

A Study on the Difficulties encountered by the translators when translating cultural words with special reference to the short novel *Vap Magula* by Somarathna Balasuriya

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Abstract

Translation which is the process of transferring an idea of one language to another language, can be considered as one of the most effective ways to communicate between two cultures. This study was specially focused on difficulties encountered by translators when translating cultural words from Sinhala to English in the field of literary translation by using the short novel “Vap Magula” by Somarathna Balasuriya and the English translation of the book by Dorathi Lokubalasuriya. The reason why this novel is chosen to continue this study is, it includes a considerable amount of cultural words and also cultural events which inherent to Sri Lanka. Accordingly, it was noted that the translators are using different types of solutions based on the problems they faced. The main purposes of this study were to identify the problems in translating cultural words, to find the solutions adopted by the translator and to observe the accuracy and propriety of those solutions. Scholarly studies by Jean-Paul Vinay, Jean Darbelnet and, the aforesaid novel and the translation have been used as sources. Findings concluded that most of the cultural words have been translated by using the technique of borrowing. The main reasons why this technique is being frequently used for the translation of literary works, is the lack of equivalent terms in the target language and also to preserve the local color of the word, or to be used out of fear that some of the semiotic aspects and cultural aspects of the word would be lost, if it is translated. Apart from that, equivalence and modulation have been also used to some extent. This study will assist in a time where one could see mistranslations in the field of literary translation and for translators who could see literary translation as a hard task due to the usage of cultural words.

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