



The Politics of Language and Identity in Translations: A Comparative Study of Mahasweta Devi's and Jhumpa Lahiri's Literary Translations

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Abstract: Diaspora is a phrase that appears often in many different types of speech. The term is used to describe the process by which a people are driven from their homeland. This paper analyses Lahiri's treatment of culturally and universally relevant themes, including migration and cultural assimilation, globalisation and cultural clashes, and the delicate nature of family relationships abroad, including the awkwardness, beauty, and vitality of each. Among the themes explored in Lahiri's works are traditional gender roles, Indian culture, and the importance of family. In her first novel, "The Namesake" (2003), Jhumpa Lahiri addresses these issues as part of a new wave of Diaspora authors. Her works vividly depict the characters' experiences as they navigate the cultural chasm that exists between the Hindu way of life and the American social order. By mediating information across language and cultural borders and moulding global narratives, translation is a powerful but underappreciated factor in political discourse. In this introductory piece, we look at translation as a tool for political activism and identity building, specifically at how it may subvert dominant narratives, provide a platform to underrepresented groups, and encourage a more compassionate and inclusive international conversation. The research sheds light on the transformational significance of translation as a catalyst for change and cross-cultural understanding, drawing on the ideas of George Orwell and John Searle about the potency of language in political manipulation and power relations.

Keywords: Diaspora, Jhumpa Lahiri, Namesake, Translators' identity, culture

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INTRODUCTION

There is an inseparable link between language and identity; the two influence one another, and this bond permeates all individuals. Because of the significance of the language, we use in our daily interactions, our environment and the language we use shape our identities. They have been wondering about it as the number of researchers and scientific fields expands. And I investigated a great deal of uncharted territory in an effort to understand how linguistic diversity may give rise to distinct identities—and, more importantly, how it might impede our capacity to connect with one another. On a more individual level, we will benefit from expanding our knowledge of this connection. It will also aid in comprehending the local populace, regardless of our linguistic or identity differences. More research on this connection will shed light on their interdependencies and reveal which factor has a more profound societal impact. One way in which our cultural background shapes who we are is via the words we use to express ourselves. In English-speaking nations, for instance, the buyer may say We appreciate your purchases and are more pleased by your requests than customers in other nations. Typically, the one who sells is the one who gets thanked, which is

different from Japan. There are still some distinctions, despite the fact that the circumstances are comparable and the sequence of events is same. Culture, society, and the people in our immediate vicinity all have an impact on the way we speak and the words we choose to use. Our language also influences them to some extent.

A global perspective on translation The cosmopolitan moment is defined by Gerard Delanty in the last chapter of *Citizenship in a Global Age*: When culturally specific traditions interact and adapt, we enter a cosmopolitan period. The communitarian slide into the specific and the false universalism of liberalism's morality can only be circumvented in this manner. according to (2000: 145). Being caught in the between of the romanticism of the specific and the delusion of a "world culture" offered by more dominant forms of globalisation is the classic dilemma. The interaction between context-dependent and transformable cultures is, according to Delanty, essential to the development of true cosmopolitanism. Two radically different countries, China and Ireland, on opposite ends of the geographical size and regional importance spectrums, will have their translation histories briefly mentioned to demonstrate the essential connection between the micro-cosmopolitan and the transnational, as well as the macro-cosmopolitan and the transnational. Historical accounts of translation must now include the many translation endeavours of a nation's diaspora, rather than limiting themselves to literary occurrences inside the borders of the nation-state, as was formerly the case in the area of translation studies. For this reason, it is not sufficient to have a "national" history of translation; what is required is a "transnational" history. The Irish situation provides an opportunity to trace the evolution of transnational translation back at least three epochs. First, the Irish play an important role in the rebuilding of the Carolingian educational system, beginning in the early Middle Ages when Latin classes are revived.

The Irish were teaching Latin as if it were a completely alien language since their Celtic language is so distinct from Latin. Latin was not only an alien tongue to the Irish instructors, but to many of their continental students as well, thanks to the decline of the Roman Empire and the ravages of nomadic tribes. Because of the widespread nature of their activities and the noticeable nomadism among the Irish monks, their cultural impact extended far beyond their homeland of Ireland. Consequences for translation are inevitable outcomes of this expansionism in religion and education. An Irish trio named Johannes Scotus Eriugena, Sedulius Scotus, and Martinus Hiberniensis will appear in the ninth century. Their translations from Greek to Latin will greatly aid the Carolingian renaissance and the resurgence of neo-Platonism across Europe (Whitelock et al. 1982; Mackey 1994; Shiels and Wood 1989; Cronin 1996: 12–15). The continuous flow of texts, ideas, and literary models between Irish monasteries—local powerhouses in a very decentralised country—and Irish monastic institutions in Britain and Europe is what stands out when tracking translation activity.

The second turning point in this global history happens in the seventeenth century, when a number of Irish colleges were founded on the European continent as a result of the political and religious persecution of Irish Catholics. Rome, Prague, and Salamanca all have translations of Irish texts, but the centre of translation work is on Saint Anthony's College in Louvain, which was founded in 1603. Due to the high expense and restricted dissemination options associated with manuscript translations, the purchase of a printing press in 1611 by the Irish government elevated the translation effort in Louvain to a new level. In addition to showing how intellectuals with roots in national intellectual traditions engaged with the

ideological upheaval of the Counter-Reformation, the translations' choice of language will have an impact on the evolution of modern Irish. (Reference: Ó Cléirigh 1985)

Thirdly, in the twentieth century, Irish modernists in exile like Thomas McGreevy, Brian Coffey, Denis Devlin, Joyce, and Beckett—who will incorporate translation into their unique transnational poetics—emerge, marking a turning point in this diasporic history of Irish translation (Shields 2000: 17-90). Irish pedagogues, missionaries, and linguists in colonial and postwar West Africa provide an additional, less researched facet of this diasporic experience. Even the most isolated Irish village had some kind of connection to the outside world, whether it was through emigration to North America or the United Kingdom, or via church-related activities in South and West Africa and Latin America. Modernism in Ireland simply couldn't have happened without constant communication with Europe. The breadth and depth of these links are attested to both Irish and English literature, and it is widely acknowledged that a nationalist history focused on territory has often failed to acknowledge or downplay the significance of diasporic.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Alshehri, Somaya. (2023). Since there are more than 7,000 languages in use today, the ability to communicate one's ideas and identity through one's native tongue is one of the most remarkable aspects of being human. However, just as every culture and society has its own unique language, so too can the ways in which people express themselves through it. Words, phrases, or even written text all make up language. Our ideas, culture, society, goals, and even our true selves and the impression we want to project to others are all conveyed via the written and spoken word. Different situations call for different personas, which we both embody and create. In order to collect as many participants and experiences as possible, I utilised a survey (quantitative data) and disseminated it via various channels. There were both open-ended and closed-ended questions on the test, with multiple-choice responses for correctness and a percent-choice option for self-evaluation. The study's participants were selected at random from the general population and represented a range of ages and genders. Graphs were used to illustrate some of the statistical findings from the survey questions. Various social media programmes served as the stage, as I said before. With any luck, this study will provide light on how language and identity are interconnected.

Ponton, Douglas & Ozyumenko, Vladimir & Larina, Tatiana. (2023). To begin, one of the most noticeable trends in the field of translation studies over the last several decades has been the emphasis on cultural factors in translation. But how exactly cultural knowledge contributes to a translator's cultural competency and how it develops over time is still up for debate. This paper contends that one must be well-versed in the target culture's social structure and worldview—the most fundamental aspects of its deep culture—in order to fully understand it, along with its history, geography, literature, traditions, artefacts, etc. The research expands upon the idea of "I-culture" and "We-culture" and the identities associated with each. Incorporating an understanding of such cultural elements into translators' core linguistic and professional training is what we propose. A Russian book is translated into English with the purpose of revealing linguistic and discursive aspects of lingua-cultural identity. Using the Russian and English versions of Vladimir Putin's address at the Valdai discussion club meeting (2021), we examine subtle differences in the use of the pronouns we, our, and me in comparison to I, myself, and other indicators of

we-identity vs I-identity. Approach: choosing a text with enough instances, reading carefully to pick out lexico-grammatical elements, comparing the original and translated texts, analysing the examples, and developing conclusions. Discourse, pragmatic, and lexico-grammatical analyses were performed on the texts. Analysis of the data was based on cultural and sociolinguistic research. The results indicate that it is possible for a Russian text to convey a more communal mentality compared to its English translation, which may seem to have a more personal and subjective attitude. An interdisciplinary approach is both necessary and beneficial for translation studies, and this research shows how deep culture plays a part in discursive practices. In conclusion, the research shows that linguistic, cultural, and communicative identities are present at all linguistic levels and in all discursive behaviours. Translating these subtleties effectively is a challenging undertaking that calls for an in-depth familiarity with the function of deep culture in discursive practices.

Li, Saihong. (2023). By mediating information across language and cultural borders and moulding global narratives, translation is a powerful but underappreciated factor in political discourse. In this introductory piece, we look at translation as a tool for political activism and identity building, specifically at how it may subvert dominant narratives, provide a platform to underrepresented groups, and encourage a more compassionate and inclusive international conversation. The research sheds light on the transformational significance of translation as a catalyst for change and cross-cultural understanding, drawing on the ideas of George Orwell and John Searle about the potency of language in political manipulation and power relations. It highlights the relevance of activist translation, especially in Chinese settings, a field that has received little attention from academics. The first of the three parts that make up this introduction follows the roots of activist translation in religious and political discourse to demonstrate the capacity of translation to bring about change. Section 2 examines the ways in which translation impacts the transmission of cultures and the formation of identities on a worldwide basis. In Section 3, we see activist translation in action, promoting inclusion, giving a platform to underrepresented groups, fighting global inequality, and bringing down structural inequities. The conclusion looks forward, outlining problems and potential solutions in translating political discourse, stressing the need of avoiding culturally insensitive depictions and working to eliminate misconceptions amongst different groups. A list of references is included at the end of the introduction, which provides important viewpoints to encourage more study on the topic of translating political speech.

Cussel, Mattea & Bielsa, Esperança & Bestué, Carmen. (2024). Many people on the outside or on the edge of the global academic sector now feel they can't even apply for academic positions without first being able to translate or self-translate into English. The academic translators who work in the field of social sciences and humanities are the subject of this essay, which explores the important but often overlooked importance of their work in challenging the preponderance of Anglophone ideas and discourses. Based on semi-structured interviews with academic translators in the Spanish setting, it applies the ideas of assimilatory and reflective translation to an empirical inquiry that lays forth an interdisciplinary theory of translation politics. Their perspectives on science and excellent writing are illuminated by the study, together with their histories, professional biographies, and impressions of their working environment. Most academic translators use a reformulating approach known as assimilatory translation in order to conform their works to the academic norms prevalent in the Anglophone world. Consistent work

between writers and translators, however, prompts discussion on how to adapt works to the target language. Working together in this way has enormous promise for the growth of more reflective forms of translation, which open the door for writers and consumers of translations to reflect on their own translation judgements and techniques.

Elder, Olivia. (2018). Roman identity politics and language Miss Olivia The Elder Laura The link between language and Roman identity, here understood to include all aspects of Roman life (political and cultural), is the subject of this argument. Evidence of multilingualism is the main topic. The Romans' sense of identity was shaped by their interactions with others and the resistance they faced. These discussions are highlighted at places of contact. Although it focuses on evidence of Greek-Latin bilingualism, it does take other languages' evidence into account to see how their connections to Roman identity varied. It takes a sociolinguistic and historical perspective on multilingualism. A thorough examination of the historical variables and circumstances that impact language choices and their social, cultural, and political ramifications, as well as a sociolinguistic interpretation of data about the interrelationships of languages, are necessary for comprehending the practices of bilingualism. The thesis argues that in order to delve deeper into larger political and identity-related topics, we need to be more engaged with sociolinguistic terminology and linguistic evidence when studying Roman cultural relations through the lens of bilingualism. A fundamental component of one's identity, language also serves as a model for it, one that is applicable to both classical and contemporary ways of thinking. It is intertwined with other aspects of Roman identity and many issues related to it, including as citizenship, migration, and integration. The thesis delves deeply into three case studies: the multilingualism in Suetonius' lives, the Greek in Pompeii's graffiti, and the literary and epigraphic evidence of many languages in Rome. The thesis contends that there are more parallels than has often been recognized, and these case studies show how language politics play out in many contexts and at various social levels. Furthermore, the case studies demonstrate that the limits of Roman identity were not fixed at the outset but were rather subject to constant reevaluation as a result of successive waves of assimilation and expulsion.

Kullu, Ajit & Vihar, Jyoti. (2020). Language movements are fascinating occurrences that have far-reaching effects on the future of languages. A state-backed, dominant language may undermine and destroy the foundations of a less powerful, politically-unsupported language. Some languages, meanwhile, manage to gain traction in unconventional ways. Motives for learning a new language are varied and intriguing. The tribal language Sadri, spoken mostly in the Odisha area of Sundargarh, is gaining an advantage over other adivasi languages.

POLITICS OF LANGUAGE IN MAHASWETA DEVI'S WORK

The victims of naxalism, banded labourers, landless peasants, discrimination based on gender and caste, exploitation, social injustice, political imbalance, and tribal culture are all examined in "Voice of the Marginalised: A Study of Mahasweta Devi's Select Novels," a dissertation that focuses on Mahasweta Devi's works. Books by Mahasweta Devi, including *Mother of 1084*, *Glory of Sri Sri Ganesh* (1981), *Aranyar Adhikar*, *The Book of the Hunter* (2002), *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, and *Bashai Tudu*, are the main focus of research. The human values and sufferings of society's marginalised are the subject of these works. This dissertation delves at the social and political realities of marginalised groups in India's caste

dominant system, namely the dalits and tribals. Fiction set in tribal communities often examines real-life social phenomena, such as the relationships between tribal members and outsiders, as well as the Indian societal aspects that shape their daily lives. It delves further into the ways in which tribal people were deprived of liberty and equality within socio-economic-political systems. Devi portrays the impoverished living circumstances of tribal people in India, particularly in West Bengal and the neighbouring states, in terms of food, housing, settlement, and culture.

The "civil-hero" of a low-income neighbourhood may be Devi. Additionally, she shares their horrific recollections of apartheid, violence, assault, prejudice, injustice, and crimes. The research outlines the socioeconomic traumas and the process of self-elevation as it goes forward. The Naxal Movement of the 1970s provides the backdrop for Mahasweta Devi's *The Mother of 1084* (1997). Despite coming from a middle-class background, the protagonist, Brati, develops into a radical, violent, and revolutionary young man during the course of this book. Even if he didn't openly express it, he became an angry and revolutionary person as a result of the things he saw and experienced as a child. Brati saw his father, an aristocratic bourgeois, abuse and torment his mother often while he was growing up. He had a special affinity for his mother and absolutely no interest in any of his other relatives. Other relatives of Brati's seemed to have strayed and become corrupt, in his opinion. Outside of his house, Brati observes a world characterised by opportunism, cowardice, and unfairness. Later that year, Brati and a few of his pals joined the Naxal Movement on their own. In the midst of all this turmoil, he met a girl from his organisation and fell head over heels for her.

However, our heroine Brati's mother had no idea her son was involved in the covert Naxal Movement or any of his other hidden endeavours. It was a crime against the state as it was unlawful. She was, in reality, typical of middle-class Indian mothers: they tend to stay at home to take care of their children and avoid becoming involved in politics and other outside matters. During a particularly stressful night, Mother received a phone call from the local police station instructing her to go to the station and verify the identity of a deceased inmate with the batch number 1084. Mother was surprised to find that her small son, Brati, was among the bodies that needed to be identified when she went to the police station.

She was taken aback when she laid eyes on his corpse in the jail. She was bewildered by the circumstances surrounding her son's brutal murder. Then, a female in the scene introduces herself as Brati's adored and informs Mother in secret about Brati's transformation into an aggressive and revolutionary, as well as his decision to join the Naxal Movement. After Brati's actions changed his mother's perspective, she went from being a passive observer and victim of abuse to a forceful survivor. Both at home and in the wider world, her son had taught her to stand up for herself. She decides to stand up for herself and joined a human rights organisation to aid others going through the same thing. Among the most influential works published in 1981, Devi's *The Glory of Sri Sri Ganesh* (2003) stands out. In contrast to the mighty Medinis and Ganeshes, it depicts the life of the downtrodden Lachhimas, Rukmanis, Mohors, and Haroas. After Ganesh begs her to spare his life at the conclusion of the book, Lachhima resolves to rescue him—but only under her own conditions—after releasing a lifetime's worth of resentment and resentment towards Medini and Ganesh. This massive book delves into the socioeconomic malaise of rural India after independence via a multifaceted narrative, and the title of the work becomes a weapon for subversion in the process.

Addressing topics such as agricultural land relations, inter-caste violence, so-called rural development, and the status of women in rural India, Devi showcases her acidic wit and cryptic language to great effect. The Rights of the Forest, Devi's 1979 book, delves into the centuries-long connection between the Munda people and the forest. Grass seeds, roots, tubers, fruits, flowers, and seeds are some of the forest's most abundant food sources for these indigenous peoples. Honey, leaves, and tussar cocoons are some of the forest items that they sell. They use the forest as a hunting area for small game and birds, a pasture for their goats, a place to worship their nature deities, and a place to keep their totem animals and plants. The woodland clearing is the setting for their dances and handia, a kind of rural liquor. True, the tribal people are empowered by the forest in ways that the established farmer has never been since he is always at the mercy of the elements. The oral history of these indigenous peoples includes extensive information on the therapeutic uses of plants found in the forest. Devi discusses Birsa's process of grinding forest-find bone-break creeper and applying a plaster of the paste to a goat's broken leg in Aranyer Adhikar. He achieved mastery in a number of these treatments. The pang tree's (*achyranthes aspera*) roots are used to purify stagnant pools, while neem leaves are used to prevent smallpox during an outbreak. In addition to their medicinal value, Birsa employs these medicines throughout the book as a form of resistance against the white government's efforts to ignore and repress tribal culture and the hierarchical system.

POLITICS OF LANGUAGE IN JHUMPA LAHIRI WORK

Author Jhumpa Lahiri is of Indian US descent. She is now well-known for her novels and short stories. When it comes to diaspora literature, Jhumpa Lahiri is right up there with the best of them. Her stories often centre on individuals who are on the move, either encountering new people or drifting apart due to the underlying tensions and conflicts in their lives. Immigrant families are explored extensively and vividly by Lahiri. However, protagonists' stories—their uncertainties, losses, and heartbreaks—may be passed on via immigrants. The fact that Jhumpa Lahiri—who is of Bengali origin but was born in London and brought up on Rhode Island—seems to be implying, via her experiences in Brooklyn, that a person's deepest connection may not always be to the location of their birth. Each narrative centres on a Bengali family's experiences in the United States or England.

The Namesake (2003) Jhumpa Lahiri's first work is titled *The Namesake*. It was developed from an earlier story that appeared in "The New Yorker" into a full-length book. It delves into several cultural and emotional topics that her Pulitzer Prize-winning collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies*, also addressed. Set in Calcutta, Boston, and New York City, the story delves into the complexities of navigating two cultures at odds with one another, each with its own somewhat different religious, social, and ideological norms. The story follows a Bengali couple as they leave their homeland and build a new life for themselves in America, despite all the obstacles they face. The narrative starts with Ashoke and Ashima relocating to Central Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts from Calcutta, India. The protagonist's life is profoundly affected by a sequence of events that culminate in Gogol becoming his official birth name. Gogol struggles with his own identity throughout the novel. He finds it difficult to choose friendship above family and to reconcile American and Indian cultures. In order to make the reader care about the tale and the message that family is important, Lahiri employs many arguments throughout the book. Using pathos effectively, the story's events including the creation of Gogol's name and Ashoke's unfortunate accident compel the reader to empathise with the characters.

CROSS - CULTURAL IDENTITY IN LAHIRI'S THE NAMESAKE

Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli are the protagonists of Lahiri's *The Namesake*, a story about Indian immigrants who accept the United States as their home while preserving their cultural heritage. The firstborn, Gogol, is referred to as "The Namesake" throughout the story. He first accepts his name as he grows up, but he eventually rejects it and officially changes it as an adult. Since Gogol's father escaped a terrible train disaster, the name Gogol stands for his dreams for a better future. It is at these crossroads in Ashoke Ganguli's life that his future family is shaped; he is brought to America by this tragedy, and he returns to this alien place a few years later with his new wife, Ashima. The story jumps around to cover Gogol's life: from his childhood, which was mostly in the US with long trips to India here and there, through his college years at Yale and Columbia, where he becomes an architect, and a series of love affairs, including one with an American girl while he was a student, an unusual affair involving a wealthy American (which included living together), an affair with a married woman, and finally, a semi-arranged relationship that ended in marriage to an Indian girl he had met when he was a child. An fully realised character, Gogol—who does, in the end, choose a "real" name, Nikhil, which is similar to Nikolai Gogol's first name—is an American born in the US who struggles to reconcile his Indian roots with his American upbringing. Although the story begins with the childhood of Ashoke and Ashima, the protagonist Gogol is really the one who takes centre stage as he becomes an American while still being haunted by the continuous reminders that he is Indian, which makes him stand out from his American friends. However, as an adult, he clearly rejects his family's name and habits by rebranding himself as Nikhil and claiming to be too busy with business to meet his family very much. The protagonist, Gogol, is the primary focus of the tale, while we also hear from his parents and wife on occasion.

As the Ganguli children, Gogol and Sonia, are born into American society, Lahiri does a good job of tracking the family as they adapt to American culture. To let us see the family's highs and lows, Lahiri skillfully interweaves the lives of different members, striking a balance between significant viewpoint adjustments and temporal ones. Lahiri does a good job of depicting the everyday struggles of Indian Americans and the normal tensions between children born to immigrants and their native-born parents. The brave Ashoke and Ashima are able to raise a family and preserve their culture despite being strangers in a foreign place. They only communicate with a small circle of Bengali friends in the United States, and they only get together for special occasions like weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries. The fact that they are all pals stems only from the fact that they are all Calcutta natives. In Cambridge, the majority of them reside in close proximity to one another. (38) Ashoke and Ashima want to carry on their Indian heritage to their children, as is common among migrants who feel a strong need to hold on to their cultural identity while living in a foreign country. However, the white mainstream culture has a magnetic pull on the kids. Despite his parents' desires, Gogol has relationships with white women and comes close to marrying one. His mother, Ashima, convinces the Indian girl he marries to marry a Russian instead of him. The aspirations of Ashoke and Ashima to spread the culture they have worked so hard to develop in a foreign nation are dashed when Sonia weds a white man.

CONCLUSION

An individual's language and their sense of self are inseparable. Language and identity are incalculably

important. Our language, as we've already established, is the best indicator of our cultural background and the most vital means by which we express ourselves. But there are a lot of variables, such gender and age, that impact this connection. Their significance and the ways in which they shed light on our own and other people's identities are too great to ignore, given the roles they play in our society and in our everyday lives. Immigrants, cultural conflicts, adaptability and assimilation are prominent themes in her writings. They show how gender, ethnicity, and socio-cultural pressures have affected the expat characters and highlight the fears, apprehensions, longings, and isolation that they must face. She has done an excellent job in her writings of illustrating the difficulty of exile. Two competing influences on the exile's sense of self emerge: the national, which shapes their identity from the outside, and the external, which may be colonial or modernist. Depending on the situation, her characters reject or embrace these opposites. While assimilating into a new culture, diaspora members' subjectivities and thought processes undergo transformations that impact the dominant culture's cultural discourse. Language movements are fascinating occurrences that have far-reaching effects on the future of languages. A state-backed, dominant language may undermine and destroy the foundations of a less powerful, politically-unsupported language. The "civil-hero" of a low-income neighbourhood may be Devi. Additionally, she shares their horrific recollections of apartheid, violence, assault, prejudice, injustice, and crimes. The research outlines the socioeconomic traumas and the process of self-elevation as it goes forward. The Naxal Movement of the 1970s provides the backdrop for Mahasweta Devi's *The Mother of 1084* (1997). Brati, the protagonist of this work, is a young guy from a middle-class household who develops into a radical, violent, and revolutionary as he grows up.

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