

## Translator's Approach in Translating the Title of a Text

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### Abstract

The process of translation involves several challenges, as a translator always aim for accuracy of meaning. Translating the title of a literary work is as important as translating the literary text. This research paper tries to analyze the challenges faced by translators in translating the title of the source text. The importance given to the title by the translator is more important than translating the literary text itself. It also examines the role of the translator in the process of translating the title. But it is often taken for granted. Difficulties arise out of achieving the original sense of meaning in the title, because it is always concise and at the same time it shouldn't deviate from the original sense of meaning. Therefore, the researcher tries to experiment the ambiguity and relevance in the translation of titles from source text to target text by examining selected works in translation. This also paves way to understand the intentions of the translator to transliterate the title of the source text. There are certain limitations in translation. Therefore, it is not highly possible for a translator to retain the same sense of meaning as that the author intends. But the translator might provide his intentions regarding the literary work. Hence, this article studies the translated work as well as the author's intentions and the challenges faced. In this way the reader's opinion regarding the translated title will also be taken into account.

### Introduction:

The process of translation involves numerous challenges. Moreover, it plays an essential role in the process of building up text from one language to another. Therefore it requires more clarity and the translators will be very much cautious about the discrepancies of meaning faced in the translation process. However efficiently the meaning is achieved, it undergoes lot of criticism in terms of the language, gender, and linguistic form etc...Therefore it is observed that it is an open-ended process which does not have an exact result of the translation process. Rather,

it may vary according the point of view of the critics. Certain translators take it as a challenge, whereas other translators don't give much importance to the title, but this aspect of translation provides space for the readers to argue and involve the readers' responses and their experiences. This makes the readers of the transited text to interact and connect with it.

### **Review of Literature:**

Several researches have been undertaken to analyze the root of the translation process by applying various theories. The theory of studying feminism in translation is an upcoming theory which analyzes the traditional norms and stereotypical ideas that exists in translation. It originated during the second-wave feminism and the feminist critics undertook the process of translation too into feminist studies. The Gender and the practice of translation was given wide importance by the feminist critics.

Baya (2019) had taken two Arabic works: *Women at Zero Point* by Nawel Saadaouis and *Memory of the Flesh* by Ahlem Mosteghanemi with their English translations done by Hatata (male) and Raphael Cohen (male) respectively. The analysis of the first translation by Hatata had shown that there were feminist thoughts in the translation as he had adopted linguistic strategies to center the female heroine's perspective. Conversely, Raphael Cohen had emphasized the male presence by employing mostly terms that connoted masculinity.

Shaheen et al. (2021) investigated the ideological position of the translator in the Urdu translation of Brown's *The dancing girls of Lahore* done by Dr. Naeem Tariq and found that the ideological position of the male translator was reflected in the grammatical and lexical choices of the translation activity, and thus, had exposed the patriarchal structure of Pakistani society.

Jinga and Lihua (2020) analyzed the English-Chinese translation of *Pride and Prejudice* by a female (Li Limei) and male translator (Sun Zhili), and concluded that the female translator had indicated more feminist consciousness in the translation activity. Furthermore, there are some studies, which have simply analyzed how translations of male translators differ from female translators in terms of linguistic choices

## Background of the Study

Several decades ago, the process of translation was considered as an inferior activity as it is the second hand work of an original literary product. Lots of researches have been carried out in the field of translation studies. But the recent researches and theories in the field of translation studies show that the portrayal of translation as an inferior activity has changed over the years. Though it may be a second hand work, it serves the first hand purpose of reading the text when it translated into another language. In fact that is very crucial because translated can not only be achieved by the exchange of words or ideas but mainly how it is carried out.

Several translators usually suffer from ‘translators block’ like ‘writers block’ because of the challenges that they face in a translated text. The idea of de-centering women in translated texts arouses the interest of the researchers, while reading some of the translated works. For example, when one thinks of the word ‘virginity’ one always associates with the woman as it is the myth of being a good girl with suitable feminine characteristics. Why it is associated only with women? Does not it sound for men? How does the virginity of men will be addressed/denoted? These are some of the arguments that have questioned the blind-folded society. When the critics try to question, multiple waves of discussion arise. As a result there has been certain wax and wane in the meaning of the translated text. These things include gender differences, linguistics variation, uncertainties in form, ambivalence of meaning etc...

Modern translation has paved way for the inclusion of gender consciousness in the translated text. This is evident through the use of linguistic structures and the choice of the words that he translator adopts. In the process of translating a text, the psyche of the translator also plays a vital role in it. This enhances the quality of the translation and satisfies the expectations of the various readers. Gender has also become a significant part in the process of translation. But how far the translators exhibit their approach towards gender in the translated text is very strange. Again it depends upon the mentality and the approach of the translator towards the original text.

## Discussion

For this discussion the Tamil novel, ‘Amma Vanthal’ written by Ti. Janakiraman is taken into study. This novel is a psychological fiction about the life of a boy called as ‘Appu’ who had some unpleasant experiences within his family. The boy’s mother is considered to be an immoral woman who had illegal affairs in her family life. She is also portrayed to be an arrogant lady which irritates Appu and his father. This novel revolves around the disturbed psyche of the young boy. And the author, Ti. Janakiraman is known for revolutionizing the psychological behavior of the characters in his literary works.

First of all the linguistic ambivalence can be found from the translation of the title itself which has been discussed several times. By analyzing the novel in the grounds of feminist translation once can witness the oppression of women in the translated text.

ST: Amma Vanthal

TT: The Sins of Appu’s Mother

The title of the original text Amma Vanthal stands as connotative, whereas the tile title of the same translated text stands as a denotative. What need to be analyzed from the source and translated title, is the intentions of the author and the response of the readers.

The author’s intention to present the connotative title for the source text might not be to reveal the character of Appu’s mother predominantly. In fact the title ‘Amma Vanthal’ does not even talk about the character of Appu’s mother explicitly. His intention was to denote that when Appu tried to hug Indhu out of his sexual interest, his mother came as a flash off light in front of his eyes, In fact this is what the author means as the thought of his mother that came in his mind as ‘Amma Vanthal’.

But the translator of the same novel gives the title as ‘The Sins of Appu’s mother’. And this is very predominant that Appu’s mother has committed adultery against her husband. And this is considered to be the highest form of a sin that a woman commits, according to the society.

The stereotypes that exist in the society against women consider women to be filled with all sorts of good virtues. If so they are considered to be respectful and dignified. But the translators use of the word in the title 'Sins' in plural form try to project not just one sin committed by Appu's mother but many. On the contrary, the author in his text just place the title as 'Amma Vanthal'.

Mostly, in any of the literary work either in the original work or in the translated work; the title carries as much importance as the text itself. If analyzed from the psychological perspective of the author, his intention is not to explicitly project the women in a negative way. He mentions the behavior of Alanagaram and her attitude.

She sat majestically in her chair, in that tenement, in the cattle-yard lane, like a queen on her throne. In her smile and speech and the way she turned and walked was regal. She never pleaded and she never bargained. And she ever spoke at needless length. [p.102]

By this one can understand that the translated text tries to de-center the women by changing the idea of the author from the source text to target text. While the translator uses the title as the 'The Sins of Appu's Mother', the translator knowingly or unknowingly tries to project the other side of the character explicitly. Rather he may even try to de-center the women according to his critical perspective, thereby the translator tries to project the patriarchal stereotypes of de-centering the women. While the original and the translated novel is analyzed from the feminist perspective, the reader find a vast difference in usage of words, the stereotypical projection of women, biological difference, psychological barriers etc.... This in turn may affect the credulity of the translated text that has made the translated text as a secondary work of art.

### **Conclusion:**

The aim of the research work is to read the novel through a theoretical perspective in translation. The researcher tries to analyze the importance given by the author in translating the title of the source text. In analyzing and translating the content of the text, the title may sometimes be overlooked rather it is the title that provides the first impression for the readers. To

conclude, the ambivalence in the translation of the title affect the aesthetics of literature and it promotes ambivalence in its literary meaning.

#### Translations

Amma Vandhaal was translated into English twice.

M. Krishnan translated it as 'The Sins of Appu's Mother' and published it in 1972.

Malati Mathur translated it as 'Remembering Amma' and published it in 2006.

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