

1.4 You and I in Translation....

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ABSTRACT

The task of the translator is finding equivalents. The translator is faced with the problem of lack of equivalents in the process of translation as no two languages in the world are identical. These problems may occur in all the strata of a language such as lexical, morphological, syntactical and semantical. Here the main focus will be on the syntactic level. The problems that occur in the syntactical level can be discussed according to the grammatical categories of gender, number, tense, voice and person. The objective of this paper is to focus on the concept of person and lay emphasis on how it manifests itself in the task of translation.

The category of person relates to the notion of the participant roles. In most of the languages participant roles are systematically defined through a closed system of pronouns which may be organized along a variety of dimensions. The most common dimension distinction is that between

- First Person (Identifying the speaker or a group which includes the speaker)
- Second Person (Identifying the person or the persons addressed)
- Third person (Identifying the persons or things other than the speaker and addressee.

In addition to the main distinction based on participant role, the person system may be organized along a variety of other dimensions. The person system in some languages may have a gender or number dimension which applies to the whole system or to parts of it. In case of Sinhala it has a more detailed person system compared to English where there is only seven.

In this paper we intend to discuss the problems encountered in translating the concept of person.