Linguistic and Aesthetic Constraints in Literary Translation: Phonic Considerations in Translating *sabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

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Abstract

By outlining two features of language termed 'lexical drift' and 'linguistic clogging' and employing certain explanatory concepts of classical Indian aesthetics, this study addresses the question of how phonic elements of language constrain or smooth the ways of translation. Linguistic clogging, the study argues, constraints translation of expressions with śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani, SSMD (phonic-based suggestion)[1], in two ways. As a semantic constraint, the presence of SSMD in source expressions impedes translation if unsatisfied with target expressions. Secondly, as an aesthetic constraint, it curtails the aesthetic pleasure for readers even if the semantic constraint is satisfied by paraphrasing the source expressions. This study, analysing verses in English, Sanskrit, and Malayalam languages with SSMD, illustrates that if the constraints are not satisfied in the target expressions, they bring down the quality of translation. Nonetheless, satisfying both these constraints, by recovering the literal and suggested

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[1] *Śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani* (*SSMD*) is a sub-variety of *dhvani* where *a figure of speech* is suggested because of the inherent power of words. The meaning that is different from literal and metaphorical is termed "*dhvani*" (suggested meaning). Around the ninth century CE, Ānandavardhana articulated the philosophy of aesthetic suggestion and systematically theorised the concept of *dhvani* (suggestion) in his magnum opus *Dhvanyāloka* (*Light on the Doctrine of Suggestion*). He argues that the significative power of words is of two types, *vācya* (literal) and *pratīyamāna* (suggestive). *SSMD* is generally translated as "*word-based suggestion*". In this paper, the author has translated *SSMD* as "*phonic-based suggestion*", as sound elements distinguish *SSMD* from other varieties of *dhvani*.

meanings where possible, can improve the quality of translation.

Keywords: Indian Aesthetics, *Śabda-Śakti-Mūla Dhvani* (SSMD), Linguistic Clogging, Lexical Drift, Homonymy.

Introduction

In a world where a misplaced comma can turn one's fortune wheel, translation is a sail close to the wind. Even so, paying attention to the constraints on translation and understanding the parameters of its wind and climatic conditions can smooth the sail and contribute to its aesthetics and workability, and in time to come, improved machine translations. Translation, in general terms, is a rendition of meaning or content of expressions[2] from one language or one (communication) system to another; creative, accurate, and functional in good ones and not so or weakly so in the opposite (Kelly 1979; Malmkjær 2012; Venuti 2004). This study focuses on the human translation of texts and expressions of literary merits, argues that it is constrained by linguistic and aesthetic elements related to *śabda* or sound, and suggests few considerations[3] to smooth the sail.

At one end of the spectrum of human translation, there are source texts in mathematical, logical, or scientific languages whereas, on the other end, the texts are in natural languages having expressions with *suggested meaning*. In some cases, for example, in transposing mathematical or factual information expressed in one language to another, a plain literal translation of expressions may be sufficient. Translation in most of these

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[2] "Expressions" is used in a broad sense here to include sentences or utterances in a language, non-linguistic communicative devices as in communication systems, and language-neutral propositions.

[3] Though confined to human translation, this study has implications for machine and non-human animal translations since *certain* phonic elements are common to all these.

cases could be smooth and plain sailing, for what it needs to preserve in the transition is the form or structure[4] of expressions only. Translation of literary works, on the other end, takes a different path; here, neither literal translation of forms of expressions nor content alone is sufficient. Capturing or *recovering* the network of words along with their meaning in a literary work and *discovering* or rendering them in another language require additional considerations (Ingarden 1973). This study argues that these considerations include phonic elements and shows that the suggestive power of words (*dhvani*) in a literary work creates semantic and aesthetic constraints, if unsatisfied with target expressions can impede translation, and in turn, offers how paying heed to these constraints can aid[5] translation.

Each human language has its own archetypal, characteristic, and distinct structural components, such as semantic, morphologic, syntactic, pragmatic, and phonologic features, that play a significant and often decisive role in contributing to the quality of translation. Linguistic constraints create a few verbal barriers related to these features in finding the balance between *recovering* the essence of a text and *discovering* it along these parameters in another language. A word can have, as the case is with literary expressions, a network of synonyms with specific nuances of meaning along these parameters in a

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[4] Since form or structure guarantees the truth of mathematical expressions, form preservation is the only requirement in the case of translation of these expressions. For example, any translation (#>@, #, therefore @) that preserves the form of the following expression (p>q, p, therefore q) would be truth-preserving as well, and so would count as a good translation of the given expression. For an account of how these non-content-specific expressions are computed in classical AI and how content-specific expressions are computed in human cognitive systems and contemporary AI models, see Shea (2021).

[5] Detailed exposition and illustration of this is a topic of another paper in progress.

source language. Nevertheless, the lack of words with similar features in the target language to reveal those nuances and surface features make translation high and dry. Keats' (1820) famous line "Thou still unravished bride of quietness" from the poem "Ode on a Grecian urn" in the English language is taken as an example to illustrate this. The word "still" in the above line is polysemic; as an adjective, it means "motionless" and as an adverb, it means "yet" or "even now" implying to stand the test of time. A paradox is suggested as the urn continues to be "the unravished bride of quietness", and the urn is lifeless as if it is frozen in time. The artwork is free from the clutches of time, yet it simultaneously represents the past and the present. If the target expressions cannot capture this contour of polyseme with its multiple meanings, then those subtle nuances of meaning and the impression it has created in the original verse are lost in translation due to *linguistic clogging*.

Linguistic clogging, as introduced and argued for in this study, is a case of interpretive condition present in literary expressions with homonyms where the literal and suggested meaning of expressions are entirely different and take different inferential and narrative trajectories though connected through the vehicle(s). Linguistic clogging can happen at three levels; where the reader is not alert to both the meanings of the homonym, where the reader glides away from *recovering* the figure of speech, and where the translator understands the meanings but does not find words with similar *lexical drift* in the target expression. At the third level, linguistic clogging reaches its challenging form in disrupting the poetic suggestion of the verse. Even if the linguistic constraint is satisfied by paraphrasing[6], that is, compensated otherwise using literal

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[6] Currie & Frascaroli (2021) have given a different account on the possibility of paraphrasing in poetry. However, the present author does not endorse it considering the arguments of and notions of meaning in this paper.

expressions in the translation, the aesthetic beauty cannot be maintained as such in literal translations.

We may note here that some scholars have labelled the translation of poetry as a "creative transposition" (Jakobson 2000), "transadaptation" (Wong 2012), or "transcreation" (Portela 2003). The linguistic features, "idiomatic or idiosyncratic word choices, contextually grounded utterances, ideologically problematic concepts" (Glynn & Hadley 2021:29) (Bassnett 1980), cultural issues (Min 2007), and aesthetic constraints make translation challenging and arduous. Though translators use various methods for translating poetic devices (Delabastita 1997; Lefevere 1992; Low 2011; Offord 1997; Reiss 1981), language-specific literary devices like paronomasia and double entendre build up linguistic constraints to a higher degree (Klitgård 2018). This difficulty arises because paronomasia and double entendre are phonology-based literary expressions. Paronomasia or pun is a rhetorical device that creatively employs multiple meanings of words, where "two strings of thought tied together by a purely *acoustic* knot" (emphasis added, Kostler 1964) usually to arouse laughter or amusement (Newmark 1988). A double entendre is a phrase that can be interpreted in more than one way. Because of the phonological features of puns, many scholars have retained puns in the category of literary devices with 'absolute untranslatability' (Min 2007).

O'Flaherty (1971) emphasized the need to preserve the details and "compactness" of the content in Sanskrit to English translation. He offered examples where verses with double entendre and puns are maintained within a square bracket in one translation. In contrast, by eliminating double meanings only the "essential" words are preserved in the other translation. Various scholars have made several successful attempts to show the presence and use of poetic suggestions in

Indian and Western poetry (Rustomji 1981; Sreekantaiya 2001). However, studies that use some explanatory concepts of classical Indian aesthetics in translation studies are limited. Translators like Catlin, Ganganatha, Krishnamoorthy, Ingalls, Masson, and Patwardhan have translated verses with poetic suggestions into the English language. Ingalls (1982) and Catlin (2006) have illustrated some of the problems encountered in the translation of Sanskrit poetry. Ingalls (1982) focused on the semantic constraints to translate verses with suggested meanings to the audience having different sensibilities of two different ages or cultures. In this study, Ānandavardhana's theory of suggestion is used to explain linguistic clogging in phonology-based literary expressions. In the case of phonology-based literary expressions like *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani* (hereafter *SSMD)*, there could be a lack of equivalent words in the target language resulting in linguistic clogging. The study consists of four topical sections, besides the introduction and conclusion. The first section, as an attempt to connect the concerns of the paper to insightful classical literature, introduces and elucidates the distinction between the literal meaning and the suggested meaning. The poetic suggestion in *SSMD* is discussed in the next section, which explains *lexical drift* and *linguistic clogging* in the source and target texts. The third section analyses verses with *SSMD* to show how linguistic clogging at the suggested level catches the wind. The fourth section is on the aesthetic concerns of translating *SSMD* and shows how figures of speech along with its aesthetic beauty slip away in the translation. The study ends with a remark on phonic elements and meanings and the broader applications of the explanatory link between the two.

The Distinction Between Literal Meaning and Suggested Meaning

Signs, like gestures, sounds, pictures, and words, are used for communication. These signs have two distinct components, one pertaining to the content and the other pertaining to the vehicle. In the same way, signs of verbal communication have two components, sound (*śabda*) and meaning (*artha*). Traditionally, language is conceived as "sound with meaning" (Aristotle 1963; Chomsky 2011). Nevertheless, meaning does not always have to be explicitly expressed in literary expressions. Especially in literary works and in non-literal conversations[7], meaning could be intended or implied but not expressed literally. In Indian aesthetics, this argument was first theorised around the ninth century CE by Ānandavardhana in *Dhvanyāloka*. Ānandavardhana says meaning which is essential to a literary work and admired by connoisseurs, has two varieties, the literal (*vācya*) and the implied (*pratīyamāna*)[8] (Ānandavardhana 1990: 74). Though the texts and expressions of literary merits creatively employ literal and implied meanings, only those expressions where the literal meaning (*vācyartha*) is subordinated and implied meaning

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[7] Grice (1989), in the article "Logic and Conversation", presents cases of ordinary talk exchanges with implied meaning and considers this within the ambit of the *cooperative principle* and *conversational implicature*. In contrast, Ānandavardhana presents cases of implied meaning in literary expressions and develops an aesthetic theory based on them, with wider applications. Though both these theorists talk about implied meaning, the formulation, implication, and scope of the theories are entirely different. Currie & Frascaroli (2021) have given a different account on the possibility of paraphrasing in poetry. However, the present author does not endorse it considering the arguments of and notions of meaning in this paper.

[8] "*kāvyasya hi lalitocita-sanniveśa-cāruṇaḥ śarīrasyevātmā sāra-rūpatayā sthitaḥ sahṛdaya-ślāghyo yo 'rthas tasya vācyaḥ pratīyamānaś ceti dvau bhedau*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 6). (Source, Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages, hereafter addressed as "GRETIL").

with aesthetic appeal (*vyaṅgyārtham*) gets prominence are termed as "*dhvani*" or "*poetic suggestion*"[9].

The literal aspect of a word that is directly expressed is known in Indian linguistic tradition as "*vācaka śabda*" (*expressed sound*) of a word. *Vācaka śabda* gives the literal meaning (*vācyartha*) of a word through a function called *abhidhā (*customarily translated as "*denotative function*"*) and forms the first variety of meaning.* Due to different methods of language comprehension[10], the primary meaning of a word gets shared among the language users. However, there is no natural or necessary connection between sound and the meaning of a word (Saussure 1966). The *vācaka śabda* of a word can be used with a different sense or associations in other languages or even within the same language. For example, the word "*kalaṁ*" with phonetic transcription, /*kalam*/, as a noun in Malayalam means "pot"[11], as an adjective with gender neuter words in Sanskrit means "soft musical sound"[12] and, as a noun in Hindi means "pen"[13]. Two or more words with the same pronunciation and spelling can have different meanings in the same language as homonyms. The word "bark", which means "the outer layer of a tree", and "the sharp cry of a dog", for example, is a homonym. Although a word can have

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[9] "*yatrārthaḥ śabdo vā tam artham upasarjanīkṛta-svārthau /*
vyaṅktaḥ kāvya-viśeṣaḥ sa dhvanir iti sūribhiḥ kathitaḥ //"
(Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 18) (Source, GRETIL).
[10] The eight commonly used methods for grasping literal meanings are; "the usage of words by elders, direct statement of a trustworthy authority, grammar, analogy, lexicon, the rest of the passage in the context, explanation, and the syntactic connection with words already known" (Raja, 1969, p. 26)
[11] Malayalam is a Dravidian language spoken in Kerala, located in the southern part of India.
[12] The author is thankful to Dr. Shankar Rajaraman for this example.
[13] Hindi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken mainly in the northern part of India.

multiple meanings in a dictionary or mental lexicon, generally the context helps us decipher the intended meaning. The primary meaning of a word can be fixed by several determining factors such as compatibility, association, and purpose, as explained by Bhartṛhari in *Vākyapadīya*[14]. With these determining factors, the primary meaning of a word in a particular sentence can be firmly expressed. Besides, it is essential that the literal meaning is adequately conveyed in any translation (Baker 1992).

The suggestive aspect of a word, *vyaṃjaka śabda* (*suggestive sound*), is implied through a function called *vyañjana (suggestive function)* which gives the suggested meaning (*vyaṅgyārtham*) and forms the second variety of meaning. Ānandavardhana argues that this suggestive function distinguishes *dhvani* and *guṇībhūta-vyaṅgyam* (poetic expressions with literal meaning as prominent and implied meaning as subordinate). Further, he points out that great literature always communicates through suggestions and if properly understood, suggested meaning generates aesthetic pleasure in *sahṛdayas* (connoisseurs). Ānandavardhana classifies poetic suggestions into two types based on the differences in the suggestive components of expressions. In the first type, the literal meaning is discarded. The literal meaning, though not incongruous, is transferred to suggest a different content in the second type. *Saṃlakṣyakrama*

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[14] "*saṃsargo viprayogaś ca sāhacaryaṃ virodhitā*
arthaḥ prakaraṇaṃ liṅgaṃ śabdasyānyasya saṃnidhiḥ // 2.315
sāmarthyam aucitī deśaḥ kālo vyaktiḥ svarādayaḥ
śabdārthasyānavacchede viśeṣasmṛtihetavaḥ // 2.316"
(Bhartṛhari, 1980, pp. 282-283) (Source, GRETIL).
"The indicatory factors for fixing the meaning are connection, disjunction, association, enmity, purpose, context, peculiarity, the proximity of another word, capacity, compatibility, place, time, gender, accent" (Mammaṭa, 1967, pp. 34-35).

dhvani (*suggestion of discerned order*) belongs to this second type of suggestion, where the order of apprehending suggested meaning and literal meaning is perceptible. In *saṃlakṣyakramadhvani* verses, the suggested meaning can be entirely different from the literal meaning.

Poetic Suggestion in *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

In Indian aesthetics, Ānandavardhana presents a distinction between two phonology-based literary expressions; *śleṣa* customarily translated as "double entendre"[15] and is not a case of poetic suggestion, and *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani* (*SSMD*) *phonic-based suggestion,* a sub-variety of poetic suggestion. If two concepts are expressed simultaneously because of the power of a word, it is considered as "*śleṣa"*. The domain of *SSMD*, which is a subvariety of *saṃlakṣyakrama dhvani*, is described thus: wherever a figure of speech is implied because of the suggestive power of the word, "this figure being implied by the inherent capability of the situation and not directly denoted"[16] (Ānandavardhana 1990: 294). In *SSMD*, when context fixes the meaning for a particular object, an additional non-contextual meaning is suggested. (Ānandavardhana 1974). There is a *lexical drift* from contextual meaning to non-contextual or *vice versa* in *SSMD verses.* 'Lexical drift'[17], the study terms as a movement of meaning from one word to another through the same phonic elements. It occurs, in the present case, when the expressed sound and suggestive sound

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[15] Translated as "double entendre" by Krishnamoorthy. In the Cambridge dictionary, "double entendre" is defined as "a word or phrase that might be understood in two ways, one of which is usually sexual". The two ideas expressed through *śleṣa* need not have any sexual conotations.

[16] "*yatra tu śabda-śaktyā sāmarthyākṣiptaṃ vācya-vyatiriktaṃ vyaṅgyam evālaṅkārāntaraṃ prakāśate sa dhvaner viṣayaḥ*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 74). (Source, GRETIL).

[17] For a use of "lexical drift" in experimental psychology literature, see Mattys et al. (2010), and another one in linguistics, see Pullum (2006).

share the same phonic elements yet, indicate distinct meanings; literal and suggestive meanings respectively. The lexical drift along with the presumed figure of speech aid the reader in *discovering* that the additional meaning suggested is not inappropriate or inconsistent. Though there is a lexical drift in *SSMD* verses, distinct, unrelated meanings of homonyms *coexist* with each other. On this ground, Ānandavardhana suggests that "in order that the two meanings might not appear as entirely disconnected, we will have to postulate the relation of the standard of comparison and the object compared as existing between the two" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 79).[18] There are no connecting words[19] to indicate the presence of a figure of speech in *SSMD* verses; instead, it is suggested. Subsequently, a relation between the subject of comparison (*ūpameya*) and the object of comparison (*ūpamāna*) is suggested. The contextual meaning is the subject to which attributes are ascribed[20], and the non-contextual meaning is the object whose attributes are borrowed, which is suggested.

For the other subvarieties of *dhvani*, if the literal meaning is translated correctly, the literal meaning can give rise to suggestions even in the translated verse, just like the original. Furthermore, in cases where target expressions have poetic suggestions that are lacking in source expressions, translation can even outperform the source text (Sagan & Hofstadter 2009) and transform it into a new product (Bradley 1909). In general, satisfying both the semantic and aesthetic constraints

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[18]   "*śabda-śaktyā   prakāśamāne   satya-prākaraṇike   'rthāntare vākyasyāsambaddhārthābhidhāyitvaṃ mā prasāṅkṣīd ity aprākaraṇika-prākaraṇikārthayor   upamānopameya-bhāvaḥ   kalpayitavyaḥ*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 78). (Source, GRETIL).

[19] Connecting words like *iva* for *upamā*, (simile) *tu* for *vyatireka* (poetic contrast) or *eva* for *rūpakā* (metaphor)

[20] The subject to which attributes are ascribed is called "*tenor*" (Richards, 1936).

in the target expressions in line with the source expressions can improve the quality of translation.

Linguistic Constraints in Translating *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

In *SSMD* verses, the literal meaning stands independent of the suggested meaning and is complete by itself. An array of suggestions apart from the literal meaning may arise because of the suggestive power of the homonym in such verses. As the literal and suggested meanings of expressions encoded within the same sound are entirely different, some readers might miss the suggested meaning or overlook them. If the reader captures the literal and suggested meaning and discovers the figure of speech suggested by the word, then there is no linguistic clogging. Here the suggestive power of words becomes a desirable feature that heightens the aesthetic beauty of the verse (See, Fig 1). Linguistic clogging becomes an undesirable feature of the expressions for those who miss capturing the suggested meaning. Linguistic clogging can happen at the following three levels.

1. The first stage of linguistic clogging happens when readers are not alert to both the meanings of the homonym. In such cases, the reader is unaware of linguistic clogging and focuses on the literal meaning. The suggested meaning is invisible here.
2. In the second stage, readers identify both meanings, yet they miss the relation between them and fail to discover the figure of speech. Here, the reader is aware of linguistic clogging but does not give the necessary attention needed to interpret the suggested meaning.
3. The third stage happens in translation, where linguistic clogging reaches its peak in disrupting the poetic suggestion of the verse. The translator is aware of linguistic clogging present in target expressions. However, translation fails to capture

suggested meanings due to the lack of equivalent words for conveying both the expressed and suggested meanings in the target language.
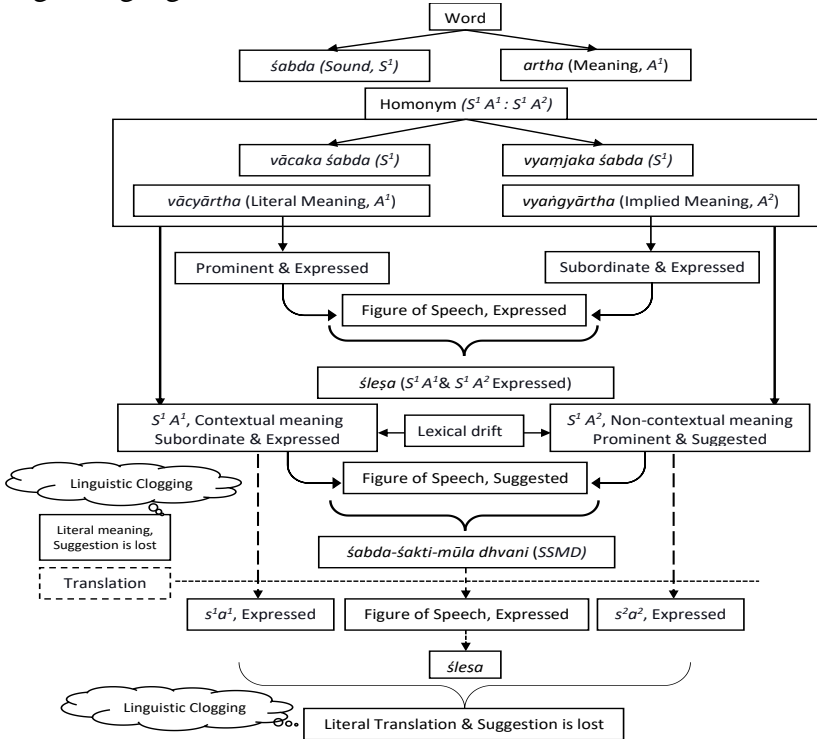

Figure 1. A pictorial representation of linguistic clogging in *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*.

Signs of verbal communication have two components; sound (*śabda*) and meaning (*artha*).

Homonyms- words with the same spelling and pronunciation [sound] (S^1) and different meanings (A^1 & A^2).

If two ideas or concepts are expressed simultaneously because of the power of the word, it is considered as "*śleṣa*". If $(S^1 A^1)$ & $(S^1 A^2)$ be the two words presented by the homonym (SA), then $(S^1 A^1)$ will be the expressed meaning which is prominent. $(S^1 A^2)$ will be

> *the suggested meaning which is subordinate. The figure of speech will be expressed literally in śleṣa.*

> Wherever a figure of speech is implied because of the suggestive power of the word, it is regarded as "*SSMD*", "*phonic-based suggestion*". *If (*$S^1 A^1$*)& (*$S^1 A^2$*) be the two words presented by homonym (SA), then (*$S^1 A^1$*) will be the literal meaning which is subordinate. (*$S^1 A^2$*) will be the suggested meaning which is prominent. The figure of speech will be suggested in SSMD.*

> In *SSMD,* there is a lexical drift between non-contextual meaning *(*$S^1 A^2$*) and contextual meaning (*$S^1 A^1$*)*

> In the translation of *SSMD, if an equivalent homonym is not found in the target expression, then (*$S^1 A^1$*)& (*$S^1 A^2$*) can be paraphrased as (*$s^1 a^1$*)& (*$s^2 a^2$*), which would be a literal translation. In such cases, the figure of speech can no longer be suggested. Such cases are termed as "linguistic clogging", where the literal meaning is translated and suggested meaning is lost in translation. If the figure of speech is literally expressed in the translated expression, then the translated verse will be considered only as śleṣa and not SSMD.*

A passage in Sanskrit from Bāṇa's *Harśacarita* with the poetic suggestion is taken for literary analysis to illustrate linguistic clogging at the third level.

"*atrāntare kusuma-samaya-yugam upasaṃharann ajṛmbhata grīṣmābhidhānaḥ phulla-mallikā-dhavalāṭṭa-hāso mahā-kālaḥ*" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 78).

The literal meaning of the passage is as follows. In the meantime, (*atrāntare*), after putting an end (*upasaṃharann*) to the spring season (*kusuma-samaya*) which lasted for two months (*yugam*) expanded (*ajṛmbhata*) [the summer, *grīṣma*]. The long season (*mahā-kālaḥ*) named summer (*grīṣmābhidhānaḥ*) came with the wild laughter (*hāso*) of

Jasmine flowers (*phulla-mallikā*) that were making the palace terrace (*aṭṭa*) white (*dhavala*). In this passage, the expressed meaning is a description of the summer season. The author wants to convey that after putting an end to both months of Spring, the summer season has arrived. That makes the Jasmine bloom in such a manner that it seemed the palace terrace was laughing. The literal meaning of every word is set according to the context, which is the description of the summer season. Within that context, the word *mahā-kālaḥ* means a long period of time. Even though the compound word *mahākālaḥ* means Lord Shiva, the denotative power of the word *mahā-kālaḥ* is restricted to the meaning of its individual components *mahā* and *kālah* as "long season" because of the context. There are no linking words like *eva* or *iva* that will force us to choose the meaning that refers to Lord Shiva. Even though the primary meaning of the word *mahā-kālaḥ* is fixed as long season, the meaning of Lord Shiva also comes to our mind from the homonym *mahākālaḥ*. Accordingly, the suggested meaning of the Sanskrit passage quoted above is as follows. Meanwhile, (*atrāntare*) Lord Shiva (*mahākālaḥ*) whose wild laughter is white (*dhavalāṭṭa-hāso*) as jasmine blossoms (*phulla-mallikā*) aroused (*ajṛmbhata*) as he brought an end to aeons of time (*yugam upasaṃharann*). In *SSMD,* every word in the passage does not relate to the suggested meaning. When Lord Shiva is taken as the suggested meaning for *mahā-kālaḥ* then the description of the season called summer (*grīṣmābhidhānaḥ*) will not fit with the suggested meaning. The aesthetic delight of the passage does not stop just by the attribution of the meaning of Lord Shiva to the word *mahākālaḥ*. It goes to the extent of suggesting the similarity between the summer season and Lord Shiva through the suggested metaphor (*rūpaka alaṅkāra*)[21]. In such cases, the

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[21] *Ābhidhāna* (named) is usually used in *rūpaka alaṅkāra*. The author is thankful to Dr. Shankar Rajaraman for this insight.

suggested meaning cannot stand independently without the presence of a figure of speech. There could be expressions with lexical drift without suggesting a figure of speech, but the suggestion of a figure of speech makes *SSMD* stand out of its kind.

In most cases of literal translation of *SSMD* verses, a lack of a figure of speech might lead to ambiguity. To avoid interpreting the meanings of homonyms as entirely disconnected meanings, the reader imagines a suggested simile along with it. Therefore, similar properties of summer and those of Lord Shiva are suggested in this passage. Just like summer puts an end to the spring season, Lord Shiva puts an end to the aeons of time. The suggestion of a figure of speech removes the ambiguity, and the gentle touch of the suggestion brings out aesthetic delight in the readers. A similarity-based relation is established between the contextual and non-contextual meanings. Likewise, any other figure of speech where we could assume a relation of the standard of comparison and object compared through suggestion can be taken as an example for *SSMD*[22].

It is also not true to say that the figure of speech present in the verse is because of *inference*. If the method of cognition was through *inference*, then we will get only the contextual literal meaning which we can infer from the context. *Inferring* a non-contextual meaning is not possible because it will result in ambiguity. In *SSMD* verses, distinct, unrelated meanings are recognised from the creative use of homonym. In such cases, a relation between the contextual and non-contextual meaning can be identified due to suggestion. In Keats' famous line, "Thou still unravished bride of quietness", the word 'yet' is a

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[22] "*anye 'pi cālaṅkārāḥ śabda-śakti-mūlānusvāna-rūpa-vyaṅgye dhvanau sambhavanty eva*" (Ānandavardhana1974: 78). (Source, GRETIL)

polyseme[23]. Hence, there is a lexical drift from one meaning to another. There is no subject of comparison (*ūpameya*) and the object of comparison (*ūpamāna*). Even so, the figure of speech paradox is suggested, and it brings a creative, expressive touch to the verse.

The following discussion of a Sanskrit verse from Mayūra's *Sūryaśataka* with poetic suggestion shows how linguistic clogging appears in the translation of *SSMD*.

"*dattānandāḥ   prajānāṃ   samucita-samayākṛṣṭa-sṛṣṭaiḥ payobhiḥ*
pūrvāhṇe viprakīrṇā diśi diśi viramaty ahni saṃhāra-bhājaḥ /
dīptāṃśor   dīrgha-duḥkha-prabhava-bhava-bhayodanvad-uttāra-nāvo
gāvo   vaḥ   pāvanānāṃ   parama-parimitāṃ   prītim utpādayantu //[24]" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 78)[25].

In this verse, the expressed meaning is a description of the sun. Sun's rays (*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) bring delight to all people (*dattānandāḥ   prajānāṃ*) by absorbing (*ākṛṣṭa*) water (*payobhiḥ*) at the right time (*samucita-samayā*) [summer season] and releasing (*sṛṣṭaiḥ*) water (*payobhiḥ*) at the proper time (*samucita-samayā*) [rainy season]. The sun's rays

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[23] For more on the distinction between pragmatic polysemy and syntactic polysemy, see Carston (2020).

[24] (Source, GRETIL)

[25] English translation of the verse by Krishnamoorthy.
"Bringing delight to the public by sucking
And showering down water (also, milk) at proper times
Scattering wide in every quarter in the forenoon
And receding back at the close of the day,
Those veritable ships that ferry one across
The ocean of rebirth's terror and suffering ,
May such rays (also, cows) of the blazing Sun
Bring us delight, holy and limitless". (Ānandavardhana 1974: 79).

(*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) are spread out in all directions (*viprakīrṇā diśi diśi*) during the daytime (*pūrvāhṇe*) and withdrawn (*saṃhāra-bhājaḥ*) by the close of the day (*viramaty ahni*). The sun's rays (*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) are the ships (*uttāra-nāvo*) for crossing the sea (*odanvad*) of a non-ending cycle of birth and rebirth, which is the source of our prolonged grief (*dīrgha-duḥkha-prabhava*). May the rays of the sun (*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) bring us (*utpādayantu*) unlimited bliss (*parama-parimitāṃ prītim*) to all kind-hearted people (*pāvanānāṃ*). Looking at the context, the meaning of *gāvo* as "rays" is the expressed meaning. However, *Gāvo* is a homonym, where one meaning being 'rays' and another meaning being 'a cow'. Accordingly, with the non-contextual meaning, it reads as the cow (*gāvo*) takes (*ākṛṣṭa*) water/milk (*payobhiḥ*) at the correct time (*samucita-samaya*) and gives happiness to its progeny (*prajānāṃ*) [calves] by releasing (*sṛṣṭaiḥ*) milk (*payobhiḥ*) at the proper time (*samucita-samaya*). The herd of cows is scattered in all directions (*viprakīrṇā diśi diśi*) during the daytime (*pūrvāhṇe*) [for grazing]. All the cows gather around (*saṃhāra-bhājaḥ*) [the cattle shed] by evening (*ahni viramaty*). Here, the primary word *gāvo* gives the contextual meaning of "sun rays". The suggested meaning of cow appears by the suggestive power of the word *gāvo.* Accordingly, the first two lines match perfectly with both meanings. In contrast, the literal meaning of *dīrgha-duḥkha* as "prolonged grief" will not fit with the suggested meaning of cow.

There will not be any change in the literal meaning if the poet has used any other synonym for sun rays instead of the word *gāvo*. In that case, the suggestion would not have arisen. Even if the poet has used any other synonym for rays, the literal meaning will be complete. It goes well with the contextual meaning also. Nevertheless, another synonym for *gāvo* (sun rays) will not give the meaning of cow. Hence, the figure of speech cannot be suggested. Therefore, in many cases, even

within the same language, the homonym that produces *SSMD* cannot be replaced with a synonym. The use of the homonym (*gāvo*) and the relation it shares with other words used in the verse is the primary source for suggestions here. The literal meaning is fixed with sun rays, and the meaning of cow is achieved through the suggestive function. A simile is suggested by comparing sun rays to the behaviour of cows.

As another example of linguistic clogging, the study analyses a verse with *SSMD* in the Malayalam language quoted in *Bhashabhooshanam* by Rajarajavarma.

> "*salkīrttikoṇṭu paramannakulattinellā-
> mulkkarṣadan prathitavikramanitrilōkyāṁ
> nalśāradōjvalavilāsavilōlaśīlan
> sanmānasattilamarunnitu rājahamsan*" (Rajarajavarma
> 2017: 171).

The literal meaning of the verse is, through esteemed reputation (*salkīrttikoṇṭu*), the king brings an end to the fame of the clan of enemy kings (*paramannakulam*). The king's valour and manliness (*vikramam*) are praised (*prathita*) in the three worlds. He is the one whose conduct shines forth due to the grace of muses. The literal meaning of the word *sanmānasam* is right-minded. "The king resides inside the minds of his virtuous subjects" is the contextual meaning. Alternatively, the word *sanmānasam* is also the spot where the swans (*rājahamsa*) arrive. In Hindu mythology, lake Manasarovar is seen as the abode of swans during the rainy season. Thus, the verse also suggests that, through esteemed reputation (*salkīrttikoṇṭu*), the Rājahamsa provides high excellence to the clan of splendid swans (*parama anna kulam*). They desire the welfare of others (*ulkkarṣadan*). The glory given by the swans to the Manasarovar is known in three worlds. During autumn (*śārada*), they are full of energy while playing, and they are the ones who gleefully wander amongst

the lotus of goddesses Sarasvati. The swans settle in *sanmānasam*. To remove the impression of impropriety through the non-contextual meaning, a similarity between the king and swan is suggested in this verse. Achuthanunni (2015) interprets the verse as, just like a swan in Manasarovar lake, the king stays in the minds of his subjects because of his good deeds. The aesthetic pleasure lies in the fact that the poet was able to give us the image of swans without mentioning it. Just like the glory given by the swans to the Mānasasaras, the king resides in the minds of virtuous subjects through his glory known to the three worlds. The suggestion of a figure of speech shows that the verse does not stop merely by presenting a non-contextual meaning of swans. The aesthetic beauty of the verse lies in resonating with the similarity between the swans and the king. In the translation of *SSMD,* if an equivalent homonym is not found in the target expression, then the literal and the suggested meanings have to be paraphrased, as in a literal translation. In such cases, the figure of speech can no longer be suggested. If the figure of speech is literally expressed in the translated expression, then the translated verse will be considered only as *śleṣa* and not *SSMD*[26].

Aesthetic Concerns of Translating *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

In *SSMD*, the figure of speech, rather than being expressed directly through the denotative words, is being suggested. The author knits two seemingly unrelated objects [long season of summer and Lord Shiva in the passage quoted below] using the poetic threads of suggestion in *SSMD* verses. In the translation of *SSMD* verses, it becomes necessary to either individually express the suggested meaning through denotation or to expose the figure of speech directly through words, as in the case of *śleṣa*. Literal translation and paraphrasing of

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[26] For more examples of *śleṣa and SSMD, see* Ānandavardhana (1974: 72-82).

expressions take away the possibility for suggestions in the translated verse. We often miss the poetic suggestion in a translated work because the suggested figure gets directly expressed or is omitted in the translated verse.

Three different translations of the Sanskrit passage, "*atrāntare kusuma-samaya-yugam upasaṃharann ajṛmbhata grīṣmābhidhānaḥ phulla-mallikā-dhavalāṭṭa-hāso mahā-kālaḥ*[27]" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 78) are taken to demonstrate the point mentioned above.

English translation of the passage by Krishnamoorthy. "In the meanwhile, appeared (also, yawned) the Terrible Time (also Lord Siva) of the name 'Summer' putting an end to the two flowering months (also, bringing an end of the aeons) and with radiant laughter in the farm of mansions festooned with blooming jasmines (also, with boisterous laughter white like full-blown jasmines)" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 79).

English translation of the passage by Ingalls, Masson, & Patwardhan.

> "Meanwhile the long period named Summer,
> **Meanwhile the God of Destruction,**
> when the market stalls are white with the laughter
> **whose terrible laughter is white**
> of their blossoming jasmine flowers,
> **as jasmine flowers,**
> expanded as it put an end to the two months of spring
> **yawned as He put an end to the aeons of time"**
> (Ānandavardhana 1990: 302).

Malayalam translation by C.V. Vasudeva Bhattathiri

> "*itiniṭayil raṇṭu vasantamāsakālaṁ upasaṁ harīcca keāṇṭu kēāṭṭuvāyiṭṭu.*

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[27] (Source, GRETIL)

vēnalkkālamennu pēruḷḷa viṭarnna mullappūvākunna peāṭṭi ciriyēāṭe vanna mahākālaṁ (*śivan*)" (Ānandavardhana 2008:73).

In all three translations, the contextual and non-contextual meanings are directly denoted. The translator uses various methods to portray both of these meanings. The non-contextual meaning is given either in separate brackets or smaller font or italics to differentiate it from contextual meaning. When it is directly denoted through words in the translated verse, they become part of the literal meaning. The literal meaning of such verses is conveyed through literal translation, whereas, owing to the linguistic constraints triggered by *SSMD*, the suggested meaning is lost in translation. If the passage cannot suggest a non-contextual meaning after translation, then there is no scope for the reader to grasp the figure of speech in the translated passage.

The suggested meaning is non-contextual, and it requires the imaginative ability of the reader to identify the suggested meaning. The author/translator keeps it open for the reader's imagination to explore the suggested figure of speech without directly expressing it. The relation between the two seemingly unrelated objects is what the reader *recovers* in their imagination. Therefore, it opens the possibility for interpretation from the reader's frame of mind. An active engagement of the reader is necessary for this process of *recovering* the relation between the contextual meaning and the non-contextual meaning. The reader gets that aesthetic pleasure by actively engaging in the creative process along with the author.

In verses with *SSMD*, if a translator cannot employ equivalent expressions that can convey *both* the meanings encoded in the source expression, then translated verse misses the poetic suggestion. Consequently, readers cannot savour the suggested

meaning as it is absent in the translated verse. Suppose the suggested meaning/sound in a verse is translated through denotation instead of the contextual meaning. In that case, it does not form any relationship with the context and thus remains ambiguous. Thus, linguistic clogging arises at the suggested level in *SSMD* verses. *SSMD* verses can be translated at the literal level without any specific difficulty. If we look at the contextual meaning, the translated verse is meaningful and complete at the literal-half level. However, it cannot suggest the figure of speech in the translated verse. The lack of poetic suggestion in the target expression thus results in a half-baked translation.

Conclusion

The suggestive power of words, when actualised through the creative use of phonic elements and lexical drift to encode meaning, enhances the aesthetic attributes of an expression by alluding to a figure of speech. In the translation of such literary expressions with *SSMD*, we encounter linguistic clogging not in terms of primary meaning but due to the linguistic and aesthetic constraints in capturing the suggestive aspects. This study analysed literary expressions with *SSMD* where the literal and suggested meanings were entirely different and showed how linguistic clogging created linguistic and aesthetic constraints on the translations. Generally, when words with similar phonic elements cannot be brought out in translation, the target expression shortfalls poetic suggestion (*dhvani*). Nevertheless, when the translation succeeds in capturing the parameters of sound (*śabda*), that is, the structural elements of the source expressions, along with the meaning, reference, and other semantic features, then the lyrical beauty and aesthetic attributes of the verse can be maintained even in the translation of verses with a poetic suggestion. Once the explanatory link between the structural (phonic) elements of words and content,

that is, the causal connection between *SSMD* and lexical drift, and meaning is understood, it may be possible to put that for broader applications. In such a manner, understanding the importance of the phonic elements in human translation can be helpful in areas such as machine translation, where structural elements are registered and processed, capturing aspects of content.

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