

Standardisation of Technical Terms in Tamil

Dr. P. Chandra Bose,
Presidency College (Autonomous), Chennai -600 005, India

Abstract :

The explosion of information technology reaching the common people has demanded its explication in the native languages. In Tamil this has resulted in several attempts which have further complicated the process. This paper attempts to bring a broad framework that would facilitate in arriving at certain standards in creating equivalences for the technical terms as well as technical texts in Tamil.

This paper concludes that:

- a) Technical Translation is one part of specialised translation; broadly they indulge in two divisions viz translate & transfer. It is primarily distinguished from other forms of translation by terminology.
- b) The style of the technical translation should be free from emotive language, connotations, sound effects etc. It has three varieties : Academic, Professional and Popular. The style should have a proportionate degree of persuasion to information. Based on the readership it should have a recognised house-style.
- c) Distinction between technical and descriptive terms. Both must be concept centered and should have communicative competency in the Target Language (Tamil) Making mystiques for descriptive or technical terms should be avoided.
- d) The main characteristic of technical language is its richness with its potential infinity. With this feature in a technical translation one can always recast the source text.
- e) New objects and processes are continually created in technology. Newly coined lexical units, or existing lexical units that have acquired new sense viz neologisms pose the real challenge. They are of different types : Old words with new sense, new coinage, derived words, abbreviations, collocations, eponyms, phrasal words, transferred words, acronyms, pseudo-neologisms and a few more. They need to be analysed with their components and the equivalences are to be formed.

This paper further suggests that:

- a) Technology escalates exponentially, especially computer, internet and digital technology. Hence the translator has to be up to date.
- b) One has to dispel the false notion that technical translation is easy and boring. When a technical translation is well done it also has the same demands as that of a literary translation.

The findings are based on the experience imbibed during the past two decades in translating technical texts from English to Tamil.