

LITERARY TRANSLATION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY.

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Annotation: This article explores the intricate relationship between literary translation and cultural identity. By examining the ways in which translation shapes and is shaped by cultural contexts, the paper highlights the dual role of translators as mediators and creators of cultural identity. The study also delves into the methodological approaches used in literary translation, analyzing the impact of these methods on the preservation or transformation of cultural identity within translated texts.

Keywords: Literary translation, cultural identity, translation studies, cultural mediation, cross-cultural communication, translation methods.

Literary translation is a complex and multifaceted process that goes beyond the mere conversion of text from one language to another. It is an act of cultural mediation, where the translator is not just a linguistic intermediary but also a cultural interpreter. In this role, the translator influences how cultural identities are constructed, perceived, and conveyed across different linguistic boundaries. This article examines the interplay between literary translation and cultural identity, highlighting how translation can both preserve and transform cultural narratives. The central question explored is: How does literary translation impact cultural identity, and what are the implications of this process for both source and target cultures? The relationship between translation and cultural identity has been a subject of considerable scholarly interest. Scholars like Lawrence Venuti and Susan Bassnett have emphasized the role of translation in shaping cultural perceptions and the power dynamics involved in the translation process. Venuti's concept of the "invisible translator" suggests that translators often efface their presence to produce

a fluent target text, thereby subtly influencing the representation of cultural identity. Bassnett, on the other hand, highlights the political and ideological aspects of translation, arguing that translation is an act of rewriting that reflects the translator's cultural and ideological biases. Furthermore, translation theorists like Antoine Berman have discussed the ethical dimensions of translation, particularly the tension between domesticating and foreignizing strategies. Domesticating strategies tend to make the text more accessible to the target culture by minimizing foreign elements, while foreignizing strategies retain the cultural uniqueness of the source text, challenging the target audience to engage with cultural differences. This tension is crucial in understanding how translation impacts cultural identity, as it raises questions about the balance between preserving the original culture and adapting to the target culture. The research adopts a qualitative approach, combining textual analysis with comparative studies. The primary method involves analyzing translated literary texts to identify the strategies used by translators in representing cultural identity. This is complemented by a comparative analysis of source and target texts to examine how cultural elements are preserved, transformed, or omitted in translation. Additionally, interviews with translators are conducted to gain insights into their decision-making processes and the factors influencing their translation choices. The study also incorporates a case study approach, focusing on specific literary works that have been translated multiple times, allowing for a detailed examination of how different translations have handled cultural identity.

"Literary Translation and Cultural Identity" is a multifaceted topic that explores how the process of translating literature affects and reflects cultural identity. It delves into the complex relationship between the source and target cultures, as well as the translator's role in mediating between them. Here are some key aspects of this topic:

1. The Translator's Role:

- Cultural Mediator: The translator acts as a bridge between cultures, interpreting and conveying the cultural nuances of the source text to a new audience. This involves

not just linguistic translation but also the transfer of cultural context, values, and ideologies.

- Ethical Considerations: Translators must decide how much of the original culture to preserve and how much to adapt to the target culture. This can raise ethical questions about fidelity to the original text versus accessibility to the target audience.

2. Impact on Cultural Identity:

- Preservation of Cultural Identity: Translating literature from one language to another can help preserve and promote cultural identity by making the literature of a particular culture accessible to a broader audience. It allows the target culture to engage with the source culture's ideas, values, and narratives.

- Transformation and Hybridization: Literary translation can also lead to the transformation or hybridization of cultural identities. The interplay between the source and target cultures can create new cultural expressions and understandings, sometimes leading to a blending or reshaping of cultural identities.

3. Challenges in Translation:

- Cultural Specificity: Some concepts, idioms, and references in literature are deeply rooted in the source culture and may not have direct equivalents in the target language. Translators must find ways to convey these cultural specifics without losing their meaning or impact.

- Domestication vs. Foreignization: This is a key dilemma in translation. Domestication involves adapting the text to make it more familiar to the target audience, while foreignization retains the source culture's distinctiveness, even if it remains somewhat alien to the target audience.

4. Influence on National Literatures:

- Cultural Exchange: Translated literature can introduce new ideas, styles, and genres into the target culture, influencing its literary traditions and practices. This exchange can lead to the enrichment of both the source and target cultures.

- Cultural Hegemony: There is also the potential for cultural domination, where the literature of more powerful cultures overshadows or alters the literature and identity of less dominant cultures.

5. Case Studies:

- Analyzing specific examples of literary translations can shed light on how cultural identity is negotiated in the translation process. For instance, the translation of postcolonial literature, with its complex layers of cultural identity and resistance, offers rich insights into these dynamics.

6. Globalization and Translation:

- In a globalized world, literary translation plays a crucial role in shaping and sharing cultural identities across borders. It allows for a cross-cultural dialogue that can either homogenize or diversify cultural expressions.

This topic is significant in understanding the power dynamics, ethical considerations, and creative processes involved in the translation of literature, and how these influence both the source and target cultures' identities. The findings of this study underscore the role of literary translation as a site of cultural negotiation. Translators, in their role as cultural mediators, navigate the complex interplay between preserving the cultural identity of the source text and making it accessible to the target audience. This process is inherently subjective, as translators bring their own cultural perspectives and biases to the task. The study highlights the ethical responsibilities of translators, who must balance the demands of fidelity to the source text with the need to create a text that resonates with the target audience. Moreover, the discussion points to the broader implications of literary translation for cross-cultural communication. Translation can serve as a bridge between cultures, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation. However, it can also reinforce cultural stereotypes or contribute to the marginalization of certain cultural identities, depending on how the translation is carried out. The study suggests that greater awareness of the cultural dimensions of translation can lead to more responsible and culturally sensitive translation practices.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The article concludes that literary translation plays a crucial role in shaping and transmitting cultural identity. Translators, as cultural intermediaries, have a significant impact on how cultural narratives are represented and understood across linguistic boundaries. The study suggests that translators should be more aware of their role in cultural mediation and strive to maintain a balance between cultural fidelity and accessibility. Additionally, the study advocates for a more nuanced approach to translation, one that recognizes the importance of cultural context and the ethical implications of translation choices. Future research could explore the impact of digital technologies on literary translation and cultural identity, as well as the role of translation in the global circulation of literature. By continuing to investigate the relationship between translation and cultural identity, scholars and practitioners can contribute to the development of translation practices that are both culturally sensitive and ethically responsible.

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