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A Literary Review for the thesis

Strategies for Translating Dialectical Features:

A Study of Selected Gujarati Novels in English Translation

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Introduction:

The present research is aimed at exploring the strategies employed while translating dialectical features of Gujarati novels into English. Since a dialect is a regionally or socially distinctive variety of a language, it is identified by a particular set of words and phonological features. Spoken dialects are usually also associated with a distinctive pronunciation and accent. At times the two dialects of the same language become unintelligible to each other e.g. the dialects of Chinese: Mandarin, Cantonese etc. Cockney, one of the dialects of English, is considered 'squeamish' and 'affected' by the standard users of English. Similarly, a Gujarati dialect spoken in the Northern Gujarat is somewhat unintelligible to the people of Southern Gujarat. Now, while translating Gujarati novels with diverse varieties of dialectical features into English, what strategies of translation are employed by the translators could be an interesting study.

A novel, set in a regional background, represents the race and milieu of that region. Such a novel is written in a dialectical language to express the unique features of that region. The selected novels for the proposed study include *Manavini Bhavai* (translated as *Endurance: A Droll Saga* by Prof. Y. V. Kantak) by Pannalal Patel, *Angaliyat* (translated as *The Stepchild – Angaliyat* – by Rita Kothari) by Joseph Macwan and *Akoopar* (translated as *Akoopar – The Infinite* – by Piyush Joshi et al.) by Dhruv Bhatt. Set in various regions of Gujarat, these novels amplify three powerful dialects of Gujarati language. *Manavini Bhavai* depicts the plight of the farmers of Northern Gujarat during the famine of the first decade of 20th century. *Angaliyat* deals with the lives of Dalits of Charotar region of Gujarat. Whereas, *Akoopar* is set in and around the forest of Gir and portrays the people, places and heritage of that region in *Kathiyavaadi* dialects. All these novels are translated into English by eminent translators. As these three novels have numerous dialectical features in them, it would be worth exploring the strategies employed for translating such dialectical features.

Prior to the study of above mentioned area of research it is imperative that the literature review of the available research is undertaken. The list of the following research is inclusive, but not limited to, the major work done so far.

1) *Akoopar (Akoopar – The Infinite)* translated by Piyush Joshi et al.

Akoopar appeared in 2010 by Dhruv Bhatt. The novel represent the Gir forest and the unique biodiversity of the region. The novel was also remarkable as it documents the dialectical features of The Gir and Ghed region with minute detailing. Now while translating from one language system from another language system means translating a socio-cultural heritage of one language into another which is quite complex endeavor. Further, when dialectical features of the region are even more complex endeavor as a dialect is a



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regionally or socially distinctive [variety](#) of a language, it is identified by a particular set of [words](#) and [phonological features](#). The novel was first translated by Prof. Piyush Joshi et al. in the year 2014. However, the first translated version, *Akoopar (Akoopar – The Infinite)*, was withdrawn from the market as there were many grammar typo errors along with some serious issues of equivalence in translation. Later, the editing of the translated novel was undertaken by Mr. Vishal Bhadani, a promising translator, in the year 2015. While revising the work of translation the editor took special care of idiomatic and dialectical features and made a genuine attempt in translating the sense for sense translation rather than work for word translation. In other words the revised text adopted target language approach rather than the source language translation approach. Thus, the comparative study of the original novel by Dhruv Bhatt and its revised/edited translation by Vishal Bhadani will serve the ample research insights for the current thesis undertaken.

2) *Angaliyat (The Stepchild)* translated by Rita Kothari

Angaliyat by Joseph Macwak is a landmark in the Dalit literature not only of Gujarati literature but also of the Indian literature. The novel depicts the plight of the Dalits of the Charotar region of Gujarat. The life and time of Dalits and their miseries are regional but it appeals the national level. The language used by the author is that of the Charotari dialect of Gujarat in general and of the Dalits in particular. As discussed earlier, the translation from one language system from another language system stands for a quite complex endeavor of translating a socio-cultural system of one language into another. And when dialectical features of one region are even more complex endeavor as a dialect is a regionally or socially distinctive [variety](#) of a language, it is identified by a particular set of [words](#) and [phonological features](#). This complex endeavor of transiting was undertaken by Rita Kothari and in the year 2004 the transition of the original novel appeared as *The Stepchild - Angaliyat*. The translator has provided a detailed translator's note in the translated work. The attempt of translating the dialectical elements by the translator is commendable. The creative solutions taken by the translator are of immense resource for the researchers of the translation studies in general and dialectology in particular.

3) *Endurance – a Droll Saga*. Translated by Prof. Y. V. Kantak

Pannalal Patel had been the prominent name in the Gujarati literature in the post-independence era. His *Manvini Bhavai* has remained a bench mark not only in Gujarati literature but of the national literature. The novel depicts the plight of the farmers of the northern Gujarat. The language of the novel exhibits the rich tapestry of dialectical variety of northern Gujarat. To translate such a canonical regional novel into English is a challenging task. The challenging task was undertaken by a scholar, Prof. Y. V. Kantak. The transition



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of *Manvini Bhavai* as *Endurance – a Droll Saga* appeared in 1995 by Sahitya Akadami, Delhi. For the students and researchers of translation *Endurance – a Droll Saga* offers a rich variety of translation endeavors that demonstrate creative solutions of dialectical features. As the prime focus of the current research is on strategies of transiting dialectical features into English, *Endurance – a Droll Saga* would offer an opulent case study.

4) *Translation of Pannalal Patel’s “Malela Jiv” from Gujarati into English with critical introduction* – by Dr. Rajesh Patel

Dr. Rajesh Patel undertook the above are of research as his doctorate thesis under the guidance of Dr. Jaydeepsinh Dodiya at the Saurashtra University, Rajkot. The thesis was submitted in 2011. Pannalal Patel has been a canonical writer of Gujarati regional novels in the post-independence era. Along with his masterpiece *Manvini Bhavai*, he wrote many novels that deals with the life and time of farmers of the northern Gujarat of the first half of 20th century. *Malela Jiv* is equally renowned work that has been proved to a landmark in the development of Gujarati literature. Dr. Rajesh Patel took the challenge of translating this masterpiece into English as his Ph. D. thesis. Dr. Rajesh also provided a critical introduction to his thesis that can be proved to be a great resource to those who undertake the comparative studies of translation of regional Gujarati fiction into English. As the current research includes one of the novels by Pannalal Patel, i.e. *Manvini Bhavai*, the thesis of Dr. Rajesh can be of an immense assistance.

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5) *A translation of Jhaverchand Meghani’s non translated folk tales from Gujarati into English with a critical evaluation* – by Dr. Vandana Soni

Dr. Vandana Soni undertook the above are of research as his doctorate thesis under the guidance of Dr. Sanjay Mukherjee at the Saurashtra University, Rajkot. The thesis was submitted in 2015. Jhaverchand Meghani was nationalist poet, writer and folklorist towards the end of the first hand of the 20th century. Influenced by the intellectuals of Bengal Renaissance in 1920s, he started collecting folk tales and folklore from Saurashtra region. His contribution to the folk tradition as ‘a travelling folklorist-collector’ unmatched in Gujarati literature. His folk tales deal with the rich heritage that Saurashtra region has of tradition and culture, individuals and events and of people and places. Dr. Vandana Soni undertook the task of translating the selected folk tales of Jhaverchand Meghani into English as her Ph. D. thesis. She also provided a critical evaluation to the transition of the tales at the beginning of her thesis. The thesis by Dr. Vandana could be of a great recourse to the student of translation studies and of comparative studies. As the current study is focusing on the study of translated text of Gujarati literature with dialectical features, the thesis and the



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evolution done as an introduction by Dr. Vandana would be of immense assistance.

6) *A Translation of Select Critical Essays of Suresh Joshi from Gujarati into English with a Critical Introduction* – by Dr. Sunil Sagar

Dr. Sunil Sagar undertook the above are of research as his doctorate thesis under the guidance of Dr. Kamal Mehta at the Saurashtra University, Rajkot. The thesis was submitted in 2010. Suresh Joshi is a renowned Gujarati poet, novelist and a short story writer. His contribution to modern Gujarati literature is immense. He contributed in almost all the genres of Gujarati literature ranging from poetry, fiction, short story, essay but his contribution to modern and post-modern poetry is of paramount stature. His critical essays are of immense literary value not only for students of Gujarati literature but also for all the students of modern and post-modern literature of India. But as these critical essays had been written in Gujarati, they were not available to non-Gujarati students comparative and translation studies. Dr. Sunil Sagar took the challenge of translating select critical essay of Suresh Joshi into English as his Ph. D. thesis. Dr. Sunil also provides a critical introduction to the translated essay that could be resourceful to the students of comparative and translation studies as well as to the scholars who wish undertake comparative studies of Gujarati literary tradition with other regional literature of India and abroad.

7) *A Comparative Study of English and Gujarati Phonological Systems* – Dr. Ketan Vyas

Dr. Ketan Vyas undertook the above are of research as his doctorate thesis under the guidance of Dr. Anupam Nagar at the Saurashtra University, Rajkot. The thesis was submitted in 2010. The research aimed at studying English and Gujarati Phonological systems.

“English and Gujarati phonological systems have noticeable similarities, which could assist in attaining intelligible standards in English communication.” (Vyas, 157)

The author revisited both phonological systems and enlisted common aspects of both the phonological systems respectively. The research provided wide range of comparative study of the phonological aspects of English and Gujarati.

“English and Gujarati phonological systems have clear distinctive features, which need to be recognized and articulated for achieving intelligible standards in English communication for Indian (Gujarati) students.” (Vyas, 158)

However, the study of phonological aspects was not exhaustive and the research did not include the dialectical element of either of the languages, i.e. English and Gujarati. Nevertheless, the study is of immense assistance to those researchers who aims at studying the phonological systems of English and/or



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Gujarati.

8) *Introduction, Post-colonial Translation* – edited by Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi

History of translation goes back as old as the history of the language itself. Every age shows some orientation and inclination towards the translation. Be it Biblical translations, translations during and before the renaissance, translations of classical texts into English and other European languages; the translation has remained pivotal of the transition that came about in these respective historical events. Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi have been the scholars of post-modern translation studies. Together and separately, both of them have edited and wrote in and around translation studies. Their co-edited text, *Introduction, Post-colonial Translation* appeared in 1999 has been the benchmark in the area of comparative and translation studies. For any researcher of translation studies this book is of immense value as various scholars of translation studies have contributed to the collection, including the editors of the book. As the current research is going to deal with the issues of translating dialectical features from Gujarati into English. The core focus of the study would be the issue of equivalence in translation. *Introduction, Post-colonial Translation* deals with the issue of equivalence in translation along with other, hence it'll be of a great importance to the research.

9) “Towards an Indian Theory of Translation” by Indra Nath Choudhari

Unlike, the west translation in India has never been a matter of resistance and recreation. India being a multi-lingual country, translation has been a continual and common practice of everyday life. Indra Nath Choudhari has been an Indian scholar on translation studies. He has written a research article, “Towards an Indian Theory of Translation” published by Sahitya Akadami. In this article, Indra Nath Choudhari provides a detailed summary of history and development of translation in India and leads the discussion towards an *Indian Theory of Translation*. For the students of translation and comparative studies in India, the said research paper is inevitable and is of immense importance.

10) *Tadni Boli* – by Dalpat Chauhan

A dialect is a regionally or socially distinctive variety of a language, it is identified by a particular set of words and phonological features. Spoken dialects are usually also associated with a distinctive pronunciation and accent. At times the two dialects of the same language become unintelligible to each other e.g. the dialects of Chinese: Mandarin, Cantonese etc. Cockney, one of the dialects of English, is considered ‘squeamish’ and ‘affected’ by the standard users of English. Similarly, a Gujarati dialect spoken in the Northern Gujarat is somewhat unintelligible to the people of Southern Gujarat. Dalpat Chauhan has edited *Tadni Boli* that encompasses dialectical features of Gujarati language in general and of Charotar region in



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particular. As the current thesis is focusing on the dialectical features used in three select novels of Gujarati translated into English, *Tadni Boli* could be proved to a very good recourse to bank upon.



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Summing up:

Thus, in this research article, the literature review was undertaken of various literary and critical studies in the area of translation of dialectical features. The purposed of literature review is to study the existing body of research in a particular area of research. As a result, for the present research, the researcher has reviewed 10 works, including 3 of the primary resources in order to justify the researcher's selection of a research problem; to offer contextual information required for the study; to illustration existing and latest researchers and scholars of significance that are relevant to the selected topic; and ultimately to establish the study undertaken as a bead in a chain of research that is ongoing in the chosen field of research. This research article was undertaken as a part of a doctoral research under the title of "Strategies for Translating Dialectical Features: A Study of Selected Gujarati Novels in English Translation". The research article will also serve the purpose of providing a ready to use reviews for the future researcher in the similar area of research.



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