

Comparative Literature and Translation Studies: Approaching an Understanding Between the Two



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ABSTRACT: Comparative literature cannot be thought of as ignoring translation. Instead, translation studies are more critical for comparative literature, as every word has several connotations for various cultures. Through translation, works of literature can influence each other, and people come closer to other cultures and understand others better. Most Indian readers, through the intermediary of translation, get access to the works of Goethe, Tolstoy, Balzac, Shakespeare, Gorky and many more.

Translation studies as a subject have greater scope across the globe. Different Indian universities have started running degree or diploma courses in translation studies, and the new generation is attracted to it. Several public or private organisations need translators as public relations officers in their offices.

This paper needs to consider the vital role translation plays in the broader literary phenomenon to demonstrate the impossibility of the general theory of literature. The circulation of texts and readings of world literature is only possible through translation, not as canonical literary texts. The paper explores translational studies' role in defining literature as a space between the source and receiving cultures and examines the comparative relationship literature has with translation studies.

KEYWORDS: Comparative literature, General theory of literature, Indian readers, Peripheral literature, Translation studies.

INTRODUCTION

Out of several definitions, comparative literature is clearly defined as the study of 'literature without walls' (Meltzl, 1973, p. 42). It ranges across all nations regardless of languages, times, genres and boundaries. It, not following Goethe's concept of Weltliterature, has an equal focus on all kinds of literature. Giving little importance to the power of nations and language, it instead studies the relationships among several works of literature, minor or significant. It tries to explore similarities and differences between them.

However, Rene Wellek, one of the European scholars, finding it against nationalism, says, "Comparative Literature arose as a reaction against the narrow nationalism of much nineteenth-century scholarship, as a protest against isolationism of many historians of French, German, Italian, English literature" (2009, p. 165). However, while world literature takes interest only in major world languages, comparative literature takes care of both minor and significant works together. Also, studying literature and cultural expressions across linguistic, geographic, national and disciplinary limitations, comparative literature, as an academic field, "is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country, and the study of the relationship between the literature on the one hand other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts (e.g., painting, sculpture, architecture, music), philosophy, history, the social sciences (e.g., politics, economics, sociology), the sciences, religion, etc., on the other. In brief, it is the comparison of one literature with another or others, and the comparison of literature with other spheres of human expression" (Block, 1964, p. 78).

Comparative literature, grown into a methodised field of knowledge with its share of sceptical criticisms, has also, as a field of knowledge, undergone multiple but gradual structural changes. It's universal 'connection' that Matthew Arnold, in his Inaugural Lecture at Oxford in 1857, spoke of was still Euro-centric in the application. Even in the twentieth century, its constricted definitions bear the examples of 'white' solipsism. For example, Paul Van Tieghem speaks of it as "the mutual relations between Greek and Latin literature" (1931, p. 57). Rene Wellek also defines its historicity in terms of "the influence of Walter Scott in France and the rise of the historical novel" (1970, p. 17). Comparative literature, after some time, like translational literary phenomena, shifted its approach and started looking beyond its national boundaries. The founding objective of the Indian Comparative Literature Association in 1981, according to Susan Bassnett, was to "arrive at a conception of Indian literature which will not only modernise our literature departments but also take care of the task of discovering the greatness of our literature and to present a panoramic view of Indian literary activities through the ages" (Bassnett, 1993, p. 39).

The practitioners of Comparative literature, after that, trying to maintain a balance between propagating literary understanding and cultural superiority, shifted their focus on comparing texts with new readings across cultures. Praver says that "the mutual illumination of several texts, or series of texts, considered side by side; the greater understanding we derive from juxtaposing several

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(frequently very different) works, authors and literary traditions" (1973, p. 102). In a somewhat ironic situation, comparative literature as an academic discipline grew, through the nineteenth century, with a parallel shift towards monolingualism in Europe and the rest of the English-speaking world. This shift denigrated the conventional binary model of literary comparative, requiring proficiency in several languages and readings of original texts. Bassnett rightly observes, "Whereas a Browning or a Pushkin had read works in various languages without thinking twice about it, a century later, the ability to read in several languages was beginning to be considered a sign of exceptional intelligence and education. Once knowledge of Greek and Latin was fundamental for any educated European, so by the 1920s, the pattern changed radically. By the 1990s, the knowledge of Greek and Latin was limited to a small specialist group. Moreover, the status of modern European languages in the nineteenth century is completely altered today. French, once regarded as probably the most widely used European language across Central and Eastern Europe and throughout Africa and the Middle East, has fallen into second place behind English, the new world language of commerce...this spread of English, combined with the decline of classical languages has also had an impact on comparative literary studies" (1993, p. 42).

Subsequently, 'translation,' replacing linguistic difference as a condition for comparing literature, emerged as an essential tool for this act. Bassnett escapes mentioning the growing popularity of Indian, African-American, and Latin-American literature that have often been considered 'non-canonical.' Hence, each of these disciplines requires a look into their theoretical paradigms and the different ways translation studies can benefit its predecessor as the second to attain academic legitimacy

.Before the practice of Comparative literature, comparative literary theories are not supposed to be coherent knowledge bodies. Comparative studies, with Francis Meres' *A Comparative Discourse of Our English Poets with the Greek, Latin and Italian Poets*, with reference to literature, are said to have been initiated in 1598. Robert Lowth, as early as 1753, while propounding on the additive values of juxtaposing the cultural-intellectual framework of the British-English and Hebrew writings, tried theorising modes of comparative studies. He observed, "We must see all things with their eyes [i.e. ancient Hebrews]: estimate all things by their opinion; ... We must act...with regard to the branch of...science which is called comparative...in order to form a perfect idea of the general system and its different part, conceive themselves as passing through, and surveying, the whole universe, migrating from one planet to another and becoming for a short time inhabitants of each" (1835, pp. 113-14).

The translation is being used right from the history of human civilisation. Human beings, for a long, have been using language to translate their thoughts and ideas. Using symbols or codes to transfer an idea, thought, or feeling to others is nothing but an act of translation in some way or the other. Hence, in this context, we translate every day. Moreover, the term 'translation studies' refers to an academic branch of humanity that systematically studies the interdisciplinary theory, description and application of translation and interpretation. It, to support translation, borrows much from the several branches of study, including comparative literature, history, philosophy, philology, etc. James S. Holmes, an Amsterdam-based American scholar, coined the term 'translation studies' in his 1972 paper "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" (1972/1988, pp. 67-80). This paper is considered a foundational statement for the discipline (Munday, 2008, p. 4).

In the 19th century, translation study was considered a threat to literature because it was treated as a misinterpretation. Its accuracy regarding the sameness with the original text could have been better. In the beginning, many conservatives did not accept the translation of many texts, particularly religious ones such as the Bible. They thought that if the Bible got translated, its words, being the words of God, would lose their meaning. People thought that when a text got translated, it lost its originality; nay, the translation would not make any sense. However, the need for translation got acknowledged, with comparative literature getting developed beyond the European literature.

Most of us know and are well-versed in the world's dominant languages, and we hardly bother with less-spoken languages. But when the matter of study of the works of less-spoken languages comes before us, we feel helpless because of our non-speaking and non-understanding of those languages. And it is here that we, in comparative literature, find the importance of translation studies. With translation, works of less-spoken languages become comprehensible to many people. Hence, studying and understanding minor languages is more important than getting them translated into major ones. Also, the knowers and speakers of minor languages can, thanks to translation, study and understand the works of primary languages. The translation helps us understand the works of literature, languages, cultures, or even histories of various nations. It is translation, in a comparative study, that saves those less-spoken languages from going extinct.

Moreover, as another distinctive branch of knowledge, 'Translation Studies' has never fully understood Comparative Literature. Though both comparatists and translation theorists, from different cultural spaces, ostensibly juxtapose literary creations, their knowledge formation modalities can easily be seen with an essential difference. The original texts, in the early days of Comparative Literary Studies, required to be read in the original languages while translated texts were treated as secondary readability as "translation means carrying over a piece of a foreign language into one's own", unlike "comparison" which allows "to step into the other's language without carrying it across, and thus respecting the otherness of languages and cultures" (Corngold, 2005, pp. 139-145). This shows that translation studies needed a better relationship with comparative literature. However, owing to specific scholastic endeavours in the 1970s, the attitude towards translation studies began to change. Itamar Even-Zohar, one of the first to go for a systematic approach in thinking about the practice of translation, wrote, "[W]e [have] been tortured by clichés...that translation is never equal to the original, that languages differ from one another, that culture is 'also' involved with translation

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procedures, that when a translation is exact, it tends to be 'literal' and hence loses the spirit of the original, that the meaning of a text means both 'content' and 'style,' and so on" (1981: 5).

However, a ground for looking into the methodologies of translation studies, like comparative literature, to be constructed into a discipline emerged during the period, thanks to the offensive against the rather incoherent critique of translation as the producer of the spurious. The feminist critique of language in the 1980s started questioning the ideas of 'fidelity' of the translated texts to the language or their 'betrayal' of poetic senses. A comparison between the patrilineal kinship system and the superiority of the source text over the translation was made by Lori Chamberlain. Barbara Johnson also contributed by writing about 're-reading' through translated texts and subverting 'certainties' of the original text. And subsequently, post-cultural critics' determination of the fallacy to believe in the single, conclusive reading of the texts began to gain semantic plurality. Roland Barthes had already proclaimed the 'death' of the author, challenging the ownership of the original texts. And finally, Derrida, validating the ethics of translation in the untranslatability of the text, said, "As a matter of fact, I don't believe that anything can ever be untranslatable or, moreover, translatable" (1998/2001: 174-200).

LITERARY EXPLORATIONS

Translation theory, conspicuously, is much sparse in antiquity. The antique theories of translation, mainly situated in the rhetoric discipline, need to be more systematic remarks. Roman luminary commentators such as Cicero and Quintilian, the pioneers of translation theory, deemed it a pedagogical exercise. They debated against word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation practices. Composing Latin versions of the Greek orators' speeches, Cicero wrote, "I did not translate as an Interpreter, but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and the forms, or as one might say, the 'figures' of thought, but in a language which conforms to our usage and in so doing, I did not hold it necessary to render word-for-word, but I preserved the general style and the force of language" (1960, p. 364).

St. Jerome, in the fourth century B. C., approached the translation of the Septuagint Bible into Latin, which affected later translations of the Scriptures (Munday, 2001, p. 7). He also, for the sense of the original, negated the word-for-word approach by closely following the form of the original. For him, it might create a masked and absurd translation. He, vindicating his strategy, wrote, "Now I not only admit but freely announce that in translating from the Greek – except in the case of the Holy Scripture, where even a syntax contains a mystery – I render not word-for-word, but sense-for-sense" (Jerome, 1997, pp. 22-30).

John Dryden, making significant strides by his trichotomy on translation types, negated metaphor (word-for-word) for lacking fluency or easy readability and imitation as well, that adapted the foreign texts to serve the translator's literary ambitions; instead, he favoured the paraphrase or translation with latitude which sought to render meanings (qt. in Venuti, 2004, pp. 17-18).

At its very outset, Romanticism discussed the issue of translatability and untranslatability. While writing his seminal paper titled "The Different Methods of Translating," Friedrich Schleiermacher, a German translator, "went beyond word-for-word, literal, sense-for-sense or free translation. Arguing for bringing the source-text writer and the target-text reader together, he opined, "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader towards the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer towards the reader" (Schleiermacher, 1813/1992, pp. 41-42).

The twentieth-century thinkers, rethinking these ideas from the modernist movement viewpoint, focused on the 'autonomy' of the translation, its status as a text in its own right, a derivative but independent work of significance. In his *The Task of the Translator*, Walter Benjamin suggests that a translation should not aim to provide the readers with an understanding of the meaning or information content of the original. It should exist separably but in conjunction with the original, coming after it and giving it a 'continued life' (1968, pp. 69-82). Benjamin argues that an actual translation should be transparent. It should not cover the original, block its light, but allow the pure language to shine upon the original. A translator, according to Benjamin, can achieve this by a literal rendering of the syntax, which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary elements.

Emily Susan Apter, a modern American academic, translator and professor of French and Comparative Literature, trying to break the identification of language with a nation, says, "In naming a translational process constitutive of its disciplinary nomination comparative literature breaks the isomorphic fit between the name of a nation and the name of a language" (2009, p. 410). She, proposing a 'new comparative literature' based on translation, sees several initiations in the works of Leo Spitzer, Jacques Derrida, Edward Said and Gayatri Spivak. Apter believes in a lasting relationship between humans, nation and language and cites Leo Spitzer's famous statement that "Any language is human prior to be national: Turkish, French and German languages first belong to humanity and then to Turkish, French and German peoples" (Spitzer, 1933/2011, p. 41). Apter considers translation as a way of denationalisation of literature.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, an Indian theorist and philosopher, says, "If you want to make the translated text accessible, try doing it for the person who wrote it" (2009, p. 407). For her, when a translator considers the receiver, his/her translation becomes valid; otherwise, it fails to go further except for its own country. Instead of her much support for the idea of translation, Spivak instead goes for learning the other languages in order to be able to make a comparison. She says, "If you are interested in talking about the other, and/or in making a claim to be the other, it is crucial to learn other languages" (2009, p. 407). She finds learning the target language as the key to comparative literature. If one does not know the language of the original text, one reads just what the translator

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sees from his/her point of view. Pointing out the importance of close reading in translation, she says, “Unless the translator has earned the right to become the intimate reader, he/she cannot surrender to the text, respond to the special call of the text” (2009, p. 400). However, because of translation studies moving ahead of Comparative literature, she, in her *Death of a Discipline*, finds Comparative Literature approaching its end. Nowadays, everything is being translated, and if it goes on like that, a day is bound to come when there is a dearth of original texts to make comparisons.

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive as well as an analytical approach was adopted for the preparation of the paper. Moreover, a quantitative content analysis was employed to find the recent research works' trends, trace the innovative translational contributions to Comparative Literature and establish a base for future research. A quantitative content analysis aids in summarising several research articles and presenting a solid and justifiable generalisation in the research field (Ozcinar, 2009, pp. 559-580). The study was based on research papers found from different database websites by using keywords such as 'Comparative literature, General theory of literature, Indian readers, Peripheral literature, and Translation studies.'

Out of almost more than two hundred research articles available on different websites, only forty were found relevant to keywords, having full text with open access availability. Journals' years of publication, being recent and accessible were chosen between 1960 and 2018.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Languages and linguistic identities, as of now, are the embodiment of national culture. Consequently, literary works produced in different languages of a nation will always have nationally sanctioned cultural validities. Theories of comparative literature, hence, even being very conscious of the existence of national boundaries, have followed a dual policy of including these boundaries. A comparatist, during his/her use of translated text, generally bases a binary study model on the cultural specification of the original text. Zhirmunsky's comparisons of Pushkin and Byron contributing to the theory of typological analogies and inter-literariness or studying the Shakespearean inter-semiotic translations by applying the same theoretical principles, for example, can be said of being derived from the linguistic vis-à-vis the cultural vis-à-vis national boundaries of such works. The target-oriented poly system theory in translation studies, however, leading to a state of flux in the linguistic identity of the text, shifts the emphasis to the 'translated' text and thus uses the semanticity of the target language to express and internalise a different set of cultural values. Samuel Weber rightly observes, "[The] linguistic systems between which translations move are designed as 'natural' or 'national' languages. However, these terms are anything but precise or satisfactory. The imprecision of these terms is in direct proportion to the linguistic diversity they seek to subsume. The difficulty of finding a generic term that would accurately designate the class to which individual languages belong is indicative of the larger problem of determining the principles that give those languages their relative unity or coherence – assuming, that is, that such principles really exist" (2005, p. 66).

No language, in such a situation, can be said to solely belong to certain specifications validated by national boundaries. One language, therefore, can be differentiated from another through the basis of its spatial associations as well as under several parameters such as gender, age group, social strata, etc. Emily Apter, finding this notion's traces in the Derridian notion of translation, tries to extend it to the non-nationalism notion of translation. Apter finds the particularly productive model of comparatist that adopts the idea of "neighbouring" languages, pieces of literature and communities of speakers, with the "neighbourhoods" being defined by contiguity and ethical encounter rather than by similitude and cultural influence (2006: 247). She further contends that "[i]n naming a translational process constitutive of its disciplinary nomination comparative literature breaks the isomorphic fit between the name of a nation and the name of a language" (2006, p. 243).

A linguistic identity, through the utilisation of the above concept, can, by comparative literary theory, be looked beyond its solipsistic cultural connotations. Moreover, this can broaden the horizon of comparative studies of texts in a critical paradigm more concerned with the person rather than the cultural dimensions of the texts. For example, a comparison between the texts of George Eliot and Sharatchandra Chattopadhyay may be derived from socio-cultural connotations placed in a given Victorian and post-independent Indian social milieu, the dominant technique and the purpose of using language as a cultural identity. The comparison between the linguistic and socio-cultural identities of the colonised and the colonisers may become inevitable. This new theoretical formation may, however, emphasise the variant gender of both authors and their gendered aesthetics and make the different treatment of a theme dissociated from its current social value viable.

To understand it better in particular culturally enunciated situations devoid of national boundaries, we may, for example, apply comparative theories to tribal works of literature and find that it always emphasises the capacity and aesthetic values of the 'tribal' language in the understanding of tribal works of literature. The target-oriented approach of translator praxis, however, focuses, having no tribal context in mind, on literary aesthetics and other concerns. Therefore, it seems better to base the comparison between a mainstream poem in any of the languages of the Indian tribes or Australian aboriginals on languages' stylistics and their thematic impacts rather than on it being a part of cultural validation. However, we should not take this attempt as a negation of socio-political values of literary understanding. It is instead an attempt to explore other avenues of comparison. This new attempt is considered to

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subvert the accepted norms of establishing cultural connotations at the helm. It, hitherto, considers, to a certain extent, the consequences of culture, such as poetics, thematic, or even stylistics, as the primary concerns.

The possibility of a reception-oriented comparative literary theory extends from its strictly critical paradigm and chances of getting modified by emphasising the receptive functionality of translation studies' poly-system theory. H. J. Vermeer finds this approach (reception-oriented), in the context of translator practice, considering the needs of the target-culture system and the application of different ways by the translator's independent agency to fulfil the system's needs. He says, "[The] translator's *skopos* [is] a decisive factor in a translation project...[T]he *skopos* is a complexly defined intention whose textual realisation may diverge widely from the source text as to reach a 'set of addressees' in the target culture. The success of the translation depends on its coherence with the addressees' situation. Although the possible responses to a text cannot be entirely predicted, a typology of essential guidelines may guide the translator's labour and the historical study of translation" (2000, p. 229).

Bearing affiliations with the readers-response criticism and being derived largely from the aesthetics of reception, the abovesaid theoretical context presents a text's understanding as a liberation from the prescriptive formats. The post-structuralist literary position also, by dismantling the particularity of or rather the approaches to the meanings of a text, enabled it. In translation studies, the parameters of measuring the accuracy, as well as the shift of cultural-ideological values, get lost during comparisons between the source text and the target text. In this way, a cross-cultural interchange, without any hierarchical strengthening of the source culture, takes place that places the target culture into academic focus. And people start studying the translated texts for their merit of the re-creation of aesthetic values, not for the changes initiated through translation. Thus, new avenues of interpretation get opened which, without referencing the source texts, compare the translated texts and also offer a central concern for the literary merit of the translator.

This viewpoint, thus, dramatically enriches comparative vis-à-vis translated literature. However, when, mainly in a diachronic (but also synchronic) manner, the theoretical position of borrowing motifs, themes or ideas or even matters of stylistics between authors is evaluated by applying this viewpoint, the translated texts assume an independent functionality. To make it more clear, we may take an example of a film inspired by a novel. Based on the story of Miss Marple, *Subho Mohorot* (2003), a National Award-Winning Bengali film by Rituporno Ghosh, was inspired by Christie's *The Mirror Cracked From Side To Side* (1962). Ghosh, in this film, not only borrows the revenge theme and the central characters of the novel but also transforms the 19th-century British situation with Victorian remnants to a 20th-century Kolkata having modern urban complexities and problematises the concept of inter-semiotic translation. However, the film is not only a celluloid version of the crime thriller but also presents a deep interest in human relationships. Comparative theoretical position, thus, depends on the differentiated treatment of a similar storyline.

Often seen merely as a possibility, the detachment from the origin and reverting to the consequences as a mode of comparison requires conscious theorising. Rather than borrowing, the phenomena of re-writing, coming into focus through reception theory, is more complicated, having more researchable insights than presumed. As Andre Lefevere says, "Re-writing...is an essential strategy which guardians of a literature use to adapt what is 'foreign' (in time and/or genealogical location) to the norms of the receiving culture. As such, re-writing plays a significant part in developing literary systems. On another level, rewritings are evidence of reception and can be analysed as such. These would appear to be two perfectly good reasons to give the study of re-writing a more central status in both literary theory and comparative literature" (1992, p. 89).

The process-oriented translation practice, theorised by James Holmes in his *Descriptive Translation Studies* and later extended by Zohar's poly-system theory with important implications in understanding the hierarchy discerned in the heterogenous structure of literature, begets the motivations of comparative study. The focus, in the translational process, instead of merely concentrating on the translator's thought processes, shifts to the means of translations being chosen and the functioning of those ways within the literary system. The theorisation of translation, therefore, is very conscious of the cultural and political implications of the translational process. Even Zohar rightly observes, "Translated literature fulfils the needs of young literature to put its renewed tongue in use in as many literary genres as possible in order to make it functional as a literary language and useful for its emerging public. Since when it is young and in the process of being established, young literature cannot create major texts in all genres until its poly-system has crystallised; it greatly benefits from the experience of other pieces of literature. Translated literature becomes, in a way, one of its most important systems" (1981, p. 117).

The process-oriented translation practice delves into the political connotations of translation. Comparative, which hitherto has generally been concerned with the end product, follows this system as a critical-aesthetic paradigm of exploring literary values without referencing the socio-political implications of bringing texts together. According to Emily Apter, it is a sense of globalisation that subsumes all national boundaries just for the sake of the aesthetic merits of a text. Apter further says, "In many ways, the rush to globalise the literary canon in recent years may be viewed as the 'comp-lit-ization' of national works of literature throughout the humanities. Comparative literature was, in principle, global from its inception. Comparative literature necessarily works toward a non-nationally defined disciplinary locus, especially in an extremely globalised economy..." (2006, p. 42).

These geopolitical, national boundaries, however, were often deliberately made invisible to an emphasis on literary sensibilities. This is another possible theoretical position, contrary to the theory of dissociating linguistic identities from strict cultural specifications, being derived from the existence, not negation, of national boundaries. Thus, the non-recognised factors, such as the

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effects of a political motive behind a comparative study and the power structures in juxtaposing two cultural structures focusing more on such effects than the aesthetic values of a literary text, can best be ordained through the process-oriented theory of comparative study. To clarify, let's take examples of Bishnu Dey and T. S. Eliot, the two modernist poets belonging to a regional language in India, heralding the era of 'New Poetry' in the post-Tagorean era. While comparing their poetry, we will definitely find the domination of the latter's ideas on the former. It suggests that the balance of power will always be tilted towards the Europeans and that any negation of European modernism by the non-European recipient will be perceived as a form of subversion in post-colonial comparative literary theory. A tribal writer, on the other hand, in this case, through all the tribal social structures, will be taken as opposed to a mainstream writer. And here, with the help of the process-oriented approach of translation studies, the comparative study becomes aware of the power structures' influence over the aesthetic elements and the power structure itself being an object of study.

With the onset of the twentieth century, translation theories, especially in relation to linguistics, semantics and socio-cultural connotations of language, have come to deconstruct (and sometimes reconstruct) hegemonic systems. Lori Chamberlain, Susan Bassnett, and Sherry Simon (some of the renowned Feminist translation scholars) have, while theorising about translation, structured a sexualised terminology for it by repeatedly using metaphors of 'infidelity' or alternative marriage contract. The use of these metaphors for translation led, through the binary model of gender, to a reinterpretation of various concepts of translation theories. Lori Chamberlain, for example, offers a re-reading, for the sake of an exchange in a man-woman relationship, of the hermeneuticist concept of George Steiner. This approach in translation studies, by creating a semantic/cultural situation of overt sexual politicisation of 'language,' makes it a tool of gender expression. Chamberlain, for example, expresses, "Writing within the hierarchy of gender...the [gender] paradigm becomes universal and the male and female roles...are essential rather than accidental" (2004, p. 313). The translation studies theorists, therefore, being conscious of the differences in the usage of language, have based their studies of language on inferences drawn from differentiating genders. The metaphoric translation, moreover, unmask a tension between anxiety related to the myths of paternity and a profound dichotomy in the role of maternity. The translation theorists, thus, with language as the means of articulation and exemplification, unveil a remarkable consciousness regarding the binary construction of gender. And the translators also, on the other hand, with reference to gender, differentiate the usages of language. For example, George Steiner, vindicating a difference in choice of phrases, says, "[W]omen's speech is richer than men's in those shadings of desire and futurity known in Greek and Sanskrit as optative; women seem to verbalise a wider range of qualified resolve and masked promise...Certain linguistic differences do point towards a physiological basis or, to be exact, towards the intermediary zone between the biological and the social" (1975, pp. 41-43). Not being primarily antithetical to feminist studies, this male-female differentiation of language rather develops in a different direction. Though being influenced to an extent by Feminist discourses, comparative literature now does not seem to be really conscious of the binary concept of comparing the gender values of writing. Women's representations or works of women writers, related to cultural and temporal dimensions, have been explored by thematic comparative studies. Though Susan Bassnett, in *Gender and Thematics*, has acknowledged the contributions of feminist literary theory in comparative literature, theoretical perspectives say something other. It hardly ensures the comparison between gendered expressions. Hence, comparatists can, from the tenets of translation studies, juxtapose literary works as gendered expressions beyond a feminist standpoint. Comparative, therefore, can, through comparative analysis of literary works referring to writers' gender, be devised as a means of interrogating masculinity as well as femininity as a construct. And this may not be confined to a non-heteronormative framework and should be extended to 'queer' works as well.

CONCLUSION

This brief analysis of the understanding between these two disciplines contributes towards the direction where both disciplines need to explore newer avenues of knowledge for sustenance. The convergence of several modalities of knowledge such as area studies, gender studies, modes of reading cultures, etc., Comparative Literary theories has, in the application, become a heterogeneous episteme. Its relationship to Translation studies is a mutually enriching one. The monolingualism vs multilingualism conflicts are slowly going outdated. Instead, the theoretical developments of both disciplines are getting more potential when the methodologies of one discipline are often applied to the other. This suggests the creation of a more balanced understanding between the two. It is the equilibrium, not a power struggle, between these disciplines that can counter the hegemonic formations of cultural politics responsible for impeding the study of understanding between language and literature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My paper is an original research work. It has not been funded by any agency. It has neither been sent anywhere for publication nor for consideration.

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