

Literary Translation in Tamil With Reference To Transfers Made At the Background in Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale

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Abstract: Translation is a general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form. J.C.Catford defines translation as 'the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language)'. In an Indian context, translation is very important and the study of translation and its problems are even more important. The value of translation was considered even during the early days in Tamil language. The text chosen for study is Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. The play has been translated in Tamil as *Maarikathai* by Era.Ekambaranathan. The translation is simple and the verse form adopted by Shakespeare is changed into prose by the translator. The paper focuses on the transfers made in the background particularly in the plot, characters and place names in the course of translation by the translator in translating it.

Keywords: Source Language (S.L.), Target Language (T.L.), Angams, Kalams

I. Introduction

Translation is a general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form. J.C.Catford defines translation as 'the replacement of the textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language)'.

In an Indian context, translation is very important and the study of translation and its problems are even more important. The value of translation was considered even during the early days in Tamil language. When a translator wants to translate a work he should see if there is commonness of ideas with the work he wants to translate. Many literary works in Tamil have been translated into English by many writers and likewise many literary texts in English have been translated into Tamil.

The text chosen for study is Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. The play has been translated in Tamil as *Maarikathai* by Era. Ekambaranathan. The translation is simple and the verse form adopted by Shakespeare is changed into prose by the translator. The paper focuses on the transfers made in the background particularly in the plot, characters and place names in the course of translation by the translator in translating it.

II. Change In The Plot

In *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare has divided the play into Five Acts each of them having a number of scenes. Each act has an idea and Shakespeare has divided them according to the different incidents that take place in the drama. The same pattern has been adopted by Era. Ekambaranathan in his translation *Maarikathai*. The play has Five Angams and each of them has a number of Kalams.

The first act deals with the relationship of King Leontes with his Queen Hermione and Polixenes, the King of Bohemia and the suspicion of Leontes which leads to the plan to poison Polixenes. The act has two scenes – the first a short one in which we are introduced to Camillo, the lord of Sicilia and Archidamus, the lord of Bohemia. From their talk we get certain glimpses of the drama and about the two kings who play their part in the drama. This opening scene throws light on the drama that is to follow.

This first scene of *The Winter's Tale* has been altered slightly by the translator in *Maarikathai*. There are two things discussed by Archidamus and Camillo in the S. L. text. First, they discuss about their respective country and glory. Secondly, they discuss about their kings and their heir to the throne. Each of these ideas is separated into Kalams. In the first, Kamalapathi, the lord of Madurai and Mekanathan, the lord of Ceylon discuss the glory of each one's country to the other. In the second, the translator introduces Devadasan and Anandan both lords of Madurai. They talk of their King Narasimhan and his son Verakesari. The introduction of Devadasan and Anandan in the original is not there in the first scene. Dion and Cleomenes in *The Winter's Tale* appear only in the trial scene of Hermione.

This is the only deviation that the translator has done with regard to the plot change. Thus, the T. L. text has three kalams unlike the S. L. text which has only two scenes. The second scene is a long one in the S. L. text and the same is followed in the T. L. text in the third kalam.

The second act has three scenes and the same has been adopted by the translator. The first scene presents the homely scene between the mother and the son, which is later turned into a sad one by the king. The second scene presents the servant maid, before the prison asking permission to meet the Queen. The third scene opens with the confrontation of the servant maid with the king. She tries to make the king realize his mistake by showing the new born child. But she is sent out and the king orders to destroy the baby.

The third act also has three scenes and the same with the T. L. text which has three kalams. The first scene shows the interaction of the two lords who are bringing the verdict. The second deals with the trial scene of the Queen in which she is proved innocent and the consequences of it. The third scene presents the lord carrying the baby to be destroyed but the child escapes and the lord is killed by a bear. The child is carried off by an old shepherd.

The fourth act is divided into four scenes. The first scene represents 'Time' which plays its part as the 'chorus' and tells us that sixteen years have gone by. The second scene takes place in the city of Bohemia where the king and his lord decide to disguise themselves to watch their Prince and his doings. The third scene presents a picture of the commons where the clown is robbed of his money. And the fourth scene which is a long one brings the young lovers of the drama and the climax of their relationship in which they are forced to flee from the country.

The fifth act once again shifts back to Sicilia which has three scenes. The first scene deals with the repenting king and how the two young lovers get help from the king. The second scene reveals the mystery of the young shepherdess who it is known to be a princess. And the final scene unravels the entire mystery and everything ends on a happy note. Except in the first act, the translator has followed the same pattern followed by Shakespeare in the presentation of the drama.

III. Changes In The Location:

Whatever may be the story or drama, whether in real life or in fiction, the incidents that happen become concrete and effective if the location is presented to the reader. In other words, the places must be pinned down to particular spots for a clearer understanding. Writers vary in this aspect too, as some writers use imaginary places in order to hide the happenings of a particular place. The use of imaginary place names may be interesting in a science fiction, but in a story based on facts, it is always better to fix the location.

Shakespeare having taken his source from Robert Greene's *Pandosto the Triumph of Time* has taken the same place names except that Sicilia and Bohemia change places as far as the happenings are concerned. With regard to the island of Delphos, the same has been borrowed.

In contrast to Shakespeare's borrowing of the names of places, the translator has taken all efforts to study the area or location set by Shakespeare and thereby has altered the place names to suit the Tamil audience.

THE WINTER'S TALE

Sicilia
Bohemia
The island of Delphos

MAARIKATHAI

Madurai
Ceylon
Palani

The place Sicilia is situated on a sea-shore which Shakespeare has taken from Greene's prose romance. This has been aptly translated as Madurai since it is a place with a sea-shore. At this point one should keep in mind the entire Pandyan Empire. Likewise Bohemia is translated as Ceylon by the translator. By looking at the source we know that Shakespeare has taken the same place mentioned by Robert Greene. But Bohemia is a place without a sea-shore.

The translator has seen to it that the place he has chosen is appropriate to the context so that imagination is not far-fetched. The geographical error of Shakespeare is erased by the translator as he has chosen Ceylon, a place with a sea-shore and close to Madurai. Finally, the island of Delphos, also borrowed by Shakespeare from Greene's text becomes Palani in the S. L. text. The translator has been keeping the geographical aspect in mind because we find that Palani is close to Madurai.

From the above changes in the T. L. text we find that Ekambaranathan has been very careful in translating by keeping in mind not only the reader but also the geographical aspect so that the reader may not imagine the places or sound far from convincing.

IV. Changes In The Characters:

When a literary text is being translated from one language to another, the foremost change likely to arise is the names of characters in the plot. Translators have their own way of presenting the characters either using the same name or giving it a different name. However, it is found that those who change the names of characters become successful translators.

Writers vary in this context; some writers feel that retaining the original name creates a better impact on the mind of the reader while reading the translation. Confusion in the names of characters is also removed from the point of the reader who gets a chance to read the original text also. The original atmosphere is retained. It even lightens the burden for the translator to think of suitable names in the language he is translating in.

On the other hand, there are writers who feel that names of characters should be changed to suit that particular language in which it is being translated. When there is a change and names are localized to that particular language, the reader is able to understand the text better as names sound familiar to him. The atmosphere created will also not be a strange one. The text will also not appear as a translation, but read like an original one. While changing names to suit that particular language, the translator alters the names not at random, but studies the significance of the name in the S. L. text in respect to the role and what is portrayed of the character in the story. The translator now alters the names and gives names to his characters which are familiar with the audience he is translating for.

Taking a look at Ekambaranathan's *Maarikathai*, a translation of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, we find the translator has carefully chosen names for his characters in the play. The names chosen by the translator, suits the position of that particular character and at the same time the names have some relationship with the names of the source text. The inner meaning and significance of the source is retained by the translator.

Ekambaranathan has not only translated names to suit the Tamil audience but also seen to it that the basic meaning of each name is not lost. The names are characteristic of the Tamil culture and people while reading or seeing the play enacted will be able to relate the play as one belonging to their own. This realistic touch is maintained by the translator in his translation.

If we analyze the names of some of the characters in *Maarikathai* we can have a better understanding of this. Leontes is translated as Narasimhan. Leo means a 'lion' and Narasimha also means a 'lion'. Both Leontes and Narasimhan take the root meaning lion. The name Narasimhan also suits the status of the character as he is portrayed as the King of Madurai. Mamillius becomes Verakesari. Mamillius is related to as being big and strong and Verakesari also takes the same meaning. But the name is ironical as we find the young prince dying very young.

Perdita becoming Masilamani. The inner meanings of both the names are same. Perdita sounds as pure when pronounced, likewise Masilamani we know that it means 'masu illatha mani', that is, a person who is pure at heart and body. Polixenes is translated as Kayavagu. Though the two names have no root meaning, the translator has taken care to name the character Kayavagu which is typically Sinhalese as the place chosen is Ceylon. In this sense the name aptly suits the play. Moreover Kayavagu was supposed to be the name of a ruler in Ceylon at one time.

Florizel is adapted as Putpakandan. The name Florizel is usually associated with a person who is delicate and soft natured as that of a flower. Putpam also means a 'flower'. Basically the two names have the same meaning and from the part that this character plays in the drama also suits the name. That is, Putpakandan is portrayed as being tender, happy, full of loveliness and grace.

A look at two of the names of the four lords namely Cleomenes and Dion, the names are usually associated with people who perform certain religious duties. In Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* we know that these two people are the ones sent by Leontes to Delphos to see what the oracle of Apollo says. Likewise the names Rathnakarar and Devadasu are associated with people who are the messengers of God. People performing such religious duties attach these names to themselves.

Shakespeare has not named the old Shepherd whereas; the translator has given typical shepherd names to his characters. One Shepherd becomes Kandakonar. His son has been called Clown by Shakespeare, but the translator has named him Appukonar. The rogue, Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale* plays the part of a singer who provides comedy during the second half of the play. The translator seems to have found that the aspect of a singer is usually associated with Lord Krishna and hence named the character Kannan.

V. Conclusion

Looking at the significance of some of these characters mentioned above, we come to understand how the translator has studied the names of characters in Shakespeare's play and aptly adopted them for his translation. From an analysis of the problems in translating Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* we find that the translator has made observations of the S.L. text and translated it to suit the people for whom the translation was meant.