Chapter II

Methodological Considerations in Translation Studies

2.1. Methodological Directions in Translation Studies

Like any other discipline, Translation Studies has to be explored under the specified methodological considerations. The designation ‘translation research methodology’ is often used consciously to be distinguished from the designation ‘translation methodology’. A primary concern of translation research methodology is to address the directions in translation research and their reliability and validity in translation discourses. Translation methodology is different from translation research methodology in many ways. Translation methodology talks about the science of translating process whereas translation research methodology represents the general ideas about the translation research models which have extensively been used in Translation Studies. On the other hand, it explores validity and reliability of a particular research in using either descriptive or prescriptive methods. Though they are reciprocal in many contexts, their nature, gravity, and function are also quite opposite in many contexts.

Research is “a systematic process of formulating questions, collecting relevant data relating to such questions, analyzing and interpreting the data, and making the results publicly accessible” (Nunan 2000: 515). This clearly states that, in order to be counted as research, data collection and interpretation of the data should be carried out using appropriate methods to ensure reliability and validity of research. The primary concern of a researcher is to draw a layout with some questions and tentative hypotheses in order to locate the sources of the study. After receiving some of the materials on a specified research topic, a researcher has to engage himself/herself in a close reading of
the specified subject and concentrate on the theoretical literature for searching the models. Research methodology guides a researcher step by step from the beginning to the end and for grooving the research goal perfectly. By virtue of its discipline, every research has its own methodology. Methodology may be one or more, it can be said and proved according to quality and quantity of data. Its important role is to specify the sources and conceptualize the hypotheses in an analytical form. For any research, the hypotheses are equally important to map the research results. Methodological considerations in research introduce the plan of research and then to synchronize the whole data with appropriate models. It confines the size of data, type of data and their sources from where they have been extracted and used for research. Methodology depends upon the subject, quality of the sources and their availability. In this context, translation research methodology is discussed here.

2.2. Translation Research Methodology

Unlike linguistics, literature, and philosophy, Translation Studies is a younger discipline which has evolved from the tradition of linguistics and its allied disciplines. That deal with the scientific study of language, communication, literature, culture, and behavioural sciences of human culture. Today, like any other allied discipline of linguistics, Translation Studies has been enriched in a certain paradoxical position due to its own methodological agenda. Its methodological directions are immaculately discovered by the scholars of linguistics through spontaneous readings from the social and cultural demands of language. Needless to say that the translation methodologies are often based on the principles related to either linguistics or allied disciplines. The main aim of the translation methodologies is to describe the different translation research
approaches and their technical equipments which are propounded by most researchers. The different translation research approaches address the knowledge of the various translation theories and their models from the given linguistic contexts. And the technical equipments of research are likely to intimate the essential element of research modalities namely, sources of study or data, hypotheses, and their interrelationships. It is because they all are equally essential and significant for achieving the research goals and analyzing the data scientifically. In Translation Studies, the researchers have been carefully using the suitable theoretical models, both prescriptive and descriptive, in order to establish their research hypotheses. These two types of research approaches namely prescriptive vs. descriptive and deductive vs. inductive have often been used in the field of linguistics. Similarly, Translation Studies has also been dealt with the following these two type of approaches as branch of applied linguistics. The research hypotheses and research problems of translation have experimented and quantified by using these methodologies of linguistics right from the era of modern linguistics to the present day. Many researchers have tried to build up theoretical models based on the quality of data and their interpretation bypassing the empirical methods of linguistics. Some researchers have followed prescriptive methods in describing their research problems and findings ignoring the descriptive or empirical methods. Therefore, it is appropriate to accept Translation Studies as a multi-dimensional subject which is not only one of the experimental disciplines of linguistics but as a discipline having overlaps with various subjects, like anthropology, education, communication, computer science, cognitive science, comparative literature, literary discourse, philosophy, film studies, folklore and popular culture studies. Apart from these disciplines, “today’s translation activity covers
a wide array of subjects from religion, science, medicine, engineering, agriculture, economics, politics, psychology, sociology, law, journalism to trade and commerce, management, computer applications interior decorations, home science, cooking, yoga, sports even Feng Shui” (Mohanty 2007: 230). Mohanty’s contention is valid to understand the directions of translation activities, many of such activities need to be supported within the frame of translation theories. In other words, the practices, experiences and uses are to be considered altogether and discussed under the frame of translation methodology in order to include them in Translation Studies. Though all these are difficult to be considered in this chapter, it would rather be appropriate to focus only on a particular research genre, i.e. literary and para-literary translations. Their methodological outlines are exposed to their meta-discursive contexts which are essential to be informed. Any researcher of Translation Studies who is interested in the reasons of specifying the particular methodological preambles will certainly write about the proposed research and its methodological considerations. This would be a simple answer for the fact that research methodology gives a significant attention to research validity, potentiality, and reliability. The research potential and interest can be studied through the methodological overviews. Venuti (2000: 1) explains that Translation Studies itself holds “the broad spectrum of theories and research methodologies”. As he has rightly observed the theoretical and methodological growth of Translation Studies shows its potentiality and independence rather than as a sub-discipline of any discipline. Further, he clarifies it “may doom any assessment of its “current state” to partial representation, superficial synthesis, and optimistic canonization” (ibid.).The theories and methodologies of Translation Studies have revealed their strength and margins exploring many independent
features. By using the methodological tools from various disciplines it has “reached a stage where it is time to examine the subject itself. Let the meta-discussion begin” (Holmes 2000: 183). This important expression from Holmes not only refers to the future of Translation Studies but also encompasses the dynamic growth of translation activities based on which the meta-discussion has to begin. His main intentions are that Translation Studies is a global subject which can be considered as a text and its every single component as a meta-text of the source text. Based on the theoretical text, the meta-discussion is possible to begin and establish each of them as the parts of core text. In this retrospect, Translation Studies is a subject of meta-discussion and it specifies the data, sources of data, data collection procedures, quality and quantity of data, research questions, hypotheses, aims and objectives and data analysis in applying its own research tools and techniques. The meta-discussion of Translation Studies tries to explore the science of each genre by choosing different methodological tools and techniques in the given ‘situation and context’. The debate on the meta-areas of Translation Studies takes a central place in the translation discourses and they all try to show their approaches in the light of various disciplines like linguistics, culture studies, etc. Researchers from different disciplines do not hesitate to specify their methodological preliminaries under the spectrum of Translation Studies. They specify the aims, objectives, problems, and research findings, and even the research potentials are clearly understood through the notions of translation methodologies. So these are necessary to be explained to evaluate the research validity, reliability, and potentiality of research in various contexts.
As it has been mentioned the methodologies of translation research have become interdisciplinary and they aim to find out the methodological viability of translation discourses in order to map the methodological directions in Translation Studies. It is also important in many respects like exploring the sources, hypothesis, and conceptualizing the data in proper forms. Apart from these, it represents the central ideas of the hypothesis building and verifying the data either in a prescriptive or in a descriptive way.

So the focus of this discussion is on the methodological considerations of the “translation strategies of the native and non-native Oriya translators” during the colonial period. Before going to study it in detail, it is important to discuss the methodological directions in translation research and their interrelationships.

According to Steiner (1974: 32), “a study of translation is a study of language”. Therefore, it is a common assumption that “all theories of translation are linguistics” (Nida 1976: 66-67). Since translation is a linguistic activity and languages are involved in it, definitely their byproducts are concerned with linguistic applications. As Newmark (1988: 39) suggests, “any translation is an exercise in applied linguistics”. Therefore, one can say a theory of translation is a theory of linguistics. Nida (1976: 47) has also said: “all who have written seriously on translating agree that translators should know both the source and the receptor languages, should be familiar with the subject matter, and should have some facility of expression in the receptor language. Beyond these basic requirements there is little agreement on what constitutes legitimate translating and how the science of linguistics, or even the knowledge of language structures, can and should be applied. For a better understanding of the causes of this lack of agreement and in order to construct a framework for the analysis and evaluation of the various theories of
translation, it is essential to review briefly the relations between the source, the message, and the receptors in the communication process, and also the function of the medium of communication which is employed”. In translation, linguistics acts as a science of ‘knowledge negotiator’ in order to bridge the equivalent effects between two languages, two texts, and two cultures. Therefore, the role of linguistic competence is most significant for translating and evaluating any translation work by using different methodologies.

2.3. Dimensions of Translation Studies Research

Today, Translation Studies has reached a position where the multiple areas can be discovered and established with their own methodological preambles. Translation research methodologies are broadly classified in two ways: (Williams and Chesterman 2002: 58). The conceptual method follows the hermeneutic approaches of research and the empirical method, the positivist approaches of research. “Hermeneutics (the science of interpretation) has often been thought of as the basis research methods of the humanistic disciplines (philosophy, literary theory, aesthetics…), whereas positivist methods based on empirical observation and experiment have characterized the hard science. At its simplest, the distinction is between a focus more on ideas and a focus more on data” (ibid.). The same can be discussed under the framework of descriptive translation research and prescriptive translation research. The descriptive or empirical approach refers to analyze the comparative discourses of translation texts using the linguistic and anthropological interpretations of the translations. The hermeneutic or prescriptive approach refers to be studies in adopting different approaches which have been established in translation discourses. Literary and cultural aspects of translations are
central in this approach. The prescriptive methodologies in translation research analyze the data according to a theoretical model prescribed by somebody whereas the descriptive ones follow the bottom-up approach. Descriptive methodologies are based on empirical statements which are extracted from the pragmatic view points of research elements.

Let us now talk about different research areas of translation which represent the multiple ideas about translation research and their methodological considerations. Williams and Chesterman (2002) have conceptualized the following twelve research areas:

1. Text Analysis and Translation,
2. Translation Quality Assessment,
3. Genre Translation,
4. Multimedia Translation,
5. Translation and Technology,
6. Translation History,
7. Translation Ethics,
8. Terminology and Glossaries,
9. Interpreting,
10. The Translation Process,
11. Translator Training,
12. The Translation Profession.

These areas show how Translation Studies has become a multi-methodological subject and every area has its own theoretical model. Again the above fields have been divided into subdivisions. For this research we have selected “Text Analysis and
Translation” which comprises the subfields like source text analysis, comparison of translations and their source texts, comparison of translations and non-translated texts, and translation with a commentary. Among them, comparison of translations and their source texts model is adopted to find out the proposed research output. They discuss the comparison of translations with their source texts and the important aspects of this comparison are as follows: “The analysis of translated texts involves the textual comparison of a translation with its original. A translation comparison deals with several translations, into the same language or into different languages, of the same original. Such topics cannot deal with every possible aspect of the texts, of course, so you have to choose the aspect(s) you want to focus on. You might take a particular aspect of the source text, such as a particular stylistic or syntactic feature, and examine the corresponding sections in the translations. Or you could start with a kind of translation problem (the translation of passive sentences, or dialect, or allusions, for instance) and see how your translator(s) have solved the problem, what translation strategies they have used. Or you could start with a kind of translation strategy, some kind of change of shift between source and target texts (e.g. the strategy of explanation), and examine its conditions of use. (For references to research on explication, see the entry in Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997). In all these cases, your aim would be to discover patterns of correspondence between the texts. In other words, you would be interested in possible regularities of the translator’s behaviour, and may be also in the general principles that seem to determine how certain things get translated under certain conditions” (ibid.). As they clearly explain the tools and techniques of translation comparison are helpful to bring out the translation strategies of translated texts or translators in order to map the
translation knowledge between two minds. So this study concentrates on the model of translation text comparison.

The main goal of this research is based on a comparison between the Source Language Texts (SLT) or Source Texts (ST) in English and the Target Language Texts (TLT) in Oriya. These have been translated between 1807 and 1936 by Oriya speaking native and many other languages speaking Oriya knowing non-native translators. For this purpose, the following research design has been designed.

2.4. Research Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a primary concept of research which details the research motivations and anticipates its tentative results. What will be the research outputs and how will they synchronize? There need not necessarily be one hypothesis, but many, if necessary. It is often associated with the aims and objectives of the research which help to derive the research endeavour to achieve the goals in a stipulated time. In this study, the hypotheses are restricted to the theme of translation strategies adopted by both the native and non-native Oriya translators during the colonial period. There are certain questions that often arise, such as how far a translation is a form of creative writing and how the translators have authority over the translational equivalence both linguistic as well as cultural. The translators probably had the motivation to build up a national literature, linguistic consciousness, and above all knowledge acquisition for moral and intellectual purposes. Taking into consideration the descriptive nature of Translation Studies the following issues are to be studied for determining the Oriya translations strategies. The issues are

1. to determine the Oriya colonial translators strategies,
2. to determine the main interest of the non-native Oriya translators in translating from English into Oriya,

3. to determine the main interest of the native Oriya translators in translating from English into Oriya,

4. to make observations on the linguistic aspects of Oriya translations,

5. to make observations on the cultural aspects of Oriya translations,

6. to draw conclusions on the translation strategies by both the groups.

2.5. Data and Sources of the Research

Data and sources of the research are very important tools in any research endeavour. The data of the proposed study consists of the Oriya prose texts translated from English during the period of 1807-1936 and they have been classified under two different literary schools, such as Modern Oriya literature and early Satyabadi literature. For describing the historical background of Oriya translation extensive archival data, such as Government records, education dispatches, correspondences between district commissioners and British officials, letters, and gazetteers, old journals and newspapers, periodicals, historical writings, autobiographies, and biographies have been collected from Orissa State Archives, Orissa State Museum Library, Asiatic Society Library, Calcutta, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore, Ramesh Mohan Library, English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, Indira Gandhi Memorial Library, University of Hyderabad by the researcher besides a few from different publication companies and internet sources. The following translated texts have been selected for this study:
2.5.1. Non-native Oriya Translation Texts

1. *swargiya jātrira brutānta* (1838) by Amos Sutton translated from John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress* (1670)

2. T.J Maltby’s *nitikathā* (1873) extracted from his book *A Practical Handbook of the Uriya or Odiya Language* (1873).

2.5.2. Native Oriya Translation Texts

1. *oDisā bijaya* (1876) by Jaganmohan Lal translated from *A Sketch of the History of Orissa (1803-1828)* (1873) by G.Toynbee

2. *kathāLi gadyānsa* (1917) by Chandramohan Maharana from Aesop’s Fables


4. Narmada Kar’s Oriya stories titled *bandi* (1916) (A Prisoner in the Caucaus), *drusTilābha* (1916) (Esarhaddon, King of Assyria), *bibādabhanjana* (1916) (Little Girls Wiser than Men), *pariNāma* (1916) (Work, Death, and Sickness), and *daNDabidhāna* (1917) (Too Dear), originally written by Leo Tolstoy between 1870-1903, have been selected and analysed in order to determine the translation strategies of the native Oriya translators. The present study aims to focus on the macro translation and micro translation strategies of Oriya translators on the basis of the above data and theoretical models of translation strategy. It is also important to discuss translation history and politics of translation of the colonial period. Therefore, Chapter-3, and Chapter-4 will discuss the role of translation in India and then in Orissa through the colonial translation history and its multidimensional activities.