

## EXPLORING TRANSLATION DYNAMICS: SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF MOHSIN HAMID'S *THE LAST WHITE MAN*

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### Abstract

*Current research is based on the application of Peter Newmark's translation theory on Mohsin Hamid's novel The Last White Man. The study seeks to examine the linguistic strategies employed in the translated text and the extent to which semantic and communicative translation effectively communicates the literal and intended meanings respectively. The theoretical work used in this research is Peter Newmark's Translation Theory which is followed by qualitative research design. It is used to analyze Anders' first dialogue from the novel. Newmark's translation theory employs various parameters to analyze the dialogues. The finding shows that semantic translation maintains accuracy by giving word-to-word translation, and communicative translation makes text more engaging by providing sense-for-sense translation. The study concludes that Newmark's translation theory is very helpful in translating modern literature to convey real meanings.*

**Key Words:** Newmark's translation theory, semantic translation, communicative translation, The Last White Man, Mohsin Hamid, word-to-word translation, sense-for-sense translation

### Introduction

There is plenty of evidence suggesting that language and culture are intimately dependent on each other. The history of human civilization provides enough evidence of this relationship. In order to build a civilized society and develop writing to change human communication, language and culture were equally necessary aspects of the human experience (Akhtar et al., 2024). Translation refers to the process of transferring ideas and concepts from one language to another. It is a key way to connect cultures and share literature worldwide. In literary translation, it's not just about changing words from one language to another (Muren, 2020). It involves conveying cultural details, metaphors, and socio-political contexts to keep the original work's essence. It has recently arisen as a distinct discipline within the science of linguistics. In addition to the function, it plays role in the process of translating books from one language to another (Muhammad, 2020). Linguists also participate in the discussion in order to analyze and defend the appropriate method of translation.

According to Newmark, the goal of semantic translation is to properly convey the meaning that the original author intended in the original text. The breadth of the language framework and the meaning license of the target language are also important. It looks at the structure of the original text and focuses on what the author meant (Gou, 2023). This method only looks at the source

language and doesn't take into account the target language's background or structure. It can be used in literature, scientific or technological papers, and other types of texts that value both the language and the subject of the source text highly. He does not view semantic translation as an ideal translation model. He sees it as a middle way between assembly and line-by-line translation in real life.

The current study examines the linguistic strategies used to analyze the translated text. It also explores how far semantic and communicative translation conveys the actual meanings of the original text. Semantic translation gives a word-for-word interpretation, and communicative translation provides a sense-for-sense interpretation of the original text.

The proposed text has a lot of cultural and sociopolitical information. The analysis of semantic and communicative translation studies is very helpful for reader and researcher. It allows them to understand the cross-cultural norms and problems during the translation of text from one language to another. This research has great interest in translated fiction. Researcher followed proposed theoretical framework to equalize the source text and target text. This research is very significant because the translation theory is not investigated before in the analytical perspective of Anders' dialogue. His character portrays multiple semantic interpretation and deeper meanings. This analysis helped researchers and readers to understand how communication affects ideologies and different perspectives protagonist's characters of selected text.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the linguistics strategies which are employed in selected translated text?
2. How far the selected translated text has conveyed semantic and communicative aspects of original text?

### **Literature Review**

The exploration of semantic and communicative translation has gained significant scholarly attention. Newmark's translation framework providing a compelling lens for understanding the complexities of human interaction within a narrative (Newmark, 1977). Translation is a notion of transformation of one language by another, of one text by another (Derrida, 1981). Derrida a French philosopher mentions the transformation of one language by another. He highlights that how translation is not merely a mechanical task but a complex act that include interpretation, adaptation and recreation. It conveys the accurate and original message accurately in a different cultural context. According to Newmark, the selection of translation technique should align with the nature of the text being translated. For expressive text, he highlighted the significance of semantic translation to capture the nuances and emotions conveyed in the original text.

Communicative writing improves the clarity and impact of informative and vocative texts (Zu & Dong, 2015). Translators may use this translation framework to translate a variety of texts. In closed texts, Chomsky prefers the possibility of text-wide translation. This connotation-free reading represents just a small part of the text. His perspective on closed text translatability sheds light on the advantages and disadvantages of translating single-meaning texts.

The text depicts a society's struggle through paranoia and upheaval on its way to enlightenment. According to Hamid (2022), the novel was inspired by his own experience of losing his partial whiteness as a highly educated brown man when 9/11 brought about new levels of racial

profiling.

When a metamorphosis takes place, a person or object doesn't just change a little, they go through a mind-blowing, jaw-dropping transformation that turns them into a whole new being or thing. It's like a complete rebirth where everything about them is revamped and altered. It creates something entirely fresh and unrecognizable from its previous form. It's a colossal shift that shakes the very foundation of what was and ushers in a whole new existence that's beyond imagination. The character of Anders in the novel faces the metamorphosis racial identity and racial attitudes among white Americans.

According to Mujtaba (2021), the study focuses on the utilization of adjectives by authors of Urdu and English literature, which examines the fundamental characteristics of translation. The study examines the influence of the tradition of translating Urdu literature into English by investigating and advancing fundamental translation procedures (Iqbal, Sibtain, & Shahzadi, 2020b). The examination of translated Urdu literature into English may enhance the descriptive methods used to assess characterized meanings. It aims to promote cultural exchanges, deepen awareness of Urdu, and honor the transformational potential of translation in creating relationships across language and geographic divides (Newmark, 2009).

### Methodology

Current research follows the qualitative research design as methodology. The original text is the primary source of data for this research. The analysis of data primarily focuses on the semantic and communicative aspects using Newmark's theoretical framework. Analyzing the application of Newmark's Translation theory (Newmark, 1988) on *The Last White Man* (2022) was the main aim of this research. It also focuses on the analysis of every paragraph of Anders' first dialogue. This research provided the in-depth information of semantic and communicative translation methods in both original text and translated text. It also focuses on the textual evidences and references to explore translation dynamics instead of conducting interviews, surveys and questionnaires. Researcher analyze the selected paragraphs and Anders' dialogues based on the analysis of selected participants, which aligns with the translation theory (Akhtar et al., 2024). This approach helps to understand the translation perspectives and their impact on meaning and cultural elements. Interlingual translation method has been used in this English to Urdu translated text. Selection of target text for translation is the important part of data collection. In this scenario, paragraphs of Anders' first dialogues played important role (Muhammad, 2020). This selection is based on the research goals, which focus on the exploring different translation strategies. Chosen dialogues and passage are based on the importance of key parts of translation. It focuses on how cultural references, idiomatic expressions and writing styles are handled white translation text from one language to another to maintain its meaning.

The data analysis techniques involve a deep and systematic comparative analysis of selected text. Newmark's theoretical framework is used as lens to examine translation strategies and different techniques which are used in this research. Main step which has been done is the digitalization of original text. Text is translated from one language to another. It involves identifying whether the translation prioritizes communicative aspects or semantic aspects (Iqbal et al., 2020). Each dialogue or paragraph is analyzed in term to maintain original text's meaning, tone and cultural significance. By narrowing the scope, this research offers new scope of translation

studies. Choice of selection of dialogues and passages is also delimited because these are more relevant to this theoretical framework.

The current research has a limited sample size because of time restriction. Findings may not include all of its translation perspectives. Existing studies have viewed it differently. This research only translates a selected text. The current study uses translation textual analysis based on semantic and communicative translation domains. This study is not discussing other theories, concepts, or methods. The inquiry examines it in context of cultural nuances and translation.

The reliability and validity of this are confirmed through clear methods. Reliability is obtained by systematic method. Newmark's communicative and semantic translation theory is applied to the selected passage of the novel and gives a result, which is completely reliable and valid. The translation of the text, which is done by comparing original and translated texts, adds more validity to the findings. It gives meaningful insights into translation methods.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis is followed by the Semantic and communicative translation of the Ander's dialogues in all chapters of the novel. Dialogues are selected in a way that covers all the perspectives of semantic and communicative translation of the original text. It explores how close the semantic and communicative meaning is to the original language text (Lauscher, 2014).

### Translation Text 1

Anders messaged in sick the first day. On the second he messaged to say he was sicker than he thought, and probably out for the week, upon which his boss called him, and when Anders did not answer, his boss messaged saying you better be dying, but he left Anders alone after that, other than, an hour later, sending a brief coda, you don't work, you don't get paid.

### Semantic Translation

اینڈر نے پہلے دنیما رینے پر پیغام دیا۔ دوسرے نمبر پر اس نے جکیا کہو باسکی سوچ سے زیادہ بیمار اور شاید ایک ہفتے کے لیے باہر سے حسیر اس کے پاس سے بلایا اور جی اینڈر نے کوئی جواب نہ دیا تو اس کے پاس سے اس نے جکیا کہو بہتر ہے کہ تم مر جاؤ، لیکن اس کے بعد اس نے اینڈر کو اکیلا چھوڑ دیا۔ اس کے علاوہ، ایک گھنٹہ بعد، مختصر کوڈا بھیجا کہ ہاں کام نہیں کرتے، آپ کو تنخواہ نہیں ملتی۔

### Communicative Translation

اینڈر نے ٹیکسٹ کیا کہو پہلے دنیما ر تھا۔ دوسرے دن، اس نے دوبارہ جکیا کہو باہر سے سوچ سے زیادہ بیمار اور شاید ایک ہفتے کے لیے بند رہے گا۔ اس کے پاس سے اسے بلایا، اور جی اینڈر نے جواب نہ دیا تو اس کے پاس سے پیغام بھیجا کہو بہتر ہے۔ اس کے بعد، اس کے پاس سے مزید پریشان کن کیا، سوائے ایک گھنٹے کے جی اس نے ایک گھنٹہ پریشان کن کیا کہو اگر آپ کام نہیں کرتے بیٹو آپ کو تنخواہ نہیں ملے گی۔

Table 1: Analysis of Translation Dynamics (Text 1)

Sr. No	Selected Text	Semantic Translation	Communicative Translation
1.	You	تم	تم
2.	dying	مرنا	مرنا
3.	You better be dying	بہتر ہے تم مر جاؤ	تم بہتر مرنا چاہی

This selected phrase provides a literal translation through using semantic approach, but it looks strange in the conversation. On the other hand, communicative translation follows sense-for-sense understanding and efficiently links the writer's meaning in the target language.

### Findings and Discussion

Current research aims to investigate first dialogue uttered by Anders in Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* (Newmark, 1977). This portion explores the language and emotion behind selected dialogues. It covers purpose, dialogue dynamics, context, and discussion in the selected paragraph. It includes the transmitter-addressee focus, the relation to the source text, and appropriateness parameter. It helps the audience to understand the identification of hidden themes and ideas. It plays an important role in making this analysis more insightful. It covers all the perspectives of semantic and communicative translations through dialogue analysis selected paragraph of novel.

#### Sample Text 1

"You better be dying"

**Table 2: Application of Transmitter/ Addressee focus Parameter on Text 1**

Sr No.	Phrase	Parameter	Semantic Translation	Communicative Translation
1.	You better be dying	Transmitter/Addressee focus	<p>بہترے تمہر جاؤ</p> <p>The transmitter is expressing frustration by using the words "dying" to convey a sense of urgency.</p>	<p>مرنا بہتر ہے</p> <p>The communicative goal is to develop an intense atmosphere. The transmitter is a boss, and the addressee is Anders or readers who understand the speaker's intent.</p>

**Purpose:** The main purpose of the communication between Anders and boss, is to highlight Anders' struggle with sickness and also bearing oppression from his boss. This phrase conveys the message of isolation, stress, and oppression faced by the main character of the novel.

**Dialogue Dynamics:** The communication between Anders and his boss portrays the picture of power, imbalance in treatment, and societal expectations of a single individual. The boss is a symbol of authority in society, and Anders is a symbol of helplessness.

**Context:** It is the opening of the novel when Anders feels uncomfortable because of his shocking transformation, and he isolates himself in his house. On the other hand, in the face of his boss, societal expectations and demands suppressed him.

**Discussion and analysis:** Semantically, Word like dying (مرنا) carry a strong emotional weight, such as loneliness, decay, and seriousness. "You better be dying, communicatively, this phrase conveys a close translation of the original structure and the meaning of harshness and rudeness. The communicative translation objective is for easiness and naturalness of understanding.

## Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of the application of semantic translation to Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* investigated Newmark's Translation Dynamics. The study employed the linguistic strategies in the selected text and analyzed the way semantic and communicative translation conveyed the actual meaning of the original text. Researchers have gained profound insights into the emotional and cultural nuances to analyze Anders' dialogues in the novel, which highlight the intensity of transformation in the story.

The dialogue dynamics show the psychological state of the characters. The context of each dialogue enhances our understanding of Anders' inner thoughts. The purpose of all dialogues is clear, i.e., to expose racism in society and the theme of acceptance. This research work has followed the qualitative research design and proved how different translation strategies are used in the translation of dialogues from two perspectives: semantic and communicative translation.

Applying Peter Newmark's translation theory for semantic and communicative translation is very helpful in this regard. Two steps are involved to analyze dialogues as sense-for-sense and word-for-word translation. The first step was breaking the selected phrase into keywords for translation and then applying semantic and communicative translation to the complete phrase. Semantic translation aims to match literal meanings, and communicative translation concentrates on naturally conveying the idea by adapting language to the occasions and emotions. Both translation approaches worked well and showed that literal translation often fails to convey the full meaning and nuances of the original text. Semantic translation deals with to-the-point meaning without considering emotions, and communicative translation saves the speaker's emotions, intentions, and social context.

It completely conveyed the semantic and communicative perspective of the original text. The application of Newmark's Theory and its various parameters, such as transmitter/addressee focus, appropriateness, and relationship to the source text, achieves this goal. These parameters have a significant impact on how readers and researchers understand the literal and intended meanings of the text. Current research proved that source text language serves not only as the medium of communication but also as a tool that conveys deep contextual and emotional meaning. The parameters aim to connect the readers to the character's experience. Ultimately, the novel aspects related to metamorphosis not only share Anders' journey but also reflect Hamid's intent to highlight the broader human experience of fear, adaptation, and the search for meaning in life.

It was observed that semantic translation is more suitable when the primary goal is to convey the word-for-word translation of the source text. However, communicative translation is more suitable when the goal of the researcher is to convey sense-for-sense interpretation, which also maintains the conversational flow of the original text. Ander's dialogue communicatively sounds more natural and alive and fits the context. Semantic translation assisted in preserving the original meanings of the dialogue.

Research also concluded that translation is the interpretative act. During translation, the translator is not only just transferring words from one language to another but also interpreting the emotional, social, and cultural meaning behind the text. In the case of Ander's dialogue, translation lies between literal and intended meaning. Thus, the study proves that the translator's role as both linguist and interpreter leads to effective and faithful translation.

Therefore, the current research has successfully achieved its objectives. The study identified the linguistic strategies that are used in the selected text, and they provide a comprehensive analysis of semantic and communicative translation. By using different parameters, research gained an in-depth examination of the translation process.

### Future Recommendation

It is recommended that the application of Newmark's translation theory to contemporary literary works will serve as a model for possible future research domains connected to translation dynamics. Future research could potentially develop new models of translation studies, applicable to various literary traditions, languages, and genres. The significance of translation in cultural, emotional, and human experiences is brought to light by this study, which opens up new avenues for additional research and underscores the relevance of translation.

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