



TRANSLATION IS BEYOND LEXICAL MEANING: STUDY THROUGH SOME SELECT TERMS

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1. Introduction

Generally people think that anyone who knows more than one language can do translation. But it is not so, there are so many factors to be considered to meet the satisfaction of the target readership. Every lexical expression has its own significance. A translator must transfer those implied things from the original into the target language. While doing so, a translator can utilize the tools such as dictionary, thesaurus, glossary and encyclopedia. But it is the co-skills of the translator to apply the proper terms with the appropriate meanings in the right places. So, beyond referring a proper tool a translator should have the skill to find the appropriate equivalent and to apply them properly to suit the target language. This study aims at identifying and analyzing such applications through some select terms. With this scope, this study intends to refer the proper references as translation is not merely finding the equivalents. Some select terms sources of this study are the lexicons and dictionaries.

The field of Applied Lexicography concerns the study of the lexicon and the use of lexicon. It focuses on the different aspects of the use of the lexicon, including functions of lexicon, how lexicon is used; purposes, attitude of the users, attitude towards the proper reference, usage of dictions, and review of the dictionary. The translators have to pick up the skill by trial and error. Without a grip on the skills of dictionary use, their efficiency in translation will be at stake.

2. Dictionary as a Tool

Translation involves the studying of the Lexicon, grammatical structure and cultural context of the source language text. It analyzes the meaning in order to determine the meaning precisely. Then the translator reconstructs the very substance of the original to suit the structure and cultural context of the target language. The proper use of lexicon may lead the task without any shortcomings. Among all types of Translation tools, dictionaries are the most essential, prominent and very much supportive to translators. A dictionary is an indispensable tool to meet the challenges encountered during the process of translation. As a dictionary is indeed esteemed as the most important tool as far as translation in any field is concerned, bi-lingual dictionary is useful to have exact equivalence as well as equivalent of a word in another language. A dictionary is designed by a lexicographer considering the expectations of the users. Concurrently the users too could reflect and suggest valuable feedbacks. A dictionary is the product of a lexicographer associated with language elements. Dictionaries or Lexicons are compiled and designed to serve various needs and purposes.

At times, the traces of the influence and local colouring (e.g. kinship terms: For the English term 'Aunt' *attai* > *māmi*, *periyammā*, *citti* and *ciṇṇammā*) experienced by the compiler could be felt in the equivalents. In order to have an appropriate translation, it is better to refer a proper dictionary to comprehend the source term properly and to provide the exact equivalent as well.

The proper dictionary should be chosen as per the need and context of translation in order to glean a precise equivalent. The utility of a comprehensive dictionary and translation are language experiences. Thus a dictionary is an indispensable entity in translation. It is helpful in checking the appropriacy in translation to a good extent. Though a dictionary is used for reference, excellence and adeptness are essential to comprehend and infer the meaning of the word accurately as per the context. Referring a dictionary in

the proper way is a skill. Continuous practice may make one handy in using dictionary. The process of referring Dictionary is actually very complex, involving different levels of physical and mental conditions. It varies as per the types of dictionary and the purpose of its use.

Word is a unit of language which has meaning and is used to form sentences. Words play a vital role in translation. They exhibit their accuracy in their respective contexts. So finding a proper equivalent is the most essential part in translation. This task could be achieved while referring a proper dictionary or proper reference. The meaning and the context of the words, phrases, idioms and sentences of the original ought to be understood, felt and assimilated before the translation process. This could be achieved while referring a proper dictionary.

Although words are entities that refer to objects or concepts, a word in one language may not be substituted aptly by a word in another language. The same concept or object may not be in usage or use in the target language. There are four main seasons observed in occident: e.g. In English, Autumn, Spring, Summer and Winter. But in orient two major seasons are mainly observed in Tamil: *māri* and *kōṭai*. (இலைதுளிர் காலம் and இளவேனில் காலம் come under மாரிகாலம் and இலையுதிர்காலம் and முதுவேனில் காலம் come under கோடைகாலம்)

Throughout these processes of translation the tool of dictionary is extensively used. To have an exact comprehensive dictionary or proper reference is of utmost necessity in the process of translation. In the process of translation the use and usage may be checked and confirmed through Dictionary. Dictionary is a reference book or list of words in an alphabetical order together with a guide to their meanings, pronunciation, spelling and equivalents in other languages or in simpler words in the same language. Plurals of nouns and terms of verbs are shown. Relevant idioms and phrases, too, are included.

Sentences of example for each word in relevant contexts are added. When translating cultural elements, idioms or phrases, acronyms, etc. of a particular milieu, employing the dictionaries that emerged from the particular target milieu is appreciable.

3. Procedures in Translation

There are two main procedures with eight methods introduced by Peter Newmark in 1988. Technical Procedure deals with the comprehension part and the Organizational Procedure

deals with the restructuring part i.e. the emphasis of Technical Procedure is Source Language and the emphasis of the Organizational Procedure is Target Language.

There are four methods come under Technical Procedure. In the word for word method the source language word-order is preserved and the words are translated singly by their most common equivalents out of context. It is a pre-translation process of difficult text in order to gain sense of meaning.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

அகராதிகள் - விளையாடுதல் - ஒரு - பெரிய - பங்கு - இல் - மொழிபெயர்ப்பு

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

நிகரன் - விளையாடுதல் - ஒரு - குறித்த - பங்கு - இல் - மொழிபெயர்ப்பு

In the literal translation method the grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest target language equivalents but the lexical words are again translated out of context. The Grammatical structures of source language are converted to their nearest equivalent in the target language. As a pre-translation process, this indicates the problems to be solved.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

அகராதிகள் மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் ஒரு பெரிய பங்கு கொண்டுள்ளன

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

நிகரன் மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் முக்கிய பங்கு கொண்டுள்ளது

A faithful translation method attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the target language grammatical structures. It „transfers“ cultural words and preserves the degree of grammatical and lexical in the translation. Here the words are translated with the context.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

அகராதிகள் மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் ஒரு பெரிய பங்கு கொண்டுள்ளன

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation நிகரன் மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் முக்கிய பங்கு கொண்டுள்ளது

Semantic translation method differs from „faithful translation“ as it takes more account of the aesthetic value of the source language text, compromising on „meaning“. It is more flexible than faithful translation. It naturalizes in order to achieve aesthetic effect. Here

the great focus is on aesthetic features of source language.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் அகராதிகள் பெரும்பங்கு கொண்டுள்ளன

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் நிகரன் முக்கிய பங்காற்றுகின்றது

Four methods come under Organizational Procedure. Communicative translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership. It gives priority to the effectiveness of the message to be communicated.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் அகராதிகள் பெரும்பங்கு கொண்டுள்ளன

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் நிகரன் முக்கிய பங்காற்றுகின்றது

Idiomatic translation reproduces the 'message' of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் அகராதிகள் பெரும்பங்கு ஆற்றுகின்றன

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் நிகரன் முக்கிய பங்காற்றுகிறது

Free translation reproduces the matter without the manner, or the content without the form of the original. Usually it is a paraphrase much longer than the original, a so-called 'intralingual translation'.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் அகராதிகளின் வகிப்பங்கு அளப்பரியது

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் நிகரன் முக்கிய பங்காற்றுகின்றது

Adaptation is the „freest“ form of translation. It is used mainly for plays and poetry: the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the source language culture converted to the target language culture and the text rewritten by an established dramatist or poet.

Dictionaries play a vital role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் அகராதிகளின் வகிபங்கு அளப்பரியதே

Equivalent plays a significant role in Translation

மொழிபெயர்ப்பில் நிகரன் முக்கிய விடயமாகின்றது

These methods clearly say about the transference of the content from the source language to the target language by finding the proper equivalents. From word level to semantic level these methods give a clarification.

4. Word Level to Semantic Level

This section analyses the word level to semantic level aspects of the translation of culturally dependent bilingual context. The target language translators may incorporate their language features and reflects the socio – cultural typology where it grows. In the translation process, first identifies the lexical items which reflect the target language culture and then the nativisation strategies selected are applied to identify the way native culture is reflected in the translation. Many lexical innovations in the latest dictionaries and lexicons, are formed as a result of processes such as borrowing, transfer, hybrid formations and idioms etc., are accepted as appropriate to the socio cultural contexts of the target language. An inevitable outcome of a bilingual and bicultural situation is the change in the lexicon. It is a sociolinguistic fact that semantic changes can be caused by cultural modifications. As language is unique, societal factors shape specialized meanings among words and social groups and these new meanings spread throughout the community.

4.1 Word Level

The problems related to the lexical level are mainly those of matching words, phrases, idioms or idiomatic phrases or proverbs. Finding equivalents for the source language words, or concepts is not always an easy task.

The lexical problems in translation are mainly of three types:

- i) One to One
- ii) One to Many and vice versa
- iii) One to None correspondences

4.1.1 One to One and One to Many and vice versa

Finding one to one correspondent equivalent of a source language

concept in target language is often difficult, if not possible. Equivalent however does not mean identical. This is a rare possibility across cultures. Polysemy and homonymy are two important features of all languages and are directly related to this phenomenon. Usually in a given situation, one of the meanings remains functionally relevant. The problem arises when more than one potential meaning of a word has functional relevance in a given situation or context. Again if a source language item has many equivalents in target language – all near equivalents, the translator has to choose the most relevant one.

e.g. 'Development'

The term which is a broad one partially shared by various disciplines, but not exactly in the same sense. The following usages of the term indicate the domain of its application and the variation in meanings:

Development programme	Development conditions
Development nations	Development areas
Development studies	Individual development
Cultural development	Social development
Community development	Global development
Urban development	Political development
Economic development	National development
Personality development	

The different listings of the use of the term are illustrative though exhaustive. While photographers “develop a film”, musician and artists “develop a theme”, mathematicians and chemists “develop an equation and formula” respectively.

4.1.2 One to None correspondences

Language due to different physical, historical and socio-cultural reasons showed different kinds of lexical gaps, thus subscribing the problem of one to none correspondences. A source language item may not have an equivalent in the target language, if the extra-linguistic reality that the word designates is missing in the target culture.

In occident we name the air in many ways as per its power such as wind, breeze, tornado and hurricane. But in orient the different forms of air are identified through the directions. e.g.: North - vāṭai வாடை; East - koṇṭal கொண்டல்; South - teṇṇal தென்றல்;

5. Semantic Alterations

Translation of Tamil idioms and proverbs also poses problem to a translator. The translator has to resort to some strategies to make up the loss of information in the Target language. Most of the translators are not well-versed in English idiomatic and proverbs expressions since they are rarely used in their day to day usage of English. Hence, when they translate, they have to sort through various sources to find the appropriate semantic meaning in English. In this case, the translators are free to translate idioms and proverbs from Tamil to English without necessarily looking for their counterparts in idiomatic English.

Person system in a language structure is a vital one and it has its impacts in translation. In both the languages, the person system has a gender and number dimensions. The translator from Source Language to Target Language has to be cautious of these dimensions in both the varieties. The pronominal system of the languages is a good example. The pronominal system of Tamil is considered here. It makes use of different degrees of politeness in addresser - addressee interaction as given below: e.g.

In Tamil, second person singular *nī*, *nīr*, the third person plural pronoun *nīnkaḷ* (honorific) is used in interaction with a singular addressee in order to express difference and non-formality. This is not the case with English pronouns. English uses only 'you' for all the three. Is there anything semantically lacking in the English speaker who uses only one pronoun 'you' correspond too many pronouns.

Likewise, instead of third person singular *avaṇ*, *avar*, or *avarkaḷ* are being used to express differences. So, while translating pronouns from Tamil to English, the translator has to consider various dimensions on degree of intimacy between participants or whether reference includes or excludes the addressee.

The inclusive /exclusive dimension: e.g. Tamil has two first person plural pronouns *nām* (inclusive) and *nānkaḷ* (exclusive) depending on whether the address is included or excluded, on the contrary, English has only one person plural form 'we'.

6. Conclusion

Translation is the process between two languages as well as two cultures. In order to transfer the original concept from one language into another, a translator may seek the help of the proper

tools like lexicons. Dictionary is one of the forms of lexicon. A bilingual dictionary is very much supportive in the process of translation. However, a translator can't solely rely on a tool. There are so many aspects beyond lexis. A word may carry so many aspects such as cultural flavor, contextual connotations, societal implications and even some mythologies. So it is the duty of the translator to properly transfer those implied aspects into the target language. Thus a translator should go beyond mere lexical meaning to get a successful translation.

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