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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the triangular relationship between discourse, gender, and translation in relation to the evolution of the concept of translation. Gendered metaphors have always been a fundamental part of translational discourse despite the evolution of translation as a concept and a discipline. The metaphorical representation of translation as a female has confined translation to the status of a secondary activity for decades. Gender inequality, a pervasive form of social disparity, manifests predominantly in discourse as the primary form of human interaction. Grounded in the cultural turn paradigm, the study draws on feminist translation theory, intersectionality, and discourse analysis to examine how feminist translational discourse has contributed to re-conceptualizing translation. Feminist translators argue that gendered discourse reinforces gender inequalities. To align with their ideological stance, they reject the traditional authority of the ST and claim co-authorship. Within this framework, translation is a gendered act of "rewriting" that destabilizes power hierarchies. In doing so, feminist translation redefines translation as a culturally and ideologically bound practice. The analysis of Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood's translation of Lise Gauvin's *Lettres d'une Autre* discloses the translator's insistence on infidelity as an ideological stance. Her counter-discourse is realized through an open transgression against the conventional grammatical rules. Her aim is to subvert the inequalities underlying them in order to restructure power relationships and enhance the visibility of the feminine. By feminizing language and foregrounding the feminine/translator's voice in translated literary texts, feminist translation promoted a sense of cross-cultural solidarity, thus reshaping power dynamics in translational discourse.

KEYWORDS

Discourse

Gender

Translation

Metaphor

Feminist translation

Introduction

Gender disparities and inequalities are prevalent in various aspects of human society, including metaphorical language. Metaphors are embedded in experience and influenced by the physical, and cultural contexts producing them (Lakoff and Johnson 146-147). Beyond their poetic value, they are a mode of conceptualizing the world through accessible mental images that construct knowledge and frame the way we think about a topic. Based on the conceptual mapping and associations we create between the source and target concept, a metaphor can highlight some characteristics and overlook others, which points to the manipulative function of metaphors (Charteris-Black 202-203).

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Translation metaphors are a case in point; conceptualizing translation as a woman through gendered metaphors has associated translation with feminine characteristics, such as unfaithfulness, submission, and subordination. This view of translation was enhanced by other metaphors presenting translation as an imitative activity, which, unlike writing, requires no creativity. Such metaphors have influenced the conception of translation for so long that they act as an impediment to the establishment of translation-focused scientific research. The secondary position assigned to translation confined both translators and scholars to the pursuit of linguistic equivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) at the expense of other, more important aspects of translation.

In the triangular relationship between discourse, gender, and translation, discourse serves as a means of replicating ideology, where metaphors accentuate gender stereotypes (Zeng et al. 3). It is revealing of the power relationships established between female/translated texts on the one hand and male/originals on the other. Nevertheless, discourse not only constructs and expresses power relations, but it can also be a means of challenging and counteracting these relations (Foucault 101). It follows that the hierarchy and power relations between male/original text and female/translated text can be subverted by means of a resistance discourse that places the TT on equal footing with the ST.

Within the framework of the cultural turn and feminist translation theory, translation has expanded beyond the boundaries of linguistics and comparative studies, relinquishing its quest for equivalence to become a mode of cultural exchange that entails rewriting and manipulation. Translation is not only concerned with language, but with the text as a product of a complex cultural and ideological system. Mobilized by a certain ideology and poetics, the practice of rewriting manipulates literature to function in a specific way in society in service of power (Lefevere 8). From a feminist translation perspective, translated texts can be manipulated in various ways to serve the translator's feminist interests and amplify her voice.

To this end, a variety of feminist translation strategies were implemented to break out of the constraints of patriarchal language and the authority of the ST. An outstanding instance of this form of counter-discourse is Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood's translation of Lise Gauvin's *Lettre d'une* autre. Her counter-metaphor, "*Re-belle et infidèle*", is a forthright rebellion against man-made norms. In her translation, de Lotbinière-Harwood insists on being unfaithful to the ST. Her open transgression against conventional grammatical rules is a way to accentuate and subvert the various inequalities underlying them.

Theoretical Framework

Gendered metaphors have always been a central part of translational discourse despite the evolution of the discipline. These metaphors have influenced research directions in the field and acted as an impediment to the development of a concept of translation. The reversal of the power relations embedded in gendered metaphors through feminist translation marked a turning point in the history of translation, redefining translation and empowering the translator. To contextualize this study, we draw on a blend of interconnected theories to guide our exploration of this topic.

From a feminist theoretical perspective, Dale Spender contends that discourse embeds gender inequalities in language, thus shaping cultural ideologies and power relations. This assumption is complemented by Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis, which emphasizes the role of discourse in establishing and perpetuating power inequities. As a fundamental part of discourse, metaphors play a vital role in the interplay between language, cognition, and social reality. The power of metaphors manifests in the way conceptual metaphors shape our view of

the world, influencing the way we think and talk (Cameron and Deignan 676). In the context of this study, feminizing the TT through metaphors, such as *Les belles infidèles*, conceptualizes the ST as a trustworthy authority and the TT as a derivative unreliable copy, thus degrading the translator to the state of a traitor, or at best, an invisible slave (Dryden 24) or handmaidens (Simon 1) with no authority over the ST.

Under the cultural turn paradigm, feminist translation theory, emerges as a counter-discourse, reversing the power relation between the ST and TT. The intersection between translation studies and gender studies, raised questions about how power and gender metaphors influenced the evolution of translation theory. Pioneering reflections on the potentials of translation in transferring/transforming gender-based power relations in literary works emerged in the 1980s, with the voices of Susan Bassnett, Luis Van Flotow, and Sherry Simon (Gehmacher 19). As a practice, feminist translation focuses on the translator's visibility. By means of feminist translation strategies, the translator defies and transgresses the conventional grammar and authorial choices as a resistance against forms of oppression (de Lotbinière-Harwood 65).

Gender, Discourse and Translation

For Spender, language is a part of a patriarchal system where the male is the norm against which women are judged. A system "arranged that we are damned if we go along with it, and damned if we do not" (Spender 2). In other words, conforming to the system implies acknowledging women's inferiority and subordination, and trying to break out of it entails repudiation. Hence, language, as a man-made construct, not only reflects real-world inequities, but it is also the means to institute and perpetuate them.

Discourse is a central element in the complex structure of inequality existing in every society, a socially conditioned practice, constitutive of knowledge, power relations and social identities (Fairclough and Wodak 258). Accordingly, it is fundamental that reform attempts should start by understanding how meaning is constructed and established through social interaction. A dynamic understanding of discourse, as a mode of social stratification, should be done within an intersectional framework that analyses it in relation to power dynamics within a wider socio-cultural context and political stance (Guimarães Corrêa 3; Muñoz-Puig 1135).

Relying on the advances in socio-cultural studies and critical discourse analysis, research on gender proliferated, focusing on the study of dominance relationships and their reproduction strategies in oral and written texts. Language, in its written as well as spoken form, instantiates ideologies and builds political, economic and gender relationships between people on the one hand, and between people and institutions on the other. Discourse plays a crucial role in shaping gender identity and power structures to serve the interests of a certain social actor. This can be best seen in how femininity has become 'a mode of consumption' in advertising and mass-media discourses (Anderson 26). Such discursive constructs are naturalized and legitimized by social and cultural beliefs, and perpetuated through the discourse of dominant institutions and individuals.

However, "Dominance is seldom absolute; it is often gradual, and may be met by more or less resistance or counter-power by dominated groups" (Van Dijk 85). Male dominance is no exception to this rule. As a mode of resistance, different forms of feminine counter-power emerged in many fields, such as art, sports, and politics. But above all in writing as a space of self-realization and flourishment that allows more freedom than reality (Morrison 15). 'Writing as resistance' is not limited to literature and literary criticism; it has also impacted translation.

Simon points out that "translators and women have historically been the weaker figures in their respective hierarchies: translators are handmaidens to authors, women inferior to men" (1).

The encounter between feminism and translation studies gave rise to a feminist translation theory that challenged traditional notions of fidelity and authorship. Feminist translators conceive of translation as a creative activity, thus blurring the borders between translation and authorship by bringing the obscured, metaphorically feminized translator into visibility. This relationship was approached from two perspectives. The first perspective approaches the metaphorical discourse about translation as an identity-forming discourse, while the second approaches translation as a counter-discourse that subverts established forms of dominance between the ST and TT on the one hand, and between feminine and masculine figures in the text, on the other.

Literature Review

Metaphors of Translation as Identity-forming Discourse: *Les belles infidèles*

Metaphors have recently become a center of interest in discourse studies. Beyond their stylistic value and rhetorical function, the metaphors we produce and use contribute to the construction of our conceptual system and shape the way we think and define realities (Lakoff and Johnson 57). From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, metaphors utilize available linguistic resources to express mental connections between conceptual domains by establishing correspondences of properties between them. When a metaphor is used recurrently to express an idea by creating a connection between two concepts, the web of relations connecting the two concepts, and the stance they express, become a part of the speakers' knowledge. Cameron and Deignan points to this dynamic recursive relationship between thought and language as a determinant of people's attitudes:

> metaphor, like most other uses of language, is designed for other people and for particular discourse purposes. An important dimension of the dialogics of metaphor is its use to express affect and attitude along with ideational content. On the timescale of a discourse event, the cumulative impact of metaphors contributes to the overall 'affective climate' of the interaction. On a more macro timescale, the dialogic use and re-use of metaphors leads to the conventionalization of attitudinal judgements attached to them. (676)

Metaphors are not only an easy way to describe an object or illustrate an idea; they constitute mental models that frame our understanding of the world, and when used in discourse, they communicate an attitude or a belief. These linguistic forms tend to evolve and stabilize, becoming a common way of expressing a given idea across discourse communities (Cameron and Deignan 680).

The discourse about translation has historically made use of different metaphors that place translation in a secondary position to writing by portraying translation as a mirror, a copy, or an artifact, and the translator as a woman, a traitor, a slave or a spy. Hermans explains that translation metaphors originate in a traditional view of translation, based on two aspects: cultural transmission and interpretation (16). With respect to these two aspects, maintains Hermans, we conceive of the translator as an enabler who makes the inaccessible, or the culturally distant, accessible by removing barriers, and an interpreter who makes the incomprehensible understandable "by offering a mirror image of that which itself remains

beyond reach" (16). In Herman's view, metaphors that present translation as building bridges of transfer derive from the first aspect, while metaphors portraying translation as mimesis derive from the second. From an ideological and historical perspective, argues Hermans, this image of "translator function," as devised by culture, keeps translation in that hierarchical order and maintains the power and authority of the author over the translated text, which, despite being authored by the translator, needs to be authorized by the author (22).

One of the most frequently used metaphors or 'clichés' enhancing this hierarchy is *Les belles infidèles*, coined by Gilles Ménages in 1648 to describe Perrot d'Ablancourt's translation of Lucien. The centuries-old metaphor, points out Bassnet, has "become so powerfully ingrained in contemporary thinking that it is still regularly used by men and women alike, despite the fact that it is nonsensical" (67). The source of this absurdity, explains Bassnet, is that this sexist analogy outlived the notion of 'faithful translation' itself, and is still used although notions of faithfulness and equivalence have lost their appeal for contemporary scholars.

The parallelism between women and translation places this latter in a secondary position to writing, like a wife to her husband, she can never reach the status of perfection and power he enjoys. Chamberlain argues that although the gendering of translation is frequently illustrated by *Les belles infidèles*, there exist different replications of this analogy by other writers (457). From a cultural perspective, explains Chamberlain, this analogy implies that the original represents what is natural, truthful, and lawful, and the translated text embodies what is artificial, false, and treasonous (455). Accordingly, points out Chamberlain, the French metaphor is granted truthfulness because it articulates the "cultural complicity between the issues of fidelity in translation and in marriage" (456). It conceptualizes the relationship between the ST and TT as a marriage between translation as a woman and the original text as a husband or a representation of the author's patrilineal power to legitimize the progeny of this relationship.

However, attributing infidelity to translation is not a new idea, the Roman proverb "traduttore traditore" is but another version of the French adage. One reason for the persistence of these metaphors, according to Polizzotti, is "that no one has been able to define, once and for all, exactly what fidelity means in the context of translation" (50). Attempts to define fidelity gave rise to other controversial issues, such as whether the translator should show fidelity to the words or to the meaning of the original, if they should pledge fidelity to the author or the reader, and to what extent, if at all, can they abide by neutrality, or comply with the author's ideology, when translating?

Another reason is that metaphors seem to resist time and space, and subsist through use. They encode cultural knowledge and are learnt through interaction within socio-cultural groups (Cameron and Deignan 674). Due to their reliance on images and their coherence with culture, metaphors have a strong impression on the recipient, being a part of their cultural knowledge (276). In the same way, Lakoff and Johnson explain that no matter how different the target and source are in a metaphor, they are conceptually linked within a particular culture. Metaphors are therefore embedded in the socio-cultural experience, and they generally cohere with the system of values of their source culture.

By extending this view, *Les belles infidèles* can be understood in terms of the axiom that beautiful women lack faithfulness, and faithful women lack beauty. According to this analogy, translations, just like women, can either be attractive or trustworthy but not both. This structured metaphorical relationship makes better sense in the light of the idealized image of women in the 17th century, when women were not supposed to be too ugly neither extremely beautiful; they had to be sage but not forthright; and they had to be content with their subordination to their husbands (Murphy). According to this patriarchal ideal, it was essential for a woman to

be obedient and silent in a social system that decries and repudiate disobedient or outspoken women because they act against nature.

Likewise, under the prevalence of the notion of 'faithfulness' in translation, it was essential for a translator to follow the footsteps of the author by creating an accurate copy of his work. Liberties in translation were intolerable, and the translator's interference or visibility, regardless of his motives, is judged as an act of indiscretion against the prestigious original text. The analogy between translation and women conceptualizes translation in terms of its duty towards the original. In this relationship, the ST symbolizes the male authority that imposes rules and demands complete servitude and loyalty from the TT.

Yet, the metaphor and its underlying view of *good translation* carry some ironical overtones. Translation finds itself in a kind of "damned if it does and damned if it does not" dilemma. A literal colorless rendering is disapproved, for it sticks slavishly to its source, and a creative, elegant translation is denounced as unethical, for it forsakes its original. In his *Dedication of the Aeneid*, Dryden summarizes the translator's predicament as follows:

> But slaves we are, and labor in another man's plantation; we dress the vineyard, but the wine is the owner's: if the soil be sometimes barren, then we are sure of being scourged: if it be fruitful, and our care succeeds, we are not thanked; for the proud reader will only say, the poor drudge has done his duty. (…) He, who invents, is master of his thoughts and words: he can turn and vary them as he pleases, till he renders them harmonious; but the wretched translator has no such privilege: for, being tied to the thoughts, he must make what music he can in the expression; and, for this reason, it cannot always be so sweet as that of the original. (24)

In this extended analogy, Dryden pictures the translator's condition by drawing a vivid contrast between the liberties of creativity and recognition enjoyed by the author and the translator's state of subordination and invisibility. Worse still, although translators are deprived from authorship freedoms, they are expected to produce refined texts under the imperative faithfulness constraints. Through his pioneering theory of translation, Dryden made one of the first calls for a balanced view of translation that moves the translator beyond the rigid constraints of literalism.

Feminist Translation as a Counter-discourse: *Re-belle et Infidèle*

Gendered discourse constituted a point of intersection between feminism and translation. An encounter that gave emergence to a feminist translation theory in Canada towards the end of the1970s. The feminist translation theory influenced translation studies by bringing politics and gender to the center of the discipline and shifting its interest to 'ideology' as a new axis of analysis, thus paving the way for the "cultural turn" in the 1980s and 1990s (Castro and Ergun 1). The cultural paradigm expanded the field of translation beyond the boundaries of linguistics. Translation gave up its quest for equivalence to become a mode of cultural exchange that involves rewriting and manipulation.

Translation, as such, is mobilized by a certain ideology and poetics to serve power by manipulating literature to function in a specific way in society (Lefevere 8). When translating, points out Lefevere, translators mostly do not reject the ST entirely, they rather rewrite by manipulating both content and style (Lefevere 8). Translation, from this perspective, is not just a linguistic endeavor, it is a transhistorical and transcultural phenomenon that can never be transparent, it dislocates and manipulates everything in an attempt to represent a distant culture (Hermans 25). In this sense, translation has its own discourse, aiming at creating an impact or making a change.

From a feminist point of view, the notion of rewriting brings the feminist translator to a higher status, that of an active agent who, in addition to creating and establishing images and gender representations in culture, can construct new power relationships by being on an equal-footing with the author, each collaborating from his position in meaning construction. Godard notes that "Womanhandling" enhances the discursive presence of the feminist translator by replacing the silent self-negating translator by an active participant who leaves her signature in italics, in footnotes or in a preface (50). Translation, as conceptualized by feminine translators, is not only a counter-discourse in the sense that it subverts the traditional discourse about translation itself, it is also a means of claiming power, a metaphor of resistance for women's struggle to express their experience by means of a patriarchal language.

The pursuit of fidelity, as explained earlier, frames translation as a derivative literary activity and the translator as a subordinate whose ultimate aim is to imitate the ST as accurately as possible. It follows that the subversion of this traditional discourse should focus on two main points: a) redefining of the concept of fidelity, and b) reassigning a new role to the translator. If translators are required to act as cultural facilitators, who remove cultural barriers to make the foreign familiar, their cultural intervention and responsibility should be recognized. For feminist translation, the translator's responsibility, should be broadened to that of "signatories" of "doubly authored" documents" (Simon 12).

In contrast to the conventional metaphorics of translation, feminist translation obliterates the difference between "production and reproduction" and re-conceptualizes fidelity in terms of the purpose of translation (Chamberlain 465). Fidelity, from this point of view, is owed to the translator's assumptions, as a member of a cultural community that produces and validated these assumptions (Arrojo 160). This implies that the translator can interfere with the text to serve her feminine interests in a given cultural context. The translator's voice is audible and her role in meaning creation is as visible as that of the author. The translator is not a passive transmitter of the author's meaning, she rather creates meaning. Translators, argues Simon, "communicate, re-write, manipulate a text in order to make it available to a second language public. Thus they can use language as cultural intervention, as part of an effort to alter expressions of domination, whether at the level of concepts, of syntax or of terminology" (8).

Feminist Translation Strategies: Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood

Translation of Lise Gauvin's *Lettres d'une Autre*

Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood, a prominent theorist and practitioner of feminist translation, places women and translators at the center of the rewriting activity. Her approach to translation emphasizes infidelity as a political stance and a conscious practice in translation, aiming at destabilizing the patriarchal order. According to de Lotbinière-Harwood (1991), feminist translation is essentially a political action realized through language:

> Contrairement à un pratique de traduction orthodoxe, qui entretient l'illusion de la parfaite neutralité, voir même de la non-existence de la main traduisante, la traduction comme pratique de réécriture met cartes sur table dès le départ. Son projet est de faire entrer la conscience féministe dans l'activité traductrice. Comme l'écriture au féminin, dont elle est tributaire, la traduction au féminin se présente une activité politique visant a faire apparaitre et vivre les femmes dans la langue et dans le monde. (11)

Feminist translators make use of various inventive linguistic strategies to make women visible in the text as well as in society. In her prize-winning translation of Lise Gauvin's novel, *Lettres d'une Autre*, de Lotbinière-Harwood's feminist and political interests are manifested through different feminist translation strategies. In the preface to her translation, de Lotbinière-Harwood summarizes her translation approach as follows:

> (…) this translation is a rewriting in the feminine of what I originally read in French. I don't mean content. Lise Gauvin is a feminist, and so am I. I am not her. She wrote in the generic masculine. My translation practice is a political activity aimed at making language speak for women. So my signature on a translation means: this translation has used every possible feminist translation strategy to make the feminine visible in language. Because making the feminine visible in language means making women seen and heard in the real world. Which is what feminism is all about. (…) translation is an act of linguistic invention which often enriches the original text instead of betraying it. (9-11)

One of the inventive textual practices of the translator is that she retains the French spelling of Québec and Montréal to accentuate the foreignness of the language, thus confronting the anglicizing power of English, aspiring to destabilize its dominance over the French language. Translation in this sense is a subversive mode demystifying all forms of dominant ideologies and cultural inequalities.

Her approach to this 'linguistic inequality' can be contemplated in the light of her belief that all women are bilingual, in the sense that they forcedly learn and speak the dominant patriarchal language along with a private muted feminine language. This view is expanded to the multicultural context in Quebec. For her, the seemingly different relations between central/ peripheral, colonizer/ colonized, men/ women, original/ translated are simply layers of the same phenomenon: inequality.

Another strategy used by the translator is the feminine French inflexion (+e), added wherever the generic masculine (Québécois) is used in the French ST. (Québecoies-es) is, according to de Lotbinière-Harwood, the non-sexist grammatical form comprising both men and women. This inflexion is inventively used to serve two purposes. On one level, by imposing the feminine form on a gender-neutral word in English, this unusual form becomes more noticeable to the reader's eye and mind. It compels them to question the motive behind the translator's insistence on markedness, thus forcing the feminine presence in a bilingual cultural context that ignores women in English and privileges the masculine in French.

De Lotbinière-Harwood explains this practice by her notion of "la grammaire intérieure" (15). She maintains that the grammars that privilege the masculine are by no means arbitrary or natural. A grammatical rule that erases the feminine group when a masculine is present, rather reflects the socio-economic, political, judicial and symbolic inferiority of women. The violence socially inflicted on women is encoded in grammatical gender, and by internalizing these rules, they become rules of life for both sexes, shaping their identities and status in society.

On another level, this intentional morphological deviation in the text is meant to "constantly confront" the reader with otherness. The reader, explains de Lotbinière-Harwood, is persistently reminded that they are reading a translated text, which was rewritten to bear a new, different meaning. By making this very blunt claim for total visibility, the translator gets out of the cocoon of passivity to transform herself into a master of her text; she subverts the hierarchical relation between the original and translated text. de Lotbinière-Harwood notes:

> L'effet du genre est ressenti en premier lieu par le corps lisant qui décode et interprète le message contenu dans le texte source. Inévitablement, la main traduisante fera passer ses valeurs, ses intentions, ses positions idéologiques, dans le texte qu'elle réécrit en langue cible. L'identité de genre du corps traduisant influence également les rapports avec l'auteur-e at avec le lectorat de la culture à laquelle se destine le texte traduit. (19)

The original is "one of many possible versions," and the translation is simply another; they both presuppose the reading, assimilation and interpretation of other texts (Levine 22). It is therefore necessary for the translator to manipulate the text to stay faithful to his political interests on the one hand, and to establish bonds of communication with the author and the target readership on the other. In some cases, the conventional use of the masculine form, explains de Lotbinière-Harwood, in the target language may, in addition to changing the meaning of the original, disfigure the reality by erasing female presence and experience.

Another instance of this practice of 'feminization' occurs in the text when the translator feminized the masculine noun (voyeur):

> ST : "j'avais mal à accepter la position de voyeur auquel ce jeu me confinait… "
> TT : "I had some difficulty accepting the position of voyeur**e** this game put me in …"

The French text uses the generic noun 'voyeur' functioning as a specimen representing a group sharing the same property, that of a person who contents himself of watching without taking part in action. Both the French masculine noun and its equivalent English neutral noun, in their genericity, erase the feminine. By translating it as voyeur-e, the translator manipulated the text in a way that moves from the general to the specific/feminine, which brings the gender of the translator/author to the surface, and orients the reader's minds to think about this position of passive *voyeure* in relation to the female speaker. Unlike the generic, this 'ungrammatical' form enables the translator to exclude the masculine and highlight the feminine feeling of passivity.

Elsewhere in the novel, the translator manipulates the text in the opposite way so that the generic masculine includes the feminine as well. After all, victory and heroic acts are not limited to men:

ST	**TT**
Du mélange brunatre de boue at de sel qui charactérise dans ce pays **la victoire de l'homme** sur les élèments (11) .	The brownish mixture of mud and salt which, in this country, represents **our victory** over the elements (19).
Comme **les héros** de contes de fées (46) .	Like fairytales **heroes and heroines** (56).

Similarly, the translator manipulates the use of pronouns. These interventions aim at granting the inclusion of women in the first extracts below, or the absolute feminization of the referent in the second extract, where the readers of female writers are exclusively women:

ST	**TT**

- L'écrivain refuse désormais de soumettre **sa** subjectivité critique(18) - Chacun (…) en était arrivé à intégrer à **sa** personnalité un double surnois, multiforme (38).	-The writer refuses to submit **his or her** critical subjectivity (22) -Each person (…) had succeeded in integrating into **his/her** personality a shifty, multifaceted double (46).
Chacun de leurs textes est une invitation à poursuivre **soi-même** l'itinéraire (19).	Each one of their texts is an invitation to the reader to continue the journey on **her own** (23).

In other parts of the text, where manipulating the available grammar does not satisfy the translator's intentions, she resorts to the typographical code to signal gender (de Lotbinière-Harwood 11). In the first example below, the masculine noun 'masters' is used, between inverted commas, to refer to women in a subtle allusion to the negative connotation associated with the feminine form 'mistresses'. In the same extract, the translator did not translate the masculine plural 'ils' by its grammatical equivalent, the gender-neutral 'they', she added (men) between brackets to offset the practice of neutralization (de Lotbinière-Harwood 114). In the context of the extract below, she excludes women from "the no – less absolute enjoyment of their time and of other little things such as the state". Following the same practice, in the second sentence, the gender-neutral 'flight attendant' had to be modified by the adjective (all female) to highlight the gender of the flight attendants in this context, pointing out to the bilingual nature of women as they speak two different languages one in private and another in public (de Lotbinière-Harwood 93):

ST	**TT**
Ils leur arrive même de rêver à ce temps béni qu'on appelait le matriarcat et qui donnait aux femmes **la royauté absolue** de la cuisine, alors une belle grande pièce avec poêle ronronnant, pendent qu'**ils** avaient eux-mêmes la jouissance non moins absolue de leur horaires et de quelques autres petites choses, dont l'Etat (99).	Sometimes they even dream of that blessed time called the matriarchy when women were **absolute 'masters'** of the kitchen, which in those days was a big beautiful room with a humming woodstove, while **they (men)** had the no-less absolute enjoyment of their time and of other little things such as the state (112).
Les hotesses communiquant en francais entre elles et en anglais avec le public (45).	The **flight attendants (women all)** speak French among themselves and English to the public (55).

Addition is another strategy used by the translator to confront neutralization. While gender is grammatically expressed in French, in nouns, adjectives and pronouns, it is necessary to add modifiers to specify gender in English:

ST	TT
Une amie m'a aussi prété les disque de Suzanne jacob(15).	A **woman friend** also loaned me Suzanne Jacob's records (19).
Elle me pointe du doigt les confession **d'une ex-politicienne** (16).	She pointed to the confessions of **a female ex-politician** (20).

Declare en la quittant **le compagnon** de l'héroine (97).	Says the **male companion** of the heroine (110).

By emphasizing the feminine in the TT, De Lotbinière-Harwood breached the conventional discourse about translation. Feminist translation made the female voice heard and gave the translator more authority over the text. This new paradigm extended translators' authority to rewrite the balance of power, which emphasizes the role of translation in re-constructing social and cultural identities. In this context, translation strategies are not only textual techniques used to solve problems of non-equivalence between the source language and the target language. They are an intentional act of resistance and a hallmark of feminist translation.

Conclusion

This article has explored the relationship between gender, discourse, and translation revealing that the translation theory has evolved in parallel to the discourse on translation. While it offered an initial conceptual and theoretical framework, the metaphorics of translation ultimately hindered the development of translation as a scientific discipline. Being pre-conceptual and pre-scientific, metaphors cannot be translated into "unambiguous concepts" (Guldin 20). The use of metaphors in translation theoretical discourse, explains Guldin, reveals the existence of explanatory difficulties and the lack of accurate analytical concepts.

Insights from the evolution of translation as a concept underscore the need to adopt a scientifically and theoretically grounded discourse, appropriate to the expanding discipline of translation studies. Such discourse can equally strengthen the transformative role of translation as a cross-cultural means of communication, with a huge potential of changing social realities. Nowadays, more than ever, there is a greater need to empower translation, theoretically, professionally and ethically, to meet the challenges of globalization and keep up with the ever-increasing amount of information invading our life. For Bassnet and Johnson, the need to re-examine the traditional conception of translation is justified by the following:

> What we have today is a world in which not only are there sophisticated global communications systems undreamt of just a few years ago, but a planet where political, cultural, economic and ethical issues transcend national boundaries and affect us all. Today translation is essential, for without translation we cannot communicate in a world where interconnectedness is vital, nor can we access the world inhabited by our ancestors. We need to expand our ideas about translation beyond the linguistic and to seek a redefinition of what translation actually is. (187)

Empowering translation involves, above all, recognizing the translator's agency. Breaking out of the degrading metaphorical discourse and developing a new concept of translation is a foremost step in this process. From a historical perspective, translation as mediation was always linked to activism, and translation practices were of symbolic and practical value to a certain political or social movement (Gehmacher 21). Re-conceptualizing translation should, therefore, draw on the actual role of translation as a "proactive force" that revitalizes culture and drives political, social, and economic changes (Gentzler 8). Similarly, the success of a given translation, explains Gentzler, should equally be assessed in terms of the cultural changes it introduced, rather than in terms of equivalence or fidelity to the ST.

Freedom is another prerequisite of empowerment. Translation has always involved conscious choices and decisions, both in selecting STs and in the translation process itself. It follows that the application of critical thinking skills is crucial in analyzing of the components of the ST context and evaluating the requirements of the TT audience. Choosing a text for translation is not always neutral. It is often determined by the kind of change the translator aims to. In like manner, minor lexical or structural choices are vital to meaning transfer. Overall, micro and macro decisions are made throughout the translation process, which requires taking certain liberties.

However, this freedom is by no means absolute; it is a strategic concept that allows a better handling of the ST, and a more efficient way to fulfill the TT function and intended effect, which may differ from those of the ST. In this process translators should be aware of the moral responsibility they assume towards the author, the readership and their community. Central to this is equipping translators with a sound ethical framework that enables them to make appropriate decisions when addressing ideological bias, and take accountability for their actions.

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