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## **Tagore’s “Kabuliwala” in English: Comparative study of culturally and subjectively determined variables in two translations**

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### **Abstract**

The translation of Rabindranath Tagore’s short story “Kabuliwala” (literally, a man from Kabul) provides a fascinating instance of intersection of cultural variables. Problems of sonic equivalence, intratextual translation in the original, the way blood relations are expressed in Bengali and what they connote, glaring mistranslation of a character’s name due to inadequate competence in decoding certain features of the Source Language and the overall way in which communication between father and daughter is culturally nuanced are approached by comparing William Radice’s (1991) and Madhuchchanda Karlekar’s (2000) translations. While being rooted in the Target Language culture can potentially enable greater dexterity of expression to make the translation appear more fluent English to the monolingual reader, the present example also exposes the pitfalls of not being able to read even simple culture-specific elements in the original correctly. The English translator’s disadvantage here happens to be the Bengali translator’s forte; however certain modes of address, the affectionate intonation which marks the bonding typically Indian, deviate somewhat from their connotation, sensibility and atmosphere in the latter’s effort as well. While one fuses paragraph divisions in many parts apart from certain obvious mis-readings, the other errs in the choice of certain crucial words. These are juxtaposed, compared and contrasted to unveil various forms of reading, interpretation and response which can “Only Connect...”

**Keywords:** *Tagore, Bengali, short story, translations, comparison*