

GENDER AND TRANSLATION

Arabboyeva Mubinabonu Doniyor qizi
Master's student at Andijan
State Institute of Foreign Languages

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Abstract: This article is an attempt to investigate the relationship between the gender of a translator and the gender of the evaluator of the work of that translator. The researcher hypothesizes that if a male rater is to evaluate a translated text done by both a man and a woman, he would unconsciously choose the translation of the same gender and vice versa. To test this hypothesis, 60 (30 men and 30 women) senior students of the translation training program at the Maritime University of Chabahar were selected and participated in the experiment. The test included 20 questions; it was designed based on two translations of one chapter of a short story which was translated one by a male and the other by a female translator from English to Persian. Two of the answer options were the translations of the two translators and the others were wrong translations. The subjects were asked to choose just the one which was nearest to their own opinions.

Key Words: Translation, Gender, Translator, Evaluation, Rater, Short Story

In the past three decades, gender issues have received a wide coverage in the education literature. Working at the intersections of gender, race, and class, education scholars have tried to understand which students are disadvantaged by particular contexts and what can be done to address these inequities. Two areas remain largely invisible in the larger field of research on gender in education, however. One relates to the unique challenges faced by educators working in linguistically and culturally diverse contexts, where learners bring with them distinct and oftentimes conflicting gender ideologies and practices. Second, are those working in foreign Language Classrooms, where students are introduced to the ‘imaginary worlds’ of other languages whose gender ideologies and practices may appear unfamiliar or perhaps even illegitimate. Consequently, the aim of this chapter is to survey research on gender issues in the education of linguistically diverse speakers and in foreign/second language education. In recent years, the concept of gender has also been the focus of some research in the field of translation studies and a number of scholars have investigated this subject (Simon 1996; Von Flotow, 1997, 2001; Chamberlain, 1998; Santaemilia, 2005; Strauss, 1998; State 1994)

According to Von Flotow (2001) the issue of gender and translation can be investigated in historical studies, theoretical considerations, issues of identity, post-colonial questions, and questions of cultural transfer. While most of the research done regarding gender in translation has dealt with the issue of the translators' gender identity and its effect on their translations, the present study is on the relationship between the gender of a translator and the gender of the evaluator of the work of that translator.

Since the subjects of the present study act like translation raters, it can be said that this study implicitly deals with the concept of translation evaluation. Although translation evaluation has been the focus of a considerable volume of research in translation studies, it still seems to be a controversial concept in this field and, like the existing approaches to translation quality evaluation, has some deficiencies (Colina, 2008).

Thus, the present study aims at investigating whether or not there is any relationship between the gender of a translator and that of the evaluator of the translator's work..

The major objective of this article was to find out an answer to this question that whether the gender of a translation evaluator can have an effect on his or her rating of a translation which is done by a male and a female translator. The study reported here indicated that the difference between the answers of the two groups as measured by the standard deviations was not meaningful. Therefore, in translation evaluation, the gender of the evaluator can be ignored. There are some limitations in this study. First, since the translated text used here was a short story, generalizing the finding of this study to the translation evaluation of other kinds of texts can be difficult. Second, the focus of the study was just on translation; interpretation was not included. Hence, conducting research on the translation evaluation of other texts could provide broader insights. This study has implications for translation evaluation and testing. It is suggested that the same study be done on the other kinds of text and on interpretation. Moreover, we also recommend that in the future studies be done on gender differences in the process of translation or interpretation.

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