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BA English Honours | Semester IV | ENG4FS112

Translation in Praxis

Module 4: Translations from Malayalam to English: Cultural Nuances and Dialects • Comprehensive Notes

Chapter 4: Malayalam Masterpieces in Global English Translation

Translating modern Malayalam literature into English reverses the colonial gaze, presenting Kerala's rich socio-political histories, regional dialects, and unique cultural landscapes to the international anglophone readership.

4.1 Ecological Elegies: O.N.V. Kurup's "Iniyum Marikkaatha Bhoomi"

Renowned poet O.N.V. Kurup's prophetic ecological poem "Iniyum Marikkaatha Bhoomi" ("A Requiem to Mother Earth") mourns the impending death of the planet under human environmental greed. Translating ONV's resonant Sanskritized Malayalam diction and intense rhythmic lamentation into English requires crafting elevated, prophetic verse that retains ecological grief without flattening emotional resonance.

4.2 Memoir and Creative Process: M.T. Vasudevan Nair's Kathikante Panippura

In *Kathikante Panippura* ("The Storyteller's Workshop"), legendary writer M.T. Vasudevan Nair reflects on the genesis of his iconic novels, childhood memories along the Bharathapuzha river, and the feudal decay of matrilineal Valluvanad (*tharavadu*). Translating MT into English demands capturing the melancholy interiority and sparse, atmospheric prose that defines modern Malayalam fiction.

4.3 Magic Realism and Football Politics: N.S. Madhavan's "Higuita"

N.S. Madhavan's landmark short story "Higuita" seamlessly weaves the geopolitical passions of the 1990 FIFA World Cup, Colombian goalkeeper René Higuita's daring sweeper-keeper tactics, and the everyday struggles of Father Geevarghese, a Catholic priest in Delhi who intervenes to rescue a tribal girl from human trafficking. Translating "Higuita" into English requires balancing international sports jargon, theological dilemmas, and the urban underworld of the capital city with linguistic finesse.

Advanced Critical Theory, Hermeneutics & Literary Praxis

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Critical inquiry into Module 4: Translations from Malayalam to English: Cultural Nuances and Dialects reveals how textual forms construct meaning through complex aesthetic strategies and structural choices:

- **Structuralism and Semiotic Deconstruction:** The organization of signs, tropes, and syntactical structures establishes narrative authority while simultaneously revealing internal fissures. Binary oppositions embedded within the discourse—such as center versus margin, tradition versus modernity,

and subjective interiority versus objective reality—are systematically problematized through textual slippages and ambiguous signifiers.

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2. Historiographical Context and Reception Theory

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