

**The Problems of Stylistic Devices in Indira Parthasarathy's Novel  
*Suthanthira Bhoomi* From Tamil Into English as  
*Into This Heaven of Freedom.***

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**Abstract**

Translation is a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and or statement in one language by the same message and or statement in another language. Each exercise involves some kind of loss of meaning, due to a number of factors.

This paper traces how the problems of translation equivalence are closely connected with the stylistic aspect of translation. Stylistic devices are based on the comparison of primary (dictionary) meaning and that dictated by the contextual environment, on the contradiction between the meaning of the given work and the environment, on the association between words in the minds of the language speakers and on the purposeful deviation from accepted grammatical and phonetic standards.

**Introduction**

Indira Parathasarathy is a very popular and versatile writer of Tamil literature. He has published sixteen novels, ten plays and anthologies of short stories and essays. He is the recipient of Sahitya Akademi Award (1999) for the novel **Kuruthipunal** and the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (2000) for his play **Ramanujar**. He received Padmashri in 2010. Subbulakshmi Janardhanan translated **Suthanthira Bhoomi** into English as **Into this Heaven of Freedom**.

Mukundan, the Protagonist of the novel, went to Delhi in search of a job and a new life. Chance placed him as a cook in the house of Mishra, a political king maker. Mishra recognized Mukundan's potential and made him enter into the politics. Mukundan became Deputy Minister. The Prime Minister deputed Mukundan of Tamil Nadu to challenge politicians who commit atrocities in the name of ideology. Initially Mukundan hesitated and thought that if he was able to justify the faith the Prime Minister had in him. Afterwards he made up his mind to go to

Tamil Nadu. The novel ends with the note of Mukundan's acceptance to go Tamil Nadu as instructed by the Prime Minister.

### Problems in Translating Similes

A Simile is a figurative device in which two unlike things are compared by using the word "like" or "as". Similes make the connection much more overt.

#### 1. FROM SL SIMILE TO TL SIMILE

1.1. When Mukundan came to the bus stop it was crowded. The learned professors conducted seminars on transport in a developing economy and gave statistics to prove that the country is progressing. But the real situation is terrible

ஆட்டு மந்தை போல் ஜனங்கள் செல்லும் காட்சி

(Ee.paa.48)

Our local bus pack people in like herds of sheep (Subbulakshmi.42)

The Simile ஆட்டு மந்தை can be easily translated as herds of Sheep. This type of transfer is possible in places where the images are simple, bringing out comparisons between common universal terms which are not culture-specific. The translator's job has become easier as English has an identical simile. The feelings of Mukundan are outlined by the Simile. Certain basic human experience and emotions both negative and positive are universal and due to the unifying feature in the thought processes have created universal similes. In the case, the translator has preserved the same simile. Nida and De Waard Point to the University of human thinking and understanding in the following lines: *What binds people together is much greater than what separates them In adjustments to the physical Environment, in the organization of Society, in dealing with crucial Stages of life (birth, marriage and death), in the development of elaborate ritual and symbolism, and in the drive for aesthetic experience....., people are amazingly alike.* Because of all this, translating can be undertaken with the expectation of communicative effectiveness (43)

1.2. A boy worked in the local mess drank a bottle of cake stealthily and lied to the shop keeper that he had paid him with a ten-rupee note, even demanded his change back. The shop keeper was annoyed by the behavior of the boy and called the police. He was taken to the police station and the police beat him so badly that he died. So there was a protest rally led by Sarla Bhargava to find justice for the death of the boy. At that time, some of the rioters broke open the lock of the shop and entered it. The situation was well expressed with simile.

கடை, யானை புகுந்த காடாயிற்று (Ee.paa.104)

The shop fil resembled a sugarcane field  
attacked by a rampaging herd of elephants  
(Subbulakshmi. 88)

The translator used collective noun in order to show the violent attitude and nature of rioters at that time. The translator succeeded in her attempt to transfer the same amount of unkindly act of the rioters from SL to TL.

- 1.3. கண்ணாடிக் கற்கள் தூவப் பெற்ற சுவரைத் தாண்டிக் குதிப்பது போல்(Ee.paa.125)  
It is like jumping over a wall stuck with glass pieces (Subbulakshmi. 105)

When Sarala and Mukundan returned to the hotel, after meeting the Prime Minister, Mukundan told Plawar that, the meeting with Prime Minister was like jumping over a wall stuck with glass pieces.

The Meaning of the simile is one should be very careful in words and in actions.

The translators found an equal simile in TL which is reflective of the same spirit.

### Deletion

If the Simile is redundant, there is a case for its deletion. Peter New mark in his book **Approaches to translation** says:

A decision of this nature can be made only after the  
Translator has weighted up what he thinks more  
Important and what less important in the text in  
Relation to its intension (p.91)

- 1.4. உருளைக் கிழங்குக்குக் காலும் கையும்  
முளைத்தாற் போலிருந்த அந்த மந்திரி  
நீங்கள் சென்னைக்கு வருகை தந்தது பற்றி மகிழ்ச்சி

(Ee.Paa.135)

The Minister said, “We are very happy you are  
Visiting Chennai (Subbulakshmi. 113)

Mukundan and Mishra visited Chennai. Mishra was received like a foreign dignitary. The Minister told Mishra that they were very happy for mishra’s visit to Chennai. When describing the height of the Minister, the author compared him with potato. The translator omitted the simile in the TL because it does not disturb the meaning of story. Moreover if the translator translated literally, it does not give the same effect as the original text. That’s why the translator chose to omit it in the TL.

## 2. Metaphors

New Mark (1988b:113) admits that:

“The translation of any metaphor is the epitome  
Of all translation, is that of always offers choices  
In the direction either of sense or of an image or

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Language in India [www.languageinindia.com](http://www.languageinindia.com) ISSN 1930-2940 19:1 January 2019

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A modification of one or a combination of both,  
And depending on the contextual factors, not  
Least on the importance of the metaphor within text”

2.1 கல்யாணம் என்பது அபஸ்பரம் (Ee.Paa.56)

Marriage always strikes a discordant code (Subbulakshmi 48)

When Mishra came to know that Mukundan was from the southern side (Chennai) he recollected his memories of Kanyakumari and the deity Bhagavathy Amman. He was very much impressed by this story of Bhagavathy Amman that is a lovely young maiden waiting for ever to get married. At this juncture, since he was a bachelor, his opinioned marriage as discordant notes. He says கல்யாணம் என்பது அபஸ்பரம். That shows his disbelief in the concept of marriage. Since the translator could not find an equivalent metaphor in TL, he adopted the strategy of

**Conversion of Metaphor to sense.**

2.2 கம்ப்யூனிச் பூச்சாண்டியைக் கண்டு பயப்படுகிறவர்களுக்கு (Ee. Paa. 161)

Afraid of communist monster (Subbulakshmi. 135)

New Mark in his book **Approaches to Translation** points  
Out that the translator may replace the image in the SL  
With a standard TL Image which does not clash with the  
TL Culture, but which like most stock Metaphors, proverbs  
Etc are presumably coined by one person and diffused  
Through popular speech, writing and later the media.

When the parliament was dissolved so suddenly, Mishra and Mukundan passed their pungent attack on democratic socialism. The Politicians used the term socialism tactfully for the gullible poor and democracy for those afraid of the communist monster.

The Politicians who have in power want to remain in power for ever to cheat the people. The metaphor ‘பூச்சாண்டி’ means a terrifying and dangerous creature which has the flavor of the soil. Here the translator used the term Monster to refer to a cruel or antisocial person.

### 3. IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

An **idiom** is an expression, word, or phrase that has a figurative meaning conventionally understood by native speakers. Idioms don’t mean exactly what the words say. Idiomatic expressions which reveal the typical flavor of the Indian soil. If we render word by word literal translation for idiomatic expression, the meaning is changed completely. Hence the translator

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adapts various techniques to keep the original flavor and meaning of the idiomatic expression in tact while translating it.

### 3.1. அந்த ஆளு சள்ளை பிடிச்சவன் (Ee.Paa.16)

He is a pain. (Subbulakshmi 14)

When Mukundan met his friend Asirvadam in Delhi, Asirvadam asked Mukundan to go round the city and met him in front of Akashvani Bhavan at nine o' clock. Since his boss won't leave him now, he scolded him as சள்ளை பிடிச்சவன். The idioms சள்ளை பிடிச்சவன் means the person is not an easy going one. He raises so many questions for a small problem. Since there is no equivalence in TL, the translator rendered as he is pain. Hence the translator has taken this meaning of the idiom and found an equivalent term which conveys the same meaning.

### 3.2 ஆடியிலே ஒரு நா, ஆனியிலே ஒரு நா இப்படியாடா வருவவே (Ee.Paa 129)

Why don't you come here often? (Subbulakshmi 109)

Mukundan's cousin wished Mukundan to visit her house frequently. But Mukundan visited her once in a blue moon. So she expressed her anger in an idiomatic way as ஆடியிலே ஒரு நா இ ஆனியிலே ஒரு நா இப்படியாடா வருவவே. Here the translator's task is difficult. So he paraphrased the idiom but the spirit is missing.

## Conclusion

The role of the translator is many faceted. He has to make sense on every level. He has to capture grace, beauty, color and flavor of SL. Subbulakshmi Janadharanan encountered problems in translating idioms, similes and Metaphors but she adopted various compensatory mechanisms to solve the problems and rendered justice to the original. We have to accept the fact that sameness cannot be exist between two languages. Whatever lost in translation is compensated by gain. Indeed all translation is gain.

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