

Gender Representation in the English Translation of the Urdu Short Story 'Parbati' by Farkhanda Lodhi

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: Gender representation is a key area of study within sociolinguistics, focusing on the analysis of gender identity and how it is conveyed across languages. This article examines gender representation in the English translation of the Urdu short story *Parbati* by Farkhanda Lodhi, translated by Samina Rahman and included in an anthology compiled by Amir Hussein in 2005. The study explores how gender is portrayed in the translation and how the translator's linguistic choices, influenced by the process of translation, affect the representation of gender ideology. While both the author and the translator are women, the male editor's role in compiling the anthology is considered in the analysis of potential shifts in gender representation.

Methodology: Using Sherry Simon's framework from *Gender in Translation*, this research applies discourse analysis to identify translation challenges, particularly those related to faithfully conveying the source text's meaning and preserving gender dynamics. Comparative analysis of extracts from both the original Urdu and its English translation is employed to assess these issues.

Findings: The study finds that translation is a complex task requiring careful lexical and grammatical choices to maintain meaning. However, certain points in both the source and translated texts reflect the portrayal of women as weak and powerless, a tendency that can be exacerbated in patriarchal contexts, contributing to gender bias.

Conclusion: Ultimately, the research concludes that a translator's lexical decisions play a significant role in shaping gender identities and in negotiating the representation of gender ideologies in translated works.

Keywords: Gender Representation, Urdu Short Story, Parbati, Translation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the significant topics in sociolinguistics is 'language and gender'. In the 1960s, Feminists claimed that English is a sexist language. Sexism is about the behaviours that promote and maintain the inequalities between men and women. It seems odd to believe that a language can be sexist rather than its users (Holmes and Welson, 2017).

Research initially concentrated on two main areas: distinct male and female speaking styles and how language refers to and treats women and men.

According to Wardhaugh (2010), gender is an aspect of social identity, and both linguistic and social behaviour are abstracted from the communities in which they occur. It is crucial to grasp the diverse belief systems that influence people's linguistic behaviour to comprehend the dynamics of language acquisition and use fully.

Language is actively involved in the construction of meaning and serves as a means of communicating reality to others. As a result, translation refers to transferring information between languages. Hence, gender studies have received much attention in research and translation.

This essay will first provide some background information on several aspects of gender imbalance in the English Language within the literature review; secondly, describe the short story text in Urdu to be examined; thirdly, detail the methods for qualitative analysis; and finally, reveal the results of the analysis and discuss the findings.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on Gender and language have examined language used by women and men in terms of phonology, syntax, and lexicon through conversation analysis. Gender-based language differences contribute to the unequal power dynamics between male and female genders (Alami, 2016). Exploring gender issues in translation encompasses various linguistic, cultural, and socio-political dimensions. Since the 1990s, there has been a growing emphasis on gender-related concerns within translation studies.

2.1 *Sexism in Language Use*

In this section, we will discuss examples of sexism in the English Language, although it is established that sexism also exists in other languages. Cameron (1992) has noted that the English lexicon and grammatical system contain features that exclude, insult, and trivialise women. Some of these features result from the dynamic nature of language and cultural impact. Let's look at these features in detail.

2.1.1 *Omission*

Omission refers to the exclusion of women from discussions. According to Spender (1987), this can occur on multiple levels. First, by completely disregarding women's experiences, for example, portraying motherhood solely as a joyful and beautiful experience, while it may not be for all women. Second, the generic term "man" is often intended to include women, but it fails to do so effectively.

Omission is not a relevant feature of gender bias in English in modern times; however, it is essential to discuss it briefly here as it will be looked at in relation to translational dynamics.

2.1.2 *Firstness*

Another area of language use which provides evidence of gender imbalance is "the order of mention, termed firstness" (Porreca, 1984, p. 706). When two gender-specific nouns or pronouns appear as a pair in a text, like mother/father or he/she, the one appearing in the first position can be interpreted as having a higher status; according to Holmes & Wilson (2017, p. 349), such a bias reinforces the second-place status of women and could, with little effort, be avoided by mixing the order.

2.1.3 *Nouns and Pronouns*

Nouns and pronouns used to describe men and women can also yield evidence of gender imbalance. Holmes and Wilson (2017, p. 347) commented on the semantics of English metaphors to describe women. Animal imagery, such as old biddy and cow, and food imagery, such as sugar, sweetie, and honey, have negative connotations. Spender (1987) commented that spinster and bachelor are used for female and male adult unmarried people, respectively. However, 'spinster' has a negative connotation. Similarly, words such as 'lord/lady' and 'Master/mistress', mistress have acquired a sexual connotation. According

to Spender (1987), the problem is not with the word but the semantic rule, which gives a positive or negative connotation.

2.2 *Discourse Aspects*

Extensive research has explored the differences in how men and women use language, both in conversation and expression. Women tend to use specific linguistic features, these features includes:

- a. Use of lexical hedges or fillers, e.g., you know, sort of, well, you see.
- b. Tag questions, e.g., she's very nice, isn't she?
- c. Rising intonation in statements, e.g., it's really good?
- d. 'Empty' adjectives, e.g., divine, charming, cute.
- e. Specific colour terms, e.g., magenta, aquamarine.
- f. Intensifiers such as just and so, e.g., I like him so much.
- g. 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g., consistent use of standard verb forms.
- h. 'Super polite' forms, e.g., indirect requests, euphemisms.
- i. Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g., fudge, my goodness.
- j. Emphatic stress, e.g., it was a BRILLIANT performance" (Wilson, 2017).

Discourse analysis from the 1970s and 1980s revealed that women's speech often differs from men's. Wardhaugh (2010) found that women tend to use more lexical hedges, intensifiers, a "submissive paralinguistic system," and super polite grammar, reinforcing a subordinate status. He also noted that men tend to dominate mixed-gender conversations, speaking more and for longer, while women were sometimes expected to remain silent.

It is important to recognize that these linguistic differences are not universal; they are shaped by factors such as social class, race, culture, discourse type, and group membership (Wardhaugh, 2010).

2.3 *Gender in Translation*

Grammatical gender and its related concept, "social gender," (Xanthippi, 2019) are key linguistic categories that illustrate how translation is not merely a "cross-cultural transfer" but also a cross-ideological one. Translation serves as a crucial bridge, connecting communities, cultures, ideologies, ideas, and languages, thus contributing significantly to globalization. Gender permeates every facet of life, influencing how we perceive and interpret the world (Abduazizovna, 2022).

Since the 1990s, researchers have increasingly focused on issues surrounding gender, sex, and feminism in translation, with their work impacting a wide range of academic disciplines globally (Hou et al., 2020). The structure of language, particularly in terms of gender—whether grammatical or pronominal—greatly affects the translation process and the target audience's interpretation of reality. Translators play a pivotal role in analysing gender dynamics in the source text and determining how these gendered connotations influence ideological meaning in both the source and target texts.

As Simon (2003) observes, both "women" and "translation" are often positioned in "discursive inferiority." The original text is seen as authoritative, akin to a "strong male," while the translation is perceived as a weaker, derivative "female." Feminism, however, seeks to dismantle patriarchal stereotypes and confront gender inequalities (Flotow, 2015). Simon (2003) explores how social, sexual,

and historical differences are expressed in one language and transferred across others, focusing on the “fidelities” expected of translators to express things as they are.

Fairclough (2013) has similarly analysed the relationship between discourse practices and social ideologies, particularly power and hegemony, arguing that language not only reflects but also constructs reality. Translation is a form of interlanguage transfer where translators communicate, rewrite, and adapt texts for second-language audiences. They can act as cultural mediators, altering expressions of domination at the levels of “concept, syntax, or terminology” (Simon, 2003, p. 9).

Gender issues in translation present numerous challenges. Misinterpretations can not only distort the text's meaning but may also cause offense. Three primary gender-related challenges in translation include:

Grammatical Gender: This refers to the gender assigned to nouns, which varies across languages. Some languages categorise nouns into masculine, feminine, or neuter categories based on cultural and linguistic norms. For instance, this classification leads to terms like "Hero" and "Heroine" (Saad, 2024).

Semantic Gender: This concerns the biological distinctions between male and female nouns, reflecting differences based on biology.

Social Gender: Social gender refers to the gender assumed based on a noun's use within a specific societal context. Although distinctions between sex, gender, and gender roles have become more fluid, linguistic categories often maintain rigid lines. For example, while the term "secretary" once implied a male role in English, this is no longer the case. Despite the recognition of gender as a continuum, historically and culturally gender roles remain highly stereotyped, making their translation contextually complex (Saldanha, 2019).

Moreover, translating what is "unsaid" presents additional challenges (Saad, 2024). In many cultures, nonverbal cues—such as body language, tone, and formality—carry significant meaning. In high-context cultures, communication relies heavily on contextual elements rather than explicit verbal exchanges. Thus, ensuring accuracy in translation requires not only the selection of appropriate words but also a nuanced preservation of intended meanings and subtleties for the target audience.

3. THE TEXT

The text under review is a short story, originally written in Urdu by Pakistani novelist Farkhanda Lodhi in 1966. The English translation, titled *Parbati*, appeared in the anthology *Kahani*, edited by Aamer Hussein and published in 2005. The narrative is set against the backdrop of the Indian Army's invasion on September 5-6, 1965, when Indian troops crossed the international border between India and Pakistan.

Lodhi's *Parbati* is a poignant exploration of gender dynamics, focusing on the complex interactions between men and women through its characters. The protagonist, Parbati (or Parveen), is a "symbolic name" (Hussein, 2005, p.9), which evokes the Hindu goddess Parbati—known for her power, devotion, and partnership with Shiva—establishing a thematic foundation of femininity and strength. The story is described as "a fable of strife, struggle and upward mobility, a modern fairy tale of a brave, exceptional but absolutely common and ordinary woman's self-actualisation" (Hussein, 2005, p. 9).

The plot follows Parbati, an Indian spy who enters Pakistan during wartime and marries a Pakistani Captain, Hassan, without revealing her existing marriage to Mehta in India. After Hassan discovers her true identity as a Hindu, he leaves her at the border, allowing her to return to India. Upon her return, Mehta finds out she is pregnant with Hassan's child and beats her. Rejected by everyone, Parbati tries to return to Hassan but is tragically killed by border forces. The story critiques societal stereotypes and gender expectations that obstruct women's happiness.

This study focuses on gender representation in the English translation of *Parbati* and examines how gender is portrayed in both the Source Text (ST) and the Target Text (TT). It also explores how the translator's gender ideology influences this representation. According to Simon (2003), the translator's

perspective on gender plays a significant role in shaping the translation. The study further investigates the translational strategies used by the translator, Samina Rahman, to either maintain or alter the meanings of the original text.

By analysing both the original Urdu story and its English translation, this study seeks to understand the linguistic and cultural portrayal of gender and the broader implications for translation.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach to provide a comprehensive analysis of the data. The comparative analysis of the ST and TT uses Sherry Simon's theoretical framework from *Gender in Translation* (2003) in conjunction with Fairclough's (2013) critical discourse analysis (CDA). Simon explores how gender is represented in translation, viewing translation as a form of rewriting that operates within specific historical, social, and cultural contexts. Translators, in Simon's view, are literary activists who create new meanings. Fairclough's three-dimensional CDA framework is employed to analyse the relationship between language and society, particularly how ideology is embedded in language and discourse. CDA examines how lexical choices and translation strategies represent gender and the broader sociopolitical context, contributing to power and hegemony in discourse.

Fairclough outlines several principles of CDA, including:

- CDA addresses social problems,
- Power relations are discursive,
- Discourse shapes society and culture,
- Discourse is historical and ideological, and
- Discourse analysis is interpretive and explanatory, mediating between text and society.

The translation process, often complicated by differences in conceptualising words and ideas across languages, employs various techniques like literal translation, free translation, and sense-for-sense translation (Baker, 2019). The translator must balance the mediation between the source and target cultures without altering meanings.

The study follows a comparative analysis, including overall visibility, firstness, imagery, and discourse, to determine the representation of men and women.

4.1 Procedure

1. The study analyses the short story *Parbati*, written by Farkhanda Lodhi and translated into English by Samina Rahman.
2. Random examples are extracted from the ST and TT for analysis using different translation strategies.
3. Lexical choices are examined in relation to the translator's influence on representing gender identities.
4. The results are discussed within the theoretical framework of Simon (2003) and Fairclough (2010).

4.2 Visibility

To determine the relative visibility of men and women in *Parbati*, three categories of characters are identified:

- **Main characters:** Actively contribute to the plot and are named.
- **Secondary characters:** Referenced by main characters and identified by name.

- **Tertiary characters:** Referred to by common nouns (e.g., "soldier", "evacuee"). Visibility analysis considers the collective and individual representation of these character types, noting gender disparities.

4.3 *Firstness*

Firstness considers the order of mention for male/female characters, common noun pairs, and pronouns in the narrative of both ST and TT. The frequency of first-place occurrences for male and female characters will be counted and analysed.

4.4 *Imagery*

The analysis will focus on imagery in TT and ST, examining the metaphors used to describe male/female genders.

4.5 *Discourse*

The study also evaluates discourse to determine gender dominance in the ST and TT by analysing the amount and quality of speech attributed to male and female characters in the light of tag questions, politeness, and turn-taking. The gender that interrupts more or consistently initiates conversations will be considered dominant.

This study explores how women are represented in the translation of *Parbati* and whether translation strategies affect gender representation.

5. RESULTS & DISCUSSION OF ANALYSIS

This section provides a qualitative analysis of sentences from the ST and their translations in the TT using Simon's (2003) framework and Fairclough's (2013) model of CDA. Some numerical data is included to determine the frequency of masculine nouns/pronouns appearing first in both texts. According to Cameron (1992) and Swann (1992), the gender mentioned first typically signifies dominance.

5.1 *Visibility*

In both the original and translated versions of the story, women are prominently featured, particularly because the protagonist is a female character named Parbati/Parveen. Although the story lacks a clear antagonist, it compensates by introducing three distinct secondary characters:

1. **Sidekick:** Zainab, a young female companion supports, Parbati throughout the narrative.
2. **Foil:** "Grand Colonel Mehta" is a foil to Parbati, contrasting her strengths and weaknesses (Hussein, 2005).
3. **Shapeshifter:** Hassan, initially portrayed as a "victorious warrior" and "brave soldier" (Hussein, 2005), changes allegiances when he abandons Parbati upon learning she is a Hindu/Indian woman.

Tertiary characters include female evacuees, male servants, and soldiers. The gender of these characters is clear in ST and TT, with gender pronouns used to convey visibility, such as the phrase مردانکھون پر چشم لکائے was translated as "The man put on dark glasses" in the TT.

The balance of male and female characters ensures equal visibility for both genders. By making the protagonist female, the story amplifies female emotions and experiences, showcasing what Simon (2003) calls the "symbolic power of the feminine in language" (p. 8). According to Fairclough (2013), discourse patterns shaped by power dynamics influence the structure of the text. Although the story reflects a patriarchal society and depicts a woman's suffering at the hands of men, it can be interpreted as a critique of gender discrimination and an act of resistance through discourse as social action.

The visual representation is not considered here because both ST and TT were part of the anthologies, and no specific graphics or images accompanied the texts.

5.2 *Firstness*

Common noun/pronoun and proper noun pairs are critical for understanding "firstness," which signifies that the first-mentioned gender holds authority. In the ST, six instances of common noun/pronoun pairs, such as "men, women, and children," consistently place the male noun or pronoun first. Other examples include officer/old lady, brother/mother, Shiv/Parbati, and God/Adam/Eve. The TT mirrors this order, maintaining the precedence of male pronouns, likely due to translator's adherence to a literal translation approach. The table shows the order of proper nouns mentioned in ST and TT within the same or consecutive sentences, focusing on which gender appears first more frequently.

Table 1: *Indicating Instances proper noun pairs mentioned in ST and TT.*

Proper Noun Pairs	Times in ST (Urdu)	Times in TT (English)
Male proper noun before female proper noun in single sentences	11	11
Male proper noun before female proper noun in consecutive sentences	25	20
Female proper noun before male proper noun in single sentences	8	6
Female proper nouns before male proper nouns in consecutive sentences	15	12

In several instances, proper nouns in the ST were replaced by pronouns in the translation. This discrepancy in occurrences between the ST and TT highlights the linguistic nuances and structural differences between the two languages.

5.3 *Imagery*

Metaphors and personifications are ideologically specific, with cultural variations yielding differing connotations and actions (Saad, 2024).

5.3.1 *Imagery about Women*

In the Urdu version, the protagonist is metaphorically linked to figures such as "دیوی" (goddess) and "Eve," with terms like "ممتا" (mother), and "عظیم" (great) emphasising her spiritual and emotional strength alongside her nurturing nature. Conversely, Mehta employs metaphors of fire to portray Parbati negatively, asserting, "Parbati, you have consumed everything, burnt it to cinders... You have led Shiv astray." This reflects a societal tendency to hold women accountable for wrongdoing, underscoring their vulnerability in a male-dominated society.

5.3.2 *Imagery about Men*

In the ST, men are depicted using terms that denote authority, control, and insensitivity, such as "طاقتور" (powerful), "لعل" (a metaphor for sons) to "precious sons". These descriptors reinforce the patriarchal context of the narrative. The imagery used for men is juxtapositioned; one moment, a man is described as Shiv (a Hindu god), Adam, or even a rare gemstone, while in another moment, he is characterised as a "barbarian." Notably, Shiva is described with terms like "محافظ" (protector), suggesting balance and mutual respect, yet he ultimately abandons Parbati.

The representation of men as equal partners to Parbati is consistent in both the Urdu and English versions. Overall, the imagery surrounding Parbati remains consistently positive, contrasting sharply with the more ambivalent imagery applied to male characters.

5.4 Discourse

The amount of dialogue spoken by the main characters in the ST and TT was quantified by counting the total number of sentences they uttered. The following table illustrates the overall percentage of dialogue attributed to female and male characters.

Table 2: *Dialogue spoken by the characters in the ST and TT.*

Total sentences uttered	Female Talk		Male Talk	
	Total sentences	Percentage	Total Sentences	Percentage
103	43	42%	60	58%

It's striking that male characters, despite the narrative's female protagonist, dominate the dialogue. Parbati's responses, often minimal and non-descriptive, underscore her subordinate role. This highlights the profound influence of power dynamics on interactions, where individuals may choose silence in the presence of perceived superiors (Fairclough, 2013).

Conversely, Coates (2004) posits that women often display politeness through silence and smiling responses. For instance, "Parveen showed her appreciation of this unimportant event with tiny chuckles" (Hussein, 2005). Evidence indicates that Parbati/Parveen prefers not to interrupt others and is seen listening to her husband's stories. This minimal response or patient listening can be interpreted in two ways: as evidence of politeness or as a lack of authority. Cameron (1992) notes that "men can take the lion's share of the floor in the cross-sex talk," as women often provide a listening ear with minimal responses like "mhm."

Throughout the narrative, characters generally take turns engaging in dialogue, except for one incident when the male foil character, Colonel Mehta, snaps at Parbati, a dynamic consistent in both versions of the story.

Additionally, two instances of tag questions are employed by groups of female tertiary characters, which are also replicated in the English translation due to a literal translation strategy. The use of tag questions by women may indicate a lack of assertiveness or may be interpreted as polite and considerate (Cameron, 1992). Coates (2004) views women's cooperative speech as emerging from a unique female subculture, developed through interactions in small groups where girls learn to maximise intimacy and minimise conflict.

5.5 Example 1 and Discussion

Table 3: *Source Text, Transliteration and English Translation.*

Source Text	Transliteration	English Translation
ہاے نی کدی حنکی کدی اے۔ نی ایدا کی بیے کا؟	Hai nee kadi chanji kuri ay. ayda kee banay gha?	'Hai nee, what a nice girl! What will become of her?' One would ask.
نی کافران کا ہنون لٹ لی؟	Nee kafraan kahnoon lut lay?	'Oh, why did the kafirs plunder her honour?'

This extract is from the story's beginning when Parbati arrives at a refugee camp disguised as a refugee and works as a spy. A group of evacuee women expresses concern about her future, which becomes apparent when Parbati reveals that her family abandoned her during a rushed evacuation and Indian soldiers raped her.

The phrase نی کا فران کا بنون لٹ لی is translated as, "Oh, why did the kafirs plunder her honour?" Here, the translator employs the "Addition" technique, adding the word "honour" to clarify the meaning for English-speaking audiences. This represents a mix of sense-for-sense and word-for-word translation strategies (Baker, 2019).

The phrase "Hai nee," a common lexical hedge women use for candid expression in Urdu, is transliterated in the TT to preserve cultural context. As Simon (2003) notes, translation is a process of rewriting and imparting meaning, while Fairclough (2013) suggests that texts reflect underlying social and cultural concepts, as seen here.

The women's concern highlights the patriarchal cultural norms, where a woman who has been raped is considered undesirable for marriage. In such societies, independence for women is not recognised, and marriage is seen as their primary purpose. What may seem like casual conversation on the surface reveals deep-rooted social and cultural expectations placed on women.

5.6 Example 2 and Discussion

Table 4: Source Text, Translation and English Translation.

Source Text	Transliteration	English Translation
جن کی سنکت میں وہ بے فکر دنگی کاٹ سکتی ہیں۔ حوا کی بیٹیاں اس کے علاوہ اور کچھ نہیں جاہتیں۔ اس کے علاوہ سو جنا دیر بات کی دو شیراؤں کے بس کی بات نہیں۔	Jin kee sanghat main woo bay fikaar zandaghi kaat sakti hain. Hawa (Eve) kee batiyan is kay alawa aur khuch nahin chahteen. Is kay alawa soochana deehat kee doosheezaon kay bus kee baat nahin.	Whose presence would ensure for them a carefree life. The daughters of Eve desire no more than this; to think beyond it is not possible for these simple village maidens.

This example depicts women in evacuation camps, emphasising their dependence on men for security and a "carefree life." The ST portrays women as waiting for the presence of "fathers, brothers, and future husbands," suggesting that these men ensure their well-being. The use of the word سنکت, translated as "presence," is closer in meaning to "companionship." This subtle translation shift alters the meaning, presenting women as more passive and reliant on men. Companionship implies mutual support, which is essential, but translating it as "presence" reduces this relationship to mere physical reliance. This reflects the patriarchal assumption that women depend entirely on men for their happiness and safety.

The narrative further emphasises that these women 'do not desire more than that,' reinforcing the societal view that limits women's roles and ambitions to the presence of men. By repeating this concept, the text conveys a societal view that limits women's roles and ambitions. The portrayal of 'simple village maidens' suggests that women from rural backgrounds, due to their lack of education and resources, can only imagine a life defined by male companionship. This implies an intellectual limitation imposed by societal norms, confining women to narrow, passive roles.

Simon (2003) argues that gender is constructed by societal perceptions rather than the true nature of women and underscores how translation reconstructs and represents gender identities. In this example, the translation subtly reinforces gender biases by shifting "companionship" to "presence," reflecting societal assumptions of women's dependency. Fairclough (2013) similarly asserts that language reveals hidden

ideologies and power dynamics. The translator, even with minor alterations, influences how women are portrayed, reinforcing traditional beliefs about gender.

Throughout the narrative, men, particularly the figure of Shiva, are depicted as equal partners to Parbati, characterised by terms like "protector" and "partner," highlighting mutual respect and collaboration. This example contrasts with how the village women are portrayed as entirely reliant on male presence.

Gender differences in language reflect deeper social structures, as Dong (2014) suggests. Even gender-neutral language can conceal masculine bias, which often persists despite changes in expression. Thus, while translations may alter wording, they may not fully challenge the underlying gender ideologies.

5.7 Example 3 and Discussion

Table 5: *Source Text, Transliteration and English Translation.*

Source Text	Transliteration	English Translation
وہ اسے دیکھنے لگا ٹکٹکی با ند بے تکتا رہا اور وہ جھینپ کھی	Woo usay deekhanay laga tiktee bandhay taktaa rahaa aur woo jheemp ghai.	He began to look at her, embarrassing her with his unblinking gaze.

This extract occurs during a scene where Hassan and Parveen/Parbati are newly married. Hassan, while having tea, gazes at his wife. The literal translation for *ٹکٹکی با ند بے تکتا رہا* is "unblinking gaze full of admiration and love," and the term *جھینپ* (blushing) is translated as "embarrassed." While the ST suggests Parbati blushed under her husband's gaze, the translation shifts this to Hassan "embarrassing her with his unblinking gaze."

This alteration changes the context from a romantic moment to one that implies discomfort. The translator's choice subtly shifts the portrayal of Hassan, suggesting hostile intentions instead of admiration. In the cultural context, blushing in response to admiration from a husband is typically seen as positive, reflecting mutual affection. However, the translation introduces an imbalance, suggesting that Hassan's gaze was a source of discomfort rather than endearment.

This translation reflects the social construction of gender roles, where the hierarchical dynamics between men and women are often framed around dominance and submission. As Simon (2003) notes, the translator's ideological perspective can significantly influence how meanings are transferred and adapted. By portraying Hassan in a negative light, the translator has, in Simon's words, "hijacked" the original meaning, potentially with a feminist perspective aimed at challenging traditional gender roles. This form of interpretation involves modifying the original text to question the expected roles of masculinity and femininity.

Fairclough (2013) argues that power and discourse are interwoven, with language shaping and reflecting social realities. In this case, the translator's alteration reduces the masculine power present in the original scene by changing the romantic context. However, this also indirectly impacts the female character, as it implies Parbati's passivity in being embarrassed, reinforcing gendered notions of dominance and submission. As Cameron (1992) observes, "Gender should never be used as a bottom-line explanation because it is a social construction needing explanation itself." The translation thus demonstrates how language mediates social constructions of gender, potentially reinforcing or challenging existing norms.

5.8 Example 4 and Discussion

Table 6: *Source Text, Translation and English Translation.*

Source Text	Transliteration	English Translation
میں پاربتی ہوں۔ کرنل مہتا کی استری۔ ی۔	Main Parbati hoon. Karnal Mehta kee istree.	'I am Parbati. Colonel Mehta's Wife.'

This example occurs when Hassan leaves Parbati at the border, and she crosses into India at midnight. Upon being taken by the border forces, she introduces herself as Mehta's wife, as though her marital status defines her identity. Despite being an intelligence officer in the Indian army, a role requiring education and qualifications, she omits to mention her profession. The protagonist, a female intelligence officer, is symbolically portrayed as an equal partner to Colonel Mehta and Lieutenant Hassan, both male characters. However, in this instance, her identity is tied to her status as "Mrs."—reflecting the socio-cultural expectation in patriarchal societies that a woman's identity is defined by her relationship with men. This reflects gender norms that expect women to be identified as someone's wife or daughter rather than as individuals with their own identity.

The translation uses word-for-word (literal) translation techniques (Baker, 2019) for the first sentence. However, in the second sentence, the Urdu word استری, which in its literal sense means "spreading" (legs), is translated as "wife" in the target text. The more common Urdu word for wife, بیوی, is not used in the source text, indicating the translator's choice to avoid derogatory terms. This suggests a feminist interpretation, aligning with Simon's (2003) notion that "feminist translation implies extending and developing the original text, not deforming it." The translator's decision to replace derogatory language reflects an attempt to promote feminist sympathies. As Hussein (2005) notes, translators sometimes deviate from literal translations to make culturally appropriate lexical choices for "Anglophone audiences."

The original Urdu text appears to portray women in derogatory terms, which the English translation avoids by "reduction technique". Given that the story was written in 1946, such terms might have been acceptable in Urdu literature but are less acceptable in modern contexts. According to Simon (2003), this is an example of appropriation, where a translator alters the text to infuse feminist intentions.

Gender differences in language reflect deeper social structures, as Dong (2014) suggests. Even gender-neutral language can conceal masculine bias, which often persists despite changes in expression. Thus, while translations may alter wording, they may not fully challenge the underlying gender ideologies.

5.9 Example 5 and Discussion

Table 7: *Source Text, Translation and English Translation.*

Source Text	Transliteration	English Translation
اس نے محسوس کیا کہ عورت مان بننے کے علاوہ بھی کچھ کر سکتی ہے۔	Us nay mahsoos kia kay awarat maa bannay kay alawa bhee boohat khuch kar sakti hay.	She began to feel that there was much more for a woman to achieve than motherhood.

This example takes place when Parbati returns to her husband and reflects on her life before becoming an intelligence officer. After years of marriage with Mehta and her role as a housewife, she matures, as the story notes. The original sentence, "She realised that a woman can do many things despite being a

mother," has been altered in translation. The translator replaced the word محسوس ("realised") with "feel," which shifts the connotation. While "realised" has an intellectual implication, "feel" portrays women as more emotional, subtly diminishing the intellectual aspect of the character. Similarly, the word کر ("do") was translated as "achieve," which adds a more empowered tone to the protagonist's actions.

The translation presents a complex representation of women, depicting them as both emotionally driven and associated with achievement. The female protagonist is shown as an emotional being, highlighting her depth, vulnerability, and strength. Phrases like "blood coursed through her veins, vigorous and passionate" and "she was perpetually conscious of her low status" (Hussein, 2005) underscore her emotional struggle and desire for self-realisation. This portrayal evokes empathy, revealing both her emotional intensity and her decision to break free from an "aimless existence" to become an intelligence officer.

Despite this empowerment, the character is still framed within traditional gender roles. Women are frequently represented as more emotionally sensitive than men, and when praised, their contributions are typically linked to their roles as wives or caretakers, reinforcing their domestic responsibilities (Abduazizovna (2022).

In translation, as Meyerhoff (2024) suggested, linguistic gender in literature is a powerful tool that authors can use to subvert or flout prevailing ideologies of social gender. Their strategic use of pronouns, nouns, and modifiers can shape the portrayal of gender in literature.

6. CONCLUSION

This study investigates gender representation in English translations of Urdu, focusing on how translation choices reflect patriarchal social structures. The analysis reveals that the translator employs various translational (addition, reduction, adaptation) strategies that portray women as weak, oppressed, and marginalised. Utilising Sherry Simon's framework of "Gender in Translation" alongside Fairclough's Model of CDA, the research examines the lexical choices and decisions made during translation. Simon's perspective highlights the marginalisation of women and the dominance of men within a patriarchal context, while Fairclough's model scrutinises how linguistic choices shape gender identities. The findings underscore the significant role of gender ideology in constructing male and female identities throughout the translation process, demonstrating that language not only reflects but also reinforces the translator's influence on gender representation.

In the narrative, male characters Hassan and Mahta illustrate a dominant-subordinate relationship, failing to acknowledge Parbati's experiences, effectively silencing her. This study advocates for feminist translators to challenge oppressive representations and urges translators to maintain neutrality while respecting gendered themes. Adjustments in language and portrayal of women are essential to ensure equitable representation in translated feminist literature.

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