

## Guidelines for Translating for Thulika.net.

The basic philosophy of this site is to introduce the Telugu culture, customs, traditions, and lifestyles of Telugu people to non-Telugu readers.

### Target audience:

Primarily, it is intended for American audience. Telugu people also are reading these stories, mostly, because of their English background. This is especially true of the youth who attended English-medium schools. Regardless, readers of other cultures are the primary audience.

My basic premise is people read translations:

1. To learn about the intellectual perceptions of Telugu people; and,
  2. to find the similarities and peculiarities between the two cultures.
- They include everyday lifestyles, people's desires, aspirations, and problems, and the manner in which they are dealt with.

### Selection:

\* Stories should reflect our culture, age-old traditions, customs, our intrinsic values, and lifestyles, which are specific to the Telugu people.

\* **Please, note that all great stories are not translatable. Also, a highly praised, award winning story may not be suitable for the specific purpose of this site.**

\* In that sense, stories depicting Westernized lifestyles, situations, and environment are not acceptable.

### Native flavor:

Do not strain yourself to bring in the native flavor. Do not resort to word-for-word translation in the name of native flavor. It will not work.

It is important to make sure that the translation makes an enjoyable reading.

### Phrases and idioms:

Translation of phrases and idioms should be able to capture the reader's imagination, and convey also the cultural nuance.

Before using English equivalents, I would try to see if I can translate the Telugu phrases in order to highlight the Telugu nuance. If it works, I will give further explanation in a footnote.

Telugu phrases may be classified into three categories:

1. Phrases that lend themselves to straight translation: e.g. పుస్తకప్పురుగు -

bookworm; చెవిని వేసుకోడు - turns a deaf ear. మన్ను తిన్న పాములా can be translated as a "like a snake that just snacked on dirt". It is a close enough translation, but further explanation in a footnote is necessary.

Another important alert. Some of the older stories have idioms, which are unknown now. Malladi Ramakrishna Sastry's story సోహం has a phrase, మంచి చేసుకు వచ్చు, which I had a hard time understanding. It turned out to be "making food

arrangements with a పూటకూళ్లమ్మ. I mean, don't take all the words as they appear to be, especially in the stories written by scholars.

2. Phrases and idioms that require some effort. Mostly, it depends on the context. e.g. బిస్కట్లకోసం పిల్ల ఏడుస్తుంటే, తండ్రి ఒక్కటిస్తే సరి అన్నాడు. The idiom ఒక్కటిచ్చు may mean either "give her one piece" or "smack her".

### **Phrases, which require some effort to make them comprehensible in translation**

Some phrases may not be translatable, while others leave some room for you to be creative.

I translated కొండవీటి చేంతాడు as *Kondaveeti* rope. It is unique. The word "rope" helps the reader to understand a part of the phrase. Additionally, the name కొండవీడు is different from the oblique form, కొండవీటి. If I were to leave the entire phrase as *Kondaveeti chaantaadu*, the reader is sure to miss the entire connotation. Significance of *Kondaveeti chenthadu* was explained in a footnote.

### **Untranslatable Phrases**

Culture-specific phrases and idioms are even harder to translate.

Let us take a culture-specific phrase like లొపలేసుకొను. No matter how we translate it, it would be impossible for a foreign reader to visualize the actual scene or comprehend the underlying socio-religious connotation. My translation would be, "She stroked her cheeks gently and reverentially." The phrase లొపకాయ ఇచ్చు involves two people and anger. On the other hand, లొపలేసుకొను happens in the context of expressing deference or remorse.

### **Nouns, Pronouns, and Proper nouns.**

Nouns like జుకాలు and కంటి should be italicized the first time the word occurs in a story, and continue with normal font in the rest of the story.

Pronouns like వాడు, అతను, ఆయన, అది, ఆవిడ, ఆమె--all translate into just two pronouns he and she. Sometimes it complicates the story. For instance, ఆయన అతన్ని పిలుచుకురమ్మని వాడితో చెప్పేరు translates into "he told him to bring him". Translator needs to make sure that the sentence in English makes sense. One way is to insert names or relational terminology, depending on the storyline.

Proper nouns can be classified into two groups: Given names and relational terminology. Normally, given names are not a problem. However, long given names could be tiresome for non-native speakers, especially, if the two names start with similar syllables.

Example: శ్రీమన్నారాయణ and శ్రీనివాసరావు, or సీతారాముడు and శ్రీరాములు could be confusing for those, who are not familiar with such names. Possibly, the readers may go by the first few syllables, as a kind of tip, they would create for themselves. Translators may want to provide a shorter version of the name, with author's permission.

Relational terminology can be troublesome in some cases such as అత్త, వదిన, బావ, పినమనమామ.

My practice is to use them as is, and provide an explanation in a footnote.

Further,

\* First letter of the name should be capitalized;

\* The word should be italicized the first time it occurs in the story. After that, regular font should be used.

\* When using professional terms such as జడ్జీగారు, డాక్టరుగారు, use them as proper nouns, and spell them as pronounced. e.g. Jadjee garu, Dactaru garu.

### **Non-finite verbs:**

Long-winding sentences with non-finite verbs may be broken into several sentences; or, as a string of short sentences, using past tense, depending on the tense in which the story is being told.

కాఫీ తాగి, బజారుకెళ్లి బట్టలు కొనుక్కుని, సినిమా చూసి, రాత్రి పదిగంటలకి వచ్చేడు may be translated as "He had coffee, went to the store, bought clothes, saw a movie and returned home at 10 o'clock at night."

### **Tense:**

Start with one point of reference, and proceed with the narration, going back and forth from that point. Switching tense in Telugu stories is somewhat erratic. In English, consistency is a requirement.

Here are some ways to handle it. Assuming the story is being told in the past tense, prior incidents can be narrated by

1. Changing to past perfect;
2. Changing fonts to italics, if one or two sentences;
4. Indenting (this, however, could be a problem for me in uploading); Or,
3. providing alerts. e.g. "he recalled/remembered" at the beginning of the incident, and "he returned to present" at the end of the incident.

### **Nuance or dhwani**

This is where the peculiarities of our language and author's style are highlighted. On one hand, words like మడి, అంటు, బారెడు వొడ్డు, పేదరాసి పెద్దమ్మ, దిప్తి తీసేయడం, నోది are not easy to translate. Currently, some equivalents are in use, although I am not sure, to what extent, they are known around the world. Whatever words you use, make sure, they are explained in footnotes.

### **Proverbs**

Proverbs are fun to translate. Some are easy to translate.

e.g. కొరివితో తల గోక్కున్నట్టు.

Like one scratching one's head with a burning torch.

Some are hard.

అడుగులకు మడుగులొత్తడం carries a deeper cultural nuance. I had to ask around to find that మడుగులు is మడతలు. The proverb refers to spreading sheets for guest of honor to walk on, similar to red carpet treatment. Obviously, this needs a footnote.

### **Humor**

Just remember what is funny for us may not be funny may not be acceptable in other cultures. A classic example is the teasing between husband and wife. Actually, teasing between two people in the presence of strangers, as in parties, may not go well. A lot of footnotes may not help either.

Last but not least, check grammar online. There are websites that are helpful. And look up the words in the thesaurus for words that serve the intended meaning precisely.

In the final analysis, it is all about conveying the author's perceptions to the target audience in a manner that appeals to them. Of course, we do not know who will read, but, for the purpose of publishing on this site, I will consider Americans as our audience.

Hope this helps. All the best,

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