

Issues in Audiovisual Translation (Avt) With Special Reference to Tamil-Dubbed Science Documentaries - an Overview

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I. Introduction

Though Translation is as old as the existence of the multiplicity of human languages and the migration and interaction of different language communities, its long-held facets of operation are fast changing of late, thanks to globalization and IT revolution. Translation endeavors no longer are restricted to texts, but are fast taking up the huge global audio-visual information or knowledge data base (inclusive of documentaries, feature films, entertaining movies, TV serials, video games etc) of various languages to be disseminated to the other language communities other than one's own. With the advent of IT enabling in translating this database, the speed and burden of rendering it into other language has also been unimaginably reduced. But there are issues still as well, both typical to Translation domain as well as troubles anew. Translation theories have so far dealt predominantly with textual translation and not aural and visual translation. General definitions of translation have become less inclusive. This latest facet of Translation is a rather complex one due to its technical aspects, but a promising and prospective arena for language experts, teachers and students alike of bi-lingual and multi-lingual exposure, and interest in the translation domain. However, conceptualization, theorizing and intensive research are scanty in this field, especially in India, a potential multilingual haven, and, hence, this paper aims to be expository and exploratory in its attempt in discussing certain translation issues of this relatively new field, namely **Audiovisual Translation (AVT)**, in order to impress upon both teachers and students alike their attention to certain issues in this field, and also to initiate them to pursue their academic interests as well as to seek career opportunities in this field.

II. The Multi-Named Baby

As mentioned earlier, due to paucity of research yet, even typology for this field has not yet been standardized, and hence AVT is also called Screen Translation, Multimodal Translation and Film Translation etc. While talking about AVT and its lack of theorizing Khoon and Bahasa precisely state that AVT is ..a specialized form of translation, is often regarded as peripheral to translation and not too important. Scant attention is paid to it in writings on translation and translation theory. If mention is ever made, it is only done in passing and with a mere comment or two. It is understandable, therefore, why there is hardly any systematic research on the subject. (Khoon 66) As a result of this marginalization, no audio visual translator actually knew how exactly the job should be done. However, AVT researchers have felt that 'by virtue of their importance and apparent necessity to one of the modern forms of art, that is film production, AVT can no longer be left to a vague existence, but should be given its due share of attention.' Khoon and Bahasa also recommends that 'AVT translation should be included in any course content on Translation.' They point out that AVT has a far reaching potential than other types of translation':...from the point of view of interlingual communication, which is one of the basic reasons for the existence of translation, film translating probably surpasses book translation in total impact. Translated films, through regular distribution in the cinema or on television, reach a larger audience than any other form of translation. (68)

Karamitroglou too agrees that 'translation theory has much to gain from a systematic investigation of AVT translation and its idiosyncratic peculiarities. The field has started gaining gradual recognition, but it has not yet definitely established its place, either within Translation Studies or in relation to other disciplines such as semiotics, media studies, and discourse/pragmatic studies.' (2000 : 15) However, to be clear and precise in nomenclature regarding the focus of the paper, AVT is preferred throughout. Karamitroglou gives a good justification for the terminology preference due to its typology (10) Although different researches use different terms, like 'screen translation', 'film translation' and the like, Karamitroglou restores Delabastista's (1989:196) term *Audiovisual Translation (AVT)* which is explanatory and comprehensive and which emphasizes "the audio-visual dimensions of the communicative mode. Unlike the communication through books, radio, telephone or sign language, audio-visual communication implies that both the acoustic channel through air vibrations and the visual channel through light waves is simultaneously utilised". As mentioned above, "Audiovisual language transfer denotes the process by which a film or television programme is made comprehensible to a target audience that is unfamiliar with the original's source language" (Luyken 11). Being so suggestive in its naming,

AVT naturally distances itself from the logocentricity of the conventional translatology, and it does not restrict itself only to the language aspect of the AV material but be inclusive of other related aspects of it like synchronization, timing, frame matching, paraphrasing, condensation, elision, retention and substitution etc., due to the constraints of the AV medium, apart from the predominant issue of Translation namely the 'search for equivalents (linguistic, cultural and dynamic).'

Range And Demarcation:

Basically, AVT is undertaken to make an AV product accessible to those who do not understand the language that is spoken in it, that is to overcome a linguistic barrier. It is just similar to that of translating a book or any written matter in a different language for that language speaking community or to make it accessible to those who do not understand the language in which it is written in that sense. But they are not one and the same and the differences shall be dealt with later in this paper. From the financial angle, it should be borne in mind that foreign-language adaptation of audio-visual works for TV and Cinema is done for release on international markets. The purpose could, however, be to earn and rarely it could be to enlighten. In some cases it could specifically be non-profitable propagation and hence it could mainly be 'to enlighten' as in the case of AVT rendered DVDs on Trans-gender inclusion, Syrian women fighting ISIS or Global Warming etc. Then the profit aimed at is ideological mobilisation. The translation of an AV product thus depends on a number of factors which share a common characteristic namely its distribution in a linguistic area different from the one in which it was made rather than the production merit of the film. However, these factors are to a large extent national in character and whatever a language community likes cannot simply be 'imported' and be translated. The legislation of a country may lay down that free imports all AV works are not allowed or else all imported films have to be dubbed in their own language (as in Italy).

Avt's Arms

According to O,Connell (1998) the two most common limbs or sub-types of AVT are **Subtitling** (oral text of SL into written TL text) and **Dubbing** or voice over/revoicing (from a source language(SL) to a Target language (TL)) replacing totally the SL aural-oral text there. Indians, especially the Tamils are likely to be puzzled at the definition of subtitling – 'oral text of SL into written TL text' – as they have been accustomed to find only 'oral text of SL (English) into written SL text (English).' But this is another and a further sub-type of Subtitling. That is to say, the former is **Inter lingual translation** (between two different languages) whereas the latter is called **Intra lingual translation** (within a language). "Intralingual translation or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language; interlingual translation or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language (Jakobson 1959/2000: 114). translation. Intralingual translation helps the hearing impaired too. In practice, we see many kinds of intralingual translation; numerous varieties of expert-to-layman communication, easy-readers for children, subtitling for the deaf, summaries, some kinds of news reporting, new translations of classics, etc.

While our own Tamil films do not carry 'SL to SL subtitling,' the reason for English AVs carrying subtitles is because we lack exposure to the face-to-face spoken form of it. It is not only meant to help us cope with the unfamiliarity of the nuances of the spoken version of the language, but also because English is being widely used in India, especially in Tamilnadu, as a second language. Indeed, Tamil viewers were listening to it in English as it unconsciously helped them strengthen their L2, i.e., English. However, it is worth noting here that, due to its wide reach and advertisement revenue it brings in return, the English documentary channels available in Tamilnadu State, of late, provide both Tamil dubbing and English subtitling now. But, unlike in India, in countries like Saudi Arabia, Japan and Mexico subtitling means translation of an AV in an SL to their own languages. The English "Discovery" channel, for example, like movies of different languages being translated there, is subtitled in Arabic, Japanese and Mexican respectively. The reasons are for subtitling in these countries are not the same, though English is limited in use in all these countries. Reasons range from cultural consciousness, national attitude, language policy of the country, financial constraints etc. They are countries that allow dubbing, i.e., completely replacing the foreign language audio of the AV material with their own language. Subtitling and Dubbing are translation endeavours of course, but they two different processes, involving different issues of translation. The former is a visual written & on-screen type, the latter is an integrated one of the AV product. Subtitling and Dubbing are, however, different from 'remake' which indeed is actually a total re-making of a work indigenizing everything, except the basic story line/theme. Actor Kamal Hasan's remaking of the English movie *Mrs. Doubtfire* into *Avvai Shanmugi* in Tamil is an example of remake. Some researchers tend to further to distinguish deeply and define further the subtypes of AVT namely voice over, revoicing, commentary, narrating etc. But this paper restricts itself to the two broad AVT types, namely subtitling and dubbing.

Translation Issues In Avt:

Whether for subtitling or for dubbing, the task of translation retains its conventional restraint of ‘playing within a frame.’ That is to say, a translator is not as free as the SL author. When you translate an AV product to any kind of constraint, you will have to accept that this may result in your translated version is adapted or paraphrased in order to retain the meaning but adhere to the constraints of the medium and the SL material. You cannot be creative on your own though you can be creative (transcreative) in your efficient search for equivalents. One cannot go beyond that though you are most likely to be induced at heart. However, this is more often the case when one is translating for subtitles. Though an agency gives you a work trusting your expertise, it would be a trouble for them if you tend to stretch out of the framework (SL text) to manage/overcome some restraints, as they would be held responsible for any distortion of the original. But, from the translation point of view, the supra-linguistic features of subtitling strain more since it involves a conversion of an aural-oral aspect of a product into a visual written one. The Technical constraint of displaying it on screen and its timed –visual appearance are also there. But, in dubbing, the translation involves the conversion of the SL audio into TL audio, and the translator has to be supplemented with a voice-artist who gives life to the translated TL audio, as a dramatist’s product is given life through skilful actors.

Typical Subtitling Constraints:

When translating for subtitles, not only do you have to follow strict subtitle time-codes, but the translator also has to contend with other constraints so that expansion can become more problematic. For example, there can only be two lines of subtitles per screen; each line cannot exceed 32 characters and each subtitle must be on screen for at least 3 seconds so that the reader has time to read and digest it. Hence, a subtitler must be adept at making the translation simple, clear and faithful and above all in condensing as per space constraint of the screen. So as you can imagine, translating for subtitling requires a specifically trained translator – most subtitle translators shall have a degree/diploma in audio-visual translation as well as sufficient knowledge of Contrastive Linguistics and translation. The subtitler usually starts working with a SL script or SL dialogue list, which is provided to him by the employing organization. The subtitler’s job is then just to transform it into his language. Then the time and constraints comes in. The time code shows “hours:minutes:seconds.frames” like e.g. 01:28:15.09. “The number of frames per second depends on the standard: 24 frames a second for film, 25 frames a second for PAL or SECAM video and some films, and 30 frames a second for NTSC video” (Ivarsson and Carrol, 141). With the assistance of the time codes, the subtitler can spot the film and then prepare the subtitles. As mentioned earlier, the AV translation for subtitling is “influenced by confined space available for the subtitled text, the time available for and between subtitle exposures, the timing of subtitle insertion and removal and last but not least the display and format of the subtitles apart from the usual problems of language transfer. (Pavel Reich, p.), Additionally, the subtitler has to take into account the average reading speed of the viewers. The appearance of the ‘on screen text’ should neither be too long nor too quick and this is vital because the audience or television viewer is intended to forget that he/she is reading. As the technician who is to video-mix the screen text with that of the movie/documentary will simply carry out the frame-wise subtitle supplied by the translator he has no one else to come to his rescue. The entire blame will also go to the subtitle translator, if something goes wrong. This means the dialogue can rarely be translated without being shortened. The crux of the art of subtitling, hence, lies in this process of condensation. It involves simultaneous working out of the linguistic and supralinguistic issues like the breaks falling at natural points, and the beginning and end of the subtitle synchronizing with the beginning and end of the speech in the film. Only a chunk of the translated TL text, above all, should be there for display for the viewer’s rapid grasping. The subtitler, when compared to the dubbing translator, works very much in the written mode. But, a dubber’s translation is a base background material on which the voice artist, who has got nothing to with the translation aspect of the translated script in hand, can even improve upon with his voice-acting of what is suggested there in the written script. Ofcourse, the constraint of faithfully adhering to the original is there. Another, constraint of subtitler is attention shifting of the viewer between the visual scene of the film and the reading of the on-screen text. So, the subtitler’s translation is received with a degree of formality and stiffness. This shift enables as well as strains the viewer. This can be better understood if the ease of the reading of the title(s) of the film shown before the start of the story is compared with that of our reading of the subtitles after the start of the story. The Indian Tamil-dubbed science documentaries have increased the career opportunities of the translators since the tamil-dubbed documentaries are, of late, supplied with English subtitles also simultaneously on the screen, ensuring subtitling and dubbing are offered to be carried out for a single AV product. But, from the Channel’s point of view, it is being offered now as a solace to those who felt that they miss now the tone, cadence and rhythm of the SL audio namely English which helped them improve their own knowledge of L2, English. Thereby, an ‘intralingual subtitle translator’ could easily be caught if he distorts or

fails the original, as the audience hears the original dialogue, understands it completely, partially or not at all and however sees the translation, simultaneously with the images to check for himself easily and quickly.

Dubbing

Dubbing, as stated earlier, is oral translation of dialogues or narration in one language into another language. Mona Baker and Brano Hochel term it as “one of a number of translation methods which make use of the acoustic channels in [AV] translation” (“Dubbing”, 74). The traditional SL Text is replaced by an acoustic text. It attempts to replace the original acoustic soundtrack while retaining the original phrasing and timing as closely as possible. However, Dubbing can take place at various levels, of course. Dialogue can be dubbed in the same language, as the same dialogue will have to be recorded / dubbed in the studio again, if the film location in which it was made was too noisy. It can also happen that the actor is not good with the language and cannot deliver the lines properly. Then an actor can make use of a dubbing artiste to render the lines, otherwise popularly called playback. The dubbing artist, however, has to be a good actor also, at least in his/her voice, if he/she has to reproduce the drama of the original of the SL. She/he interprets/translates the emotional content of the film in his/her own terms, but being faithful to the original audio. He/she shall be a transcreator too, in this sense. Dubbing is a specific technique of translation which is, in the words of Nida (1964: 178) 'difficult and complicated.' It is the replacement of one language with another in live sound, the voice-actors and actresses record a translation of the dialogue on a new soundtrack. The translation is styled and pronounced in such a way that the oral movements as perceived on the screen coincide as closely as possible with the movements made by the dubbing actor's lips. Besides this synchrony of the lips there is also the synchrony with facial expressions and gestures to consider. The strict observation of synchrony as the overruling requirement automatically implies a translation which is less than faithful to the original. To obtain what is known as a 'synch' or perfect synchronisation; formal adaptations without destroying the meaningful content are sometimes resorted to for the sake of a very close parallelism of lip movements and the timing of stressed syllable etc. There arises problem of unnatural utterances likely to be produced, which has become the laughing stock very many mimicry artists on stage. In Tamil dubbing we have come across odd and amusing sentences in our dubbed programmes like

நீங்க ஏன் ஒரு கப் காபி சாப்பிடக்கூடாது? (for *Why don't you have a cup of coffee?*)

எது உங்கள் இங்க வரவெச்சதுன்னு நான் தெரிஞ்சுக்கலாமா? (for *May I know what brought you here ?*)

Hence, it should be borne in mind that AV translation must take the whole language speaking context in to account than the 'script' on the page. And this is the major difference between book-based translation and AVT. It is thus apparent that the dubber is faced with a collection of seemingly impossible tasks. Characteristic differences in word order in different languages have to be taken into account as in any translation, despite looking for the spoken version of it and its possible version in the specific AV context before one's eyes now. Some languages are also more concise than others, for example, Chinese. The dubbing writer is also faced with other problems such as whether to retain the foreign flavour of the original with the actors' affecting accent and whether to use equivalent expressions altogether or to create the illusion that the script was originally in the dubbed language. Discovery's programme titles are an interesting case in point here. The programme titles like “Destroyed in Seconds,” “Man Vs Wild,” “incredible India,” “Science of Stupid” etc are retained as such in tamil-dubbed versions too. Whether they are spared since they are ‘un-translatable’ or ‘need not be translated’ is a question worth probing from translatory and supratranslatory angles. In the tamil dubbing of science documentaries like “Mega Structures,” many civil engineering/architecture domain words are just transliterated as such (like centrifugal pressure, wind-velocity, draughtsmen, drawing table etc.) to sound natural like Tamilians of these domains.

Anyway, that dubbing is difficult and costly cannot be denied due to the man power and studio processes it requires. Many writers and translators share this view. Ian Finlay in *Translating* (82) says it is a 'far more challenging, difficult and expensive method' than subtitling. However, Caille (1960) remarks that dubbing 'apart from being absolutely necessary is also one of the most exciting and, if properly done, most rewarding forms of translation, comparable with the translation of poetry.' University of Leeds, UK is offering MA degree in AVT Studies.

Dubbing Process Upto The End-Product

The original voice-over/re-voicing script shall have to be translated into a regional language and so you need to first translate the content and write a 'visual script' of the same as in subtitling, i.e., a script tied to the scene(s). And, as the script is tied to the scene-numbers running in the program, the translator shall bear in mind that the dubbing artist simply has to pick up those lines and enact like a good narrator while looking into the video. While a deer is hunted by a tiger or when a buffalo is caught by a crocodile, you really have to 'enact' the emotion in your narration as it was done in the original, if it had been so. Documentaries are visual story telling. From an artistic perspective, the narration should 'amplify' the effect of watching a visual. Hence, a dubbing translator shall indeed be given the AV version of the SL to comprehensively internalise the audio-visual context of the scenes. One can hardly imagine a particular AV context of a scene (of the SL product), just with

written script the translator is supplied with. Though the visual is the crux of a documentary, it is actually the narration that makes a person sit down and listen to the ongoing story. After all, communication researches has found out that only 7% of message pertaining to feelings and attitudes is in the words that are spoken in face-to-face conversations (AV contexts) Mehrabian 1967 (1) & 1967 (2). Hence, You need to first translate the content and write an effective visual script tied to the scene doing justice to the original by all possible means, bearing in mind it is a face-to-face AV communication meant to be viewed. This textual content on paper shall be taken up by the voice artist with the same attitude and simply he/she becomes a good story teller with a good as well as an appropriate voice!! In dubbing even three or four voice artists may do the playback simultaneously if the scene demands. The translator may oversee as the poet Vairamuthu who writes lyrics for Tamil movies oversees the playback singer SP Balasubramaniam to check for the perfection of the expression the writer intended to be in the end product.

Later, this track is added to the original video timeline, replacing the previous voice track by technicians. If the video came as a final render, then the soundtrack artist may have to do a bit of sound-engineering, to retain the original music tracks and ambient sounds and inserting your new dubbed tracks. So time required for obtaining the end dubbed product would depend on the complexity of the processes involved from stage one. All those documentaries, interviews and information videos that we see on our TV channels in India are dubbed 'real' easily in local studios nowadays. Only the audio translators are across the country or even the globe. But studios normally prefer in-country translators for various reasons. Only then seemingly minor but major discursive etiquette mistakes of a language like the one in Cadbury's advertisements (which has been a translated version across all Indian languages) would be avoided : “ஸ்வீட் எடு, கொண்டாடு” - which could have been courteously added, indeed, a Tamil case ending typical and courteous as “ஸ்வீட் எடுங்க , கொண்டாடுங்க.”

Most of the channels like Star, HBO, National Geographic group, BBC have active operations in India, and so offices in India. The verbal/translation part of the product is outsourced to some studios in the regional-language-locality in order to be done by that studio, hiring either an in-country translator or contacting someone living abroad but is good at this work, to make it cheaper, technically skilled, as well as authenticity and acceptability verified by the native speaker of the TL. Then it is checked by the studio as well as the channel for correction and improvement. Then the extra-translational process is carried out as mentioned above to make it ready. Nowadays, channels out-source the entire dubbing projects to local trusted studios. The Studios, consequently seek English Teachers and students who are good at Tamil & English as well as translation techniques.

Dubbing Vs Subtitling

Subtitling is comparatively flexible for a translator, as in subtitling some portions of the audio can be omitted when fragments of the dialogue are either superfluous or incomprehensible, whereas dubbing would still be required to avoid making it a dumb show. In fact, chunks of dialogues are frequently left out in our local television programme subtitles. Films or parts of films which are action-packed usually carry no subtitles because they are superfluous, and comprehensible on its own. The audience is still able to follow the story/film as evidenced by many a Chinese youngster enjoying the Hindi/Tamil films shown on the television screen in China either by the private television network HBO or Star Movies. The awkwardness or sometimes downright comical effect of listening to Spiderman in Hindi referring to his aunt Ms. May as 'mausi' does not deter the avid movie watcher in India nowadays. However, the dubber would be perplexed whether to translate into Tamil or not Chris Tucker's reading of a girl's love letter to Jackie Chan in a Hollywood movie like *Rush Hour*. But, in fact, the Tamil dubbed audio of *Rush Hour* was extensively and unimaginably indigenized in Tamil due to its abounding hilarious situations and genial comedy, and the audience rocked the cinemas with their outbursts of laughter which was due to its deliberately odd & amusing translation too.

Translation Issues - General

Due to the mix of different communication systems such as images, sound (music, noise) and the verbal component (oral production, written text), the translation of audiovisual material is characterised by particular limitations. Every AVT subtype has its own set of issues, and countries differ in their choices of the sub-types. It is done on the basis of national policy, language outlook, and also purpose of import of the product, for example the case of import of cartoon animation for children that are allowed dubbing as in Arabic countries. Luyken divides European countries into several groups according to their attitude towards translating audiovisual production. There are 1) dubbing countries, 2) subtitling countries 3) countries using both subtitling and dubbing, and 4) countries using other types of audiovisual translation (31 – 39). The 'why' and 'for whom' of translation determine the 'how' of any translation, and however some basic AVT concepts may be given due attention to avoid annoying the AVT viewers. Adapting cultural references, jokes and nuances to produce the desired effect—whether you want to make the audience laugh or cry—is extremely difficult, especially

considering the specific constraints of subtitling and dubbing. But this can be overcome by appropriate exposure and training. The golden rule of translation is to work only in your mother tongue. Only in that language does someone possess the latent, intuitive grammar skills, idiomatic knowledge and eloquence to write a natural-sounding text; similarly, a translator should be able to fully grasp all the cultural references and nuances in the original-language script—including any slang or regional accents and expressions. They must be familiar with the original country's (SL's) history, cultures, values and way of life in order to catch subtleties, jokes, allusions and abbreviations, and to accurately assess tone and register.

Though the subtitler translates by spotting, condensing, translating and composing the subtitle as per time and space constraints just with the SL text assuming the AV version of the task in hand, he could be more natural if he/she is provided access to the AV version of the work to refer and for the successful comprehension of the specific scenes. Similarly, dubbers shall also be supplied with the same, as a dubber shall translate even mono syllabic approvals like “mm..” and exclamatory sounds & words, without any condensing, if necessary. Such discourse markers, linguistically, are multifunctional (according to Michailinienè (2007) and they contribute to the coherence of the utterance, transitions, gap filling like in the cases of uncertainty, expressing surprise, (dis)approval, etc.) and they are high density elements in the audiovisual text. But, unfortunately enough, the Studios give only the written script of the video to both the subtitler and the dubber, due to secrecy, safety and copyright reasons of the video. It is looked more upon a commercial enterprise like textile products outsourcing, or else as if they were dealing with an inanimate object. Another pitfall of AV translator is that the translated AV product is freely modified or adapted by many before finalizing, and the translator cannot claim any right over that like a translator of literary works. In fact, they are treated like BPO employees, and not given any recognition for all their hard work. There are some special features that make them different from the translation of a written text. AVTs are short-lived and only the only the auditory component of the SL is changed, and above all it has to co-exist with the paraphernalia of the original. Whereas the translated literary work, once translated in a TL start surviving on its own. Sometimes it surpasses in fame and sale even the original. But times will alter the present and due dignity and income will be reaped by AVT people too in future. However, translations theorists of late have been promising that inclusive of Luyken comes to the conclusion that subtitling and dubbing certainly are forms of translation, and this reassures a hopeful future for AVT (Zohar (in Weissbrod 2004: 24), Gambier (1992: 308), Luyken (1991: 114). To make a career out of Tamil translation you really have to study both languages very hard, as Mr. Gnanasekaran says in the , “Nothing can substitute a firm grounding in the fundamentals of both English and Tamil grammar and vocabulary, that too contrastively.” While it is important to be in close adherence with the original in AV, it should not be at the cost of putting off the reader, lacking the necessary discursive knowledge of spoken form of a language. AVT is predominantly in spoken form than in the ornate literary language. “This is why AVT also requires a creative mind as more often than not a good amount of transcreation (recreating text) is demanded.”

Translation Issues – Linguistic

Regarding the translation of spoken sentences of English into Tamil, it shall be borne in mind that Languages differ in the way they organise information in these entities and all of these interact in the organisation of information. The grammar of the language shall also be looked at afresh from the contrastive linguistic and discursive (spoken vs written) point of view, to effect a natural, uninhibiting translation. A lot of resources are available on the net to tap for contrastive linguistic inputs for an AV translator. Applied Linguistics books like “A Reference Grammar of Spoken Tamil” by Harold Schiffman are of great help than mere dictionaries and thesauruses. Basically, different languages encode information in different ways. Tamil encodes information in morphemes, while English encodes information in positions. While English follows the sentence order SVO & SVOCA, Tamil follows SOV in normal circumstances, and C & A are not final but initial and even freely placed. But in English, positions are rather fixed. The Tamil active-passive sentences are also managed in the same order with case morphemes without adding any functional words, and without altering the positions of words. For example, The Active English sentence “Wild dogs kill hyenas” and “Hyenas are killed by wild dogs” can be translated into Tamil in the same SOV sentence order by appropriately adding accusative case morphemes as “*kattunaaikal kazhuthaippuligal/ai/k kolkindrana*” “*Kazhuthaippulikal/ai/k kattunaaikal kolkindrana*.” Similarly the basic difference in Tamil and English verb form-compositions shall also be taken into account by a AV translator of Tamil. English verbs are a composition of action+tense whereas Tamil's is of action+tense+gender+number. Hence, an English sentence “Give it to him” may be translated as “(*athai*) *avar kitta kudunga*,” and the sentence “He went away” can as simply be as stated in spoken discourse as “*poittaru*” with just the Tamil verb equivalent of the sentence. “Another crucial thing in Tamil translation of speech shall be its spoken discourse transformations. Unlike the limited weak form transformations of English, Tamil drastically changes in the spoken mode, possibly because Tamil had been of oral tradition for long. Hence, the above sentence gets further shortened in face-to-conversation into “*avartta kudunga*.” Comparatively it is a large scale elision in Tamil. Similarly, popular spoken lexis shall be preferred to

dictionary equivalents; for example, the translation of “**The lungs of the Jarawas (tribes) are stronger than mine, though they’ve been extensively smoking**” need not be as odd as follows:

“*periya alvirkku* (extensively) *pukai pidichukittae irunthaalum, intha jaravakkaludaya suvaasappaikal* (lungs) *ennodayathai vida valimayaanavaiyaaka* (strong) *irukku.*”,

and instead it could further simply be spoken as

“*pukai niraya pidichaalum, intha jaravakkaloda nurayeeral*(lungs) *ennodatha vida valuvaa*(strong)*irukku!*.”

(*புகை நெறைய பிடிச்சாலும், இந்த ஜராவாக் களுடைய நுரையீரல் என்னோடது விட வலுவா இருக்கு*)

At the phonological level too spoken Tamil adopts extensive changes and substitution by elision:

English	LT - Tamil	Transliteration	ST - Tamil	Transliteration
place	இடம்	<i>idam</i>	எடம்	<i>edam</i>
body leaf	உடம்பு இலை	<i>udambu ilai</i>	ஒடம்பு எலை	<i>Odambu ele</i>
child	குழந்தை	<i>kuzhanthai</i>	கொழந்தை	<i>kozhanthe</i>
think	நினை	<i>ninai</i>	நெனை	<i>nene</i>

Harold Schiffman postulates that this grammar assumes that there exists a variety of spoken Tamil that is ‘standard’ alongside the long-since standardized LT variety (LT). He further says that it is a variety being used in the Tamil social film, and on the radio and television, in situation comedies. He also puts forth that “Since ST is the form that all educated speakers know, it can be a repository from which general forms can be chosen; ...” to avoid class, communal, regional social identities, and to sound comprehensible to the largest number of speakers. Only then one may avoid unnatural, awkward and amusing AV Tamil translations. Such an Applied-linguistic exposure of a motivated learner will help her/him learn some interesting intricacies of one’s own language and also awaken one’s own latent knowledge of the same, and consequently make her/him confident in taking ventures like AVT. One may also refer online modern Tamil teaching organizations like www.ileartamil.com. However, to avoid learning more ‘about the Tamil’ of AVT than the ‘Tamil of AVT’, one may look for AVT training institutes. National geographic channels themselves are a good source of learning the Dos and Don’ts in Tamil AVT practically, treating the programmes as case studies. One of its channels ‘Discovery Channel Tamil’ is “the first dedicated channel in a local language in India. The quality of dubbing and the effort which is put in is of world class. Discovery Channel Tamil has critical reputation on the quality of dubbing and the language is loved by every Tamil household. They simply do not use English for technical terms, I have always seen the technical jargons were understandably simplified and translated into Tamil and the common and inevitable terms are rendered just through transliteration” says Sathiya Kesavan of Excelacom Technologies.

Kesavan further remarks regarding the market assessment of this channel for their Tamil AVT as follows: “Rajiv Bakshi, Vice-president – Marketing, South Asia, Discovery Networks, says: “Tamil was chosen after our study made it clear that television penetration in the State is very deep and Tamilians strongly identify with their language. In addition, the advertising outlook is extremely positive. The channel — available on analogue and digital platforms — targets Tamilians across the country.” Regarding the quality assurance and their training of the Tamil AVT professionals, Kesavn further says that “The most popular shows on Discovery Channel will be dubbed into Tamil, and Bakshi speaks of **three layers of quality checks — involving studios in Mumbai, Delhi and Singapore** — before the dubbed programmes go on air. The team has already been put through special drills over three months.” It is interesting to note that not all Hollywood movies are dubbed — only those that have the elements of being crowd pullers have Hindi or Tamil versions. One shall also understand that Movies like *Titanic*, *Spiderman* or *Jurassic Park* were known for their special effects rather than subtlety of characterization or dialogues. It is also noteworthy that movies get dubbed only into languages that can boast of a significantly huge viewership, like Hindi or Tamil and not Malayalam or Assamese. For a motivated Tamil translator of AVT, this is a positive and promising news to either pursue academically or plunge in for a business/career in AVT industry.

The Career Potential:

As far as the career opportunities for the language teachers and students alike, given to translation, is prospective and promising. There are numerous career opportunities emerging in India for those skilled in Tamil translation. *Empowerlingua*, a ‘translation service’ organization states in its blog that “The continuing popularity of Tamil translations, [both literary and AVT] may result in many new career opportunities for language students in India and Sri Lanka. Lecturers at postgraduate centres like the Kanchi Mamunivar Centre for Postgraduate Studies believe that Tamil translation of short stories is a good way for students to get started with literary translation.” It also mentions that “But to make a career out of Tamil translation you really have to

study both languages very hard, as Mr. Gnanasekaran says, “Nothing can substitute a firm grounding in the fundamentals of both English and Tamil grammar and vocabulary.”

A Delhi-based studio that has advertised for undertaking Tamil AVT job-work has listed out 40 types of AVT sub-types inclusive of Tamil Voice Over Service, Tamil Voice Over recording, Voice Over production in Tamil, Tamil Voice Over Artist, Tamil Voice Artist, Tamil Voice Acting Voice Over, Tamil Video Game Voice Over, TV Program Voice Over in Tamil, Tamil TV commercial Voice Over, Tamil Radio jingle Recording etc. (<http://www.voicerecordingstudio.in/tamil-voice-over-service/>Tamil Voice Over). The field is evolving, dynamic, expanding, and profit and popularity is most likely for the skilled. Necessary AVT training is also offered online by these studios. Foreign-language adaptation opens the door to opportunities like assignments for international film festivals, multilingual DVD and VOD markets and the international distribution of popular TV series. And that's just the tip of the iceberg in terms of market potential.

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