ANALYSING TRANSLATION AND OVERCOMING OBSTACLES-A STUDY THROUGH TRANSLATING TWO MALAYALAM SHORT STORIES TO ENGLISH

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Abstract: Literature has played a very vital role in guiding the mankind through the tough times. Texts written in all language perpetuates universal values that has to be widely disseminated. It is here that the relevance of translation comes up. It bridges the gap between cultures and reduce the dividing effect. The task of translation is to ensure cross-language communication in the text created in the language of Recipient. Indian literature is a platform where a lot of narratives comes up that are worth being discussed across the nation irrespective of the linguistic borders. It is necessary to make the walls of reading permeable to all texts without the obstacle of language comprehension. Regional literature in India is highly diversified. One's inability to understand a language should not hinder their access to a wonderful piece of literature.

This paper is governed primarily by the understanding that translation is a very important tool in imparting universal reading experience. The chosen primary text for translation are two stories by 'Santhosh Echikkanam', a reknowned Malayalam writer - '*Biriyani*' and '*Panthibhojanam*'. These stories depicts class and caste differences respectively. While imploring the difficulties of translation in general, focus will be given up on the complications in translating regional words that are inseparable from the cultural capital of a person. When meaning becomes relational, how is the purpose of translation achieved as far as a person who is completely alien to a different culture is the major question that will be answered across the research. The paper, with the aid of contemporary translational theories tries to decode the reason as in why there is gap between the original work and the translated work and why they are always compared. This attempt of translation and observing the experiences of the same will help locate how far has translation as a process has fared to instil a culturally enhanced reading experience to the readers. The paper establishes a concrete relation between language, thought and culture in alienated circumstances of the reader.

Keywords: Translation, Language, Thought, Culture, Malayalam.

Introduction: Translation has always been a field of study which is very important yet was left unattended for a long period of time. It has enabled the masses to read beyond the borders irrespective of their linguistic capital. The facets of 'Multilingual awareness' is awakened when translation reaches to the depths of anthropological thinking. Rather than seeing into words and other linguistic units, a good translator will see into the existing power relations and culture in a community for effectively carrying out the process. One must also understand that language is constantly in motion and is evolving over time.

The history of translation can be located back to 3000 BC. The first phase of Oral tradition stretches from prehistory to 3000 years BC. The 'process' of translation was not even recogonised at that time though they were doing exactly the same. one can clearly define the different practices of translation into stages of four. It can be traced down from *word for word translation* followed by *sense translation*. After the fifteenth century, we can see *free translation* coming into picture whose end marked the beginning of the era of a*dequate translation* from the nineteenth century (Foz, 139).

Translation is a multimodal activity considering the amount of collaborations that are required between various aspects of language, culture and identity. It is very important to keep in mind the culture and identity of the target audience for the effectiveness of translation. In most cases, people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds are presenting the texts to people and rhetorical decisions are often taken. These rhetorical decisions are influenced by selective histories and backgrounds of the intended audience which are considered keeping in mind the variations prevalent in them . One has to move across the ranges of linguistic modality, and cultural canvas inorder to figure out the final translation that will enhance the reader's experience and knowledge.

Multilingualism and translation becomes a tool for introspection into a community's monolingualism and becomes the key of survival in a global environment made of smaller local units. In such a multifarious global community with discrete linguistic translation enables effective communication and helps in forming a common platform for the people.

Theoretical Framework: Translation is a process that incorporates both anthropological and ethnographic elements together. Within the arena of translation theories, for the purpose of this research its application is narrowed into contemporary translation theory. It has six major approaches within it. They are Sociolinguistic approach, communicative approach, Hermeneutic approach, Linguistic approach, Literary approach and Semiotic approach .Translation is considered to be interpreting texts where the social context varies. From the plethora of translation theories, with a clear idea of what need to be done in the course of the research helped to narrow them to these six approaches. With the understanding that the same rule cannot be applied everywhere, appropriate approaches will be used as per the requirements of the text. It is hoped that the information gathered during the review of literature will help in bringing out the best analysis of the concerned subject of study.

Observation: Santhosh Echikkanam is a Malayalam contemporary short story writer who has contributed vehemently to Malayalam literature. His focus is primarily on class and caste differences that are prevalent in Kerala. Since it is not directly propagated, caste hierarchy cannot be perceived overtly. But Echikkanam was successful in bringing out these hidden inequalities and questions the fake pride of Keralites that they wear of social equality and acceptance. This contemporary writer also did not forget to look into the attitude of the native Keralites towards the immigrant daily wage workers from Bihar. The deliberate hostility of the localities and the resulting ignorance faced by the migrants are bought into the lime light by him. The stories that are taken for understanding the challenges and overcoming them was*Panthibhojanam* and *Biriyani.* Both of these stories are closely linked to the culture of Kerala, especially the food culture. A person who is not familiar with the culture of Kerala won't understand the intentions of the story at all if word by word translation is carried out. At the same time, in some other instances the literal translation

could only deliver to the meaning of the sentence to the readers. In order to see the very evident differences in the result of translation using different methods, trial and error method was used and only the most and the least suited translated versions are presented here in order to maintain brevity and clarity of the paper.

Attempts to Translate the Explicit Caste and Cultural Contents in Panthibhojanam: The story *Panthibhojanam* is set up in a court. Unlike always, the story takes place during the lunch break where the colleagues eat together. Caste and food is related is the main topic of discussion in the story. This is a sentence from the text *Paachakam cheyyumbol uppum manjalum okke cherkkaarullathu pole chilayinam currykalil athinte upanjaathaakkalude jaathiyum mathavumokke kalarunnathu swabhaavikamaanennaval paranju.* (Echikkanam, 193). One can translate this sentence in multiple ways. Since there is cultural capital involved in this using trial and error method, it was observed that communicative approach would be the most suitable one (Table 1.1)

Table 1.1

Approach used	Resulting Translated Sentence
Communicative Approach	Just like how we add salt and spices into our foods, knowingly or unknowingly it's creator's caste also falls into some of them.
Linguistic Approach	The caste of the person who invented the dish will also be added into some of them just like salt and turmeric.

In this exercise, though the linguistically approached sentence is short, meaning finds its way more smoothly with the communicative approach. The second sentence is the literal translation which simply states the sentence but fails to convey facts.

Similarly, the following sentence has a lot of cultural terminologies; *Aval mathangayude aakrithiyilulla cheriya oru castrol thurannathum nalla onnantharam kottayam paachakavidhiyil Soosante vallyammachi varatti nirthiya pannikkutty onnamari.*(Echikkanam,191). This sentence has many words whose existence could be perceived through only literal translation, but its meaning is something different from its objectivity. The signified and signifier are too unrelated that the relationship between them could only be established through definite knowledge of the culture to which the language belongs to.

Table 1.2

Approach Used	Resulting Translated Sentence
Hermeneutic Approach	When she opened the pumpkin shaped castrol her Grandmother's cooked pork squealed.
Semiotic Approach	The aroma of the sautéed pork cooked lovingly by Soosan's grandmother called out for them when she opened her large castrol

In this case, the phrase *Pannikkutty onnamari* literally means the pig squealed or oinked. But the idea that is posited here is not at all about the onomatopoeic sound. It is about the taste that the dish has. Sautéed pork is an emotion in the Christian household across Kerala. When a person who reads this sentence will understand what the author meant, but the literal translation will give an entirely different meaning. This is where the right approach becomes relevant. In this case, any method that translates the linguistic units does not hold good since the relationship between the words and its meaning is something that has to be derived from the cultural capital and societal experience that one has. Because of the same reason, it is the meaning that has to be translated here for the purpose of understanding.

There are several instances where direct caste hierarchies comes into play in this short story (table 1.3). It was understood that such caste attached words are not anymore words that are used to describe people of a particular community, but obscene abuse. The literal translation may look like an addressal to the receiver as a member of that particular caste. But the multiple meanings that the word *polayante mone* has acquired over time disables a person's capability to think of it as a mere form of angry addressal than an abuse. The sentence used is *Avante kazhuthil pidichu 'Polayante mone konnu kalayum' ennalari* (Echikkanam, 190).

Table 1.3

Approach used	Resulting translated sentence
Sociolinguistic Approach	He grabbed his collars and shouted, "I will kill you, son of a bitch"
Linguistic Approach	He held his neck and screamed, "Son of a Pulaya (a Caste name), I will kill you"

The Problems of Translating Class and Local Contexts in 'Biriyani': Biriyani' is a story that depicts the life of an immigrant worker through the wedding ceremony in a rich Muslim family. It draws comparison of the economic differences that these class differences will bring up. Since there are many colloquial utterances coming up, the translation approach that is to be used is very crucial as far as the meaning of the same is concerned. One such sentence goes like this *Ini aa Haajath nadakkaathe mooparu mayyathaayal pinne athu manassilennum oru bejaaraayi kidakkumennu umma paranjathu kondu Riswan sammathichu* (Echikkanam,196). When different translation approaches was applied it was found that due to the heavy embedding of local terms only Linguistic Approach is practical. The following sentence can be translated like this

Table 1.4

Approach used	Resulting translated sentence
Linguistic Approach	When his mother said that If his Hajaath goes ungranted, after his death it will haunt her forever; Riswan agreed to do the reception.

Here, the Communicative Approach which will translate the meaning cannot be used since there is no exact meaning existing for words like *mayyathu* that perpetuates the same level of relativity as

this word. In such cases, the entire sentence could only be translated in its literal meanings to ensure the proper flow of messages.

Some sentences has to be read through the socio-political contexts that the narrative is going through. The lines which reflect the society might not mean the same thing as the word says but something different. So an uninformed reader will completely misunderstand the situation if only literal translation is done. The following sentence has a lot of socio- political contexts to it; *Avar orizha janthuvine pole kudanju kalanjallaathe pirivil orilavu thannittilla* (Echikkanam,195). It can be translated the best through Socilinguistic approach.

Table 1.5

Approach used	Resulting translated sentence
Linguistic Approach	They threw him away like a reptile and did not give any discounts
Sociolinguistic Approach	They shunned him away like a rat and denied him any considerations

These lines talk about the bribes that the police department of Bihar takes from the poor people and how they loot them. The main characters plea to consider his requests and spare his money for his hungry family is denied here. The literal translation won't help here as the sentence does not mean that the police officer kicked him away. Hence a Sociolinguistic Approach is required to convey the intended meaning here.

Conclusion: Translation as it has always been known to people is a very thought engaging process. This paper not only helped me to validate this but also gave me a handful of effective ways that could be applied ignorer to bring out out the best results and thereby helped in aiding the understanding that translation need not always drain the essence of a text. During the initial stages of the study, the approach was purely based on the generalised notion that Linguistic Approach in translation never holds good at any point as they lack the sense of meaning. This notion was contested by those statements that have a plethora of colloquial terms and cultural connotations. The fact that sometimes meaning and sometimes signs has to be translated ignorer to give space for the reader to think also came with the tireless process of translating two Malayalam stories. All obstacles are multifaceted, a single sided approach won't solve the problem. This is true for translation as well. The hurdles of translation are more often left unattended than overcoming them which is not only easy but more importantly unethical. Multiple approaches are hence applied across the two stories to carry out the best of it to the non-Malayalam readers. For essence not always lies in meanings alone but also in the beauty of the words that can transcend beyond a single language.

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