



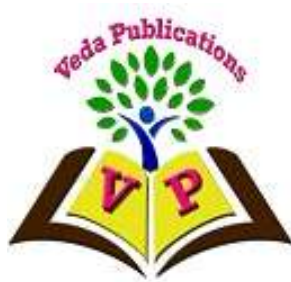
BACK TRANSLATION AS A TESTING TOOL TO CHECK TRANSLATION ACCURACY

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ABSTRACT



This research paper aims to find out the effectiveness of using “Back Translation” to check the accuracy of the translation. The first part of the paper explains the definition of the “Back Translation” and the limitations of “Back Translation”. The second part of the paper establishes the practical demonstration of how “Back Translation” test is conducted and the results of the test is explained. The last part of the research paper concludes by explaining the effectiveness of the “Back Translation” as a testing tool to check the translation accuracy.

Keywords: SLT: Source Language Text, TLT: Target Language Text,
BT: Back Translation.

**INTRODUCTION**

As it is a well established fact that no translation is final and there is a room for improvement with every translated work. There are certain methods to test the accuracy of translation such: proofreading, review by the second author loud reading by the translator him/herself etc. "Back Translation" can also be used as testing tool to determine the accuracy of the Translation. "Back Translation" can also be called as Reverse Translation.

"Back Translation" is used to compare the translated document with the original for accuracy and quality. It is used to help in the evaluation of the compatibility of meaning between the source and target languages. When a "Back Translation" is requested by client, the translation provider will have a different or independent translator who has not seen or worked on the original text do a translation back into the original language, for example, English to Spanish to English. The independent translator must be as literal as possible when creating the "Back Translation" to achieve an accurate description of the translated words' precise meaning. Because of the natural differences in languages, one cannot expect that the "Back Translation" will be 100% the same as the original source. Due to the nuances of language, "Back Translation" can help highlight errors, ambiguities or confusion that may appear. It can also help improve a translation's validity, accuracy and readability." (Racoma 2016)

"Back Translation" is one of the neglected areas of research because of certain drawbacks in it. Peter Newmark opines that "Back Translation" is a useful tool but it is hard to justify "Translating a stretch or lexical unit of TL text back into the SL, for purposes of comparison and correction is a useful test for assessing the semantic range of the SL passage. If the retranslation doesn't correspond with the SL text, a Translator can justify his version: (a) if it shows up a SL lexical gap; (b) the wider context supports a non-corresponding version. However, if the SL lexical unit has a clear one-to-one TL equivalent, a different version is usually hard to justify" (Newmark 2008:202)

Although the field of literary translation neglects "Back Translation" method, Field of

medicine has adapted "Back Translation" method effectively to check the accuracy of the translated work. In fact, it is recommended by the world health organization. The field of medicine requires a lot of accuracy while translating a text because; any wrong interpretation would cost the lives of the patients.

The operative principle of "Back Translation" is to gather evidence from the Back translated work and it is compared with the Source language text to check whether the meaning is conveyed or not. The language cannot be the same. If the source language text has a sentence "I am fine" the "Back Translation" might be "I am doing well", the language is different but the meaning is same. But if the sentence "I am just fine" is back translated as "I am doing well", we see that the meaning is not conveyed. It gives an opportunity to the translator to review and edit his translated work to ensure that the work conveys the intended meaning. To establish the concept further, the following practical experiment is done.

Research Methodology: Five Advertisement statements were taken from the internet and the translated version of the English statements are also found in Telugu. An expert of translation is asked to back translate the Telugu statements to find out how accurately the Telugu Statements are conveyed through the translation. The expert is not provided with the statements of the advertisements in Source Language. Hence, it can be called as Blind "Back Translation".

THE RESULTS

1. **SLT:** Give their dreams a solid foundation

TLT: Valla Swapna Soudhaniki Drudamaina Punadhi Kalpinchandi.

BT: Make a Strong foundation for the achievement of their dream.

Commentary: the word "Drudamaina" is translated as "Strong" by the expert, which is used as "Solid" in the Source Language text, which does not alter the meaning. The words 'dreams' and 'Foundation' are exactly used in both SLT and in the BT. If we consider the overall meaning of the text in the "Back Translation", we can infer that the



translator has conveyed the meaning very well to the readers.

2. **SLT:**An Ideal Plan to secure your child's future

TLT:mee bidda bavishyath nu surakshitham chesenduku oka adarsavanthamaina padakam

BT: An ideal program for your child's safety and future.

Commentary: In this "Back Translation", we can observe that the expert has over translated the sentence however; there is no deviation from the intended meaning. Hence, the meaning is accurately conveyed through the translation to the reader.

3. **SLT:** No making charges on Gold Jewellery, Except for Special items

TLT: Bangaru abarnala tayarikuliledhu pretyeka itemlanu minahayinchi.

BT: Except for a special item, there will be no portering for making the gold ornaments.

Commentary: Here, the "Back Translation" has failed as the context of the statement is not available to the translator. The expert translated 'Kuli' as "portering", whereas it has to be used as 'making charges'. Even though the context is not provided, there is mention of 'gold' in the sentence, which the expert has failed to interpret. Hence, "Back Translation" shall be done carefully interpreting the context.

4. **SLT:**Serving customers with a smile

TLT:Chirunavvutho Viniyogadarula seva.

BT: Help the customer with a gentle smile.

Commentary: 'Seva' can be translated in different ways. Here, in the source language it is used as 'Serve' and in the "Back Translation", it is used as 'help'. The back translator has also improvised smile as gentle smile because, in the TLT, it is given as 'chirunavvutho' but not as 'navvuthu'. It is apt to use chirunavvutho rather than "navvuthu" because

'chirunavvutho' represents readiness ,where as 'navvuthu' represents being happy or joyful. Using gentle does not alter the meaning of the sentence. Our main intention is to find whether the meaning is conveyed accurately or not. Hence the sentence is effectively translated into the target language.

5. **SLT:** Save Life-Donate liberally to TTD Pranadhana trust.

TLT: TTD Pranadhana Trust ku Udaramga viralaluivvandi.

BT: Please send your generous donations to TTD Pranadhana trust for saving the lives people.

Commentary: 'Udaramga' can be translated as generous as well as liberally. We find 'donate'and 'life' both in Source language text and the "Back Translation". Change in the parts of speech didn't alter the meaning of the text. Hence, it can be interpreted that the Translation has been successful.

CONCLUSION

As we can see through the results of the practical experiment, the "Back Translation" has been successful in checking the accuracy of the translation considering the fact that the meaning has been conveyed well to the third person. In the experiment, the "Back Translation" has failed in the third statement. As we can see, that is not entirely the fault of the "Back Translation" test. Had it been done by some other expert, the third statement could have reconciled with the source language text.

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