

DERIVATION OF SOCIO-POLITICAL CONCEPTS OF THE DRAMA ‘THE HOUSE OF BERNADA ALBA’ INTO SRI LANKAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

Translation reinforces the camaraderie that exists between language and socio-political concepts of a society. Accordingly, the genre of dramatic text translation, reserved a crucial space. Hence, the fundamental objective of the present study was to identify the manner in which the socio-political concepts of the drama, ‘The House of Bernada Alba’ has been derived into the Sri Lankan context while identifying the translation methods employed by Prof. Ranjini Obeyesekera in its Sinhalese translation. This qualitative research approach addresses the translation procedure of Jean-Paul Vinay (1950) and Jean Darbelnet (1950). The primary data were segmented into two classifications as sociological and political concepts and further analysed under five subordinate concepts as overbearing repression, culture, religious aspects, appearance and respectability, and capitalism as the political concept. Accordingly, the translator has employed adaptation and equivalence along with the addition to enhance the immeasurable repercussions of socio-political concepts of repressed individuals in the society.

Keywords: *Culture, Dramatic Text Translation, Socio-political concepts, Translation methods*

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Introduction

This study can be considered as an attempt to examine the derivation of socio-political concepts of the drama, 'The House of Bernada Alba' into Sri Lankan context while providing clear descriptions and examples of the translation methods and techniques used by the translator and also highlighting the issues and gaps in the field of literary translation.

Materials and Methods

The present study is fundamentally based on the qualitative research approach composed of one variable, analysed under the content analysis method. Data were collected through primary and secondary sources. The English translation, 'The House of Bernada Alba' by Michael Dewell and Carmen Zapata (Source Text – ST) and its Sinhalese translation '*Bernada Albage Parapura*' by Ranjini Obeyesekera (Target Text – TT) is the sample of the study which was selected based on a stratified sampling method.

Results and Discussion

Primarily, the discussion unfolds under two main divisions as sociological and political concepts while evaluating the appropriateness of those derivations when they are translated into the target language.

1. Sociological Concepts

Derivation of sociological concepts in a dramatic text translation can be interpreted as a sensitive engagement that should be subtly completed by a translator. The fatal frustration of these domineering sociological concepts by the social forces itself transcends the dictative authority it creates, at a momentum.

1.1 Overbearing repression

The oscillation between individual passion and social custom in the drama 'House of Bernada Alba', explores the expected morals of the prevailed Spanish society while suggesting that a strict code of honour represses the natural instincts of human beings. The concept of overbearing sexual repression is a universal apt and has highlighted through the method of adaptation. Thus, the Sri Lankan society also has reinforced the issue of repression with simultaneous force but in different directions.

Example 1

ST

Poncia: Somethings' wrong with that girl. She seems restless, shaky, frightened as if she had a **lizard between her breasts.**

(Act II, pg. 137)

TT

පොන්චියා: ඒ ළමයට නං මොනවදෝ අමාරුවක් තියෙනවා. එක තැනක ඉන්න බැගැස්සෙනවා. බයවෙනවා. හරියට හැට්ටේ අස්සේ කටුස්සෙක් ලැගලා වගෙයි.

(2 වෙනි ජවනිකාව, පිටු.24)

1.2 Appearance and Respectability

The clash between appearance and respectability has been raised by Lorca as a doubtful point to be reconsidered by the people. The typical concern of the middle class to appear respectable can be applicable to the Sri Lankan society as well and the methods of equivalence and literal translation have been used to illuminate it.

Example 1

Bernada: For a hundred miles around, **no one can measure up to them. The men here are not of their class. What would you have me do - turn them over to some field hand?**

(Act I, pg. 129)

TT

පොන්චියා: දැන් ඉතින් දුලා දීග දෙන වයසක් ආවනේ.

බර්නාඩා: අපට හැතැප්ම සියක්වත් මගේ දුලට කැපෙන කෙනෙක් නෑ. ගමේ පිරිමි අපේ තත්වයට කිට්ටු කරන්න බෑ. ඉල්ලන ඕන ගොපලුවෙකුට මගේ දුලා දෙන්නද කියන්නේ?

(1 වන ජවනිකාව, පිටු. 14)

1.3 Culture

Lorca addresses the notion of culture in the drama through different dimensions such as gender issues while suggesting drastic social paralysis which took place in the rural Spanish society. It suggests the fact that, females dominating power over their own kind is more critical than male domination.

Sri Lanka can be counted as a country inherited with pure Asian culture and typical issues of gender often occur within the society and the concept is highlighted through the methods of equivalence, literal translation and adaptation.

Example 1

ST

Magdalena: **To hell with being a woman.**

Bernada: **A needle and thread for women: a mule and a whip for males.**

TT

මැග්ඩලිනා: එහෙනම් මුළු ගැණුණු ජාතියම මක බෑ උනාවේ!

බර්නාඩා: ගැණුණන්ට ඉදිකවුයි නූලයි. පිරිමීන්ට කසයයි, හරක් බානයි.

1.4 The Concept of Religion

Lorca highlights the commercialization and the authoritarianism of the concept of religion which is Spanish Catholicism and universalizes its effects on individuals regarding their own fundamental rights to become exposed to freedom and to be liberal through emphatic symbols and colours. The Sinhalese translator employed her shrewdness through the method of adaptation unfolding infirmities of Spanish Catholicism which are emphasised in the source text without causing any damage to the pure aspects of Catholicism.

Example 1

ST

Poncia: **The walls trembled**, and when he sang the ‘Amen’, it was as if a **wolf** had come into the church.

(Act I, pg. 121)

TT

පොන්චියා: දෙයියන්ගේ පිහිටයි බිත්ති හෙල්ලුනා! “ආමෙන්” කියනකොට හරියට පල්ලියට කොටියෙක් පැන්නා වාගෙයි.

(1 වන ජවනිකාව, පිටු. 5)

2. Political Concepts

The political narration of the drama, ‘The House of Bernada Alba’ can be elucidated as a powerful admonition towards the prevailed dictative Franco regime in Spain. Equally, the play draws close parallels with the status of Sri Lankan political catastrophe which transpired during the 1970s.

2.1 Capitalism

The presence of 20th-century capitalism in the specific drama has been interpreted as one of the inevitable political elements of Spain during the time. The translation of symbols and sarcastic language elements utilizing the method of literal translation which critically highlights the nature of capitalism and the injustice it causes to the citizens can be rated as a note of success.

Example 1

ST

Bernada: Work and keep your mouth shut. **It is the obligation of those who are paid to work.**

(Act II, pg. 151)

TT

බර්නාඩා: වැඩ කරලා කට පියාගෙන ඉන්න එකයි හොඳය. පඩියට වැඩ කරන කාගෙන් යුතුකම ඒකයි.

(2 වන ජවනිකාව, පිටු. 41)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The derivation of socio-political concepts of the specific drama into the Sri Lankan context has taken place as a translation procedure with multiple limitations since the translator attempts to avoid transcending the inherited cultural and traditional elements of the Sri Lankan society. Thus, future research should be conducted to emphasise the unaddressed ramifications of dramatic text translations.

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