Chapter 3
Cultural issues in translation

This chapter is intended to examine the translation of cultural elements, which in turn will be helpful in translating proverbs, as proverbs contain a lot of cultural elements. The imagery embodied in the proverbs is based on culture, as proverbs evolve from social relations and cultural environments of the people. Apart from other books and articles, three translations are chosen as case studies in this chapter. The main reason for choosing these is that these are the very few translations available involving German and Telugu to the best of my knowledge.

As claimed by Edward Sapir, a language spoken by a group of people is a guide to their social reality. People express their customs, habits, value systems etc. through their language. They learn about their culture through language, as culture is transmitted through language. Therefore language and culture of a given society become interwoven. Edward Sapir along with Benjamin Lee Whorf recognized the close relationship between language and culture, concluding that it was not possible to understand or appreciate one without knowledge of the other. (Wardhaugh 2002, p. 220)

There are several definitions of culture. Some of them cited by Spencer-Oatey are listed below:

‘Culture . . . is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.’

Tyler 1870:1; cited by Avruch 1998:6

‘Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of the human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditional elements of future action.’

Kroeber & Kluckhohn 1952:18; cited by Adler 1997:14
‘Culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images or encodements and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves.’


‘[Culture] is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.’

Hofstede 1994:5

‘. . . the set of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors shared by a group of people, but different for each individual, communicated from one generation to the next.’

Motsumito 1996:16

‘Culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behavior and his/her interpretations of the “meaning” of other people’s behavior.’

Spencer-Oatey 2008:3

Inter-lingual translation involves two languages – source language (SL) and target language (TL). Translating from one language into another also involves transfer of the cultural elements of a source text into target text. There is bound to be translation loss in dealing with cultural transposition or in transferring of contents from one language into other. For instance the translation of the French expression *Bon appetit*, which is situation based, becomes untranslatable, when the target language does not have an equivalent term for that situation. Of course one translates it as ‘Guten Appetit’ into German, but there is no English phrase which fulfils the same function as the French. In Telugu also there is no equivalent phrase for it.

Caste names from Telugu or from other major Indian languages are untranslatable into English and other European languages. Sometimes they become difficult to translate even between major Indian languages when a particular caste or sub-caste doesn’t exist in the
target language. Ultimately words have meaning in terms of the culture of the people speaking that language.

Hence Albrecht Neubert’s view

that Shakespeare’s Sonnet ‘Shall I compare thee to a summer day?’ cannot be semantically translated into a language where summers are unpleasant is perfectly proper, just as the concept of God the Father cannot be translated into a language where the deity is female.

(Susan Bassnett, Translation Studies, 3rd edition, p. 31)

Eugene Nida gives an example of Guaica, a language of southern Venezuela, where the terms for ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘ugly’ and ‘beautiful’ cover a very different area of meaning. This language does not follow a dichotomous classification of good and bad but a trichotomous one as follows:

1. **Good** includes desirable food, killing enemies, chewing dope in moderation, putting fire to one’s wife to teach her obey, and stealing from anyone not belonging to the same band.
2. **Bad** includes rotten fruit, any object with a blemish, murdering a person of the same band, stealing from a member of the extended family and lying to anyone.
3. **Violating taboo** includes incest, being too close to one’s mother-in-law, a married woman’s eating tapir before the birth of the first child, and a child’s eating rodents.

(Susan Bassnett, Translation Studies, 3rd edition, p. 38)

Also the large number of terms for variations of snow in Finnish, for aspects of camel behavior in Arabic, for light and water in English, for types of bread in French, presents the untranslatable problem for the translator.

In his book titled *Contexts in Translating*, Eugene Nida says that

Knowing the appropriate meaning of a nonlinguistic event also depends on the context of who does what, when, where, and for what reason, just as the meaning of the word *run* depends largely on contexts: *the dogs were running, the salmon are*
running, he is running into debt, his nose is running. In fact, the term run combines with a number of diverse contexts to provide distinct concepts.

He stresses that the words of any language do not constitute a rich mosaic of terms that fit together neatly into various semantic domains or fields. The meanings of words constantly overlap with one another and the boundaries of meaning are fuzzy and poorly defined. The words love, like, adore, worship, be crazy about, be head over heels in love with are some examples. Also among the words sprint, dash, race there is considerable overlapping in referring to the act of rapid running. He states that sprint focusses more on the rapid and effective movement of the legs, and race suggests competition, while dash emphasizes simply fast movement in space, without regard to style. So the real clues to meaning depend on contexts. The type and functions of the context help the translator in understanding the texts. Different interpersonal contexts also result in quite different forms of language like ritual, formal, informal, casual, intimate. Ritual form of language is used in ceremonies and rites, formal language is used in talking to strangers or people one does not know, informal language is used in conversing with business colleagues and intimate form is used within a family.

He cites several examples involving different countries to highlight the variability in cultures. For example, in America exceptionally good friends belonging to opposite sexes, while greeting each other, kiss once and usually near the mouth but without touching the lips. In Spain such people kiss twice, first on the right cheek and then on the left cheek, whereas in Belgium people normally kiss three times – right, left and right, but in France people frequently kiss four times – right, left, right, left.

Another example, at banquets in Chinese universities, the honoured guest is usually seated opposite to the entrance to the dining room, and other persons seat themselves according to their academic rank, but a government official, irrespective of rank, takes precedence over all but the honoured guest.

Regarding business correspondence, he says that American business letters are usually short and right to the point. The literal translation of these letters into Spanish gives the Latin Americans the impression that North Americans are unfriendly. On the other hand the business letters of the Latin Americans are so effusive with praise that the writers seem
insincere. Therefore, the bilingual secretaries need to resolve such problems by deleting the effusive praise from the letters coming from the Latin Americans and adding expressions to the American letters and make their American bosses appear more friendly to businessmen in Latin America.

Further, he opines that the translator should not depend entirely on the dictionaries for meaning. He says that encyclopedias are much more helpful to translators than dictionaries, since by the time a dictionary is compiled and published it is almost always at least twenty-five years out of date, especially in the listing of idioms. He adds that while language can usually be acquired within a period of ten years, it takes a lifetime to understand and become an integral part of a culture.

J.M. Powis Smith in his article titled ‘Some difficulties of a translator’ talks about the difficulties in the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into English. He says that no two languages are exactly equivalent at all points. The area of thought is differently plotted in two different languages. One language may gather up a certain section of thought into a word ‘A’ and another section of thought content into a word ‘B’. The second language may neither have ‘A’ nor ‘B’. Rather it may have ‘A+’ and ‘B+’ or ‘A-’ and ‘B-’ or ‘A-’ + ‘B-’, or some similar combination. He opines that under such conditions, the translator must be content to lose something in the conveyance of the thought from one language to the other, or to use more general and inclusive terms which lack clear-cut precision.

He emphasizes that the Hebrew mind and the English mind are specialized in different spheres of thought. He cites a few examples to prove this. For example, the English language contains a very limited number of names for the ‘lion’ – lion, lioness and cub. But the Hebrew language has a more extensive list of eight words for lion. These words describe lion in terms of his age, functions, sex or some outstanding characteristic. All these vivid descriptions are lost in the wholly colorless English word ‘lion’.

He also cites the example of the vocabulary for ‘darkness’. He says that we are shut up to two words in English – ‘darkness’ and ‘gloom’. On the other hand, Hebrew has eleven words for the same. Therefore, facts like this make quite evident the absurdity of the attempt to represent any particular Hebrew word by one English word on every occasion of its
appearance. He says that the Hebrew word covers a wide area of meaning – at one time it
stresses a certain section of the area, and at another time another section. A new English word
is called for in each case.

As this situation tends to keep a translator humble, the best he can do is bound to be
inadequate. He also warns that there is a danger of the translator becoming discouraged, as
the obstacles in the way of a full and satisfying rendition multiply. At the same time, he also
says that the very difficulty of the task is an element in its attraction and this makes
translation perennially interesting.

Further, in the book titled ‘Thinking German Translation’, the chapter on ‘Cultural issues in
translation’ deals mainly with ‘cultural transposition’. It uses this term to cover the main
types and degrees of departure from literal translation that may be resorted to in transferring
the contents of a ST from one culture into another. The various degrees of cultural
transposition are represented as points along a scale as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source-culture bias</th>
<th>Target-culture bias</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exoticism</td>
<td>Calque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural borrowing</td>
<td>Communicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural transplantation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(p. 33)

Exoticism and cultural transplantation are the extremes of source-culture bias and target-
culture bias respectively.

Exoticism is a strategy for cultural transposition, wherein the translator consistently uses the
grammatical and cultural features imported from the ST with minimal adaptation in the TT.
The exotic source culture and its cultural strangeness are constantly highlighted in the TT.

Cultural transplantation is another extreme of cultural transposition, wherein the translator
deals with more adaptations than translations in the TT. The whole of ST is rewritten in a
target-culture setting. It is sometimes used by literary translators where a ST contains a lot of dialect.

A calque is an expression that consists of TL words and is acceptable as TL syntax, but is unidiomatic in the TL because it is modelled on the structure of an SL expression. The translator introduces a momentary foreignness in the form of calque. Calques are used in the translation of the following German proverbs into English, but they are more or less unidiomatic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German (ST)</th>
<th>English (TT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ein gebranntes Kind scheut das Feuer.</td>
<td>A burnt child shuns the fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgenstund hat Gold im Mund.</td>
<td>Morning hour has gold in the mouth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(p. 34-35)

Transferring an ST expression verbatim into TT is termed as cultural borrowing. It is different from exoticism and calque, as it does not involve adaptation of the SL expression into TL forms. This is another alternative of introducing an element of foreignness in the translation. Translators turn to cultural borrowing when it is impossible to find a suitable indigenous TL expression.

Communicative translation is usually adopted for translation of those clichés, idioms, proverbs, etc. that have readily identifiable communicative equivalents in the TL. The following table gives some examples of communicative translation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German (ST)</th>
<th>English (TT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ein gebranntes Kind scheut das Feuer.</td>
<td>Once bitten, twice shy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgenstund hat Gold im Mund.</td>
<td>The early bird catches the worm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(p. 37)

Virginia F. Allen, in her article titled ‘Understanding the cultural context’, talks about the importance of understanding foreign culture while learning a foreign language. The author opines that semantics cannot help learners of foreign languages very much as far as cultural meanings are concerned. For example, to understand fully the Spanish equivalent for the word ‘home’, the author suggests that one needs to observe home life in a Spanish-speaking country, to find out about the roles and responsibilities and relationships of the members of the family and learn how the home functions in Spanish culture. The author adds that the relevance of culture to language extends far beyond individual words. Further the author quotes the following passage given to foreign students learning English in an “advanced” class

“I was born . . . into the trying position of being the eldest of the family, so that the full force of my mother’s theories about education were brought to bear upon me; and it fell to me to blaze a path to freedom for my juniors, through the forest of her good intentions.”

When these students were asked how this writer apparently felt about being the eldest in her family, the author says that half of the class has completely missed the point. The general sentiment among them was that the author considered herself fortunate indeed. It was obvious that the students were reasoning within the context of their own cultural premises: mothers are good; education is good; good intentions are good.

Finally the author says that understanding the cultural context should be a language learner’s goal.

In another article titled ‘Proverb Image, Proverb Message, and Social Change’, the author, Ilhan Basgoz, says that the issue of proverb image was touched upon initially by Archer Taylor, who noted that the same message of a proverb may be expressed by various proverbs using different images. The author also states that Matti Kuusi while quoting the proverbs: “He who is bitten by a snake fears even a robe” and “Whoever is burned by hot milk blows on cold yogurt”, observed that the “same or similar message may be communicated by different images”. Further the author explains how the Russian folklorist, G. N. Premyakov, emphasized the importance of study of proverb image. Premyakov quotes the following proverbs in his book

1. You cannot wash coal of blackness.
2. You cannot wash a black dog white.
3. A crow will not become white however hard you rub it.
4. A dark thing cannot be made white by washing.
5. No matter how hard you beat an ass, it will not turn into a mule.

and maintains that all these proverbs convey one message: “A bad thing will not become a good thing, no matter what you do with it.” He calls this the underlying logical frame. He uses the name ‘realia’ for the images and objects that the above proverbs include (such as coal, dog, etc.). He states that the logical frame is cross-cultural and general and the realia is local, regional or national. The author questions Premyakov’s interpretation of the meaning of logical frame of the above proverbs. He asks why, for example, the ass in proverb No. 5 should be considered bad and mule good. Why should the blackness of coal be considered bad? Finally the author opines that the core images and objects that the proverbs refer to have an unbreakable bond with the logical frame and message. The core realia is culture specific and message bound. It correlates with cultural change.

The following case study is intended to study the translations of the German fairy tales into Telugu, as they contain a lot of cultural elements. As already stated in the introduction of this chapter, the study will be helpful in translating the cultural elements involved in the Proverbs.

3.1 Case Study1

The book titled ‘jarman jaanapada kathalu’ translated by P. Srinivas Reddy, N.S. Harinath and A. Gandhi, published by Peacock Classics, Hyderabad in 2007 has come up with the translations of 17 stories of Grimm brothers into Telugu. It is not known whether the stories are directly translated from German into Telugu. It is believed that they are indirect translations from English. The stories have been adapted to the target language (Telugu) culture. Especially most of the cultural images – names of the characters, animals, and food items have been adapted to suit the Telugu culture.

Karine Zbidin in her article titled ‘The Bakhtin Circle and Translation’ talks about adaptation to the target readership as follows:

Adaptation to the target readership’s contemporary contextual knowledge and current preoccupations has obvious normative force, making the translated text instantly accessible and marketable in its new context. It also has the advantage of making the
translated author appear immediately relevant, and perhaps more significantly, of opening up new perspectives in the original work, enriching it, contesting it, revitalizing it.

The following table shows the translations of the titles of the original German stories into Telugu. The translations of the German titles into English are also given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>German title</th>
<th>Title in English</th>
<th>Title in Telugu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Der Wolf und der Fuchs</td>
<td>The Wolf and the Fox</td>
<td>atyaashatoo antamaina tooDeelu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sechse kommen durch die ganze Welt</td>
<td>How six men got on in the world</td>
<td>aaruguru monagaALLu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Die Nelke</td>
<td>The Pink</td>
<td>gulaabbi baala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Der alte Großvater und der Enkel</td>
<td>The old man and his grandson</td>
<td>taata manavaDu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Der Wolf und der Mensch</td>
<td>The Wolf and the Man</td>
<td>tooDeelu veeTagaaDuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Der Arme und der Reiche</td>
<td>The Poor Man and the Rich Man</td>
<td>dhanavantuDuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>peedavaaDuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Der Jude im Dorn</td>
<td>The Jew among thorns</td>
<td>donga debba …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>phiDeeludebbabba…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dornröschen</td>
<td>Rosebud/Sleeping beauty</td>
<td>nuureeLLa nidra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>König Drosselbart</td>
<td>King Thrushbeard</td>
<td>maasina gaDDam maaraaju</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Rumpelstilzchen</td>
<td>Rumpelstiltskin</td>
<td>rumpelsTilTskin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Schneewittchen</td>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td>cinnnaari snoovaiT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Marienkind</td>
<td>Mary’s Child</td>
<td>satyamee balam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Märchen von einem, der auszog, das Fürchten zu lernen</td>
<td>The story of the Youth who went forth to learn what fear was</td>
<td>vaNakaDam anTee….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Von dem Fischer und seiner Frau</td>
<td>The Fisherman and his Wife</td>
<td>jaalari bhaarya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Rapunzel</td>
<td>Rapunzel</td>
<td>Sarasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Brüderchen und Schwesternchen</td>
<td>Little Brother and Little Sister</td>
<td>annaa celleLLu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Aschenputtel</td>
<td>Cinderella</td>
<td>cinDrellaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Though most of the titles are translated literally from German / English, the translation of the titles of 1st, 7th and 12th stories are based on the moral of the respective stories.

In the first story the word ‘Pfannkuchen’ (=pan cakes) has been translated as ‘roTTelu’ into Telugu. It may be because ‘roTTelu’ are also cooked on a hot surface like griddle or frying pan, often using oil and butter, but without adding sugar to the flour like in pan cakes. But ‘dosalu’ would have been a more appropriate translation.

The second story is about a wounded soldier, who is later removed from service by the king. He along with five other heroic men teaches a lesson to the king. These six characters are given names according to their abilities in the Telugu translation – ‘shantayya’; ‘tuphaanu’; ‘gurayya’, ‘gaalayya’, ‘parugulayya’ and ‘himalayya’. These characters don’t have names in the original story. The ‘Eichbaum’ (=oak tree) in the source text is replaced by ‘raavi ceTTu’ in the target text. It may be because oak tree is not found in Telugu speaking regions. Further ‘raavi ceTTu’ also has a hard trunk like the oak tree and is very familiar to the Telugu speakers.

In the third story, in the Telugu version the word ‘Schürze’ (=apron) is omitted, which may be because of the climatic conditions. In Telugu households, people, especially women are not accustomed to wearing apron while giving bath to newborns/kids. Also the animal ‘Hirschkuh’ (=hind) is replaced by ‘kid’ (= young one of a goat). This may be because in the original story, the hind is killed and its blood is applied to the apron of the queen while she falls asleep, but in Telugu culture killing of the hind is not common. Also the term ‘baarasaala’ (= ritual for naming the newly born) is added in the translation.

In the fourth story German word ‘Suppe’ (=soup) is translated as ‘annam metukulu’ and the translations of the words ‘Löffel’ (=spoon) and ‘Tischtuch’ (=table cloth) are omitted in the Target text. This may be because in Telugu culture traditionally people are not used to eating with a spoon at the dining table. Domestication and deletion strategies are followed here.

In the Telugu translation of the fifth story, no adaptation of cultural elements is found.

As regards the sixth story, the word ‘Gott’ (=God) in the source text is translated as ‘deeva duuta’ (=angel) in the Telugu story. Also the sentence: “If I am to allow everyone, who
knocks at my door, to spend the night in my house, then I might as well have to beg”, is translated as ‘aDDamaina vaLLakuu aashrayam istuupootee naa illu satramavutundi’ (=if I keep on giving shelter to everyone, then my house becomes a choultry). Here the word ‘satram’ (= a place where travelers get free lodging and boarding for a few days) is a cultural term in Telugu. Further the ‘goat’s milk’ in the source text is translated as ‘buffalo’s milk’ and the details of the food items served (which are not mentioned in the source text) are given as ‘annam’ (=rice) and ‘pappu’ (=dal), and the word ‘Bett’ (= bed) is translated as ‘parupu’ (=mattress), though ‘mancam’ (=cot) is the equivalent of bed.

In the seventh story, the currency term ‘Heller’ of the source text is translated as ‘paavala’ (= ¼ of a Rupee); ‘Jude’ (=Jew) is translated as ‘donga’ (=thief). It may be because the Jew is portrayed as a thief in the original story. The simile-like sentence ‘der greift die Lügen wie Fliegen an der Wand’ (=He is reaching for lies like flies on the wall) is translated as ‘atanu abaddam cebutunnaaDu’ (= he is telling lies). In this case, may be, the translator wants to keep it simple, as the SL expression is something unknown in Telugu and may sound strange and awkward if translated literally. Modulation method is followed here.

In the eighth story, like in the third story the term ‘baarasaala’ (= ritual for naming the newly born) is added and the story is slightly modified at the end in the translation. In the source text, the cook, who is a male, stretches the hand to slap the young boy, before falling asleep and finally slaps him after he wakes up. In the Telugu story the cook is a lady who gives a utensil to the young boy. Here the adaptation method is used. It may be because the translator do not want to present the slapping incident to the children.

As regards the ninth story, the words and phrases in the source text are translated into Telugu as follows:

‘Weinfass’ (=wine barrel) is translated as ‘niiLLatoTTi’ (= water barrel);
‘lang und schwank hat keinen Gang’ (=thin and tall, no good at all) is translated as ‘poTLakaaya’ (=snake gourd)
‘kurz und dick hat kein Geschick’ (=short and thick is never quick) is transalated as ‘poTTi buDam kaaya’ (=dwarf cucumber)
‘der bleiche Tod’ (=as pale as death) is translated as ‘shavam’ (=dead body)
‘der Zinshahn’ (= prize rooster) is translated as ‘tella ciluka’ (=white parrot)
‘grünes Holz, hinterm Ofen getrocknet’ (=green wood, dried behind the stove) is translated as ‘kaalina gaDDiparaka’

‘Drosselbart’ is translated as ‘maasina gaDDam’

Further, instead of pockets the word ‘kongu caaTuna’ is used. This is because, like in all the other stories, the cultural elements are domesticated. The word ‘Weinfass’, if translated literally do not make much sense to Telugu speaking children. Also in the Indian context water barrels are more common than wine barrels. The vegetables like ‘poTlakaaya’ and ‘poTTi buDam kaaya’ give metaphorical meanings and are easily understood by children. Also the words ‘shavam’, ‘tella ciluka’, ‘kaalina gaDDiparaka’, ‘maasina gaDDam’ and ‘kongu caaTuna’ sound more idiomatic to the Telugu speakers.

In the translation of the tenth story, we do not find any deviation from the source text. It is more or less a faithful reproduction of the source text.

In the translation of the eleventh story, the text is slightly adapted to suit the target audience at the end.

In the twelfth story, the woodcutter is named as ‘ramayya’ and the girl as ‘swarna lata’. The German story does not mention the names of the woodcutter and the girl. This is an addition to the story. ‘Jungfrau Maria’ (=Virgin Mary) is translated as ‘swarna deevata’ (=goddess of gold). The names of the food items ‘Zucker Brot’ (=sweetend bread) and ‘Milch’ (=milk) have been translated as ‘rucikaramaina aahaaram’ (=tasty food). The change in the translation of these food items is from specific to general. The hyponyms have been translated using a super-ordinate term. The word ‘Apostel’ (=apostle) is translated as ‘devata’ (=goddess). Here domestication strategy is used. The little angels telling the girl that it is a sin to open the thirteenth door is omitted in the translation. On the whole this story is totally modified to suit the target audience.

In the Telugu translation of the thirteenth story, the father and the two sons are named as ‘somayya’; ‘gopalam’ and ‘bhoomayya’ respectively. The names are not given in the German story. Also the Telugu version is slightly changed. The father gives the younger one 50 thalers (=coins), before he asks him to leave the house, whereas in the Telugu version the elder brother puts 100 rupees in his brothers bag, while he is leaving. The source text word ‘Eimer’ (=bucket) is adapted as ‘binda’ (=a cylindrical vessel used to store drinking water in
the kitchen). The names given to the characters and the translation of ‘thalers’ as ‘rupees’, and ‘Eimer’ as ‘bucket’ show both adaptation and domestication techniques used by the translator. Also by replacing father giving money to the son by the elder brother giving money to the younger brother, may be the translator wants to show that the elder brother’s position is the same as that of the father in the Telugu culture.

In the translation of the fourteenth story, the minute details of the design and things in the palaces of the king and emperor are cut short and the details of the Papal palace are omitted. This may be because Christianity is not the religion of the majority Telugu speakers and also because the target audience is children.

As regards the translation of the fifteenth story, the German word ‘rapunzel’ (= a Eurasian plant of the bellflower family, whose roots can be eaten in salads) is translated as ‘apple’ and the girl’s name ‘Rapunzel’ is changed as ‘sarasa’. The translator has used the domestication strategy here. Telugu people are not familiar with Rapunzel, but they are familiar with apple. Therefore, the translator may have translated Rapunzel as apple. Also the girl’s name has been domesticated as ‘sarasa’.

In the Telugu translation of the sixteenth story the brother is named as ‘saamant’ and sister as ‘caamanti’. The ending of the story is totally modified here. In the original story, after the stepmother, who is a witch, learns that the sister married a king and has become a queen and that she has even delivered a baby boy, becomes jealous and kills the queen and keeps her daughter in the queen’s place. Later, the king comes to know this and punishes the witch and her daughter. The brother, who was in the form of a fawn regains his human form. In the Telugu translation, another character, the King’s sister is added, who falls in love with the queen’s brother and marries him at the end.

In the seventeenth story, the word ‘Brot’ (=bread) is translated as ‘roTTe’; ‘Erbsen’ (=peas) as ‘baTaani ginjalu’ and the translation of ‘Linsen’ (=lentils) is omitted in one context and translated as ‘ginjalu’ in another context.

In the above translations, most of the cultural elements like personal names, animals, food items etc. are adapted to the Telugu readership. They no longer read as German stories, but as Telugu stories. It can be said that these stories are domesticated into Telugu. Some of the
extra details are omitted and added, so as to make them look familiar to the culture of the Telugu readers. The target audience for these stories are children. They may not appreciate much if all the culture-specific elements are retained in the Telugu translations, because of the cultural differences between the two languages. The characters in some of the stories are given names in the Telugu stories, which they lack in the source stories. It may be to make the children understand easily and make the stories more concrete.

3.2 Case Study 2

Another text that is taken for case study is the German story titled ‘Reise im Boot’, which is a translation of the English translation by Percy Eckstein of ‘paDava prayaanam’, a Telugu short story written by Palgummi Padmaraju. He won the Sahitya Academy award in 1985. The story is basically about a boat journey of a couple belonging to the lower middle class society. The man is a drunkard and woman is his unwedded wife. Their names are ‘paddaalu’ and ‘rangi’. It starts with the author’s description about the boat’s movement in the night and also the stock (rice, jaggery, pulses, tamarind and other things) present in the boat. Then it is followed by the conversation between the person steering the boat and the woman, as the couple board it in the night.

In the German story, the word ‘maridi’ (=brother-in-law) is translated as ‘brother’. It may be because of the difference in the cultural connotations associated with the word ‘maridi’ in the source and target culture. Even in the Telugu culture, generally family women and women of some morals address other men as ‘anna’ (=elder brother) only and not as ‘maridi’. But in the present story, going by the context one can understand the woman addressing the person steering the boat as ‘maridi’. The translations of the stock details – ‘bellam’ (=jaggery), ‘dhaanyam’ (=rice) and ‘pappu’ (=pulses) are omitted in the German story. It is translated as tamarind and other goods. Also the word ‘kanduvaa’ (= a piece of cloth, which is folded and worn on onside of the shoulder by men) is translated as ‘Tuch’ (=towel/cloth/scarf). Since this is culture-specific, it does not have an equivalent in German. They have, therefore, substituted it with something that can be considered as its equivalent in German rather than retaining the term and explaining the meaning. The word ‘magajiira’ (=manlike voice) is translated as ‘Baßnote’ (=bass note). The swear word ‘lanja’ (= bitch), which is used several times is translated as ‘Miststück’ (=bitch); ‘Schlampe’ (=slut); ‘die Tochter einer Hündin’ (= daughter of a bitch); ‘Lügnerin’ (=liar); ‘die dreckige Hündin’ (=dirty bitch); and ‘Gaunerin’
Except for the word ‘Lügnerin’ (=liar), the other words are the synonyms of the swear word ‘lanja’ and are used according to the context in the translation. When the in-charge clerk of the boat comes to know about the theft of some of the stock items, he questions ‘Rangi’ and asks her where exactly ‘Paddalu’ got down from the boat. Initially, when she says that he got down at ‘Kaldari’, the clerk abuses her with the swear word ‘lanja’ and tells her that he was awake at that time. In the German translation it is translated as ‘Lügnerin’ (=liar). But it fits the context. The word ‘saviti’ (= the keep of a woman’s husband) is translated as ‘Hure’ (=whore). The word ‘gummam’ (=threshold) is translated as ‘Schwelle’ (=threshold) and the word ‘naanupeeTa’ is translated as ‘Halskette’ (=necklace). The word ‘niddara mokaalu’ (sleepy faces) is translated as ‘schlafende Bettler’ (=sleeping beggars). The idiomatic phrase ‘inkaa diiniki bhoommiida nookalunnaayigaani’ is translated plainly as ‘Es war ein Glück, daß sie gerettet würde’ (=lucky, that she was saved).

Except for the translation of ‘maridi’ (=brother-in-law), which is translated as ‘brother’, the other terms like names of the characters and the geographical names of places like ‘Vijayanagaram’, ‘Visakhapatnam’, ‘Kaldari’ etc. were retained as it is and kept unchanged in the German translation and some of the names of the food items are omitted. It may be because the German readers will find it difficult to understand the names of the food items, which they do not use. Whereas the geographical names of the places can be easily understood from the context even if they are kept unchanged. The word “Appanna konDa’ (hill of the God Appanna) is translated literally as ‘die Hügel von Appanna’ (hill of Appanna). Also the names of the main characters – ‘Paddalu’ and ‘Rangi’ are retained in the German translation. This also makes the target readers understand that the text is a translated one. We can say that, more or less, foreignization strategy was used in the German translation.

3.3 Case Study3

The novel ‘egiree klaasrum’ is a Telugu translation of the German novel ‘Das fliegende Klassenzimmer’ (=the flying classroom), written by Erich Kästner for children in the year 1933. The Telugu translation by B.V. Singaracharya was first printed in 1971 by Southern Languages Book Trust, Madras and by Hyderabad Book Trust in 2008. It is said, that the author has directly translated this novel from German into Telugu.
‘Das fliegende Klassenzimmer’ is actually the name of a drama to be enacted by the ‘Tertianer’ (=students of the fourth-form) of the Johann-Sigismund Gymnasium before the Christmas vacation. Unfortunately the drama gets stalled because of the kidnapping of one of the students of the fourth-form by the students of secondary school. The kidnapped student, who also happens to be their teacher’s son, was carrying their homework books, which are burnt down by the secondary school students. This results in a bitter fight between them.

3.3.1 Some of the normal sentences / phrases in the German text translated as proverb-like sentences in Telugu are as follows.

These translations are context based and they fit well. They do not look like mere translations. This can be considered as gain in translation.

Aber wie das so ist, es kam immer etwas dazwischen. (=what with one thing and another, always something interfered) (pg. 5)

- ayinaa miiku telusugaa, andamaina paniki aDugaDugunaa aaTankaalee (=you know that there will be hurdles for a good work at every step)

Da staunt der Laie, und der Fachmann wundert sich. (= the layman gapes and the expert wonders) (pg. 53)

- muurkhuDu abbaa ani aavalistaaDu viveeki aasharyapaDataaDu (= the fool gapes and the wise man wonders)

die beiden ungleichen Freunde (= both dissimilar friends) (pg. 53)

- poolikalu takkuva vyatyaasaalu ekkuva ayina aa sneehitulu (= friends with less similarities and more dissimilarities)

3.3.2 Translations of some of the German idioms in Telugu taken from the texts under consideration are given below.

Except for the second translation, which is translated literally, all other translations sound idiomatic in Telugu, though some of them are not equivalents of the German idioms.

Halte die Ohren Steif, Johnny! (= keep a stiff upper lip) (pg. 11)
jaanii cakkagaa varthillu! (=May you do well, Johnny)

Haltet die Ohren Steif! (=keep a stiff upper lip) (pg. 12)

mii pai pedavi nibbarangaa uncukoonDi! (=keep a stiff upper lip) – literal translation

Du willst mich wohl auf den Arm nehmen? (=you want to tease me?) (pg. 17)

naaku maskaa koDadaamani cuustunnaavaa? (=Are you trying to flatter me?) – ‘nannu aaTa paTTincaalanukunTunnaavaa?’ (=you want to tease me?) would be a correct translation.

Gott sei Dank (=thank God) (pg. 25)

adi manchidee (=that’s good) – ‘hammayya!’ (=thank God) can be an equivalent to Gott sei Dank (=thank God)

Das geht auf keine Kuhhaut (=that’s going too far) (pg. 30)

lekkaleenannii (=countless)

Da lachen ja die Hühner! (=that gives one a horse laugh) (pg. 40)

enta aasha (=how ambitious?)

Kopf hoch, Kleiner! (=Cheer up! Little fellow) (pg. 47)

pedavulu gaTTigaa bigabaTTi unDu ciTTibaabu (=Keep your lips tightly pressed. Little fellow). -- This is not an equivalent of the German idiom.

Hals und Beinbruch, ihr Lümmels (=Good luck, tikes) (pg. 48)

miidee vijayam, cinnayyalu (=Good luck, little fellows)

Sicher ist sicher (=just to make sure) (pg. 82)

bhadratee bhadram (=safety is safe)

Um Gottes willen! (=For God’s sake) (pg. 88)

ayyabaabooy (=Oh my God) – ‘dayavunci’ (=to be merciful) can be an equivalent for the given idiom.

Also Kopf hoch, Jungens! (=Cheer up, guys!) (pg. 90)

kulaasaagaa unDanDi (=be cheerful)

Der Junge war Feuer und Flamme (=the boy was full of enthusiasm) (pg. 97)
- vaaDu hushaarrugaa siima pacci mirapakaayalaaga unnaaDu (=he was enthusiastic like a green chilli belonging to Rayalaseema region) – This is a gain in translation and it gives the text the local flavour. A geen chilli belonging to Rayalaseema region is known for its hotness.

3.3.3 Some of the German food items have been translated into Telugu as follows.

As can be observed from the table below, the SL names have been replaced by their TL counterparts. It may be because the translator does not want to make it difficult for the Telugu readers to understand the names of the food items, which they do not use.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GERMAN</th>
<th>TELUGU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kuchenränder (=margins of cake)</td>
<td>virigina biskeTlu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebkuchen (=ginger bread cake)</td>
<td>allapuroTTelu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apfelsinen (=oranges)</td>
<td>Naarinja paLLu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following are the translations of some of the German greetings into Telugu. These are literal translations and do not sound idiomatic in Telugu. They sound unnatural and awkward in Telugu. The translator could have gone for their equivalents in Telugu rather than literally rendering them into Telugu. All these expressions come under social language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GERMAN</th>
<th>TELUGU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frohe Weihnachten! (=Merry Christmas!)</td>
<td>kulaasaa krismas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prost Neujahr! (=Happy New Year)</td>
<td>santooshakaramaina nuutana samvatsaram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fröhliche Ostern! (=Happy Easter)</td>
<td>subhakaramaina iisTer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glückliche Reise, Martin! (=Happy Journey, Martin)</td>
<td>prashaantangaa prayaanam ceyyi marTin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this translation also the names of the characters are kept unchanged. Some of the phrases are translated using proverb-like sentences and some of the idioms and greetings are translated literally. The names of the food items are adapted to Telugu readership. As can be observed from all the above SL and TL pairs, the translator has not followed any procedure consistently. While we appreciate some of the changes he has made to the SL text and feel that they are justified, some others we feel would have been better had he translated them differently. In general we find in any translation both domestication and foreignization taking
place in different degrees. This case study, however, helped us understand some of the issues involved in translating a text from German into Telugu.

3.4 Conclusion

The imagery embodied in the proverbs is based on culture, as proverbs evolve from social relations and cultural environments of the people. Edward Sapir opines that a language spoken by a group of people is a guide to their social reality. People express their customs, habits, value systems etc. through their language. They learn about their culture through language, as culture is transmitted through language. Therefore language and culture of a given society become interwoven. Eugene Nida says that knowing the appropriate meaning of a nonlinguistic event also depends on the context of who does what, when, where, and for what reason, just as the meaning of the word *run* depends largely on contexts: *the dogs were running, the salmon are running, he is running into debt, his nose is running.*

Archer Taylor noted that the same message of a proverb may be expressed by various proverbs using different images. Matti Kuusi while quoting the proverbs: “He who is bitten by a snake fears even a robe” and “Whoever is burned by hot milk blows on cold yogurt”, observed that the “same or similar message may be communicated by different images”. The Russian folklorist, G. N. Premyakov, emphasized the importance of study of proverb image. Premyakov quotes the following proverbs in his book: 1. You cannot wash coal of blackness; 2. You cannot wash a black dog white; 3. A crow will not become white however hard you rub it; 4. A dark thing cannot be made white by washing; 5. No matter how hard you beat an ass, it will not turn into a mule and maintains that all these proverbs convey one message: “A bad thing will not become a good thing, no matter what you do with it.” He calls this the underlying logical frame. He uses the name ‘realia’ for the images and objects that the above proverbs include (such as coal, dog, etc.). He states that the logical frame is cross-cultural and general and the realia is local, regional or national. Ilhan Basgoz questions Premyakov’s interpretation of the meaning of logical frame of the above proverbs. He asks why, for example, the ass in proverb No. 5 should be considered bad and mule good. Why should the blackness of coal be considered bad? Finally he opines that the core images and objects that the proverbs refer to have an unbreakable bond with the logical frame and message. The core realia is culture specific and message bound. It correlates with cultural change.
Examining how the cultural elements are translated in the above stories and the novel helps us in understanding the translation of proverbs. In the Telugu translations of the Grimm stories most of the cultural elements like personal names, animals, food items etc. are adapted to suit the Telugu readership, whereas in the German translation of the Telugu story, the names of the characters are kept unchanged and also the other cultural elements are not adapted to the German readership. But in both the cases, translations of some of the cultural elements are omitted. In the third translation, the author followed more or less the foreignization strategy except in case of translation of food items. Hence, it is very tricky to translate the cultural elements or the culture specific words. They are no particular norms to be followed in general. It is for the translator to decide according to his purpose and the tastes of the target readership.

In the case of the second case study where a Telugu text has been translated into German, a German translator has translated the Telugu text from an English translation of it. This translation has more or less gone for a faithful rendering of the text into German. We can only expect that the English translation that served as an intermediary text in this case is also a faithful rendering of its Telugu original. On the contrary, in the other two cases, the Telugu translators are involved and they translated German texts into Telugu. We can say that it is not just the cultural differences between the two languages that had prompted these translators to adapt the text to suit the target culture wherever possible, but also the translation tradition in general that they are a part of, as we know, the Indian translation tradition is dominated by free renderings and adaptations.