The Importance of the Knowledge on Dialects for a Translator

*Kaumadee Bamunusinghe[a], Sepali Bamunusinghe [b]

[a]Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya

[b]Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Sri Jayewardenepura

*kaumadeebamunusinghe@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Translation is mostly referred to as the act of transforming the data of a source language in to a target language. In this process, the translator's knowledge on these two languages is of great significance since a minor change has the capacity to change the intended meaning of the original text. Furthermore it is important for a translation regardless of its category; science, technical, literary, legal or interpretation. In some instances literary translations may depict dialectal forms based on the context. Dialects are considered as an inseparable unit of a society which signifies slight differences of a language that can be noticed either regionally or socially. Though dialects create a trivial confusion in the speaker's or listener's mind it will not affect the meaning completely as dialects are always based on a language which the community uses already. A translator should be a keen observer of the dialects of the target and source languages as dialectal differences may create confusion in the meaning which the translator has wanted imply. Dialects are of two types and they are considered as regional and social dialects. A linguist can identify dialects in the branch of socio-linguistics and it is important for a translator to be aware of the difference which it can cause to a word. This article discusses the Sinhalese dialects which are prevailing in Sri Lanka and the importance of the knowledge on these dialects for a translator. On the other hand it will discuss the solutions for the problems which occur due to dialectal difference in meaning and the role of a translator who should be keen enough to search and study the dialects of the languages she/he is using.

Keywords: Problems, Regional Dialects, Social dialects, Solutions, Translator

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