CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. GENERAL

Etymologically, “translation” means “carrying across” or “bringing across”. The Latin term “translation” is derived from the perfect passive participle, “translation” of “transferee” “to transfer”-from “trans”, “across” + ferret”, “to carry” or “to bring”.

To translate a text is to “encode” and “decode” equivalents between the two languages, using a translation dictionary as the “codebook”.

The common misconception is that anyone who can speak a second language will be a good translator. It is generally accepted that the best translations are produced by persons who are translating any work into their own native languages ‘since it is rare for someone who has learned a second language to have total fluency in that language. ‘A good translator understands the source language well, and has specific experience in the subject matter of the text, and is a good writer in the target language. He is not only bilingual but bicultural.

Literary translators, such as Gregory Rabassa in his “If This Be Treason”, argue that translation is an art, a teachable one. The best translations are obtained through the combined application of good technical – terminology skills and writing skills.

Dryden observed that “Translation is a type of drawing afterlife...” If translation be an art, it is no easy one. In the 13th Century, Roger Bacon writer that ‘if a translation is to be true, the translator must know both the languages. Translation is re-writing of the original without doing violence to the latter. It is both necessary and useful in bringing different literatures of the world together despite linguistic and cultural differences. Translation is subjected not only to two
semiotic systems i.e source and target languages but to two different cultures. Translators not only say what the author says, in another languages i.e., target languages (but they also say what the original means.) In other words, translators re-create the original in the target languages. It in this sense that translation of literary texts assumes importance.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present researcher has determined to plunge into the task of translating Tamil text into English and thereby she tried to establish the theoretical stand available in her translation process. Sirpi Balasubramaniam and Sujatha writers. The former is a seasoned poetry whose modern Tamil poetries are most acclaim able and the later is a versatile prolific writer in Tamil. Poetry and prose are two genres while translating these two genres into English, one can experience different types of problems. That is the rationale, why the present research has taken this subject for exploration.

1.3. AIM OF THE STUDY

To familiarize meritorious prose and poetry of classical Tamil to the global readers in the international language English by translating Tamil Text i.e Prose and Poetry into English. This study also provides a scope for making a comparative study of English rendering of Tamil Poetry and Prose with the original ones.

1.4. OBJECTIVES

This study has the following objectives:

1. To translate modern Tamil prose written by Sujatha and Tamil poetry written by Sirpi into English and to unearth the practical problems of translating them.
2. To establish translation theories existing in the field of translation in practical translation and understand the suitability of theories in translating Tamil texts into English with empirical evidences.

3. To compare the problems of prose and poetry translation experienced by this scholar and

4. To suggest corrective measures to solve the problems experienced in translating from Tamil to English both in prose and poetry.

1.5. DR. SIRPI BALASUBRAMANIAM

The researcher feels gifted to translate the poems by Dr. Sirpi Balasubramaniam (i.e) Sirpi into English, spurred by his genuine encouragement, the researcher has translated a sizeable chunk of Tamil New poetry into English. Sirpi is a well known poet in Tamil Literature. His reputation as a poet is not merely based on the many awards which he earned. The quality and range of his poetic creativity, his significant contribution to the genre of Tamil New poetry, spanning modern Tamil Literature, while being deeply rooted in the rich and ancient Tamil, combine in himself depth of scholarship with creative sensibility these attributes account for his position in the modern Tamil literary field.

As a translator, the researcher finds that the ‘readerly text’ is more important than the ‘writerly text’. The translator has read and internalized the poem which he has determined to translate. But the translator is always conscious of the loyalty to the original. The translator can never fancy himself / herself as a parallel creator competing with the original author. In the Poetic work of Sirpi he scales the peak of his creative outpouring in his award winning collection ‘Oru Gramaththu Nathi’ i.e ‘The River of a village’ – revisiting his formative years in his native village.
The ultimate objective of any language is communication. English, as a global language, also enjoys the status of an ‘Associate Official Language’ in India. It interlinks all the twenty eight linguistically divided states and serves as a key for national integration; hence it is recognized as the ‘link-language’. English is no longer viewed as a western or foreign language. As a link language tongue, English springs many accents and dialects in the works of the Indian writers.

Indian writings in English play a vital role in transmitting the cultural and social aspects to the global level. R.K. Narayan, for example, is the first modern Indian writer in English to make a full-time career out of it. His international standing is expressed in the fact that his works can be read in most of the world’s major languages. Translations of regional languages into English serve a similar purpose.

From a long past, we have come across numerous translations, mostly from English into the regional languages and very few translators do vice-versa. This dissertation is one such work, with an objective of familiarizing the unique stylistic and thematic aspects of Sujatha alias R.K. Rangarajan not only to the Indian readers but also to the global reading public. The global language English is best suited for this purpose.

1.6. SUJATHA ALIAS R.K. RANGARAJAN

Sujatha alias R.K. Rangarajan is a renowned writer, scientist, playwright and critic of South India. He has the skill of portraying the intricacies present in the everyday life of the typical South-Indian setting, especially in Tamilnadu. The present study undertakes a challenging task of translating four select short stories of Sujatha into English.

Sujatha, being a multi-faceted personality, has been writing for the past forty five years on almost all kinds of themes varying from science fiction to psychological thrillers. These four short stories ‘The Dark Horse,’ ‘The Adult
World,’ ‘Lie,’ and ‘I am Malliga’s son’ appeared in his collection ‘The Dark Horse’.

These four select short stories have many aspects in common. All the four stories end on an unexpected twist. In ‘The Dark Horse’ the narrator, being an honest umpire, expects that he has saved the gambler $ 50000 by refusing his bribe, but the gambler shocks the narrator as well as the readers saying that he had to bribe the batsman himself with $ 100000. In ‘The Adult World’ too, the central character, Manickam expects a shock from the Headmaster when he reveals the illicit affair and treachery of headmaster’s wife, but he himself gets shocked when the headmaster tells him that he is very much aware of that. The same things happens in the story ‘Lie,’ when the manager finally resigns his job confessing that himself he is a homosexual. In the story ‘I am Malliga’s son,’ the narrator kills his father to avenge his mother’s death but he is surprised to know that his father has bequeathed all his wealth to him.

The characterization is very natural in all these stories, as all of them are chosen from the rustic life. All the stories have realistic themes as they deal with social crimes such as gambling, treachery, homosexuality and debauchery. All the central characters face a critical situation in which they face a dilemma in a decision making as that of Hamlet. [Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, is visited by the ghost of his father and told that his uncle Claudius, who is now King, was responsible for his murder. Hamlet is torn about trying to avenge him, and ends up pretending to be insane. He hires actors to do a play about a man who kills his brother to become king to see Claudius' reaction. Hamlet confirms that Claudius is responsible, ends up being abusive to his mother Gertrude for shacking up with the murderer of his father, and murders his girlfriend Ophelia's dad thinking that it's Claudius. Ophelia goes insane from having her boyfriend kill her dad and dies. Her brother Laertes is pissed and is convinced by Claudius to kill Hamlet. The two duel, and both are fatally injured. Gertrude accidentally drinks the poison that
Claudius has prepared for Hamlet and dies. Hamlet manages to kill Claudius before finally dying. In ‘The Dark Horse,’ the umpire faces a dilemma whether to accept the bribe or not. In ‘The Adult World,’ the students Manickam also faces a dilemma whether to reveal the illicit affair of the headmaster’s wife to him or not. In ‘Lie,’ the manager is placed in a critical situation to resign his job as he has no other choice.

Fate also plays a very vital role in all the stories resulting in a change in the course of action. In ‘The Dark Horse,’ the central character Swami is shown as a cricket player in the beginning but an accident makes him an umpire. In ‘The Adult World,’ fate makes Manickam go to the headmaster’s home where he comes to know about the illicit affair of his wife. In the story ‘Lie,’ fate makes the manager to develop a clash with sincere worker in the office regarding a trivial issue of wearing uniforms. In the story ‘I am Malliga’s son,’ fate delays the arrival of the letter which announces the narrator to be the legal heir of his father’s entire wealth after his murder. In all the four stories there is enough scope for the readers to imagine the actions that may follow the climax. The common aspects discussed above have motivated the translator to choose these four stories for translation.

1.7. RESEARCH METHOD

The present research adopts descriptive methodology. It understands the practical problems while translating Tamil text into English. It is a known fact that the language of prose is different from that of poetry. The present scholar with her rich wealth of experience in Tamil and English tries to produce English rendering of those text with but adding extra colour and without deleting their original colour and understands the theoretical aspects of those translation process.

1.8. DATA COLLECTION

For interpretation and correlating with the theories, the researcher has elicited data in terms of the problems. She experienced during the translation
process. While translating the Tamil text into English, the researcher recorded all the bottle necks and the way in which she solved those issues in order to retain the original content or in order to be faithful to the original text. Those problems and there solutions have been matched with the theoretical understanding.

1.9. LIMITATION

The present work limits itself with only to Sirip Balasubramanian’s modern poetry and Sujatha’s writing, with which the researcher tries to generalize the translation problems while making Tamil to English Translation.

1.10. SCOPE OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study will be a significant one in two perspectives. One is that, the present work presents an English rendering of two Tamil texts viz, prose and poetry. Therefore, it would be a real contribution to the field of literature. Another one is that it analyses the Translated version by applying linguistic principles to unearth the theoretical stand of the translation which the researcher carried out. Thus, the present work is a real contribution to the field of literature as well as to the field of literature research in general and Translation study in particular.

1.11. SCHEME OF PRESENTATION

The present study consists of chapters

1. Introduction
2. Theoretical perspective of Translation
3. Poetic Translation and its problems
4. Prose Translation and its problem
5. Comparative view of Translation problem
6. Conclusion
The introduction chapter talks about the technical knowhow of the present study while the second chapter throws light on the theories of Translation. The third chapter has been devoted to present the poetic translation, and the problems experienced by the researcher with certain corrective mechanism and fourth chapter has been devoted for presenting prose Translation and the problems of translation with corrective measures. The fifth chapter has been devoted for presenting comparative view of both prose and poetic translation and concluding chapter relates the translation issues to the theoretical aspects.

The present research thesis ends with the interview with Sirpi Balasubramaniam. Which is followed by bibliography.