

The Question of Regional Indian Languages in the English Classroom: Towards a Heterographic Pedagogy of Translation¹

UMESH KUMAR

The focus of my paper is to discuss and search the possible channels of theorising the presupposed ‘enigmatic’ relationship of regional Indian languages with English especially in an undergraduate (B.A.) English classroom. In our present times, the term ‘regional Indian language’ is pitched not only in isolation but also in direct conflict with power languages such as English (in a somewhat similar trend, Sanskrit and Persian in pre-modern times). In fact, regional Indian languages are shown to be ‘valiantly’ fighting the dominance of the cosmopolitan languages such as English with their resistant frames. For instance, a conscious reader of Indian Writing in English will agree that its ‘lacks’ are continuously exposed by the literatures written in regional Indian languages.

However, the present paper wishes to challenge this monolithic notion of conflict and dominance and argues that the relationship between regional Indian language(s) and English (translation) is not only opposing but also beneficiary to each other at the same time. For its material, the paper foregrounds the classroom teaching experience of the researcher with multilingual students and hints towards ‘heterographic’² translation –as (a new) pedagogy of translation.

Keywords: language conflict, translation pedagogy, heterographic translation

¹ A different version of this paper was presented at the international conference on “Translation Studies: New Directions,” organised by Department of English, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, 23-25 January 2018. However, the proposal of heterographic translation as a potential pedagogical tool was discussed elaborately at the National Translation Mission (NTM), Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) Mysore, during its international conference on “Translation and Knowledge Society” held between 7-8 March 2018. I am thankful to the participants at both the places for providing me a constructive feedback. I also wish to acknowledge the anonymous reviewer/s at NTM for offering a detailed review of the paper and suggesting constructive changes.

² I borrow the term ‘heterographic’ translation from Saji Mathew. However, with the difference that Mathew considers such an enterprise to be ‘a new ideological praxis for postcolonial translation whereas in our case ‘heterographic’ translation is foregrounded as an additional tool in translation pedagogy. See Mathew (86-96).

Introduction

Taking a somewhat ‘contentious’ lead from the importance given to personal narratives, of late in our academia,³ I do not see it improper to begin with an anecdote and offer a discussion that incorporates the heavy material of self-reflection.

It so happened that as soon as I completed my PhD research from a metropolitan city of India in 2015, I was offered the job of Assistant Professor in Banaras Hindu University’s (BHU) English Department. For starters, BHU offers itself as the most affordable venue for learning in the *purvanchal*⁴ districts both in terms of quality and quantity. As a result, the majority of its students (more so in undergraduate programmes) come from the Hindi and Urdu speaking purvanchal region of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Along with the ‘standard’ Hindi and Urdu, which are reserved for the ‘outsiders’,⁵ people/students predominantly speak Awadhi, Bhojpuri and other regional varieties of Hindi.

As a junior teacher in the Department, almost half of my workload consisted of teaching undergraduate (BA English) classes where I was assigned both the core⁶ and Honours papers. Among the core papers given to me was a paper on *English Essays*, accommodating the mainstream canonical English essayists beginning from Francis Bacon to A G Gardiner. My students reacted sharply to these prescribed essays. Their reactions, I intend to record a little later but before that, it would be interesting to have a cursory look at my prevailing classroom situation.

Social Demography of the B.A. English Class

As suggested above, the social demography of my class was already divided among students who were studying *English Essays* with interest and choice

³ For instance, one can take the examples from the genre of autobiographies and the currency they have received in the contemporary times. As personal narratives, autobiographies/self-narratives have an appeal as they attempt to bridge the gap between the personal narratives and the objective truth. In relating the personal to the political context, the particular life narratives are often attempts to legitimize the self. However, the same attempt becomes ‘contentious’ due to the tendency to ‘valorise’ the self with a monolithic standpoint.

⁴ Purvanchal is a geographic region of northern India, which comprises the eastern end of Uttar Pradesh and western end of Bihar. Purvanchal consists primarily of four divisions: the eastern Awadhi region in the west, the western Bhojpuri region in the east, the Baghelkhand region in the south, and the Nepal region in the north. See www.epurvanchal.com

⁵ Interestingly, the category of outsiders is being applied to both the Hindi and Non-Hindi speakers. It is observed that one’s ignorance of Awadhi or Bhojpuri automatically puts one in the category of outsider.

⁶ As a policy, core papers of English are opted by both kinds of students –those who have English as their Honours subject and those who have other subjects as Honours but have opted/given English as general papers for the sake of combinations. In my classes that year, the ‘English’ and ‘Non-English’ students were equally represented.

(Honours students) and those on whom the subject of *English Essays* was imposed (core students) –as a subsidiary subject and as a combination to their Honours subject. It needs to be mentioned that most of the core students had Hindi literature as their Honours subject. So, the groups, Honours as well as core, were students of literature –a kind of connecting link that as a teacher I could see.

At the same time, there existed another intangible but hard to ignore division in the classroom. One could see, both by language and mannerisms that the Honours students, most of them, had studied in English medium private/convent schools before they entered in the university system. On the other hand, the Hindi Honours students had been students of *sarkari/nagar-palika* (government/municipal) schools. There was a clear class division among students and it was visible even in their seating preferences where the English Honours students would be on one side and the Hindi Honours/other regional Indian language students on the other. Furthermore, the prevailing situation produced different strands of behavioural patterns among students especially with their relation to me as a subject teacher. For example, during the classroom teaching the students will react typically in the following fashion:

Firstly, I would see a group of students extremely vocal in the class – coming with advanced preparation about the essay which is supposed to be taught that day, asking questions, giving clarifications which on occasions also involved having a debate with the teacher. (This group represented the Honours students).

The second group of students will involve those who display themselves as the most attentive listeners to the first group as well as to the teacher. They would always remain curious about what is going on in the class. However, they would hardly speak in the class. Once the class is over, they would follow the teacher and ask their questions and clarifications. On most occasions, they would attempt to ask their questions in English with the intermittent use of Hindi. Their questions and clarification will also highlight the fact that they had come to the class with their homework done. On being asked – why they don't ask the same question(s) and doubts in the class? – The students will pity their ignorance of 'not knowing the English language that well'. Not knowing English that well is the reason for their silence in the class –they would plead. (This group represented the core students).

Conflict of Languages in the Classroom

Notwithstanding the issues proposed by the two groups due to their usage of English, both groups actually spoke vernacular languages (Hindi, Urdu, Bhojpuri, Awadhi etc.) outside the classroom situation. There was a third (minority) group in the class that included the speakers of Bangla, Marathi, Telugu and Nepali, which again belonged to the core group. However, the foregrounding of English as a medium of communication by the Honours group was enough to prove that the core group was 'more-vernacular' than

the former or at least that was what the core group was forced to feel.

The situation mentioned above illustrates that the prevailing ‘language relations’ among students were far from peaceful in the class. One could see clearly that different languages/variants of a single language were struggling to get public space in the classroom. Consequently, those who inhabited these languages (the students) were also struggling to get their space in the classroom. At another theoretical level, the classroom situation can also be explored as a site of translation.⁷ A site that incorporates heavy traffic of multiple languages where the speakers are highly aware of their linguistic positions –both socially and politically.

Further, the plurilingualism of the English classroom actually turns it into –a “translated class.”⁸ Both the Honours as well as the core group students make attempts to translate themselves into English. Here, one can understand the students of the English classroom as “subjects in translation.”⁹ The situation of the students makes it quite clear that translation does not just belong to the intimate space of the translator but it is very much a part of the daily life. According to Sherry Simon: (In such situations) “Translation serves as a flashpoint, an indicator of dissonant claims to public space, showing how the identities of the public space are contested, made and remade, imagined and narrated, imposed and marketed.”¹⁰ The interplay of different languages in the classroom not only created a competing space within in it but also divided the students.

As an instructor, I felt that the situation was both a challenge and opportunity for me. I took it as an opportunity for I too experienced a similar thing when I was a student. In a one to one interaction with the students it was decided that in every class, apart from my (English) lecture and the participation of the students in the same language, last fifteen minutes of the hour be kept for discussion where both the language as well as the reference material can be from the Indian languages similar to the topic discussed in/from the English language. It was a decision taken unanimously by the class. One could see that a new spirit of enthusiasm prevailed among the students of the core group.

⁷ I am thankful to Sherry Simon for drawing my attention to this during the course of a discussion at Pune in 2018.

⁸ This understanding I borrow from the presentation of Siri Nergaard titled *Living in Translation: The Socio-Psychological Condition of Translation* presented at the International Conference on “Translation Studies: New Directions,” organised by Department of English, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, 23-25 January 2018. The paper is unpublished.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ The statement is borrowed from the abstract of Sherry Simon’s unpublished paper titled *Translation Sites, Languaged Histories and Disputed Public Space* presented at the International Conference on “Translation Studies: New Directions,” organised by Department of English, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, 23-25 January 2018.

Instances of Language Conflicts

Consequently, the next class was on Francis Bacon's *Of Studies*¹¹ and *Of Travel*.¹² The class went on as usual except the last fifteen minutes. The students of Hindi literature in the class; belonging to the core group, managed to bring certain essays from Hindi on themes dealt by Bacon and argued that the indigenous essays from the Indian languages make far more sense than the English essayist. They questioned the sanity of teaching Bacon in the contemporary classroom/times especially with the unabridged archaic English. Further, it was beyond their good sense as to why he always loads his writing with the Latin phrases and vocabulary. One student argued to the extent that Bacon was primarily writing for the aristocratic/princely class where his writing was used as a training material for the future nobility. It would be dangerous to perpetuate such monarchic thoughts for they are against the spirit of democracy and the idea of decentralizing the power structures.

In order to bring home their point that day, the core students put in two Hindi writings in front of the class – *Himmat aur Zindagi*¹³ (Courage and Life) – Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and *Bheday aur Bhediye*¹⁴ (Sheep and Wolves) – Harishankar Parsai, both of them, they argued, can be read as essays though personally I was not too sure about the latter because it read to me like a short story (when once I read it). Nevertheless, the students of the core group were making a strong argument against the teaching material used in the class. What they are taught in the class has no immediate connection whatsoever with their lives outside the classroom, they argued. The prescribed material, according to them, neither improves their English language skills nor is it capable of developing a distinct taste pertaining to the aesthetics of literature. Whereas when they read their own writers they feel as if the ideas are speaking directly to them.

The students belonging to the Honours group felt uneasy with these discussions. They interrupted by saying that if one wants to study Hindi writings ones should actually be in a Hindi department. By the reactions of Honours students, it was not difficult to ascertain that they felt 'duty bound' to defend their (English) material. However, the core group requested them to read the mentioned above Hindi material first and thereafter make their arguments – a proposition readily accepted by the Honours group. Before I provide the details of what happened next, it would help our cause if we could spell out the questions the situation was proposing.

¹¹ See Bacon in Sinha (10)

¹² See Bacon in Sinha (11)

¹³ For an e-version of the story see <http://www.hindikunj.com/2017/08/himmat-aur-zindagi.html>

¹⁴ The e-version of the story is available on <https://www.hindi-literature.com/bheden-aur-bhediye-parsai.html/>

Questions of/on Teaching Material and Pedagogy

Firstly, does the dissatisfaction of regional language students with the English material in hand hints towards the possible 'crisis' within the English studies? It needs to be mentioned that the discovery of this crisis is not at all new.¹⁵ Books like *Subject to Change*,¹⁶ *The Lie of the Land*,¹⁷ and *Rethinking English*,¹⁸ *Masks of Conquest*,¹⁹ *Provocations: The Teaching of English Literature*²⁰ in India along with the national level project on *Rethinking the 'Crisis' in English Studies*²¹ have amply brought out this problem in the public domain.

But, even almost two decades after the 'crisis' is identified, the problem seems to be far from over. One of the chief reasons, as identified by Sundar Rajan in her introduction to *The Lie of the Land* is the complacency of the English departments themselves, which asserts that there is no crisis at all. Most of the English departments in India (sometimes directly and often indirectly) assert that English literature is the repository of the best of global literature. Except, the stray changes here and there, the *numero uno* status of (British) English remains unchanged. In fact, there has been a covert hostility against agents (that include both the teachers and student research scholars) who wish to respond to the 'crisis' by improvising on the syllabus, teaching methods and taking on areas and texts for research hitherto 'unknown' to English departments. The 'new' research in English departments is basically the foregrounding of regional Indian literatures as the material of research. Setting aside the English authors, of late, a small trend has developed where the young researchers are working on *bhasha* (another collective term used regional Indian languages) authors in English departments by employing translation as an important bridge of collaboration between the English and the Indian *bhashas*/vernaculars.

However, we have to be little cautious at this juncture. By my account, it may be assumed that this 'new trend' of research is ongoing across all the English departments of the country. But this is not the case. Except for a few universities, the research on indigenous native authors in English is seen with a lot of suspicions. At times, in spite of research scholars having strong interests in *bhasha* literatures, they are discouraged to undertake it in the English departments. Out of the many excuses given, on the top of the list include the non-availability of supervisors who could supervise such dissertations, the practical problem of finding the job after the research is done etc.

¹⁵ Although the crisis always addressed the teachers and never the students.

¹⁶ See Tharu (1994).

¹⁷ See Sundar Rajan (1992).

¹⁸ See Joshi (1991).

¹⁹ See Vishwanathan (1990).

²⁰ See Marathe, Ramanan and Bellarmine (1993).

²¹ This was a national level project coordinated by Tharakeshwar, V. B.

I myself faced a similar situation on two occasions and quite ironically, at places like Delhi and Hyderabad, assumed to be having liberal outlook towards the ‘new research’ in humanities. The first experienced occurred in 2014 during the interview at a Delhi University college. To cut a long story short, for my PhD work, I worked on Gendered Violence and thematically located my study in the ‘Honour Killing’ phenomenon of North India. For a topic like this, there cannot be ready-made textbooks and authors (which we usually have for the ‘traditional’ research conducted in the English departments: The writers and their novels/poems etc.) The committee was literally in ‘shock’ to find that I have no authors and books to study and I am doing a PhD in English! On being answered that a phenomenon like honour killing has to be studied as a cultural text, which also requires fieldwork along with the manual text, I was told that in that case, I should be seeking jobs in social sciences.

On another occasion, I was appearing for a faculty position at a central university in Hyderabad. The selection procedure was divided into different modules. One module asked for the academic vision of the potential teacher. In my presentation, I made a strong case for regional Indian literatures (in English translation) to be taught at the department. That too not as optional papers but at least one compulsory paper every semester. The audience of this module comprised all the teachers of the department. On expected lines, the house was divided on the issue. The chairman in his final remarks told that the department has a mandate to teach English literature. However, he did not clarify if the mandate is to teach literature written/available in English or literature produced by English? No one made that distinction, actually.

My experiences, as well as that of my students, make it quite clear that there is heavy institutional and ideological resistance towards the inclusion of regional Indian literatures in the Indian English classroom. What are the reasons for this? Is it the colonial hangover that resists this inclusion? In personal conversations, on numerous occasions, the detractors of such an inclusion told me that such ideas have polluted the English departments. The analogy of purity-pollution compels us to ask another question: Has English and English departments have become academic-brahmins of academia where the mere touch/entry of regional Indian literatures (*the shudra/atishudras*) pollutes it?

Another thing that comes out quite clearly from our discussion above is that Indian literatures, whether Hindi or other Indian languages are assumed to be possible threats to the legitimacy of English. But, do the Indian languages; really have the capability to threaten English –the lingua franca of the world? In our present times, the term Indian languages are in fact pitched in direct conflict with the power languages such as English. A somewhat similar trend must have been felt in pre-modern times when Sanskrit and Persian were the power languages. The existence of both English and Indian *bhashas* is assumed to exist in isolation to each other.

Before we move further, it is important for us to have some degree of conceptual clarification about certain terms that we are using so far more of for convenience than clarity: What do we mean by Indian Languages? Why do we wish to propose their entry into English classroom? What is the conceptual meaning of politics between English and regional Indian languages? Let us attempt to spell these issues one by one.

Regional Indian Languages: Challenging the Hegemony of English?

One can define the regional –as a language or a dialect spoken by “the ordinary” people of a country or region. A regional language is also an everyday language, spoken language, colloquial speech, native speech, conversational language, common parlance, non-standard language. It also incorporates indigenous jargon, slang, idiom, argot, patois, dialect; regional language, local tongue, regionalism, localism, provincialism; *informal* lingo, local lingo, pattern etc. Furthermore, in that sense –

A regional language is a native language or native dialect of a specific population, especially as distinguished from a literary, national or standard variety of the language, or a lingua franca (vehicular language) used in the region or state inhabited by that population. Some linguists use “vernacular” and “nonstandard dialect” as synonyms for regional language. However, epistemologically, the word vernacular was brought into English from the Latin word called – Vernaculous which means ‘Native’. The word native is again very much near to the word regional. So the regional is supposed to exist in contrast to the Lingua Franca: For example, in the European experience (as English was to Latin) and in Indian Experience (as Indian *bhashas* to Sanskrit).

To simplify further, the regional languages exist as a low variant of the standard language. I propose to call this standard, vehicular or for that matter the lingua franca as a power language. The relation between a standard and a non-standard native/regional language also defies proper analytical standards. Because a regional language has a dormant potential to become a power language and the historical evolution of some languages such as English (and in Indian context Hindi) is a proof of that. Further, the geographical variations of space can also alter the status of a specific regional language.

Thus we can safely say that regional languages have the character to change, the attributes to be assimilated and a certain mechanism of resistance towards institutionalization that the power language dare not afford. Perhaps, these are also the reasons due to which regional languages ‘capitulate’ in front of the power politics of the power language. I do not use the word politics in its narrower sense where it is understood as a grammar of vote bank politics. Rather, I use it in the sense of power equation, assertion and perhaps also in the sense of appropriation in the ongoing continuum of the power struggle in the Indian linguistic scene.

The Indian Linguistic Scene and the Role of Translation: Towards a Heterographic Pedagogy of Translation

The Indian linguistic scene is multilingual. And for the multilingual Indians, language (along with caste) is their social reality. For the post-independent Indian nation-state, the issue of language has been quite crucial (not to forget the linguistic reorganization of states in India, during the early sixties). Having lived for a considerable time in both North and South of India, I can dare say that the divide between the two corners is more linguistic than cultural. However, this divide is kept in check by the proliferation of English language both in the North and the South as well as among the other geographies of the country.

In fact, English works as bridge language between the North and South and at the same time tunes down the ‘dominance’ of Hindi that threatens to dominate the other Indian languages by becoming the *rashtrabasha* (national language). The position of English also gets strengthened because of it being a language of the global market, technology, diplomacy and influence on the global platform. To be precise, it is extremely hard to ignore the existence of English in our country. Along with the regional Indian languages, English would continue to exist in a parallel position. In fact, this position now constitutes the linguistic reality of India.

Lets us move to the final part of my classroom story to which I promised to return. In the next class, the Honours students came with their readings of *Himmat aur Zindagi* (Courage and Life) –Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and *Bheday aur Bhediye* (Sheep and Wolves) –Harishankar Parsai. During the feedback session, these students accepted the fact that the Hindi readings were more enjoyable than their English counterparts.

The Honours students did feel a ‘lack’ in their English material and proposed to me that they would translate the Hindi material into English and the English material into Hindi. The Honours students would do it from Hindi to English whereas the core students would do the reverse of it. As already mentioned, we also had a minority of Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Nepali students in the class and they decided to translate in their own languages. However, administratively, it was difficult for me to permit –for the examination was to happen only according to the guidelines of the prescribed syllabus. Nevertheless, the students came up with a solution themselves. They reminded me that I was supposed to take an assignment that constituted Thirty-Three percent of their internal marks. By rule also, the teacher is allowed to give an assignment that may be instrumental in enhancing the creative and critical skills of the students. My students decided to undertake translation. For me, it was also a reconciliation that I could witness between the regional and the English along with the translation.

In retrospect, I feel my students were doing something new that semester. I shall explain this newness in a few moments. First of all, they were challenging this notion that the power language and the regional languages

can only exist in conflict and isolation. They were proving it through their translations that a certain harmony is possible among this ‘sour’ relation. Secondly, we all know that predominantly the contemporary translation scene in our country is bilingual though the resources and materials of translation are multilingual. In policy discussions, it is often revealed that the mandate of translation activity in India is to translate Indian languages into world languages or the world languages into regional Indian languages. However, it is mainly done in English. On a routine basis, we see that the *bhasha* texts are translated into English in a voluminous way whereas the vice-versa is done minimally.

Lawrence Venuti also contends that the English language rules the global cultural economy of translation. By giving empirical shreds of evidence, Venuti proves that English remains the most translated language worldwide, but one of the least translated into.²² The students in the discussion were trying to undertake translation both ways. One observed that through their translations they were writing a different – a third language. Their translations were not only subverting the rules of standard Hindi but also that of Standard English. By incorporating a new third language, the young translators were challenging the monolithic style of Hindi/English/other Indian languages translations. Some of the translation projects the students undertook that semester, were as follow. I also contributed a few of them.

Sl. No	Name of the Original Work/ Language/Writer	Translated into/Translated as	Translated by
1.	<i>Of Studies and Of Travel</i> /Eng./F. Bacon	Hindi, Bhojpuri and Nepali	Core Students
2.	<i>Himmat aur Zindagi</i> /Hindi/ R.S. Dinkar and <i>Bheday aur Bhediye</i> /Hindi/H.S.Parsai	English	Hons. Students
3.	<i>Thakur Ka Kuaan</i> /Hindi/Premchand	English/Bengali/ Marathi	Hons. and Core Students
4.	<i>First Translation of the Gita</i> /English/Sunday Magazine Literary Review (Prose)	Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Telugu, Nepali	Core Students
5.	<i>Sawa Ser Gehun</i> /Hindi/Premchand	English and Marathi	Course Instructor and two Core Marathi Students
6.	<i>Daag Diya Sach</i> /Hindi/Ramnika Gupta	English	Course Instructor

²² See Venuti (327).

7.	<i>El Paraiso Era Un Autobus</i> /Spanish/Juan Jose Millas	Hindi	Abhishek Parashar (on invitation)
----	---	-------	--------------------------------------

TABLE 1. Details of Translation Projects

For Hindi and English, translation projects were evaluated collaboratively in the classroom itself whereas the translated pieces in other languages were given to those people who have long been teaching/practising translation in that subject. The biggest takeaway from these translation assignments was that the students were able to cover new grounds of self-confidence for themselves, especially –the core students. Through the informal feedback, the students revealed that not only they enjoyed the act of translation but also felt as if they were doing something very important in the process. In a nutshell, the activity of translation created a working harmony not only in the classroom situation but also beyond it.

During the first evaluative discussion, it was seen that most of the core students have done word-to-word literal translation of Bacon’s essays. However, the translation of Bacon’s essays in Bhojpuri created a lot of laughter in the classroom. A collaborative translation of two students, the Bhojpuri version replaced the Latin allusive vocabulary of Bacon by Sanskrit terms. Another interesting thing was how the young translators replaced the representation of nobility with the sons of Uttar Pradesh’s politicians in the translation!

The translation of *Himmat aur Zindagi*/Ramdhari Singh Dinkar and *Bheday aur Bhediye*/Harishankar Parsai by Hons. Students heralded a discussion on the ‘failure’ of translation. The translators were hugely dissatisfied with their own translations for it was difficult for them to incorporate the nuances of the source language into the target language. There was an animated discussion in the classroom regarding the usage of footnote so as to avoid the possible ‘potential failure’ of a translation.

Premchand’s *Thakur ka Kuaan*²³ has been translated a number of times into English. The students could closely see the differences between the existing translations and concluded that every translation is a new translation. At the same time, the student who attempted to translate the story into Marathi informed the class that the rendering into Marathi has not been very difficult. His claim was that he has been able to keep the nuances of the original almost identically intact in the target language because the portrayed social conditions have existed in Maharashtra too. Another interesting debate that generated during the course of this discussion was: Is it ‘easier’ to translate from one regional Indian language to another? Most of the participants, in fact, agreed with this proposition. Almost all the translators of

²³ For the complete story see <http://hindisamay.com/premchand%20samagra/Mansarovar1/Thakur-ka-kuan.htm>

*First Translation of the Gita*²⁴ agreed that the text was comparatively easy as compared to the preceding ones. The (journalistic) nature of the literary report ensured that the students could take a lot of help from the Google Translator – so as to find the equivalent words in the target language.

The twin discussions on Premchand's *Sawa Ser Gehun*²⁵ and Ramnika Gupta's *Daag Diya Sach*²⁶ were rather prolonged one. The students really enjoyed that their course instructor was presenting his translation in the class. I distributed the drafts of my translations of *Sawa Ser Gehun* and *Daag Diya Sach* well in advance, along with the source texts. The students came 'more' prepared' and 'confronted' my translations in a friendly manner.

They started with the very titles of both the short stories. The literal translation of *Sawa Ser Gehun* would be Quarter Ser of Wheat. Picking on my inability to translate *Ser*, the students advised me to keep the title as it is in target text as well. As for Gupta's *Daag Diya Sach* there were many suggestions. Certainly, the students did not agree with 'Burning the Truth' – my original title. After discussing the few proposals, 'The Funeral of Truth' was the one with whom almost everyone agreed. Along with these discussions, the working nature of collaborative translation was also discussed. The concept of collaborative discussion seemed more practical to the students when the local/indigenous words such as *Kurmi*, *Pitambar*, *Chabena*, *Kamandal*, *Jau*, *Ser*, *Mun*, *Punseri*, *Khalihani*, *Chaitra*, *Vipra*, *Maharaj* etc. were discussed in great detail with their possible equivalence in other Indian languages from Premchand's *Sawa Ser Gehun*. The invited translation from Abhishek Parashar was a rendering of Spanish short story into Hindi. During the course of his discussion, he foregrounded how he has 'domesticated' the Spanish source text by the act of 'transcreation' and 'adaptation'.

In spite of the fact that most of our evaluate strategy for these translations depended on the utilitarian mode of translation such as utility, accuracy, readability etc., it was observed that the attempted translations made the students further aware about the existing blindfolded cultural narcissism existing in them especially with respect to their culture and language. In a way, through the resultant self-reflexive mode, they started to question their commonsensical complacency about different regional Indian languages as well.

If one observes closely, the two-way translation exercise discussed above created a space for the instructor to introduce the theoretical terms of translation during the course of practical discussion on the translated texts itself. With such an approach, one can avoid the situation of discussing theory and practice in isolation while teaching translation. A further inference that

²⁴ See the e-version of the article at the following link: <http://www.thehindu.com/books/first-translation-of-the-gita/article20104419.ece>

²⁵ See Premchand (55-61).

²⁶ See Ramnika Gupta in Mudrarakshas (73-85).

we can draw from this exercise contends that in order to have an alternative pedagogy of translation one cannot afford to teach theory and practice of translation separately.

Conclusion

Thus, the students were challenging the normative method of 'homographic translation' where the translations were being attempted only in the dominant –power (English) language and were now moving towards a more accommodative 'heterographic translation.' Certainly, Heterographic translation would not only challenge the monopoly and hegemony of English by speeding up the translation of same text across different Indian languages but shall also pave the way for the development of an alternative pedagogy of translation. These many translations shall not only take the text to a wider public but also boost the pluralistic character of Indian nation-state and that of multilingual exchange among the different regional Indian languages as well.

References

- JOSHI, SVATI. (ed.) 1991. *Rethinking English: Essays in Literature, Language, History*. New Delhi: Trianka.
- MARATHE, SUDHAKAR, RAMANAN MOHAN and BELLARMINE ROBERT. (eds.) 1993. *Provocations: The Teaching of English Literature in India*. Madras: Orient Longman.
- MATHEW, SAJI. 2002. *From Regional into Pan Indian: Towards a Heterographic Praxis for Postcolonial Translation*. Journal of Contemporary Thought (Special number). 86-96.
- MUDRARAKSHAS. (ed.) 2012. *Nahi Sadi Ki Pehchaan: Shreshtha Dalit Kahaniya*. Allahabad: Lok Bharti Prakashan.
- PREMCHAND. 2010. *Pratinidhi Kahaniyaan*. New Delhi: Rajkamal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- SINHA, SUSANTA K. (ed.) 2016. *English Essayists*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- SUNDAR RAJAN, RAJESWARI. (ed.) 1992. *The Lie of the Land: English Literary Studies in India*. Delhi: OUP.
- THARU, SUSIE. (ed.) 1994. *Subject to Change: Teaching Literature in the Nineties*. Delhi: Orient Longman.
- VENUTI, LAWRENCE. 1996. Translation and the Pedagogy of Literature. *College English*, 58 (3). 327-344.
- VISHWANATHAN, GAURI. 1990. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. London: Faber and Faber.
