

Capturing the Essence: Employment of Dynamic Equivalence in Lakshmi Holmström'sTranslation of Salma's *இரண்டாம் ஜாமங்களின் கதை* *Iranṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ**katai* into English**Author**

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Abstract

Translation is a nuanced art. It involves transferring not only words but also the cultural context from one language to another. In translating Salma's *இரண்டாம் ஜாமங்களின் கதை* *Iranṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ katai* as *The Hour Past Midnight*, Lakshmi Holmström has used dynamic equivalence. Thus she makes sure that the translated text resonates with the target readers. At the same time, she preserves the essence of the original text. This paper deals with how Lakshmi Holmström has made use of dynamic equivalence in her translation through some illustrative examples.

Key words: equivalence, repetition, ideophone, colloquialism, form

Dynamic equivalence is a concept introduced by the translation theorist Eugene A. Nida. He differentiates formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence in his work *Toward a Science of Translating*. Formal equivalence is also known as 'literal' or 'word-for-word' translation. It focuses on closely adhering to the lexis, form and content of the source text. On the other hand, dynamic equivalence produces a translation that evokes the same effect and response in the target readers as the original text does in its readers. It is also known as

‘functional’ or ‘sense-for-sense’ translation. This technique is particularly preferred when culture based words, phrases or sentences are found. Here the motive is to make the target text evoke the same effect in the target audience as the original does with its readers. In the translation, Lakshmi Holmström carefully chooses words and phrases that differ from the literal translation. The Tamil language has rhetorical devices like double words, pleonasm, ideophones and colloquialisms, the dynamic equivalences used in the translation of such words are analysed.

இரட்டைக்கிளவி *Iraṭṭaikkiḷavi* (double words) is a rhetorical device, commonly found in Tamil language. Here the word is repeated twice and it conveys no meaning if split. Hema believes that it is impossible to bring it to the target text. In her book *Theory and Practice of Translation* she says, “This form is totally new to the TL. Therefore, there is no place in the TL for a double word to replace the original” (62). There are some repetitions used in the fiction. They are replaced either with adjectives or adverb in the translation. On the day of Firdaus’ wedding, the bridegroom comes and sits near her. The silk veshti he wears makes a sound. In the source text, *Iraṇṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ katai*, it comes as “பக்கத்தில் பட்டு வேட்டி சரசரக்க வந்தமர்ந்த மாப்பிள்ளையிடம்.....” *Pakkattil paṭṭu vēṭṭi caracarakka vantamarnta māppiḷḷaiyiṭam.....* (34). Here the double word சரசரக்க *caracarakka* refers to the sound that comes from his dhoti. The word has been transferred into English by Holmström as ‘rustling’ - “The bridegroom, his silk veshti rustling, came and sat by her” (16). Here the term ‘rustling’ comes as a present participle. It also acts as an adjective and describes the noun ‘veshti’. It indicates that the silk veshti is making a rustling sound. The word “rustle” refers to a soft sound caused by the movement of frail things. The translator here has achieved equivalence by employing the dynamic equivalence ‘rustling’.

Rabia, a character from the fiction, watches the raindrops through her classroom window. The falling of the rain is described as “.....மழைநீர் சரசரவென இறங்கி வழிவதைப் பார்க்க வேடிக்கையாய் இருந்தது”*Maḷainīr caracaraveṇa irāṅki vaḷivataip pārka vēṭṭikkaiyāy iruntatu* (Salma 19). Here the double word சரசரவென *caracaraveṇa* means “the speedy and steady flow of rainfall”. It is replaced with the adverb ‘steadily’ in the translation by Lakshmi Holmström. Through the dynamic equivalence, she retains the same effect as to how the rain falls.

Pleonasms involve the use of redundant or unnecessary words to express an idea. The repeated words used here have the same meaning though conveyed in different terms. In SL, the pleonasms used by Salma are brought into the TL with dynamic equivalences. The character Firdaus is compelled to marry Yusuf whom she does not like. She comments on him saying “ஒநாயைப்போல அவன் முகமும் முஞ்சியும்” *Onāyaippōla avan mukamum mūñciyum* (Salma 35). The pleonasm ‘முகமும் முஞ்சியும்’ *mukamum mūñciyum* here has two different components, but both have the same meaning, namely ‘face’. This doubling is expressed by Firdaus out of frustration. Due to certain constraints, the original structure could not be entirely preserved in the translation. So the translator, Holmström has replaced this pleonasm with another word ‘features’ – “his wolf-like features” (17). Here she has avoided the literal translation, instead, she gives the generic term ‘features’. The word here includes not only his face but also all the features that made her hate him. The well-chosen word keeps the same effect in the target text.

In another instance, when Karim defends his point that he is correct in choosing the match for Firdaus, he says that the bridegroom’s family accepts to be her in-laws only with the hope that Karim will give her some jewellery. It comes as “என்னமோ எனக்காக, நான் ஏதோ நகைநட்டு போடுவேன்னுதான் வந்தானாக” *Ennamō enakkāka, nān ētō nakainaṭṭu pōṭuvēṇṇutān vantānuka* (36). There comes the pleonasm ‘நகைநட்டு’ *nakainaṭṭu* in the sentence. Here both the words have the same meaning, ‘jewellery’. There is a small difference between the words. The term ‘நகை’ *nakai* refers to large pieces of jewellery, while ‘நட்டு’ *naṭṭu* refers to small pieces like earrings and nose pins that are attached with a screw-back. In Tamil, *nattu* means ‘to fix’. The process of screwing a piece of jewellery like an earring or nose pin onto the body can be metaphorically linked to the idea of fixing something securely. Over time, this verb might have been adopted to describe these small, securely attached pieces of jewellery. In this context, Karim does not particularly mention any jewellery. He means the jewellery he is capable of giving Firdaus. The line is translated as “Somehow they agreed, because of me; in the hope that I would have the odd piece of jewellery made for her” (Holmström 18). The pleonasm *nakainaṭṭu* is translated as “piece of jewellery”. In translation too, Holmström does not particularize the jewellery, instead she gives a phrase which proves that he could not make more jewellery for her. Thus the dynamic equivalence is attained here.

An ideophone is a device used to convey an idea through the sound. Some ideophones used in the source text are rendered to sense. In the source text, *Iranṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ katai*, Madina makes the cow go away by saying “சூ...! சூ...!” *Cū...! Cū...!* (49). In the Source country, people would make this sound to drive away the animals. In the translation, Holmström brings the line, by changing the ideophone into a verb as “Madina shooed the cow” (30). Similarly, the ideophone for the dog’s sound is given in the SL as “லொள் லொள்” *Loḷ loḷ* (Salma 53). In Holmström’s words, it is changed into a verb and an adverb as “barking loudly” (35). In both these examples, Lakshmi Holmström does not follow the language structure of Tamil. By making a few changes, she brings the same effect to the target text.

Colloquialism refers to the use of informal expressions used in spoken conversation. The colloquial phrases found in the source text, are brought with the same colloquialism in the target text by Lakshmi Holmström. In *Iranṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ katai*, Rabia’s mother scolds her daughter for not coming home from school on time and in anger she says “அப்படி என்னா படிச்சி கிழிச்சிட்டிருந்தே?” *Appaṭi eṇṇā paṭicci kilicciṭṭu iruntē?* (21). It literally can be translated as “What did you study and tear?”. This expression contains a colloquial verb. The verb கிழிச்சிட்டிருந்தே *kilicciṭṭu* means ‘tore’ or ‘ruined’. It is a sarcastic or critical tone and it reflects a colloquial way of belittling her academics. Bringing literal translation would not be effective. In the translation of the text, Holmström captures a colloquial tone similar to that of the target language’s style and translates “What rubbish were you learning, anyway?” (03). Here by bringing the word ‘rubbish’, she retains the informal and harsh language to reflect the original’s colloquial nature.

Rabia’s mother advises her not to have too much of mangoes as they would increase the heat of her body. She says “மாம்பழம் ரொம்பத் தின்னு தொலைக்காதே” *Māmpaḷam rompat tinṇu tolaikkātē* (Salma 54). Here the verb ‘தொலைக்காதே’ *tolaikkātē* implies a contempt. The phrase is a colloquial way of telling someone not to overeat. This is translated by Lakshmi Holmström as “Don’t go and gorge on too many mangos” (36). The phrase ‘gorge on’ here reflects the colloquialism. It means to eat something greedily or in large amounts. Through this word, the dynamic equivalence is accomplished.

In another instance, Rabia expresses her frustration by saying to herself why she grew up. In the fiction, it comes as “ஏன்தான் வளந்து தொலைச்சோமோ” *Ēntān vaḷantu tolaiccōmō* (Salma 54). Here the word ‘தொலைச்சோமோ’ *tolaiccōmō* implies the colloquialism. It suggests a sense of burden or questioning the necessity of that growth. It is translated by Lakshmi Holmström as “Why on earth do I have to grow up?” (36). The translation of the line effectively conveys the emotional tone and the speaker’s sense of annoyance regarding the expectations of maturity. It maintains an informal tone, making it relatable in English.

In *Iranṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ katai*, the character, Aamina regrets for having such an unruly daughter, Firdaus. She talks to herself as follows, “இப்படி ஒரு அடங்காபிடாரியைப் பெற்றுவிட்டோமே” *Ippaṭi oru aṭaṅkāpiṭāriyai perruviṭṭōmē* (35). Here the term அடங்காபிடாரி *aṭaṅkāpiṭāri* refers to someone who is unruly, difficult to control or defiant. The term is translated by Lakshmi Holmström as “wild and defiant child” (17). Her translation conveys the meaning of the original. It captures both the unruly behaviour (“wild”) and the resistance to authority (“defiant”). This translation maintains the dynamic equivalence by conveying the cultural and emotional context of the original term in a way understandable to the target readers.

Summation

The study emphasizes the importance of dynamic equivalence in literary translation through Lakshmi Holmström’s translation of Salma’s *Iranṭām jāmaṅkaḷiṅ katai*. Dynamic equivalence is achieved for double words through the use of suitable adjectives and adverbs. For pleonasm, Holmström avoids literal translation and instead provides a generic term or a suitable phrase. When it comes to ideophones, the structure of the source text is not followed. They are replaced with verbs. For colloquial terms and phrases, though the original structures are not retained, the informal tone is preserved. Thus the target text has tried to evoke the same effect and response in the target readers as the original text does in its readers. Overall, the study demonstrates how the translator has made changes to bring the same effect to the target readers, using specific examples. It resonates with English-speaking readers while maintaining its cultural authenticity.

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