

TRANSCENDING LANGUAGES: BAMA'S TRANSLATION STUDIES THROUGH LAKSHMI HOLMSTROM'S LENS

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ABSTRACT

This research with the aid of the skilled translator Lakshmi Holmstrom, investigates the intricate process of translating Bama's great literary classic, "Karukku," from Tamil to English. Because of its focus on caste discrimination, social injustices, and the experiences of oppressed people, "Karukku" has a unique place in Tamil literature. The overarching purpose of this study is to make Bama's captivating story available to a wider public by examining the challenges and triumphs of translating Holmstrom. Moreover, the objective of this study is to examine the translation of the title "Karukku" in order to illuminate the significance of language adaptation in promoting intercultural comprehension and advancing societal development. Furthermore, it highlights the substantial cooperation between the author and the translator, highlighting their close relationship and mutual impact.

KEYWORDS: Lakshmi Holmstrom, Transcending Languages, social barriers, Bama, translation

INTRODUCTION

Karukku, an autobiographical book by Bama, is a significant work that portrays the lived realities of Dalit Christian women in Tamil Nadu. The literary masterpiece "Karukku" by Bama serves as a significant witness to the persistent battle against caste-based discrimination and social inequities within Tamil culture. Originally written in the Tamil language, this esteemed work of literature has captivated readers with its comprehensive examination of the lived realities of persons who have been excluded. Nonetheless, the endeavor of translating "Karukku" into English poses significant linguistic and cultural complexities. The narrative serves as a testimonio, expressing the collective problems and ambitions of the Dalit community. Scholars like Pramod Nayar and M. S. S. Pandian classify *Karukku* as a testimonio, highlighting its role as a collective voice for the entire community. The book has established a counterculture and independent identity for Dalits within the societal framework. The novel has evolved from a focus on aesthetics to an activist approach, highlighting the experiences of Dalits and their challenges. The use of Dalit language in Bama's works has significantly contributed to the development and evolution of Dalit literature. *Karukku* has elicited a strong response among readers, providing a deeper understanding of the experiences of Tamil Dalit Christians. The novel has resonated deeply with a wide audience, shedding light on the numerous instances of discrimination, inequality, violence, injustice, and poverty faced by the Dalit community.

Karukku provides a novel lens through which to examine the process of identity creation, specifically focusing on the spatial encounters of Dalits. These encounters may be categorized into three distinct phases of progression. The work actively employs a self-reflective narrative technique, serving as a platform for the voices of Dalit women and questioning established cultural conventions. "Karukku": An Exemplary Work of Literature "Karukku" is a groundbreaking literary endeavor that fearlessly confronts the intricate matters of caste-based prejudice, societal inequity, and the oppression experienced by underprivileged populations within the region of Tamil Nadu, India. Bama, who identifies as a Dalit Christian, offers a genuine and unadulterated viewpoint on the challenges experienced by marginalized individuals. The work has received positive reviews from critics and has established a loyal fanbase within the realm of Tamil literature. The study highlights the relevance of Bama's literary contributions when translated, as her narratives expand comprehension for a broader readership. Holmstrom's translation abilities reveal the subtleties, emotional depth, and cultural elements in Bama's works. This study aims to examine the intricate relationship among language, culture, and the translation process, specifically emphasizing the impact of language evolution on fostering intercultural comprehension and furthering human progress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the field of translation studies, the focal point is in the process of surpassing linguistic barriers, highlighting the significant function of language as a conduit for cultural interchange and comprehension. This literature review critically analyzes prominent scholarly works and many views that enhance our comprehension of the field of

translation. It specifically highlights the significant contributions made by Lakshmi Holmstrom's translations of Bama's writings, shedding light on the intricate nature of translation and its capacity for transformational outcomes. The use of translation has been widely recognized as a mechanism for facilitating communication and understanding across many cultures and languages (Venuti, 1995). It functions as a medium for facilitating intercultural communication and promoting the sharing of ideas and narratives across language barriers. The tales of Bama, which are firmly grounded in Tamil culture, have garnered international acclaim mostly owing to the adept translations of Lakshmi Holmstrom, hence facilitating the accessibility of these stories to a broader spectrum of readers (Cronin, 2003).

Bama, a highly esteemed Tamil author, is well recognized for her compelling storytelling that addresses themes pertaining to caste, gender, and social disparities. The literary contributions of the author, such as "Karukku" and "Vanmam," have played a significant role in illuminating the experiences of social exclusion encountered by the Dalit community in Tamil Nadu (Raj, 2013). According to Rao (2002), the translations of Bama's works by Holmstrom have facilitated the dissemination of these tales to a worldwide audience, hence enhancing the discussion around the concept of social justice.

Lakshmi Holmstrom, a translator of notable repute, has garnered recognition for her significant contributions to the domain of Tamil-to-English translation. The author's work serves as a prime example of the translator's skill in maintaining the integrity of the original text while ensuring its comprehensibility for a different readership (Venuti, 1998). The translations of Bama's works by Holmstrom have been highly praised by critics for effectively expressing the profound emotional aspects and cultural subtleties that are present in the original Tamil tales (Venkataraman, 2009).

According to Pym (2010), the translations of Bama's tales by Holmstrom have the ability to surpass language and cultural barriers, providing readers with a unique chance to explore the intricacies of Tamil culture and the universal aspects of the human condition. The act of surpassing linguistic barriers exemplifies the profound impact of translation, whereby narratives originating from a certain cultural milieu discover meaningful connections inside a different one (Bassnett, 2002).

Tymoczko (2007) highlights that translation is not just a language activity but also a tool for social transformation. Holmstrom's translations of Bama's literary works, promoting social justice, stimulate scholarly discussions on issues like caste discrimination and gender inequality. This demonstrates the intrinsic influence of translation in championing the voices of oppressed individuals.

This research emphasizes the value of translation in fostering intercultural comprehension and social change. It's a great example of how Bama and Lakshmi Holmstrom were able to work together despite language limitations to investigate intricate cultural histories and advocate for social justice on a global scale. In addition to contributing to debates about literature, identity, and cross-cultural understanding, the project investigates the collaborative connection between authors and translators.

METHODOLOGY

The study analyzed excerpts from the literary work "Karukku" and their translated versions using text analysis and a comparative investigation. Text analysis is a systematic method used to identify patterns, themes, and underlying significances in texts. Comparative analysis is an integral part of the research process, examining distinct instances or groups to identify commonalities and disparities. "Karukku" and their translations with meticulous consideration, using a descriptive approach of comparison analysis. They conducted a thorough comparison of the target sections across other texts using text criticism and content evaluation. This approach provided significant insights into the interpretation and subtleties of the text across various languages and cultural settings.

THE DIFFICULTY ENCOUNTERED IN THE TRANSLATION OF "KARUKKU"

The analysis of "Karukku" by Bama reveals several significant themes, storylines, and messages that warrant classification as *testimonio*, a genre that chronicles the experiences of trauma and adaptive mechanisms used for survival. The tale serves as a testimony to the hardships endured by the Dalit community, urging readers to engage in "rhetorical listening" as secondary observers. The process of translating "Karukku" necessitated a thorough and precise examination of language subtleties and cultural frameworks. The title of the book, "Karukku," effectively captures the core themes and provides a notable problem. The term "Karukku" has several levels of significance and cultural importance that need precise conveyance in the English language.

“The sisters and the priests too don’t say what needs to be said, but only speak words which are irrelevant, meaningless mumbo-jumbo. ... What passes for devotion nowadays is merely a matter of doing things out of a sense of duty.” (Bama, 101)

The authors Littig and Pöchhacker, examine the importance of translation within the context of qualitative research, proposing a collaborative methodology with the active participation of skilled interpreters and translators at every stage of the research endeavor. The investigation of language subtleties and cultural characteristics maintained or modified in the translations of "Karukku" by Holmstrom is of significant relevance, as it is imperative that the translations faithfully capture the subtleties and cultural context of the original text.

Bama is the voice of the Dalits, Parayas. “I share the same difficulties and struggles that all dalit poor experience. I share ...the poverty of the Dalits who toil far more painfully through the fierce heat and beating rain, yet live out their lives in their huts with nothing but gruel and water” (Bama, 79).

Aronson et al. (2019) highlight the significance of the messages conveyed in literature that depict racial and cultural groups who are often marginalized or underrepresented. The consideration of the messages used and their intended goal is of utmost importance in the investigation of "Karukku" and its translated versions, as it facilitates an understanding of the social critique and portrayal of underprivileged populations within the tale.

LINGUISTIC EVOLUTION AS A MEANS OF CONNECTION

Language is a dynamic entity that undergoes changes and adaptations in response to alterations in society and cultural developments. Within the framework of translating "Karukku," the progression of language functions as a conduit that facilitates the accessibility and comprehension of the tale for readers hailing from diverse backgrounds. The process of language change, in this context, facilitates the cultivation of mutual understanding across diverse cultural groups. The dynamic between authors and translators the relationship between Bama and Lakshmi Holmstrom went beyond the traditional dynamics of author-translator relationships. The strong bond between them facilitated a deep interchange of ideas and viewpoints, enhancing the process of translation and permitting an accurate portrayal of the original piece.

Translation has the inherent capacity to surpass language and cultural barriers, cultivating intercultural comprehension and promoting societal transformation. The translation of "Karukku" by Holmstrom exemplifies the transformational force discussed in this context. The process of connecting these dimensions increases cross-cultural understanding and fosters societal change. Translation plays a vital role in comprehending and evaluating family functioning within the framework of cross-cultural views on family quality of life. The act of translation assumes a critical role in accurately expressing the many intricacies and cultural frameworks that contribute to the comprehension of the concept of family quality of life.

The use of social media as a medium for translation has the potential to augment the distribution and translation of research findings into the realm of clinical application. This strategy effectively tackles the challenge of time constraints and competence limitations that physicians have when attempting to obtain and evaluate research information. By using social media platforms, the field of translation can efficiently facilitate the transfer of evidence into practical application, enhancing the quality of patient care and resulting in improved results.

Holmstrom's translation of "Karukku" exemplifies the transformative potential of translation, as it transcends language and cultural barriers. Translation plays a crucial role in promoting cross-cultural understanding and advocating for social change, affecting various areas such as family quality of life, healthcare, and intercultural communication. It captures cultural subtleties, disseminates research results, and facilitates communication of ideas across different cultures, ultimately fostering cross-cultural understanding and contributing to social development.

The symbiotic alliance between author Bama and translator Lakshmi Holmstrom is a vibrant collaboration that enhances scholarly dialogue around literature, identity, and cross-cultural interaction. Their literary partnership, particularly in relation to "Karukku," has profoundly impacted the literature realm.

Bama and Holmstrom challenges the notion that many partners provide similar advantages and can be easily replaced. Their translations are enriched and imbued with authenticity due to their distinct personalities and specialized knowledge. The cooperation between the parties exemplifies the importance of incorporating varied viewpoints and acknowledging the uniqueness of cooperating individuals for favorable results.

The ongoing significance of the work of Bama and Holmstrom may be linked to its presence within the global environment. The collaborative efforts between Tamil and English literature serve to facilitate the connection and mutual respect between these two cultural spheres. The translations facilitate cross-cultural readership, enabling

individuals from many cultural backgrounds to actively interact with Bama's narratives and acquire valuable perspectives on the lived realities of oppressed populations in India.

Bama and Lakshmi Holmstrom is a literary symbiosis that enhances dialogue on literature, identity, and intercultural exchange. It highlights the importance of identity development in interorganizational partnerships and challenges the notion of easily replaceable partners. Their work fosters intercultural understanding and admiration globally.

CONCLUSION

Translation plays a crucial role in promoting cross-cultural understanding and social change. The translation of "Karukku" by Bama and Lakshmi Holmstrom from Tamil to English has helped readers understand the experiences of Dalit women in India, fostering empathy and a deeper understanding of their lives. This technique is essential for combating preconceptions and promoting social change by raising awareness of social injustices and promoting equality and inclusion. Translation studies can reveal how different translation methods capture the cultural intricacies and contextual features of the original work. The study highlights the difficulties and successes associated with translating a literary piece that addresses issues related to caste-based discrimination and socioeconomic inequities. It also emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts between writers and translators in safeguarding the integrity and influence of literary works across other languages. In an era with many cultures and extensive interconnections, translation studies are essential instruments for fostering mutual comprehension and advancing societal development.

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