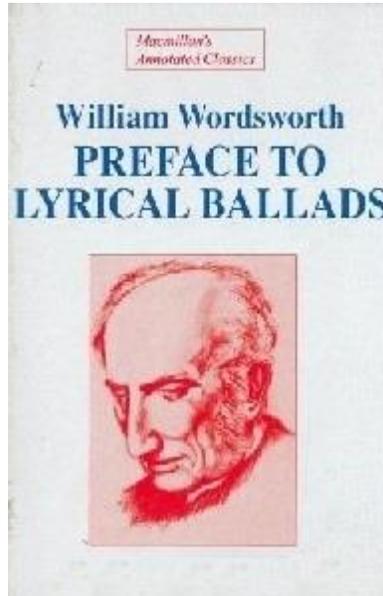


Heartwarming Trials in Translating Wordsworth's *Preface to Lyrical Ballads: A Linguistic Loom*

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Abstract

Translation is a literary genre that exists in all the traditions for years though it gained momentum with manifold perspectives in India in the last century. The artistic and creative skills of people of one ethnicity are transferred through translation to another creating a healthy and unified experience as well as global exposure. Though translation has been in practice for a long time, it was recognized as a profession only in 1950s and different concepts of translation were evolving. Nowadays, translation in established languages are overflowing in translated literature due to numerous reasons like digitalization, globalization etc... Translation has become a very easy task thanks to the internet and it has become a profession with bountiful harvest. It is amazing to notice the machine aided translation being completed in a few seconds and the proximity it renders in the translated version. Translation was not so simple in 1990s. Before the popularity of machine translation, it had to be done with utmost effort and care. In this digital era, if a person talks about difficulties in translations, he or she will be wondered at. However, this paper aims at the sharing of the know-hows in the translation of the very first few pages of Wordsworth's *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*. The paper is a recollection of difficulties faced by the translator while reading the translation after many years.

Translation as an Art of Enriching Literature

Translation is an art of enriching the literature of the world as the literary achievements of one realm is imported to other in a profoundly dignified way. The artistic and creative skills of people of one ethnicity are transferred through translation to another creating a healthy and unified experience as well as global exposure. It bridges the people and serves as the unifying medium. It binds people together propelling a perfect understanding and appreciation of global literature as well as universal human experiences and cultural heritage. It offers wide scope of gaining human experiences as revealed in literature. It sharpens and strengthen cultural roots. It is an art with its soul and mind transferred from another art reflecting humankind embodied in a different language. Translation is a literary genre that exists in all the traditions for years though it gained momentum with multiple perspectives in the last century in India. Though translation has been in practice for a long time, it was recognized as a profession only in 1950s and different concepts of translation were evolving. All theories and methodologies advocated by the diverse schools of translation focuses on fruition of the concept of communicative equivalence of the original and the translated texts as a norm of translation accuracy.

Focus of This Paper

Nowadays, translations in established languages are overflowing in literature due to numerous reasons like digitalization, globalization etc. Translation has become a very easy task thanks to the internet and it has become a profession with bountiful harvest. It is amazing to notice the machine aided translation being completed in a few seconds and the proximity it renders in the translated version. It is possible to translate one literary piece into many languages in a few minutes. Translation was not so simple in 1990s. Before the popularity of machine translation, it had to be done with utmost effort and care. In this digital era, if a person talks about difficulties in translation now, he or she will be wondered at. However, this paper aims at the sharing of the know-hows in the translation of the very first few pages of Wordsworth's *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* because touching upon the translation of entire preface is not possible due to several constraints. The paper is a recollection of difficulties faced by the translator while reading the translation after many years.

Anxiety pertaining to the translation

It is universally accepted that the translation must be equitant to the original writing and agreeable to the recipients which is not an easy task and it was certainty an uncertain and unpredictable task with *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*. Translating is not pouring wine from one bottle to another. All translators often encounter a lot of difficulty in their endeavor to emulate the original literary art and drop in the same kind of charm in the translated version. In the same way, the translation of *The Preface* also led to lot of dilemmas and difficulties before appearing as a part of the translator's M.Phil. dissertation. The translator has to present the most appropriate words and phrases to convey what is meant by Wordsworth. She knows that the translator, who is not the author of the original, is likely to be more respectful if she strives to produce in translation with the closest approximation to the original. This is done by translator's recourse to a number of approximations such as transliteration, borrowing, transposition, modulation, adaptation, paraphrase etc.

Reception of SL Text in TL

The element basics to the genesis of Wordsworth's *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* and the reader for whom it was published by Wordsworth were completely alien to the people of Tamil speaking community. The genre called literary criticism was not familiar among Tamilians until it was introduced to them by the Europeans. The reception of the foreign author in a particular time forms a direct and integral part of literary taste and hence the shaping of the audience for the author's own artistic and critical consciousness is feasible. Here, the translator has taken the contemporary native audience of the TL to a work written in another language and at a different century for the people of different culture. The author's intention is achieved even though there is cross cultural communication.

Beginning of Translation

The art of translation begins not at the moment of translating the first word but even before that. This is applicable to translation of Wordsworth's *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* also. All act of translation began with the investment of time in reading process. The translator read each word and sentence carefully like a scholar and critic. There was the exploration on each and every word on a large cultural and historical context. Efforts were put with the focus on the readers and their possible interpretations although it was not intended for publishing. It is through the eyes of the translator's meticulous work, the reader recognizes the potentials of the thinking of the source text. So, the translator was sentient that translation is a continuous subconscious association with the original and a process similar to meditation. Utmost care is taken to bring the essence of the original text into translated version which is quite challenging and interesting.

Approaches to Translation

Translating Wordsworth was a rewarding experience. According to Nida(1964) there are two approaches to translation.

I. Technical approaches :

- A. Analysis of source and target languages;
- B. A thorough study of source language text before making attempts translate it;
- C. Making judgments of the semantic and syntactic approximations.(pp.241-42)

II. Organizational approaches :

Constant re-evaluation of the attempts made; contrasting it with the existing available translations of the same text done by other translators and checking the text's communicative effectiveness by asking the target language readers to evaluate its accuracy and effectiveness and studying their reactions (pp.246-47)

The nature of *The Preface* compels to bring in the *Technical Approach* as there was less feasibility for the second approach. The whole text was read two or three times to find out the tone, register etc. and the work of translation was begun. On the whole, the prime consideration falls on the complete transcription of ideas of the original work and recapturing its shape, beauty, passion and other considerations.

Making Compromises

When literary work like *The Preface* is translated, there cannot be pale mechanical imitation of the original because the literary work under translation presents a challenge to the

sensibility and also the imagination of the translator. Wordsworth's experiment was similar to his poetry with embroideries of fancy and imagination. He made his poetic theory also romantic. He said, "I want to keep my readers in the company of flesh and blood." He felt that the language of classical literature failed to retrieve the general passion, thoughts and feelings of men. He does not regard metre in poetry as essential. Wordsworth's theory does not include formal theories and grammar. He tries to follow the natural language of the people. To achieve a cohesive effect and to maintain the same degree of naturalness, the translator's mastery of both the languages has been used to the full. The translation in hand demands the maintenance of the literary status of the language and so the translator has taken efforts to achieve it.

Problems of different character appear in the translation of the *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* because Tamil syntax does not allow the same word order as in the English sentence. For example, we can take the first sentence of the preface.

"The first volume of these poems has been already submitted for the general perusal" If the sentence is translated with no change of word order, it has to be written in the following way.

"முதல் அத்தியாயம் இந்த பாடல்களின் ஏற்கனவே வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது பொது மக்களின் ஆய்விற்கு." After the rearrangement of words in the sentences only, we get the correct translation – "இந்த பாடல்களின் முதல் அத்தியாயம் ஏற்கனவே பொது மக்களின் ஆய்விற்கு வைக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது"

Here, the preposition *for* and *of* have the same function as in Tamil. However, they have to be combined with the words to make the sentence meaningful. The words 'general' has to be rendered as 'பொதுவான' to get the exact translation, but the translator has used the word 'பொதுமக்களின்' to make the meaning clear to the audience. It is therefore, coming together of lexis and grammar that makes a proper sentence.

Gaps in Language and Translation Difficulties

Problems in translation arise out of many gaps in language. The word 'language' is used in English language in different context by the writer. But this kind of usage is not possible in Tamil. The word by word translation seemed to be ridiculous. For example, the meaning conveyed by the phrase, 'metrical language' and 'the language of men' cannot be exactly translated into Tamil. We have to say, 'யாப்பளவில் அமைக்கப்பட்டுள்ள நடை' and 'மக்களால் பேசப்படும் மொழி' or "மக்களின் பேச்சு வழக்கு" respectively. The translator was very careful in choosing the words that are suitable to the context. What is expressed by the original writer in a single word might require many words for translation, a typical illustration being the English word "conviction" translated into Tamil. The word can be translated as "குற்றவாளி என்று நிரூபித்தால்" in Tamil. Similarly, the words 'enclose' and 'lead' has to be translated as 'சுற்றிலும் அடை' and 'அழைத்து செல்'. Thus, it is clear that there is no one to one equivalents in both the languages.

The word as the basic unit has been given up by the translator. The sentence becomes a unit of thought .As a result, the sentence also becomes the unit of translation .When smaller units are discovered within a complex sentences, the sentence is translated in various ways and then the best is chosen. For example, let us consider a short sentence from *The Preface*.

“It has been said that each of these poems has a purpose “. Translation of the above sentence takes up the following course before arriving at the corresponding sense of thought.

1. இதில் ஒவ்வொரு கவிதைக்கும் ஒரு எண்ணம் உள்ளது என்பது முன்பே கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது
2. இதில் உள்ள ஒவ்வொரு கவிதைக்கும் ஒரு நோக்கம் உண்டு என்று ஏற்கனவே சொல்லப்பட்டுள்ளது
3. இந்த கவிதைகள் அனைத்திற்கும் ஒரு குறிக்கோள் உண்டு என்பது முன்பே குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளது
4. இந்த கவிதைகள் ஒவ்வொன்றுக்கும் ஒரு நோக்கம் உண்டு என்று ஏற்கனவே கூறப்பட்டுள்ளது

Of these, the fourth one yields a better value and so it has been preferred to the other three.

Long sentence are split up so to give help the reader understand the meaning of the meaning of the SL text clearly. For example,

‘I had formed no very inaccurate estimate of the probable effect of these poems. I flattered myself that they who should be pleased with them would read them with more than common pleasure, and on the other hand. I was well aware, that by those who should dislike them .they would be read with more than common dislike.’

‘நான் அந்த பாடல்களின் ஆற்றல் பற்றி துல்லியமான கணக்கு போடாமல் இல்லை. எனக்கு நான் புகழ்ச்சியாகக் கூறிக் கொண்டது என்னவென்றால், இந்தப் பாடல்களால் பரவசமடைவபர்கள் அவற்றை வாசிக்கும் பொழுது அசாதாரண சந்தோசத்தை அனுபவிப்பார்கள், அதற்கு மாறாக, யார் அவற்றை வெறுக்கின்றார்களோ, அவர்கள் மிகவும் வெறுப்பார்கள் என்பதையும் நான் நன்கு உணர்ந்திருந்தேன்.’

Transliteration

Transliteration is not adopted by translator as far as possible. Pain has been taken to render each and every word into Tamil. To maintain the literary status of the great literary work, transliteration is avoided to the maximum. Tamil is a rich language. To find the equivalent words with the same variety and number of values is possible. But proper names like Shakespeare, Milton, Johnson, Grey, Cooper, etc. are transliterated. In transliteration, SL graphological unit is replaced by TL graphological unit. In case of Tamil, there are eighteen constants and twelve

vowels and an *aytham*. When Tamil is spoken a lot of phonemes are used and some of them have no separate symbols in Tamil alphabet. For example, there is one symbol for voiced and unvoiced constant. So, while transliterating of names like Shakespeare, Johnson and Grey the translator has to use Sanskrit letters of ‘Sa’, ‘dja’, ‘sha’ to make the user the correct pronunciation

Conclusion

Cautious steps have been taken by the translator to avoid the words that can cause damage to the observation and insight of the original writer. The argumentative tone of the original has been maintained in the translation throughout. So, in the translation also the arguments are put forth in the First Person. In the translation, it is maintained that Wordsworth himself speaks to the reader. Careful attention has been paid to the aesthetic value of the SL along with its communicative value to create the closest possible effect in the mind of the reader. During the process of translation, the TL readers have been kept in mind. The translation of Wordsworth’s preface, it is hoped, have its own contributory effect. The experiences are sure to widen the sphere of literary and linguistic activities. In short, if the translation is successful in providing enjoyment to its readers, the job is done effectively and the translation of *The Preface to Lyrical Ballads* springs with aesthetic experience.

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