



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 3. Issue.2.,2016 (April-June)

ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA
2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

TRANSLATION AND EQUIVALENCE

Dr. M.SURESH KUMAR¹, G. ASHOK VARDHAN²

¹Associate Professor, Department of English, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.

²Research Scholar, Department of English, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.



Dr. M.SURESH KUMAR



G. ASHOK VARDHAN

ABSTRACT

Translation Studies and the practice of translation has a crucial role to play in this 21st century global village. The wide diversity of cultures and the plurality of languages calls for a good number of translators taking up the mantle on their shoulders to translate. The aim of any translator should be to go for equivalence in translation in an easily readable and comprehensible language. This paper presents the theory of equivalence as propounded by various experts on translation studies, briefly. The paper deals with a case study of translating two chapters from *Turning Points a Journey through Challenges* by A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. The paper also discusses some of the problems encountered in translating these texts mainly with regard to the all important task of achieving equivalence of the two texts. The paper analyzes the translation of these two chapters within the framework of the communicative equivalence and/or semantic equivalence approach of Peter Newmark.

Key words: autobiographies, equivalence, communicative/semantic equivalence

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INTRODUCTION

21st century has heralded good tidings to a new stream of research called Translation Studies as translation and Translation Studies have never had it so good before. It is to be observed that over the last two to three decades, translation has become more prolific, more visible and more respectable activity.

Definition

Translation is an act of rendering a text from one language into another. As such, it is as old as original authorship and it has always been considered the branch of literary study and an offshoot of comparative literature.

Peter Newmark has given a simple definition of translation.

“Often though not by any means always, it is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in that way the author intended the text. Common sense tells us that this ought to be simple, as one ought to be able to say something as well in one language as in another” (Newmark, 1976:96).

Susan Bassnett-McGuire defines translation as a process involving a transfer of meaning from signs of one set of language into another set of language signs (Bassnett-McGuire, 1985:13).

Eugene. A. Nida calls translation as a process by means of which a person with knowledge of both the source language and the receptor language decodes the message of the source language and encodes it in the receptor language in the most appropriate form.

“Translation consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message first in terms of the meaning and second in style” (Nida, and Tabor, 1969:12).

Catford defines total translation as “replacement of SL grammar and lexis by equivalent TL grammar and lexis with consequential replacement of SL phonology/ graphology by (non-equivalent) TL phonology/graphology” (Catford, 1965:22).

The Theory of Equivalence

It was during 1960s and 1970s that the theory of equivalence has become the key element of Translation Studies. Equivalence may be referred to as achieving accuracy and fidelity between SL Text and TL Text. This study aims to study the concept of equivalence.

Eugene A. Nida proposed two types of equivalence –Formal and Dynamic. Formal focuses on the message itself in both form and content. Dynamic equivalence is based on ‘the principle of equivalent effort’ (1964:159).

According to Nida, dynamic equivalence is the main goal of a translator. This theory which was devised by Nida based on his experience of translating the Bible, was improved upon by Peter Newmark. In his *Approaches to Translation*, he proposes semantic translation and communicative translation. The semantic focuses on semantic content of the SL Text. The communicative focuses on the comprehension and response of the receptor. This distinction becomes relevant for the wide diversity of the text types-not just the Bible.

Newmark speaks about communicative translation where the translator attempts to produce the same effect on the TL readers as was produced by the original in SL readers. Nida’s theory is based on his translation of the Bible. Newmark’s theory is relevant to any type of text. The researcher wishes to look at his translation of the two chapters from *Turning Points a Journey through Challenges* by A.P.J. Abdul Kalam within the framework of the communicative and/or semantic equivalence approach of Peter Newmark.

Translation –Text Analysis:

This paper attempts to study two chapters from the autobiography *Turning Points a Journey through Challenges* by A.P.J.Abdul Kalam. The following are the problems the researcher encountered when translating these texts. The problems may be grouped as mentioned below:

I. Linguistic Problems: Problems in this level are of the following types:

- a. Lack of equivalents
- b. More than one equivalents

a) Lack of Equivalents:

1. <i>When Can I Sing a Song of India?</i>	Chief of Protocol(transliterated it as protocol chief) CNN IBN Channel governor e-judiciary(translated as electronic <i>nyaayavyavastha</i>) preventive health care nurses postmen police police station IT Emails Ranker
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	degree NRIs (transliterated it as <i>ennaarailu</i>) Medical fraternity (translated it as <i>vaidhyulu</i>) Committee Knowledge officers(translated as <i>gnanaadhikaarulu</i>) knowledge society(translated it as <i>gnanasanghaalu</i>)
2. My Ninth Lecture at Anna University	hornbill birds syllabus vision mission TIFAC(Technology Information, Forecasting and Assessment Council) vision to mission NDA (National Democratic Alliance) parliament civil servants space launch vehicle IGMDP(Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme) India 2020 report

b) More than one equivalent

Title of the Chapter	Word	Equivalents
1. When Can I Sing a Song of India?	scientists	<i>saasthravetthalu</i> <i>saasthragnulu</i>
	field	<i>rangam</i> <i>vruthulu</i> <i>polaalu</i>
	hurdles	<i>addankulu</i> <i>samasyalu</i> a kind of running race
2. My Ninth Lecture at Anna University	president	<i>dhesaadhyakshudu</i> <i>raashtrapathi</i> <i>sarvasainyaadhyakshudu</i>
	resolve	<i>pattudala</i> <i>dhrudachittham</i>
	inquisitive	<i>kuthoohalamkaligina</i> <i>uthsukathakaligina</i> <i>uthsaahamkaligina</i>

- II. **Idiomatic Problems:** At this level, the translator generally encounters problems with translating idioms/verbal phrases and other important expressions. The researchers wish to present a few of the problems they encountered as practical translators. The title of the book 'Turning Points a Journey through Challenges' is translated as '*Meli Malupulu-Addankulni adhigamisthu Prayaanam*'. Actually, it is not easy to translate the word 'challenges', yet based on the themes presented in the book, the

researcher has gone for the word '*addankulu*' as the book presents the challenges and hurdles Kalam had to overcome in his struggle for achieving success.

The first chapter is titled '*When can I Sing a Song of India?*' and it is translated as '*Bhaarateeya vijaya geethaanni nenepudu paadagalanu?*' The researchers translated 'song of India' as '*bhaarateeya vijayageetham*' instead of '*bhaarateeya geetham*' because it is more relevant in the context of the topic being mentioned by Abdul Kalam. The expression 'turning points' could be translated as '*malupu thippina sanghatanalu*' but the researchers went for the expression '*meli malupulu*' as a turning point could be either for good or for bad, but the contextual reference is for good turning points and so the researchers went for the expression '*meli malupulu*' which actually means good turning points.

There are other expressions like 'biting cold of winter' (*emukalu korike chali*), 'poured out their ideas' (*enno aalochanalu naakicharu*), 'affordable medical care' (*thakkuva dharalo vaidya sevalu*), 'wide-ranging' (*bhinnakonaallo*), 'haunting letter' (*nannu ventaadina aa vutharam*), 'ease the life of differently-abled people' (*angavaikalyamkalavari jeevithaanni inkonchem sulabhatharam cheyadam*), 'pressing issues' (*gaadamaina samasyalu*), 'spiritual harmony' (*aadhyathmika samaanathvam*), 'unity of minds' (*aalochanalloni saaroopyam*), 'unique experiences' (*prathyekamaina anubhavalu*), 'power of youth' (*yuvatha sakthi* but the researchers used the expression *yuvathaloni sakthiyukthulu*), and 'dancing peacock' (*naatyamaade nemali* but the researchers used the expression '*swetchaayutha vaathaavaranamlo purivippi naatyamaade nemali*') among others. In translating these idioms or expressions, the researchers have taken care to bring about communicative equivalence.

The second chapter is titled '*My Ninth Lecture at Anna University*'. It is translated as '*Anna viswavidhyalayamlo naa thommidho upanyaasam*'. The researcher faced many problems at the idiomatic level.

There are expressions like 'ignited mind of the youth' (*utthejamtho koodina yuvattheeyuvakula medhasse*), 'yellow bird sings' (*pasupurangulovunna oka pakshi kooniraagam theesthundi*), 'coalition parties' (*mithrapakshaalu*), 'powerful resource' (*shakthivanthamaina aayudham*), 'beautiful environment' (*andhamaina parisaraalu*), 'indigenous' (*sthaanika*), 'national mission' (*dhesaabhivrudhi lakshaalu not dhesalakshaalu*), 'leaders of all coalition parties' (*maaprabhutvamtho kalisipanichesthunna parteela naayakulu*), 'concensus' (*ekaabhipraayam*), 'handsome margin' (*manchi aadhikyamtho*), 'beehive of activity' (*boldanni kaaryakramaalu*), 'an exercise in itself' (*peddhapanaikoorchundhi*).

In translating these idioms or expressions, the researchers have taken care to bring about communicative equivalence.

- III. **Cultural Problems:** Cultural untranslatability is due to the absence of relevant culture in target language for source language text. Culture oriented words cannot be translated from one language into another with a different culture.

However, here in this analysis the culture depicted in SL Text and TL Text is more or less the same. The researcher didn't find problems with regard to the cultural aspects. The English version is about the life of Abdul Kalam during and after his days of Presidency. So, the culture of both the SL text and the TL text is the same.

Analysis of A.P.J.AbdulKalam's 'Turning Points a Journey through Challenges:

In the paragraphs to follow, an attempt is made to present a few texts from the SLT and TLT to check what kind of equivalence is used in translating the texts in question.

Communicative Equivalence

1. **SL** - Keep loving nature and care for its blessings, Then you can see divinity all over.

TL—*Premapooritha hridayaannikaligi, vaati aaseervachanaalu grahinchu. Appudu anninta dhavivaanni choodagaluguthaavu*

2. **SL** - And so it went with several other farewell calls.
TL - *Inka boldanni veedkolu sandheshaaluu sweekarinchannenu.*
3. **SL** - The recitation of these oaths brought the entire audience together in a common purpose and conveyed a message that they could all carry with them through their lives.
TL - *Ee pramaanam cheyinchagaane vaarilo okanoothanotthejam kanipinchedhi. Vaaru chesina pramanam thaalooku vishayaalanu vaari jeevithakaalamlo kalisikattuga saadhinchavacchu anna bhavam vaarilo prasphutamga kanipinchedhi.*
4. **SL** - A yellow bird sings on the jamun tree and makes my morning walk a pleasure.
TL - *Neredu chettumeedha koorchuni pasupuranguvunna oka pakshi kooniraagam theesthundhi. Dhaani paata vintoo naa udhayapunadaka aahladakaramga saaguthundhi.*
5. **SL** - The enthusiasm, and resolve on the young faces I see in the classrooms gives me energy too.
TL - *Bharatha dheshamlo mariyu ithara dheshaalalo tharagathigadhullo koorchune yuvathalo kanipinche vuthsaaham mariyu pattudhala naakukooda enaleni shakthinishtundhi.*
6. **SL** - I had been enjoying my time in the large, tranquil campus, working with professors and inquisitive students on research projects and teaching.
TL - *Naa samayamantha thoti aacharyulatho kalisi panichesthu, kuthoohalamkaligin avidhyardhulamadhya parishodhanlu mariyu bodhana chesthu chaalaa peddhadhi mariyu prashanthamga vunde Anna Viswavidhyalayamlo nirmaanaathmakamga gaduputhunnu.*

Semantic Equivalence

1. **SL** - The panchayat presidents, particularly the women presidents, explained their plans and programmes for improving their villages and the hurdles they faced.
TL - *Panchaayathee adhyakshulu, mukhyamga mahilaadhyakshulu, vaari graamaalanu abhivrudhicheyadaaniki vaarikunna pranaalikalanu, aakramamlo vaaru edhurkuntunna addankulanu naaku vivarinchaaru.*
2. **SL** - Wherever I went, teachers assured me that their mission was to groom the youth for nation building. They would strive to impart values to the young which would help them become enlightened citizens, they said.
TL - *Nenu ekkadikivellinaa teacherlu, ee dheshayuvatheeyuvakulanu dsheshamagraabhivrudhiki thaginatlugaa thayaarucheyadame thamalakshyamani cheppevaaru. Teacherlu vidhyardhulaku viluvalu nerpagaligithe sahajamgaane vaaru gnaanamnindina pourulugaa thayaaruavuthaarani cheppevaaru.*
3. **SL** - The ignited mind of the youth is the most powerful resource on the earth, above the earth and under the earth.
TL - *Utthejamtho koodina yuvatheeyuvakula medhase ee bhoomimeedha, bhoomipaina, bhoomikrindha vunna athyantha shakthivanthamaina aayudham*

Conclusion

The researchers made this study to understand the processes and the problems involved in translating these texts mainly with regard to the all-important task of achieving equivalence of the two texts within the framework of Peter Newmark's theory of equivalence.

This paper doesn't suggest that these are the only findings or the problems the translator will face if he goes for translation of these texts. These are the problems encountered by the researchers as translators and understanding these problems, will help any like-minded translator understand the nuances of the translation practice.

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