

## EQUIVALENCE IN TRANSLATION OF THE TELUGU STORY “*NUNE SUKKA*” (SLT) AS “AN OIL DROP”(TLT)– AN OBSERVATION

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### **Abstract**

The story “*Nune Sukka*” in Telugu (SLT) is written by Saleem and it is translated into English (TLT) as “An Oil Drop” by K.V.Koteswara Rao. In this paper the researchers observed Pater Newmark’s principles of equivalence to analyse the translated story. The researchers faced linguistic, idiomatic, usage, and cultural problems in this analysis providing some SL text samples. In this paper the researchers have observed that the translator tried his best to introduce the SL culture in the translation of the SL text into the TL. The findings are discussed in the analysis of the SL text with that of the TL text.

**Key words:** Linguistic problems, Idiomatic/Usage problems, Cultural problems, Analysis of Random Text Samples

### **Introduction**

Communication is a process of sharing information either orally or in writing. In this process of sharing of ideas through the select medium of expression, however, perishable the information may be, shared among people of different languages and cultures. In the process of sharing, the information should be translated from one language to another to make the receiver understand the information. Translation studies, as an emerging stream of research, has been changing its methods and techniques rapidly in the recent two or three decades.

**Definitions:**

Peter Newmark has defined it as: “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” (96). Susan Bassnett-McGuire defines translation as “Process involving a transfer of meaning from signs of one set of language into another set of language signs” (13). Eugene, A. Nida defines translation as a process by means of decoding and encoding the message of the SL into the RL in the most appropriate form as, “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” (12). J.C. Catford’s *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* (1965) defines 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” (22).

**Objectives of the Paper:**

- a) To study linguistic, idiomatic and the cultural problems.
- b) To study the process of translation with reference to the select texts within the frame work of Peter Newmark’s Theory of Equivalence.
- c) To see whether the selected texts can be done by applying the semantic equivalence and communicative equivalence.

**Peter Newmark’s Theory of Equivalence in brief:**

Peter Newmark (1988) proposed “semantic translation” and “communicative translation”. The functional difference between the two is that ‘semantic translation’ emphasises ‘the source text’ and ‘communicative translation’ focuses on ‘the target readers’.

Newmark has discussed the importance of analysis of text categories highlighting the translation methods. He divided the texts into three categories: a) expressive text, b) informative text, c) vocative text. The expressive text explains the mind process of the original writer, or an originator of the utterance, or a speaker, and it includes the authoritative statements, serious imaginative literature, autobiographies, essays and personal correspondence. The informative text depicts the specific knowledge of the readers’ viz., facts, reports, ideas, or theories covering academic papers, textbooks, popular science or art books, and popular journalism. The vocative texts narrate the readership of the target language people, interprets how to act, think, or feel, to react, etc. intended by the texts. The instructions, publicity, propaganda, persuasive writing, and also popular fiction come under the vocative texts category. Semantic translation is suitable to interpret the expressive texts, while communicative translation is used for informative and vocative texts and a judicious mix of the two theories.

Newmark preferred an integrated perspective of translation process, rather using semantic translation and communicative translation separately, even though they are applied alternatively to accommodate the circumstances in the text, and to create a good piece of translation.

### **Plot Synopsis**

It is the story of a mother who insists her only son to go to live in a town doing a job, which is against to his wish, as he wants to stay in the village cultivating his land. The narrator of the story is Ramakrishna the grandson to the mother character. The beginning of the story is narrated by him as he has become nostalgic, recollecting the incidents one by one vividly about how his family had left their village. He visualises all the incidents viz. How they came down to the town leaving the village in the rain, what were his grandparents doing at that time, where did he sit on the cart, who accompanied them with the bullock cart and how they had reached the cross roads by catching the bus service to town.

He also depicts how it has become years since their arrival to town. He had successfully completed his schooling and college in the town. His father has not visited village ever since they had left the village, but his grandfather used to visit them now and then. He has been visited his grandfather's house in summer holidays. As he has been disturbed with the thoughts of their journey to town in that rain, he has asked his mother about the reasons for their desertion of village.

His mother told him that his father deserted the village because of his grandmother who had insulted his father, when he had asked to add an oil drop (ghee) to the tamarind pickle with the two *roties* for dinner. He got angry for the words she had spoken on the day; consequent to it he deserted the village and his parents permanently.

Ramakrishna felt angry upon his grandmother for the words, and wanted to ask her immediately, therefore, goes to the village. His grandparents became very happy for his arrival. Having washed his feet and hands, he sat for dinner. His grandmother served him two roties and some tamarind pickle, he then asked her to add an oil drop to be tasty. Having got her eyes full of water, she served the oil drop to the pickle and waited until he finished his dinner. Soon after the dinner, his plate was taken to backyard for cleaning. While cleaning the plate she called him there, and asked to watch the hen that was jabbing its chicks sending them away repeatedly from it, even though the chicks had been coming close to it.

He did not understand it. Therefore, he asked her what was there new to know in that situation. She told him then that she had also send his son away from her in order to make him live a happy and contented life in town doing a government job, as they have been cultivating and living a life full of despair for ages. She did it because her son is an educated person, and also the only person who had got a government job, however, he doesn't like

doing the job, but wants to cultivate the field, and produce crop to help the people. Her narration made Ramakrishna feel comfortable by keeping his face in the lap of his grandmother.

### Text Analysis

The researcher has faced I) Linguistic, II) Idiomatic/Usage problems, and III) Cultural problems in analysing the story, "An Oil Drop."

#### I. Linguistic problems:

##### a) Lack of equivalence

<b>An Oil Drop (TLT)</b>	<b>Words in SL:</b> <i>Gongadi, patela, ningilam, putlaku-putlu, pidaka,</i>
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The above words in the select story in Telugu (SL) have no equivalent words in English (TL) and therefore, the researcher tried to bring equivalence by using certain communicative expressions in the TL.

##### a) More than one equivalence

Title of the story	Words in SL	Equivalent words in TL
<b>An Oil Drop (TLT)</b>	<i>Gubulu,</i>	Tension, worry, meloncoly, mental dipression, whim, fancy, sick at heart
	<i>Woota</i>	Fountain, spring of water, pickling juice, strength
	<i>Dhoddu,</i>	Fat, stout, big, large, thick
	<i>Muchata,</i>	Gossip, an idle talk, news, wish, desire, pleasure, taste, liking
	<i>Phikhar,</i>	Worry, caring, think about
	<i>Dhimaku,</i>	Brain, head weight, reckless
	<i>Dhabba-dhabba,</i>	Quickly, tapping
	<i>Kushi,</i>	Happy, ecstasy
	<i>Podisi-podisi,</i>	Prick, stab
<i>Yaava</i>	Thought, passion, obsession	

The researcher found more than one equivalent words in English (TL) for the Telugu (SL) words in order to reduce the disturbance in understanding the text (TT) by the target readers.

**II. Idiomatic/ Usage Problems:** “*Manasula mullu guchukontane vundhi*” is an expression that speaks about the suffering of somebody in the source language. The idiomatic explanation for the word is “giving pain to someone with or without any cause”. The translator translated it as “the thorn is piercing in my mind” as it explains the condition of the grandmother of the speaker in the story. “*Kandlu gandlu theginai*” is another idiom in the SLT means the speaker sobs continuously shedding tears from his eyes in the story. The idiomatic meaning of the idiom is “uncontrollable flood” in the TLT. The translator used these idioms contextually without missing the content.

**III. Cultural Problems:***Chinthakaya thokku* is a the name of a pickle made by the source language people with unripe tamarind fruit generally ate as a supplement to the main course of meal in the source culture. As the source language (Telugu) has a few dialects, the dialect used by the speaker in the story is the Telangana dialect because *thokku* is the word used for pickle by the people of Telangana rather than the people of other dialects of the source language (SL) as they use it as *Pachhadi*. *Naayana* is also a culture specific word; generally it can be used to address the father of a boy/girl and specifically to a young boy/girl in the source culture. The source writer used it to address the narrator of the story, a boy by his grandmother. *Tikaana* is an Urdu word usually being used by the SL speakers of the Telangana region, its meaning is a shelter or settling down somewhere in the SL. The translator translated as settling down in the town, which contextually expresses the content. *Voota* is a word used to express the meaning “continuous flow of water” otherwise a stream, or flow of water, which is colloquial expression mostly used in Telangana or Rayalaseema regions of SL. *Gubulu* also a colloquial usage and culture specific word mostly used by the Telangana region people of the SL, it has many meanings, they are: Tension, worry, melancholy, mental depression, whim, fancy, sick at heart, as the usage is pertinent enough to the dialect which has cultural inflections. *Bandi* is a colloquial usage that means a cart. *Yaadhi* has different meanings one is *to recall something or somebody*, another meaning is *what an interrogative adjective* in the TL. *Kushi*, *Phikaru*, *Dhimaku*, *Chowrastha*, *Masthu* are culture specific words of Urdu language, and these words are used as interlinear words in Telangana dialect of the SL, their respective meanings are *happy*, *sorrow/think about*, *mind*, *crossroads* and *sufficient or plenty* in the TL. *Patela* is a culture specific word, it means addressing a person particularly the headman or the landlord or a high caste (community) person especially in Telangana region of the SL., *Thalle* means plate to eat, it the culture

specific word of the SL of Telangana people. *Sonchayinchu*, *Samjgale*, both the words are used colloquially in the SL of Telangana dialect, which mean to *think*, *didn't you understand* in the TL. *Rappuna* is also a colloquial expression in the SL that means *immediately* in the TL. *Nunemuntha* is also a culture specific word as it is a custom to store ghee in the pots on the attic of any house hold in the early years of twentieth century Telugu speaking areas of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

### Random Text Analysis:

**Text.1.** “*Nuvvu bandi meedhikekku patelaa!*” *annadu kaapala Ramulu baapu thoti.*(SLT)

- “You also climb on the cart my lord!” said Ramulu to father.(TLT)

The translator succeeded in bringing the contextual meaning to the words and the sentence at this point, provided the words like *patelaa* and *baapu*, which have cultural influence of Urdu language as *patelaa* means owner or landlord and *baapu* means father in the SL of Telangana region. Having maintained the consistency in bringing the dialectical impact on the translation, the translator successfully achieved the communicative equivalence of the content and context in this sentence.

**Text. 2.** *Poragadu peddhagaiyundu. Yeppatikanna gee muchata seppaka dhappadhani gudlalla neellu dheeskuni cheppindhi amma.* (SLT)

- Having thought the boy grew old, and he would anyhow be told about the matter someday. She told him the story by filling tears in her eyes. (TLT)

In the conversation between the boy and his mother in the story, the mother character speaks within herself before telling him the reasons why they had left the village. *Poragadu*(SL) means a *boy*(TL) in Telangana dialect. *Gee* (SL) means *this* (TL) in the Telangana dialect of the SL. *Gudlalla* (SL) means *in theeyes* (TL) in the dialect. The text has been translated into the TL by the translator, considering the standard speech of the SL as the source for the translation however the source writer followed the Telangana dialect in writing the source text (SLT). Hence, the communicative equivalence is applicable in translating this text.

**Text.3.** *Oorikeppudu bovale, yevusamjeyyale, nalugurki aasarakavle ani yeppudu gidhe yaava.*(SLT)

- When would he go to the village, cultivate the land, and be an aid to the people around him. His mind was always preoccupied with these thoughts. (TLT)

In this context, the mother of the boy, tells him about the interest of his father before leaving the native village. The complete sentence is spoken in the Telangan dialect of the

SL. *Yevusm* in the dialect means *vyavasaayam* in SL. It means *farming or cultivation* in TL. Another word *yaava* in the SL dialect has different meanings in TL: *thought, passion, and obsession*, etc. Therefore, the translator tried to bring communicative equivalence between the two languages applying the communicative equivalence in translating the text.

**Text.4.** *Vaanagottangane, selka dhunnidro ledhonani, itthanaalesidro ledhonani ooke phikaru jesthunde.* (SLT)

- Your father used to think whether the field had been ploughed or not, and sowed the seed, immediately after the rain had fallen. (TLT)

The mother character tells about the intensions of his father when he was in the village before leaving the village in the Telagna dialect of the SL. *Vaanagottangane* in SL means *if it rains* in TL. *Gottangane* is the word of the particular dialect has a substitute word in the source language, which is *padangane* or *kuruvangane*. *Ooke* is another word that also has a substitute in the source language as *Oorake* means *just like that* in the TL. The translator successfully brought the sense of the words in the TL therefore the communicative equivalence is applicable in translating this text.

**Text. 5.** *Poyee raajeesi rottelanna cheddhamani susthe, poyeela ningilam aaripoyyindhi.* (SLT)

- I thought I would make some roties for the dinner after igniting the hearth. There was no sign of fire in the hearth. (TLT)

The mother character while describing the incidents lead them leave the village, tells the boy that she wanted to make roties for dinner but she could not prepare the *roties* as there were no fire particles in the hearth. Though the entire sentence is spoken in the Telangana dialect, the word *ningelam* has got emphasis as it has no equivalence in the TL, the translator brought equivalence to it after getting understood it in the source language as *nippu* means fire particle in SL. Hence, it is understood clearly that the communicative equivalence is applicable in translating the text.

## Conclusion

The researchers have discussed the linguistic, idiomatic/usage, and cultural problems in this paper to make the TL reader understand the SL text and its content and context. The translator after following the principles of translation, understood the source text thoroughly, however, written in the Telangana dialect by the original SL writer, and it is translated the text following the Peter Newmark's theory of translation. He used the communicative equivalence rather semantic equivalence in translating the SL text because the original text is completely written in one of the dialects (Telangana) of the Source language.

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