Research Paper

Idiomatic Language Complexities in Translation with Special Reference to Sinhalese and English

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ABSTRACT
Idiomatic expressions are regarded as an essential and inevitable element of every language. In the process of translating elements and aspects of a target text, idioms are a concern for translators as these expressions are embedded with a figurative meaning different from its literal meaning. On account of these complexities, translating idiomatic expressions from the source language tothe target language has always been challenging and problematic in the field of translation. This particular study investigated the complexities and its counterstrategies in response to complications within an idiomatic language in translating idioms from Sinhalese to English. The research was conducted at the Presidential Secretariat, Sri Lanka, demanding a qualitative approach provided with textual descriptions of how translators experienced complexities in translating idioms as a predictable linguistic form. Thus, the sample included 20 translators chosen from Media Division and Translation Division at Presidential Secretariat, Sri Lanka. As instruments of the study, In-depth Interviews were conducted providing a special endorsement to thematic and statistical analysis platforms. The research findings bear the testimony that complexities in idiomatic translation arise when attempting to find an equivalent, to grapple with cultural inequality, to contain the quality of idiomatic expression, and to deal with the risks of misunderstanding the meaning of source text in the process of rending.
KEYWORDS:*Idiomatic Expressions, Translation Strategies, Linguistic forms, Source Text, Translation*

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.1 Idioms in Translation

The term "idiom" is derived from the French ' idiom' or Latin 'idioma' from Greek 'idioma-Matos' which means private property, "idos" which stands own or private. Idioms, for many, are originated without the knowledge of people. As idioms have been practiced amply in literature and holy texts, the order of occurrence of idioms is inalienable in a language. The evolution of history uncovers the evolution of idioms with different origins. The idiom 'spilt the beans' originated in ancient Greece with the practice of democratic voting, embedded with casting their vote by putting beans into a cup with their preference. The jar filled with more beans refers to the winner of the election. This historic practice surrounded by the language process when this idiom was originated. However, at that time the word "spill" was used in the sense of "upset", now it is used in the sense "divulge". In modern terms, the very idiom is used to imply the act of revealing someone's secret intentionally or unintentionally.

The etymology of various idioms bears a natural stipulation of language, which differs from region to region. The cultural beliefs, customs, rituals are seen influencing the origin and functioning of an idiom. For the sake of clarity, these conditions along with the figurative meanings make a profound influence, thus provoking the minds of readers.Likewise, the natural occurrence and emergence of idiomatic expressions have been a vital and dynamic part of every language representing a bond embedded with the language and culture. The uniqueness of every culture bears its own set of distinctive culture-bound idioms which signifies the active engagement and involvement of the SL culture and TL culture to make rendition accurate and justifiable to the reader. Language and culture are inseparable twins and understanding the culture can be the gateway to understanding the language and vice versa. Idioms are culture-bound and the majority of them have cultural associations, which make them peculiar and difficult to understand and translate (Howwar, 2013). It has been

established that the rendition of idiomatic expressions leads to complexities as in cases where two or more words are syntactically related, with a meaning like a single syntactic unit whose meaning is not predictable from its component words. It has been established that the rendition of idiomatic expressions leads to complexities as in cases where two or more words are syntactically related, with a meaning like a single syntactic unit whose meaning is not predictable from its component words. (Jabbari, 2016). In light of this, it is worth analyzing the difficulties faced in translating idioms with special reference to English to Sinhalese to streamline the process of translation while provoking the inherent beauty of a language to harmonize the inconsistencies of languages. Thus, this research is conducted to identify and analyze translation complexities encountered by translators in specific working environments.

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theorizing Idiomatic Language in Translation

The translation is commonly contemplated as a process of substituting the source language text by equivalent target-language text, as well as preserving the meaning and content of the source language text as accurately as possible. (McGuire, 1980). The faithfulness to the source text is generally measured considering the level of preserving the sense of the source text in the process of rendering. As to preserve faithfulness, Linguists and theorists like Nida (1964), McGuire (1980), Ivir (1987), Newark (1988), Baker (1992), Da-vies (2004), and Langlotz (2006), have given great importance to language, culture, and idiomatic expressions. In the same vein, (Newmark, 1981) defined translation as "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"

As noted by Newmark, (1981) the level of prominence given to preserving the accuracy of the source text is necessary while conveying the SL culture and TL culture to the target audience to make the output even more justifiable and defensible. In translating, the output ought to be followed by the aforementioned comprehension stages. It has hence been established that rendition is a process of translating aspects and attributes of a source text pragmatically, culturally, and semantically into a target language. Idiomatic Expressions as an unavoidable element of language the syntactical and semantic and cultural complications are to be predicted on a great scale. As noted by Jabbari (2016), despite idioms are a universal feature of the language, one particular language may use different idiomatic expressions with corresponding referential meanings. These complications make the rendition process of the idiomatic expressions from a source into a target language so sophisticated and challenging task. When particularly translation occurs between two distinct languages like English and Sinhalese which are linguistically and culturally different, translating idiomatic expressions represents a real challenge to translators. The source text can be misunderstood by translators when the literal value is not apparent and finding an equivalent to that source of language would be ambitious.

In the realm of research, complexities in idiomatic expressions in the process of rendition have been examined on a great scale focusing on cross-cultural and cross-linguistic analysis. In the same vein, many language experts, scholars have drawn their attention towards idioms as a rhetorical device to embellish certain languages. Nonetheless, Sri Lanka, in its way to open academic platforms in translation studies is still immature in researching idiomatic language with a special focus on Sinhalese and English languages.

Taking that information into account, the main focus of the study will be centered on the complexities faced by translators at Presidential Secretariat Sri Lanka focusing on English and Sinhalese. Sinhalese is the native language of the Sinhalese people belongs to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European languages. In contrast, English is a West Germanic language known as a common language. The different origins, structures, cultures of both languages make the process of translation complex.

III.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out employing a mixed approach while conducting in-depth interviews as the instruments of the study. Henceforth, the population of the study consisted of 20 translators from the Presidential Secretariat Sri Lanka.

3.1 Sample Characteristics

The characteristics of the study are evaluated concerning the demographic data and the general background of the respondents including age, gender, employment status, nationality, proficiency status. All the chosen respondents were Sri Lankan and 5 translators are entitled to more than 20 years of experience. The overall sample was included, 7 males and 13 female respondents.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

1	Age		
Options	25-30	30-45	45-60
No	2	8	10
2	Gender		
Options	Male		Female
No	7		13
3	Interest		
Options	Article Writing	Translation	Linguistics
No	8	10	2
4	Number of years spent in learning Sinhalese		
Options	10-20	20-40	40-60
No	–	10	10
5	Number of years spent in learning English		
Options	5-10 years	10-30 years	Above 30 years
No	0	12	8
6	Education Level		
Options	**Degree**	**Diploma in translation**	**No Degree**
No	18	–	2
8	Experience		
Options	**2-10 years**	**10-20 years**	**Above 20 years**
No	6	9	5

3.2 Thematic Analysis- Interviews

The Data collected through interviews were transcribed and analyzed using Thematic and Statistical Analysis. Asthe study of translating idioms is fairly a common subject, thematic Analysis provided some main themes with statistical endorsements by taking all of the rich and varied data gathered from interviews into consideration.

IV. DISCUSSION

In concluding the opinions that respondents bear over idioms as a feature of the language, "idioms" have been seen as a positive feature of language. The majority of the respondents have affirmed "idioms" as a progressive feature of language which contributes to enhancing the expressive levels while making the language comprehensive.

Table 2: General Idea over Idiomatic Expressions

The general opinion	Supported %	Not Supported %
Idioms make language comprehensive	65	35
Idioms are a dead version of the language	10	90
Idioms help to express serious problems easily.	50	50
A necessary element for language	90	10
Helps to express ideas in a better way and with few words.	90	10

The occurrence of idioms in varied contexts can further be deemed as a factor evaluating incidental and contextual values. The high order of occurrence brings forward the necessity of idioms as an inevitable material for a language. Throughout this systematic analysis, the contexts and settings that idioms are highly manifested, are evaluated depending on the opinions expressed by the respondents. It, on the other hand, elucidates the

articles idioms are often found. As it is described most of the idioms are found in the political context in which cynical exposures are being addressed using language mechanisms such as idioms. The opinion that "Idioms are often found in political context" was supported by 65% of respondents while very opinion was not supported by 35% respondents. The contexts like technical marks lower the occurrence of idioms where the language turns are not specifically welcomed in those contexts. The rest of the values are viewed as follows with the relevant percentages.

Table 3: Articles idioms are often found

Category	Supported %	NotSupported %
General Context	25	75
Editorial	45	55
Political Context	65	35
Technical Context	10	90

Idiomatic language complexities in translation can be evaluated in various approaches since the respondents have stressed out controversial notions. Nevertheless, the ideas were categorized together considering the weight that they have put. The described difficulties are followed by the characters (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I,) to weigh overall percentages. As it is described, the inability to occupy literal translation as a technique for translating was supported by 55% while very difficult was not supported by 45% of respondents.

Table 4: Difficulties confronted by translators when translating idioms

Character	Difficulties	Supported %	NotSupported %
A	Literal translation cannot be used as a technique for translating	55	45
B	Cultural equality is hard to preserve	75	25
C	If the idea of an idiom is paraphrased, the quality of the idiom is lost	25	75
D	Inability to find out a similar equivalent in the target language	75	25
E	The target audience easily can misunderstand the ST meaning	50	50
F	More time allocation over one idiom to translate	55	45
G	Unfamiliarity with the source language idiomatic expressions	50	50
H	The gap between the source language culture (Sinhalese) and the target language culture (English).	75	25
I	Inability to recognize the cultural differences concerning traditions, habits, ceremonies, entertainments, and environment.	75	25

The significant difficulties taken out of all the difficulties can be illustrated with the character denotation as follows. Characters (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H) are denoted regarding the difficulties evaluated in table 6 to the overall hundred percent percentages. All the difficulties were addressed along with the percentages taken as a whole. The most underlying characters can be mentioned as B, D, H, I which can be considered as the most significant difficulties confronted by participants or the translators.

Once the hurdles of translating idioms are identified and claimed by the participants, the solutions claimed shall be discussed as follows. Following solutions can be mentioned as the practical exposures that participants assume when the difficulties appeared. Each solution has been supported by certain respondents while they have been not supported by particular respondents as follows. As previously discussed, each solution has been followed by a specific character (A, B, C, D, and E). Character A is denoted the solution of "omission also has been supported by 65% of respondents while the very solution has not been supported by 35% respondents.

Table 5: Solutions

Character	Solutions	Supported	Not Supported %
A	If the meaning of ST cannot be preserved, the omission shall be directed.	65	35
B	The translator shall be a social person, who tends to touch every platform in society.	20	80
C	The more translators travel, the more he gets to know about the cultures.	25	75
D	If an idiom is based on a story, that storyline shall be attached as a footnote.	10	90
E	If SL language idiom is translated focusing ST audience the idiom shall be transliterated.	50	50

To achieve overall percentages regarding the solutions mentioned by participants, the following chart can be viewed. All solutions followed by a character shall also be accompanied by a percentage value. The most significant solutions identified were Omission and Transliteration which are followed by the characters A and E. Both Characters mark 38% and 29% percentages respectively. Most of the participants associated their own experiences when giving recommendations to overcome such difficulties. Recommendations given by the participant to minimize this particular issue can be evaluated in the following manner. As previously discussed the recommendations are followed by the relevant agreed percentages. As it is described, 65% of respondents recommended bridging the generation gap as a fine approval by supporting character "A", which is "Bridging the generation gap", while very recommendation has not been supported by 35% of respondents. The rest of the recommendations specified are viewed as follows with the relevant "supported" and "Not supported" percentages.

Table 6: Recommendations Specified

Character	Recommendations	Supported %	Not Supported %
A	Bridging the generation gap	65	35
B	Fostering Sinhalese language	75	25
C	Awareness of native language idioms	55	45
D	Practice of usage	85	15
E	Experience	85	15

To elucidate the overall recommendations as a whole, the following chart can be viewed as a cluster of percentages. As viewed in table 6, all the recommendations are followed by the characters (A, B, C, D, and, E) specified. The most underlying recommendation given by the respondents can specifically be taken as the Experience in which 26% percentage was marked. Apart from that recommendation, the other significant characters to mention are A and B which represent the facts such as bridging the generation gaps and fostering Sinhalese language respectively.The themes absorbed by the interviews were carried out by the above percentages to get numerical values attached to the analysis.

V.CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study shall be interpreted relay on the results obtained through the translation test and interviews as follows. The key findings of the study are elaborated based on the strategies that have been used by the respondents while performing their translation tests and the interviews that they faced. Whilst it is concerned translating idiomatic expressions as an evergreen challenge for translators, concrete attention has been driven to explore the major difficulties. The overall comprehension of the analysis to elaborate the findings can be presented as five difficulties confronted by translators when translating idioms. Difficulty to preserve cultural equality, Difficulty to find a target language equivalent, Difficulty of being productive over translation, the risk of misunderstanding ST meanings by the target audience, Difficulty to preserve the quality of idiom when it is translated can be mentioned as five major difficulties confronted by translators.

TheSolutions to overcome mentioned difficulties easily concluding as translating by omission, paraphrasing, transliterating the ST idiom, correct usage of translation methods. When it is concerned the recommendations to conclude the findings, Fostering Sinhalese language, Practice of usage, Experience, Bridging the generation gap can be mentioned.

5.1 Recommendations

Not being the ultimate goal of a study is to facilitate the future research field with recommendations, the effective level of a study can comparatively be concerned together with the outcomes and approval to bring out. Following recommendations are influenced by the research findings.

Idiom translation is not only required the competence of two languages but the competence of two cultures which urges the awareness of social-linguistic factors for translation. Therefore, the translator shall be bicultural as well as bilingual. The level of understanding of the target culture can be shaped by exposure to the target culture in two ways. The first to begin with is "Indirect exposure" which urges translators to read English books, magazines, newspapers and watch films and TV series. The second way is "Direct exposure" which urges the visiting the target country. In addition, it is way more effective to try out translation platforms such as footnotes and transliteration techniques for bridging the gaps of languages. If a translator expects the competence of the English language, Newspaper reading shall be considered as the best endeavor to start where the variety of the language is nicely performed and bargained.

- For future reference, Idioms (වාග්සම්ප්‍රදාය) published by the Department of Official Languages, Sri Lanka, Oxford Dictionary of English Idioms, and Longman Idioms Dictionary are highly recommended.
- The need of conducting future researches using the Mixed Method as accurate assumptions could be drawn with a numerical endorsement and transparency for qualitative data.
- The Accurate practice of Translation Methods for idioms shall comprehensively be manipulated.

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