



# A Review of the Difficulties in Translating Balakumaran's Poradum Penmanigal

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## Abstract

Translation is the process of conveying meaning from one language to another. The translator may encounter several problems and challenges while working on the translation. The most difficult problems, subjects, and texts are synthetic, semantic linguistics, and cultural difficulties. Discussing the challenges of Tamil to English and English to Tamil translation is a crucial subject of translation because there is such a significant need for this kind of research. The goal of this study is to pinpoint the challenges that arise when translating word and phrase combinations from English to Tamil. This article focuses on syntactic problems. The study's central thesis is that almost all sentences have repeats or other pointless redundancy. The syntactic norms of translation are known to translators, and they correctly apply these rules in their translations. The purpose of this study is to identify the different types of syntactic errors in translation, the difficulties students have translating text, and the variables that affect these errors when translating from English to Tamil. Descriptive and quantitative research methods were used. The results of this study showed that elliptical errors, idioms, textual meaning, grammatical problems (tenses, word order, clauses), structural ambiguity, and lack of strategy in syntactical errors were the most difficult parts of translating from English to Tamil.

**Key Words:** Descriptive and quantitative, translation difficulties, syntactic errors, grammatical complexities.

## Introduction

Translation studies is an academic discipline that focuses on the theory, practise, and phenomena of translation. The goal of this study is to provide instructors, researchers, students, and professional translators with a solid theoretical foundation. They can also provide direction for graduate-level students and undergraduates studying translation, translation studies, and theory. The intention is to make the readers more

aware of the grammatical intricacies that emerge during the translation process. In addition to professional studies, this research is for linguists and translators.

## **Syntactic Issues with the Translation from Tamil to English**

Translation has some role in every conversation. Without translation, we would be living in largely silent provinces.

Each person's understanding of a translation is different. To me, translation means communicating the author's intended meaning while conforming to the grammatical conventions and cultural expectations of the target language. The age of translation is the age of modernity. Information is widely available in the global village that has emerged. It is now obvious that translation works well as a communication tool. It creates racial harmony and promotes respect for one another's languages and cultures. Thus, translation fills the communication gap between two or more different countries. Translation involves a wide range of professions, including those in the legal, journalistic, medical, literary, and academic fields. Translating something is challenging. Nowadays, there is a widespread misconception that anyone who speaks many languages well may work as a translator or interpreter. However, this is incorrect because a professional translator also needs to be socially and culturally competent in addition to having excellent language skills for the communication medium. Fundamentally, translation is a linguistic process. The scientific study of language is known as linguistics. According to Susan Bassnett, there are specific principles that can be organized, separated, and applied in translation depending on the target language. She also claims that translation is thought of as an integral component of a foreign language and has never received separate attention. No two languages have the same or equal structure. Every language has a different structure.

We require linguistic assistance to comprehend this arrangement. Since linguistics and translation are interwoven, as I previously stated, the translator must be versed in both linguistics and the subject matter. A translator has a variety of difficulties, such as language, cultural, contextual, problems with terminology translation, and difficulties finding an appropriate counterpart. Therefore, in order to cope with linguistic challenges, the translator needs to be knowledgeable in micro linguistics and its applications. Two broad divides that can be formed in the study of language are micro-linguistics and macro-linguistics.

### **The four more subfields of micro linguistics are:**

- Phonology is the scientific discipline that investigates the patterns of spoken sounds.
- study of words, including their many forms and phonetic structure.
- Syntax is the study of verb tense and agreement.
- Semantics is the field that researches meaning.

Such problems were classified as "translational problems" by many translators. Among them are:

**Phonological level** \_ It consists of sound effects, speech figures derived from sound effects, and borrowed graphophones from other languages. - Phonological problems in translation.

**Word Level** - This level includes word selection, functional vocabulary and style, echo words, and compound word issues.

**The morphological level** \_ this level encompasses all issues with numbers, genders, cases, verb tenses, and cases.

**Syntax Level** \_ Phrases, sentences, clauses, tone groups, and problems with syntax in verse make up the syntax level.

Let's discuss the grammatical problems associated with translating from English to Tamil in this context. To do that, we must first understand syntax. A language's syntax is made up of its vocabulary and grammar rules. The rules of language grammar govern how to build complex assertions out of simple ideas and expressions. As a result, we'll use the term "syntax problems" to describe any sentence structure flaws that arise while translating a document.

Grammar and semantic accuracy should be maintained while translating sentences.

For instance, K.Muthu reads Kamba Ramayana K. Muthu Kambaramayanam Padikkiraal.

This sentence's meaning and grammatical construction are both appropriate.

Kambaramayanam pronounces K. Muthu as Kambaramayanam K.Muthu Padikkiraal which is both syntactically and semantically erroneous.

Although the language in this sentence is correct, the meaning is not. Therefore, the translator must be careful in this area. The word order presents a challenge for the translator. Every language is unique from the rest in some manner. There will always be certain differences between the two languages, despite the fact that they are linked. Every tongue has a different pattern for how words are arranged. As a result, when translating, the translator needs to be knowledgeable with both the source language's (SL) and target language's (TL) sentence structure patterns.

Take the English SVO pattern as an example.

- She (S) bought (V) a book (O).

Tamil, however, follows an SOV pattern.

- Aval (S) Puthagam (O) Vaanginaal (V)

As is common knowledge, Tamil is an agglutinative language. Therefore, we can change the language of our sentence without changing its meaning.

For instance,

- Sowmiya Vardanai santhithaal
- Sowmiya santhithal Varadanai.
- Santhiaal Sowmiya Vardanai.
- Varadanai Sowmiya santhithaal.

- Varadanai santhithaal Sowmiya.

Tamil is a versatile language, thus there are numerous methods to create intelligible phrases. However, the only translation we can make into English is "Soumya met Varadhan."

Further difficulties include quantity, gender, and case. It signifies that the verb's gender is not indicated in English. However, in Tamil, the verb also alters depending on the noun.

Examples include

- Sujatha drinking tea (Sujatha theneer Kudikiraal).
- Bala drinking tea (Bala theneer kudikiraan).
- Dog drinking milk (Naai paal kudikirathu).

The agreement of the subject and verb in translation is another problem. Subject-verb agreement needs to be understood for accurate translations. For instance, in English, a singular subject employs a singular verb, but a plural subject uses a plural verb.

- I'm talking about a story in the book.  
Naan puthakathil ulla kathaiyai patri pesikondirukiraen
- I work in educational department.  
Naan kalvithuraiyil paniaatrugiraen.
- She is a proficient reader
- Aval oru thiramaiyana vasagar.
- They are close friends.  
Avargal nerungiya nanbargal,

If there are two or more singular subjects that are connected by the conjunction "and", they are preceded by "each" or "every," the verb is frequently singular.

- Everyone comes to college's library.  
(Ovvoruvarum kalooriyinnudaiya nollagathirkku varugai tharugindranar)

The expression should be translated to Tamil as varugai tharugindranar

- "Every plant and fruit in my garden is lovely.
- Enathu thotathil ulla ovvoru thavramum palamum alagaanathu (Correct)
- Enathu thotathil ulla ovvoru thavramum palamum alagaanavai (Wrong)

In this instance, the correct Tamil translation of the phrase is Alagaanathu. There are over 30 different types of subject-verb agreement in English, which is similar to this. It must be possible for the translation to differentiate between them. He can overcome these kind of grammar mistakes only after that.

A "hierarchical structural" problem arises for the translator when they work on a text. What it denotes is what modifies what.

Example:

1. They require more *motivated employees*.

Avargalukku urchaagamaana paniyalargal athigamaga thevai padugirargal

2. They require *more motivated employees*.

Avargalukku urchagam nirantha paniyalargal thevai padugirargal.

These two sentences appear to be identical when we first glance at them. Actually yet, it is crucial to comprehend the highlighted passages. They want more enthusiastic employees in the first sentence and more enthusiastic employees in the second sentence. Syntactic category typically includes grammars for word parts and phrase structure. This will be the main challenge for any translator. It is possible to categorize words into parts of speech and semantic features using morphological, syntactic, and semantic traits. Typically, open and closed classes can be used to classify parts of speech.

If fresh information is consistently introduced, the class is said to be open. Included are nouns, verbs, adjectives, and verb tenses. A closed class is one that receives very little additions and only a few words. It includes determiners, conjunctions, pronouns, and prepositions.

speech fragment or sentence. Actually, understanding the syntactical organization of words and phrases is made possible by this subject. By being aware of this fact, the translators can overcome this obstacle.

## NOUNS

for example, "book's": morphology = (noun + plural marker "s"). - Puthagangal in order to describe syntax, determiners and adjectives are frequently used.

### Examples:

The following examples are syntax = (Nouns + Determiners).

- A book (Oru puthagam)
- Several books (Pala puthagangal)
- This book is excellent (Intha puthagam sirappaga ullathu)

I think we now fully comprehend the syntactic and morphological components of nouns. I'll only give examples of the remainder of the component of speech's grammatical structure from here on out.

In this sentence's syntax, auxiliaries and models are used. Phrases are an essential part of the English language and are the building blocks of all sentences. There are five main phrases in English: noun phrases, adjective phrases, verb phrases, adverb phrases, and prepositional phrases.

### Noun Phrase:

A noun phrase is a collection of two or more words that is led by a noun and contains modifiers. The noun is highlighted in these instances of noun phrases. The rest of the words are all modifiers.

- *The lion* has the sharpest canine. (In this instance, "the" is a modifier.)
- *A cat* (In this case, "a" is a modifier.)

**Verb Phrase:**

A verb phrase is a collection of words that serves as a sentence's verb, comprising the main verb and any additional linking verbs or modifiers. Modifiers are words that can alter, accommodate, restrict, enlarge, or assist in defining a certain term in a sentence.

e.g:

- My dad *is cooking* today.  
En appa indru samaikirar.
- I *have written* a letter for you.  
Naan unakkaga oru kaditham eluthiirukiraen.

**Adverb Phrase:**

Every phrase that functions as an adverb in a sentence is referred to as an adverb phrase (or adverbial phrase). By addressing the how, where, when, why, or to what extent an action has occurred, it adds more information about the verb, adjective, or adverb that it modifies.

e.g:

- I went to the library *to find out more*.  
Melum ariya noolagathirkku sendrean.

**Adjective Phrase:**

A set of words called an adjective phrase can be used to characterize a noun or pronoun in a sentence. An adjective phrase may begin, terminate, or contain an adjective. The adjectival phrase may come before or after the noun or pronoun in the sentence.

**Example:**

In sentences, adjective phrases can be used to describe individuals or any other nouns or pronouns. The terms adjective phrase and adjectival phrase have the same meaning.

- Her eyes were incredibly mesmerizing to the young man.  
Aval kangal antha ilanganai nambamudiyatha alavirkku vasigarithana.

**Prepositional Phrase:**

Prepositional phrases are those in which a noun or adjective phrase is combined with a preposition. Example of a prepositional phrase:

- I am surprised at your reaction.  
Ungal ethirvinai kandu viyappadaigiraen

When translating, the translator keeps in mind these crucial words. This is because the capacity of a translator to identify the primary verb of a complex sentence, especially in legal works, is important. Because he combines the little sentences into a full sentence after sorting the smaller ones, this understanding of phrase structure will make his work much simpler.

## Tense

The number of sentences in each language—English has twelve, whereas Tamil only has three is another concern. Thus, Tamil and English both have the present, past, and future tenses. In contrast to Tamil, each English tense has four variations. In English, the present perfect and present perfect continuous tenses are distinct from one another. However, the meanings of both tenses in Tamil are most likely the same.

e.g:

- She has studied medicine for few months (present perfect)  
Aval sila mathangal maruthuvam padithirukkiraal.
- She has been studying medicine for few months (present perfect continuous)  
Aval sila mathangalaaga maruthuvam padithukonduirunthirukkiraal.

The Present participle can be used as an adjective and a gerund.

- The children *are sleeping* right now (verb+ing).  
Kulanthaigal ippothu thoongugirargal.
- The grandmother carried *the sleeping child* to his bed (adjective).  
Thongikondiruntha kulathaiyai paati padukkaikku thooki sendraal.
- *Sleeping* in a chair is insecure (gerund).  
Naarkaaliyil thoonguvathu paathukkapatrathu

Like this, Past Participles also used to indicate the perfect tense, passive voice as well as an adjective too

- I empty the bin daily (present perfect)  
Naan eppoluthum kuppai thotiyai kaliseikiraen
- It has been emptied (present perfect - passive)
- It is emptied (Participle Adjective)
- It is empty (Ordinary Adjective)

Sometimes exceptional modal verbs will be the greatest challenge for the translators.

- It's wild animal, it can hunt you (possibility)  
Ithu kaathu vilangu athu ungalai vettaiyaadam.
- It's domestic animal, it could hunt you (impossibility)  
Ithu veetu vilangu athu ungalai vettaiyaada koodum  
Through this we can understand that “can” indicates possibility, “could” indicates impossibility, so
- I am very thirsty, I could drink a seawater (Correct Possibility)  
Naan Migavum thaagaamaga irukiraen ennal kadal nirai kudikka koodum
- I am very thirsty, I can drink a seawater (Wrong Possibility)

Naan Migavum thaagaamaga irukiraen ennal kadal nirai kudikka mudium As a result, translators need to be familiar with unusual modal verbs.

The passive subject cannot be left out when discussing tenses because they are intertwined. Generally speaking, passive forms improve writing. For this reason, academic writing frequently employs passive forms. The translator must therefore be familiar with passive forms. These verb tenses are passive in English.

There are no passive forms for the future continuous tense or any of the perfect continuous tenses.

**e.g:**

- I shall have been finished my homework before the deadline.  
Kaalakeduvukku munbae naan enathu veetupaadathai mudithiruppaen

These are the most significant syntactic rules in all languages. Thus, the translators must be well-versed in these qualities. The translation will be difficult if the translator is unable to distinguish between those issues. I've already mentioned a few fixes for the translation's syntactic issues. Here are several strategies for getting around syntactic obstacles.

A translator may substitute a different culture in their work.

For instance, the translators might translate the phrase "he is dead" as *Avan puttukittan*;" if the author used it in his original work. He also employs transposition strategies. If the possessive adjective form of the original statement. He can convey it using the definite article without changing its meaning.

**e.g:**

- Your eyes are too large (possessive adjective)  
Ungal kannal migavum periyathu.
- You have the eyes too large (definite article)  
Unnudaiya kangal migavum periyavai

**Verb into noun:**

- I *pray* God for your health (verb)  
Ungal arokiyathirrkaga iraivanai vendugiraen
- *My prayer* is for your health (noun)  
Ungal arokiyathirkaaga enathu prathanai

In order to solve the issue, the translator also employs reformulation procedures.

**e.g:**

- "She works round the clock" can be translated as "Aval oivindri velaiseikiral".

In a similar manner, the translator can employ a variety of translation methods and strategies to get around syntactic issues.



## Conclusion

Each language has a unique nature. Throughout the translation process, there are a number of challenges to overcome. These are linguistic, contextual, and grammatical problems. Our research demonstrates that individuals with little translation experience often only substitute words from one language for those from the target language without doing a more in-depth text analysis, which is consistent with the way we understand translation as a bilingually mediated process. Since English and foreign language sentence structures can differ, the majority of translators whether they are inexperienced amateurs or seasoned professionals tend to translate verbatim as a habit. The cultural practices of each language's speakers may also differ greatly. Certain terminology may not exist at all in several languages.

Some students utilise grammar checkers, translation memory tools, and other ways to make sure that the structure of the source document has been preserved in the target language without affecting its meaning or sense. The translator must become familiar with the usual idioms and deviance, respectively. Other issues also exist, although they haven't been adequately looked into. It is thought that the knowledge gained from researching syntactic mistakes related to translation would help in the creation of useful instructional resources and methods. It is anticipated that this research will aid academics and translation students in addressing this issue and in devising solutions for additional issues.

It is believed that the information gleaned from studying syntactic errors associated with translation will aid in the development of practical educational materials and methodologies. This study is expected to help academics and translation students solve this issue and come up with answers for other problems.

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