


## The Impact of Cultural and Translational Studies on Modern Comparative Literature Studies

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### ABSTRACT

Modern comparative literature with globalization phenomenon extends linguistic and political boundaries, even for conserving and revitalizing languages particularly minor languages with cultural and ethnic exchanges. Such this emergence of comparative literature might return from contemporary translational and cultural studies as crucial and effective factors in the study of comparative literature. The role, relationship, and impact of translation and cultural studies on modern comparative literature are explored via a descriptive analysis. Translational and cultural studies in current comparative literature studies facilitate the relevant studies and they play a supplementary role for literary study. This study confirms a significant relationship exists among contemporary translational, cultural, and literary works intangibly and inevitably that helps to study comparative literary works. The findings report cultural and translational studies can be fruitful informing literary studies, new writing styles besides intercultural conversation; nevertheless, scholars of comparative literature have argued that their discipline has been significantly subsumed and substituted by translation studies. The results indicate contemporary translation and cultural studies have paved the way for comparative literature researchers to achieve cultural knowledge and to strengthen the culture with developing national literature.

### 1. Introduction

Traditional/modern Comparative literature always tends to cross-linguistic and political borders as a result of globalization, even retaining and revitalizing languages, including minor languages, through cultural and ethnic exchanges. This advent of the comparative literature world can be attributed to translation, as well as cultural studies as significant and powerful factors in comparative literature. The simplest and clearest concept of comparative literature is "Comparative Literature is the study of "literature without walls." It is interested in all nations regardless of their cultures, periods, genres, or borders. Unlike Weltliteratur's word, which was coined by Goethe, it gives equal weight to all types of literature. The influence of nations or languages is insignificant in comparative literature; rather, it aims to examine the relationships between various literature, whether minor or major works and to find similarities and differences. The principal objective of the present study is to examine the role, relationship, and effect of translation and cultural studies on comparative literature along with their advancement and development. The current study attempts to respond to the research questions as follows.

- Is 'Translation' considered as a secondary/marginal element in modern comparative literature studies?
- What kind of factors are cultural translation and communication in the comparative literature study?
- How is the role of translation and cultural studies defined in the comparative literature studies?

## **2. Literature review**

There are many articles, thesis, and books on the translational study and cultural studies and their effect and connection. Some research works on the role of the translational study on literature and some the effect of cultural studies on literature separately. Very few attempts to investigate translational study and cultural studies both on literature. A study is required to examine new development and contemporary trends of both studies: translational study and cultural studies on modern comparative literature.

Even-Zohar (1981) presents a different definition of translation in the polysystem, he defines it as a possible force to a renewal in social transform procedures. Furthermore, Bassnett (2004) declared the implications of translation have become the image for all types of procedures of rewriting, transforming, encoding, and decoding yet as a force for cross-disciplinary communication among individuals and thus the sciences. Hence, cultural translation stresses the connection of social, cultural, literal, and political contexts within the task of translation. As Bassnett (2004) explains translating cultures might not be a few text act itself, however concerning learning to measure another style of life, speak another language, and meet completely different individuals and their literature since the copy method depends on the resources of the translators' language, literature.

Cultural flip is that the figure of speech is adopted to seek advice from the analysis of translation in political, cultural, philosophical, and literal contents. A cultural shift was given on Poly systems and translation norms by Even-Zohar (1978) and Toury (1980). Bassnett and Lefevere (2004) adopt a cultural shift to stress the social and political implications in translational studies. Moreover, Venuti (1995) discusses the powers that controlled translation e.g. political parties, governments, and politically intended establishments, that restricted the choices of promoting or censoring some translations, ideology, religion, or a whole culture. Simon (1996) noted the method of cultural studies aid in apprehending the complexities of certain problems like women studies.

On the other hand, intercultural competency and culture develop out of the expertise of culture. Bassnett (2014) states that translation is not simply to transfer the texts from a language to another language; however, it is the method of communication between texts and between cultures. To boost the translator's ability, Newmark (1988) projected two strategies for translating cultural concepts. Newmark's primary methodology of translation introduces transference, which provides color; the second method is componential analysis excluding the culture and the core message from the text.

Moreover, Bassnett and Lefevere (2016) study that intercultural and cultural capacities and their impact on translation works. Furthermore, Tymoczko (2003) argues that a competent translator's area unit is required in any intercultural and interlingual contexts because of the mediation between two linguistic, cultural categories. Tymoczko states a difference exists between culture and transference, which refers to symbolic or physical transculturation and transformation, and that involves translating on the far side the transformation of verbal materials, those embrace transmittal ideas on literary texts.

Mohammadi and Emami (2011) highlight the implications within translation in the field of world literature with a special focus on Persian and Arabic literature. In another study, Lotfi Poorsaedi (2016) analyzes the principles and strategies of translation. Akbari and Hori (2001) also note the impact of translation on the Persian language and literature. Anoushirvani (2012) investigates literature and translation studies solely; in addition, Heidari (2012) examines the interpretation approaches to modern western fiction. Alkhatib (1990) also discusses the role of translation in comparative literature (traditional comparative studies).

## **3. Methodology**

Initially, the researchers were conducted on the role, relationship, and impact of translation and cultural studies on comparative literature and development through literature review studies based on the library study method. In the light of the objectives of this study, the data were collected to cover the research questions i.e. Translation views as a secondary/marginal component, the elements of cultural translation and conversation, and the function of translation and cultural research which describe in the comparative literature studies. Next, the collected data were analyzed via the descriptive-analytical method in order to be able to answer the research questions in the conclusion.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

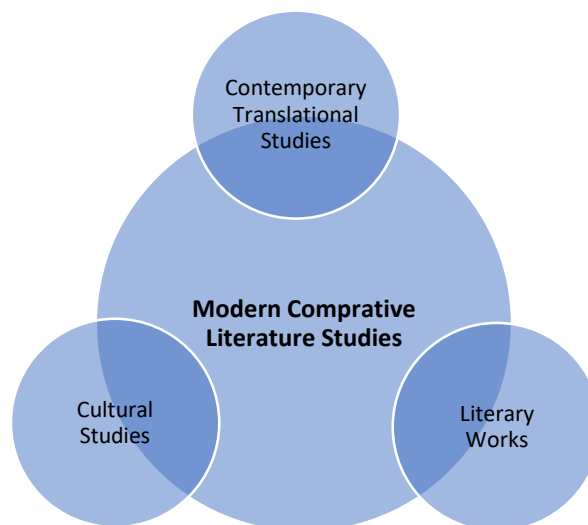
### **4.1. Comparative Literature**

Comparative literature defines as an academic study coping with exploring world literature and cultural expression beyond geographical, national, linguistic, and disciplinary limits (Brown, 2020). Literary study "performs a task the same as that of the study of academic diplomacy, however, works with languages and creative traditions, to know cultures 'from the inside'" (Brown academics, 2020). Whereas in most cases practiced with the works of various languages, a comparative literature study investigates the works of a similar language/culture/genre/style whether the works originate from unique countries or cultures. The typically intercultural and transnational disciplines in comparative literature researches pose a relationship with literature, widely defined in different spheres of human activity such as philosophy, art, politics, science, and history. In contrast to styles and types of human sciences, comparative literature stresses the interdisciplinary analysis of cultural implications among the "economy, political dynamics, cultural movements, historical shifts, religious differences, the urban environment, international relations, public policy,

and the sciences"(Schawbel, 2019). Comparativists all over the world are working to refocus the discipline away from the nation-based approach with which it has traditionally been associated and toward a cross-cultural approach, that disregards national boundaries. The cultural development in comparative studies remains to be seen whether or not this approach can prove productive and creative trends. Although traditional comparative literature has its roots in nation-based thinking and original language work, these studies still concern the over-considerations of the nation-state. Modern Comparative literature covers a world wider spread study than single national literature studies practically minor languages with developing intercultural and globalization studies. Comparative literature holds a unique role in terms of having a positive effect on the interconnection of cultures and civilizations at all levels, from the national to the global. The basic dynamics of comparative literature allow it to move in harmony with the intellectual revolutions of its time. It is related to the development of communication and debate with other disciplines of human sciences, but it also creates knowledge among various cultures. The existence of many works in world literature, comparative literature influences the cultures and civilizations of the nations in the form of the itinerary, story writing, essay writing, historiography, and biography.

However, Wellek (1970) argued that comparative literature is anti-nationalist: "Comparative Literature emerged as a reaction against the narrow nationalism of most nineteenth-century scholarship, as a protest against isolationism of many historians of French, German, Italian, English, and other literature." World literature is concerned with major languages such as French, German, and English, while Comparative literature is concerned with both major and minor literature. Many of the individuals in the world are acquainted with the most commonly used languages and communicate with dominant languages; however, what about the lesser-known languages? How do we explore people who write in other languages that are not commonly used/spoken? If we do not speak their languages, how will we be able to comprehend their literature? The value of translation research in comparative literature lifts up here. Many people can understand more readily when less spoken languages are translated. Similarly, translation allows people who speak minor languages to understand the literature of dominant languages. Individuals might understand their works of literature, languages, traditions, culture, and even histories through translation. Those lesser-spoken languages would be lost and extinct if the translation was absent in comparative literature studies particularly today because contemporary professional literary translators can be accounted as cultural and literary researchers.

The role of translation is determinant and distinctive in the subject of modern comparative literature and it does not play a marginal role anymore like in traditional comparative literature studies. In fact, a sort of upgrading can be observed in contemporary translational and cultural studies and modern comparative literature studies. This advent supports all these studies simultaneously. An interrelationship emerges among contemporary translational, cultural, and literary works which aid modern comparative literary studies (Fig.1).



**Figure 1. Relationship in contemporary cultural, translation, and literary studies**

A comparative literature scholar in analyzing translated texts can ask the following questions: why does a translator of a particular book select to translate that literary work at a certain time and what is the acceptance of that translation in the target language. The researcher of comparative literature adapts a work from another language and culture and becomes a national and indigenous

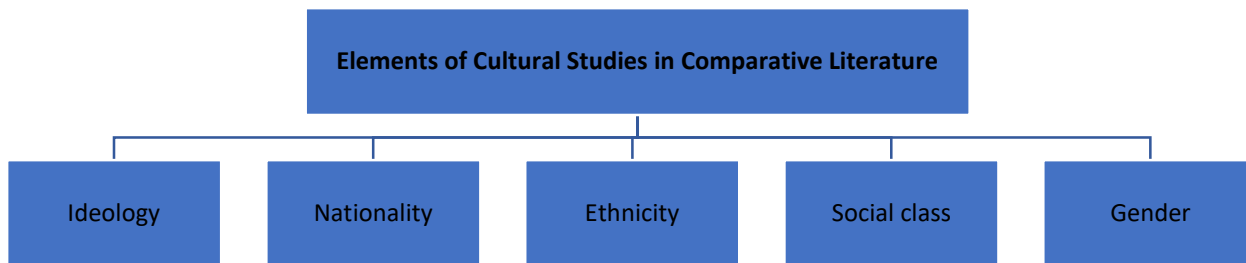
culture, and sometimes its themes are inspired by the literary tricks of the original author. Anoushirvani (2012) agrees that a translator, like a writer, is influenced by his/her social and cultural context.

One of the significant areas of comparative literature researches is the study of cultural connections and literary influences. Although the emphasis is on reading texts in the original language in traditional comparative literature but currently the effect of translation as an intermediate considers in the interactions of significant cultural exchanges. Translation plays an important role in transferring concepts of themes and movements and types of literary styles from one culture to another in modern comparative studies. In traditional research of comparative literature, the importance of translation is confined to analysis as the secondary source of inspiration and the researcher of comparative literature merely sought to discover original work. The translation itself used to be unimportant for adaptation and recognize as the intermediaries through which communication and influence have taken place. At present, modern comparative literature researchers consider both original literary work along with its translation because he/she is aware of cultural translation and investigation beyond the work.

#### **4.2. Translational and Cultural Studies in Modern Comparative Literature**

Since translation is the first tool to cross the border of literature of one country and enter the territory of literature of another, it can be considered as one of the factors preventing the isolation and passivity of literary types of a nation and, consequently, its decline. Translation plays a key role in shaping the relations of the literature of nations as well as the exchanges between them or even in the comparative literature, which is one of the fields related to the literature of nations.

Researchers in cultural studies focus on how cultural practices interact with larger systems of power that are linked to or operate across social phenomena including ideology, class structures, national formations, race, sexual orientation, gender, and generation. Cultural studies examine cultures as continuously interacting and evolving sets of activities and procedures rather than as fixed, bounded, stable, and distinct entities. Cultural studies can be a part/ some parts of the following fields, including translational studies, feminism, ethnology, anthropology, racism, semiotics, stylistic, pluralism, multiculturalism, deconstruction, post-structuralism, marginalism, post-colonialism, politics, Marxism, sociology, literature, art, theory, media studies, philosophy, economics, and geography. However, globalization is giving the world a new experience in cultural studies through a new lens of comparative literature. Cultural studies in comparative literature need to examine the place and position of five major elements: ethnicity, gender, ideology, nationality, and social class (Fig.2).



**Figure 2. Principal components of cultural studies in Comparative Literature**

According to Venuti (2004), at the same time, new interdisciplinary, cultural studies, appears, cross-fertilizing fields including literary theory and criticism, media, and anthropology, etc. This concept represents an experience of functionalism to translational studies as appropriately as a subject does for the cultural themes of translation and their political and ethnical themes. The culturally focused study is also philosophically critical and politically active; hence, it inevitably calls into question the assumption of scientific objectivity in empirically oriented work that relies on linguistic, experimental, or historical forms of description and classification. In this decade, provocative evaluations of competing paradigms will be provided. It also sees fruitful synergies in which theoretical, technical gaps are seen to complement one another and detailed explanations of the translated text, and translation processes are related to cultural and political issues. Translation studies create an international network of academic groups that conduct the study and discussion through conceptual and interdisciplinary interpretations at the turn of the millennium.

One of the most important methods for the singularity of the literary occurrence to be absorbed into cultural experience is through translation. Translation makes language noticeable, reminding us that cultural bridges are never built overnight but rather require patient probing and openness to otherness and distinction. The history of translation aids us in putting current issues into context, broadening our experience, and comprehending our options as comparative literary scholars. The emergence of translation studies as a distinct discipline at the intersection of philosophy, historical linguistics, and literary studies in recent decades has been remarkable along with demands for "global consciousness" in popular culture and public life, a lively, interdisciplinary, and timely

area of inquiry has emerged. The function of language and culture is essential as well as the potential to interact and apprehend the facts of others via translational studies.

Reynolds (2011) suggests the term "translation" obscures and defines distinctions that metaphors show and describe. Translation does more than just "pass meaning." In some ways, Steiner's meaning is too broad, while in others, it is too narrow. Words are stretched, times are bridged, personal identities are mingled, and national languages are perturbed by translation. Words are stretched, times are bridged, personal identities are mingled, and national languages are uncertain by translation. As a result, it provides a unique medium in which relations between various locations, periods, and people can be imagined, considered, and felt.

In Leuven, Lefevere has worked and studied in the comparative literature department and later at the University of Texas at Austin. Lefevere's translation studies focus on the growth of his strong connections to polysystem theory and the Manipulation School. While some may argue that Lefevere belongs more to the system theorists, his later work on translation and culture serves as a bridging point to the 'cultural turn' in many ways. Lefevere (1992) examines the study of "very concrete factors" that systemically control the reception, acceptance, or rejection of literary texts," such as power, ideology, institution, and infiltration. People in positions of authority, according to Lefevere (1992), are those who are *rewriting* literature and impose its consumption by the public. Ideological (conforming to or rebelling against the dominant ideology) or poetological (conforming to or rebelling against the dominant / chosen poetics) motivations can also be used to justify such rewriting. Edward Fitzgerald, a nineteenth-century translator/rewriter of the Rubaiyat by Persian poet, mathematician, and astronomer Omar Khayyam, is one example provided by Lefevere. Fitzgerald thought Persians were inferior and believed he ought to 'improve' on the original by 'taking liberties with the translation' (Munday, 2012). Fitzgerald made it conform to the expected western literary conventions of his time and the work was a phenomenal commercial success.

Translation studies and comparative literature are pitted against world literature. Emily Apter's book (*Against World Literature*, 2013) is a sobering counterpoint to the excitement for World Literature, which is a relatively new discipline. Translation, foreign affairs, and diplomacy (all spheres in which the discourses that make them up circulate) oscillate between Universalist, even utopian, arguments on the one side, and its dialectical counterpoint, the focus on the critical distinction on the other. The first few pages of Apter's book (1992) provide an informative and significant overview of the history of World Studies as a young discipline and its relationship to translation studies. It also contains a discussion of key philosophical and political topics as they pertain to these two disciplines.

Drawing on Jacques Derrida's, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's, Samuel Weber's, Barbara Johnson's, Abdelfattah Kilito's, and Édouard Glissant's translation philosophies, as well as Barbara Cassin's *Vocabulaire européen des philosophies: Dictionnaire des intraduisibles*, the Untranslatable is provided substance. The aim is to trigger untranslatability as a theoretical fulcrum of comparative literature, with implications for approaches to world literature, literary world systems, and literary history, periodization politics, philosophical and theoretical translation, the relationship between sovereign and linguistic borders at the checkpoint, non-secular proscription and cultural sanction, and more, Ethical, cosmological, and theological aspects of worldliness, as well as free versus privatized authorial property, the poetics of translational disparity, and ethical, cosmological, and theological dimensions of worldliness, ethical, cosmological, and theological aspects of worldliness, as well as free versus privatized authorial property, the poetics of translational disparity, and ethical, cosmological, and theological dimensions of worldliness (Pérez, 2018). Even though the book is divided into chapters, it is conceived as a long essay in which the issues are discussed about a central thesis about the relevance of a literary comparative method that acknowledges the significance of mistranslation, non-translation, untranslatability, and incomparability (Apter, 2013).

The appeal of contemporary translation studies stemmed from its ability to respond to a global mandate without losing contact with the world's languages. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of papers, novels, book series, articles in journals about, and journals dedicated to translation practices and theory increased dramatically, demonstrating the new discipline's unique combination of enthusiasm and disaggregation. Since it was interdisciplinary without diluting a disciplinary formation in comparative literature, translation studies gained momentum in the humanities.

It reworked the Renaissance humanist tradition of translation studies (so critical to comparative literature's foundation as a discipline) for contemporary global education. Information diffusion, philosophies of the 'world,' 'humanity,' and 'human rights,' are among the substantive topics that have most clearly passed from early periods to the present; the concept of a 'classic'; artistic judgment and its critique; vernacularization and linguistic ethnocentrism in opposition to cosmopolitan culture. Such issues are at the core of what concerns graduate students preparing to teach humanities subjects at a critical juncture in the educational economy (Kir, 2014).

Scholars and college students have a clear stake in obtaining pedagogies (competence in the translation practicum and the related subfield of translation theory) as appropriately as figuring out issues and subjects that communicate why the humanities matter in

contemporary society as teachers in training relevant studies. The translation is also one of those places where a wider audience can be reached without losing analytical complexity. It is also the kind of paradigm—the translational humanities—whose global significance in terms of public policy, legal theories of authorship and intellectual property, and international security is only beginning to be realized, and whose consequences as a language technology for media theory beg to be explored further (Apter 2013).

The illusion of transparency in translation: the false belief that the translated text is a perfect replica of the original, taking nothing away or adding nothing to it. Venuti (2004) points out the illusion of clarity in translation is consistent with a long-standing Anglo-American empirical tradition that "language we use will provide unmediated access to truth or fact."

Two other studies adopted with "The language we use will supply unmediated get admission to fact or evidence," based on the tradition. Anglo-American cultural practices are characterized by the illusion of transparency: It has dominated English-language translation since at least the seventeenth century, and in suggesting that language can provide unmediated access to truth or fact, it has become a catchphrase. It is intimately connected to the empiricist epistemologies that have long separated British and American ideologies (Venuti 1995; Venuti 2005).

The future of comparative literature depends on translation studies. People compare and contrast through translation, but comparative literature does not end there. For example, Iranian poets e.g. Hafez, Saadi, Molana are not only very famous Iranian literates but they also are well-known all around the world due to the translations of their works into a variety of languages. Further, some translators (e.g. Najaf Daryabandari, Mohammad Sobhani, Mohammad Ghazi, etc.) are well-recognized in Iran due to their professional translations. Comparative literature would consist solely of dominant languages if translation were not a study of comparative literature. In comparative literature, however, translation enables minor languages as well as major languages to play a part. Languages that are less commonly spoken now have more readers thanks to translation. Similarly, translation helps well-known works of literature gain a wider audience around the world. Shakespeare's sonnets can be employed as a sample in this case. For instance, the book was published which was a translation of one of Shakespeare's most famous sonnets, but Shakespeare's sonnets gained popularity in Iran after Omid Tabibzadeh translated it into Persian as well as Hamlet's translation by M. E. Behazin. They can be noticed by Iranian readers and appreciate the translations. However, it is common to accept that translation plays a role in its success.

## **5. Conclusion**

The main aim of the present study was to explore the impact, role, and relationship of translation and cultural studies on comparative literature with their development. The present research demonstrates that culture, literature, and translation are intimately connected.

The translation is an active and non-marginal component in the study of modern comparative literature. Translation and cultural relations are effective and effectible intermediate factors. In traditional comparative literature, translation was only a source of vision, and it in some cases did not matter, only considered as the mediators that created this connection. Translation along with cultural studies becomes an important connective bridge and is used as a practical tool in modern comparative literature.

Contemporary professional translators are each considered a kind of cultural and literary researcher and turn their translations into a place of a rebirth of literary works. The researchers in comparative literature tend to study the subjects in current translated works from a cultural and literary perspective rather than linguistically. Contemporary translation and cultural studies have paved the path for modern comparative literature scholars to achieve cultural knowledge and to strengthen the culture and development of national literature. Today, translation and cultural studies eliminate a lack of coordination and blind imitation of the literature (Montahen & Lak, 2013).

Furthermore, translational and cultural studies in comparative literature aid in the interpretation of others and serve as a useful complement to comparative literature. The findings indicate that cultural and transformative studies may help shape a literary structure, new literary genres, and intercultural dialogue; however, scholars of comparative literature have argued that translation studies have subsumed and replaced their discipline, citing questions about comparative literature's status. For comparative literature, translational and cultural studies are required. As previously mentioned, without translational and cultural studies, dominant languages such as English, French, or Spanish would dominate minor languages, resulting in a lack of language diversity in literature. Through translating Shakespeare's works, the translator not only assimilates the language but also expands its renown. Minor language speakers gain an understanding of other literature through translation. They can make comparisons and contrasts between different works of literature and their own. They expand their horizons with the aid of recognizing versions and similarities. Since they are enticing with different kinds of literature, they might also create a range of works. Although some philosophers and critics see translation as the end of comparative literature, Bassnett (1993) predicts, "It is one meaning dead."

In today's globalizing world, translation and comparative literature work together to break down barriers between countries. Since comparative literature is concerned with both minor and major cultures, translation serves as a means of bringing these cultures and nations together. People will deepen and expand their perspectives on other literature by translating it. Without cultural and transitional studies, individuals in comparative literature would not be able to understand each other and therefore would not be able to see the differences and similarities between them. Ultimately, translational and cultural studies are required for comparative literature since they complement one another.

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