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THE PROBLEMS OF TRANSLATION FROM TELUGU – ENGLISH BASED ON THE TEXTS  
OF “MULLA NASRUDIN” BY K.B . GOPALAM

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ABSTRACT

The *Mulla nasrudin* is a one of the reputed tale in Telugu literature, which explains the humors of the Minorities and Dalits of Telugu state of India and as well as in the Middle East Asia. Many Dalit, minority Novels and works are translated from regional languages into English in these days. It is found very difficult to translate some words related to regional culture into English, as there are no equivalent words in English. This article attempts to focus on some of the unsolved riddles on the political scenes as the Telugu text in the process of translation, a translator must set up equivalences between a source text(Telugu) and a target language(English). If we take some words from the tale *Mulla Nasrudin* like Hodja, Visigina, Yemundi, Vayasentha?, Lotta kannu etc,. We cannot find exact equivalent English words in translation. In the same way while translating English text into Telugu, translators encounter problem because there are no equivalent words in Telugu culture. Finally, what is implicit through the K.B . GOPALAM's *Mulla Nasrudin* (2010) is that finding exact words is very difficult for translator.

**Key words:** culture, equivalent, source text, Hodja, encounter, implicit.

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INTRODUCTION

The role of the translation studies can explain the main problems in translation from source language into target language. And translation is very help to read or understand for monolingual readers. When the study translates those things, study has to think about that the word or sentence taken from which condition, situation, culture and also societal point of view.

**About the story:** Mulla/Hodja/Hoca Nasrudin is the starring character in a vast number of amusing tales told in regions all over the world, particularly in countries in or near the Middle East (foundation for science and technology and civilization, blog). Each tale depicts Nasrudin in a different situation, and through his point of view they humorously reveal commentary and lessons on various life themes. The great allure of the Mulla Nasrudin tales is that they are funny as well as lesson filled, philosophical, and thought provoking (*Mulla Nasrudin*, 2010).

### **The Mulla Nasrudin Character**

Mulla, Hodja, and Hoca are titles from various areas of the world that in early times were used to signify a learned man.

The character Mulla/Hodja/Hoca Nasrudin is sometimes wise, sometimes foolish, and sometimes both. He is a unique spin on a wise sage or philosopher character.

Much of Nasrudin's actions and can be described as illogical yet logical, rational yet irrational, bizarre yet normal, and simple yet profound. What adds even further to his uniqueness is the way he gets across his messages in unconventional yet very effective methods (*Mulla Nasrudin*, 2010).

### **Origins and History**

Mulla Nasrudin tales have been passed down for many centuries. It is thought that the Mulla Nasrudin character is based on a real man who lived in the 1300s. However, many countries claim to be the origin of the actual Mulla Nasrudin character and his tales, and it remains uncertain where the man lived and the stories started.

But whatever the origins of Mulla Nasrudin are, pinpointing them has become a trivial point. As generations went by, new stories were added, others were modified, and the character and his tales spread to broader regions. The types of themes and wisdom in his tales have become legendary products of a variety of people's observations and imaginations. And although most of them depict Nasrudin in an early small village setting, the tales deal with concepts that have relevance to today's universe and people.

Today, Mulla Nasrudin stories are told in a wide variety of regions, and have been translated into many languages. (It can only be assumed that some regions independently developed a character similar to Mulla Nasrudin, and the stories have become assimilated together.)

In many regions, Mulla Nasrudin is a major part of the culture, and is quoted or alluded to frequently in daily life. Since there are thousands of different Nasrudin stories, one can be found to fit almost any occasion.

Sufis also use Nasrudin stories frequently as learning and meditation tools, similar to the way Zen Buddhism practitioners use koans (*Mulla Nasrudin*, 2010).

### **Also Known As**

In different regions, the character goes by such aliases as:

Mulla Nasrudin

Hodja / Hoca Nasrudin

Nasrudin Hodja / Hoca

Effendi (citation : <http://www.rodneyohebsion.com/mulla-nasrudin.htm>)

### **Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of this project is to observe and find out the problems of translation between the two different languages. How the problems occur during translation and what are the problems faced by a translator and how it can be solved for a better translation

### **Translated stories**

#### **DEBT**

There would be no one in this world without debts to be paid off.

By the time Mulla Nasrudin opened the door one early morning there was a baniah waiting to collect the money that Nasrudin owed him

Hodja! You send me back by saying something or the other whenever I comes, will you give me my money at least this time? He asked.

Why are you in a hurry? Have some patience! I will return all your money! Said Mulla

Being fed up the baniah asked how you will repay.

"I sowed the seeds of thorn plants along the wall outside for you" said Mulla

"So "said the baniah surprised

"They will grow and produce a lot of thorns in a short while"

"So"

"Do you know how many sheep go along this way every day?"

"So"

"When they pass by, the wool gets struck to the thorns, I will collect that wool and my wife will spin it, I will sell that wool and I will repay you" said Mulla.

#### **HOW OLD?**

"Hodja! How old are you?" asked a man

"I don't know all of that but I am three years elder to my younger brother" said Mulla

"How do you know that?" asked that man.

"I heard my brother telling someone that he is two years elder than me the last year, one year passed by now so I am three years elder than to him, I will become his grandfather if it goes on the same way" said Mulla ( Charles Downing, 1965).

#### **WHO ELSE?**

Taimoor is a lame so another word "lang" is added to his name he was not only ugly lent also crossed-eyed! Somehow one day he scratched his beard and he found it disgusting.

"Call the barber" sultan shouted.

Barber was there within the next moment, shaving the king's beard means an occasion for them!

The work was over in no time, the king's bath was also finished.

Taimoor remembered that Spain ambassador sent him some gifts, swords, silk clothes, golden jewelry and something strange along with them that is a mirror made of silver.

"Bring the mirror" shouted Ameer

Mirror was brought and he looked at his face in the mirror and he saw how ugly his face was, started weeping , the clown Mulla Nasrudin also started weeping, Taimoor felt that it was alright initially, and both of them wept together, somehow, the remaining people made Taimoor stop weeping but Mulla continued with his weeping ( Charles Downing, 1965) .

#### **NO**

One day Mulla Nasrudin was setting right the tiles on the roof of his house, his wife went out saying that she will be back in a moment while he was still on the roof. Sometime later a stranger came and started knocking at the door.

"There is no one home! Tell me what do you want?"

"I can tell you only if you come down "said the stranger.

"I am busy, tell me" said Mulla.

"I will tell you but please come down" said the stranger.

He got down all the way down the ladder with effort,

"Now tell me" said Mulla.

"I am very poor, I have no food for the day, could you please help me out?" said the stranger as if it is a secret.

Mulla was irritated

He climbed up the house through the ladder and asked the stranger to climb up the ladder.

He also climbed up the house with a hope,

Both of then reached the roof, he turned back and said

"There is no one home" please come again ( Charles Downing, 1965) .

#### **IN THE DARK**

Mulla washed his face and wiping,

He lost his finger ring,

There was the sound of the ring falling but it was nowhere to be seen. It may be that there is no fuel in the lamp so it got turned off at the same time.

It seemed that he will not be able to find it and came out to veranda from the room, there was a bright moon light all over and he started searching in the moon light.

A man who was passing by the road observed that he was searching for something

"Mulla! What have you lost? It seems you are searching for it" said the man

"Yes! I lost my finger ring" said Mulla

He tried to help him searching saying did you lose it here? What kind of a ring is it?

"Not here! I lost it in the house" said Mulla

"If you lost it in the house why are you searching for it here? You should be searching where ever you lost it" said the man

"Yeah right! Everyone around advises me as if I don't know. Lamp got turned off as the fuel is over, it was all dark there! What is the use of searching in the room" said Mulla (My Favourite Mulla Nasrudin Story By VIKRAM KARVE, 2010).

#### **RESPECT**

The market was crowded, it was quiet congested with a lot of people.

Nasrudin Hodja started talking to a youth.

"My lord! Greetings, by any chance aren't you a nephew of a Imam" asked Mulla

"No" said the young man

"You must be a son of the judge" said Mulla

"No, not at all" said the young man,

"Are you one among the king's men of the Taimoor" asked Mulla

"Nothing like that" said the young man,

"You son of a bitch! You are stamping on my foot, I will break your neck if you do not take your leg back, you ass" said Mulla.

#### **GRATITUDE**

One day there was a dangerous situation where Mulla Nasrudin could have fallen in to a pool, but an acquaintance was just there and rescued Mulla,

Then onwards whenever he sees Mulla he reminds that situation and keeps boasting about the great help he has done, it was alright initially but by and by Mulla got irritated with it,

This time when Mulla saw him, he asked that person to come to a pool along with him, when they reached the pool Mulla jumped in to the pool, he stood in the pool with the water up to his neck and said

"I got as wet as we could have got if had not saved me, will you leave me alone?"

Said Mulla to him.

#### **TOMORROW**

One day some elderly man from the village came to Mulla Nasrudin.

"Sir! Hodja! We want Saleem and Ayesha married, is it a good day tomorrow" they asked

Nasrudin stood up and leaned against his hand stick and started thinking, none knew what occurred to his mind but he said

"If only there is something like tomorrow" looking in to nothing,

People who came there got scared and left the place,

Finally this word spread all over,

Mulla is a knowledge man, it must mean something if he says it, the world comes to an end "let's be ready" for everything, people started saying among themselves.

The next day dawn broke, people are frightened thinking of what would happen, but nothing happened,

Everyone has started to Mulla's house to find out what the matter was,

But Mulla was not there.

#### **RESCUE**

It has become a habit of Taimoor to attack small and big kings and loot their wealth,

One day he came back alone from the battle field, everyone was silent in the king's court. There was a reason for that silence,

Sultan was silent and mild, after some time has passed, Taimoor said a sentence "My horse saved me"

Every one face was brightened again, most of them sighed, finally the king came back safe, and that's enough.

"What happened my lord!" asked the minister who gathered courage  
Sultan took a deep breath and started telling the story  
"When I went forward chasing the opponent, by the way, what is his name? I forgot, our soldiers lagged behind, when I kept going I entered a forest, what would I do without my army?  
I did not find a way out and was thinking which way to go, just then five opponent warriors surrounded me. They were really strong, and they recognized me.(poor sultan doesn't know that it was easy)  
They might have thought that their king would present them with precious gifts and started chasing me like hounds, my spear was broken, arrows were finished, I was drained of all my strength, I could not even move my sword, my favorite "All sifar" must have observed it, and mustardy strength and got me here.  
Everyone was happy and shouted slogan  
"Sultan Taimoor zindabad"  
But Mulla Nasrudin quietly said "once up on a time a fish saved my life"  
Sultan expected an experience better than his and asked him to explain it in detail  
"my ship was about to sink, I don't know how many days have passed in the middle of the sea, I was famished at the time, just then a fish by itself jumped and fell in front of me, I ate that fish and I gained strength and reached the shore of the sea, or else what would have happened!" said Mulla  
No one said a word after that.

#### **DREAM**

The poor's thoughts are always those of money, and it is said that whatever we think of all appears in our dreams  
There needs no special mention that Mulla was poor, it has become his habit to think how he could make some money in his hands,  
The same thing appeared in his dream  
A strange man counted nine gold coins and put it in the Mulla's hand, but Mulla is telling him that if he gives him one more coin it will become ten coins and it will become a round figure, but the man refuses, but Mulla is asking him to give one more, both of them were fought for some time, all of this was in his dream,  
Just then Mulla wakeup to some sound, there was not a single coin in his hands.  
Immediately Mulla shut his eyes and said "it's alright nine are enough give them"  
Another time Mulla got up from his sleep suddenly and asked his wife  
"Hand me my spectacles"  
"What is the matter" asked his wife  
"I got a beautiful dream but it was all blurred "said Mulla (by the way were there spectacles in Mulla's time?)

#### **I HAVEN'T TAKEN**

One day Mulla Nasrudin wanted to buy new clothes, he did not check whether he has money in his pocket, but he is started to the market.  
Should I buy a phijamas? Or a shirt? He thought for some time  
"Show me some phijamas" he asked the shop keeper  
The shopkeeper displayed some phijamas in front of him  
He did not find them good enough except for one  
He took it in his hands and examined it but he did not like it, he returned it to the shop keeper  
"Show me some shirts" he asked this time  
The shopkeeper put many shirts in front of him, he found one shirt was good among them.  
He found that the cost of the shirt is equal to that of the phijama.  
Mulla put that shirt in his underarms and started back,  
"Sir! You have not paid for that" said the shop keeper,  
"I gave you the phijama and took the shirt in return, why should I pay" said Mulla  
"Then pay for the phijamas at least" said the shop keeper  
"You are funny! I have not bought the phijamas" said Mulla.

### **RUN**

The stupider Mulla's words sound the more they make people think.

"Do you know? Once I made a group of thieves run ruthlessly" said Mulla to a group of people who gathered for gossip,

Everyone was interested to know about that incident and they asked him to explain it in detail,

"Simple! There is nothing to explain in detail, I was running in front of them and they were running at the back of me" said Mulla.

### **LATE**

Once Nasrudin Hodja came home along with his disciples,

The thought of offering them a meal occurred to his mind, immediately he called his wife and said

"Look! There are guests at home, cook pulav" said mulla

She angrily asked him to come inside

"You are asking me to cook as though bought rice and ghee" she said

Nasrudin got angry,

"Aren't there empty plates at least?"

"Why not?" she handed over the plats to him

Mulla kept those empty plates in front of his disciples

"I would have served you palav in the plates if I had had rice and ghee" said Mulla.

### **WHAT'S IN?**

Once Mulla Nasrudin was walking in the market with apricot fruits in his pocket, he saw some boys sitting under the tree along the way and Mulla went to them,

"I will give the biggest apricot fruit if you can guess what's there in my pocket" said Mulla

"The person who can answer your question must have known the future" said the boys.

### **WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO DO?**

Nasrudin Hodja was walking in the market with his head bent,

He seemed to talk only if someone talks to him,

A rich elder man was coming down the road, Hodja was walking without paying any attention,

The rich elder man who observed this greeted him by himself.

"Greetings Hodja!" said the elder man

"Greetings, Hodja stopped and wished him back,

Hodja! I have to tell you something, some time back, someone is going with a plate chicken in it cooked with masala, my mouth watered to the order of it" said the elderly man

Hodja looked at him with an anger

"So what?" why are you telling me that?

"How does it matter to me if someone cooks chicken fry?" said Mulla

"Let me complete" said the rich man

Mulla was so irritated

"What do you want to tell me? You want to tell me about the color of the chicken fry this time?" said Mulla glaring at him

"It is not that! Why are you so angry? I saw him going with a chicken plate towards your house" said the rich man

Mulla calmed down a little and said

"Then what have you got to do with the chicken?"

### **BLANKET**

It was very late in the night, nearly in the middle of the night, mulla and his wife were sleeping covering themselves all over with the blanket.'

Both of them awakened by the sound of the two men arguing in front of their house

Mulla removed his blanket and went to the window and started listening  
“Why bother? Some stupid people, why don’t you come and sleep?” said his wife and she did not get up,  
But mulla wanted to see what is going on outside,  
It was so cold outside so he covered himself completely with a blanket and went out,  
“Hey! Is it fair to fight in front of someone’s house at this odd house?” said mulla to them,  
One of them pulled the blanket from mulla without answering and ran away, the second one did the same,  
Having nothing left to do mulla came in to the home shivering with cold,  
His wife came out with the lamp to see what is happening,  
“By the way! What is the fight about?” asked her husband  
Mulla hesitated for a moment  
“I don’t know whether you believe it or not! If study told you the truth, both of them were fighting for my blanket, they got the blanket, so the fight ended up” said mulla.

#### **Annotations**

In the view of a translator it would be difficult to translate the cultural terms in to another language, in my translation work there are many cultural and idiomatic terms which cannot be translatable, as the supervisors suggestion study tried my best to refer the maximum tools like the dictionaries, thesaurus, Wikipedia and encyclopedia of translation, study could finally find some of the terms which were already translated, those are may be a equivalents, according to the basics of translation, a translator can take the liberty over the source text and can translate or put the near equivalents according to the context, hence study could translate the source text in to target text in near sense if the words are not translatable, even though there are some terms which cannot be translatable and some terms have equivalents are given below with the explanation to satisfy the reader of the target language.

The author of the source text used the difficult terms which are used in colloquial Telugu are not translatable in to another language but there are such expressions in every language the problem is the word itself will have one meaning and the word in a sentence will have another meaning, this kind of meanings will differ from one another,

A few words and expressions are not changed of translated in this texts for not to lose the essence of the original those words and the clear explanation is given below along with the colloquial terms.

Saahukaaru	: baniah (a person who give loans)
Hodja	:generally it means ‘The Lord’ but here the name of a person in the story
Visigina	: irritated
Yemundi	what else? (The word changes its meaning based on the context as there is no perfect equivalent
Pedda manishi	elderly man (a knowledge person and respects them as they are experienced in life and village people treats them as judges on some occasions
Dhyasha	: thought (thinking on a particular issue)
Akyechelu	: considered as money/ copper coins used in past years
Vayasentha?	: Combination of two words ‘age’ and ‘how much’ it is a question of ‘how old are you?’
Kuntivaadu	: physically challenged,
Lotta kannu	: crossed eye
Asahyamga	: being disgusted
Mangali	: barber
Marukshanam	: very next moment
Raayabari	: ambassador
Chitramaina	:Baavurumanuta : the act of crying (the term used as an idiom)

Atigaa lagadam	: acting too much on a particular issue
Poyekaalam	: a colloquial word used in different situations to refer 'what's wrong with you?'
Mahaprabho	: generally it refers the word 'my lord', the expression of irritation indifferent contexts
Daya chesi	: kindly
Beedavaadini	: poor person
Vishayam	: matter of something
Kollagottukuravatam	: louting
Satrunayakudu	: head of the opponents in the battle field (the king of a kingdom)
Satruyodhulu	: soldiers
Manyaaalu	: valuable stones/jewellery
Taladannae	: idiomatic term of 'better than'
Nanem	: coin
Melakuva	: wake up
Angi	: shirt
Bhalevadivayya	: somewhat wise man
Chamuru	:fuel/oil in the lamp
Deepam	: lamp
Aaru bayata	: varanda/ out of the house
Pindi aarabosinattlu	: idiomatic term of expressing that the moon is bright
Sareleyyah	: it's okay man
Abbey kaadu	: to say no strongly
Donga munda kodaka	: it's a colloquial telugu term to scold a person/ a taboo
Neeti madugu	: water pool

### **Conclusion**

The study has translated text as sentence to sentence type. Study have examined many terms are untranslatable. Since the given source text were already a translated version, there is a loss of original essence if the study observe the source text and hence some words does not have technical terms in particular target language to translate from source language(Telugu). Like cultural terms, metaphoric and idiomatic terms, So, It is quite different from standard language Telugu, sometimes it is influenced standard dialect of Telugu. There are some words which we can't translate, they are untranslatable words. It needed the explanation and explanation research have to focus on the cultural and traditional terms, the task of a translation become more challenging as the language is not in voyage now and these are the words and expression that a person from the modern times will have trouble in understanding the source text. The sentence takes S O V structure in Telugu and when the source text is translated in to English must be S V O in phrase construction so when writer translate a text from one language to another the text should have meaning and as well as the essence of the original though translator cannot make a perfect judgment for the target text thus that the role of a translator should be faithful to both source and target languages.

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