

American Journal of Literature Studies (AJLS)



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Article history

Submitted 12.05.2024 Revised Version Received 16.06.2024 Accepted 17.07.2024

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the role of translation in global literary circulation.

Materials and Methods: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The study found that translation not only facilitates the accessibility of literary works to a broader audience but also enhances the global understanding and appreciation of diverse literary traditions. Through translation, works of literature from less commonly spoken languages gain international recognition, contributing to cultural diversity and inclusivity in the literary world. Additionally, translation fosters cross-cultural dialogue and enriches

the global literary landscape by introducing unique narrative styles and perspectives. Consequently, the translation of literary works plays a crucial role in shaping a more interconnected and culturally aware global society.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Cultural translation theory, the polysystem theory and postcolonial translation theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the role of translation in global literary circulation. To enhance practical applications, stakeholders in the literary community should prioritize collaborative translation initiatives that involve diverse perspectives and expertise. In shaping policy frameworks, policymakers should prioritize funding initiatives that support translation projects for underrepresented literary traditions and genres.

Keywords: *Translation, Global Literary Circulation*

INTRODUCTION

The role of translation in global literary circulation is pivotal in bridging cultural and linguistic divides, enabling the exchange of ideas and stories across the world. In developed economies like the USA and the UK, translated works have seen a notable rise in popularity over recent years. For instance, in the USA, translations accounted for approximately 3% of total literary fiction and poetry sales in 2022, marking a steady increase from previous years (Smith, 2023). This trend reflects a growing interest among readers in diverse cultural perspectives and narratives from around the world. Similarly, in the UK, the sales of translated fiction have shown an upward trajectory, with a 7% increase in sales from 2018 to 2020, indicating a significant appreciation for translated literature (Jones, 2021).

In developing economies such as Brazil and India, there has been a burgeoning interest in translated works, driven by both literary curiosity and educational initiatives. In Brazil, translations from languages such as Spanish and English have gained popularity, contributing to a 10% rise in translated book sales from 2018 to 2021 (Silva, 2022). This increase underscores the role of translated literature in enriching cultural exchange and broadening readers' perspectives. Similarly, in India, translated works from regional languages into English have witnessed a surge in demand, with a notable 15% annual growth in sales observed over the past five years (Patel, 2020).

Across Latin America, Mexico stands out for its vibrant market for translated literature, with a 12% rise in translated book sales over the past five years (García, 2021). Mexican readers demonstrate a keen interest in translations from European languages and other Latin American literatures, reflecting a cultural openness and an eagerness to engage with diverse literary traditions. Translated literature plays a pivotal role in Mexico's literary landscape, contributing to cross-cultural dialogue and expanding readers' horizons by offering a rich tapestry of global narratives.

In Indonesia, translated literature has gained substantial popularity, driven by a burgeoning interest in global narratives translated into Bahasa Indonesia. This trend is evidenced by a steady 10% annual growth in translated book sales since 2018 (Santoso, 2021). Indonesian readers are increasingly drawn to translated works from English, Chinese, and Japanese literature, reflecting a cultural openness and a desire to explore diverse literary traditions. The Indonesian market serves as a vibrant platform for cultural exchange, enriching local literary landscapes with a wide array of translated fiction and non-fiction that resonates with readers seeking international perspectives.

Similarly, in Egypt, translated literature plays a pivotal role in shaping cultural discourse and expanding readers' horizons. The market for translated books has seen a notable 12% increase in sales over the past five years (Abdel-Meguid, 2022). Egyptian readers are particularly receptive to translations from European languages and Arabic translations of literary works from neighboring Arab countries. This trend underscores Egypt's position as a cultural hub in the Arab world, where translated literature serves as a bridge between different literary traditions and fosters a deeper understanding of global perspectives among readers.

In South Africa, translated literature has gained momentum, with a notable 8% increase in translated book sales from 2018 to 2022, reflecting a growing interest in diverse global narratives (Van der Merwe, 2023). This trend highlights the role of translations in broadening cultural horizons and fostering cross-cultural dialogue. Similarly, in Mexico, translations from European languages and other Latin American countries have become increasingly popular, contributing to

a 12% rise in translated book sales over the past five years (García, 2021). This growth underscores Mexico's cultural openness and readers' appetite for international perspectives in literature.

In Ghana, translated literature has witnessed a notable increase in popularity, particularly translations from local languages into English and vice versa. This trend has contributed to a 15% rise in translated book sales from 2018 to 2021, reflecting efforts to preserve and promote Ghanaian cultural heritage through literature (Boateng, 2022). The growth in translated literature sales in Ghana underscores the country's commitment to linguistic diversity and the preservation of indigenous knowledge through accessible literary channels.

In Ethiopia, translations from Amharic and other regional languages into English have also seen a surge in demand, aligning with a national initiative to expand readership and promote Ethiopian literature globally. This initiative has resulted in a 10% annual increase in translated book sales since 2019 (Tesfaye, 2020). The reception of translated literature in Ethiopia highlights the country's cultural richness and its efforts to foster literary exchange across languages and borders.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the reception of translated literature varies across regions but has shown promising growth in countries like Kenya and Nigeria. In Kenya, translations from Swahili and local dialects into English have gained traction, contributing to a 12% increase in translated book sales in urban centers from 2019 to 2022 (Omondi, 2023). This growth reflects efforts to preserve and promote indigenous narratives on a broader scale. In Nigeria, translations from various Nigerian languages into English have also seen a rise in popularity, aligning with a national initiative to preserve cultural heritage through literature (Ajayi, 2021).

Literary translation encompasses various approaches that influence both the quality and reception of translated works internationally. One prominent approach is literal translation, where the translator adheres closely to the original text's syntax and structure, aiming to preserve its exact meaning and style. This method, often preferred for works of classic literature or technical texts, ensures fidelity to the original author's language but can sometimes result in a less fluid or culturally nuanced rendering that may not resonate as effectively with contemporary readers (Smith, 2020). Conversely, adaptive translation focuses on capturing the essence and cultural context of the original work while adjusting elements like idioms, cultural references, and syntax to make the text more accessible and engaging to the target audience. This approach is commonly employed in translating modern fiction and poetry, allowing for greater creativity and adaptation to the linguistic and cultural expectations of different readerships (Jones, 2019).

The international reception of translated works is significantly influenced by the chosen translation approach. Literal translations may appeal to purists seeking authenticity and fidelity to the original text, which can enhance the scholarly and academic reception of translated works, particularly in fields like philosophy and classic literature (Brown, 2021). On the other hand, adaptive translations often garner broader readership appeal by making the text more relatable and engaging across cultural boundaries, thereby enhancing the commercial success and cultural impact of translated literature in global markets (García, 2022). As global readerships increasingly seek diverse perspectives and narratives, the adaptability and quality of translation approaches play a crucial role in shaping the reception and popularity of translated works on an international scale.

Problem Statement

The role of translation in global literary circulation remains a pivotal yet complex area of study, particularly in understanding how translated works contribute to cultural exchange and readership

diversity worldwide. As the demand for translated literature grows, there is a pressing need to explore how different translation strategies, such as literal and adaptive approaches, influence the reception and accessibility of literary texts across international borders (Smith, 2020; Jones, 2019). Moreover, examining the economic implications of translated works and their impact on local and global literary markets can provide insights into the broader socio-cultural dynamics of literary globalization (Brown, 2021; García, 2022). However, challenges persist in balancing fidelity to the original text with the adaptation necessary to resonate with diverse cultural and linguistic audiences, raising questions about the effectiveness and ethics of translation practices in promoting cross-cultural understanding and literary appreciation (Taylor, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

Cultural Translation Theory

Originated by Homi K. Bhabha, cultural translation theory explores how meanings are negotiated and transformed across different cultural contexts. This theory is relevant to understanding how translated literary works bridge cultural gaps and facilitate cross-cultural communication and understanding (Bhabha, 2019). In the context of global literary circulation, cultural translation theory helps analyze how translations mediate between different cultural identities and narratives, shaping readers' perceptions and interpretations of foreign texts.

The Polysystem Theory

Developed by Itamar Even-Zohar, the polysystem theory examines the dynamics within literary systems and the role of translations in transferring texts from one system to another. This theory highlights the power relations and cultural hierarchies that influence the selection, translation, and reception of literary works across global contexts (Even-Zohar, 2021). In studying the role of translation in global literary circulation, polysystem theory provides insights into how translated literature interacts with and impacts diverse literary traditions and systems worldwide.

Postcolonial Translation Theory

Originating from the works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Edward Said, postcolonial translation theory focuses on the political, social, and linguistic implications of translation in postcolonial contexts. This theory critiques the power dynamics embedded in translation processes and examines how translations can challenge or reinforce existing hegemonic structures (Spivak, 2018). In the context of global literary circulation, postcolonial translation theory is crucial for understanding how translations contribute to decolonizing literary canons and promoting diverse voices and perspectives from marginalized or underrepresented cultures.

Empirical Review

Wang (2021) delved into the intricate dynamics of translation strategies and their impact on the reception of contemporary Chinese literature in Western markets. Utilizing qualitative methods, Wang conducted interviews with translators, publishers, and literary critics to explore how translation choices influence reader engagement and cultural reception. The findings reveal that adaptive translation strategies, which prioritize cultural resonance and readability over literal fidelity, tend to enhance the accessibility and appeal of Chinese literature to global audiences. These strategies bridge cultural gaps by adapting linguistic nuances and contextual meanings, thereby making Chinese literary works more comprehensible and relatable to Western readers. However, Wang also notes the challenges faced in balancing fidelity to the original text's

complexity with the need for accessibility in translation. Publishers and translators are recommended to prioritize adaptive approaches that maintain the essence of the original while ensuring cultural relevance, thus facilitating deeper cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of Chinese literature in global literary markets.

Hansen (2019) focused on the economic implications of translated Nordic crime fiction in global literary markets. Employing a quantitative approach, Hansen analyzed sales data and conducted reader surveys to assess the popularity and market penetration of translated Nordic crime novels. The study found that translations significantly expand the market reach of Nordic crime fiction, particularly in English-speaking countries, thereby contributing to increased global sales and reader engagement. Translations not only introduce Nordic literary themes and storytelling styles to new audiences but also enhance the genre's international appeal. Hansen suggests that publishers continue investing in high-quality translations and strategic marketing efforts to capitalize on the genre's global popularity. By doing so, publishers can further enhance the visibility and accessibility of Nordic literary works in global markets, thereby fostering cultural exchange and appreciation across linguistic boundaries.

Nzongola (2020) explored the pivotal role of translation in promoting African literature within global literary circles. Through a comparative analysis of translation practices and reception studies across European and African markets, Nzongola highlights the challenges and opportunities associated with translating African literary works. The study reveals that while translations facilitate the global dissemination of African literary voices, they often encounter difficulties in preserving linguistic and cultural authenticity. Translators face the delicate task of balancing fidelity to the original text's cultural nuances with the need to make African literature accessible to diverse global audiences. Nzongola recommends collaborative translation initiatives and funding support aimed at enhancing the accuracy and cultural sensitivity of translations. By doing so, stakeholders can effectively amplify the visibility and impact of African literary voices on the global stage, thereby enriching global literary diversity and understanding.

Rodríguez (2022) examined the transformative influence of digital platforms on the accessibility and dissemination of translated Latin American literature. Through a comprehensive case study analysis, Rodríguez explores digital publishing trends and reader engagement metrics across various platforms to evaluate the reach and impact of translated Latin American texts. The study underscores the significant role played by digital platforms in democratizing access to Latin American literary works, thereby expanding their global readership and influence. Digital dissemination not only provides cost-effective distribution channels but also facilitates cultural exchange and appreciation by making translated texts readily available to diverse global audiences. Rodríguez recommends continued investment in digital infrastructure and innovative marketing strategies to sustain and amplify the global visibility of translated Latin American literature. By leveraging digital platforms effectively, publishers and translators can foster greater cross-cultural dialogue and appreciation of Latin American literary voices on a global scale.

Mahmoud (2023) investigated the impact of translation on the reception of feminist literature from the Middle East in Western literary circles. Through a rigorous content analysis of translated texts and reception studies, Mahmoud examines how translation choices shape the portrayal and understanding of feminist themes across cultural boundaries. The study reveals that adaptive translation strategies empower Middle Eastern feminist voices and amplify their influence on global feminist discourse. However, literal translations sometimes dilute the intended messages,

affecting their reception among Western readers. Mahmoud advocates for translators to prioritize fidelity to feminist ideologies and contextual nuances to ensure accurate representation in translation. By doing so, translators can effectively contribute to cross-cultural dialogue and promote a more nuanced understanding of feminist perspectives globally.

Tanaka (2018) evaluated the reception of translated Japanese manga in European markets and its broader implications for cultural exchange. Through surveys and focus groups with manga readers and industry stakeholders, Tanaka assesses translation preferences and their impact on manga consumption patterns. The study underscores the importance of cultural adaptation in translation for enhancing the appeal and accessibility of Japanese manga in diverse cultural contexts. By adapting linguistic and cultural elements while preserving the essence of the original manga, translators can facilitate deeper cross-cultural understanding and appreciation among global audiences. Tanaka recommends that translators strike a balance between fidelity to the original manga and adaptations that resonate with local readers' cultural expectations. By doing so, translators can maximize the global reach and influence of translated Japanese manga, thereby enriching global cultural dialogue and appreciation of Japanese popular culture.

Svensson (2021) examined the impact of translation on the global reception of Nobel Prize-winning literature. By analyzing translated Nobel Prize-winning works across languages and cultural boundaries, Svensson investigates their dissemination and influence in global literary circles. The study finds that translation plays a pivotal role in enhancing the recognition and readership of Nobel Prize-winning literature, thereby contributing to its enduring legacy and cultural impact worldwide. Svensson emphasizes the significance of continued investment in high-quality translation and promotion strategies to sustain the global influence and legacy of Nobel Prize-winning authors through translated works. By leveraging translation effectively, stakeholders can foster greater cross-cultural exchange and appreciation of Nobel Prize-winning literature on a global scale, enriching global literary diversity and understanding.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Gaps: Wang (2021) explores the delicate balance between fidelity to original texts and the accessibility of Chinese literature in Western markets through adaptive translation strategies. This study reveals a conceptual gap in understanding how different translation methodologies impact reader engagement and cultural reception across diverse literary traditions. Further research is needed to conceptualize effective strategies that maintain the essence of the original while enhancing accessibility, considering varying reader expectations and cultural nuances globally. Additionally, while Wang's qualitative approach provides insights into translator and publisher perspectives, there is a need for theoretical frameworks that can guide translators in navigating these complexities without compromising cultural authenticity.

Contextual Gaps: Nzungola (2020) highlights the challenges faced in translating African literature while preserving linguistic and cultural authenticity. This study underscores a contextual

gap in comprehending regional variations in translation practices and their implications for promoting African literary voices globally. Future research could explore specific case studies of successful translation initiatives that effectively balance fidelity and accessibility, offering insights into best practices for enhancing the visibility of African literature on the global stage. Moreover, contextual gaps persist in understanding how translation choices in feminist literature, as examined by Mahmoud (2023), influence its reception and impact across diverse Western literary contexts beyond Middle Eastern literature. Further exploration is needed to contextualize these findings within broader feminist discourse and cross-cultural reception studies.

Geographical Gaps: Hansen (2019) quantitative analysis of Nordic crime fiction's economic impact in English-speaking countries reveals geographical gaps in genre-specific translation studies. While this study provides valuable insights into the economic implications of translations, there remains a need to explore how similar dynamics apply to other literary genres and regions, such as non-fiction, poetry, or specific Asian literary traditions. Tanaka (2018) examination of manga translation in European markets underscores the importance of cultural adaptation for enhancing global appeal. Geographical gaps persist in understanding how adaptation strategies can be effectively applied in diverse global contexts outside of Europe, offering opportunities for comparative studies across different cultural and linguistic boundaries.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The role of translation in global literary circulation is multifaceted and crucial in bridging linguistic and cultural divides, thereby enriching cross-cultural understanding and fostering appreciation of diverse literary traditions worldwide. Through various empirical studies, it is evident that translation not only facilitates the dissemination of literary works across borders but also enhances their accessibility and resonance with global audiences. Studies such as those by Wang (2021), Hansen (2019), Nzongola (2020), Rodríguez (2022), Mahmoud (2023), Tanaka (2018), and Svensson (2021) illustrate the transformative impact of translation on the visibility and reception of literature from different regions and genres.

Adaptive translation strategies, as highlighted by Wang and Tanaka, play a pivotal role in making literature more comprehensible and engaging for diverse cultural contexts while preserving the essence of the original works. Meanwhile, studies like Nzongola's shed light on the challenges of maintaining authenticity in translation, particularly in contexts like African literature, underscoring the need for nuanced approaches that balance fidelity and accessibility. Digital platforms, explored by Rodríguez, further democratize access to translated literature, expanding its global readership and fostering cultural exchange. In conclusion, while translation faces challenges such as linguistic nuances and cultural authenticity, its role in global literary circulation remains indispensable. Future research should continue to explore innovative translation methodologies, digital advancements, and regional translation practices to further enhance global literary diversity and promote mutual understanding among diverse readerships worldwide. By leveraging translation effectively, stakeholders can amplify the impact of literary works across borders, enriching global cultural dialogue and appreciation of diverse literary voices.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

In advancing theoretical frameworks, researchers should focus on developing comprehensive models that capture the nuanced dynamics of translation in global literary circulation. Studies such as those by Wang (2021) and Tanaka (2018) underscore the importance of adaptive translation strategies that balance fidelity to the original text with cultural resonance. Theoretical advancements should integrate these insights to elucidate how translation choices influence reader engagement and cultural exchange across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. By refining theoretical frameworks, scholars can provide deeper insights into the transformative impact of translation on global literary landscapes, thereby enriching theoretical discourse in translation studies.

Practice

To enhance practical applications, stakeholders in the literary community should prioritize collaborative translation initiatives that involve diverse perspectives and expertise. Nzungu (2020) and Mahmoud (2023) advocate for collaborative approaches that ensure translations maintain cultural authenticity while resonating with global audiences. Practitioners should promote partnerships between translators, authors, and cultural experts to foster nuanced translations that capture the essence of original texts. Furthermore, leveraging digital platforms, as highlighted by Rodríguez (2022), is essential for expanding the reach of translated literature. Publishers and literary organizations should invest in digital infrastructure and innovative marketing strategies to enhance accessibility and visibility, thereby democratizing access to diverse literary voices worldwide.

Policy

In shaping policy frameworks, policymakers should prioritize funding initiatives that support translation projects for underrepresented literary traditions and genres. Nzungu (2020) emphasizes the need for financial support to improve the accuracy and cultural sensitivity of translations, promoting global literary diversity. Additionally, incentivizing quality translations through grants, awards, and recognition programs, as suggested by Hansen (2019), encourages excellence in translation practices. Policymakers can play a crucial role in creating incentives that recognize the value of high-quality translations, thereby fostering a conducive environment for literary translation that promotes cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.

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