

TRANSLATION

Theory and Application

Editor

Dr. M. VALARMATHI

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Dr. N. MURUGAIYAN

&

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உலகத் தமிழாராய்ச்சி நிறுவனம்
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAMIL STUDIES
சென்னை - 600 113

Translation

Theory and Application

**(Proceedings of the Seminar - cum - Workshop
On Translation
from 7-12-99 to 11-12-99)**

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Title of the Book	:	Translation - Theory and Application
Editor	:	Dr. M. Valarmathi
Publisher & ©	:	International Institute of Tamil Studies C.P.T. Campus, Chennai - 600 113. & State Institute of English Chennai - 600 006.
Publication No	:	391
Language	:	English
Edition	:	First
Date of Publication	:	2001
Paper Used	:	16 kg TNPL Super Printing
Size of the Book	:	1/8 Demy
Printing type Used	:	10 point
No. of Pages	:	xviii + 93
No. of Copies	:	1000
Price	:	Rs. 35/-
Printing	:	United Bind Graphics 101-D, Royapettah High Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 600 004.
Subject	:	Proceedings of the Seminar-cum- workshop On Translation

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FOREWORD

Dr. S. Ramar Ilango

Director

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I have great pleasure in bringing out this book "Translation - Theory and Application." It contains the papers written by the eminent scholars, who participated in the Seminar-cum-workshop on Translation, held at the International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai- 600 113, from 7.12.1999 to 11.12.1999. It was conducted jointly by the International Institute of Tamil Studies, and the State Institute of English (Autonomous) TamilNadu, Chennai-6.

There are a few papers dealing with translation and its theory and practice. There are various branches of translation like - Prose, Poetry, Science and Technincal, Journalistic, Commercial and Official Translations - all have their different applications. It is impossible to draw rigid lines of demarcation for these types of translation. In this book the specialised scholars and translators have widely expressed their experience and ideas. I hope this book would be of considerable help to scholars in the field.

I express my sincere thanks to Dr. K. Chellappan, Director, State Institute of English, Chennai - 6, who has planned and organised this valuable seminar - cum - workshop.

I congratulate Dr. M. Valarmathi on her effort to bring out this book.

Our sincere thanks are always due to the Hon'ble Minister for Tamil Official Language, Culture-Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Dr. M. Tamilkudimagan, the Chairman of our Institute who has always extended his help and encouragment to us. Mr. S. Ramakrishnan I.A.S., the Secretary to the Department of Tamil Development-Culture also helps the Institute to grow from strength to strength. The Institute is immensely indebted to them.

I also express my thanks to the United Bind Graphics Press for the neat printing of this work.

DIRECTOR

PREFACE

Translation is an ever-growing art. The word 'Translation' is derived from the Greek word 'translatōs'*. The past participle of the Latin verb 'Transferre' which means 'to carry over', 'to go across', 'to transfer', 'to transport', 'to convey', 'to translate', to turn something written or spoken from one language into another; to change into another language retaining the sense or rendering of something into another language from the original.

As Jean Carrigue says, "Translation is essential to humanism. It connects not only the past with the present, it is an ancient way too of making clear the kinship between men of different cultures, countries and ages. It is an exchange of recognitions." The translator's role has become one of the most important ones in the modern world. The translator's work is a more difficult one than the original writer's, because, the translator is bound by what is given to him. The translators have to serve two masters at the same time. The translator has to be a writer and at the same time he is also an indirect creator.

The translation experts discuss, what is a good translation, what is the primary responsibility of a translator, etc., Mr. Premendra Mitra says in his article "Responsibilities of Translators" (Problems of Translation p.24),

"The real trouble starts with the definition of a good translation. What should be the criterion of a good translation?

Strict faithfulness to the original?

The maximum of readability in the languages to which the original is transferred?

Any one of the aforesaid two to the unavoidable exclusion of the other?

Or both of them together as far as possible in a happy harmony?

* The Greek expression does not translate easily into English.

(ME<< Translat (us) transferred (ptp of transferre equiv. to trans - Trans+latus, carried, borne ptp of ferre to Bear - The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, The Unabridged Edition, New York, 1967, p.1505.

Most translators would naturally, I think, incline to the last view. But the definition of a good translation still remains far from clear and the happy harmony is a matter of personal judgement mostly."

So every translator has some individuality as well as particular ideas on translation. These essays deal with the various aspects of translation using illustrations wherever necessary.

The State Institute of English, Chennai in collaboration with the International Institute of Tamil Studies organized a Five-Day Faculty Improvement Programme from 7.12.99 to 11.12.99 at Chennai, for the benefit of teachers of English/Tamil who handle translation theory and practice at P.G. (English/Tamil) level. A good number of eminent scholars participated as resource persons, in the seminar - cum - workshop on translation. Among the twenty of them, nine have presented their articles to this collection. I thank them all for their contributions. I hope that this book would be of some help to the students as well as teachers of translation theory and practice.

I express my heartfelt thanks to Dr. Ramar Ilango, Director, The International Institute of Tamil Studies, Chennai, for having given me the opportunity of acting as co-ordinator for the seminar - cum - workshop and to publish these papers presented by the resource persons of the seminar-cum-workshop. My sincere thanks go to Dr. K. Chellappan and Dr. N. Murugaiyan and Dr. Syed Abdur Raheem for conducting the seminar successfully. I thank Mr. Gopinath for doing the type-setting of this book neatly and in time.

Dr. M. Valarmathi



Seminar - Cum - Workshop on Translation Theory and Application

A Seminar - cum - Workshop on 'Translation - Theory and Application' held at the IITS, was conducted jointly by the International Institute of Tamil Studies and the State Institute of English. In the Inaugural function eminent scholars like Dr. K. Sivathambi, Dr. N. Muthukumaran and Dr. C.N. Srinath participated.

The salient feature of the workshop is the participation of both Tamil and English professors from different colleges of the state.

In the Inaugural session the speakers stressed the need for inter-lingual and intra-lingual activities in translation. Being a science and an art at one and the same time, Translation ensures creativity and growth enriching the common literary legacy.

Dr. C.N. Srinath in his lecture, focusses on the specific problems faced by the Translators. Translation can be looked upon as a discovery. It is a laudable attempt to break the barriers among languages. Translation involves a process of transformation also. It gets into the 'inner being' of the text. In short it is a sort of creative challenge.

However, a translator confronts difficulty in translating abstract concepts, proverbs, metaphors and the like.

Dr. S.A. Raheem contends that a Translator recreates the text in the target languages transcending linguistic and cultural boundaries.

The translator has to act as a mediator and an interpreter to help weak learners understand the subject. He helps as an activator in the class-room situation. Hence, Translation should be pursued not as a method but as a technique to make it yield better results.

Dr. N. Murugaiyan deals with the theory of Translation both as a process and as a product, referring to his translation of modern English poems into Tamil. He also brings out the similarity between translation theory and education theory.

Dr. K.Chellappan calls the act of translation a primary activity which is as creative as the original. A Translator inevitably faces conflict and complexity. Within certain constraints, he has to discover his freedom while being faithful to the original text. Hence, any Translation should be treated not as a completion but as a continuation of the journey of the text.

Dr. A.A. Manavalan speaking on Translation Equivalences treats Translators as cultural ambassadors who tread on two cultures. As a creator and contributor, a Translator should prove that a translation is not a photo - copy of its original.

Dr. N. Ramani dealing with translation of religious texts along with images and metaphors observes that it becomes increasingly difficult for a translator when his experience becomes more complex and the piece of composition becomes more composite.

Dr. V.R. Narayanasamy expresses the view that a translation should not merely be a mechanical reproduction. A Lexicon or a Dictionary should have to be treated as an arbiter of meaning. He illustrated this concept with plenty of suitable examples.

Speaking on translation of Sangam poetry, Dr. S. Dakshinamoorthy brings out instances of distorted translations of words, phrases and ideas even by eminent scholars. He suggests that a collaborative approach can avoid such dangers. While adhering to the theory of fidelity, a historian should translate the contents of history without focussing his idea of history.

Dr. Ganesan underlines the fact that Translation is implicit in every act of communication. It is an act of domesticating the author. A successful translation remains a close approximation to the text in original.

Dr. Prema Nandakumar expresses her view that man is bilingual by nature. A Translator finds it difficult to bring the original rhythm into translation. She stresses the inevitability of the English language in the field of translation.

Dr. M.L. Thangappa contends that a reasonably good translation should not look like a translated version. A translator should have to undergo a chemical change in the process.

Dr. R. Balachandran deals with the mechanic of translation. In the process of getting losses and gains a translator receives blows from everywhere. Though there are author-centred and reader-centred translations, translations should have to be oriented more towards the reader than towards the author. A translator should try to retain the beauty of the original even in attempting a thematic translation.

Dr. Rathi Jaffar deals with the cultural components of Translation. Translators undertake the task of constructing cultures. A translator invests something of his own in his translations being a mediator between cultures. She stresses the need for devouring other cultures to internalise the text.

Dr. C.T. Indira, dealing with Hermeneutic Translation, underlines the need for a translator to be an interpreter also. She demonstrates the theory through a post-modernist short story entitled 'நட்பு' written by Muthusamy.

Dr. T.B. Siddhalingaiya deals with many religious and philosophical terms whose full import of the meaning, even the educated at times fail to understand properly. He puts across the idea that even a literary genre can be a religious text.

Dr. Seethalakshmi narrates the problems confronted by her while translating texts from Bengali to Tamil and English and vice-versa. Each genre demands a unique strategy from the translator. She suggests that a project through which a basic methodology may be arrived at to help Indian translators can be undertaken..

Mr. G. Balasubramanian, talking at length on Technical translation, says that the translation shall not pave the way to litigation in administration. Hence, the correct presumptions/meanings may sometimes be supplied in brackets.

Dr. D. Gnanasambandam dwelling on Machine Translation, focusses the fact that machine resorts to non-linear translation whereas man indulges in linear translation. Machine lessens the burden of the translator.

Dr. V. Shanmuga Sundaram (Member, State Planning Commission) delivered the valedictory address and Dr. Prabhakaran (Former Prof. Dept. of English, University of Madras) presided over the function.



Presidential Address

- Prof. S. Muthukumaran

It is appropriate that a programme on "Translation : Principles and Methods" is organised by the I.I.T.S. for the benefit of teachers, as there are very few persons in our country who are good at translation. Recognising the need for giving training to our students for development of translation skills, translation has been included as an important subject in the undergraduate syllabus. In order to teach this subject, the teachers are in need of training.

Translation is not a new subject, as far as we in Tamilnadu are concerned. Tolkappiyam written several thousand years ago, points out that there are two broad types of treatises i.e. original work and secondary or derived work; there are four types of secondary or derived treatises i.e. abridged, enlarged, partly abridged, partly enlarged and translated works (Tolkappiyam verses 1593-1597)

- 1.* "The works written without deviating from the traditional procedure are of two kinds which are styled 'muthal' and 'vali'

(மரபு நிலை திரியா மாட்சிய ஆகி
உரைபடு நூல்தாம் இருவகை இயல
முதலும் வழியும் என நுதலிய நெறியின்.) (தொல்.1593)

- 2.* "The 'muthal' is that which is written by one who is pre-eminent in having the knowledge free from the influence of worldly activities."

(வினையின் நீங்கி விளங்கிய அறிவின்
முனைவன் கண்டது முதல் நூலாகும்.) (தொல். 1594)

- 3.* "The 'vali' is said to be one which is adapted from the original work."

(வழி எனப்படுவது அதன் வழித்தாகும்.) (தொல். 1595)

4.* "It falls into four kinds."

(வழியின் நெறியே நால்வகைத்தாகும்.)

(தொல். 1596)

5.* "They are abridged, expanded, abridged as well as expanded and translated in accordance with the traditions of Tamil."

(தொகுத்தல், விரித்தல், தொகைவிரி, மொழிபெயர்த்து

அதர்ப்பட யாத்தலோடு அனை மரபினவே.)

(தொல். 1597)

From this, it is clear that our forefathers have developed the art of translation several thousand years ago.

Special Attributes of Languages

It is fashionable in our country to speak ill of our Tamil language and high of English language. Therefore, whenever one finds difficulty in translating an English text into Tamil, he chooses to attribute the difficulty to the deficiency of Tamil. But if only the same person tries to translate a Tamil text into English, he will understand how difficult it is.

In every language there are words which have several meanings and also several words which have the same meaning. Therefore, it is often difficult to find a suitable word in the second language which will have all the meanings of the word in the first language. As a matter of fact, it is quite often difficult to find another word in the same language with exactly the same meaning. That is why, the dictionaries often explain the meaning of a word by providing a sentence where the word is used. In other words, it is only possible to feel the meaning of a word and it may not be possible to explain fully the meaning of the words in any language. The following examples are given to illustrate how the meaning of the words get distorted in translation.

The word 'Police' in English is translated into Tamil as *Kaaval* (காவல்) '*Kaaval*' which means protecting (good) people from harm. On the other hand, policing would mean supervising to make sure that one is not doing any mischief. In Tamil, the word is so coined as to mean that people are basically good and the official of the '*Kaaval*' department is expected to protect them from harm by unlawful elements. Another example is the word housewife. If one looks up the English -Tamil dictionary published by an Indian publisher, he will find that it means (வீட்டோடு இருக்கும் மனைவி) 'a wife who remains at home and not taking up any job.' But if the Webster's English Dictionary is referred, it will be seen that the word means

'a woman in charge of a household especially a wife who does all or most of the cleaning and cooking in her own household and who holds no other job.' We are unable to think of a lady who is not a wife but who will take care of the household. Therefore, we take it that a housewife is a wife who remains at home and does not take up any job and dictionaries published in India give the meaning accordingly. We may also note that midwife is not a wife. Therefore it is not astonishing that in English the word housewife does not necessarily refer to a wife.

The reasons for the way the words indicated in the foregoing are coined in Tamil and English are not far to seek. It is the cultural difference that is responsible for the differences in the methods of coining of words.

Every language develops according to the culture of the people who speak that language. That is why each language has its own pattern of usage of its words.

Example

'I have a brother' must not be translated as "யான் ஓர் உடன்பிறந்தானை வைத்திருக்கிறேன்." It has to be translated as "எனக்கு ஓர் உடன்பிறந்தான் உண்டு."

"Take Practice" should not be translated as "பயிற்சி எடுக்க வேண்டும்". It should be written as "பயிற்சி செய்ய வேண்டும்".

"He came first in the examination" is to be translated as "அவன் தேர்வில் முதலாவதாகத் தேறினான்" and not as "அவன் தேர்வில் முதலாவதாக வந்தான்."

In every language there are usages that are opposite to the ordinary meaning. For instance in English the phrase "look out" may mean 'do not look out' under certain circumstances. When one is travelling in a window seat in a bus, another person sitting in front may choose to spit while the bus is in motion and a third person sitting by the side may warn the first person to be careful by saying "look out". He actually means "Be careful; do not peep!"

As each language develops on the basis of the culture of the people who speak the language it has a style and a usage. These may differ from language to language. In order to be able to translate, one must be familiar with the styles and usages of both languages. Then only, the translated material will have native style. If the translated material is not in a natural style then the translation may not be true and may not convey the message found in the original.

Established Usages

In general in every country what is accepted as established usage is what is practised by the learned. i.e. it is accepted that the learned person will speak a reigned or an exact language. Both Tolkappiyam (verse 1592) and Nannul (verse - sol 388) point out that the manner in which the words are used by the learned is treated as the established usage. But unfortunately in our country it is not the practice of the learned persons to speak chaste language. It is the practice of the learned men to mix words of other languages in the conversation. Even though they throw a number of words of another language in their ordinary conversations in order to show off that they know the other language also, a deeper look will bring out many bitter truths.

A truly wise person will be able to express new thoughts. Such persons will rise above others by their high thinking and wise words. But those that reached high positions or pushed into leadership positions by unscrupulous or dubious means will not be able to distinguish themselves. Therefore they try to appear different from others by juggling of words. They will use the words of other languages as technical terms. They will throw a number of unintelligible words to impress others. Only by such means, they can hope to impress others. Thus, many persons in high positions mix a lot of words of another language only because they do not have anything worthwhile to observe. As such, we are now in need of persons with proven merit to occupy the chief positions. Therefore, it is our duty to improve our knowledge and to acquire skills so that we equip ourselves to occupy leadership positions when the opportunity arises. We should respect and praise persons with knowledge and skills. We should acquire the required knowledge and skills and encourage those around us to acquire knowledge and skills.

In order to acquire the capacity to think up new and lofty thoughts, we have to improve our language skills. Learning a second language will be useful to acquire additional knowledge that may be available only in that language. But in the process of learning a second language, if one is unable to retain in use certain number of words in the first language, the benefit of learning a second language may be lost. For example, if one learns 1000 words in a second language and at the same time fails to retain the corresponding 1000 words in the first language, there may not be any use. It may even be harmful, as the vocabulary of the individual in the first language has decreased and his vocabulary in the second language is not substantial. It is also known that one who uses his first language correctly will use his second language also correctly.

These days, we often find that there is considerable misunderstanding among individuals. One of the main reasons for this state of affairs is that there is a communication gap. Such gaps arise because in general, people are not interested in speaking correctly and they often break the established rules of usage. It may be appropriate to recollect the relevant part of Tolkappiyam (verses 1590 and 1591)

- 1.* "Changes are not allowed in the idiomatic use of words in compositions which must go in accordance with the usage"

(மரபு நிலை திரிதல் செய்யுட்கு இல்லை

மரபு வழிப்பட்ட சொல்லினானே.)

(தொல்.1590)

- 2.* "If the usage is affected by changes, all the words will lose their meanings and become useless."

(மரபு நிலை திரியின் பிறிது பிறிதாகும்)

(தொல்.1591)

that tells us that it is not acceptable to break the established language rules in any composition since, such practices will lead to confusion in understanding what is stated.

Only if the established usages are respected, it will be possible to truly convey our thoughts to others and all the ideas stated in the original can be conveyed in the translated work. Therefore, the translator must learn the styles and usages in both languages and follow them. Every translator must continuously upgrade his language skills and knowledge.

Concluding remarks

In today's context, there is a necessity to foster the art of translation. The art of translation is not new to our country. In order to master the art of translation, one must not only learn the two languages but also learn and appreciate the usages and style of both the languages. Only if one understands the cultures of the peoples speaking the two languages, can he translate correctly and appropriately from one language to another as every language develops along with the culture of the people speaking the language. Every translator must study and appreciate the literatures of the two languages and also constantly enhance his vocabulary. Further while we teach our children words in a second language, we should teach the second language in such a manner that they do not lose their command over the corresponding words in the first language or mother tongue. In order to truly enjoy the benefits of learning two languages, one must learn to speak and write exactly both languages. Teachers of languages must bear this in mind while teaching the languages and the art of translation.

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TRANSLATION AS GROWTH

Dr. K. Chellappan

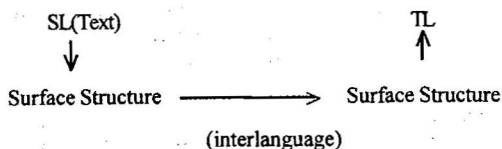
In every act of perception there is translation, and in every good translation there is creation and therefore, growth. Translation theorists from Catford make a distinction between translation and transference.

In translation, there is substitution of TL meaning for SL meanings; not transference of SL meanings into the TL. In transference there is an implantation of SL meanings into the TL text. These two processes must be clearly differentiated in any theory of translation.

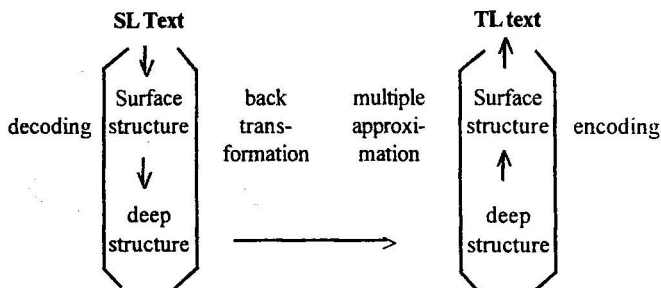
(Quoted in Bassnett-Mc Guire Susan, p. 6)

In a good translation which is more than transference, the transfer becomes not only systematic but creative because what is released is a deeper third language synthesising the two systems to the extent possible. Here there is no reclothing of old meanings into new forms, but recreating a new form-meaning synthesis. Now two processes can become simultaneous and even decoding can take place in the target language itself or at a preverbal stage. The deep semantics of SL should be closer to the deep semantics of TL, and then the transfer process is simplified. Let us illustrate the different kinds of transfer diagrammatically:

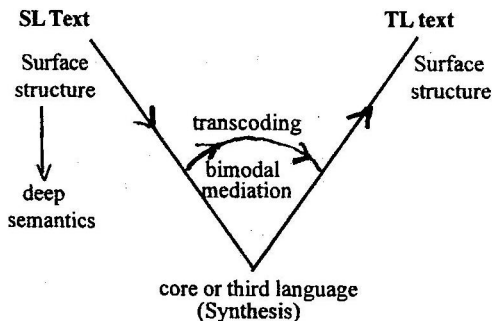
1. Simple formal transfer



2. Nida's Version :



3. Translation as Growth



This is slightly different from Nida's version also. He wants the transfer to take place at the near kernel level, and his answer to the question why not proceed to the level of the deep structures is this. "There is of course, one very important practical reason for not doing so - namely, the fact that these can only be dealt with on paper, and the translator needs a level of structural correspondence which he can readily manipulate in his mind. Back transforming to the deep level would generally be unnecessarily complex and time-consuming and would not provide any significant advantage which is not already to be found in the near-kernel structures, (p.81). But if it is a creative process, as we suppose it is, several stages of back transformation can be skipped, the reformulation can also be sudden resulting in a new synthesis. "Two spheres of languages move closer together through the medium of the translator to fuse at the moment of the contact into a new form, a new Gestalt" (p.120). This means that a good translation recreates the original by fusing the two systems through

transcoding. Back transformation need not always result in paraphrase-it should also combine and condense these components into new wholes obeying the rules of the new system. This is what possibly Steiner meant when he said, "At its best the peculiar synthesis of conflict and complicity between a poem and its translation into another poem creates the impression of a "third language" or a medium of communicative energy which somehow reconciles both languages in a tongue deeper, more comprehensive than either" (p.29). Robert Shuttuck, too, says that the translator is "thinking in a limbo region belonging to neither language" (p.62).

Whenever someone who is not good at the target language translates, what is created is interlanguage. But when someone like G.U. Pope translates, sometimes, as in the translation of **Tiruvachakam** he achieves a deeper synthesis; but when he translates **Tirukkural** the language is elaborate and too poetic, and this cannot be called growth.

Even the first chapter which is a hymn to God poses a number of problems, the second couplet suffers from overtranslation and elaboration. The first part of the original simply asks "Of what avail is learning," which becomes in Pope: "No fruit have men of all their studied lore." And again the second part, which relates it to not worshipping the holy feet of Pure Knower (which) may mean a Hindu or Jain or any other God) is translated as:

"Save they who Purely Wise one's feet adore."

In the original the rhyme and the assonance contribute to a deeper resonance whereas such a togetherness, which is essential to capture the original dhvani, is missing in the translation. The next couplet speaks of the long life on earth of those who reach the feet of one who dwells in flowers. And this has been translated by Pope as:

"His feet who o'er the flower hath past flown..... Who gain
In bliss long time shall dwell above the earthly plain."

One cannot understand "above the earthly plain" for "on earth" or the addition of "bliss" and his elaborate translation of 'Malarmisai Ēkinān'. The other versions of this phrase would show the problem:

"Flower embedded feet" (P. Sundaram)

"Who occupies swiftly the flower of mind." (Drew and Lazarus)

His translation of **kamathuppāl** which deals with the theme of love more dramatically, is better. Even the translation of culturally loaded couplet 1217 is able to recover the dhvani partially.

"My severance from the lord of the cool shore
My very armlets told me long before."

But even in this section where there is too much elaboration and use of fancy (instead of the imaginative intensity in the original) the translation suffers. For example, couplet 1279 says:

"She looks at her bracelets, her tender shoulder,
and her face; this
was what she did there (significantly)"

And Pope's elaborate version reads:

"She would join him, but shrinks from proposing it
Her companion read the sign, and says;
She views her tender arms, she views the armlet from
the sleeve
She views her feet; all this the lady did."

The first part is actually a preparatory note giving the context, which is built into the original text, and which can be easily shared by a culturally sensitive reader. And even while translating the text, the translator makes certain things explicit, but their suggestiveness is the soul of the poem.

How do we account for Pope's relatively greater success with *Tiruvācagam* than *Tirukkural*. What he achieves in translating the former is a poetic synthesis, a condensation and an enhancement, a new gestalt; whereas in the other it is more 'poetical' and elaborate, closer to the original in surface form and semantics, but the *dhvani* and the recovery of the inner form and the deep semantics are missing. In *Tiruvācagam* he achieves a genetic equivalence and a cultural appropriation by invading the text-and not simply possessing the text as Steiner would suggest, but by allowing himself to be possessed by it.

Now let us look at the translations of a few couplets from *Tirukkural* and see how good translations achieve the genetic or core level equivalence. According to Lazarus, the translation of *Tirukkural* is,

1. "None can swim the great sea of births, but
those who are united to the feet of God."

Whereas Popley translates it as:

2. "Who then can swim this wide earthly sea?
Not they who cling not to our Lord's feet."

The second translation is formally closer to the original because of its verse structure and also because it recovers the double negative of the original construction in the second part (Not they who cling not). But the first line, particularly the phrase "Piravipperunkadal" comes off better in the first version: "the great sea of births." "This wide earthly sea" is a paraphrase whereas what is indicated is the ocean of Samaskara. But in both the versions the tone is rather negative. Whereas the original begins positively "Some can cross the sea of birth.... but not...." The subject is only implied, by defining them (some) in relation to those who cannot achieve it. Possibly we can find an equivalence to it in English by using the passive form:

"The Ocean of birth can be traversed...
but not by those who have not reached the feet of God."

This version is closer to the original because of its affirmative beginning and also because it gives prominence to the Ocean of birth like the original. But more important than that is the fact that the relationship between "Neenduvār" and "Serāthār" is maintained. Now it means "those who have reached the feet of God can cross the ocean of birth". "Swimming" is a literal equivalent but "crossings" is conceptually closer and "reached" is better than "united to" or "cling". May be "surrendered" is even better.

A good translator thus uses the target language itself in such a way that it comes closer to the inner language - (and it is the deeper bond between the various constituents that is recovered) - and the inner form of the original; and the archetypal form and the core language are realised in the new text in its own way.

Such translation according to Benjamin is 'after life.' According to Benjamin,

Translations that are more than transmissions of subject matter come into being when in the course of its survival a work has reached the age of its fame. The life of the original attains in them to it ever renewed latest and most abundant flowering. (Quoted in Lawrence Venuti, p.7)

He also posits a pure language which links the language of the translator and the original and adds that a good translator tries to release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his recreation of the work (p.80). According to Derrida also, translation is a moment in the growth of the original and he emphasises that meaning is always plural and differential and hence the differential plurality in every text precludes any simple correspondence of meaning (quoted in Lawrence Venuti, p.7).

According to John Johnston, pure language presupposes a relationship that is not historical but a priori and that does not necessarily involve likeness. It rests, in the words of Benjamin, "in the intention underlying each language as a whole an intention, however which no single language can attain by itself but which is released only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other" (p.44). Johnston adds that this totality of intentions in which the differing modes of signification of individual languages supplement one another and are reconciled is Benjamin's pure language.

Benjamin associates this with Mallarme's idea of the supreme language, which according to Mallarme exists in the default implied by the fact of plurality of languages and is associated with the timeless and even silent depositary of the ultimate truth which all thought strives for. Johnston concludes that if there is a language of truth or a true language then it is Benjamin's pure language (Johnston, 44).

The translator, according to Benjamin, "instead of reproducing the meaning of the original must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification thus making both the original and the translation recognisable as fragments of a greater language" (Johnston p.44). This is different from the third language postulated by some theoreticians. For the sake of pure language the translator breaks through decayed barriers and extends the boundaries of his own language. A good translator, like Luther will not convert a foreign language into his own, but on the contrary, should let his own language be powerfully penetrated by the foreign one so that it be expanded, deepened and even transformed!

But is this pure language, a language of pure meaning and univocity unobscured by the mediation of any particular language, and in that sense is the early Benjamin with theological interests evoking an Adamite or Preilahserian language accepting the central role of a *Ursprache* within the Kabbalistic interpretation of the Biblical myth of creation? Whereas Benjamin says, 'For the great task of integrating many languages into one true language is at work in translation. George Steiner pointing to this Kabbalistic or mystical strain within translation theory says that this later feeds into the more rationalistic quest in modern linguistics for universal language' (quoted in John Johnston, p.46).

But as Johnston adds, the notion of pure language also serves,

"-as a means by which to grasp the differential and diacritical nature of all language and the fact that the essential nature

of language only becomes visible in and through differences in particular languages (p.46)".

And translation according to Benjamin lives on and in this difference and therefore accentuates and reveals it. Blanchot commenting on Benjamin's view says:

A work has the maturity and dignity to be translated only if it harbours the difference, somehow made renderable, either because in its origin the work points towards another language or because it gathers in a privileged way the possibilities, present in every language of being different from itself and strange to itself.

(Quoted in John Johnston, p.46)

This means that the original holds within itself these marks of another language either as seeds of change at a given state and or some more radical otherness only visible in the other literary works which translation is called to bring to fruition. Translation as a continuation of this originary strangeness becomes an instrument of the becoming of language/literature.

We would claim that the translatability of **Tirukkural** is a sign of its vitality and capacity for growth and renewal. This is not only because the language of **Tirukkural** is the universal language of essentials, both in terms of life and logic, but also because it contains several subtexts.

Every good text like **Tirukkural** contains its other or unconscious, and every translation activates this other; but both the text and the translations are only different journeys in meaning making; in fact translation is only a continuation and never a completion of the quest for meaning which was only begun by the original.

In conclusion, classics like **Tirukkural** have revealed new resonances in good translation, because the language of **Tirukkural** contains such possibilities of growth. There are cultural connotations which cannot be completely recovered in translation, but a good translation is a liberation and an extension, though there will also be some reduction. In the words of Derrida,

The translation will be a moment in the growth of the original which will complete itself in enlarging itself. And if the original calls for a complement, it is because at the origin it was not there without fault, full, complete, total, identical to itself.

(Des tours de Babel, p.188)

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TRANSLATING MODERN ENGLISH POETRY INTO TAMIL

Dr. N. Murugaiyan

Introduction

This paper in its first part points to the importance of translation to language teachers in general particularly to the ELT professional and also brings out the similarity between educational theory and translation theory. The second part illustrates some of the problems and principles connected with 'interlingual communication' while translating modern English poems into Tamil. The cultural differences as well as the diversity of linguistic codes connected with the source language (English) and the target language (Tamil) will be referred to in the discussion. The problems in finding lexical, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic equivalence between the source language and target language texts will be examined with reference to certain modern English poems translated by the present writer into Tamil.

Part I

Teachers of Languages and Translation

Teachers of English and teachers of Tamil in colleges in Tamil Nadu do not often enter into any academic interaction even though there is ample scope for such interaction. One such possible interaction among themselves would be getting involved in bilingual (Tamil to English and English to Tamil) translation, both literary and non-literary, projects. The fact that they can also actively engage themselves for their mutual benefit and also for the benefit of their students as well as for the benefit of the general public in the society would be to produce different types of bilingual dictionaries. A third type of possible academic interaction would be producing standard textbooks in Tamil. This would involve subject teachers along with the teachers of languages, especially English and Tamil.

Translation and Teachers of English

Teachers of English in colleges in Tamil Nadu apply themselves to professional work such as teaching and testing English language abilities. They keep themselves away from others (i.e. members of other departments or faculties) and as a result they do not become a part of the main stream.

To remain so with no interaction with others is rather strange at a time when attempts are made to produce standard textbooks in Tamil in various subjects or disciplines offered at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in colleges in Tamil Nadu. Involvement in this applied linguistic field known as translation will pave the way for the teachers of English in colleges becoming a part of the main stream so that their contribution to the interdisciplinary academic activities in progress will become significant.

Bilingual Translation and Education

Basil Hatim and Ian Mason identify three types of translating, namely, 'author centred, text-centred and reader centred' (1990:16). Educational theorists speak about four types of education such as 'teacher centred, subject centred, learner centred and learning centred'. The three types of translating behavior referred to above is in interesting contrast with the three stages identified in the history of educational theory and practice. The author centred translation focuses on the views of the author after ascertaining their views by elicitation procedures such as personal interview with them or application of a questionnaire to them. The text centred translation gives no importance to the author's views while the nature of the subject is given utmost consideration. Reader centred translating gives utmost importance to reader-response. To have a perfect symmetry with the four stages of education it would be possible to posit a fourth type of translating known as 'reading centred' translation. Translating is 'process' oriented while it is 'reading centred.'

Part II

The aim of the second part is to describe some of the problems and principles connected with translating modern English poetry into Tamil. Specimen poems from two British poets, namely Stephen Spender and William Wordsworth, the former a twentieth century while the latter a nineteenth century poet, along with Emily Dickinson, a nineteenth century American woman poet, have been translated and used for illustrative purposes in this paper. The translated versions were presented to teachers of English as well as Tamil who teach translation theory and practice at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in colleges in Tamilnadu in a session devoted for the theme of the paper in the 5-day seminar attended by them in December, 1999 and also to experts such as Dr. K. Chellappan, Director State Institute of English, Chennai - 600 006 and the feedback provided by them has been used for modifying the translated versions in Tamil. Both the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) texts are placed side by side for facilitating easy comparison and contrast. The titles of the specimen poems chosen for translation and the names of poets are given below.

1. Stephen Spender : a) Word, b) Photograph
2. William Wordsworth : The Solitary Reaper
3. Emily Dickinson : Because I Could Not Stop For Death

Specific comments on particular poems listed above are mainly based on the experience of translating them into Tamil as well as the feedback provided by the teachers who attended the Faculty Improvement programmes, in which Translation Theory and Practice is a component, organized by the State Institute of English (Autonomous), Tamil Nadu, from time to time during 1999 to 2000. Whatever translation theory and linguistic theory relevant to the 'product', the 'process' and the 'product and process' of translating the poems mentioned above has been presented with authentication at the appropriate places.

The present writer of this paper has made a judicious use of 'five' types of knowledge in his possession, namely SL knowledge, TL knowledge, Text-Type knowledge, Subject knowledge and Contrastive knowledge for translating the poems mentioned above into Tamil. Since translation as an applied linguistic discipline makes full use of analyses available at the level of the phoneme, morpheme, lexis, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, attempts are made in the translated versions of poems to present as many equivalences as possible. However, achieving 'pragmatic equivalence' has gained priority over others as it is essential for realizing 'interlingual communication.'

Word

- 1 (a) The word bites like a fish,
Shall I throw it back free
Arrowing to that sea
Where thoughts lash tail and fin?
Or shall I pull it in
To rhyme upon a dish?

சொல்

சொல் மீன் போல் கடிக்கிறது.
அதையான் அம்பாகத் திரும்ப
சிந்தனைகள் வால் துடுப்பென முதுகுத்துடுப்பென
மோதும் கடலுக்குள் தொடுத்தெறிந்திடவா?
அல்லது உள்ளே ஈர்த்ததை
உன்னுடன் தொடை நயம் காண்கவா?

In the poem that has Word as its title a statement found in the first line is followed by two questions. The first of them is presented in three lines and the second in two lines. There are as many lines in the translation as there

are in the SL text. The simple present tense used in the first line of the SL text stands for both habitual and future actions. In its place the future tense is used in the TL text. The 'dynamic equivalence' (Nida: 1964) of the SL text used in the TL text is the future tense. As there are only two tenses (the present and the past) in English and as there is no future tense as such in English, Spender uses the simple present tense in the first line of the SL text. Since Tamil has three tenses (the present, the past and the future) and since the future tense can serve as the 'functional equivalence' (Nida: 1964) of the present tense used in the SL text, the future tense is preferred over the present tense in TL text.

The rhyming pair, 'fish' and 'dish' plays a vital role in this poem. The first word of the pair 'fish' is found in the first line of the poem while the second word of the pair 'dish' in the last line of the poem. The sounds that are common to both the words of this pair are the back, close, short and unrounded vowel /i/ and the voiceless palatal fricative /ʃ/. The word 'dish' of the last line takes us back to the first line as it shares two of the three sounds of the word 'fish' found in the first line of the poem. To find a suitable rhyming pair for the TL text is a challenging task for the translator. The pair that is chosen for playing a crucial role in the TL text is constituted by /u:n/ (ஊன்) and /mi:n/ (மீன்) and it appears to be a 'dynamic equivalence' to the pair referred to above.

Photograph

- 1 (b) How it reminds me of that day!
Walking alone without you,
Remembering your voice
And looking at your face, to take this photograph:
The river curving behind branches,
Mist expunging the dark water,
Fragments of sun like shattered mirrors
Scattered through ditches, and you leaning over
The map of everywhere we'd been

நிழற் படம்

அந்த நாளை அது எப்படி நினைவூட்டுகிறது!
நீயில்லாமல் நான் தனியே நடந்துகொண்டு,
உனது குரலை நினைவில் இருத்தி உனது முகத்தை கூர்ந்து பார்த்து
இந்த நிழற் படத்தை எடுக்க
பின்னால் வளைந்து செல்கிற அருவி பிரிந்து செல்கிறது;
மாக நீரை மூடுபனி போக்கிக்கொண்டு
துண்டு துண்டாய் தோன்றும் கதிரவன், உடைந்து
போன கண்ணாடித்துண்டுகள் கால்வாயில்
சிதறிக்கிடப்பதைப் போல, நாம்

சென்று திரிந்து இடங்களின் வரைபடங்களிலெல்லாம்
நீ சாய்ந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறாய்.

In the translation of the second poem 1(b) above are there more lines than that are found in the original (9 lines in the SL text while 11 lines in TL text). If the SL text is divided into two parts, the first part will consist of the first four lines and the second part will comprise the next five lines. A similar division made for the TL text reveals the fact that the number of lines in the first part is the same as that of SL text while the second part has two more lines in addition. The reason for more lines in the second part of the TL text is that 'fidelity or word for word' resulting in economy in the use words is hard to achieve in this part. Literal translation aims at providing lexical equivalents to all the words of the SL text in the TL text. According to Vladimir Nabokov (1964 :viii-xi), 'literal rendering' can alone be called translation as it 'can render the essence of the poem.' Newmark (1988:68-69) is in favour of 'literal translation' if 'it secures referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original.' As SL text is in blank verse, there is hardly any 'constraint of rhyme' relating to it. However constraints connected with the syntax or structure of the SL text poses problems to the translator.

2. The Solitary Reaper

Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself,
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain:
O listen! For the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt
Among Arabian sands;
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy and far-off things,

And battles long ago;
Or is it some more humble lay
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss or pain,
That has been and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending;
I saw her sitting at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

தன்னந்தனியாக அறுவடையாள்

அவளைப் பாருங்கள், தானியவயலில் ஒற்றையாக,
அங்கே தன்னந்தனியாயிருக்கும் மலையாழ் மங்கையவள்!
தானாகப் பாடிக்கொண்டும் தானியத்தையறுத்துக் கொண்டுள்ளவள்,
இங்கே சற்று நில்லுங்கள் அல்லது அமைதியாக நடந்து செல்லுங்கள்!
அவள் தானியக்கதிர்களை தனிமையில் வெட்டிக் கட்டுகிறாள்,
சோகம் இழைந்தோடும் கீதம் ஒன்றைப்பாடுகிறாள்:
உற்றுக்கேளுங்கள் இந்தப்பொங்கும் உணர்ச்சிப் பள்ளத்தாக்கு
அவளிசையோசையால் வழிந்து கொண்டிருக்கு.

அரேபியமணலில் அலைந்த களைப்புத்தீர்க்கும்
நிழலிடமொன்றைத் தேடியமரும் பிரயாணிக்குழுக்கள்
விரும்பிக்கேட்கும் இராக்குயிலின் இசைத்தாக்கம்
இளநங்கையின் நாதத்திற்கு எஞ்சிய இசைக்கோடுகள்;
எல்லையற்ற தொலைவுக்கப்பால் இருக்கும் ஹெயிரைட்ஸ் தீவுகள்
இவ்விடக்கடல்களின் அமைதியில் ஏற்படும் உடைப்புகள்,
வசந்தக் கால குயில் பறவையின் குரல்வளத்தினால்
அதனையும் மிஞ்சுவதே வஞ்சியின் பாக்கள் நெஞ்சை அள்ளுவதால்.

அவளிசையின் பொருளை எனக்குணர்த்த ஏன் மறுக்கிறீர் யாரும்?
ஒருவேளை அந்த துன்பகீதங்கள்
பழைய மகிழ்சியற்ற தொலைதூரப் பொருள்களையும்,
புராதனப் போர்களையும் புலியினர்க்குணர்த்தும் சோக அருவிகள்;
அல்லது அது இன்னுமொரு சாதாரணப்பண்ணா?
யாருமறிந்த அன்றாடச் செய்தியைச் சொல்லுமொன்றா
ஏதோ வழக்கமான துயரம், இழப்பு அல்லது வதைப்பு,
எப்போதும் இருந்துவருவன, மறுபடியும் கொள்வனவாயிருப்பு?

மங்கையின் பாட்டுப்பொருள் யாதாமிருப்பினும்,
 அவளிசைக்கு முடிவெனும் எல்லை இல்லை என்பதைக்
 கண்டவள் போல் பாடினாளாவள்;
 அவளைப்பார்த்தேன் நான் பணியிடைப் பாடிக்கொண்டிருப்பதை,
 கையில் உள்ள அறிவானைப் போல் தன்னை வளைத்துக்கொண்டவள்;
 நான் கேட்டேன் அவளிசையை அமைதியாக அசையாமல்;
 மற்றும் நான் ஏறியபோது மலைமேல்,
 என் இதயத்தில் நான் ஏந்திச் சென்ற அந்தக்கீதம்
 அதற்குப்பின்னாலது கேட்கப்படவில்லை ஒருபோதும்.

'The Solitary Reaper' by William Wordsworth is a popular poem that often gets prescribed for tertiary level learners of English as a second language in India. The translation in Tamil comprises four 8-line stanzas as in the original. Hence there is neither 'gain' nor 'loss' as far as the number of lines is concerned. However, many a line in the translation is longer than their counterparts in the SL text.

'Phonemic translation' that requires imitation of source language sounds and 'rhymed translation' that involves constraints of rhyme and metre are two of the seven strategies propounded by Lefevere (1975). The other five strategies, enumerated by Lefevere, suitable for verse translation being 'literal translation, metrical translation, prose translation, blank verse translation and interpretation.' As this poem is noted for its rhyme scheme, an attempt has been made to provide rhythmic equivalence wherever possible. But at the same time it must be remembered that a perfect rhythmic equivalence is nowhere possible as it is hard to achieve in divergent languages.

Rarely does one encounter literal translation in the TL text presented above. Line 3 of the SL text consists of five words whereas there are seven words in the corresponding line of the TL text. Having set 'interlingual communication' as our goal, 'freedom' is preferred over 'fidelity' and a 'natural expression of meaning' is attempted at the expense of 'economy' in the TL text given above.

3. Because I Could Not Stop for Death

Because I could not stop for Death-
 He kindly stopped for me-
 The carriage held but just Ourselves-
 And Immortality.

4

We slowly drove - He knew no haste
 And I had put away

My labour and my leisure too,
For his Civility- 8

We passed the school, where children strove
At recess-in the Ring-
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain-
We passed the Setting Sun- 12

Or rather-He passed Us-
The dews drew quivering and chill-
For only Gossamer, my gown-
My tippet-only Tulle- 16

We paused before a House that seemed
A swelling of the Ground-
The Roof as scarcely visible-
The cornice-in the Ground- 20

Since then-it's centuries-and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses heads
Were toward Eternity- 24

நான் சாவுக்காக தயங்கி நிற்க முடியாததால்

நான் சாவுக்காக தயங்கி நிற்க முடியாததால்--
அவன் அன்புடன் எனக்காக தயங்கி நின்றான்--
அந்த ரதம் எங்களை மட்டுமே கொண்டிருந்தது--
மற்றும், அழியாமையும் அங்கிருந்தது, 4

நாங்கள் மெதுவாகவே சென்றோம்-- அவசரமவனுக்கேதுமிலை
மற்றும் நான் எடுத்துவைத்துவிட்டேன் எட்டி
எனது உழைப்போடோய்வையும் கூட,
அவனின் நவநாகரிகத்துக்காக-- 8

நாங்கள் பள்ளியைக்கடந்தோம், அங்கே குழந்தைகள் வருந்தி முயன்றனர்
இடைவேளையில்-- வளையத்தினுள்ளே நுழைய--
நாங்கள் தலைநிமிர்ந்து பார்க்கும் தானியவயல்களைக் கடந்தோம்--
நாங்கள் அஸ்தமித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிற ஆதவனைக்கடந்தோம்-- 12

அல்லது ஒருவகையில் அவன்தான் எங்களைக்கடந்தான்--
கொட்டுகிற பனி கொணர்ந்தது குளிரையும் நடுக்கத்தையும்--

ஏனெனில் துல்லியபிழையோடும் மெல்லியது என் மேலங்கி--
என்தலையணி மென்மைபில் பஞ்சைமிஞ்சுவதே--

16

பூமியின்வீக்க மெனத்தோன்றும் வீட்டொன்றின்
முன்னே தயங்கி நின்றோம்--
கண்ணுக்குச்சரியாகத் தெரியாதக்கூரை--
சுவர் விளிம்பில் தோன்றும் சுதை வேலைப்பாடு-- பூமிக்குள்

20

அன்று முதல் இன்று வரை பன்னூற்றாண்டுகள்-- இருப்பினும்
குதிரைகளின் சிரங்கள் முடிவில்லாகாலத்தைச்
கட்டிக்காட்டும் பாங்கையான் ஊகித்துணர்ந்த
நாளை விடச்சிறியனவே--

24

Emily Dickinson's poem 'Because I could not Stop for Death' is often prescribed for undergraduate students of English in autonomous and non-autonomous colleges in Tamil Nadu in South India. If there is going to be an anthology comprising one thousand great poems of the world, this poem will find a place in it.

Equivalence is maintained in the number of lines as well as in the number of stanzas between the original (SL text) and the translation (TL text). Alliteration (the use of words that begin with the same sound) and assonance (similar vowel sounds of words that are close together) are realized wherever possible as found in the original. For instance, 'gazing grains' (line 11) becomes 'talai nimirṇu nirkum taaniyam' (தலைநிமிர்ந்து நிற்கும் தானியம்), 'setting sun' is rendered as 'astamittukondirukkira aatavan' (அஸ்தமித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிற ஆதவன்) etc., Though alliteration is achieved, it is realized at the expense of 'economy' in the TL text. Line 19 of the SL text reads as 'The Roof as scarcely visible' and it is translated as 'kannukku cariyaka teriyata kuurai' (கண்ணுக்குச் சரியாகத் தெரியாத கூரை). Repetition of the voiced alveolar flap /r/ makes the TL text more musical than the line quoted above (i.e. line 19). Such instances in which the translation acquiring additional poetic features may be termed as either 'growth' or creative extension. However, the creative use of capital letters found in the SL text cannot be applied to the TL text as there is no distinction made between capital and small letters in the Tamil orthographic system. Nevertheless it is possible to bring about a similar effect by increasing the font numbers of particular letters or by italicizing or by making the relevant letters bold or underlined utilising the provisions available in the word processor. As the measures suggested above would not guarantee a natural expression of content, they are used nowhere in the TL text

Conclusion

This paper in accordance with the plan outlined in the introduction has dealt with ideas such as translation and the language teachers, the role played by translation in bringing the ELT professional to the academic main stream, translation and educational theory etc., in its Part I and in part II problems and principles relating to translating modern English poems into Tamil have been considered with reference to the present writer's translated versions of four modern English poems.



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TRANSLATION AND LANGUAGE TEACHING

Dr. Syed Abdur Raheem

In the language classroom translation has a very precise, narrowly defined pedagogic role. When the teacher exhausts all methods of explaining the meaning of a quite unfamiliar word or concept, it is only translation of the second or foreign language into mother tongue which comes to his/her rescue. Though translation is one of the oldest approaches to language teaching, its uniqueness lies in the fact that it could never be completely abandoned as an utterly useless approach, not even by proponents of Audiolingualism who tried in vain to ostracize it.

According to Pit Corder Translation theory is a branch of contrastive linguistics and is concerned with correspondences and non-correspondences between languages. It involves overcoming the contrasts between the language systems. There is a wide variance between the syntactical structures of English and Tamil. While the usual sentence pattern in English is SVO/SVC/SVCA, in Tamil the dominant sentence pattern is SOV. This variation may pose problems and may be overcome by bringing out the differences in sentence patterns. Language conventions of English and Tamil also vary greatly. The convention of starting a story with "Once upon a time, long, long, ago" in English becomes "In a town" in Tamil. Whereas English has capitalization Tamil does not have it.

All natural languages have the capacity to convey all of the range of experiences of the cultural communities of which they are a part and the resources of particular languages expand to cater for new experience through borrowings, metaphors and neologisms. But grammatical and lexical structures and categories force language users to convey certain items of meaning and it is here that the real translation problems lie. The categories of deixis that is those categories which relate in utterance to the personal, spatial and temporal characteristics of the speech situation vary greatly. For example, in the personal pronoun system of the English language third person pronouns 'he', 'she', 'it', 'they' express gender and number. The first person pronouns 'I' and 'we' express number but not gender. And in the second person we use 'you' as a singular as well as plural pronoun for both genders. The same asymmetrical pattern is not found in all languages. Chinese has no singular - plural distinction in the third person. Many

languages make a singular-plural distinction in the second person. According to Levinson, Village Tamil has as many as 6 second person pronouns reflecting various gradations of addresser and addressee relationship. They are நீ, நீர், நீவீர், நீங்க, உங்க, உம்ம. So the Tamil speaker has more options to choose from depending upon the distance or intimacy in interpersonal relationships. But in English the choice is limited to only one second person pronoun for singular as well as plural which does not make a distinction between distance and intimacy.

As Nida says non-correspondence of grammatical and lexical categories is the main source of loss and gain in translation. The following English terms cannot be translated into Tamil without loss of meaning:

Boy friend, girl friend, womaniser and extra-marital relationship.

'காதலன்' and 'காதலி' the Tamil equivalents in English for boy friend and girl friend respectively would actually mean 'lover' and 'love', thus giving a slightly deviant meaning. Similarly while words like 'Womaniser' and 'extra-marital relationship' are euphemistic, their Tamil equivalents 'காம வெறியன்' and 'தகாத உறவு' appear harsh. The Tamil equivalent for 'Womaniser' means 'sexual fanatic' and for 'extra-marital relationship' the equivalent means undesirable relationship.

Some proper nouns like Catherine Senior and Catherine Junior, two Characters in Emily Bronte's novel 'Wuthering Heights' do not have proper Tamil equivalents. So, we have to depend on poor substitutes. தாய் கேத்தரின்/ பெரியகேத்தரின்/ மகள் கேத்தரின்/ சின்ன கேத்தரின் for Catherine Senior and for Catherine Junior as there are no equivalent terms in Tamil for these names.

Despite limitations, translation can play a useful role in language teaching. In fact grammar translation method was in vogue for a long time until it was replaced by audiolingual, direct, situational and structural methods and the communicative approach. But though the Communicative approach which insists on the 'use' of language to perform functions, has been there for over two decades, translation approach continues to be a major pedagogic device for weak learners. The important assumption behind this approach is that better comprehension leads to understanding and learning. As Krashen says SLA depends on comprehensible input for which the learner's L₁ plays an important role. Long ago, Wallwork said, "our view of the world is largely conditioned by our mother tongue". So, translation in the classroom helps the activation of a wider vision of the world.

Weak learners can be taught to comprehend a difficult passage with the help of translation. First they may write the answers in L_1 and then translate them into L_2 , thus wrestling with two languages for meaning and structure. The same strategy can be adopted for paragraph writing and essay writing.

Translation has many advantages in the language classroom. It facilitates what Widdowson calls the "use" of both languages, each reinforcing the other, despite the dissimilarities. They learn the conventions, structures, richness and limitations. Actually it facilitates the learning of target language rather than jeopardises it. As Ann Berthoff says "It serves as a bridge from the familiar to the unfamiliar."

Most importantly, translation involves the transference of meaning from one set of patterned symbols into another set of patterned symbols. It gives opportunities for "experiencing" languages and their functions while learners are in the complex process of manipulating two languages for conveying meaning.



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THE ROLE OF TRANSLATION IN THE INDIAN CLASSROOM

Dr. Prema Nandakumar

We are right now living in a world that has certainly shrunk in many ways. Gone are the days when our earth spaces seemed vague stretches of land and spreading sheets of water inclosing unimaginable areas. Such is the scientific advancement that we know almost exactly earth's area. However, the speeding up of communications has not been paralleled by a matching integration and mutual familiarity with cultural values. Apart from a handful of scriptures or authors of each country, what do we really know of the nations that exist in this world? And yet, a wider understanding of one another could make the people of the world reflect on the need to live in loving togetherness, make them recognise that mutual suspicion and the arrogance of pride did never bring happiness to man in his limited span of life. If at all we do not feel utter strangers to one another at the intellectual level, it is because of a few common denominators like the Bible, the Gita, Shakespeare and Dante Alighieri.

Within our nation, again, we encounter a like problem. There has been a tremendous coming together in this century that an old lady in a Tamil village doesn't feel really astonished when Bengalis or Punjabis stroll around the ancient temple in her place. In the same manner, with effortless ease she plans her travels all over India. No more the need to go by cart and trudge distances for days without end. She can just pay for a seat in a tourist bus and then go on a Bharath Darshan. But the language problem is never overcome. Some brief, utilitarian words, yes. But she is quite ignorant of the nuances of her neighbour's language (and the vast literature represented by it), even as the neighbour cannot comprehend Tamil. For all its political unity and basic cultural oneness, India is still a compartmentalised structure divided by several languages.

This compartmentalisation is a fact of constant regression even for the educated young persons in the Indian society. What do we really know of the rest of Indian literature except a few books that have received a national prize? Even here, it is mostly titles. Handicapped by the linguistic curtain, we are ignorant of the parallel trends that exist in other Indian literatures. Thus our view of Indian literature is necessarily fragmented.

In the same way, the teaching of literature in the Indian classroom is also handicapped by a fragmentary approach. Teaching English literature in the Indian classroom becomes even more difficult as we are unable to place the text in the background of a western experience. An increasing lethargy at the library level (and how can we blame anybody in this age of the visuals led by the tyranny of the television?) keeps the Indian student unaware of the political and social history that gave rise to the English language and literature as we know it. More often than not, the classroom becomes a group of blind aspirants led by a dim-visioned explorer.

The Indian classroom has other disabilities too. At the collegiate level, English is used widely but at the school the student often takes the choice of the local medium and has no need to burden himself with extra care in learning the English language or its literature properly. Yet, when he comes to the college he finds that this 'language of opportunity' (B.N. Pattanayak) is irreplaceable as his local medium cannot supply him with standard textbooks and reference volumes, a wider variety of reading matter associated with the subject, and can be of no help if he wishes to go abroad for higher studies.

At one time Sanskrit or Persian was the language of opportunity. B.N. Pattanayak describes the language of opportunity as "one which can serve as the means to gain access to modern knowledge in various fields including those of science and technology, is rich in registers so that it can be used to discuss a very wide range of subjects, and which can be effectively used in a large number of formal and semiformal contexts".¹

At a time when the English language has become so important to the Indian student, it becomes necessary to teach him the language not only as a tool but as a pliant helper to do his job with ease and grace. How are we to do it when around us whirls the hoarse cry of the falling standards in English?

The answer to this problem does not lie in thrusting the language of opportunity down the child's throat at the school level for psychologically the best way to begin one's learning process is through one's mother tongue. Only, when the student rises to the collegiate level, should he be aided to master the language of opportunity without sacrificing the language of his natal culture. In this twin-language experience lies also the strength of the Indian classroom. If we go about in the right manner, what appears as a problem at the time of the medium transition at college will turn out to be a blessing.

1. Profiles in Indian Languages (1985), edited by A.K. Biswas, p.254.

Generally at the time of transition we tend to go over to the language of opportunity totally and neglect almost completely the language that was learnt at school. This is an incalculable wastage of the learner's intellectual make-up. On the contrary, if we are able to strike a balance and continue to treat the two languages as the two eyes on our face, infinite good would result. The roots will not be disturbed nor the flowering impaired. Towards achieving this, translation can play a crucial role in the Indian classroom.

In a multilingual society like India, languages (and hence literatures) apart from the mother-tongue and the language of opportunity cannot be ignored if the teacher wishes to give the student a feel of the Indian culture. It is, of course, humanly impossible to learn all the languages but it is not very difficult to gain a clear idea of the identities and differences among the different linguistic groups if we seek the idea of translation. Admittedly, a translation cannot convey the original in toto. But because of an integral cultural background that is the same for people all over India, it is quite possible to project almost entirely what is in one Indian language into another language. This background is provided by our Vedic, Upanishadic and Itihasic heritage. In fact such an integral background for the vast Indian sub-continent was made possible only through translation. It was thanks to the innumerable translations and adaptations of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata that an Indian is no stranger in any part of this big country. Translation definitely helps towards a wider vision of the world around which is the basic requirement for any humanistic view of life.

How then can translation be made to play a significant role in the Indian classroom? There are no simplistic answers to such a question. The aim should be that when teaching the English language (or when using the English medium), our students should not jettison their mother tongues and become foreigners in their mother tongues and become foreigners in their own motherland. At the same time students using their mother-tongues should not be compartmentalised in a hermetically sealed linguistic dungeon. By encouraging the use of the two languages in conjunction, the student would find easier ways of comprehension in the classroom. The Indian classrooms ought to encourage an "active partnership between English the developed language and the developing languages (which) will be very healthy for the growth of Indian language".²

2. L.M. Khubchandani, *Linguistics and Language Planning in India* ed., N.G. Kalelkar, p.47.

This would help English in India as well and save it from the fate of becoming a degraded tool of diminishing efficiency. As A.K. Biswas has said:

"..... hundreds of dialects and the related cultures are our 'eyes'; English could only be a window or mirror. It is the 'eye' or the insight which enabled Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan to popularise English in India and without which anglicised young men of India would merely indulge in using English slangs and blindly ape some rootless, flotsam variety of Western behavioral pattern. To ensure intimate and fruitful association between English on the one hand and the Indian culture and languages on the other, we must immediately ban all English-medium schools (as Gandhi suggested) which are the breeding grounds for the affluent snobs".³

While we need not be detained by the drastic and doubtful remedy suggested by Biswas, we cannot deny the truth in his basic premise. The situation obtaining today is best reflected by D.P. Pattanayak:

"In a country like India, the question is not whether English or Indian languages but English and Indian languages..... Those who speak of throwing English into the Indian ocean and those who wish to enthrone it as the exclusive language in India are equally blind to the ethos of multilingualism."⁴

Now to the practicalities of the situation. How do we use the instrument of translation for enriching the Indian classroom at the collegiate level? Be it literature, history, economics, science or technology, the Indian classroom has to have a double vision. The student should have access to books in both the languages so that his native intelligence would draw the most from what is taught in the classroom. Even if there are no translations available, the teacher should be one who can communicate with ease in English and in the mother tongue. There is certainly nothing regressive if the Professor teaching Shakespeare in a class takes the trouble of referring to Shakespearean appreciation in the Indian languages and to translations and adaptations of the Bard of Avon in Tamil or Telugu. Shakespeare is not merely dates, Anne Hathaway and the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. Shakespeare in the Indian classroom is also the dramatist who has inspired the Indian writer in several ways. For instance, if a translation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (say, the version of K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, 1961) is brought to the notice of the classroom, the very induction of the mother-tongue sharpens audience-

3. Profiles in Indian Languages, p.325.

4. Ibid.

awareness of the drama. Prospero, Ferdinand and Miranda cease to be shadow figures to the student who practises a few questions and answers for passing the examination. These Shakespearean characters become part of our everyday experience when the Professor can put up a translation of value beside the original. Thus Macbeth on the contemplated crime:

"If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
it were done quickly. If th' assassination
Could tramm'd up the consequence, and catch,
with his surcease, success; that but this blow,
Might be the be-all and the end-all here--
But here upon this bank and shoal of time--
We'd jump the life to come"

“செய்து முடித்தவுடன் விவகாரம் தீர்ந்து விடுமாயின், விரைவில் அதைச் செய்து முடித்துவிடுவது நல்லது. விளைவுகளைத் தடுத்து, இறுதி வெற்றியையும் இக்கொலையானது அளித்தால், இது ஒன்றே முயற்சியும் முடிவுமாக இருக்குமாயின், காலம் என்ற கடலின் கரையைத் தாண்டி மறுபிறப்பைப் பற்றிய கவலையை ஒழிப்போம்,”

Though this is not a literal translation and even contains several imaginative extensions, the native accents of Tamil do make the understanding of the play easier. Apart from introducing translations, the teacher would do well to guide the student in terms of contemporary linkage. As how near Shakespeare is to our would-view; and yet often, how far, far away.

By bringing the classroom close to the language and culture in which the student lives, boredom is easily banished from the classroom. The student gains a life-long awareness of the basic unity of creation and of the widening frontiers of knowledge.

Above everything else, the recourse to on-the-spot translation when dealing with seemingly familiar but trickily identical words in English can help avoid misunderstandings. With a due sense of responsibility I would like to point out that there is a percentage (mercifully small, I hope!) of English teachers who assume that they know what they do not, never having tried to understand the precise meaning of English words by immediately comprehending them in terms of their mother-tongue. When an assistant Professor in a leading Tamil Nadu college assures her class that 'cultivation' and 'civilisation' are interchangeable terms, and that baseball is only another version of football, it is time for us to think of remedial aids for the English classroom. For, as Socrates says in his last words, "to use words wrongly and indefinitely is not merely an error in itself; it also creates an evil in the soul"⁵

Apart from a good English-to-English dictionary for this particular case, one could recommend an English-to-Tamil dictionary and even the teaching of the text with an appropriate translation in Tamil. Teach English in Tamil! One may gasp. But why run away from the realities of the situation?

When the roles are somewhat different, when the class teaching is conducted in Tamil, in view of the global reality, it is best the student is drawn to the language of opportunity (English in this case) through attractive translations and encouraged to improve his linguistic skills. Immediately a whole set of questions assault us. How do we decide which is the best translation to recommend? In the absence of a translation, what should be our criteria for preparing a translation?

Forty-two years ago when I began my career as a translator with the book, **Bharati in English Verse**, I had been assailed by several doubts. Should my translation be loose or close? Free or literal? Paraphrase or metaphor? Today, I look back down the arches of the years and can only ruefully smile that I have not been able to fix for myself a firm credo. But throughout it has been an infinitely enriching experience, a constant challenge to wrestle with and gain a sense of joyous fulfilment.

This applies to the reader of a translation as well. Whatever the style, as long as it is not bad grammar, a translation is always a helpful instrument to gain a wider understanding of the world around us. To the Tamil student of **Chittirappavai** my translation however imperfect can yet lead him to the vistas of Henry James's fiction because of the title I have chosen for the translation: **Portrait of a Woman**. From Akilan's **Portrait of a Woman** to Henry James **Portrait of a Lady** is a logical step. And then comes the wider understanding with the student's own immersion in Akilan and James. As K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar puts it:

"Between these two novels, however, there is the stretch of almost a century, striking difference in the social, intellectual and moral climate, and differences in technique and style as well. But one as much as the other is the story of a tragic misalliance, and equally Isabel and Anandi go through the fire and brimstone of unconscionable suffering before they can hope to come out of the pit that is, partly at least, of their own contriving."⁶

To ask the student himself to take up translation would be a good investment for the future. If our regional languages should flourish in a healthy manner, we must produce books on all subjects: standard books, fanciful books, inspirational books. Of the students who learn today to

6. **Portrait of a Woman** (1981). p.v.

toddle in the classroom by their attempts at translating history, economics, politics or literature, a few at least might gain stability and achieve speed by the time they settle down in a job. Then they would be unable not to translate: that anxiety to persevere and succeed is the only way to enrich our intellectual treasury.

Yes, just as the student learns his trade, ethics and morality in the classrooms, it were wisdom to learn the art of translation also in the classroom. The classroom itself would then shed much of its pontifical dullness since the teacher and the taught would be engaged in an exploration of new vistas presented by the different languages and their cultures. By and by they will come to realise that they were studying two distinct things united at one end, that the whole of man's moral universe is as much a solid mandala as the physical universe is, and that no man is an island. That way lies the future of peace to be shaped by the students of today.



TRANSLATING MODERN ENGLISH TEXT INTO TAMIL AND FROM TAMIL INTO ENGLISH : AN APPROACH

Dr. Prema Nandakumar

The problem of having to change the medium of instruction and daily commerce is nothing new for academics. It has pursued the teaching fraternity from ancient times. Roger Ascham (1515-68) who was private tutor to Queen Elizabeth I wrote **The Schoolmaster** where he dealt with this outcry for changing the medium by translating all ancient Greek texts into Latin:

"A Bishop that now liveth, a good man, whose Judgement in Religion I better like, than his Opinion in Perfectness in other Learning, said once unto me: 'We have no Need of now of the Greek Tongue, when all things be translated into Latin. But the good man understood not that even the best Translation is for mere necessity but an evil impeded wing to fly withal, or a heavy Stump Leg of Wood to go withal. Such, the higher they fly, the sooner they falter and fail: the faster they run, the often they stumble, and sorer they fall.'"

The generally held opinion then and now is that it is infinitely more difficult to translate the writings of a bygone age than our own. Alexander Pope has spoken in detail about the problems of translating the classics; he was himself a commendable translator. Yet, he felt it was an impossible job. Ornate or simple, free or literal; one always was on the verge of committing unpardonable injustice to the original. However, he voted for a literal translation as the lesser evil; "If there be sometimes a **Darkness**, there is often a **Light** in Antiquity, which nothing better perseveres than a Version almost literal."

Actually translation is always a difficult process and there can be no perfect translation. The translator can try his very best to be only a conduit; yet, he cannot escape bringing his personal mental make-up into the message on hand. But translation becomes a necessary instrument of change and whatever be Roger Ascham's reservations, the Bishop has a point. This kind of enthusiastic translation does marginalise an ancient language. This is happening right now to Sangam Tamil. Time was when academics learnt the ancient diction in the traditional ways posited by a

great commentatorial tradition. There was no other way of getting into the secrets of the Sangam poems, the great epics or puranas. But now translations into modern Tamil make it much easier to appreciate the content of the poems, while the original language is fast disappearing from the serious discourse verily like Old English. Forty-five years ago, we had to present a paper in Old English and another in Middle English at the post-graduate level, but now all this is gone. We do still answer questions on these ancient texts but our students have read only the translations in modern English. Attempts by A.K. Adithar (Tirumurugatrappadai) and Sujatha (Purananooru) are examples of our being able to live in the mysterious significances of the ancient texts with satisfactory modern Tamil versions in hand. And one can go upto the doctoral level in Sanskrit by simply writing the examinations and dissertations in a language other than Sanskrit!

Can we come up with satisfactory Tamil translations of modern English texts? One cannot give a firm answer. It is enough if we say we can present passable versions for the present generation. Each generation needs its own translation for words are not frozen into a permanent significance. The English text we take up may be the same, but different generations bring different attitudes in using the language. As Prof. Mario Wandruszka says:

"Dictionaries often give us the particular socio-cultural connotation of a word (children's language, colloquial, familiar, literary, poetic, biblical, political, legal, official). New special languages develop wherever new groups emerge. New languages emerge in the old; new words and turns of phrase and new contaminations from other languages. The flexibility of languages is so considerable that old words can continuously receive additional meanings. That our human languages have special fashions and fads is something that also sets them aside from any mathematically constructed language."¹

We must need keep this in mind while dealing with the problems that arise in translating modern English texts into Tamil. How have I managed to come to grip with this art? It may be remembered that I belong to a much older generation when English was spoken with an eye on its noble flourishes and a desire to be recognised as an enthusiastic (if not voracious) reader of classics. Echoes from the classics that one had read in the school and college were exhibited with pardonable pride. Since a purer form of mother tongue was then in use, a comparatively serious approach to English was seen as the right thing. There were no generational hassles for me when I

1. 'Multilingualism as a problem of a new Linguistics, Universitas (Stuttgart, Volume 25, 1983, no.4) p.291).

began translating Chaman Nahal's **Azadi** into Tamil for the author and I belong to almost the same generational block.

Azadi is written in a rather stately English language. The author is conscious that he is presenting the English version of Punjabi and so does not care to take the liberties of spoken speech. Consider the opening of the novel:

"It was the third of June, 1947. This evening, the viceroy, was to make an important announcement. That's what Lala Kanshi Ram told his wife Prabha Rani, whose education had become his task. Lala Kanshi Ram was not too literate himself -- it is doubtful if he ever finished high school. But life had rolled him around, misfortunes had come and gone, and this had given an edge to his intelligence."

A strictly literal translation would be as follows, and I am sure to have done it if I had been translating a generation earlier: "அது 1947 ஆம் ஆண்டு ஜூன் மாதம் மூன்றாம் தேதி ஆகும். இன்று மாலை வைஸ்ராய் ஒரு முக்கியமாக அறிக்கை விடுக்கப் போகின்றார்கள். இதையே லாலா காண்ஷிராம் தன் மனைவி பிரபாராணிக்கு அவளுடைய கல்வி அவருக்குத் தொழிலாகி விட்டதால், கூறினார். லாலா காண்ஷிராமே அதிகமாகக் கல்வி அறிவு பெறாதவர். அவர் உயர் நிலைப் பள்ளி முடித்தாரோ என்பது சந்தேகம். ஆனால் உலக வாழ்க்கை அவரை இங்கு மங்கும் சுழற்றியதாலும், துயரங்கள் வந்து சென்றதாலும், இவை அவரது புத்திசாலித்தனத்துக்கு ஒரு கூர்மை அளித்திருந்தன."

But stylistically, the Tamil language of today had freed us from many grammatical straight-jackets, and I was able to make the language sound natural for the modern ear by instituting certain changes in the sentence formations without doing violence to the significance.

"1947, ஜூன் மாதம், மூன்றாம் தேதி இன்று மாலை வைஸ்ராய் முக்கியமான அறிக்கை ஒன்று வெளியிடப் போவதாக லாலா காண்ஷிராம் மனைவி பிரபாராணியிடம் கூறினார். பிரபாராணிக்கு அறிவு புகட்ட வேண்டும் என்பது அவர் எண்ணம், லாலா காண்ஷிராம் அதிகம் படித்தவரல்ல. உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளியைத் தாண்டி இருக்கமாட்டார். வாழ்க்கையே அவரது பள்ளிக்கூடம். ஆபத்துக்கள் பல கண்டவர். அவையே அவரது அறிவைக் கூர்மையாக்கி விட்டிருந்தன."

Prof. Chaman Nahal's novel is realistic; in fact, it is autobiographical. Truth rings through every scene. Descriptive passages abound to give us a feel of the horrible days when a whole community was displaced violently from their roots. It was a difficult situation for me as (happily for our society at that time) such a communal conflagration was not a familiar scenario in modern Tamil. However, it turned out that all I had to do was pitch in with a literal translation, and the telling sounded natural. This was mainly because,

the culture was Indian. Marital respectability, women's chastity, the references to traditional rituals of the Hindus were all there and it was perhaps no surprise that I was congratulated on coming up with a good translation.

One of the tricks of the trade I used was to use comparative phrases and proverbs.

"Arun also made a turban for her out of her sari --in the Muslim fashion, with one end of the turban hanging low at the back." (312)

"அவளது புடவையால் அருண் அவளுக்கு முஸ்லீம்களது தலைப்பாகை போல் தலைபில் சுற்றி விட்டான். வால் விட்ட பாகை" (289)

"Prabha Rani leaned over and looked through the window, with reverence on her face.

'Where is the sacred tank?'

'You can't see it. You can't see the town of Kurukshetra either; it's some distance from here. But these are the fields.' (337)

'பிரபாராணி முன்புறம் சாய்ந்து ஜன்னல் வெளியே பார்த்தாள், அவள் முகத்தில் பக்தி,

'திருக்குளம் எங்கே?'

'உன்னால் பார்க்க முடியாது, குருசேஷத்திர நகரத்தையும் காண முடியாது. அது இங்கிருந்து சற்று தொலைவில் இருக்கிறது. ஆனால் இந்த இடம்தான் போர்க்களம்.'

The one great preparation I made before setting down to translate the text of *Azadi* was to read again plenty of modern fiction with special reference to mass exodus and societal violence. Reading *Alai O'sai* gave me an unconscious grip on the style to be used. It was not too formal, nor was it colloquial. For, while one has to understand the correct significance of the words and phrases in English, one has to have something more than this knowledge in the target language. That is what determines the style, and the style is of great importance in holding the attention of the reader. While a well-ordered sequence of events is very important, unless the events are subsumed in the style, no one is going to keep reading the book in these days of speed. Thus a sense of Tamil style is most important for the translator from English into Tamil.

However, I could not have come up with such a natural version, if I had been translating a modern English novel. While lexical translation is problematic enough, cultural translation makes it very difficult indeed.

Even if we go in for an adaptation instead of translation, the result does get away from the original intention. Godavarish Mishra's *Athara Sa Satara* which is an Oriya adaptation of Charles Dicken's *A Tale of Two Cities* is seen as 'subversion' by Jatindra K. Nayak and H.S. Mohapatra. It was a familiar scenario for us in the first half of this century. Free adaptations of English novels by novelists like Arani Kuppuswamy Mudaliyar often gave incongruous presentation. Mishra, according to Nayak and Mohapatra, transformed a tale of love into a tale of revolution.

Today, we are on an even more slippery pace when it comes to translating an English text into Tamil. The days of long novels in translations gone; in fact, translation into Tamil are negligible in number. But translation from scientific treatises is slowly gaining ground and for this precision is the need of the hour. It is sad that in the name of giving literal translations, woodenness is permitted in a big way which keeps the student away from the textbook. A certain verve in using the Tamil language is a must, and this is possible only by wide reading in good, standard Tamil literature. The brain has to absorb the rhythm and diction of today (as spoken at home, in the market-place and in the groves of academe) without succumbing to the dilution of the language by excessive borrowings.

Almost the same problems confront us when dealing with translating a contemporary Tamil text into English. Yet, an in-depth reading of literature in the source language is not all. Here too, one must have good knowledge of the significances of idioms and proverbs. This becomes possible by wide reading in the target language. For instance, if one translates contemporary poetry today, one must read plentiful of British and American poetry. Mere dictionary translation would only lead to mis-translation. It would be like translating Bharati's 'Kuyil Pättu' literally:

“காதல், காதல், காதல்
காதல் போயிற் காதல் போயிற்
சாதல், சாதல், சாதல்”

"Love, love, love;
Love going, love going,
Death, death, death."

Even if one translates one's own poetry, there can be problems because of the Tamil diction. Explanations become necessary to understand the importance of modern poetry. And these cannot be had always. For instance, here is a poem by Meenakshi:

“அம்மாவின் பாணை இது
அவள் கமந்ததை

நானும் சுமக்கிறேன்
என் மகள் வருகிறாள்
எப்போது?"

"This is my mother's pot
I carry what she has carried.
When will my daughter come to me?"

Here is a literal translation but the coiled significances of these few words remain opaque till we glance at the note of the author :

"The water pot is a symbol of fertility, abundance, consistent flow, energy. One of a girl's first gifts during puberty is a waterpot. The meaning of the gift is that she is handed down not only happiness but responsibility. Metal water pots are often handed down through generations of women from grandmothers or mothers to daughters. *Sumackirēn* means pregnant, or she's carrying a load nicely."²

As with the term '*Sumackirēn*' the fertile Tamil language with nuances embroidered with the letters is often the despair of the translator:

"துளித்தேன் கண்களில்
விழிகள் துடிப்பு
கரிப்பு
சுத்திகரிப்பு
கசிவு
கண்ணை கரைய
மடை உடைப்பு
அவன்
என் கண்ணில் விழுந்ததேன்?
உள்ளுக்குள் இனிப்பு"

"A drop of honey
in my eye.
Eye balls rolling,
biting,
cleansing,
tears swelling,
gushing forth,
to wash away the kohl
He is honey,
dropped into my eyes.
All sweetness inside."

2. *Another Journey* (1998), p.39.

'Karippu' and 'suddhikarippu' as also 'vizhunthathēn' (why did it fall) and 'vizhuntha thēn' (the drop of honey that fell) play with the Tamil letters, and the subtle music cannot be translated into English.³

The more our modern writers indulge in such word (and letter) play, the greater the problem of translation. But, if one has not mis-construed the original (often the case because of a poor knowledge of English idiom as also the unwritten rule about English being a language of understatement), one can come up with strikingly beautiful English versions that are comparable to the best poetry abroad. Here is another poem by Meenakshi, 'Maru Payanam' along with its striking, literal translation which succeeds because it also deals with a consistent evocation of an epic simile:

“மண்ணின் அடிவயிற்றில்
அண்டத்தின் துளியாக ஆலவிதை
தாய்க்குருதி உணவாக
வாய்பிளந்து இலைத்துளியாய்
மேலேறிப் புத்துலகில்
மரமாகி,
வளர்ந்த வாழ்வு இலக்கியமே!
மேலேறும் முதற்பயணம்,
ஆயிற்று ஆண்டெல்லாம் செலவென்று
வான் தந்தை கண்டுவிட
ஆலமரம் துடித்ததெல்லாம்
காற்றே கதை சொல்லும்
வளர்ந்து வளர்ந்து
வளர்த்த வாழ்வு,
பச்சை இலையாகிச்
சிவந்த பழமாகிப்
பழத்துள்ளே கருவாகிக்
கருவிற்குள் சத்தாகிக்
காவியம் நீள்கிறது
தூயான மரத்திற்குச்
செல்வக் குழந்தைகளைத்
தன் தாய்க்கும் காட்டி வரும்
ஆசை இருக்காதோ?
உறவு நிலைத்திருக்கக்
கிளைத்து பெரும்பாசம்
உடம்பெல்லாம் வேர்கிளைக்க
மண்ணோக்கி மறுபயணம்”

"In the bowels of the earth,
lay a speck of the universe
in the form of a banyan seed.
Sucking the sap of her mother,
mouth splitting open,
revealing a tiny leaf,
she raised her head in a new world
to become a tree.
That whole process of growth
was literature.

This journey upwards,
which was her first,
passed through years.
Only the wind can tell
the whole story.
How the banyan tree
yearned to see her father, the sky,
and grew taller and taller.

This life, starting from a seed,
putting forth leaves,
bearing red fruit,
carrying seeds within the fruit
and energy within the seeds,
is an epic that goes on and on.

Isn't it natural for a mother
to want to show her darling children
to her own Mother Earth?

And so to keep this relationship alive,
her love branches out.
Her whole body becomes once again
a cluster of roots
stretching down towards the earth.

Another journey."⁴

4 . *Another Journey* (1998), p.5.



ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE CANKAM CLASSICS - A SHORT REVIEW

DR. A. Dakshinamurthy

Tamil is one of the ancient languages of the world. It has a continuous history of literature at least for 2000 years. Its earliest literature goes by the name Caṅkam Literature. G.L.Hart III, an American Tamil Scholar, considers this body of literature as one among the finest poetry ever written.¹ A.K.Ramanujan observes as follows : "These poems are not just the earliest evidence of the Tamil genius. The Tamils, in all these 2000 years of literary effort, wrote nothing better".² The American scholar G.L.Hart laments that the Caṅkam classics have not been properly introduced to the Westerners as well as Indians. The regret is shared by the present writer. A world renowned Indian Scientist and humanist recently lamented that the North Indians are totally ignorant of the greatness of Tamil literature. Translation as a discipline will go a long way to unite the world community emotionally. It will certainly prove the oneness of human race. The Caṅkam classics, if translated into other languages by competent scholars, will reach every corner of the world. Though attempts have been made in this direction by eminent men like G.U. Pope, no serious attempts were made by scholars for a long period after him. It is gratifying to note that at present, many scholars, both native and foreign are showing keen interest in this field. As a result, the world community has to some extent begun to understand and appreciate the greatness of this body of literature. This paper attempts to review some of the translations available in English with a view to identify the problems of translating the Caṅkam classics. So, this paper concentrates only on the errors noticed in the translations, leaving aside for the time being the merits found in them. This study is not exhaustive but representative. The present writer believes that this short study will help future scholars to provide better translations of the Caṅkam classics.

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1. The poems of Ancient Tamil, their milieu and their Sanskrit counterparts, (preface)
 2. Interior Landscape, Afterword.

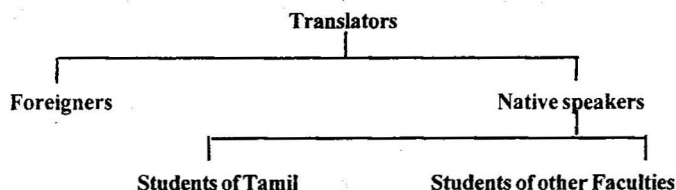
Attempts were made by interested scholars to translate parts of this great body of literature during the first quarter, of the 20th Century. Significant among them were Rev. G.U.Pope, J.M. Nallasamy Pillai, Veerabadhra Mudaliyar, R.G. Sessa Aiyar and Balasubramaniya Mudaliyar, whose translations were published between 1898 and 1913. 'The Siddantha Deepika', 'The Indian Antiquity', 'The Madras Review', 'The Tamilian Antiquary' and a few other journals encouraged such efforts.

After 1913, K.Kothandapani Pillai, J.V. Chellaiyah, R. Balakrishna Mudaliyar, and S. Natesan published their translations. These works were published during the period 1946-1959.

The process gained momentum during the late sixties when A.K. Ramanujan and others stepped into this field. His 'Interior Landscape' was published in 1967 and his second book 'Poems of Love and War' was released in 1985, after 18 years. After A.K. Ramanujan, J.M. Somasundaram Pillai published his 'Five Tamil Idylls'. This period from 1967 to this day should be considered as the golden period in the history of translation of the Caṅkam classics. This is the period, when more and more scholars, both native and foreign are showing interest in this field. M. Shanmugam Pillai and David E. Ludden, G.L.Hart III (from America), Prof. Jothimuthu, A.V. Subramaniyam, Prof. K.G.Seshadri, Prof. Ponnaiyah (from Malaysia), Dr.A. Dakshinamoorthy and Dr.V.Murugan are enriching this field with their translation works. It is gratifying to note that the Tamilnadu Government accords all financial assistance through its department for Tamil Development and culture. The International Institute of Tamil Studies is engaged in reprinting old works and publishing new works. The Institute of Asian Studies is doing commendable service. Its recent publications 'Tamil Poetry Through The Ages' and 'Kalittokai' deserve special mention. Besides publishing the English translation, the institution has planned to publish the translations in Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Marathi also.

The Tamil University, Thanjavur, and the Bharathidasan University, Thiruchirappalli evince interest in this field. The Universities in Tamilnadu should encourage such activities. The Caṅkam classics should be translated into all the major Indian languages. In this respect, the services rendered by the multilingual scholar and poet Mu.Ku.Jagannatha Raja of Rajapalayam, Tamil Nadu is commendable. The Kuruṇṇippāṭṭu of Kapilar was translated by him into Telugu. This is the first Caṅkam work introduced to our Telugu brothers. He will be publishing his Telugu version of the Akanāṇūru shortly.

The translators mentioned above may be for convenience classified as follows :



Among the above mentioned translators, as far as the knowledge of the present writer goes, Prof. M. Shanmugam Pillai, Late Prof. Jothimuthu and the present writer Dr. A. Dakshinamurthy are students of Tamil language and literature. G.U. Pope and G.L. Hart are foreigners. There are a few others also. The majority of them are native speakers but not specialists in Tamil studies. As lovers of literature and also as lovers of their mother tongue, Tamil, they have taken pains to spend their valuable time on this task. Their services are commendable in many respects. Let us expect that more and more scholars will take interest in this field and enrich it.

Before studying the translation hitherto done, it is worthwhile to say a few words about the nature of the Caṅkam Literature and the major problems posed by it to the translators. The ancientness of the literature is the major problem. The language has undergone many changes through the ages. The present day reader needs special training. It is full of epithets, compounds, simple contrasts and repetitions promoting an overall economy of expression. It contains hundreds of archaic words. They have gone out of use now. It is full of polysemy and synonyms. So the translator faces the task of philological exactness in his work that is, he has to ensure that expressions and shades of meaning of the original are faithfully adhered to in the new counterparts to the maximum extent possible. This is really a battle to reconcile truthfulness to the text with readability of the translation in the new language".³

The literature in question contains long drawn descriptions. The complicated syntactical structure poses a great problem. It is full of ambiguities. Unless carefully gone through any scholar will tumble down at any point. The classics are based on well-established genre theory and literary theory. A person who had received a good training in the grammatical theoretical as well as cultural traditions alone can, with confidence undertake to translate these poems. The most important problems alone are noted here.

3. Faithfulness in the translation of Sangam Poetry into English, IATR, Vol. II, 1981.

The Problematic Words

Reference has already been made to the problem of philological exactness. Tamil is rich in polysemy i.e., words with more than one meaning. The translator should choose the right meaning to suit the context. There are too many instances to show that the translators have failed to identify the contextual meaning. Even scholars of exceptional merit suffer from this lapse.

The word *cānrōn* meant a man of wisdom as well as a warrior in the classical period. In the later periods, the second meaning receded to the background. Verse with the serial number 312 in *Purāṇānūru* is in the form of the utterance of a heroic mother. She says, 'To beget a son and bring him up is my duty; the father's duty is to shape him into a *cānrōn*. To discipline him is the 'Crowns', to shape a spear for him is that of the ironsmith, and to enter battle-field, give fierce fight, slaughter tuskers and return triumphant is that of the youth's!' In this context, the word *cānrōn* means a warrior. But the renowned translator A.K. Ramanujan translates the relevant line as, 'to make him noble.'

Porunan : 1. Warrior

2. Porunan the bard.

Students of Tamil literature are well aware that a class of bards was called *porunar*. *Porutal* means to fight. In this sense, warriors were also called (*Puran* :14), the '*Porāpporunar*', meaning, the *porunar* who do not fight. The same author in his translation of verse No.389 of *Purāṇānūru* translated the phrase, "*Pillaiyam Poruna!*" as '*O Young warrior*'. It should have been rendered as "*O Young bard!*"

Fish and Stars

'*Mīn*' means fish as well as the stars and planets. In the poem referred to above, the following line occurs. '*Elā Venṇon Pōruru kālai*', the thing referred to here is the *venus* (in Tamil - *Velli* - Silver). According to the ancient astrologists of Tamilnadu, if the *venus* makes a southward movement, it augured a famine. Their movement was termed as the clashing of the *venus* with the other planets. It is spoken as "*Grahayuddham*" in the *Mahabharatha*. The phrase '*Pōruru kālai*' refers to this clash. Having in mind, the above movement, A.K.Ramanujan translates the above line, as "the unadapting fish white as silver moves south leaving behind a fish-famine". The renowned translator has failed to capture the meaning of the passage which is so imaginative.

The Moon and the Day

The word 'Tiṅkaḷ' denotes, a day in the week, the moon, and also a month in general. Rev.G.U.Pope, a foreign scholar while translating a verse (70) in *Puraṇānūru* commits an error and gives a mistranslation. The poet compares the prosperous homes full of food-grains of kiḷḷivaḷavan's domain to the inexhaustible tanks brimming with cool water in the month of Tai. The phrase is "Tayyi tiṅkaḷ!" Quite unacquainted with the intricate byways of the Tamil poetic tradition and convention translated the phrase as 'January-moon!'

Āram and Hāram : (*Puraṇānūru* - verse 256)

A wife who had lost her husband appeals to the village potter to shape a wide urn to accommodate the bodies of both herself and her dead husband. She says that she followed him inseparably like a tiny white lizard that sticks to the spoke of a moving cart ("Accutaic cākāṭṭu Āram poruntiya ciṟuveṇ palli pōla"). Dr.G.U.Pope mistranslates the term Āram as garland. He took it for a corrupt form of the Sanskrit word Hāram (Mālai -garland). So, he rendered the passage as, 'Like a little white lizard that sits. In the garland on the axle of the chariot!'

Makan and Makal

These are Kinship terms in Tamil. They generally mean son and daughter respectively. But Tolkappiyar the renowned grammarian states that these words may occur without any reference to kinship. It means, these words will denote man and woman in a general sense. Unaware of this rare usage in Tamil, G.U.Pope translates the line, 'Niḷamicaip paranta makkaḷ' (*Puraṇ* ; 126) 'to all sons of men on earth! This means, 'People who inhabit the world!'

Not only a foreign scholar, but also a native scholar commits the same mistake. J.Parthasarathy, a learned scholar, in one of his papers discusses the problems of translating the Caṅkam classics. (The Journal of Asian studies, Chennai). He compares two translations of the same poem (Kuru :31) and that gives his translation. In the passage, "Yaṇum ōr Āṭukaḷa Makaḷē Pīṭukeḷu Kuricilum ōr Āṭukaḷa Makanē" We notice the phrase āṭukaḷa makaḷ and āṭukaḷa makan. David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai as well as A.K.Ramanujan translate these as dancer. It is quite right to call by the name 'dancer' a term common to both the sexes. But Prof. Parthasarathy does not accept this translation equivalent and renders them as 'Dancing arena's daughter and Dancing-arena's son!' Curiously the right translation is misunderstood.

This is a common usage in ancient Tamil. Such words as Kurumakaḷ, Pārppana makan, Perumakan, Āṇ makan, Kurumakaḷ, etc., are in point. As the translator is unaware of this usage, so common in the ancient poetry, he has given an erroneous translation. People will be surprised to know that the word makan rarely meant husband. (Akanāṇūru : Verse : 48) and the commentary of Na.Mu. Vēṇkaṭcāmai Nāṭṭār).

- Koṭi :** 1. Flag
2. Creeper

Toddy shops had a green-hued flag at their entrances. This is attested by Perumpāṇārupaṭai and Paṭṭinappālai. The line, 'Paiṇkoṭi Nuṭaṇikum Palar Puku Vāyil' (Perum) is translated by J.V. Chellaiah and Regunathan as follows: 'The leaves that grow on green vines, wave at gates of drinking shops' - J.V.C.

"Drink-shops with green creepers over the door
where all may freely enter" - Regunathan.

- Itai :** 1. Waist
2. In between
'vaṇṭu Itaippaṭā Muyakkam'

This phrase means that the tight embrace of the lovers would not allow even a tiny bee to pass between their entwined bodies. The renowned translator A.K. Ramanujan unwittingly renders this as follows :

"His chest's embrace is so tight there's no place even for the waist of a bee".

- Elutu :** 1. To write
2. To paint
3. To inscribe
4. To sculpture

The word 'elutu' now means to write. But in Tamil literature, it means many other things. There are many references to an image of exceptional beauty wrought by some deity in the western slope of the Kolli hills. It is generally spoken as Kollippāvai. In Kuruntokai (89) this image is described as 'Kollik' Karuṇkatteyyam Kuṭavarai Elutiya Nalliyal pāvai.

David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai translate this line as follows :

"Short woman, who is beautiful to see like the dark-eyed and pleasant goddess drawn on the western slope". The poem in fact says that a dark-eyed god sculptured a charming image on the western slope of the Kolli hill.

The image was god-made but these scholars mistook the image for a goddess. A.V.Subramaniya Aiyar also commits the same error. She translates the phrase 'Teyvam Elutiya Vinaimāṇ Pāvai' (Nar : 185) as "She is like the painting done by gods . . . in the western slope of the Kolli hills".

Pāvai : 1. The pupil of the eye

2. The mirror image

3. A statue

4. The rhizome (root) of the aruku grass

5. doll

6. A beautiful girl and so on. The translators, unaware of the various, different meanings of this word have given erroneous translations. A.K.Ramanujan renders Āṭippāvai (Kuru.8) as "doll".

Doll is something concrete. But the reflection of a thing in the mirror is merely a shadow. David Ludden renders it as 'image'.

The renowned historian P.T.Srinivasa Aiyangār misconstrued the word 'Pāvai' in verse No.136 of Akanāṇūru. He mistook it for the image of a god. As the rhizome of Aruku looks just like an image, it was called Pāvai by the ancient Tamils.

Building - Elephant - Bull :

The author of the Paṭṭinapālai describes an inn in which abundant food is cooked to feed the needy. The 'cunjee' drained from the cooked rice flows into the street as a river; bulls engage themselves in a fight and render the street muddy; the running chariots raise the dusts from the soil and the dusts get deposited on the plastered walls of houses full of drawings on them. Now the dust-covered houses resemble elephants bathed in dust. It is to be remembered that the elephants delight in besmearing themselves with mud and dust.

J.V.Chelliah the translator of Pattuppāṭṭu mistranslates this beautiful portion of the great poem as follows:

"The thick dust raised by running cars doth soil the various pictures drawn on temples white (Venkoil) and make the bulls resemble elephants that roll in lime! Here the translator mistakes the word 'Koil' for a temple. The term denotes a big house in ancient Tamil. While the poet says that the dust veils the whole building, the translator says that the dust gets deposited on the drawings. According to the text, the bulls fight and render the

street miry. This scholar says they look like elephants that roll in lime. Again he mistranslates *Niru*, meaning dust as lime. Though this term also means lime, in this context, it denotes dust. He forgot that the elephants delight bathing in dust.

- Nanai; 1. Flower - bud
2. To dampen/wet

"Pacunanai nalal palcinai oruciraip Putu nalan Ilanta Pulampu" --
(Kuru: 81:2-3)

The meaning of the above passage is that the heroine suffers from the loneliness caused by her losing her young virginity in a place near the many branches full of fresh buds, of a Nalal tree. David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai mistranslate those lines as below :

"Hidden in a spot among fresh wet branches of
nalal trees, she lost her young virginity"

Here, 'Pacu' qualifies 'nani' and both unite to form a compound. This compound again qualifies *nālai* branches. But the above translators mistake 'pacu' for freshness and 'nanai' for dampness. Here the compound Pacu-nanai may symbolically represent the heroine who is so young a virgin. It is near a tree full of fresh buds that she lost her virginity. She hoped that the love that budded near the tree will bloom into wedding very much like the buds ripen to become flowers. These are but a few instances. A full discussion on this aspect alone will run to a hundred pages.

Comparisons Misconstrued

There are many instances where comparisons are misconstrued. A verse in *Kuruntokai* (123) compares the white sand-dune to gathered moon light. This comparison, so imaginative in character is misunderstood by P.N.Appusamy, a great scholar of erudition. His rendering is as follows :-

"By the side of the mounded sand dunes, gleaming
white by the silvery moon light".

One can easily understand that the translator has drifted away from the text. While the poet says that the sand-dune gleams by itself like the gathered moon-light, he spoils the charm of the poem unwittingly by saying that the sand-dune's gleaming is due to the moon-light.

A simile causes confusion

The author of the *Pattinapālai* narrates the greatness of the traders of Pukar city. This narration consists of 19 lines (194-212). The first 11 lines

speak of their services to the community. The next 2 lines (205-206) express a beautiful comparison. (Koṭumēli nacai uḷavar neṭu Nukattup pakal pōla). This is succeeded by six lines which again praise the impartial nature of the merchants. All the 19 lines relate to the life and services of the merchant community. The meaning of the simile is as follows : "The merchants are impartial in their trade, like the central pin on the long yoke of the farmers, who are lovers of the curved plough!". J.V. Chellaiah is right in his rendering when he says that the entire passage is related to the merchants. But he errs when he says, 'The long yoke of their curved plough! This means that the merchants were engaged in tilling also.

Regunathan interprets in the other way. He considers the first 12 lines of the narration as dealing with the life and services of the farmers. Though the fact is otherwise, he is misled by the placement of words in the poem. After listing the services of the merchants the poet praises their selfless life as one which is full of virtues offering protective shade to fellow beings.

"Puṇṇiyam muṭṭat taṇṇilal vāḷkkai' Then the poet continues, 'Koṭumēli nacai uḷavar'. The word vāḷkkai may be linked grammatically with koṭumēli Naccai Uḷavar. This will mean, Vāḷkkayai Uṭaiya Uḷavar, i.e., the farmers who live such a life. This will embrace all that went before.

After rendering this part, Regunathan considers the rest of the passage along as related to the merchants, while in fact, the entire passage deals with the merchants.

Confusion created by epithets

The Caṅkam classics abound in epithets. This is a common feature found in poems of the ancient times. When an epithet is followed by two successive nouns, the reader is confused and finds it difficult to connect the epithet with the noun concerned. For instance we may consider a passage in Perumpāṇāruppaṭai.

Irumpu Vaṭittanna maṭiyā menrōl

Karuṇikai Viṇaiṇār kāṭalam cīrār.

The first line is a compound epithet. It is followed by the nouns, Karuṇikai Viṇaiṇār and Kāṭalam cīrār. To whom does the epithet refer, the farmer or his son? By dint of their constant hard labour the farmers have strong arms. So they are called Karuṇikai Viṇaiṇār. Their skin does not suffer from wrinkles. So it looks like a steel plate. But J.V.Chellaiah translated as, "The workers' pleasing pretty children young have tender skins resembling smooth steel plates"

Words that have close resemblance

There are certain words bearing close resemblances, e.g. Kuṭil and Kuṭi. Kuṭi means a clan, family and also a settlement. Small villages are referred to as *ciṛukuṭi* in the Caṅkam classics. This term has been confused with *ciṛukuṭil* in the translation of David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai. This is not a slip, because, this has been repeated in all the places of its occurrence (Kurun : 95, 100, 108, 145, 194, 228, 284, 322, 332, 355, 373). In all the cases, the translators explain this term as small house, or tiny house. It is commonly believed that, when a project of translation is undertaken by a native speaker of Tamil and a native speaker of English, most of the errors can be avoided in the translation. But this belief is falsified in the case of the translators of Kuruntokai' under reference.

Absurdity in translation

The rain clouds which are fully loaded with water are said to be pregnant (Cūlkoṇṭa mēkam). In the Caṅkam classics it is often referred to as *Kamañcūl mā Maḷai*'. This must be rendered as the dark clouds fully pregnant with water. But quite unwittingly, the above mentioned authors render it as 'great rain clouds, pregnant with child' (Kur : 158).

The peacock lays eggs

In Tamil literature, when there is a reference to the peafowl, it is taken for the male one, peacock. The peahen is rarely referred to. It is because, the peacock alone is endowed with the fan-tail and so it is natural for the poets to compare the grace of women to the grace of the peacock. Sometimes, even gifted translators who are well-versed in both the languages mistranslate the word 'Mayil'. For example, the line '*Kāṇa Maññai arai in muṭṭai*' in the verse 38 of Kuruntokai has been rendered as, 'A peacock lays her eggs on a boulder'. (A.K. Ramanujan, Interior Landscape and Shanmugam Pillai and David Ludden, Kuruntokai).

The phrase *Kurumakaḷ* very often occurs in the Caṅkam classics. It means a young girl! Sometimes the translator, possibly owing to forgetfulness renders it as 'Short woman' (Shanmugam Pillai, Kur : 89).

Nalkuru Makaḷ (Kur : 71)

This expression means 'the girl begotten'. In this verse, the husband of a young girl, the daughter of a *Kuravan* (Hillsman) praises her during his journey in search of wealth. He calls her *Kalkeḷu Kāṇavar Nalkuru makaḷ*'. (The daughter given birth to by the hunters dwelling in the rocky forest). Unfortunately, Shanmugam Pillai renders it as, 'the daughter who was given

to that man of the rocky forest'. He has forgotten that the speaker is the husband of the girl referred to here.

Words followed by "ena"

There are a few words in Tamil which are followed by another word (Participle) 'ena'. Tutum ena, Oy ena, taṇ ena are a few among them. It is clear that the participle 'ena' expresses manner

Aruvi, taṇṇen muracin imilicai kūṭṭum

The stream sounds like a sweet toned muracu (drum) is an appropriate rendering.

But D. Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai render this part of the verse as,

"Waterfalls crashing from high and unapproachable cliffs, making sweet music like the drums that say, taṇ". There is no question of the drum saying anything like "tan". This term here may mean the rhythm of the crashing stream.

A.K. Ramanujan, likewise translates the phrase "Oy ena" in verse No. 136 of Akanānūru; as "crying woy". It is the first night when the husband just removes the garment of his newly wedded Wife. The bashful wife droops her head down suddenly. This suddenness is expressed by the phrase "Woy ena".

Current meaning for ancient words

Words undergoing semantic change is a common feature of languages. A translator should have a sound knowledge of it. Fortunately the Caṅkam anthologies have excellent commentaries written by erudite scholars. Had the translators followed these commentaries, they could have given us almost error-free translations.

"Tuṇivu" is one of the words which has undergone a drastic change in meaning. Verse 366 of Kuruntokai is in the form of the utterance of a mother. She laments after her daughter had eloped, that she had failed to know before hand her decision to go with her lover. The term tuṇivu meant in old Tamil intention or resolve. Unfortunately D. Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai translate as, "Her daring is no mistake". The compound word "Kurumakal" in Kuruntokai (89) has been translated as 'Short woman' by David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai. The Phrase 'Melliyaḷ Kurumakal' should have been rendered as, softminded young girl'.

One of the most prominent errors noticed in the translations of the Caṅkam classics is this mistranslation of the polysemous words. These are but a few among them.

Failure to identify Plants and Animals

As nature plays a prominent role in the classics, there are abundant references to plants and animals. A translator should have a thorough knowledge of the plants and animals. Though the scholars who translated the classics have done this satisfactorily, occasional lapses are noticeable. For instance, A.V. Subramaniya Aiyar says that Kuriñci is a large tree in the hill slopes (Ref: Appendix 1, Narrinai)

While Atumpu is a creeper, David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai call it a tree in their translation of Kuruntokai. (243)

Prof. Ponnaiah identifies, the small plant 'Maral' as a thorny tree (Translation of Akanānūru 49).

Peacock that lays eggs

There are references to animals of both sexes. The reader should differentiate between them carefully. Even the seasoned translator and a scholar very proficient in English has translated the word "Mayil" in verse No.38 of Kuruntokai as peacock. He should have translated it as peafowl, or a pea-hen because, the poet says that the bird had laid its eggs on the rock. David Ludden and Shanmugam also commit this error. This has been already referred to in another context also.

Omission of words impairs the charm of the Poem

Economy of words is a marked feature of the Caṅkam classics. The poets chose only the words which they felt essential to express the emotions appropriate to the situations. The commentators as well as the translators should take care that they do not omit any word in the text. The omission may impair the meaning or the charm of the poem.

Illustration

Let us discuss the omission of a word in the translation of verse (123) of Kuruntokai. It is addressed to the heroine. The speaker is her friend. The hero stands near the fence and overhears her words. It is the period of clandestine love. The friend expresses her concern over the failure of the visit of the hero at the appointed place and hour. She says as follows :

"The flowering grove of dark-stemmed Punnai trees is desolate without our lover;
He has not yet come; but the boats
of our brother. Who had gone to catch
Many a variety of fishes will shortly return".

David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai render this portion of the poem thus :

"As the flowering grove of black-stemmed *punnai* trees weeps in loneliness he has not come : and soon the boat of my brothers, who went fishing for loads of fish will return".

The phrase "*Innum Vārār*" in the original is rendered in my translation as "he has not yet come". In the translation of David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai, it is, "he has not come". They have missed the word "*Innum*" which is very essential. This word expresses the deep concern of the girls over the absence of the hero at the appointed hour. The phrase "*Innum vārār*:" suggests that he should have come long before and that they have been waiting for him for an unduly long time. This concern and impatience of the girls do not find expression in their rendering. They simply say that he has not come.

The cultural factor

Every race has its own culture. This finds expression in the poetry of the race. So, the commentator as well as the translator should have a fair knowledge of the culture, of the people whose poetry they attempt to translate.

G.U.Pope, an ardent lover of the Tamil language rendered into English, verses from *Puranānūru*. When he speaks of *Kōperum-Choḷan*, he narrates the situation which forced him to die facing into the North (*Vaṭakkiruttal*). As a foreign scholar, he could not understand this penance and so mistook it for a journey to the north, the banks of the Ganges. He imagined that the king died on the banks of the Ganges. (Tamil Heroic Poetry, 1999, pp. 118, 121)

G.L.Hart III, an American Tamil Scholar also gives a mistranslation of a verse from *Akanānūru* (166). In this poem, the poet describes how even the bees do not buzz the garland meant for a deity. It means that men were not allowed to pollute a thing dedicated to gods. Unaware of this religious belief of the ancient Tamils Hart renders the few lines in *Akanānūru* as follows :-

"At the entrance of the city (*Vēlūr*) a swarm of striped and spotted bees does not taste the garland of fragrant clusters, sprinkled with perfume water and goes instead to the great sacrifice for the fearsome god".

In fact the poet has described in the poem how the bees avoided to buzz the wreath meant for a deity. Through this description, the poet conveys the fact that the ancient Tamils considered polluting in any manner a thing meant for god was a taboo.

Faulty rendering mars the beauty of the Poem

Close study of the original text is a basic necessity in translation. Failure to do this will result in the faulty rendering of the poem. Verse 2 of Akanānūru is a beautiful poem by Kapilar. In this, he describes a mountain scene. The transliteration of the passage runs thus.

Koḷilai vālai Kōṇmiku Peruṇikulai Ūhuru finkani
 Uṇṇunart tatutta cāral palāvin cuḷaiyoṭu Ūḷpaṭu
 Pārai neṭuññicunai viḷainta tēral
 Ariyātu uṇṭa kaṭuvan ayalvaḷar
 Kari vaḷar cāntam ēral cellātu
 Naru vi aṭukattu makilintu kaṇṭaṭukkum

The translation of the present writer is as follows :

“O lord of the mountain
 where a male monkey
 Drinks mistaking for water
 The intoxicating beverage that gets
 Duly fermented in the deep spring
 Amidst rocks, out of the sweet fruit
 That fell off the heavy bunches
 Of a banana tree of fertile leaves
 And the sweet juice
 Of the drupes of jack fruit in the hill side -
 The fruit which prevent one who tasted them
 From tasting any other fruit,
 And enjoys blissful sleep
 On the bed of fragrant blooms
 Laid in several layers,
 Disabled from climbing up
 A nearly sandal tree entwined by pepper vines”

Following is rendering of Prof. Ponnaiah :

“Oh lord of the hilly land where the male monkey
 Unintentionally eats the sweet ripened fruits
 Hanging in big clusters from rich
 leaved plantain trees
 Along with the Jack fruits
 In your hill-slopes which attract all eaters
 (With their deliciousness)

And the honey found in the long rills
on ranges of rock
And does not go for its rest up the sandal trees
entwined with pepper vines”.

This rendering is faulty in more than one sense.

- (1) The monkey did not eat the fruits. It merely drank the juice fermented inside the hill.
- (2) This monkey did not taste any honey. The Tēral mentioned here is the fruit-juice.
- (3) The excellence of the fruits is expressed by the phrase “uṇṇunarattatutta”. The translator has left this phrase untranslated.
- (4) The phrase ‘ayalvaḷar’ is missing in this rendering. The intoxicating nature of the fruit juice is expressed by this vital phrase.
- (5) While the monkey was disabled from climbing the tree, the translation says that it did not go for resting.
- (6) The animal cannot eat many jack fruits and cannot rest on many tree branches at the same time.
- (7) The full moon (Urkoṇṭanru) is mistaken for the crescent moon. Urkoṇṭanru means obtained its full growth. The translation says that the crescent flooded the village with its light. The reference to the fullmoon denotes the advent of the wedding season. This excellent suggestion is missing here.
- (8) The translator says that the confidante of the heroine is under the strict vigil of parents while it is the heroine who is under the vigil of the elders.

In short, the translator has miserably failed to show the genius of Kapilar, the most renowned of the Caṅkam poets. One of the best poems of that age unfortunately stands robbed of its charm.

Meaning totally sacrificed

Very often the translators sacrifice the meaning of the poems or part, of the poems. For example P.T. Srinivasa Aiyangar, the renowned author of ‘History of the Tamils’ gives a distorted picture of the wedding ceremony of the ancient Tamils. He misconstrued the text (Poem 136 of Akanānūru) perhaps owing to the nonavailability of a dependable commentary.

The part of the long poem in transliteration, its meaning and the rendering of the above scholar are as follows :

“Menpū vākaip punpurak kavattilaip,
 Palañkanru karitta payampamal arukat
 Talañku kural vānin talaippeyarku ĩnra
 Maññuru Mañi annaMā italppāvait
 Taññaru mukaiyoṭu venñūl cūṭṭit
 Tūvuṭaip polintu mēvarattuvanri”

(Lines 10-15)

The forked leaves with coarse dorsal side of the soft flowered vāka and the cool and fragrant buds in the doll like rhizome of Aruku grass of dark blades resembling blue gems newly washed, which had grown well in the low-land, thanks to the first showers and which was eaten by adolescent calves, were strung in a white thread and worn in the wrist of the bride as protective cord by the kin. The bride was robed in her wedding garments” (A. Dakshinamurthy).

The distorted picture

“The image to be worshipped made of big flower petals, clear like a gem that has been well-washed, was placed on the soft vāka flower with the double leaf whose backside is bright and the aruku grass which grows in the low-land when the raring clouds pour the first rain and which is eaten by calves. It was decked (the image) with cool, sweet flower buds and white thread, clothed with holy cloth, so as to look grand”.

In this rendering, the vital word pāvai (the root of the aruku grass) is misconstrued. He mistook it for an image of some god. The idea of the protective cord is fully absent. The wedding garment of the bride is mistaken for the holy cloth related to the god.

Pathos becoming bathos

Verse No. 220 in *Purañānūru* is the lament of the poet Pottiyār, a close friend of Kōpperuñcōlan. When the king fasted into death owing to a difference of opinion with his sons, many of his friends joined him in empathy and willingly courted death. But Pottiyār was advised by the king to join him in the other world only after the poet’s wife had begotten a son. After the death of his king-friend, the poet returns to Uraiyūr the Capital city and stands tear-bedewed on the sight of the empty courtyard where the king held his court. The poet compares himself to a mahout who had lost the huge elephant which he had reared from its infancy, feeding it with immense quantities of cooked rice with motherly affection.

The transliteration of the poem as well as the translation of Prof. Ponnaiah are given here :

“Peruncōru payantu palyāṇṭu puranta
 Peruṅkalirū iḷanta paital pākan,
 Atucērntu alkiya aluṅkal ālai
 Veḷil pālākak kaṇṭu kaluṇtāṅku
 Kalankinēn allau yānē
 Polantart tērvāṇ kiḷḷi pōkiya
 Pēricai Mūtūr maṇram kaṇṭē”

Like a sad elephant keeper
 Who has lost his mighty elephant
 Which earned him ample food
 And supported for many years
 And shed tears on seeing
 The post in the noisy place of tether
 Where it had stayed, in a forlorn state,
 O great Chōla king, possessing
 The golden garland and the chariot!
 When I saw your palace - front
 In your ancient town of excelling fame
 With you missing there,
 I was sorrow - stricken,
 Was I not sorrow - stricken?

Prof. Ponnaiah's translation deviates from the original. The emotion expressed in it is free of any selfishness. The loss of the mahout is equal to that of a mother who has lost her beloved child which died in its prime youth. But Ponnaiah says that the elephant supported its keeper for many years and so he became sorrow - stricken owing to the loss of his sustainer.* So his rendering suggests that the sorrow was born of his selfishness. If we extend the comparison according to Prof. Ponnaiah, the poet lamented not out of his sublime feeling of friendship but out of the loss of benefactor. Such an interpretation is obviously uncharitable.

Similes Misunderstood

There are instances where the translators misunderstand the similes and metaphors and give faulty renderings. Verse number 8 of Kuruntokai has an excellent simile. The verse is in the form of the address of a hetaira. She ridicules her lover, the hero as follows :

* Prof. Jothimuthu also takes this in this sense. Ref. puṇānūru, CLS, Chennai, p.217.

"The hero in our home
 speaks high of us,
 But back in his home,
 He acts every word
 of his son's mother.
 He is like a mirror - image
 That lifts its legs and arms
 When one lifts one's legs and arms
 Standing before the mirror!!"

David Ludden and Shanmugam Pillai render this poem as follows :

"He flattered me with big words
 When he was here,
 But now, in their house,
 he lifts his arms and legs,
 like an image in the mirror -
 a puppet to every wish
 of his son's mother".

The simile in the poem does not say that the hero lifts his arms and legs. It only says how he carries out every command of his wife, without even the least resistance.

A.K. Ramanujan renders as follows :

"Now, back in his own,
 When others raise their hands and feet,
 he will raise his too;
 like a doll
 in the mirror
 he will shadow
 every last wish
 of his son's dear mother."

This rendering also says that the hero lifts his hands and feet as others in his house do. But the poem does not say so. It is merely a simile to his behaviour.

The rising crescent amidst the sea

In a verse of *Kuruntokai* (315) the poet compares a running brook on a hill to the crescent moon that emerges from the sea.

Text: "Elutaru matiyam kaṭal kaṇṭāṅku
 Oḷuku Vellaṛuvi oṅku malai"

The curved stream is compared to the curved crescent and the dark hill is compared to the blue-hued sea. Prof. Ponnaiah unfortunately fails to capture this idea and gives a flawed translation. His rendering follows :

"The flowing white streams
which swell like the sea
seeking the rising moon!"

It is well-known that tides are high on the fullmoon day. The Professor mistook the crescent for the full-moon. It shows that he has not followed the scholarly commentary of U. Ve. Cāminātha Aiyar. As a result, the richness of imagination of the poet is completely lost.

The rope and the Pods

In another verse (7) in the same anthology, the poet compares the rattling of the dry vākaipods, beaten by the summer wind to the reverberation of the drum, beaten when an Āryan acrobat performs tight-rope walking. Unfortunately the same Professor fails to understand the meaning of the text.

In the original, the poet merely says that the couple is passing through a forest rich in bamboos. The vital word Pārai is missing in the rendering. It is a disastrous omission.

These are but a few errors chosen for illustrating various kinds of error found in the available translations. The reason for this is quite obvious. Most of the translators are not students of Tamil literature. They are drawn from other fields. Out of their interest in literature, they have done these translations. We have to thank them for having come forward to do this useful service. However defective their renderings be, they have served a purpose. They have introduced the greatness of the Tamil classics to the world at large. After all, all translations are incomplete in a sense. None can boast to have given a cent percent error-free translation. All translations are tentative. They serve as stepping stones for achieving perfection in the future. As already pointed out, most of the translators are from other branches of studies. Had they sought the help of competent Tamil scholars, they could have fared better. Had they carefully gone through the available commentaries, their works could have been faithful to the original. Even institutions engaged in translating works to utilise the services of competent Tamil Scholars, in comparing the original and the translation. But they did not fail to appoint a language supervisor for English. The author's proficiency of the English language cannot be questioned. But this alone is not enough. Giving a wrong information in a beautiful style will never serve any good purpose.

While we bow gratefully to the pioneer translators, yet we feel that we are duty-bound to point out the errors and mistakes and also occasional blunders committed by them more often than not unwittingly. These are great men as well as path-finders. The roles played by them are indeed laudable. In one sense they were handicapped. The abundant material with which we are blessed were unavailable to them. They have strained every nerve of their's to produce their best. Modern translators are in a better situation. But most of them are unable to make hay even though the sun shines brilliantly.

Anybody who wants to be a translator should closely follow the original. He should understand the meaning and the spirit of the original with the assistance of a competent scholar in the original language and literature. For the English part, he should consult a competent English scholar. In short, it is better that a translation project is undertaken by a team of experts. There were times when the Tamil scholars were equally proficient in English also. Now things have greatly changed. It is regrettable that most of the Tamil scholars do not take interest in learning other languages. We people should try to learn at least our sister languages namely Telugu, Kannadam and Malayalam. It is desirable to learn one or two northern languages also. This will go a long way to propagate Tamil ideas all through India and the world at large.



TRANSLATING RELIGIOUS TEXTS

Dr. N. Ramani

Is translation a legitimate area of human endeavour? The following are the titles of some of the articles and books on the subject:

The way of the Translator is Hard; The Trials of a Translator; Translation or Paraphrase; The Precarious Profession; Translation - The art of Failure; The Trouble with Translation; The Polite Lie; The Hazardous Art of Mistranslation; The Torments of Translation; Translation as Parody; Translators? Traitors?; If This be Treason; Translation and its Possibilities.

The Titles cited above go only to show how translation has traditionally and consistently been maligned.

A more serious problem than antipathy and pedantry is the confusion in people's minds as to what constitutes a good translation. Is it how literal or idiomatic is a translation that makes it good? Or is it the meaning that is best communicated in translation that makes it good? In terms of both in their biased form, there are dangers of literality, blindness, bias and excessive freedom either individually or in various combinations. Thus expressions like *Literal Vs Free; Translation Vs Paraphrase; Words Vs Sense* have become the battle cry for those who wish to defend their own work or criticise the works of others.

It would therefore be in place to clarify some key terms involved; translate, interpret and paraphrase. The word 'translate' literally means 'to bear or carry across'. In the context of translating a text, it means 'to turn from one language into another, to change into another language, retaining the sense; to render; to express in other words; to paraphrase.'

The Oxford English Dictionary quotes Lock: "..... to translate and not to define, when we change two words of the same significance, one for another." In this sense, to translate is to interpret, explain, express one thing in terms of another.

The word 'interpret' comes from two components, 'between' and 'to spread abroad'. The word now means 'to expound the meaning of; to render clear or explicit; to elucidate or to explain' (OED). In modern English

'interpret' means 'immediate oral translation of a message'. In the case of written texts 'translation' is more or less literal rendering and to interpret is indicating a translation plus commentary on the translation.

Inherent in both the definitions of both 'translate' and 'interpret' is the concept that regardless of the 'form' used, what is carried across from one language to another is the 'meaning' of the original writer or speaker. If that meaning is lost - whether by addition, omission or distortion, then neither translation nor interpretation takes place.

To paraphrase is to tell or say the 'same' thing in other words. The word was first used in the English language by Udall in AD 1548; "a paraphrase is a plainsetting forth of a text or sentence more at large." However, the Greek word from which paraphrase derives was used in the sense of perverting or misinterpreting the meaning of something. From the strictly linguistic point of view, paraphrase is distinguished in three particular ways:

It is intralingual rather than interlingual - that is, it is another way of saying the same thing in the same language.

It is rigorous in that there are no changes in the semantic components; no addition, no deletion, no skewing of relationships between the same elements.

Specifically as it relates to back-transformation, it is aimed at a restatement at a particular level, that of the kernels.

Let me proceed further, skipping technical details.

If complete meaningfulness and full intelligibility are the objectives of a good translation, is it possible to formulate the fundamental principles of translation? In a way, Yes.

1. The translator should have understood perfectly the content and intention of the author whom he is translating;
2. The translator should avoid the tendency to translate word for word, for to do so is to destroy the meaning of the original and to ruin the beauty of the expression.
3. The translator should have a perfect knowledge of the language from which he is translating and an equally excellent knowledge of the language into which he is translating.
4. The translator should employ the forms of speech in common usage.

5. Through his choice and order of words, the translator should produce a total overall effect with appropriate tone.

This takes us to three basic kinds of translation:

Metaphrase, in which word for word and line by line rendering is resorted to.

Paraphrase, in which the author's work is kept in view but only the sense rather than words are followed.

Imitation, in which the translator takes the liberty of varying both the words and the sense and also leaves both if he or she feels that the spirit of the original requires it.

It is within the ambit of such a theoretical construct, that I would like to speak about translating religious texts.

Translating religious texts has a far greater implication than just the literary. Religious experience, of all human experiences, is the most intensely and intimately lived. Religious literature makes up a profound and public source from which it is possible to draw a general and universal description of such intense and intimate moments of life.

The content of religious literature varies from the expression of simple awe at the splendor of God or the Being to elaborating on profound philosophic discoveries through prayer, devotion, spiritual wandering, spiritual growth and maturity, steady intensification of spirit, sanctification of an original faith, sense of desolation, doubts of the sceptic, confusion of an unchosen direction and post commitment bliss or tension. So anyone who has even the remotest desire to translate religious texts not only comes across vastly divergent literature but also faces problems beyond literary or linguistic considerations through every moment of his chosen assignment. And yet, a workable definition of religious literature can be worded as follows: It is the philosophic art of disclosing the general structure of lived experience as related to aspects integral to living and beyond.

There is of course religious literature that purports to propound a philosophy from the institutionally theistic to the personally discovered.

Sivagnana Pōtam with its 12 sūtras occurs immediately to one's mind as an instance. Sivagnana Sittiyar with its twin aspect of 'supakkam' and 'parapakkam' which are in effect establishing a philosophy or perspective and refuting the other or others is another instance of this type of religious text. On the Vaishnavite side, we have 'acharya hirutayam.'

Secondly, there is the literature of prayer and appeal. There is an instance of a sloga in the Rig Vēda in which the prayer is to bless one's land with showers and at the same to render the neighbour's lands dry; one's own cow to be blessed with a full udder and the other's cow denied the privilege. Literature of prayer in different degrees makes appeal for the fulfillment of the temporal or the aesthetic or the spiritual.

“வல்லமை தாராயோ இந்த வையகம் பயனுற வாழ்வதற்கே”

Is not culture specific? “Lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud” is an equally intense prayer both of which are however by implication different from the prayer mentioned earlier.

“காணி நிலம் வேண்டும்” - is another instance of the literature of prayer

Thirdly, we have the devotional literature. Devotion to God expresses itself in many forms. If for instance, we take that terrific sonnet of Hopkins. “Thou art indeed Just Lord,” the saving grace of the poem is the earnest prayer at the end; “send my roots rain”. Thus the literature of prayer and supplication comes to make up another form of religious literature. Many passages can be cited. There is total resignation in,

- “நன்றே செய்வாய் பிழை செய்வாய். நானோ அதற்கு நாயகன்.”
- “வேண்டத்தக்கது அறிவோய் நீ வேண்டி நீ யாது அருள் செய்தால்... யானும் அதுவே வேண்டினால் வேண்டும் பரிசொன்று உலகென்னிலும் அதுவும் நின் உறுப்பன்றே.”

The above lines bring out the futility of prayer for anything specific and temporal, however it may appear to be great and significant.

There is then the literature of theistic apperception of God in concrete terms. The best illustration that appears to my mind is Jayadevar's ‘asthaphathi’ translated into English by me as follows through the exquisite rendering of the same in Tamil by Kannadasan and Asha.

The maid tells Kannan:

Kesava! Do you know how Radha has languished? She is not able to bear the weight of even the golden chain around her neck. She faints and keeps fainting often.

Kesava! Thou standest in hiding; she's in a fit of fainting!

I smeared cold sandal paste on her breasts. She shouted, “Oh, it is scorching.”

*"Why do you add poison to my woe?" she rebukes me.
Her heart is afire; her breath is as hot fire.
Kesava! Thou standest in hiding; she's in a fit of fainting!*

*Kanna! what desert is this of yours?
You're so deceived by a languish so lean Kasava.....
Kesava! Thou standest in hiding; she's in a fit of fainting!*

She thought of dragging you down to herself with the net of her eyes. She started shedding tears realising that Manivannan has escaped.

Her heart has been wounded; her eyes are sunk in tears; Radha has become one like a worm fallen into fire.

Kesava! Thou standest in hiding; she's in a fit of fainting!

I made her lie on the soft couch of the tender leaves of the mango tree. She cried. "Oh! why did you put fire on my cot?"

Her misery is not just that little!

Kesava! Thou standest in hiding; she's in a fit of fainting!

Oh you who had held the hill as an umbrella! who had saved the cowherds!

*Gopala who kisses the Gopians!
Kanna, who had routed out the whole clan of Kamsa'
Rain cloud you are and you pour your grace on the devotees!
Won't you save Radha?*

Kannan hears the words of the maid. He too falls into longing. He tells her about his own longing and asks her to bring Radha to him immediately.

The maid goes to Radha and tells her.

*Radha, see did I Kannan!
He is where the breeze rocks the cradle;
Where red flowers spread sweet fragrance;
Manmatan (the God of Love) who torments lovers in separation,
torments Kannan too.
Separated and faltering in gait,
Vanamali is in a fit of faint*

*As the God of Love shoots his arrows,
The moon saps his life,
Kannan is languishing in loneliness
Separated and faltering in gait,
Vanamali is in a fit of faint.*

*Midnight!
The bees hum; the flowers are sleeping to the lullaby of the
humming;
But Madavan is not able to sleep.
He roams here and there; longs for you;
Separated and faltering in gait,
Vanamali is in a fit of faint.*

*He has left his house for good. He has spread a bed of wild flowers
and is waiting in the wilderness.
His mouth calls for ever, "Radha,..... Radha....."
On a flower bed spread on grassy cot, unsleeping smiling with his
bright teeth shining, he is languishing in lust.
Separated and faltering in gait,
Vanamali is in a fit of faint.*

*If the koels perched on trees during the night shiver their feathers,
he runs here and there with desire to see if his Radha is coming to
him.
Though he hasn't found you, lady, he hasn't lost hope.
This faint night is the right time for him to meet you.
Separated and faltering in gait,
Vanamali is in a fit of faint.*

*When a thunder roars in the distant sky, he says, "This is the
sound of Radha's anklet."
He keeps on praising your beauty thinking again and again
how he embraced you in the forest.
Separated and faltering in gait,
Vanamali is in a fit of faint.*

*Wearing the silk, with fragrant hair, the handsome hero goes in
search of a place suited to play with you in desire. The lady love
that you are, follow him and appease with your charm his lust
that burst out knocking at the sides of his heart.
The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vanamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in playful
embrace.*

*He plays your name repeatedly on his flute.
The mildly fragrant and soft flowers kindle in him the desire to
hold your soft (fragrant) body in an embrace.
The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vanamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in a
playful embrace.*

*He will be awaiting you
with his eyes fixed on the road,
with the bird flapping its wings by his side,
with the green creepers dancing gently,
with eagerness of expectation of your arrival.
The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vanamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in a playful
embrace.*

*The tinkling anklet-ring creates a havoc
It stands in the way of our intercourse
The night closes dressed in black
The darkling bower is the right place in such a moment
know you this and give up your hesitation.
The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vanamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in a
playful embrace.*

*The garland clinging to Murahari's chest is like a flock of white
birds along the dark sky.
You with a sparkling waist!
Give up being coy and enjoin Him who has come to dispel your
distress. This is the right moment and give up your hesitation.
The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vanamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in a
playful embrace.*

*The cot is spread by the Goddess of Earth. As soon as you lie on it,
remove your girdle. Unite with him in lust.
He will open his lotus eyes and drink your beauty.
He will be waiting for you with a mouth gaped in passion. Embrace
him who embraces you. Let him taste the sweetness of your body.
Let him get whatever he seeks; Let nothing be hidden from him.*

Unite with him and let him have a feast of love like a bee feasting on the flowers.

*The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vanamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in a playful embrace.*

He cannot wait until tomorrow. You, smiling like a sheath of flowers, get set and go.

Go and take in the heart of the bull to keep like a jewel in a glass case. Madhuhari will also become happy at heart, then.

This is the right moment to faint in passion aroused by magnetic intercourse. Get going with no hesitation.

*The blissful breeze blows by the river banks,
For Vannamali to hold the breasts of affectionate gopies in a playful embrace.*

There is then the experiential literature.

“யாவையும் எவரும் தானாய் அவாவர் சமயந்தோறும்
தோய்விலன் புலனைந்துக்கும் சொல்படான் உணர்வின் மூர்த்தி
ஆவிசேர் உயிரினுள்ளான் ஆதுமோர் பற்றில்லாத
பாவனையதனைக் கூடல் அவனையும் கூடலாமே.”

That is an appeal for a certain experience realised personally. The key word here is ‘pāvanai’ - an attitude, a pose, a poise to be experienced to be made the experienced reality. It is this kind of poetry that I would choose to place at the top rung of religious literature. Such literature is to be found in quite a few of the Zen works.

Thus a certain horizontal segmentation of religious literature becomes possible, not in terms of the intensity and earnestness there in which is likely to be the same, but in terms of the demands made on language and composition while making such literature and that is exactly the concern of the translator of the religious texts.

It is comparatively easy to translate a prayer from one language to another insofar as prayer more often is circumscribed by the general human desire for fulfilments of the temporal or the aesthetic and the spiritual in terms of tangible objectification. The proposition becomes less easy while attempting to translate a text propounding a philosophy or expressing the euphoria of devotion or achieving a certain apperception. For example.

“சிறும் சிறுகாவே வந்துள்ளைச் சேவித்துள்
பொற்றாமனையடி போற்றும் பொருள் கேளாய்

பெற்றம் மேய்த்துண்ணும் குலத்தில் பிறந்து நீ
 குற்றேவல் எங்களைக் கொள்ளாமல் போகாது
 இற்றைப் பறை கொள்வான் அன்று. காண் கோவிந்தா
 எற்றைக்கும் ஏழேழ் பிறவிக்கும் உன்தன்னோடு
 உற்றோமேயாவோம் உனக்கே நாமாட் செப்வோம்
 மற்றை நம் காமங்கள் மாற்றேலோரெம்பாவாய்.”

The above song of Andal is a song of prayer that renders itself easily to be ferried across to English though we have certain difficulties with *erraiikkum ēlēl piravikkum* and *marrai nam kamankal marrēlōrempavay*.

"We access you during the small hours
 In obeisance, we praise Your golden feet.
 The proceeds-
 Our services to You, born of the herdsmen clan,
 Not to be disowned.
 Not the day's gift of the pāvai,
 But several seven births of affinity with you;
 Services unto you for ever and ever.
 Free us from the fetters of desires-otherwise."

So also does it become possible to translate 'Thee God, I come from' by Hopkins:

It becomes difficult when the experience becomes more complex and the piece of composition becomes more composite. To illustrate the same and to demonstrate the stages of such translation is the burden of my next session with you, which incidentally also will illustrate how imagery and metaphor lend themselves to be translated.

LECTURE II

The text of the poem taken for discussing the problem of translating images and metaphor:

மகா காளியின் புகழ்

"காலமாம் வனத்திலண்டக் கோலமா மரத்தின் மீது
 காளிசக்தி யென்றபெயர் கொண்டு - ரீங்
 காரமிட் டிலவுமொரு வண்டு - தழல்
 காலும்விழி நீலவன்ன மூல அத்து வாக்களெனும்
 கால்களா றுடையதெனக் கண்டு - மறை
 காணுமுனி வோருரைத்தார் பண்டு

மேலுமாகிக் கீழுமாகி வேறுள திசையுமாகி
 விண்ணுமாகி மண்ணு மானசக்தி வெள்ளம் - இந்த
 விந்தையெல்லா மாங்கதுசெய் கள்ளம் - பழ
 வேதமா யதன்முனுள்ள நாதமாய் விளங்குமிந்த
 வீரசக்தி வெள்ளம் விழும் பள்ளம் - ஆக
 வேண்டுநித்த மென்றனேழை யுள்ளம்."



TRANSLATION - THEORY AND PRACTICE

A NOTE ON SOME PROBLEMS IN INDIAN POETRY IN ENGLISH

Dr. C.N. Srinath

The importance of translation especially in a multiple - language situation like ours need not be exaggerated. That it promotes national integration, cultural unity and the concept of nationhood may be secondary but really speaking, enhances the validity of translation activity in our country. Considering the urgency of its salutary effects one is inclined to propose the founding of a new University exclusively devoted to Translation.

It is amusing how scholars have looked at translation from their own angles. If to Croce translator is the falsifier of the original, Catford thinks that finding equivalents is the major task of a translator, for Theodore Savory it is art, for Jacobson it is craft and for Nida it is science. Horst Frenz feels that it is neither creative nor imitative art but stands between the two. And Frost, the American poet, feels 'poetry is what is lost in translation'. Peter Newmark tries to be realistic when he makes a close observation that 'the basic loss of meaning is on a continuum between over-translation and under-translation'. But the text is an area that is shaped both by author and reader - intention and destination. The act of creativity is so complex and this is further complicated by translation from one text to the other, which has a different author-reader ambience from the original. Since language is a speaking tree that is nourished by both geography and history, which is grown in a soil, a weather, wind, rain, water, breeze and the music of the land and people - a text in that language is afterall a manifestation of crisis and climax. To translate that to a different language of creative climax is more difficult than the original creation in any language. Hence the problems are too many but never general. All the problems of translation are specific, text-oriented. Mere awareness of theory and scholarship of translation studies will not help, to translate one word or phrase.

Translation as an activity of the transcendence of text, that is, as an attempt to break the barriers of languages and create a shared cultural homogeneity, has a noble motive but this strikes at the root of individual identity of cultures/literatures. But then what happens in translation is give and take, a compensatory balance and a comparative approach.

Translation as criticism is the best way to understand a text as it is the critical creative perception of the text - a poem should beget a poem.

Such is the power of translation that even Plato in his Republic had to banish poets because they were in a way bad translators, from the ideal to the actual. In the West the greatest translation activity was generated by the Bible. The various versions and translations of the Bible carried out for several centuries acquired a religious and political power. Translation as an instrument of political and economic power is evident today, in the context of globalization.

In our own tradition translation from Sanskrit classics into various Indian languages was an act of counteracting the hegemony of the monolithic culture. It paved way for the growth of a horizontal plural culture nourished by folk-imagination. Even Buddhist philosophy though largely derived from the Upanishads acquired a new twist because of the dialect, Pali which was close to the common man. Translation implies the meeting of at least two cultures. It is not for nothing Helen Rapp, who was involved in the BBC production of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* observes rightly: "When you translate from one language into another, you are translating in however a subtle way the historical, geographic, climatic, religious, emotional experience of one group of people, for the benefit of another group".

Now coming to strategies of translation which are wrongly described as imitation, adaptation, paraphrasing that amounts to distortion, travesty, under-translation etc., the theory of equivalence is so irrelevant that the observation "words that glow in one language need not necessarily fire their literal equivalents" is so appropriate.

Let us take a look at some translation problems in Indian poetry in English.

The Problems of translation from Indian languages into English are not very different from the poetry written in English in original by Indian poets. To begin with a specific example, even a poet like A.K. Ramanujan uses the western word 'sauce' for 'curry'.

Interesting examples from C.P. Brown's translation of *Sumati Satakam* (which the present author himself has translated) will serve our purpose to an extent in avoiding distortions and inaccuracies.

Take C.P. Brown's Version :

"He moves not his lip
He refrains from words flowing with honey and nectar

He is a solitary
 A deaf and blind corpse
 Swollen up with the disease of authority
 is indeed a shocking object."

Read our new translation :

"Feigning speech but tight-lipped
 Withholding sweet word in stony silence
 He is a power swollen corpse,
 Deaf and blind, to sight him is sin, O Sumathi."

The point to be considered here is not that the latter is more poetic but it is also more accurate, much closer to the original. See how in Brown's version the following verse becomes loose-footed, lacks the sharpness and clarity of the original.

"A man's wrath is the cause of his death;
 But his patience shall gain him protection, favor and
 kindred.
 one's own enjoyment is esteemed as heaven;
 Anyone's grief they (Verify) consider as hell." (No.43)

This is how the same verse is rendered in our new translation :

"My anger is my foe
 My poise is my blessing
 Compassion my kin
 My joy is my heaven
 My sorrow my hell, truly O Sumathi."

It is agreed that it is difficult to communicate in English the remarkably simple, epigrammatical tightness of expression which comes out effortlessly in the native idiom but one can see that Brown has missed the original pulse.

In addition to such departures at a deeper level we find glaring distortions and western equivalents which are culturally alien to the spirit of the original. Take for example, Brown's equivalent of 'Venus in bed' to 'Rambha in sex' with reference to the husband's recognition of a wife's multifarious relationships with him. 'Venus' is alien culturally speaking and hence jars on the Indian ear. Similarly in his verse (No.42) the translated version reads: "Your own wealth is to you the treasures of Plutus, and one's own poverty truly is considered as the poverty of the whole world. She indeed whom you love is Venus, such is the case".

What the present translation has attempted to do is to be accurate and closer to the original, a loyalty which sometimes gets diluted in a different language but then it is the business of the translator to see that his version should serve both as a mirror and a lamp. That certainly is the objective and hope. It may be self-evident in the translation of verse No.42 here:

"One's wealth is akin to Indra's prosperity
 One's poverty the bankruptcy of the three worlds
 One's own death nothing but deluge
 The one you have courted is Rambha
 Surely, O Sumathi."

As for the general problems of translation from Telugu into English, one can say they are probably not altogether different from those that a translator has to encounter while dealing with English vis-a-vis any Indian language. Here, in the present case certainly, the rhyme scheme is sacrificed, the opening alphabet word is ignored, the ease and natural flow of native wisdom enriched by a great tradition is bound/released by the English language, to mention just one or two. Hence structurally and thematically it cannot exactly be the same - that would be as futile as translating to wit, 'a tip-toeing breeze over jasmine' into 'a wind blowing on a patch of jasmine garden' or the other way, 'the jasmine sucking all the air around it to blow its scent'. It is, indeed a razor's edge-to be or not to be is the translator's eternal predicament but the translator is a martyr who risks both distortion and disgrace and this calls for courage and even a dogged persistence, even a fool-hardiness in the present Indian context when we cannot afford to cheat our destiny by bemoaning a lack of tools or equipment, for eternity.

General concepts and expression which have become inseparable part of our ancient tradition, the philosophical and the aesthetic concepts such as Dharma, Rasa, Dhvani, Manas, Chit, Vakrokti, Srngara, Bhakthi, and so on cannot find adequate equivalents. So also cultural expressions like Aarati, Rongoli, Thoranam, Seemantham (celebration of woman's pregnancy before delivery) or Bananthi (post-delivery period) which has rich domestic and cultural associations cannot find English equivalents obviously. Any attempt to find literal equivalents would ruin translation and much of the discredit that translation is burdened with is because of such juvenile attempts to find equivalents.

For example : Silver fish is called 'Rajat Matsya', necktie is 'kanthalangoti' or spectacles 'netrak', look so odd and contrived.

Our 'you' is a combination of the singular and the honorific 'plural' depending on the context but this difference is bulldozed by the English

'you'. Similarly the English 'cousin' is a road-roller because our relationships are specific, descriptive and intricately interlinked.

How to find an equivalent for the Tamil 'Vara madari' or the swear words like 'Mane-hala' in Kannada which when translated into English 'destroyer of home or property' sounds so accusative but in the original it is not meant seriously, it can even suggest a levity, it can even be endearing. Some swear words in the original like 'son of a widow' sounds so offensive which in Kannada can even mean a term of appreciation sometimes.

The problem of literal translation in different spheres poses a big problem in official jargon. The Kannada words for Police, Sub-Registrar, Secretariat, PWD, Police station, etc are so artificial and jaw breaking that hamper the growth of a language. It is one of the examples and warnings to show how a language has to face such unintended hostilities from within, in its growth and development.

Coming back to poetry, metaphor as we all know is the very soul of poetry, the abstract concept that has a transcendent glow after being denuded of all trappings - how to translate such a concept? What poses problems always is not the explicit and the concrete word but the abstract, the subtle and various shades and lengthening shadows of concepts. Puns and rhymes, prefixes and suffixes, tense, gender, case, the whole grammatical order can create endless problems to a translator.

Also proverbs, because of their pithy, nutty structure. Alliteration is an essential ingredient of proverb in some languages.

For example

'Onetege sonta yenu kanta yenu?'
What is waist or voice to a camel?

(OR)

'Iddadu iddahange heledrae yeddu bandu yedhage oddaranthe'
(To say as it is, to provoke one to raise and kick on your chest)

(OR)

'Yele etto gunda'
(If you tell Gunda to clear the leaves he asks how many ate)

(OR)

'Ene Bori tharata Andase.....'
(Ask our Bori why she is whirling like wind, she replies it is temple-meal in Domasandra)

In all these cases the original flavor and precision have to be sacrificed to communicate its near meaning. In other words, translatability of poetry depends on the potentialities of specific poems. All poems are difficult to translate, some certainly impossible. The readership to whom it is meant is also important. Indian poetry of our languages translated into English for the Indian reader is much more meaningful than it is to an American or British reader.

Ultimately, all poetry is translation. The translator is as much a seer as the poet who according to Aurobindo takes us to the caverns of light.

The Hopkinsian **Inscape**, Anandavardhana's **Dhvani** and Anand Coomaraswamy's concept of **sounding** and Aurobindo's **claire-audient** word, are all as much the ingredients of translation as of poetry. The fact, as Thoreau said, should flower into Truth and the translated word is like a bird, which soars with wings in a different sky.



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FUNCTIONS OF TRANSLATION IN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. G. Balasubramanian

**Translating is "Probably the most complex type of
event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos"**

- Eugene Nida

Translating is a unique discipline, which has developed over the centuries into a wonderful branch of knowledge that is constantly involved in the mighty task of unifying the humanity into one. The world is divided by many a barrier like religion, race, nation and language etc., Before conquering a people by might, you have to lose many things. But, if you attempt to win them by their language, you are sure to win them and in the end both will stand to gain. This is achieved by the mesmeric weapon called "Translation".

"Translation is like going to another country" so says an English scholar.¹ Translation is an art which has to be learnt with devotion. It can also be classified as a science which needs a systematic study. But however, a layman's approach to translation is very simple; it is the easier way of communication with the people-who are kept at bay by the language barrier - who speak some other language, than what the layman can speak and understand. Hence, translation, as a skill cultivated through developing knowledge in two languages. (i.e.) one which gives; and which takes.

Thus, we invariably arrive at a conclusion that translation is associated with knowledge of two languages. Sometimes, it may not suffice. In addition, you have to possess some knowledge of the subject which you deal with as well as general knowledge.

The subjects which we deal with in translation may belong to a variety of fields. Each field has its own special vocabulary which you should learn progressively so that over years you can master it. Hence, each such distinctly different field will have special technical glossary and the translator shall equip himself well with such glossaries.

1. Piotr Kuhiwezak (Pronounced as Kuhichack), Director of the centre for British and comparative cultural Studies at Warwick University, Coventry, U.K. Please see an article which carried an interview with the above scholar in the Hindu dated 1.06.1997.

Translation, in the course of its functioning by a Government, warrants greater skill and exertion by way of disseminating facts and information in a variety of fields through various means. The forms of correspondence by the government machinery are many and as they emanate in English they have to be translated and simultaneously issued in Tamil which has been enthroned as the official language of our state some 42 years ago. Government order (G.O.) letter, notifications, notice, declarations and promulgations, circulars, unofficial notes, press communiques, reports and statements placed on the table of the House (Assembly) and a host of other such issuances are all rendered in Tamil by means of translation. Though the volume of original papers which are issued directly in Tamil are progressively increasing every year, still, there are a lot to be done to claim a 100% achievement by Tamil as official language.

The multiplicity of field in administration necessitates acquisition of skill and proficiency in translation. In cases where the reports emanate in Tamil they have to be rendered into English, and hence, translation in either way is always an important task. It has to be invariably a field of technical translation, because, the functions of administration are very many such as Agriculture, Irrigation, Public works, Health, Education, Housing, Industry, Labour, Energy, Environment, Social welfare, Information, Tourism, etc., Each field is a separate department of administration and it has its own jargon, apart from some common terminology which is generally used in addition to the special and Technical terms.

The functioning of a Government in a year starts from Budget. The Governor's address and Budget speech are very important publications. As per statutory requirement they are read out in the House. The Governor's Address is read out by the Governor in English and the Budget speech by the Finance Minister (at present Hon'ble Chief Minister) in Tamil. There are some 70 and add books which are printed along with the Budget Documents. Almost all of them are translated into Tamil. A majority of them are printed in dichlot (in Two languages) both in Tamil & English.²

In facilitating translation, we have aid materials like Administrative Glossary, Special Glossary, Technical Glossary and there is an array of dictionaries too, which are English-English, English-Tamil and Tamil-English. On certain occasions we come across with rare expressions and we coin Tamil equivalents to them.

2. An excerpt for a sample of printing in diglot is appended at the end.

Almost all papers and Documents placed in the Assembly are accessible to the public and they are available in both the languages. Administrative Reports and Judicial Inquiry Commission Reports are rare specimens which can provide very much information to the seekers. Moreover, certain classified documents can be feast to avid readers who happened to be research scholars. Translators also, can be happy to see a wealth of information in them regarding rendering of technical translation, apart from knowledge on the respective fields.

Learning the art of translation is not an easy joke. It has to be cultivated by hard work followed by dedication. In Government, we adopt a method of true translation or faithful translation. 'Nothing shall be omitted, nor added' shall be the principle. Translation has to be expressive and explicit so that we never land in ambiguity. In certain cases we have to infer things, because, in English, precise form is understood, but not in Tamil.³

Translation intends to carry the message and its purports. In administration, the utterance shall not pave way to litigation. Hence, the correct presumptions/meanings may sometimes be supplied in brackets. In case of doubts, the original expression (in English) will also accompany.

In this Introduction, I have attempted to present 'What is what' as for as a Government translation is concerned. I am also enclosing an exercise on Administrative Glossary and a list of contextual expression and meanings. (*Vide Annexure I & II*). A few model translations are also appended to this article, each one chosen from different fields.

Translations have to be transcreations if they are to be called 'successful'. But, in government translation, the scope is very limited, though there are few occasions to relish, if they happen to be quotes from literature or excerpts of thoughts and speech of eminent persons. In formulation of policy, in expressions of welfare schemes such passages do occur. There will be moments of happiness to reminisce.

* * * * *

3. Gender sensitization programme, -மகளிர் மற்றும் குழந்தைகளை கனிவுடன் நடத்துவதற்கு காவலர்களுக்குப் பயிற்சியளித்தல்.

Annexure I - Contextual Expressions and Meanings

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Not free from doubt | - முற்றிலும் ஐயத்துக்கிடமற்றதாக இல்லை |
| 2. It has not seen the light of the day | - அந்தப் புகார் மீது நடவடிக்கை ஏதும் எடுக்கப்படவில்லை. |
| 3. Gone further to the extent | - இன்னும் ஒருபடி மேலே சென்று |
| 4. Without further discussing on it | - இதுபற்றி மேலும் விவரிக்காமல். (விவரிக்க விரும்பவில்லை) |
| 5. Ridiculous | - இழிவானது (ஏற்புடையதல்ல) |
| 6. Not disputed | - மாற்றுக் கருத்து இல்லை (கருத்து வேறுபாடு இல்லை) |
| 7. Interested testimony | - தன்னலம் பேணும் சாட்சியம்/ பற்றுள்ள சாட்சியம் |
| 8. At any point of time | - ஏதாவதொரு சமயம்/ஒரு சமயம் இல்லாவிட்டால் ஒரு சமயம். |
| 9. To this witness, the suggestion was that he was carrying on business with his brother | - இந்த சாட்சி கூறியதை மறுத்து, 'அவர் அவருடைய சகோதரருடன் வியாபாரம் செய்து வந்தார் என்பதே உண்மை' என்று அவரிடம் தெரிவிக்கப்பட்டது. |
| 10. Skeleton of the house | - வீட்டின் சுவர்க் கட்டுமானம் |
| 11. Got the relief without prejudice | - நிவாரணத் தொகை பெற்றுக் கொண்டவர் அப்போது அதுபற்றி எவ்விதக் கருத்து முரண்பாடும் தெரிவிக்கவில்லை. |
| 12. Witness after witness | - சாட்சிகள் ஒருவர் பின் ஒருவராக |
| 13. In my considered view | - இது பற்றிச் சீர்தாக்கிப் பார்த்து நான் கூறும் கருத்தின்படி |
| 14. Did not bother | - அக்கறை காட்டவில்லை |
| 15. Uprooted from the homes | - வசித்து வந்த வீடுகளை விட்டு வெளியேறி வேறிடம் செல்ல நேரிட்டது |
| 16. Untoward incident | - விரும்பத்தகாத நிகழ்ச்சி |

Annexure II - An Exercise on Administrative Glossary

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Advancement | - முன்னேறுதல்/முற்படுத்தல் |
| 2. Claims under no fault liability | - தவறு ஏதுமில்லாதவிடத்துப் பொறுப்பின் பேரில் தொகை செலுத்தக் கோரும் கோரிக்கைகள் கோருதல் |
| 3. Defunct | - செயலற்றிருப்பது/செயலற்றுப் போதல் |
| 4. Deposit | - படிவு/வைப்பீடு |
| 5. Development | - வளர்ச்சி |
| 6. Dormant | - முடங்கிப் போன |
| 7. Economic rent | - கட்டுபடியாகும் வாடகை |
| 8. Engagement | - ஈடுபடல், ஒன்றுதல் |
| 9. Feeder road | - இணைப்புச் சாலை |
| 10. Hamlet | - சிற்றூர் |
| 11. High yield variety | - உயர் விளைச்சல் தரும் ரகம் (விதைகள்) |
| 12. Honorarium | - மதிப்பூதியம் |
| 13. Hygiene | - சுகாதாரம் |
| 14. Improvement | - மேம்பாடு |
| 15. Involvement | - ஈடுபாடு |
| 16. (Road) drop - gate | - வீழ்தடைக்கம்பம் (சாலை) |
| 17. Metal road | - கப்பிச்சாலை, சரளைக்கல் சாலை |
| 18. Mobilisation | - திரட்டுதல் |
| 19. Progress | - முன்னேற்றம்/வளர்ச்சி |
| 20. Promotion | - உயர்வு (மேன்மைப்படுத்தல்/ உயர்த்துதல்) |
| 21. Tariff rate | - கட்டண வீதம் |

22. Term deposit	- குறித்த கால வைப்பீட்டுத் தொகை
23. Torrential rain	- பலத்த மழை
24. Weighing bridge	- எடை மேடை
25. Weightage	- நிறை/முக்கியத்துவம்
26. Work - charged establishment	- வேலை நிதி ஊதியத் தொழிலாளர்

ஆட்சிச் சொற்கள் - பயிற்சி
Building up of Administrative Vocabulary

1. Assessment	- வரிவிதிப்பு மதிப்பீடு
2. Aptitude Test	- விருப்பார்வத் தேர்வு
3. Anticipatory Bail	- எதிர்பார்ப்பு ஜாமீன் (முன்னஜாமீன்)
4. All weather road	- எல்லாக் காலத்திற்கும் (பருவத்திற்கும்) ஏற்ற சாலை.
5. Fair weather road	- (மழை பெய்யாத நாட்களில் மட்டும்) வெயில் காயும்போது செல்வதற்கு ஏற்ற சாலை.
6. Blasphemy	- தெய்வ நிந்தனை/இறை பழிப்பு
7. Belt Area	- மாநகர எல்லைப் பகுதி
8. Peripheral area	- நகர்ப்பகுதியின் எல்லையோரப் பகுதி/புற எல்லைப் பகுதி
9. Buffet Meals	- பரப்புணவு
10. Break-even-point	- ஆதாயம்-நட்டம் ஏதுமில்லா நிலை
11. Bridge loan on bonded manufacturies	- ஆயத்தீர்வை செலுத்தும் தொழிற்சாலைகள்
12. Concurrent Audit	- உடன் தணிக்கை
13. Credit Stabilisation Fund	- கடன் சமன நிதி
14. Confluence	- ஆறுகள் கூடுதல், கலத்தல், சங்கமம்

- | | |
|---|---|
| 15. CETP - Common Effluent Treatment Plant | - பொது கழிவுநீர் சுத்திகரிப்பு நிலையம் |
| 16. Covered ways and means(Advance)- | - ஈடுகாட்டியுள்ள முன்பணம் |
| 17. Conspicuous | - தெளிவாகத் தெரிகிற |
| 18. Crash course | - விரைவுப் பயிற்சி |
| 19. Crash programme | - விரைவுத் திட்டம் |
| 20. Commitment charges | - பொறுப்புக் கட்டணங்கள் |
| 21. CMPRF - Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund | - முதலமைச்சரின் பொது நிவாரண நிதி |
| 22. Cumulative effect | - சேர்ந்து வரும் விரைவு |
| 23. Dead Rent (in mining) | - கணிப்பொருள் வெட்டியெடுக்கப்படாத காலத்திற்குச் செலுத்தவேண்டிய தொகை |
| 24. Draconian Act | - கடுப்புச் சட்டம் |
| 25. Dead stock | - இருப்புத் தேக்கம் |
| 26. Driving Range | - வாகனம் ஓட்டும் பயிற்சி மைதானம் |
| 27. Defamation | - அவதூறு |
| 28. Double Lock Officer | - கூட்டுப் பொறுப்பு அலுவலர் |
| 29. Dhobikana | - சலவைத் துறை |
| 30. Drug Offenders | - போதை மருந்துப் பொருள் சட்டத்தின் கீழ் குற்றம் செய்பவர்கள் |
| 31. Down stream industries | - பெருந்தொழில் ஒன்றின் உடன் விளைபொருட்களைக் கொண்டு அமையும் துணைத் தொழில்கள் |
| 32. Dismissal from service | - பணியறவு செய்தல் |
| 33. Dormant | - முடங்கிப் போன |
| 34. Defunct | - செயலற்றுப் போன |
| 35. Debt service | - கடனுக்குரிய வட்டி முதலிய செலவுகள் |

36. Emotive element	- உணர்ச்சி வயப்படுவதற்கான கூறு
37. Financial Transaction of Govt.	- அரசின் வரவு - செலவு நடவடிக்கைகள்
38. Fixed Deposit	- குறித்த கால வைப்பீட்டுத் தொகை
39. Grant-in-aid	- உதவி மானியம்
40. Guidelines	- வழிகாட்டிக் குறிப்புகள்
41. Hatchlings	- பொரித்த குஞ்சுகள்
42. Home Guard	- ஊர் காலவர்
43. Group-Insurance Scheme	- தொகுதி ஈட்டுறுதித் திட்டம்
44. Infra structure	- இன்றியமையா அடிப்படை வசதி
45. Indemnity bond	- இழப்பீட்டுப் பத்திரம்
46. Investigation	- புலனாய்வு
47. Inventory	- சரக்குப் பட்டியல்
48. Insolvent	- கடன் இறுக்கச் சக்தியற்றவர்
49. Instrument of trust	- அறப்பொறுப்பு ஒப்பந்தம்
50. Illegal	- சட்டத்திற்கு விரோதமாக
51. Immigration	- குடிபெயர்வு
52. Job Worker	- ஒப்பந்தத் தொழிலாளர்
53. Letter of Credit	- வாணிக உறுதிக் கடிதம்
54. Large sized multipurpose Co-operative Societies	- பேரளவுப் பல்நோக்குக் கூட்டுறவுச் சங்கம்
55. Liaison Officer	- தொடர்பு அலுவலர்
56. Letter of Intent	- அனுமதிக் கடிதம்
57. Mobilisation	- திரட்டுதல்
58. Minimum Needs Programme	- குறைந்தளவு தேவைகள் திட்டம்

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| 59. Medico-Legal cases | - மருத்துவம் சார்ந்த சட்ட வழக்குகள் |
| 60. Merit-cum-Means Award | - தகுதி-வருமான அடிப்படையில் வழங்கும் படிப்பதவித் தொகை |
| 61. Mobile Medical Unit | - மருத்துவ ஊர்திப் பிரிவுகள் |
| 62. Probation Officer | - நன்னடத்தைக் கண்காணிப்பு அதிகாரி |
| 63. Prompt | - உடனுக்குடன் |
| 64. Pleader | - அரசு உரிமையியல் வழக்கு நடத்துநர். |
| 65. Prosecutor | - அரசு குற்றவியல் வழக்கு நடத்துநர் |
| 66. Physical target | - திட்ட இலக்கு |
| 67. Pro-rate | - விகிதாச்சார அடிப்படை |
| 68. Pollution | - தூய்மைக்கேடு |
| 69. Periodicals | - காலமுறை வெளியீடுகள் |
| 70. Personal Deposit Account | - தனி வைப்பீட்டுக் கணக்கு |
| 71. Primary Health Centre | - தொடக்கச் சுகாதார நிலையம் |
| 72. Quorum | - குறைவெண் வரம்பு |
| 73. Rehabilitation | - புதுவாழ்வு |
| 74. Rationalisation | - சீரமைத்தல் |
| 75. Religious hostility | - சமயக் கருத்து அடிப்படையில் எதிர்ப்பு |
| 76. Reciprocal basis | - ஒருவருக்கொருவர் உதவும் அடிப்படை |
| 77. Returning Officer | - தேர்தல் நடத்தும் அதிகாரி |
| 78. Residential School | - மாணவர்கள் தங்கிப் பயிலும் பள்ளி |
| 79. Regulated market | - ஒழுங்குமுறை விற்பனை அங்காடி |

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| 80. Regulator | - மதகுப்பொறி |
| 81. Short Circuit Procedure | - சுருக்க நடைமுறை |
| 82. Sealed quotations | - மூடி முத்திரையிடப்பட்ட ஒப்பந்தப் புள்ளிகள் |
| 83. Standard rent | - நிர்ணய வாடகை |
| 84. Soft loan | - எளிய நிபந்தனை - குறைந்த வட்டியுடன் அளிக்கப்படும் கடன் |
| 85. Spirit | - எரிசாராயம் |
| 86. Slum grabbers | - சட்ட விரோதமாக பிறரது நிலத்தில் குடிசை போடுபவர்கள் |
| 87. Superannuation | - பணி வயது முதிர்வு |
| 88. Supernumerary Posts | - தனி நிலைப் பதவிகள் |
| 89. Secured Loans | - ஈடுகட்டப்பட்ட கடன்கள் |
| 90. Summit Conference | - பெருந்தலைவர் மாநாடு |
| 91. Sick Mill | - நலிவுற்ற ஆலை |
| 92. Seed Capital | - தொடக்க மூலதனம் |
| 93. Sinking Fund | - கடன் கரைப்பு நிதி |
| 94. State Domestic Product | - மாநில மொத்த வருமானம் |

Annexure III

Model Translations - Examples

1. In addition as the major traffic consists of pedestrians and cycles, foot path should be adequate, attractive, smooth, continuous and free from obstruction and encroachment.

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2. The land reforms policy over the successive plans aimed at removing such impediments to agricultural development as arisen from agrarian structure inherited from the past and elimination of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system so as to ensure equality of tenurial status and opportunity to all.

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3. Those who carry on great public schemes must be proof against the most fatiguing delays, the most mortifying disappointment, the most shocking insult, and what is worst of all, the presumptuous judgement of the ignorant (Edmund Burke).

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4. It is to my mind, a serious criticism, that in a claim, where the State and the Centre could have access to, in this case the State have had senior legal advisers, that the case in law could not be put clearly and coherently and those parts which were unfound, abandoned.

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5. The committee recommends that steps should be taken to see that there is no realistic anticipation of requirement of funds under the grant and the provision is strictly restricted to the amount that could be spent within the year or only a token provision is restored to wherever necessary so that the funds can be utilised on schemes which deserve greater and real attention.

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6. The committee would like that instructions should be issued to all the departments, reiterating the provisions of para 106 of the Tamil Nadu Budget Volume - I so as to avoid delay in the issue of sanction to schemes included in the Budget proposals voted by the Legislature.

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7. The draft of a paragraph proposed for inclusion in the Report of the controller and Auditor General of India is forwarded by the Accountant General to the Secretary to Government with a copy to the Head of the Department concerned with a demi-official letter to ensure that the irregularities brought to the personal notice of the officers who will have to appear as witnesses before the committee on Public Accounts.

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மாதிரி மொழிபெயர்ப்புகள் - எடுத்துக்காட்டுகள்

போக்குவரத்துச் சீரமைப்பு - வல்லுநர் அறிக்கை

1. போக்குவரத்தில் நடந்து செல்பவர்களும், சைக்கிளில் செல்பவர்களும், பெருமளவிற்கு உள்ளனர். எனவே, நடைபாதையைப் பொறுத்தமட்டில் அது போதுமான அளவுக்கு அகலமாக நேர்த்தியாக அமைந்திருக்கவேண்டும். கரடுமுரடாக இல்லாமல் (எளிதாக நடக்க இயலக்கூடிய வகையில்) வழவழவென்று இருக்க வேண்டும். இடையிடையே பாதை விட்டுப்போகாமல் தொடர்ந்து அமைந்திருக்க வேண்டும், மேலும், அங்கு தடைகளோ ஆக்கிரமிப்புகளோ இல்லாதிருக்க வேண்டும்

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2. நிலச் சீர்திருத்தம்

கடந்த பல ஐந்தாண்டுத் திட்டங்களின்போது தொடர்ச்சியாக அரசு மேற்கொண்டிருந்த நில சீர்திருத்தக் கொள்கை பன்னெடுங்காலமாக வழிவழி வந்துள்ள நமது வேளாண்மை சமுதாய கட்டமைப்புகளிலிருந்து தோன்றக் கூடிய வேளாண்மை வளர்ச்சிக்கு எதிரான தடைகளை அகற்றுவதையும் நில குத்தகை உரிமையில் சம தகுதி நிலை வழங்குவதில் அனைவருக்கும் சம வாய்ப்பு வழங்குதல் ஆகியவற்றிற்கு உறுதி செய்யும் வகையில் வேளாண்மை அமைப்பினுள் காணப்படும் கரண்டலையும், சமூக அநீதியையும் ஒழிப்பதையும் நோக்கமாக கொண்டது.

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3. ஆட்சித் தலைவர்கள் உரை மேற்கோள்

பொதுப் பணிகளைச் செயற்படுத்துகின்ற பெரும் பொறுப்பில் தங்களை ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொண்டுள்ள பெருமக்கள், தாங்கள் எதிர்ப்படுகின்ற சில சூழல்களில், நிலை குலையாமல் அவற்றை எதிர்கொண்டு பணியாற்றும் திண்மையைப் பெற்றிருக்க வேண்டும். எந்தெந்த வழிகளில் அத்தகைய சூழல்கள் எதிர்ப்படும் என்பதற்கு ஒருசில சான்றுகள்: அயர்ச்சியிலும், சோர்விலும் ஆழ்த்துகின்ற

வகையிலான கால தாமதங்கள் வடிவில் அவை நேரிடலாம்; அழிவுதரும் மிகுந்த ஏமாற்றங்களின் வடிவில் அவை எதிர்ப்படலாம்; கேட்டதும் மிகமிகப் பேரதிர்ச்சியைத் தருகின்றவகை மொழிகளாக முன் வரலாம், இவையெல்லாவற்றையும்விட மோசமான நிலைமை ஒன்று ஏற்படக்கூடும். அதாவது, அறிவில்லாத பாமரர்கள் தாங்களாகவே ஒன்றை உள்ளத்திற்கொண்டு, இவர்கள் ஆற்றும் பொதுப்பணி பற்றி மோசமாக விமர்சனக் கருத்து முடிவுகளைக் கூறிவிடலாம். அத்தகைய துன்பங்களைத் தாங்கிக் கொள்ளும் பெற்றிமையுடையவர்களே பொதுப்பணிகளில் ஈடுபட்டு வெற்றிபெற இயலும் (எட்மண்ட் பர்க்).

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4. நீதிமன்றத் தீர்ப்பு - பகுதி 1

உரிமைக் கோரிக்கை வழக்கு ஒன்றில், மாநில அரசும், மத்திய அரசும் மிகவும் மூத்த முதுநிலை வழக்கறிஞர்களை சட்ட ஆலோசகர்களாக அமர்த்தக்கூடிய வாய்ப்பை பெற்றிருக்கும் நிலையில் (இந்த வழக்கில் அவ்வாறே மாநில அரசு முதுநிலை வழக்கறிஞர்களை சட்ட ஆலோசகர்களாக நியமித்துள்ளது), இந்த வழக்கை சட்டத்தின் பார்வையில் தெளிவாகவும், சீர் ஒழுங்குடனும் எடுத்துரைக்க முடியவில்லை என்றும் வழக்கில் தன்னால் மெய்ப்பிக்க முடியாத பகுதிகளை தொடர்ந்து வாதிடப்படாமல் கை விடப்பட்டன என்றும் கூறுகின்ற விமர்சனம் என்னைப் பொறுத்த வரையில் (அரசைக் கண்டனம் செய்கின்ற அளவிற்கு) மிக கடுமையான விமர்சனம் என்றும் கருதுகிறேன்.

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5. பொதுக் கணக்குக் குழு - பரிந்துரைகள்

நிதிகளை அதிக அளவில் உண்மையாக கவனம் செலுத்த வேண்டிய திட்டப் பணிகளுக்கு பயன்படுத்தும் வகையில், மானியத்தின் கீழ் நிதி கேட்கப்படும்போது செலவிடக்கூடிய அளவிற்கே நிதியொதுக்கம் செய்யப்படுமாறும் பார்த்துக் கொள்ள நடவடிக்கைகள் எடுக்க வேண்டும் என்று குழு பரிந்துரைக்கிறது.

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6. சட்டப் பேரவை அனுமதியளித்து, வரவு செலவுத் திட்டச் செயற்குறிப்புகள் சேர்க்கப்பட்டுள்ள திட்டப் பணிகளுக்கு அனுமதி வழங்குவதில் கால தாமதம் ஏற்படுவதைத் தவிர்க்கும் வகையில், தமிழ்நாடு வரவு செலவுத் திட்ட நடைமுறை, நூல் தொகுதி 1ல் 106-ஆம் பத்தியைச் சேர்ந்த விதித்துறைகளை வலியுறுத்தி அனைத்துத் துறைகளுக்கும் உத்தரவுகள் பிறப்பிக்கப்படவேண்டுமென்று குழு விரும்புகிறது.

7. தணிக்கை அறிக்கை

மாநில கணக்குத் துறைத் தலைவர், இந்தியத் தணிக்கைத் துறைத் தலைவரின் அறிக்கையில் சேர்க்கக் கருதியுள்ள பத்தியின் வரைவை, அரசு செயலாளருக்கு அனுப்புகிறார். அதன் நகல் ஒன்றினையும் சம்பந்தப்பட்ட துறைத் தலைவருக்கு அனுப்புகிறார். இதே சமயம், முறைகேடுகள் குறித்து, பொதுக் கணக்குக் குழுவின் முன்னர் நேரில் வந்து விளக்கம் அளிப்பதற்கும் பொறுப்புடைய அதிகாரிகளுக்கு அவை பற்றித் தெரிவிப்பதற்கு உறுதி செய்யும் வகையில், அந்த வரைவுப் பத்தியுடன், மேற்சொன்ன முறைகேடுகளைக் குறிப்பிடுகின்ற நேர்முகக் கடிதத்தையும் அந்த அதிகாரிகளுக்கு அனுப்பிவைக்கிறார்.

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Model Translation from Tamil to English - An example

தமிழ்நாடு முதலமைச்சர் திரு மு. கருணாநிதி அவர்கள் 1998-99 ஆம் ஆண்டிற்கான வரவு-செலவுத் திட்டத்தை சட்டமன்றப் பேரவை முன் வைத்து 1998-ஆம் ஆண்டு மார்ச் திங்கள் 27ஆம் நாளன்று ஆற்றும் உரை

பேரவைத் தலைவர் அவர்களே, இந்தியத் திருநாட்டின் தென்கோடி முனையில், சோழ சாம்ராஜ்யத்தின் புலிக் கொடி பட்டொளி வீசிப் பறந்த தஞ்சைத் தரணியில், திருக்குவளை என்ற கிராமத்தில் வேளாண் தொழில் ஈடுபாடும், இசைத் திறனும் கொண்ட மிகவும் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட ஒரு குடும்பத்தில் பிறந்து, இளம் வயதிலேயே தன்மான உணர்வும் தமிழ் மொழிப்பற்றும் மிகக் கொண்டு, தந்தை பெரியாருக்குத் தொண்டனாகவும், அறிஞர் அண்ணாவுக்குத் தம்பியாகவும், தமிழ்ப் பெருங்குடி மக்களுக்காக உழைக்கும் உடன்பிறப்பாகவும் என்னை ஆக்கிக் கொண்டுள்ள இந்த அறுபதாண்டு காலப் பொது வாழ்வில், எழுபத்தி மூன்று வயதுடைய நான் “வீழ்வது நாமாக இருப்பினும் வாழ்வது தமிழாக இருக்கட்டும்” என்று குளுரையுடனும், கடலில் தூக்கி எறிந்தாலும் தமிழ் மக்கள் ஏறிச் சவாரி செய்யும் கட்டுமரமாக மிதப்பேன் என்ற கடமை உணர்வுடனும், தாழ்த்தப்பட்ட, பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட, மிகவும் பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட, அடக்கப்பட்ட மக்களின் உரிமை வாழ்வு ஒன்றையே அல்லும் பகலும் நினைவிற் கொண்டு - அவர்களின் அணி வகுப்பில் ஒரு சிப்பாயாகப் பணியாற்றும் பேறு பெற்று, அவர்களின் உயர்வுக்கும் உரிமைக்கும் வழிவகுக்கும் ஆற்றலும் அக்கறையும் உள்ளவர்கள் முன்னேறிய பிரிவினரில் இருப்பின், அவர்களையும் அடையாளம் கண்டு அரவணைத்து, அவர்தம் துணையுடன், ஒடுக்கப்பட்டோர் உன்னத வாழ்வுக்காகவும் “ஏழையின் சிரிப்பில் இறைவனைக் காண்போம்” எனும் சபதம் என்றைக்கு நிறைவேறும் என்ற என் ஏக்கத்தை தூக்கத்திலும் கனவாகக்

கண்டு, அக்கனவை நனவாக்க வேண்டுமென்பதற்காகவும், என் காலத்தில் அமைதியானதும், அரிய வளம் கொழிப்பதும், அறிவாற்றல் சிறந்தோங்குவதுமான தமிழ்ச் சமுதாயத்தைக் காண வேண்டுமென்பதில் தணியாத ஆர்வத்தின் காரணமாகத் தயாரிக்கப்பட்டதே இந்த நிதி நிலை அறிக்கை. இதனை நாட்டு மக்களும், கட்சித் தலைவர்களும், மாண்புமிகு உறுப்பினர்களும் விமர்சிக்கும்போது,

“எப்பொருள் யார்யார்வாய்க் கேட்பினும் அப்பொருள்
மெய்ப்பொருள் காண்ப தறிவு”

எனும் குறளுக்கேற்ப வரவேற்று மகிழ்ந்து, குறை திருத்தி, நிறை தோன்ற பாடுபடுவேன் என்று உறுதி கூறி, இந்த நிதி நிலை அறிக்கையை அவைமுன் வைக்கிறேன்.

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Speech of Thiru M. Karunanidhi, Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu, presenting the Budget for 1998-99 in the Legislative Assembly on 27th March 1998 (pp.54-55 in Tamil)

Hon'ble Speaker,

"In the southern part of India, Thanjavur was the capital of the mighty Chola empire where their imperial flag with the Tiger insignia was flying high. In this Thanjavur region, I was born and brought up in a village called Thirukkuvalai, in a most backward family engaged in agriculture with proficiency in music. Even as a young boy, I had a deep sense of self-respect and love for the Tamil Language. I became a true disciple of Thanthai Periyar and then the affectionate younger brother of Arignar Anna and eventually a kin of the Tamil people dedicating myself to work for their betterment. In my 73 years, I have spent six decades in the cause of pubic service. In all these years of my dedicated public life, I have made this long journey with a vow that "Even if I were to fall, let Tamil live". My sense of duty is such that even if I am thrown into the sea, I shall stay afloat like a catamaran for the Tamil people to ride upon. In my whole life I have had only one thought foremost in my mind, day in and day out, that is the right of the people belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes and Most Backward Classes to live with dignity. I have considered myself fortunate to be a humble soldier in their formation. I have identified persons among the forward communities who have the ability and concern for the rights and progress of these people. With their help, I have striven for the prosperity of the downtrodden. Even in my dream my yearning is to fulfil my vow to see God in the smile of the poor. This budget was prepared to transform that dream into reality and out of my unquenchable

zeal to see in my lifetime a peaceful, prosperous and intellectually vibrant Tamil Society. I place this Budget before this august House with the assurance that when the people, leaders of parties and the Hon'ble members comment on this Budget, I shall in accordance with the Kural,

"To discern the truth in everything, by whomsoever
Spoken, this is wisdom"

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Sample for Printing in Diglot

கோரிக்கை 51, தமிழ் வளர்ச்சி - பண்பாடு
Demand 51, Tamil Development - Culture

மொத்தம் பெருந்தலைப்பு 2059

Total Major Head 2059

2202 பொதுக் கல்வி

2202 General Education

03 பல்கலைக் கழகக் கல்வியும்
உயர் கல்வியும்

03 University and Higher Education

102 பல்கலைக் கழகங்களுக்கு நிதி
உதவி

102 Assistance to Universities

மொத்தம் துணைப் பெருந்
தலைப்பு 2202 03

Total Sub Major Head 2202 03

05 மொழி வளர்ச்சி

05 Language Development

001 நெறிப்படுத்தலும் நிருவாகமும்

001 Direction and Administration

102 இக்கால இந்திய மொழிகள்
மேம்பாடும் இலக்கிய மேம்பாடும்

102 Promotion of Modern Indian
Languages and Literature

800 ஏனைய செலவு

800 Other Expenditure

மொத்தம் துணைப் பெருந்
தலைப்பு 2202 05

Total Sub Major Head 2202 05

2205-00 கலையும் பண்பாடும்

2205-00 Art and Culture

001 நெறிப்படுத்தலும் நிருவாகமும்

001 Direction and Administration

101 நுண் கலைக் கல்வி

101 Fine Arts Education

102 கலை, பண்பாட்டை வளர்த்தல்

102 Promotion of Arts and
Culture

103 தொல் பொருளியல் ஆய்வு

103 Archaeology

105 பொது நூலகம்

105 Public Libraries

107 அரும்பொருட் காட்சியகங்கள்

107 Museums

800 ஏனைய செலவு

800 Other Expenditure

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PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION FROM TAMIL / ENGLISH INTO BENGALI

Dr. Seethalakshmi Viswanath

Any discussion of the problems in translating from one language into another will have to start with a discussion of the method of approach used by the translator. Peter Newmark's remarks on the levels adopted during a translation procedure need to be noted at this point. "When we are translating, we translate with four levels, more or less consciously in mind; 1. The SL text level, the level of language where we begin and which we continually go back to. 2. The referential level, the level of objects and events, real or imaginary, which we progressively have to visualize and build up, and which is an essential part, first of the comprehension, then of the reproductive process. 3. The cohesive level, which is more general, and grammatical, which traces the train of thought, the feeling, tone (positive or negative) and the various presuppositions of the SL text. This level encompasses both comprehension and reproduction; it presents an overall picture, to which we may have to adjust the language level. 4. The level of naturalness of common language appropriate to the writer or the speaker in a certain situation."

While a translator presupposes that the main purpose of a translation is to convey information using a 'natural' style, it also becomes necessary for the translator to emulate the peculiarities or the uniqueness of the style of the author in the SL text. In any 'expressive' text, i.e. any serious, imaginative literature, authoritative and personal statements need to be translated closely, matching the writing, good or bad, of the original. And in any informative text, statements that relate primarily to the truth, to the real facts of the matter, have to be translated in the best style that the translator can reconcile with the style of the original.

In an "expressive" text, one may come across four types of styles as Peter Newmark points out....

1. a narrative style involving a dynamic sequence of events, with emphasis on verbs.
2. a descriptive style, which remains static with emphasis on looking verbs or adjectives.

3. a discussive style which involves treatment of ideas, with emphasis on abstract nouns or verbs of thought and connectives.
4. a dialogue style with emphasis on colloquialisms and phaticisms.

Apart from these, there are further stylistic scales, too. We have the official style, the formal style, the neutral style, the informal style, the colloquial style and slang. We also have the simple writing styles, the popular style, the elite style, the technical style, or a neutral style. Style may vary in terms of emotional tones also. There is an intense style, a warm style, a factual style or an understatement. An official style will be factual, while colloquialisms and slangs will adopt an emotive style. Languages themselves have their own unique features. Italian is supposed to be an effusive language. German, formal and stiff, French, impersonal and English, informal using understatements.

The setting of the SL text should be of interest, offering familiar areas of communication to the TL reader. A historical romantic epic of the past may fail to interest a modern reader whose familiarity remains more with caste distinctions, cultural alienations or psychological or social conflicts. A contemporary setting replete with the problems of the modern world is closer to the experiences of a reader rather than an idealistic utopian world speaking of an idealistic occurrence. It is thus an African story relating the conflicts in cultural transformation is closer to the modern Indian's experiences of a cultural metamorphoses. When I started working on Komal Swaminathan's 'Tannir Tannir', the primary question that lay before me was, 'Will the Bengali audience understand the ordeals of a Tamil Nadu village suffering from acute scarcity of water?' The lady who worked on the Bengali script with me then made me understand that similar problems were faced by a few remote villages in West Bengal and hence it would be acceptable to the Bengalis. The dialect for the Bengali text also had to be chosen carefully, for the dialect chosen had to be close to the dialect of the village suffering from scarcity of water. It also had to reflect the emotive disturbances of the political situation related to the Tamil setting without disturbing the individualistic Bengali situation.

We need also to come to the cultural aspect of the SL text. Every expressive text will have metaphors culture-specific words, institutional words, proper names, technical terms and untranslatable words. Every translator needs to underline the items where he/she sees a translation problem during the last reading of the text. It is often helpful to study these items first in context, then in isolation and finally in context.

My experience related to Bengali literature covers basically three areas - poetry, prose and dramas. I had translated for the most part from

Bengali to Tamil and from Tamil to English and from English to Tamil. I have translated Komal Swaminathan's 'Tannir Tannir' into Bengali with the help of a Bengali colleague in Visva Bharati University. I was also a passive participant in a recent translation of Ala. Valliappa's 'Mazhalaip Padalgal' into Bengali. I have also interacted with a few friends who had attempted translation from Tamil to Bengali.

The problems I encountered personally or was made aware can be broadly classified under various heads: 1. Use of a dialogue style where colloquialisms and phaticisms predominate. 2. Use of a highly stylistic narrative where sentences followed a stream of consciousness technique with a highly emotive style. 3. Use of technical words-names of particular tools, flowers, trees, fruits or festivals unique to the region of the SL text i.e., Tamil. 4. Interference by cultural overtones. In rendering a rustic, colloquial style as in 'Tannir Tannir' one needs to remember that naturalness had to be followed at two levels to make the language natural to the setting and to make the language blend naturally with the speaker.

Medium to operate for both languages, becomes a successful tool to be mastered. A translator's dependence on English and an English dictionary in his rendering into Bengali is increased by the absence of a good Tamil-Bengali or Bengali-Tamil dictionary. Even Tamil-English dictionaries are few. Apart from Crea's Tarkala Tamil Agaradi, we have hardly any book as exhaustive as a lexicon. Hence a translator seems to remain almost twice removed from the TL with his dependence on a Tamil-English dictionary and then on an English-Bengali dictionary.

Any translation from Tamil to English will not normally anticipate cultural alienation as, though the south is culturally a little removed from the north in general and the east in particular, the basic strand of Indian culture binds the two and integrates them. On the other hand, a translation from English to Bengali will have to cross the basic culture barriers and touch upon universalities which will act as the integrating factor. Any story with too much of a regional leaning fails to convey to an INDIAN reader the pathos and depth of the setting or the cultural implications involved. D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover* may seem as strange as seeing *The Titanic* with Tamil dubbing, the cultural overtones being so high as to disturb a Bengali's cultural beliefs and sensitivity.

In many translations either from Tamil to Bengali or from Bengali to Tamil, the translator has to start with the sentence as the basic unit of thought and thus of translation. Though there are not too many syntactical problems between the two languages, there are problems in the translation

of the lexis, specially in translating idioms including neologisms and unfindable words. For example, in the following passage :

“இப்படி சிமிட்டாயிருந்தாத்தான் பொம்பளையாக்கும். சீக்காளி கணக்காயில் இருக்காக. நானாயிருந்தா..... இடுப்பொசரத்துக்கு புல்லுக்கட்டு கட்டி தூக்கி விட்டாலும் மலையாமச் செம்பனே. இவக என்னன்னா..... ஒரு வெளக்கு மாத்துக் கட்டையக் கூட தூக்க சீவனத்துப் போயில் கெடக்காக.....”

“நீ பாட்டுக்கு வீடு வீடாப் போயி பொரணி பேசிட்டிருக்க நம்ம ஊருன்னு நெனச்சியா?”

even a normal reader of Tamil needs referential help. The collocative meanings will not be clear to a reader unless he/she specialises in the study of dialects. Moreover the social references suggested by these usages will also have to be conveyed by the translator in the TL text. And how am I going to convey இருக்காக, to a Bengali audience where the wife addresses the husband as 'tumi' i.e. 'நீ' The introduction of a similar colloquial style in the TL text will definitely require the guidance and supervision of a Bengali expert with special proficiency in dialects and colloquialisms. Otherwise the beauty associated with the colloquial style in the SL will be lost in the translation. Naturalness here again needs to be remembered at two levels- at the level of style and at the level of register, determined by the setting of the SL text. It is also necessary to remember that the semantic range of Bengali is wider than that of Tamil and a Tamil word in the SL text can have more than one specific word in Bengali, with varying references.

Translation from English into Bengali involves syntactical rearrangements. The colloquialisms and dialectical variations are more subtle and transferring the sense behind the utterances into the TL is equally challenging. The rendering of idioms in the TL is also a difficult task. The translation of proper names is another area where translation of geographical terms or names present problems. Lakshmipuram in Tamil becomes Lakhipur in Bengali; Vani becomes Bani and so on. But Saheb in Bengali can become either সাহেব or சாகேப். A person with some linguistic exposure will choose সাহেব but a devoted lover of Tamil opposed to any Sanskrit word will choose சாகேப் as Raja becomes Rasa for him. I have often found footnotes helpful while dealing with specific proper names like festivals, rituals and the like. An indepth study in this area often reveals unbelievable similarities and contrasts in ritual worship of festivities.

In translation of serious literature content and form assume equal importance. In poetry translation for example, punctuation, metre and music play a very important part. While English has its own formal rules regarding punctuation, most Indian languages including Bengali, do not regard

punctuation as something worth giving attention. Moreover translation of imagery effectively to transfer the sense behind the image and to retain the poetry without disturbing the poetic language is a Herculean task. Every translator of poetry will have to recreate, translate as Peter Newmark says, 'the effect the poem made on himself'. Translation of poetry in other words is a transcreation. The translator's own view of poetry will also influence his/her translation. In a short story translation, on the other hand, the translator will have to identify the key word or phrase that typifies the writer or the lexical units central to the story. Whereas in a dramatic text, the translator has to read what is between the lines. If Shakespeare were to be translated into Bengali or Tamil today, the translator has to use a modern languages so as to establish a rapport not merely with the reader but with the audience who will witness the play being staged. Peter Newmark's words once again are very interesting. If one character speaks in a bookish or old-fashioned way in the original, written 500 years ago, he/she must speak in an equally bookish and old-fashioned way in the translation too, but as he/she would do today with a corresponding time-gap. The differences of register, social class, education, temperament in particular must be preserved between one character and another. Translation of a play involves not merely the translation of content or form or lexis, but it should present the drama such that it becomes more of an adaptation than a mere translation.

There are certain areas which cause great difficulty to a Bengali trying to translate from Tamil into Bengali with reasonably satisfactory exposure to the SL i.e. Tamil. Primarily a Bengali finds the pronunciation of Tamil complex when **ப** stands for **பாட்டு** and **பயம்**. Letter-groups like 'ற்றே' whose pronunciation is 'tre' overwhelms him/her. All ஒற்றெழுத்து/மெய்யெழுத்து letters confuse him/her. In short, the gap between spoken Tamil which a Bengali is familiar with and the somewhat standardised literary Tamil which remains quite incomprehensible to him is quite prominent. Few Bengalis have been really linguistically successful in mastering the language as Tamil's unique feature of not having different letters for ka, kha, ga gha perplexes a non-Tamilian. I have also come across people who translate after mastering the literary language but have little power over the spoken language. I believe sincerely that a person needs to master both the spoken and the written language to understand dialects and colloquialisms. I also have the firm conviction that duo translation where a person known to be proficient in both the SL and the TL works with the translator to ensure perfection of the rendering. Also translation workshops where the writer, the translator and the editor come together to arrive at a basic methodology for translation of Indian languages would be highly rewarding and beneficial.



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