

Voices of Women in Translation: A Psychological Study

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Abstract

Translation is an interdisciplinary field of study that offers much scope for the study of not just the transfer of language from source language to the target language, but also provides a varied scope for the analysis of psychological and ideological patterns that exists within the text. This research paper particularly narrow down to the works of women translators and the psyche of the women in translation. Here, the process of translation itself becomes an analytical tool in subverting the idea of feminist translation that has been viewed as secondary to the other.

Introduction:

India is a diverse nation with a multilingual and multicultural background that has evolved as a nation of diversity inspite of its odds and differences. Literature is an ever changing field of study based on the context of the scenario in which it is fixed. It reflects the nature of the society and the social context that happens around the particular framework of time. One of the main reasons behind the dynamic nature of literature is that it not just holds the values of life but it projects the social history of a particular region or context in which the literary work is placed. Translation of literary works into mainstream is an ongoing process which started around the middle ages where the ancient classical texts had been translated into the target language. Indian literature was started as a cult by translating the regional works into English, so that the Indian literature which was confined with the frame

of language, started to gain global recognition. Thus translation is a key to open the gates of learning the ancient literatures from the multilingual backgrounds.

This research tries to explore the challenges in the field of translation. Modern translation practices often includes the use of technological advancements with the advent of AI. However the originality of a text in translation can be brought only by human translation, otherwise the translated text face lot of misinterpretation and ambiguity. Even in case of human translation, there are lot of difference in terms of the psyche of the translator, gender of the translator, the cultural impact of the source text and the target text, regional differences, and so on. At this juncture, the major problem which is often being overlooked for ages is the inclusion of women in translation. Deborah Cameron views that,

The radical feminist view, then, is of women who live and speak within the confines of a man-made symbolic universe. They must cope with the disjunction between the linguistically validated male world view and their own experience, which cannot be expressed in male language. Indeed, since language determines reality, women may be alienated not only from language but also from the female experience it fails to encode. (1985:93)

Women in translation can be viewed under different phases in translation. The works that are translated by women, the works written by women and the representative of the women characters in the works. The ideology behind the study of these perspective is, multi-dimensional. This women's perspective cannot just be viewed by one angle, but holds different phases. This brings out a varied glimpse of the conditions of women in writing particularly in translation. Moreover, analyzing these views is the basic or key factor in bringing out the underlying cause of women's works being unidentified in the society.

Review of Literature:

There are often a lot of contrasting theories on the process of translation. Theo Hermans says that translation, “does not intervene in any substantive way. The ironic pride of the absent, empty-handed translator consists in the awareness, or at any rate in the ideological self-assurance, of offering the reader an absolutely clear view of the original” (1997, p. 15). The clear view of the original is ultimately presented by the translator based on his/her perspective over the text.

“Every perspective makes a difference. What happens when some voices simply aren’t heard? *Women In Translation* seeks to rectify the imbalance in world literature, promoting women writers from across all walks of life, all languages, and all experiences. Whether translated into English, translated between different non-English languages, or still untranslated: women from all over the world deserve to have equal opportunities when it comes to literary recognition. We as readers deserve to have access to stories that truly reflect the vastness of the world in which we live, through different lenses shaped by language, culture, and experience.” (*Women in translation*)

Sherry Simon emphasizes in her seminal work *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the politics of Transmission*, “Translation is now seen by many as a very subjective enterprise where translators exercise a sophisticated number of layered activities that allow clear active and critical interventions” (1996, p. 37). In addition to it, Juliane House describes it as “a manipulation of the source text beyond what is linguistically necessary” (2008, p. 16).

Gideon Toury, considers “The translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate – into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations” (1995, p. 55) And this where translation suffers from being inferior to the source text as there are chances of manipulation of the text. In case of Feminist translation much attention is needed for the understanding of the text from psychological point of view as well the decoding of the psyche of the author into the text.

Research Hypothesis:

The following are some of the research hypothesis framed for this research:

1. Feminist translation is still under patriarchal hegemony of translation.
2. Feminist translators engage themselves in bringing out the suppression of women writers.
3. Feminist translation brings out new insights as well as inconsistencies in translation

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Across the evolution of literature in its synchronic timeline one can witness the unfolding of the works of women in the later period rather than the early ages. It indeed took a long time for women to register their works in the realm of literature. In case of women in

translation, many works of the women authors remain untouched in its regional language itself. The problem arises mainly because of the poor acknowledgement of the works. This includes the works of regional writers from Bengal, Marathi, Telugu, Malayalam literature etc... Identifying the works of these regional writers helps to explore and multiply the works of translation into the mainstream.

Works translated by the female authors are often considered as a feministic understanding of the author's ideology over the background of the text. In case of female translators in India, only a handful of translators have been seen in the limelight whereas many translators remain unknown. But it is very important to analyze the works of the female translators in order to understand the reflection of the ideologies of the source text in the target text, which is very often overlooked in the process of translation.

Representation of women characters and their psyche is yet another major trait of analyzing women in translation. The voice of the author depicted through the characters particularly the women characters, exhibit the theme of feminism which is manipulated within the text. This portrays not only the condition of women's psyche but also the passage of ideas and thoughts transformed from the author to the reader through the characters is the vital source of study under feminist studies.

The recent statistics shows that the PEN award which is usually given for the acclaimed translators, includes only 3% of women translators. There seems to be a notion that the texts translated by women are secondary in nature compared to the translation of men. This has been the exact problem based on the gender of the translator, but there is not any concrete understanding of the same. Therefore the researcher try to explore the problems based on the gender gap issues through this research project.

Discussions:

The research aims to adopt a psychological approach to translation in different contexts relating to the field of literature. It also provides an analytical review of relevant and current research in the field of translation, particularly feminist translation. By analyzing the different aspects in translation approaches, it also explores several issues in feminist translation. Psychological approach to translation is unique in its own way as it deals with psychology which is more than translating words from source text to target text. The psyche of the author is transformed by the psyche of the translator. This is a semi-experimental research which identifies the difficulties and failures in translation in the following aspects:

1. Linguistic and psycholinguistic approach to translation
2. Cognitive approach to translation

Methodology:

The proposed research seeks to analyze the psychological aspect of the translator, author, character/s and the reader by adopting a psychological approach with the tools of psychology. The present study has taken works that are translated of Tamil literary works with corresponding English translations, by LakshmiHolmstrom, UshaRajagopalan and C.T. Indra as the research objects. These selected translations are to be examined through psychological approach, from analyzing the categories of emotions of the translator, author, reader, and character. Comparison of each of the translated literary work, reflecting the requirement of the psychological approach, has to be carried out to identify inconsistency regarding gender gap within the given translations. The selected inconsistent ideologies need to be analyzed from the perspective of the author's emotion, translator's emotion, reader's emotion, and character's emotion. The elements of emotional perspectives and understanding are carried out to find the kind of problems that exist within the selected materials. A detailed

analysis of the types of problem in translation is identified through a theoretical framework that has been outlined

Results and outcomes:

In analyzing the voices of women in translation the following outcomes are highlighted to understand the text from different dimensions:

1. Identification of the issues of translation based on gender influence is the foremost objective of this research project. By analyzing the gender gap in translation, one can find out the complexity of the text based on gender. This is foregrounded on the psyche and ideologies of the male dominated society that induce their ideologies on the suppression of women.
2. The next process is promoting equality of the translation of men and women. This helps to bridge the gap between the male and female translation by providing equal opportunities.
3. To understand the nature of women translation which is often considered as Feminist translation by the translation critics. Feminist translation is one among emerging fields of translation studies in the current scenario.
4. To survey the underlying issue behind the FT which helps to gain a broad perspective about translation studies.
5. The specific goal of this research proposal is to familiarize the importance of feminine language in translation.
6. The measurable goal includes re-reading the texts translated by the female translators

7. Identifying the difference between feminine and masculine language has to achieved at the end of this study.

Conclusion:

Thus the research article aims to point out the nature and characteristics of the voices of women in translation. Translation of grammatical gender plays a significant role in translation. Gender is a social construct, but it's a social theory about how it is constructed and on what basis. But what it's important is how it is viewed from the eyes of the author, translator and the reader. This varies according to the gender variation. Grammatical gender poses questions on the linguistic structures framed for the construction of gender ideologies.

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