

Gender Approaches in the Translation Classroom: Training the Doers

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Translator Training has been for a number of years now a key topic of research in Translation Studies, its methods, techniques and paradigms having been the subject of discussion for decades (Holmes, 1972; Pym, 2009), with some studies weighing the effectiveness of process-oriented vs product-oriented approaches (Gile, 2009; Orlando, 2012) and others focusing specifically on the impact of translation technology and its most recent developments (Pym, 2003 & 2012; Marshman & Bowker, 2012). Kiraly's (2000) social constructivist approach to training distinguishes between translation and translator competence, the former focusing mainly on the linguistic skills needed to 'produce an adequate target text' (2000:10) and the latter encompassing a wider set of skills relating to the effective use of technological tools (2000:9-13). This can be seen as a further attempt at underpinning practice-based activities within traditional theoretical frameworks and at fostering best practices in academia. Reliance on consolidated practices in translator training becomes particularly poignant when translators are faced with areas of knowledge for which no such practices are available and challenges arise which have implications for the translator's set of ideals, values, beliefs and (identity) needs.

Gender Studies is a representative example of such areas of knowledge lacking specific training benchmarks that can help translators overcome the challenges posed by sexual/identity discourse from one language into another. As a matter of fact, suitable tools or sensitivity to deal with the issues at hand may not have been developed or implemented in the relevant target languages/cultures. Gender as such is to be considered as a cross-cutting theme which affects the private and the public sphere alike and, although to a different extent, all professions and disciplines.

Since gender equality has become one of the primary goals promoted by large world organizations such as the Commonwealth and the International Labour Organization, gender training has increasingly been perceived as a need and, at the same time, as an essential tool to enhance mainstreaming, i.e. 'a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated' (International Labour Office, 1998).

The advocates of gender mainstreaming have usually been the members of non-governmental organizations and development agencies that have approached governmental institutions to get their support for promoting suitable training strategies, mainly in economic development. However, this urge has mostly interested sectors such as health, agriculture, energy, i.e. those more directly linked to economic sustainability.

Over the same period of time, translation practices in the academia have also been reconceived as a trigger for social change (Tymoczko and Gentzler, 2002), e.g. as a means by which the gender bias inherent in the texts - and that translators (sub)consciously risk transmitting in their work - may be questioned and possibly reversed. At the same time, feminist campaigns aimed at implementing the use of inclusive language in all contexts (political, institutional, etc.) have gained ground. However, the application of feminist translation strategies has usually been perceived as a form of manipulation which is irreconcilable with real-life assignments, and there does not seem to be unanimous consensus about the feasibility of such implementation, nor is being gender sensitive perceived as a pressing need by all agents involved in

the translation process. This is because gender tends to be perceived as something intimate, not as an integral dimension of someone's professional duties.

In the last few years, there have been timid attempts at using the translation classroom as a way to enhance gender awareness, in the hope of instilling the habit of thinking of gender as all-encompassing and affecting all spheres of life, including work responsibilities (De Marco, 2011; Corrius et al 2016). However, other fields in which gender issues feature prominently – Audiovisual Translation, Transcreation, Localization and institutional text translation to name but a few - remain uncharted.

The editors intend to use this volume to encourage lecturers, researchers and practitioners to address the need for gender training in translation and to share their experiences and practices in this emerging field. The questions raised in this volume are:

- Are there gender-inclusive (language) practices, aimed at avoiding/overelaborating sexist and homophobic connotations, which can be developed in class to challenge students' attitudes and behaviours?
- Can gender awareness be integrated in the classroom as an everyday mode of expression or is it an unachievable ideal?
- Do the constraints of the translation 'brief' discourage the implementation of gender as a valid translation strategy?
- How can gender-derogatory usages be avoided and how can non-heteronormative practices be activated?

Scholars are encouraged to propose articles on aspects and themes such as:

- Methodologies for activating non-heteronormative practices in the classroom
- Issues in gender assessment
- Gender sensitivity/Gender-sensitive teaching
- Gender-conscious approaches
- Queering the translation classroom
- 'Gendering' Audiovisual Translation, Transcreation, Localization and institutional text translation.

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Please send abstracts of 400-500 words in English to M.Demarco@londonmet.ac.uk and P.Toto@londonmet.ac.uk in Word or PDF format, by the deadline indicated above.

Abstracts should include:

- Name(s) of author(s)
- Author affiliation(s) – university or institution, e-mail, phone number
- Title
- Abstract (400-500 words)

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