

Filtration of literary texts in the case of an intermediate language: A study based upon French literary works translated into Sinhalese.

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Each year, thousands of literary works are being translated into Sinhalese, due to the popular demand. The Sri Lankan demand for world literature has grown to such an extent that there is a trend of literary works of renowned authors being translated into Sinhalese. This is not restricted to English literature, but also other world literatures like Russian, French, Spanish, German, Chinese etc. However, not all these works are directly translated from the source language to the target language. Most of the time, English acts as an intermediate language. Hypothetically, a literary text which has been translated through an intermediate language has a higher risk of filtration and losing its original flavour, in comparison to a direct translation.

This filtration could be twofold: linguistic and cultural. The content of the original text could be filtered, altered due to linguistic or cultural differences between the source and the target language. In the case of an intermediate language, this could lead to incomprehensibility or misinterpretation of the original text.

The researcher intends to identify the linguistic and cultural factors which may lead to filtration of the original text and to determine the reasons for these factors. It is possible that the filtration may occur due to cultural or linguistic ignorance of the first translator, the second translator or, it could be voluntary.

The researcher intends to follow a qualitative approach for the research, which includes a detailed analysis and a comparison between original text and the translated text. Only literary translations will be analysed as they are more challenging due to their linguistic ambiguity. For this purpose, a selection of Sinhalese translations (එමා බෝවාරි - සිරිල් සී පෙරේරා, සිටුවර මොන්ත ක්විස්තෝ - කේ.පී කරුණාතිලක, පෙම්බර මිතුරා - පසන් කොඩිකාර, පෙන්ගුවින් දිවයින - ටී.අන්ද්‍රාදි , සාරා - අශානි රණසිංහ) of the works of selected French authors (Madame Bovary- Gustave Flaubert, Le comte de Monte Christo – Alexandre Dumas, Bel Ami – Guy de Maupassant, L’ile de penguins – Anatol France, Elle s’appellait Sarah – Tatiana de Rosnay) would be selected and analysed, followed by interviews with the translators.

Key words: filtration, intermediate language, literary translation, originality, source language, target language