

TRANSLITERATION AND TRANSLATION FROM BANGLA INTO ENGLISH: A PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH

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ABSTRACT: *The current paper exemplifies the significance and explores the complexity of transliteration and translation in the domain of language and linguistics. Because of the differences in grammar, semantics, phonetics, phonology, usage as well as stylistic features of the two languages – Bangla and English – we often come across some defective linguistic production. However, this is always a very tough task and confronted with various issues. Since it is a most complex, sensitive and subtle area of language studies, one must be aware of both the surface and underlying relations of language. The characteristic elements are also transferred from one language into the other. Sometimes, the translation of a few names and expressions seem to be unnecessary, unwise or confusing as they are already well-fixed, well-known and recognized by the people for a long span of time. Here, we may employ the tool known as transliteration. Transliteration and translation from Bangla into English, or vice versa creates a number of problems though they are from the same origin– the Indo European language family. This research focuses and investigates the intricate issues of transliteration and translation from source language (SL), Bangla into target language (TL), English and tries to find apt solutions on the basis of need-based analysis and argument. To make the paper more readers friendly and help the non-native users conceive better, the English meaning and IPA transcription are provided wherever necessary.*

KEYWORDS: Transliteration, Transcription, Translation, Interpretation, Equivalence, Usage, SL, TL

INTRODUCTION

Transliteration and translation, the two allied fields of language studies are of contemporary interest and importance. In our day to day life, we have to count on their concept for conveying and collecting information. They are more necessary in a situation where people have more than one language to cope with. Nevertheless, the distinction between transliteration and translation is not always very clear among the common mass, even sometimes educated people become confused. It could be made crystal clear by saying that any proper nouns (i.e. the name of a person, place, thing etc) could only be transliterated but not translated because they are predetermined, well-fixed and/or accepted for a considerably long period of time. For instance, ‘ঢাকা’ is transliterated as ‘Dhaka’, but not to translate like ‘to cover’ because it is the capital city of Bangladesh, a proper noun, or even the Bangla word ‘বাজার’ should be transliterated as ‘bazaar’ and it is unnecessary to translate it into ‘market’. Although transliteration is applicable at the level of letters, syllables and words, translation is pertinent to a word, phrase, sentence and text. It will be no surprising if you ask someone to write the Bangla word ‘ফুল’ (i.e. a flower) with English alphabet, you may get the answer written, or spelt as ‘fool’ meaning ‘stupid’, ‘full’ referring to ‘complete’, or ‘ful’ which is an English ‘suffix’. However, the correct transliteration of ‘ফুল’ in English could be ‘phool’, or ‘phul’. This mistake is only due to the fact that Bangla ‘ফ’ is labial or bilabial but not a labio-dental phoneme. Again, the Bangla name ‘প্রদূৎ’ is to be spelt with the help

of English alphabet as ‘Prodyut’, but not ‘Proddut’ since Bangla ‘ঢ়’- ফলা is logically transliterated in English as ‘y’ and ‘ঢ়’ is a dental sound that is redundant for transliteration. Hence, transliteration replaces, transfers, or swaps letters from one alphabet or language (i.e. source language/SL- Bangla) into the corresponding, similar-sounding characters of another alphabet or language (i.e. target language/ TL- English). Transliteration is not always an exact science– as with the above example, sometimes words can be transliterated in more than one way. If we talk about translation, something similarly surprising and terrible may happen. For example, when anyone by mistake translates the Bangla expressions ‘এক ঝাক মৌমাছি’ /ek dʒʰak məumətʃi/ as ‘a group of bees’ instead of ‘a hive of bees/a swarm of bees’ or ‘পটল তোলা’ /potol tola/ as ‘to reap or harvest palwals/potols’ what means ‘to kick the bucket/to die’ that could be unacceptable and awful. Besides, the Bangla sentence ‘তিনি ঘোলা জলে মাছ শিকার করেন’ || t̪ini gʰola dʒole matʃʰiʃkar koren || translated as ‘He catches fish in the muddy water’ is not correct but it should be ‘He catches fish in the troubled water’. So, translation from Bangla into English needs the processes and techniques to transfer the meaning of the SL into the TL, using words having direct equivalence, new words or terms, foreign words written in Bangla, or using foreign words to fit Bangla pronunciation. However, Bangla has a terrific ability to absorb the richness of other languages.

TRANSLITERATION VS. TRANSLATION

Sometimes, translation is not possible or we do not translate a word, term or text as it is not necessary at all. Here, transliteration becomes the only option. For example, a ‘visiting card’ is more supposed to be transliterated than translated. Transliteration is a type of conversion of a term or text from one script to another that involves swapping *letters* while a translation is to convey the *meaning* of a written text of one language to another. Transliteration is not primarily concerned with representing the *sounds* of the original but rather with representing the characters, ideally accurately and unambiguously. e.g. ‘মাথা’ (i.e. the head)- ‘matha’. Conversely, transcription notes the *sounds* but not necessarily the *spelling* (i.e. letters). e.g. ‘মাথা’- /matʰa/. If the relations between sounds and letters are similar in both languages, a transliteration may be very close to a transcription. e.g. ‘গুরু’ /guru/ (a teacher). Usually, transcription uses IPA sound symbols, not the regular language alphabet. A translation tells us the meaning of words or expressions in another language. But a transliteration doesn’t tell us the meaning of the words, it helps us pronounce them. For genealogists, transliteration comes into play when researching people and places that use non-Roman alphabets, such as Hebrew, Cyrillic or Greek, and name changes of immigrants from those places. Our ancestors often would transliterate their names so that Americans could spell and pronounce them, producing many variant spellings. Transliterations are also helpful when we’re making research notes and our word processing software doesn’t offer fonts with characters in the language of interest. However, a translation provides us with the same virtue as the original, and inspires the same responses in its readers. While translation transfers the meaning of a written text, an interpretation conveys the meaning of an oral or spoken one.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

English is one of the oldest languages of the world whereas Bangla is one of the most recent Aryan languages. The formal introduction of English to the region of Bengal- Bangladesh, West Bengal and some parts of India started when the British took control of it from the late 18th century. The East India Company consolidated their hold on the area following the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and Battle of Buxar in 1764 and they took complete control of the region by 1793. The early and prolonged exposure of British administration resulted in the expansion of Western education, culminating in development of science, institutional

education, and social reforms, language and culture in the region. Bangla (earlier, *Bengali*) is the language of Bangladesh, West Bengal, Tripura, Assam and some parts of India. Historically, the Bengali 'bhadralok' (i.e. a gentleman) class was heavily influenced by the British accent. The efforts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan played a key role in building an English-speaking Muslim intelligentsia and middle class in the Bengal. Modern Bangladeshi English is noted for its neutral accent, in comparison to other forms of Asian English, and has also been influenced by the American accent. Spellings continue to be adopted from British English. English was an official language of East Pakistan, the then East Bengal and currently Bangladesh. The English language arrived in South Asia as a result of colonization but it has always co-existed in this subcontinent alongside thousands of local languages. The British first arrived in India in the early 1600s and soon established trading posts in a number of cities under the control of The East India Company. Initially, English was only taught to the local population through the work of Christian missionaries – there were no official attempts to force the language on the masses. But by the 1700s, English had firmly established itself as the language of administration and many educated people were demanding instruction in English as a means of social advancement. It was widely used in the media, in higher education and government and therefore remains a common means of communication, both among the ruling classes, and between speakers of mutually unintelligible languages. Even after independence, the Constitution of Bangladesh was written in both Bangla and English in 1972. However, successive Bangladeshi governments have converted many original English-medium universities, colleges and schools to Bangla instruction in order to spread mass education. Now, we will divide the whole paper into two parts: *Transliteration* and *Translation*

TRANSLITERATION

Transliteration refers to the process of expressing the sound of how a word is pronounced in the source language using the alphabet of the target language. That is to say, we use one language alphabet to depict it with the help of other language alphabet. Though not exactly the same, the replacement of a word of a language is done with approximately close phonetic features of the alphabet of another language. It is called 'transliteration' or *protibarnikaron* in Bangla. It is undoubtedly true that two languages may have some features in common but they also differ in various respects and aspects. So, spelling is in one sense a *social semiotics*. Historically, Bangla sounds kept phonetic similarity with at least three languages: Arabic, Persian and English. As a common rule of spelling, the long and the short sounds make difference for English words: 'ship' (a water vehicle) and 'sheep' (an animal) but for Bangla words, it causes no change in meaning. e.g. 'বাড়ি'/'বাড়ী' (i.e. a house). But when we have to employ a word or term of a language in the matter of writing, we transcribe it in other languages with a number of homogeneous difficulties.

To approach the questions how, when and where the 'lipi' or 'barno' of Bangla originated, we have to look back in the pages of history. So far as our knowledge goes, the term *lipi* (i.e. script) came from the Bangla word 'lepa', 'lipa' or 'lipon' of something done with mud or clay. Later, it was done with 'barno' (i.e. colour). Thus, we call it *Bangla barno* or *Bangla letters* in writing. However, we are still in the dark about the fact who and when the rule of Bangla spelling was established as it is not written in history. But the users of a language need to know the way of using the sound symbol (i.e. barno) for a particular sound. However, we cannot find any *barno* for 'এ' in the middle age of the Bangla language and perhaps the status of that sound (এ) was *allophonic* which changed with the increased number of users. In the 20th century, its transliteration was accomplished in different ways: 'অ্যা', 'এ্যা', 'ফ্যা' or only as 'এ' with the same pronunciation of 'এ'.

Consonants can never be articulated alone for any languages. So, it takes a vowel to be pronounced. For example, the Bangla consonant /ব/ is pronounced with the help of the vowel /অ/. As a result, the articulation of ‘ব’ equals to ‘ব+ অ’ and similarly in English, ‘b’ is ‘b + i/e’. So, it is very inevitable to understand the structural system of vowels and consonants of a language. When a language comes in contact with the others, it is somehow influenced by those languages. For this reason, the transliteration of a Bangla word using English alphabet may cause some changes in pronunciation. Some phonetic features of Bangla and English alphabet are discussed here.

The Place of Articulation for Bangla Vowels:

<u>Vowels</u>	<u>Place of Articulation</u>
অ/আ	guttural
ই/ঈ	palatal
উ/ঊ	labial (bilabial)
ঋ	cerebral
এ/ঐ	palato-guttural
ও/ঔ	labio-guttural

Bangla Consonants are Classified in the following ways:

‘ক’ বর্গ-	ক, খ, গ, ঘ, ঙ
‘চ’ বর্গ-	চ, ছ, জ, ঝ, ঞ
‘ট’ বর্গ-	ট, ঠ, ড, ঢ, ণ, (ড়), (ঢ়)
‘ত’ বর্গ-	ত, থ, দ, ধ, ন
‘প’ বর্গ-	প, ফ, ব, ভ, ম
‘অন্ত:স্থ’ বর্গ-	য (= য়), র, ল, ব (ওয়)

Here, we can see 27 sounds in the above five ‘বর্গ’ or ‘Classes’. But in many ways, they are 25 excluding ‘ড়’ and ‘ঢ়’ of ‘ট- বর্গ’ (Shahidullah, M. 1995:165, Vol- 3). One thing is very interesting that the ending letters of each Class (i.e. ঙ, ঞ, ণ, ন and ম) are nasal sounds.

In the spelling of a proper noun such as names of a person, language, place or institution etc, there are some legal restrictions. So, the spellings of শিশু একাডেমী, সোনালী ব্যাংক etc may not follow any rules. Moreover, some Bangla words are naturalized in spelling. e.g. পুলিশ /pulish/ (Chatterji, S. K. 1988:60). If we change them, we will get two forms of spelling - the original and an alternative. e.g. বাংলা একাডেমী vs. বাংলা একাডেমি. So, it could be recommended that the new spelling rules should be applicable only for the newly accepted foreign words like zipper, movie, candy, store, spool etc. And the words such as কোম্পানী, সরকারী, শিরোনাম, স্পীকার, সঙ্গীত, সিলেট, জারি, যাত্রা, ঈদ, পূজা, বৈশাখী মেলা, মেঘনা, সুন্দরবন etc those are spelt in our National Constitution of 1972 and well-accepted by the society for a long time could be changed in no way even in the name of *Standardization, Transliteration or Simplification* by anybody such as Bangla Academy, National Curriculum and Textbook Board and so forth.

The Place of Articulation for Bangla Consonants:

<u>Consonants</u>	<u>Place of articulation</u>	
ক =	guttural/velar	Stops
খ =	guttural/velar	
গ =	guttural/velar	
ঘ =	guttural/velar	
ঙ =	guttural & nasal	
চ =	palatal	Stops
ছ =	palatal	
জ =	palatal	
ঝ =	palatal	
ঞ =	palatal/alveolar & nasal	
ট =	cerebral/retroflex	Stops
ঠ =	cerebral/retroflex	
ড =	cerebral/retroflex	
ঢ =	cerebral/retroflex	
ণ =	cerebral & nasal	
ড় =	cerebral/alveolar	
ঢ় =	cerebral/alveolar	
ত =	dental	Stops
থ =	dental	
দ =	dental	
ধ =	dental	
ন =	dental/alveolar & nasal	
প =	labial (bilabial)	Stops
ফ =	labial (bilabial)	
ব =	labial (bilabial)	
ভ =	labial (bilabial)	
ম =	labial (bilabial) & nasal	

য় =	palatal
র =	cerebral/alveolar
ল =	dental/alveolar
শ =	palatal
ষ =	cerebral/palatal
স =	dental/alveolar
হ =	guttural/velar
অন্ত:স্থ 'ব' =	labial/labio-dental (archaic)
অন্ত:স্থ 'য' =	palatal

NB. The অন্ত:স্থ 'ব' (= বর্গীয় 'ব') and অন্ত:স্থ 'য' (= বর্গীয় 'জ') have less use now.

ং =	nasal
্ =	nasal

The Place of Articulation for English Vowels:

<u>Vowels</u>	<u>Place of Articulation</u>
a =	central open mid
e =	front open mid
i =	central open
o =	back open
u =	central open

The Place of Articulation for English Consonants:

<u>Consonants</u>	<u>Place of Articulation</u>
b =	bilabial
c =	velar & alveolar
NB. 'c' has two pronunciations: /k/ and /s/.	
d =	alveolar
f =	labio-dental
g =	velar
h =	glottal
j =	alveolar
k =	velar
l =	alveolar

m= bilabial

n = alveolar

p = bilabial

q = velar

NB. ‘q’ has the pronunciation like /k/.

r = palato-alveolar

s = alveolar

t = alveolar

v = labio-dental

w = back close mid (semi vowel)

y = back open mid (semi vowel)

z = alveolar

PROBLEMS OF TRANSLITERATION AND THEIR SOLUTIONS:

1. Bangla /ব/ and /ভ/ are bilabial sounds that can't be exactly replaced with English /b/ and /v/ respectively as they are labio-dental. e.g. ভানু- **Bhanu**, but not Vanu etc.
2. Bangla /প/ and /ফ/ are bilabial sounds while English /p/ and /f/ are labio-dental. However, most of the Bangla words are transliterated with /f/ for /ফ/. e.g. ফরিদপুর- **Faridpur**, but as per the rules of translation it could be ‘Pharidpur’. However, it is accepted as it is practiced for a long time and recognized by the people.
3. Bangla has two ‘ব’: ‘বর্গীয়’ (classified) /ব/ and ‘অন্তঃস্থ’ (internal) /ব/. e.g. বাংলা- ‘**Bangla**’ vs. নবাব- ‘**Nawab**’, but the later is least used now.
4. Bangla has two /n/ sounds: /ণ/ and /ন/ but the first one has no pronunciation indeed. e.g. লুণ্ঠন, প্রশ্ন etc.
5. English has no pronunciation for double consonants. e.g. Dallas- ‘ডালাস’. But in Bangla, double consonants are always sounded or pronounced. e.g. Comilla- ‘কুমিল্লা’ etc.
6. Syllable medial /h/ is not pronounced in English, but always pronounced in Bangla. e.g. ঢাকা- ‘**Dhaka**’, but in English it is like ‘Daka’ where the /h/ sound is silent while pronouncing.
7. The Bangla consonants have some short symbols known as ‘faula’ (e.g. ঙ / ব / ম / ল / ঞ / ভ / ঝ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ etc), ‘saar’ (e.g. ঞ / : etc) and ‘kaar’ (e.g. ঙ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ / ঞ etc) used when they are added to other letters. e.g. কল্যাণী, বাংলাদেশ, বাড়ি, শূণ্য etc.
8. Bangla /র/ and English /r/ are quite different. Also, Bangla /ড়/ and /ঢ়/ are more problematic.
9. There are some Bangla words which do not need transliteration such as আয়া, আদালত, অবতার, গুরু, পণ্ডিত, লুপ্তি, চিতা, খিচুড়ি, কুলি, ডাল, ডাঙা, কর্ম, হাট etc.

Here is the transliteration of some frequently used Bangla words with English alphabet. e.g.

Transliteration with English Vowels:

Bangla Sounds	English Sounds	Examples
অ/আ বা 'া' কার	a	অনিক- Anik , আলি- Ali
ই/ঈ বা 'ি/ী' কার	i	সোনালী- Sonali
উ/ঊ বা 'ু/ূ' কার	u	মিরপুর- Mirpur
ঋ বা 'ৃ' কার	ri	গৃপেন- Nripen
এ বা 'ে' কার	e	একুশ- Ekush
ঐ বা 'ৈ' কার	oi	ঐক্য- Oikya
ও বা 'ৌ' কার	o	ওমর- Omar
ঔ বা 'ৌ' কার	ou	মৌচাক- Mouchak

NB. The Bangla /অ/sound is always hidden with consonants (অ = ' '). e.g. ক্ + অ = /ক/

Transliteration with English Consonants:

Bangla Sounds	English Sounds	Examples
ক	k/c/ch/qu	কমলাপুর- Kamlapur , কুমিল্লা- Comilla
খ	kh	খুলনা- Khulna
ক্ষ	ksh	কপোতাক্ষ- Kapataksha , লক্ষ্মীপুর- Lakshnipur
গ	g (syllable initial/medial)	গোপালগঞ্জ- Gopalganj , নগেন- Nogen
গ	gh (syllable final)	মালিবাগ- Malibagh
ঘ	gh	মুঘল- Mughal
ঙ/ং	ng	বাংলাদেশ- Bangladesh
চ	ch	চারু- Charu
ছ	chh	ছাতক- Chhatak
জ	j	মুজিব- Mujib
য	z	জিয়া- Zia
ঝ	jh/zh	ঝিনাইদাহ- Jhenaidah
ঞ/	n	মিঞা- Miyan (also, Miah), আগারগাঁও- Aagargaon
ট/ত/ৎ	t	টাকা- Taka , তুহিন- Tuhin , বিদ্যুৎ- Bidyut
ঠ/থ	th	ঠাকুরগাঁও- Thakurgaon , মিথিলা- Mithila
ড/দ	d	ডালিম- Dalim , দনিয়া- Donia
ড়/ঢ়	rh/d (final position)	পঞ্চগড়- Panchagarh , দ্রাবিড়- Dravid
য়	y/i	মায়া- Maya , মুনিয়া- Munia
ঢ/ধ	dh	মধুসূদন- Madhusudan , ঢাকা- Dhaka
ণ/ন	n	নাজির- Nazir
প	p	পাবনা- Pabna

ফ	f/ph	ফরিদপুর- Faridpur
NB: Traditionally /ফ/ is denoted by /f/ but they are not phonetically the same. e.g. ফুল- Phul (a flower)		
ব	b	বগুড়া- Bogra
ভ	bh	ভোলা- Bhola
ম	m	মাগুরা- Magura
র	r	রমনা- Ramna
ল	l	লালন- Lalon
শ/ষ	sh	কিশোরগঞ্জ- Kishorgonj, কিস্তি: শরৎ- Sarat
স	s	সিলেট- Sylhet
হ	h	হরিপদ- Haripado
‘্য’ ফলা	y	কল্যাণী- Kalyani
‘ব’ ফলা	w	সিদ্ধেশ্বরী- Siddheshwari
‘ল’ ফলা	l	শুক্লা- Shukla
‘ব্র’ ফলা	r	সুব্রত- Subrota
‘ণ/ন’ ফলা	n	স্নিগ্ধা- Snigdha
‘ম’ ফলা	m	পদ্মা- Padma
‘র্’ (রেফ)	r	বর্মান- Barman

The scholars of the Bangla language consider that there remain three shapes/sizes in the Bangla alphabet:

1. **Clear-size signs:** ম + আ = মা, ঘ + ই = ঘি, ত + ও = তো
2. **Half-clear size signs:** শ + উ = শু, ভ + ঞ = ভ্ণ, শ + ন = শ্ণ
3. **Unclear size signs:** ক + য = ক্য়, ঙ + গ = ঙ্গ, ঞ + চ = ঞ্চ etc.

Some Short-size Consonants of Bangla:

Short Forms	Full Forms	Combined Forms	English Sounds
ক/ক্	ক	ক্ক	sk/kk
খ	খ	খ্খ	skh
গ	গ	গ্গ	gdh
ঘ	ঘ	ঘ্ঘ	dgh
ঙ	ঙ	বঙ	bng
চ	চ	শ্চ	shch
ছ	ছ	চ্ছ	chchh
জ	জ	জ্জ	jj/zz
ঝ	ঝ	ঝ্ঝ	jhnjh
ঞ	ঞ	জ্ঞ	gn
ট/ট্	ট	সট/ট্	st/tr
ঠ	ঠ	ঠ্ঠ	shth

ড	ড	ডড	dd
ঢ	ঢ	বঢ	bdh
ত/ত	ত	ত/থ	tt/tth
থ	থ	স্থ	sth
দ/দ	দ	গদ/দ্ব	gd/db
ধ	ধ	দ্ব	ddh
প	প	ল্ল/ম্প	lp/mp
ফ	ফ	ফ	sph
ব	ব	জ/দ্ব	bj/db
ভ	ভ	ভ	dbh
ম/ম	ম	ম/স্ম	mn/sm
ল	ল	ল্ল	pl
ষ	ষ	ক্ষ	ksh
স/স	স	স্স/ক্ষ	ksh/sph
ণ	ণ	ণ্ঠ	nth
ন/ন	ন	ন্দ/শ্ন	nd/shn

Sometimes, the transliteration of some well-fixed names seems to be unnecessary and problematic, as it is already known to the people for a long span of time. To cite a few hotly discussed examples, we can put forward the spellings of ‘Dhaka’ in place of ‘Dacca’, ‘Kolkata’ for ‘Calcutta’ etc. But the change in the spelling of our mother tongue from ‘Bengali’ to ‘Bangla’ is quite a different case that could be appreciated since it has become regular like other languages of the world such as Urdu, Hindi, Mandarin, Greek, Thai, Burmese, Dutch etc.

In fine, these rules have definitely some exceptions. Since there are some Bangla words that are, in certain cases, very necessary to write in English, here the knowledge of transliteration is undoubtedly important. At least, some particular words and terms like বাংলাদেশ, একুশ, সিলেট, বাজার, পহেলা বৈশাখ, রমনা etc are highly required to be transliterated in English for various purposes.

TRANSLATION

Translation has a huge use and impact on our everyday life for its being one of the diverse means of human interaction. It is a multidimensional and mammoth task of linguistic studies. A translation should be read by readers in its new language with the same enthusiasm and understanding as it was in the old. So, a translator is both a reader and writer at the same time. This is mainly because it sets up an association between at least two languages and their cultures. Richards, I. A. (1953:13) remarked, “Translation probably is the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos”. In these days of globalization and widespread immigration, the need of translation is increasing because of the continuous expansion of trade, science, culture, technology and so forth. As a formal definition, Dubois et al (1973:22) says, “Translation is the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences”. Again, Bassnett, S. (1980:21) says, “Translation involves the transfer of ‘meaning’ contained in one set of language signs into another set of language signs through

competent use of the dictionary and grammar; the process involves a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria also”.

Translation from Bangla into English involves the process of comparing at least two language systems. So, it could be approached from the view of contrastive linguistics (Hatim, 1997). However, while English is a fairly common language on a global scale, it also comes with a set of challenges that make it one of the most difficult languages to translate into other languages. It means that it takes a highly skilled translator to effectively translate between Bangla and English. Translation has been used by humans for centuries, beginning after the appearance of written literature. The modern-day translators use sophisticated tools and technologies to accomplish their work, and rely heavily on software applications to simplify and streamline their tasks. The problems of translation are mainly caused by syntax (grammar), lexis/vocabulary (word), stylistics (style), phonology (sound) and usage of the source language which is Bangla and is translated into the target language being English in our current study.

METHODS OF TRANSLATION

The means or ways we use to transfer the ‘meaning’ from the source language into the target language are called methods of translation. Most often, we perform this task by using the two major methods of translation: (a) Literal and (b) Free. However, the commonly employed methods of translation could be classified as: Adaptive Translation, Semantic Translation, Idiomatic Translation, Communicative Translation, Pragmatic Translation, Faithful Translation, Creative Translation, Cognitive Translation, Information Translation, Stylistic Translation, Analytical Translation etc. Here, we will discuss Literal and Free translation methods below:

Literal Translation

Literal translation involves the conveyance of denotative meaning of words, phrases and sentences in a text from one language to another. In literal translation, fluency for target readers is more important than fidelity. Therefore, literal translation works where there is correspondence between the two languages in terms of semantics and structure as can be illustrated by the following Bangla sentence and its English translation. e.g.

Bangla: নাজিন (হন) সর্বদা একজন ভীষণ উপকারী মানুষ।

|| nadzin (S) ʃɔrbɔɖa ɛkdʒɔn bʰiʃɔn upokari manuʃ (C) ||

English: Najin is always a very helpful person.

It is evident that the Bangla linking verb (i.e. ‘হন’/hɔn/ = ‘is’) can be dropped here whereas in English, it is a must. Some scholars opine that literal translation is a bad practice. Notably, literal translation often falters, specially in the case of multi-word units like collocations and idioms as can be illustrated below (the appropriate English expression is parenthesized). e.g.

ডুমুরের ফুল /dumurer pʰul/– ‘a flower of fig’ (i.e. an unseen/rarely sighted object)

This method could be applied in the three different ways such as: Word-for-Word Translation, One-to-One Literal Translation and Literal Translation of Meaning. The ancient Greek translated texts into Latin using the literal Word for Word method. Also, one to one basis of literal substitution was preferred.

Free Translation

Free translation is the act of rendering as closely and correctly as possible the wording, structure and grammar of a source document into the translation. At this point, fluency is not as important as fidelity. This is often made for students and scholars who have knowledge of the language they are reading. This method is considered to be better than the previous one, the literal translation. Free method means to translate without any constraints. A free translation is a translation that reproduces the general meaning of the original text. It may or may not closely follow the form or organization of the original. It is associated with translating the spirit, or the message, not the letter or the form of the text. It does not translate every single word in a text. The translator can translate the way s/he understands. It is convenient both for the translator and the person who reads it. As for free translation, it is another translation method whereby an SL literary text is relayed into the TL by reproducing the matter without the manner, or the content without the form. Therefore, it is usually a paraphrase which is much longer than the original and often wordy and pretentious. e.g.

Bangla: নাজিন আমার খুব পছন্দের। || nadzin amar k^hub p^oṅṅ^honder ||

English: I am very fond of Najin.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

When we come across any difficulties at translating that invites us to stop translating in order to check, recheck, reconsider, rethink or rewrite it or use a dictionary, or a reference of some kind to help us overcome it and make sense of it. Translating problem can be posed essentially by grammars, words, styles, sounds and/or usage. Here, some problems are discussed below in detail. e.g.

A. Syntactic Problems: There are some problems related to the syntax/structure of the two languages (Bangla and English) though they belong to the same language family. e.g.

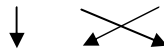
Verb ‘Be’: This type of verbs should be treated as linking verbs for both Bangla and English. The Bangla linking verbs are ‘হয়’/he/, ‘হও’/ho/, ‘হন’/hon/, ‘হই’/hoi/ etc (Present) and ‘হল’/holo/, ‘হলেন’/holen/, ‘হলাম’/holam/ etc endings (Past). The progressive tense markers ‘-ছি’ /tʃhi/, ‘-ছো’ /tʃho/, ‘-ছে’ /tʃhe/, or ‘-ছেন’ /tʃhen/ etc endings (Present) and ‘-ছিলাম’ /tʃhila/, ‘-ছিলো’ /tʃhilo/, ‘-ছিলেন’ /tʃhilen/ etc endings (Past) are followed by main verbs in Bangla. e.g. খেল + ছি = খেলছি (i.e. ‘be + playing’ for first person singular/plural)

Verb ‘Do’: The verb ‘Do’ (করা /kora/) acts both as a main and an auxiliary verb in English but only as a main verb in Bangla. But it causes a lot of problems when used in questions in English. The verb ‘Do’ has ‘Do/Does’ (Present) and ‘Did’ (Past) forms.

Verb ‘Have’: The verb ‘Have’ in Bangla such as ‘আছে’ /atʃhe/, ‘আছো’ /atʃho/ and ‘আছেন’ /atʃhen/ etc showing ownership are main verbs in Bangla in English, they both auxiliary main verbs.

Word Orders: The two languages have different word orders. For Bangla, it is as Subject + Object/Complement + Verb but in English, it is as Subject + Verb + Object/Complement. e.g.

Bangla: Subject+Object/Complement+Verb: নাজিনের সাহস আছে। || nadziner jahof atʃhe ||



English: Subject+Verb+Object/Complement: Najin has courage.

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Articles: Although Bangla has indefinite articles, its use with singular common nouns is not mandatory like English. e.g. কলম /kɔlom/ vs. a pen/pens

Personal Pronouns: In Bangla, there is no male/female distinction in personal pronouns like English. e.g. সে /se/- He vs. She

Numbers and Genders: Bangla has two types of numbers (e.g. singular and plural), but Arabic has three (e.g. singular, dual and plural). Bangla has grammatical genders whereas English does not have. e.g. ‘ছাত্র’/ʃʰat̪ro/ vs. ‘ছাত্রী’/ʃʰat̪ri/ – student vs. student

Questions: In Bangla, there is no need for using any operators (e.g. do/does/did) to form questions like English. For Wh-questions, we may have the equivalents shown in the following brackets: কি /ki/ (What), কে /ke/ (Who), কাকে/কাদেরকে /kake, kaɖerke/ (Whom), কেন /keno/ (Why), কীভাবে /kibʰabe/ (How), কোথায় /kotʰae/ (Where), কখন /kɔkʰon/ (When), কোনটা /konta/ (Which), কার/কাদের /kar, kaɖer/ (Whose) etc.

Negations: The Bangla words ‘না’/na/, ‘নয়’/ne/ etc have more equivalents in English as ‘no’, ‘not’, ‘none’ etc. e.g. আমি এটা করতে পারছি না। || ami eta kor̪te par̪si na || – I cannot do this.

Conditional Sentences: Bangla has two conditional sentences while English has three.

Tenses: Bangla has three major type of tenses (i.e. present, past and future) while English has only two (present and past). In English, the futurity can be shown in a number of ways such as using modals, time adverbs, the present progressive tense etc.

B. Semantic Problems: As words - the basic units of translation - play a very significant role, students or translators encounter more problems here. These problems take place when a word, phrase or term cannot be understood directly and clearly, misunderstood or not found in standard lexicons/dictionaries. Although language is built up of words, they have one meaning in isolation but may be quite different in a context. It could happen in four ways:

- ✓ Words/phrases/terms already having a direct equivalent: ‘বই’ /boi/- book
- ✓ New words/phrases/terms having no ready-made equivalent: ‘উপগ্রহ’ /upogroho/- satellite
- ✓ Foreign words/phrases/terms translated in Bangla with native like pronunciation: ‘রেডিও’ /redio/- radio
- ✓ Foreign words/phrases/terms made to fit Bangla pronunciation, spelling and grammar: ‘গ্যারেজ’ /geredz/- garage

The source language grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest target language equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context. The other main and major lexical problems encountered by translators and students are as follow:

Equivalence: Equivalence is a key concept in the process of translating. It should be noted that the notion of equivalence relates to the ordinary sense of the verb that we translate. That is why we are often asked to translate our feelings into words and our words into actions etc. In general, we can speak of types of equivalence: formal, functional and ideational equivalence. Firstly, ‘formal’ equivalence seeks to capture the ‘form’ of the SL expression.

Here, ‘form’ relates to the image employed in the SL expression as can be illustrated by the underlined Bangla idiomatic expression and its underlined formal English equivalent below:

Bangla: নাজিনের দেশ ছেড়ে বিদেশ যাওয়ার সিদ্ধান্ত ছিল অপরিণামদর্শী – উত্তপ্ত কড়াই থেকে আগুনে ঝাপ।

|| nadziner des̄ ʃʰete bides̄ dʒaear̄ ʃid̄h̄ant̄o ʃʰilo ɔporinamd̄or̄ʃi- ut̄t̄opt̄o k̄ar̄ai t̄ʰeke agune d̄ʒʰap ||

English: Najin’s decision to leave the country for abroad was imprudent– out of the frying pan into the fire.

Secondly, we have ‘functional’ equivalence which seeks to capture the function of the SL expression independently of the image utilized by translating it into a TL expression that performs the same function. e.g.

Najin’s decision to leave the country for abroad was imprudent– from raining to hailing.

Sometimes, ‘functional’ and ‘formal’ equivalence may coincide to furnish what can be called ‘optimal translatability’. The following Bangla proverb and its English translation illustrate it:

Bangla: কর্জ নাই, কষ্ট নাই। || k̄ord̄ʒo nai, k̄oʃto nai ||

English: Out of debt, out of danger.

Finally, there is ‘ideational’ equivalence which aims to convey the communicative sense of the SL expression independently of ‘function’ and ‘form’. The following English translation of the Bangla example involving ‘উত্তপ্ত কড়াই থেকে আগুনে ঝাপ’ reflects this type of equivalence:

Najin’s decision to leave the country for abroad was imprudent– things went from bad to worse.

Synonymy: Words which have the same meaning or similar meaning are called synonyms. Synonymy poses the problems concerning the difference between the levels of closeness or absolute identification of the meanings of synonymous words compared with one another in the same language as well as between the two languages, the SL and the TL, and how effective/ineffective that difference may be on meaning in context.

Monosemy: A word having only one meaning is termed monosemous. Monosemous words and terms cause no serious problems because they are standardized and available in the TL with one single meaning.

Polysemy: A word which has more than one meaning is described as polysemous. Problems of translation arise when a polysemous word is mistaken for a monosemous one, where one meaning is wrongly assigned to it in all texts and contexts. e.g. ফল /p^hɔl/– fruit vs. ফল /p^hɔl/– result

Collocations: Two or more words which usually occur together consistently in different texts and contexts are called a collocation. We can say, it is the habitual co-occurrence of words. e.g.

অন্ধ বিশ্বাস /ɔnd̄h̄o biʃʃ̄aʃ/– blind confidence

Phrasal Verbs: A phrasal verb is the combination of a verb and an adverb or a preposition or both having no direct meaning. It is unusual in Bangla but common in English. e.g. go through, go on with etc.

Parallelism: It refers to two identical structures such as two or more words, phrases or clauses:

Bangla: তিনি এলেন এবং জয় করলেন। || t̄ini elen eb̄ɔŋ d̄ʒe k̄orlen ||

English: He came and succeeded.

Idioms: The types of phrases which have fixed forms and special meanings that cannot be known from the direct meaning of their words are called idioms. e.g.

বকখার্মিক /bɔkq^harmik/– a hypocrite

Proverbs/Sayings: Proverbs are popular fixed-sayings which are part of culture. Thus, they have their own problems of translation for everybody, specially for students of translation. e.g.

Bangla: শেষ ভালো য়ার, সব ভালো তার । ॥ sef b^halo dʒar, ʃɔb b^halo ʒar ॥

English: All's well that ends well.

Metaphors: Metaphors are an indirect, non-literal language. They are used to say something but to mean something else. They are usually quite problematic and difficult. Metaphorical translation involves the translation of SL metaphors into TL metaphors. In creative metaphors, the vehicle (i.e. the form) and the tenor (i.e. the content) become intertwined and subsequently inseparable. However, metaphors are not always creative; they are frequently used as decorative.

Morphology: It deals with the forms of words. Morphology corresponds to that branch of Bangla linguistics known as 'রূপতত্ত্ব' /rup^hto/. English morphological system is more flexible than that of Bangla.

Collocations: To collocate, simply means to go with. Let's have a look at the examples below:

a. একটা সাদা গরু /ɛkta ʃaɖa goru/– a white cow vs. b. একটা নীল গরু /ɛkta ni:l goru/– a blue cow

The example 'b' is said to contain an error of collocation because the colour 'নীল' /ni:l/ i.e. 'blue' does not collocate with the word 'cow'.

Connotations: Connotation has the meaning that a word can be suggested in addition to its denotative meaning, for instance, the word 'lion' can signify in addition to its known meaning as 'a strong and brave person'. Words acquire their connotation from the culture to which they belong.

Paraphrases: It is a brief explanation used when there is no way to make an unclear term or expression (cultural, religious etc) understandable. The English word 'ham' without explanation won't be clear to the Bangla speakers. So, a paraphrase is usually longer than the original one.

Naturalization: Naturalization is a translation strategy where SL usage is converted into normal TL usage. The naturalization process is basically carried out at lexical, collocation and structural levels. By way of illustration, the Bangla lexical item 'দৃষ্টান্তমূলক' /dristantomulok/ translates into English as 'exemplary', the Bangla collocation 'দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করা' /dristi akorʃon kora/ translates into English as 'to draw attention', and the Bangla sentence 'এখন তুমার পড়ছে' /ɛk^hon tu^har por^he/ translates into English as 'It is snowing now'. This being the case, naturalization of usage is inevitable in translation, as literal translation would produce unnatural expressions in the TL in cases where naturalization is called for.

Localization: Localization is a new domain for language experts. Related to digital media, it is a subject where technology is very much involved. Localization has become known as a profession linked to translation. According to the Localization Industry Standards Organization, Pierre Cadieux and Bert Esselink, localization involves (a) translation of textual content into the language and textual conventions of the target locale; and (b) adaptation of non-textual content (from colors, icons and bitmaps, to packaging, form

factors, etc.) as well as input, output and delivery mechanisms to take into account the cultural, technical and regulatory requirements of that locale (Perspectives on localization, Keiran J. Dunne, pp. 4). Furthermore, it cannot be completely understood without being contextualized in reference to globalization, internationalization and translation.

Banglicization: It is a kind of naturalization that takes place either at the sound level where SL spelling and pronunciation are converted into English ones or at the concept level where an SL concept is loan-translated into English. Thus, Banglicization is related to both the loan-word and loan-translation. In loan-words, an English word is borrowed into Bangla and subsequently undergoes Banglicization in terms of spelling and pronunciation. e.g. The English word ‘table’ is ‘টেবিল’ /tebil/ in Bangla. By contrast, the concept rather than the word itself is borrowed in a loan-translation.

C. Stylistic Problems: In recent times, style is considered to be an essential part of meaning. It may cause problems for translators. Among the stylistic problems, there will be the following points to notice:

Fronting: A word, phrase or clause can be put in the beginning of a sentence in a usual way. Such fronting is done on purpose to achieve a stylistic function of some kind: emphasis of the fronted word, or drawing attention to its special importance to the meaning of the sentence. For instance, ‘আঅহত্যা তিনি করলেন’ || *tini at̪mohot̪ta kɔrɔlen* || – Suicide he committed’ instead of ‘তিনি আঅহত্যা করলেন’ || *kɔrɔlen tini at̪mohot̪ta* || – He committed suicide’. However, it creates fewer problems in both the languages.

Clichés: There are some Bangla expressions that have some kind of comparison. e.g ‘মৌমাছির ন্যায় ব্যস্ত’ /*mɔumaf̪ʰir neɛ bæst̪o*/ may be translated into English as ‘as busy as a bee’.

Parallelism: Two words, clauses or sentences may have the same structure and are, therefore, parallel. Such style of parallelism is not always easy to translate, and may have its problems in Bangla as well as in English.

Simple vs. Complex Style: This type of translation problems may occur, specially, with the imitation of complex style.

Short vs. Long Sentences: To combine short sentences into a long sentence or dividing long sentences into short ones may cause confusion.

Redundancy: The employment of extra and unnecessary words expressing something might have some purpose in translation. So, they may cause problems in both the languages.

Irony: It is a very difficult style of any languages. Here, the translator has to be very careful.

Passive vs. Active Style: There are a few differences between the Bangla passive and the English passive and its implications on translation.

Besides the aforesaid issues, punctuation, formality vs. informality, ambiguity, repetition and variation should be handled with care to convey a message correctly and accurately.

D. Phonological Problems: Phonological problems are those which are connected to sounds and their effects on meaning. These characteristics and effects may sometimes be very important for meaning and text as a whole where sounds are more significant than senses. So, careful and repeated reading, specially poetry, dropping unnecessary words and looking for

the widest possible range of synonyms for key words, rhyming words can help the translators. This is very necessary for rhythmical language. Sounds are important in language, specially when they combine together in different pattern to give meaning. To support the impotence of sounds, we can quote Lawson's (1981:97), "... much more meaning is conveyed by rhythm and stress than we recognize". The sound effect could be more important than meaning and it plays an aesthetic function of language. We have the following points to talk about. e.g.

Tone: It is an attitude of a writer toward a subject or an audience. Tone is generally conveyed through the choice of words, or the viewpoint of a writer on a particular subject.

Alliteration: In Bangla, it is an initial rhyme involving the repetition of the same consonant sound at the beginning but in English, it is at the end of words.

Rhyme: It is a type of matching sound found at the end of words in a verse.

Rhythm: It is a phonological feature of language consisting of regular stressed and unstressed syllables.

Assonance: It is the repetition of the same vowel sound in the middle of words. It is not so clear in Bangla as in English.

Moreover, consonance, onomatopoeia, meter, foot, beat, off-beat etc has to be taken care of in order to avoid confusion. So, we can say phonological features and effects have an important role in translation where sounds are more significant than senses. Here, we can recommend some possible solutions for the above mentioned issues:

- ✓ Repeated and careful reading of the SL text to comprehend the theme
- ✓ Finding out flexible English words and synonyms
- ✓ Translating the Bangla text into sense in English
- ✓ Using the changes of grammatical classes of words in English
- ✓ Omitting unnecessary words or phrases
- ✓ Using extra words that are not used in the original but derived from the context or implied somehow in the SL text etc.

E. Usage Problems: Usage subsumes various issues of language such as cultural, political religious, social, geographical, and so forth. Examples that may demonstrate approximation are so many items that may belong to various linguistic levels. These issues are great factors of translation. e.g.

Cultural Terms: Anthropologists suggest that language is culture bound. So, a culture specific expression in the SL is translated into a cultural substitute in the TL. To cite an example, to express arrival greeting in Bangla, we say 'শুভ সন্ধ্যা' /ʃub^ho ʃond^ha/ and its meaning in English is 'good evening'. But at the time of departing, we say 'good night' in English.

Political Terms: In Bangla, the word 'শহীদ' /ʃɔhiɖ/ (i.e. a martyr) is used for a person who died for the cause of the state and it may be used as a political term in particular.

Religious Terms: The lexical item 'যাকাত' /zakat/ is translated in English as 'charity' with a little change in meaning.

Understandability: The understandability or not of an expression such as the Bangla translation of ‘শক্ত মাংস’ /ʃɔktɔ maŋʃo/ in English is ‘tough meat’ but not as ‘hard meat’.

Possibility: The possibility of saying something in the TL or not, for example the Bangla expression ‘মোটা মাহিনা’ /moṭa mahina/ means ‘a fat/handsome salary’.

Logical Acceptability: The logical acceptability of an expression may be significant. e.g. The logical translation of Bangla expression ‘নিজের ভুল স্বীকার করা’ /nidʒer bʰul ʃikar kora/ is ‘to eat one’s words’ but it is not acceptable in Bangla as nobody can eat his/her words.

Frequency: The frequency or non-frequency of an expression or a grammar structure matters a lot. e.g. The translation of Bangla words ‘মনে প্রাণে’ /mone prane/ is ‘heart and soul’ in English.

Familiarity: The degree of familiarity or strangeness of an expression, or a grammatical structure can cause confusion. e.g. The familiar translation of Bangla expression ‘শুভক্ষণ’ /ʃubʰokʰɔn/ is ‘an auspicious moment’ in English rather than ‘a good time’.

SUGGESTIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR TRANSLATION PROBLEMS:

Any problems demand solutions. So, without a solution, there is no great use of pinpointing a translation problem. Indeed, without solutions to translation problems, we stop translating altogether. This is why all problems located in this work are accompanied at the same time by their possible solutions. In order to be acceptable, any suggested solutions are made clear, reasonable, feasible, reliable, applicable, contextual and in the right direction. Otherwise, it will not be acceptable. The solutions to translation problems are, therefore, based on the following criteria:

Type of Text: A text maybe general, technical, religious, political, etc. For example, books with humour require a translator with wit, and where there is an unusual or intricate use of language (in the case of dialects, slang terms, and even cadence etc), a good understanding of and ability to translate the spoken word is essential. Sometimes, the idioms or religious terms need a little explanation for English readers.

Untranslatability: The problems of translating from Bangla to English can be termed as untranslatability which as such can straightly be of three types: cultural, geographical and linguistic. Problems of loss in translation include difficulties encountered by the translator when faced with terms or concepts in the SL that do not exist in TL.

Major Linguistic Context: The whole text, which could be one sentence, one paragraph, a poem or a short story etc.

Minor Linguistic Context: It is to take account of the preceding and following words, phrases, clauses or sentences.

Type of Relationship: The level of the reader as such uneducated, educated, highly educated, specialists, children, etc is of a great consideration for translation.

Area of Speciality: Some books focus on specialist areas, perhaps involving historical facts or scientific theory, for instance. In this case, the translator should have a good working knowledge of the subject matter, or a proven ability to research, disseminate and extrapolate information successfully. In some cases, travelling to the host country may be necessary.

Area of Interest: Areas that could present some difficulty in translation and, indeed, in the editing process, could include extensive use of dialect, humour, poetry or literary conceits, all of which will need to be approached in a systematic and pre-agreed manner.

Gender: A decision may be made that a female translator is better for a text with a particularly feminine subject matter, or a male for one on a particularly masculine topic.

It should be kept in mind that one problem can have more than one solution, as much as one solution can be applied to solve more than one problem.

CONCLUSION

The common dilemma of transliteration and translation is to come to a decision where to transliterate, where to translate and where to perform both of them. Although Bangla and English are from the same family of languages having some features in common, they differ in many respects and aspects. These problems are due to the differences between the characteristics and properties of the languages concerned. So, in order to transliterate and translate from and to these languages has always been a very complicated job which necessitates the bilingual expertise to a great extent. It is also found that the lexical knowledge insufficiency; inadequate knowledge and practice of grammar; poor capability in phonetics and phonology; inadequate cultural background; inappropriate teaching atmosphere and methodology are the most important problems of transliteration and translation. Moreover, the influence of culture and religion is very strong in both the languages. As some phonetic problems show cultural aspect and background of language, a great care and attention should be employed. For transliteration, the basic knowledge in morphology, phonetics and phonology is required. Although lexical problems are greater in number, grammatical, stylistic and phonological problems are not marginal, specially for translation. However, anyone intending to carry out the task of transliteration or translation needs to be an expert in comparative linguistics. It is hoped that teachers, researchers, reader and students would benefit from this research work though the scope for further investigation has not been finished so far. More comparative studies will result in providing the readers or learners with a more clear-cut knowledge about the two languages. So, to resolve the challenges of transliterating and translating Bangla into English or finding any straightforward means is in no way an easy task. Consequently, one of the objectives of this paper is to pave the path for further research in this very field in various ways.

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