

Imitation as a Method of Translation:  
A Study Based on Selected Sinhalese Poems Inspired by Wordsworthian  
Poetry

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Translation is defined as the process of converting words or text from one language into another. In the preface to his translation of 'Ovid's Epistles' (1680), John Dryden, the first major English theorist in translation, points out three ways of translation, namely metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation. According to this tripartite classification, in both metaphrase and paraphrase, a translator is not permitted to make any changes. The freedom of making changes is available only in imitation. It is where the translators get the opportunity to make use of their creativity. One of the paramount features of the poetry of the Second Generation in Colombo Era of Sinhalese Poetry is that being influenced from Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Shelly, Keats..etc. H.M.Kudaligama and Meemana Premathilake were among the poets who were influenced by the work of such Romantic poets. This study is based on selected Sinhalese poems of this era which have been influenced by Wordsworthian poetry. The findings of this study point out that even though they are not pure replicas of their originals, those poems can rather be called 'imitations', a type of translation. Therefore, it is justifiable to state that work of literature, specially poems, which have the influence of other pieces of work can be called translations in which only some general hints have been taken from the original. As Dryden pointed out, it is also of high probability that the translator will not be called a translator anymore due to the amount of changes he does to the ground work.

**Key Words:** Influence, Imitation, Translation, Wordsworthian Poetry, Colombo Era of Sinhalese Poetry