

SUBTITLING TRANSLATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MALAYALAM MOVIES

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1. Introduction

Subtitling translation has emerged as an important aspect for today's movie industry. A large number of audiences are attracted to watch movies, video games, documentary movies and television programs. The captioning of dialogues or narration on-screen plays a great role in attracting these people. Subtitles are the written translation for dialogues either in the same language or in a foreign language. Generally subtitles are displayed at the bottom of the screen. Subtitles help the viewers to understand what's being spoken in the movie or other programs. Globally, this is the age of mass communications and of multimedia experiences. Throughout the world there is a huge demand from people to witness movies, hear movie songs, and read books simultaneously across cultures. The world has transformed into a global village. People have developed a secret love for watching foreign language movies. At the same time their interest is hampered by the language of the movie. This motivated the screeners of these movies to opt for movie subtitling translation services. The dialogues are translated into the native language of the audience and provided as subtitles. The practice throws scope for job seekers to get a well reputed and higher paying job in this field. This necessitates us to find out some effective tips or steps to be followed in writing a script for subtitles.

This paper is based on our experience of making automatic subtitling software for Malayalam-English translation for an industry (Sharp Company). It aims to give an outline about the salient features of subtitling with special reference to Malayalam-English. We have taken data from a Malayalam movie entitled *Manichitrattazha*.

2. Magnitudes of movie translation

There are different categories of translations for movies. There is an overall necessity for translation of all written materials, including scripts and articles that are needed to support the production of movies. Apart from this there are other aspects such as dubbing and the creation of subtitles. These become very vital if the movie is distributed for international release. The international audiences may expect either the movies to be dubbed in their language or subtitles to be provided for their languages. In addition the marketing materials, reviews and synopses need translation work as well. While dealing with foreign nationals in the making of their movie or documentary, the movie and documentary makers normally work with translators. The interviews as well as articles will form the background of the whole pre-production process. The movie production process involves interpreters also in the pre-production as well as on-site stages.

Two major types of movie translation

We can envisage at least two major types of movie translation: dubbing and subtitling. Each of them interferes with the original text at different degrees. Dubbing method modifies the source text to a large extent. It makes the source text conversant to the target audience through domestication. The foreign dialogue is adjusted to the mouth and movements of the actor in a movie through this method. Dubbing makes the audience feel that they are listening to actors actually speaking the target language. Domestication is the characteristic feature of dubbing. It is generally understood in the words Lawrence Venuti as "translating in a transparent, fluent, 'invisible' style in order to minimise the foreignness of the target text" (Munday 2001: 146). As a result of domestication all foreign elements including the cultural elements in the source language movie are assimilated into target language movies by dubbing. Domestication deprives the target audience the crucial characteristics of the source language culture.

Subtitling, on the other hand supplies a translation of the spoken source language dialogue into the target language. It is done in the form of synchronized captions. Usually subtitling appears at the bottom of the screen. The transfer of source text into target text is done with great care. It alters the source text to the least possible extent. The target audience experiences the 'foreignness' of the movie all the time. The requirement the country differs with regard to translating movies as each country has its own option of language choice. The choice of the source language and choice of the major translation modes - subtitling and dubbing - are crucial. The primary factor for the choice of subtitling or dubbing is the status of the source and target cultures in the global context. The secondary factors of the selection are the cost, the audience acquaintance with the type and the historically based traditions and circumstances.

3. Subtitling as a form of foreignization

Subtitling emphasizes the method of foreignization on the part of translation. To put it in differently it is an approach to translation which can be described in Venuti's word as "sending the reader abroad," (Munday 2001: 147). Deviating from domestication, foreignization assumes that the translated text does not 'pretend' to be an original one. In this method the foreign identity of the source text is highlighted. This makes the ideological dominance of the target culture impossible. Foreignization gives preference to the source culture. It emphasizes the foreign nature of a movie and evokes a sense of 'otherness.'

Amongst the major methods of translating films, subtitling involves the least interference with the original; in other words, it is the most neutral, minimally mediated method. Therefore, it is subtitling that contributes to experiencing the flavor of the foreign language, its mood and the sense of a different culture more than any other translation mode. This is mainly due to the fact that the original soundtrack and dialogues are not tampered with, as is the case in dubbing. Moreover, "hearing the real voices of the characters not only facilitates understanding in terms of the specific dialogue or plot structure, but gives vital clues to status, class and relationship" (Mera 1999: 75).

Although there are significant cuts in the length of the dialogues due to the intrinsic nature of subtitling, much of what is lost can be compensated for while hearing the original.

4. Subtitling as the preferred mode of translation

Subtitling is becoming a preferred mode of translation owing to financial considerations. It is much cheaper to satisfy the expanding needs of movie markets by providing subtitles. Subtitling is economical and easier to produce. But the economic advantages are secondary to the viewers of the target countries. In subtitling retaining the authenticity of the original production is paramount (Gottlieb 1997: 310). Subtitling is a more authentic mode than dubbing for these viewers. The audiences are not allowed to forget about the foreignness of a translated movie. They are constantly reminded of its authenticity as they hear the original dialogues throughout the movie.

As English happened to be the lingua franca in the modern world its range of reach has increased dramatically and is widespread now. In India, the general trend is to have the subtitles in English rather other Indian languages. Malayalam too has mostly of movies with English subtitles. Very rarely Malayalam movies are given subtitles in Arabic language as there is demand from Arabic countries who watch Malayalam movies.

5. Challenges and limitations

Subtitling is more problematic and limiting. Translating for movie subtitle is a difficult task. It needs greater attention than normal translation. Certain standards are to be followed while resorting to subtitle translation. Care must be taken so that even simple conversations must satisfy the target language's colloquialisms. At the top of it there are limitations of time and space. Subtitles should adhere to the limitations of space and time. The limitation of space puts pressure on the number of characters that could be displayed on the screen. This will give viewers the time to read them. Subtitles must be harmonious to the sound and picture displayed on the screen. On the other hand, the texts to be used when dubbing must be of the same length as the original.

Subtitle translators must be familiar with cultural norms to be followed while exercising translation. He must be conscious of cultural cues of different fields of knowledge. The dictions used in politics, technology, science, economics, medicine, administration, law, diplomacy and other fields throw challenge to the translator. There are words and phrases that are hard to be translated in another language. Expressions and emotions are not easy to be conveyed using subtitles as there are limitations to the length of the text (i.e. the number characters) that could be displayed on the screen. Space will put pressure on the choice of words. Often ordinary and brief words that would fit to the space would be chosen at the cost of beauty of the dialogue and the emotions. Timing is another factor to be considered seriously while translating subtitle. There is time limitation for the subtitles to appear onscreen. Therefore only a few seconds are given to the viewer to understand what has been said in those precious second. So brevity is the crucial feature of subtitles. The uncertainty or hesitation in the dialogue will put pressure on the time of

subtitle display on the screen. The subtitles must be allowed to stay on the screen for longer time to make the viewers understand the dialogue situation clearly. But this must not be repeated often. Another difficulty faced when doing subtitles is setting the time-codes, which requires double the hours spent on the subtitles.

Apart from verbal communication there are non-verbal elements of communication too in the movie. One may come across some non-verbal signs such as advertisements, name boards, display boards, notices, tokens, trademarks or road signs in the background. These non-verbal elements of communication give more credibility to subtitling. These signs make it clear to the viewers that they are watching actually a foreign movie. In such circumstances the subtitle writer must explain the meaning of the sign by inserting a subtitle with the target language equivalent. They may make use of capital letters or italics to differentiate it from spoken utterances.

6. Strategies for subtitle translation

In order to meet out the challenges and limitations explained above on subtitle translation, we need to adopt certain strategies for subtitle translation. We are not in the wilderness to choose the strategies. The foundations laid by experts on whose footsteps we can find solution to our problem of subtitle translation. Gottlieb (1992) adopts ten strategies for the translation of subtitles. They are expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, dislocation, condensation, decimation, deletion and resignation. Lomheim (1999) proposes a typology consisting of ten types for subtitle translation. They are equivalent translation, omission, compression, expansion, generalization, specification and neutralization. Based on these two approaches Yu-Jie Cheng (2014) arrives at 10 types of generalized solutions by comparing 44,251 translation units and their corresponding subtitles. They are: (1) equivalent translation; (2) condensation; (3) omission; (4) paraphrase; (5) expansion; (6) neutralization; (7) generalization; (8) adaptation; (9) resignation; and (10) annotation. As we mentioned earlier we have the experience of writing English subtitles for a Malayalam movie to prepare software for the automatic translation of subtitles in Malayalam. Here we are trying to explain the strategies adopted by based on the 10 types of generalized solutions proposed by Yu-Jie Cheng (2014).

7.1 Equivalent Translation

A close rendering of the ST in content and wording is referred here as equivalent translation. In this type of translation care is taken to keep the meaning and expression of the ST basically untouched. Only a minimum of intervention is expected from the subtitler. Equivalent translation covers literal translation or near-literal translation. The ST undergoes small adjustments to conform to the grammar and syntax of TL. Equivalent translation is adopted when literal translation does not work. The following example will exemplify the equivalent translation strategy adopted by us.

| No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|----|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>rAghavO, appO innum nI I paNi tIrkkiIla alle rAghavA.</i> | Raghava, today too, you will leave the work incomplete. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>itrayalle njAn ninnOTu paRanjoLLu</i> | That's all I have told you to do. |
| 3 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>pinne I taTi sAmAnangngaL atu OTicconnu minikkiiyEkkuka.</i> | And quickly run around and polish their teak furniture. |

Word-for word translation is seldom possible as the languages are different. If the meaning is preserved in spite of the fact that the TT does not follow the exact wording of the ST it is still considered as equivalent translation. It is quite possible that the ST idiom and slang are replaced in TT by making use of different wordings but conveying the same meaning and following the style of the original.

7.2 Condensation

A prominent feature of subtitling is condensation. When the ST is represented in a condensed form retaining its meaning the process is called condensation. It refers to the situation where typically the content of the ST is preserved but some oral features are reduced. The elements of referential function are retained when a passage is condensed. The interpersonal function are sacrificed. Condensation is the second most frequently found type of solution in subtitle translation.

| No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|----|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>Sarikkum tAkkOI eTuttiTTiIla mATampaLLiyile mETa pUTTiTTu tAkkOI eTukkAn maRannirukkuNu.</i> | I have forgotten to take the key from Maadampally house. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>miNTAte uriyATate mEtaYkuLLile nAlu mUlaykkuLLilum angaTə sthApikkuka.</i> | Without uttering a word, tie them to the four corners of the house. |

In the first example 'forgotten to take the key' has been said twice and it is condensed into a single instance in the TT. In the second example 'without uttering a word' has been repeated twice by different words and so is condensed into a single instance. Due to technical and textual constraints and to increase readability, repetitive passages are condensed. Elements of interpersonal functions are also compressed for the same reason.

7.3 Omission

Omission of source elements also part of subtitling process. It is adopted to keep the flow translation and to keep viewers interested in the movie. Omission is certainly different from condensation. There are at least two kinds of omission - partial omission and total omission. In partial omission, some elements of referential purposes in the ST unit are omitted. Unlike condensation, the elements omitted here carry informative content. Omission is the third most frequently found type of strategy for subtitling. Partial omission and total omission involves deletion of information but they differ in the elements being deleted and the degree of reduction. Both are intended to increase the readability of the subtitle.

ST units may contain certain elements which need to be omitted. Omission is implemented if the informative elements can be understood from the non-linguistic signs or from the context. Information deduced from the previous message can also be omitted. The elements which repeat the message conveyed in the previous occasion are omitted too.

| E.g. No | Name of the movie | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>innale rAtri uNNittAn cETTanentina</i> | Yesterday night you were so |
| | | <i>itrakkə angə pETiccata, che nANakkETə</i> | afraid, it's shameful. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>Asamayattu aviTe nilkAtirunnuNTallo, AyusinRe belamkoNTA.</i> | The fact that you did not wait there was because of your luck. |
| 3 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>dAsappankuTTi entA ninRe nALə</i> | On which day were you born. |
| 4 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>njAn vITTilekku varAnnu paRanjnille. de uNNittAn vAkku paRanjnA vAkka</i> | I said I'll come home. |

In the example 1, the phrase *uNNittAn cETTanentina* is omitted in the translation and replaced by *you*. It is because of the practice that the addressee's names are mostly omitted in subtitling. In example 2 *asamayattu* is omitted in the translation. In example 3 also the addressee's name *dAsappankuTTi* is omitted in the translation. In the 4th example '*de uNNittAn vAkku paRanjnA vAkka*' which means 'the promise given by *Unnitan* is a promise' has been omitted.

Omission is usually found when translation is considered not necessary. For example,

interjections, dialogue in a foreign language other than English, background voice and gasping/screaming are likely to be omitted. Another reason for omission is when the ST unit consists of elements of interpersonal functions. For example the name of the addressee and phatic expressions are omitted. Omission is implemented when the time and space available on the screen are limited. For example repetitive information, dense passages and overlapping voices are omitted. It can be noticed that even the technical constraints could be the reason for the removal of certain elements in the ST. In this respect, the majority of them do not need translation as they can be recovered from the context or other movie signs. In addition, the pace of the movie can be cause for the removal of some elements in dense passages

7.4 Paraphrase

Paraphrase is different form equivalent translation, condensation and omission. A paraphrase is a restatement of the meaning of a text or passage using other words. In the context of subtitle translation, paraphrasing involves maintaining the meaning of the ST in TT but by using different wording. In the case of equivalent translation, the ST and TT are the same in meaning even if the wording is slightly altered. But in the case of paraphrase, the wording of the TT is different from that of the ST and the meaning may be very close but not the same. Paraphrase is the fourth most frequently found type of strategy adopted for subtitling. Paraphrase is often adopted so that the TT can be easily understood with more explicitness. Subtitles are made for better readability and less processing effort. So the ST may be rephrased for quick comprehension.

| E.g. No | Name of movie | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>njAn annE paRanjatA I mATampaLLiyile tAkkOlum bharaNamonnum namukku vENTAnnu.</i> | I told him not to have anything to do with the house. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>Ippa entA asukham ennuvaccA paRa</i> | How are you feeling now? |
| 3 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>paRanjA kEkkaNTAyO</i> | He never listened to me. |

In the example 1, the phrase *tAkkOlum bharaNamonnum namukku vENTAnnu* which literally means 'key and rule are not necessary for us' has been paraphrased as 'not to have anything to do'. Similarly in the example *ippa entA asukham ennuvaccA paRa* which literally means 'what is the illness tell me now' has been paraphrased as 'How are you feeling now?' In the example 3, *paRanjA kEkkaNTAyO* which literally means 'not listening if said' is paraphrased as 'He never listened to me.'

7.5 Expansion

Expansion is opposite to omission. Expansion refers to the situation when extra words/information is added in the TT. This makes the TT longer than the ST. Expansion is the fifth most frequently found type of subtitling. It is usually adopted with the intention of clarifying the ST, making the TT easier to understand with more explicitness. Like paraphrase, expansion is usually adopted to make the TT more explicit although in many cases equivalent translation will also work. Here, facilitating comprehension appears to be the main reason.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>Innale uccaykku tiruvananthapurattə vannu, rAtri koRE iruTTyiTTA maTampalliyil ettiyatə.</i> | Yesterday we arrived very late from Trivandrum. We did not want to disturb you so we went to Madampally. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>Alla gangakku ivareyellAm manassilAyO?</i> | Ganga, this is my aunt, this is her daughter Jayashree. |
| 3 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>hEyu, nALe eTuttAmatiyennu vocAriccatA pakshe keTanna oRakkam varaNTe.</i> | Not at all I thought of taking it tomorrow but won't get sleep until I take it. |

In the first example, mention is made in the source language about ‘the arrival in the late night’; there is no mention of ‘We did not want to disturb you’. This is an instance of expansion in TT. In the second example, the ST can be literally translated as ‘Ganga do you understand all these people?’ But in the TT it is expanded with an addition of names of the people who have been introduced to Ganga to make the ST clear to the viewers. In the third example mention is made in the ST about ‘not getting sleep’; but in the TT “until I take it” is an addition for the understanding of the audience.

7.6 Neutralization

Neutralization is another strategy adopted for subtitling. The stylistic expressions are neutralized into standard, unmarked ones by neutralization. It is the sixth most frequently used type of subtitling strategy. Neutralization is usually adopted when non-standard expressions in the ST have no counterpart in the TL and appropriate replacements are not found. In such circumstance, neutralization leads to translation of non-standard expressions into plain language to preserve their meaning. The stylistic features are neutralized into plain language. The following examples exemplify the neutralization strategy adopted in subtitling.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>ninakkentA dAsappan kuTTi sAdhanam eTukka sAdhanam eTukka ennu paRanjjiTTu nl enne vazhlliTTu vaTiyAkkukayA.</i> | What's wrong with you, you kept on saying you will take it out, are you trying to fool me. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>aRinjaRinju angOTTu tanneyA pOkunne</i> | I know of it. I am going there now. |
| 3 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>atinu nl I kummAyavum kOlumAyiTTu itinakattu kERiyiTTu divasam etrayAyi</i> | But you have been in this house with your broom and brush since the last few days. |

In the first example the stylistic expression or idiomatic phrase *vazhlliTTu vaTiyAkkukayA* is translated into a plain phrase “are you trying to fool me”. In the second example, *aRinjaRinju* which literally means ‘I know I Know’ is a stylistic expression. It has been neutralized as ‘I know of it’. The third example, the stylistic expression in ST *kummAyavum kOlumAyiTTu* which literally means ‘with lime-paint and stick’ is neutralized in TT by simple words ‘broom and brush’.

7.7 Generalization

Generalization is one of the strategies adopted in subtitling. It is different from neutralization. In generalization a specific element in ST will be replaced by a general element in the TT while resorting to subtitle translation. The general element could be a hypernym for the specific hyponym. Generalization usually looks for a concept which will cover up the concept of the ST to be translated into TT. The translation equivalent must be appropriate to the context (i.e. the linguistic and cultural context and the context of the story), understandable to the target viewer, or easiest to put in words. If the ST contains elements that are culture-specific or unfamiliar to the target audience generalization comes handy in translating these elements, especially when the time and space available on the screen is limited. As the translation by generalization in terms of meaning is not as accurate as the original ST item, it will result in TT with a loss of specific information and distortion of original meaning. Therefore, generalization is usually preferred even if a direct translation is applicable. Generalization is mostly adopted whenever necessary.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>mATampaLLi mETayil yakshiyuNTə mATanuNTə ennokke paRanju naTakkuNa pETittURikaLə kAloRappiccə itinakattə kuttilla.</i> | Bu the people here believe that Madampally house is haunted with <i>witches</i> and are not to step in here. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>Oru pAtALakkaraNTi kiTTiyirunnangkil</i> | If only I could get a <i>shovel</i> from somewhere. |

In the first example, *yakshi* and *mATan* in ST are cultural terms denoting different type of devils. They have been generalized in the TT as ‘witches’. In the second example *pAtALakkaraNTi* is a type of instrument for lifting objects which fall inside the well. This has been generalized as ‘shovel’ in ST.

7.8 Adaptation

Adaptation is yet another strategy to be followed in subtitling. While translating for subtitling in may not be possible to stick to the original meaning of ST. In that case adaptation which is a free rendering aiming at achieving similar effect is preferred rather than sticking to the meaning of the original. As a result the TT bears no resemblance to the ST in terms of wording and content on the textual level. The wording and content of the ST are changed in the TT. Adaptation is the third least frequently found type of strategy. Whenever ST contains wordplay or items wherein direct translation is hardly feasible, adaptation is usually used. Due to the technical constraints, a detailed explanatory note is may not be feasible. So the subtitler has to adapt the ST to preserve the humorous effect. Adaptation is also found whenever the ST requires long explanation for culture-bound items. Adaptation could be the remedy when a direct translation is not possible even if the ST does not involve wordplay.

Whenever the subtitler decides adaptation is the only remedy, he is bound to apply it. Adaptation is a domesticating strategy, found not only when a direct transfer is impossible but also when it is possible. A subtitler chooses adaptation if he or she feels it appropriate for the target viewers, he or she chooses it. The subtitler has more room for adaptation if the viewers do not have good English listening comprehension. The examples given in the table below will substantiate the above discussion.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>nI entu paRayunnu? ottiriyangu vaLarnnupOyallo?</i> | How are you? How have you grown? |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>ippa entA asukham ennu vacca paRa</i> | How are you feeling now? |

The literary translation of the first example could be ‘What are you saying? You have grown up?’ So the subtitler prefers adaptation and translates it as given in the TT column. Similarly as the literary translation of the second example is ‘Tell what is the illness now?’, the subtitler translates it as given in the TT column.

7.9 Resignation

In the subtitling, one may find instances where one of the meanings or readings in terms of pun or wordplay of the ST is missing in the TT. This situation is referred as resignation in which the special effect of the pun or wordplay is lost in the subtitle. It is the second least frequently found type of strategy adopted.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>enthAkAn njAn vAryarkkə oru pA angatə iTTu koTuttu.</i> | I just asked Warrior to tell me a song starting with the letter pa. |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>enRe nAkku eRangngippOyenna ninRe vicAram</i> | Did you think I’ve lost my tongue? |

In the first example, the addresser mentioned *pA* meaning ‘song beginning with *pa*’. But from the following responses from listener we understand that *ut* the listener has taken *pA* as ‘mat’, the other meaning of *pA*.

enniTTu vAryar keTanno, hAyə pAyittAl keTakkayO

‘then did he sleep over it’

In the second example, the phrase *nAkku eRangngippOyenna*” is an idiomatic expression which means ‘die’. But in the TTs the translation is given as ‘lost my tongue’. The pun is lost in the translation.

7.10 Annotation

Annotation refers to the situation when notes are added in parentheses to explain the ST, or the parentheses are used to indicate dialogue in other languages. It is the least frequently found type of solution. The following is an example.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>enikku uTuttu mARAnuLLa muNTonnumilla.</i> | I have no mundu (white garment worn around the waist). |

7.11 Wrong interpretation

Apart from the subtitling strategies discussed above, one can find wrong translation due to wrong interpretation. The following example will illustrate this.

| E.g. No | Name of film | ST | TT |
|---------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>vISum njAn</i> | I will hit you |
| 2 | <i>maNiccittarattAz~</i> | <i>enthAkAn njAn vAryarkkə oru pA angaTə iTTu koTuttu.</i> | I just asked Warrior to tell me a song starting with the letter pa. |

In the first example *vISum njAn* in the ST means ‘I will wave (the instrument in order to drive away ‘evil spirit)’. But in TT it is translated wrongly. Similarly in the second example, *vAryar* in ST means ‘noble man’. But it is translated in TT as ‘*variyar*’.

7. Tips to the subtitler

Bernadine Racoma gives the following tips for subtitles. Based on our experience in subtitling, we would like to bring out the following points to the writers of subtitle translation.

The time factor is one of the most important concerns that should be taken seriously. To make sure that the subtitles are read properly, the time needs to be managed, so that the text appears immediately as the audience hears the oral counterpart. If the optimal display time is not calculated, the translation would go waste. For every translator it is important to understand the character-per-second ratio. Generally, 15 characters are advised to be used for each second of caption duration.

It is very critical for an aspiring subtitler to give maximum attention to his language and translation skills. The skills and knowledge you have for the native and other languages

should be polished enough that no one could beat you in the art of captioning. Suppose, you are translating Malayalam dialogues into English; for this, you must see to it that the Malayalam to English sentence translation is performed in such a way that the native English audience understands each and every word spoken in the movie. The translators of subtitle must assure that they are concise with their translations. The audience can read the caption only once, while watching a subtitled movie. If that part of the movie is left behind, the audience will not be able to understand that part of the movie or dialogue. Hence, keep the texts uncomplicated and free from wordy structures or lexical items.

Modulation and Transposition are the two basic strategies for translation that aims at simplifying the text for subtitles. Modulation refers to presenting the situation from a different perspective. It should be noticed that the sentence is represented with a different perspective, but the meaning remains the same. On the other hand, transposition involves a change in part of speech or word class.

Often in a movie, you may find a scene where there are a lot of background noise or background speeches going on. Example for this can be a scene at a crowded place or a scene where someone is talking while the TV is on. In such a case, it is advisable to neglect the background speeches and prioritize the one that is the most audible utterance.

Conclusion

Subtitling has grown into a big separate industry in the film field. Those who aspire to see movies of other language need some support to help them understand the movie in unknown language. The subtitles helps such movie viewers. As for as Malayalam-English title is concerned, there is ample scope and demand for subtitling, especially those work in Arab countries. The siblings who are educated there may not have ample knowledge in Malayalam language. Subtitling comes as a boon form them. Also other non-native speakers who do not know Malayalam need subtitles to follow the movie in Malayalam. The subtitles should be made in such a way that the viewers become interested in watching the movie. Writing subtitles really needs training. It's a skill oriented job. One has to develop such skill. Here in this paper we have attempted to outline some important aspect of subtitling. It needs more exploration and in-depth study.

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