

THE TRANSLATION OF FEMINIST IDEOLOGY IN MARIAMA BÂ’S “SO LONG A LETTER”: A STUDY OF FEMALE DISCOURSE IN THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

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ABSTRACT: The translation of feminist literature remains one of the most ideologically sensitive areas of literary translation because feminist meanings are often embedded in culturally coded expressions, emotional silences, and gendered linguistic structures. In *Une si longue lettre*, Mariama Bâ constructs a powerful critique of patriarchy, polygamy, and the socio-religious marginalization of women in postcolonial Senegal. However, the transfer of these feminist nuances into the English version, *So Long a Letter*, raises critical questions regarding the preservation, transformation, or dilution of female voice and ideological resistance in translation. This study therefore interrogates how feminist ideology is negotiated in the English translation of the novel and examines the extent to which the translator reproduces the author’s gendered discourse and cultural identity. The study adopts Feminist Translation Theory as propounded by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s feminist translation theory. Using a qualitative comparative textual methodology, selected excerpts from the French source text and the English target text are comparatively analysed to identify ideological shifts, lexical modifications, and gendered translation strategies. Findings reveal that while the translation substantially preserves the novel’s feminist orientation, certain expressions of resistance, emotional intensity, and cultural symbolism are semantically softened through domestication and linguistic adaptation. Terms relating to polygamy, female suffering, and patriarchal authority occasionally lose their ideological sharpness in the target text. Nevertheless, the translation successfully retains Ramatoulaye’s narrative agency, reflective voice, and critique of gender oppression. The study concludes that feminist literary translation demands ideological sensitivity beyond linguistic equivalence and recommends a gender-conscious translation model applicable to other African feminist texts.

KEYWORDS: Feminist Translation; Gendered Discourse; Literary Translation; Feminist Ideology; African Feminism; Cultural Translation; *Une si longue lettre*; *So Long a Letter*.

Introduction

Translation has increasingly moved beyond the traditional perception of being a mere linguistic transfer between languages to become a complex process of cultural and ideological negotiation. Within this context, feminist translation emerged as a critical field that interrogates how gendered meanings, women’s experiences, and patriarchal structures are represented across languages. Feminist translation theorists argue that translation is not ideologically neutral because language itself is shaped by power relations and gender hierarchies (Castro & Ergun, 2018). Consequently, feminist translation seeks to preserve the political, emotional, and ideological dimensions of women’s writing while resisting the erasure of female subjectivity in translated texts. Recent developments in Translation Studies further emphasize that literary translation plays a crucial role in transmitting feminist consciousness from one sociocultural context to another, particularly in texts where women’s voices constitute a form of resistance against oppression. The relationship between translation and gender studies has generated significant scholarly debates concerning the representation of women in literary discourse. Scholars maintain that patriarchal ideologies embedded in language often influence translation choices, thereby affecting how female experiences are reconstructed in the target text (Igbonovia et al., 2025). Feminist Translation Theory therefore challenges traditional concepts such as equivalence, neutrality, and translator invisibility by foregrounding the translator’s role in negotiating ideological meanings. According to von Flotow and Farahazad (2017), feminist translation involves strategies capable of preserving women’s voices, emotional intensity, and sociocultural identity within translated narratives. This theoretical orientation becomes particularly relevant in African literary contexts where questions of gender intersect with

religion, tradition, colonial history, and cultural identity. As a result, the translation of African feminist texts requires not only linguistic competence but also ideological sensitivity to culturally embedded expressions of female resistance.

African feminist literature has played a major role in exposing the structures of patriarchy, gender inequality, and female marginalization within African societies. Francophone African women writers, particularly Mariama Bâ, employ literature as a medium for social criticism and feminist consciousness. In *Une si longue lettre*, Mariama Bâ presents the realities of women's oppression through themes such as polygamy, forced dependence, emotional suffering, and cultural expectations imposed on women in postcolonial Senegalese society. Through the epistolary voice of Ramatoulaye, the novelist articulates a discourse of female resilience, self-awareness, and ideological resistance against patriarchal domination. The English translation entitled *So Long a Letter* enables the text to reach a broader international readership; however, the translation process simultaneously raises important concerns regarding the preservation of feminist ideology, gendered discourse, and cultural specificity embedded in the original French version. Despite the critical recognition accorded to *Une si longue lettre*, insufficient scholarly attention has been devoted to the translation of its feminist ideology from French into English. Most existing studies focus primarily on thematic analysis, postcolonial interpretation, or stylistic features of the novel while neglecting the translational dimensions of gendered discourse. Yet, translation choices involving lexical substitution, semantic modification, domestication, and cultural adaptation may alter the ideological intensity of feminist expressions and reshape the representation of female agency in the target text. The central problem of this study therefore lies in determining whether the English translation preserves, modifies, or attenuates the feminist consciousness articulated in the source text. This study seeks to answer the following research questions: How is feminist ideology represented in the English translation of *Une si longue lettre*? What translation strategies are employed in rendering gendered discourse in *So Long a Letter*? To what extent does the English translation preserve the feminist voice and cultural identity of the original text? These questions provide the foundation for investigating the ideological implications of translation in African feminist literature. The aim of this study is to examine the translation of feminist ideology in the English version of *Une si longue lettre*. Specifically, the objectives are to identify the translation strategies used in rendering gendered discourse, analyze ideological shifts observable in the translated text, and evaluate the extent to which the translator preserves female agency and feminist consciousness. This study is significant because it contributes to feminist translation studies, African literary criticism, and gender-oriented discourse analysis by demonstrating how translation functions as a site of ideological negotiation. Furthermore, the research provides insights into the challenges associated with translating culturally embedded feminist narratives from French into English within African literary contexts. The findings of this study may also serve as a reference point for future scholars interested in the translation of African feminist texts and encourage the adoption of translation practices that are culturally and ideologically sensitive to women's voices and experiences. Feminist translation studies have evolved into a significant area within Translation Studies, particularly because of their emphasis on the relationship between language, ideology, and gender representation. Contemporary feminist translation scholars argue that translation is never ideologically neutral since translators inevitably participate in the reconstruction of meaning and identity across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Feminist translation therefore seeks to preserve women's voices, resist patriarchal linguistic structures, and foreground female subjectivity within translated texts (Castro & Spoturno, 2024). Recent scholarship has also emphasized the visibility of the translator and the political implications of lexical and stylistic choices in feminist literary translation. Such studies demonstrate that feminist translation functions not merely as linguistic mediation but as a form of ideological negotiation capable of shaping readers' perceptions of women and gender relations. The translation of African literature has equally attracted scholarly attention due to the linguistic, cultural, and postcolonial complexities embedded in African texts. African literary works often contain indigenous expressions, oral traditions, proverbs, religious references, and culturally specific gender norms that challenge direct translation into European languages. Scholars maintain that the translation of African texts requires cultural sensitivity in order to preserve both the aesthetic and ideological dimensions of the source text (Flotow, 1997). In the context of African feminist literature, translation becomes even more delicate because female

experiences are deeply connected to local traditions, patriarchal systems, and postcolonial realities. Consequently, translators must negotiate between readability in the target language and fidelity to the sociocultural identity of the original text. Several studies on *Une si longue lettre* have concentrated on its feminist themes, narrative techniques, and critique of patriarchal practices such as polygamy, forced marriage, and female marginalization. Researchers have highlighted how Mariama Bâ portrays women's emotional suffering while simultaneously advocating female solidarity, education, and self-awareness (Flotow, 2023). Other literary analyses have examined the epistolary structure of the novel and its representation of postcolonial Senegalese society. Although these studies contribute significantly to African feminist criticism, most of them focus primarily on literary interpretation rather than on the translational dimensions of the text. The English translation, *So Long a Letter*, has therefore received comparatively limited scholarly interrogation from the perspective of feminist translation theory. Studies on women's voices in translation have shown that translation choices can either preserve or silence female agency within literary texts. According to recent feminist translation scholarship, aspects such as tone, emotional expression, irony, silence, and culturally coded language are central to the representation of women's experiences in translated narratives (Wallmach & Kruger, 2018). Scholars argue that the translator's intervention may affect how female resistance and identity are perceived in the target culture, particularly when culturally sensitive expressions are domesticated or semantically weakened. In African feminist texts, the preservation of women's voices is especially important because these narratives frequently function as forms of social protest against patriarchal oppression. Thus, feminist translation criticism increasingly advocates translation strategies capable of maintaining the ideological and emotional intensity of women-centered literary discourse. Despite the growing body of scholarship on feminist translation and African feminist literature, significant gaps remain in existing research. Most previous studies on *Une si longue lettre* have concentrated on feminist themes, stylistics, and sociological interpretation without conducting a detailed comparative analysis between the French source text and the English translation. Similarly, studies on feminist translation have often addressed Western feminist texts while paying insufficient attention to African Francophone novels and their translations into English. Very few scholars have specifically examined how gendered discourse, emotional intensity, and feminist ideology are negotiated in *So Long a Letter*. This lacuna creates the need for a study that combines feminist translation theory with comparative textual analysis in order to investigate ideological shifts, translation strategies, and the preservation of female voice in the translated text. The present study therefore seeks to fill this scholarly gap by providing a focused analysis of how feminist ideology is reproduced, transformed, or attenuated in the English translation of Mariama Bâ's novel.

Theoretical framework

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak is one of the most influential scholars in feminist translation studies and postcolonial criticism. Born in Kolkata, India, in 1942, Spivak gained international recognition through her translation of Jacques Derrida's *De la grammatologie* and through her seminal essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* (1988). Her intellectual works combine feminism, deconstruction, Marxism, and postcolonial theory in order to examine how marginalized groups, especially women from colonized societies, are represented within dominant Western discourses. Spivak argues that language and translation are never neutral because they are shaped by ideology, culture, and relations of power. According to her, translation should not merely reproduce linguistic meaning but must preserve the cultural identity and emotional experiences of oppressed women whose voices are often silenced within patriarchal and colonial structures (Spivak, 1988). Her contributions remain fundamental in feminist translation studies because they emphasize the ethical responsibility of translators toward marginalized female subjects. Spivak's feminist translation theory is based on the idea that translation is an ideological and political act rather than a simple linguistic transfer. She maintains that the translator must pay close attention to the rhetoric, history, culture, and gendered experiences embedded in the source text. One of the major tenets of the theory is the preservation of the feminine voice and cultural specificity of women's writing. Another principle is resistance against the patriarchal domestication of texts during translation. Spivak further argues that translators must avoid reducing Third World women's experiences into simplified Western interpretations because such practices contribute to cultural erasure and silencing. In her view,

translation should function as a space of feminist solidarity where the translator listens carefully to the language of the female author and reproduces her ideological intentions faithfully (Simon, 1996). The theory therefore highlights issues of representation, voice, identity, marginalization, and power relations in translated literary texts. The relevance of Spivak's feminist translation theory to the topic Translating Feminist Ideology in *Une si longue lettre*: A Study of Gendered Discourse in the English Translation *So Long a Letter* lies in its ability to explain how feminist meanings are negotiated during translation. Mariama Bâ's *Une si longue lettre* is deeply rooted in African feminist consciousness and portrays women's oppression under patriarchal traditions such as polygamy, emotional repression, and social silence. Since the novel is written from a distinctly African female perspective, its English translation requires careful ideological and cultural sensitivity in order to preserve the feminist discourse of the original text. Spivak's theory becomes particularly important because it interrogates whether the English translation succeeds in maintaining the emotional intensity, cultural identity, and resistant female voice expressed in the French source text. The theory also provides a framework for examining how certain lexical choices, semantic shifts, or translation strategies may either reinforce or weaken feminist ideology in the translated version.

The application and justification of Spivak's theory in this study therefore rest on its suitability for analyzing gendered discourse, female subjectivity, and ideological transfer in translation. The theory helps to reveal how translation functions as a site of power where African women's voices may be preserved, transformed, or silenced. Through comparative textual analysis of *Une si longue lettre* and *So Long a Letter*, the study applies Spivak's concepts of representation and subalternity to investigate the extent to which the translation communicates the feminist resistance embedded in the original narrative. The theory is justified because the research focuses specifically on the translation of African feminist ideology from French into English within a postcolonial context. Consequently, Spivak's feminist translation approach offers an effective theoretical lens for understanding the relationship between language, gender, ideology, and cultural representation in translated African literature. The English translation *So Long a Letter* successfully represents feminist ideology through the preservation of Ramatoulaye's critique of patriarchal marriage and female subjugation. In the source text, Mariama Bâ exposes the oppressive nature of Senegalese patriarchal customs by presenting marriage as a system that reduces women to objects of service. This ideological position is maintained in the English translation through expressions such as: “*she gives up her personality, her dignity, becoming a thing in the service of the man who has married her*” (Bâ, 1981, p. 4). The lexical choice “*personality*” figuratively represents a woman's individuality, selfhood, and emotional autonomy within society and marriage. By stating that a woman “gives up her personality,” Mariama Bâ suggests that patriarchal marriage requires women to suppress their independent identities in order to conform to socially imposed expectations of obedience and submission. The term therefore goes beyond its ordinary psychological meaning and symbolizes the erasure of female subjectivity under patriarchal authority. Through this expression, the feminist narrator criticizes a marital structure in which women are denied the freedom to define themselves outside male dominance. The figurative implication is that marriage transforms women from autonomous human beings into socially controlled dependents whose personal desires, ambitions, and voices are subordinated to male authority. Consequently, the use of “*personality*” reinforces the novel's feminist condemnation of systems that strip women of identity and self-expression within marriage. Equally, the lexical item “*dignity*” figuratively conveys a woman's sense of worth, honor, and human value. In the context of the passage, the surrender of dignity symbolizes the psychological humiliation and emotional degradation imposed upon women in patriarchal marriages. The feminist voice in the novel implies that women are often expected to endure suffering, silence, and self-sacrifice while maintaining loyalty to male-centered traditions such as polygamy. Thus, “*dignity*” becomes a symbolic representation of female humanity that is gradually diminished through oppressive marital expectations. By emphasizing the loss of dignity, the narrative exposes the unequal power relations embedded within traditional marriage structures where women's emotional needs and personal fulfillment are neglected. This figurative usage strengthens the novel's critique of women's objectification because it reveals how patriarchy reduces women's social value to their usefulness as wives rather than recognizing them as equal human beings with independent rights and emotional integrity. The most striking lexical choice in the passage is the word “*thing*,” which figuratively

represents the complete objectification and dehumanization of women within patriarchal marriage. By describing the married woman as “*a thing in the service of the man*,” the narrator employs a metaphor that equates women with possessions or domestic objects existing solely for male satisfaction and convenience. The term “thing” strips women of humanity, agency, and emotional existence, reducing them to instruments of service under male control. This figurative expression intensifies the feminist criticism of marriage as an institution that commodifies women and transforms them into passive objects deprived of voice and autonomy. The lexical choice therefore encapsulates the central feminist argument of the novel: that patriarchal systems deny women subjectivity and reduce them to functional entities whose identities are defined only through their relationships to men. Through this powerful metaphor, the novel maintains its sustained critique of the objectification, silencing, and subordination of women in African patriarchal society. The lexical choices “*personality*,” “*dignity*,” and “*thing*” preserve the feminist denunciation already embedded in the French version, thereby maintaining the novel’s critique of women’s objectification within marriage. The translation equally retains the emotional and ideological intensity of the female narrative voice, allowing Anglophone readers to experience the feminist consciousness articulated by Ramatoulaye. Through this representation of female suffering and resistance, the translation reproduces the ideological core of the original African feminist text.

The translation strategies employed in *So Long a Letter* largely consist of literal and semantic translation techniques aimed at preserving the African aesthetic and feminist discourse of the source text. The translator maintains many culturally rooted expressions and emotional reflections without excessive domestication. For instance, the statement “*Eternal questions of our eternal debates... We were full of nostalgia but were resolutely progressive*” (Bâ, 1981, p. 19) demonstrates how the translation preserves the ideological tension between African tradition and female modernity. The semantic equivalence between the French and English versions allows the feminist reflections of educated Senegalese women to remain visible in translation. Furthermore, the retention of Islamic, cultural, and communal references reflects a strategy of cultural preservation rather than ideological adaptation. Islamic references are used to reflect the religious environment that shapes the lives, behaviors, and marital expectations of women in Senegalese society. One important example of the Islamic references is the observance of the “*forty days*” mourning period after Modou’s death, during which Ramatoulaye remains in seclusion according to Islamic funeral customs. This reference illustrates how religion regulates female behavior and social conduct within the community. Another Islamic reference appears in the repeated invocation of prayer and submission to Allah, particularly in expressions where characters accept suffering as part of divine destiny. The novel equally references Islamic polygamy through Modou’s second marriage, which is justified socially and religiously within the patriarchal framework of the society. These Islamic elements are retained in the English translation in order to preserve the spiritual and religious realities of the source culture rather than replacing them with Western equivalents. Such translational choices support Spivak’s argument that feminist translation should respect the rhetoricity and cultural specificity of women’s voices instead of assimilating them into dominant Western discourse (Spivak, 1993). For the cultural references that reflect African traditions, customs, and values, one example is the importance attached to extended family structures and communal marriage negotiations, where family elders play significant roles in matrimonial decisions. This reflects the traditional Senegalese cultural belief that marriage concerns not only two individuals but also two families and communities. Another cultural reference is the practice of gift-giving and ceremonial visits during marriages and funerals, which symbolize social respect, solidarity, and communal belonging. Additionally, the novel presents cultural expectations surrounding motherhood and female domestic responsibility, particularly the belief that women must sacrifice personal ambition for family stability. These references preserve the African socio-cultural atmosphere of the original text and allow readers to understand the traditional structures influencing women’s experiences. On the Communal references in the novel, there is an emphasis on collective living, social interconnectedness, and the influence of society on individual identity. One example is the constant involvement of neighbors, relatives, and family friends in private family matters such as marriage, divorce, mourning, and child upbringing. Ramatoulaye’s home becomes a communal space during the mourning ceremonies, demonstrating the collective participation of society in moments of grief. Another communal reference is the solidarity among women, especially the enduring friendship

between Ramatoulaye and Aïssatou, which functions as emotional and ideological support against patriarchal oppression. The communal sharing of advice, emotional burdens, and social responsibilities reflects the collective nature of African society where personal experiences are deeply connected to the wider community. The retention of these communal references in translation helps preserve the African worldview embedded in the original narrative and maintains the cultural authenticity of the feminist discourse.

The English translation substantially preserves African feminist consciousness by maintaining the novel's emphasis on female agency, emotional solidarity, and resistance against patriarchal oppression. Female agency is expressed through the ability of women characters to make conscious decisions concerning their personal identities, education, relationships, and futures despite patriarchal limitations. Mariama Bâ presents women not as passive victims but as individuals capable of reflection, resistance, and self-determination. This agency is particularly visible in characters such as Aïssatou, who refuses to remain in a polygamous marriage after her husband takes another wife. Instead of accepting humiliation and emotional subjugation, she chooses divorce, professional advancement, and economic independence abroad. Similarly, Ramatoulaye exercises intellectual agency through her reflective narration, which allows her to question oppressive social norms while redefining her understanding of womanhood and dignity. The English translation preserves this feminist consciousness by maintaining the assertive tone, emotional introspection, and ideological strength of the female characters, thereby ensuring that their struggles for autonomy and self-definition remain visible to Anglophone readers. This is remarkably evident in Ramatoulaye's reflections on marriage and female autonomy. In one important passage, Daba declares: "*Marriage is no chain. It is mutual agreement over a life's programme*" (Bâ, 1981, p. 77). The translation preserves the progressive feminist ideology articulated in the original French text by foregrounding women's right to choice and self-determination within marriage. Similarly, the enduring friendship between Ramatoulaye and Aïssatou symbolizes female solidarity as a form of resistance to patriarchal domination. The translation successfully communicates the emotional intimacy and ideological strength of this relationship, thereby sustaining the African feminist consciousness that defines Mariama Bâ's narrative project. Consequently, the translated text remains a powerful critique of polygamy, gender inequality, and women's social marginalization in postcolonial African society. Emotional solidarity in the novel refers to the supportive relationships that exist among women as a means of surviving patriarchal oppression and emotional suffering. The friendship between Ramatoulaye and Aïssatou serves as one of the strongest expressions of feminist sisterhood in the narrative. Through letters, shared memories, and mutual encouragement, both women provide each other with emotional comfort and psychological strength in moments of betrayal, loneliness, and societal pressure. Their bond transcends geographical distance and demonstrates the importance of collective female support within patriarchal societies that often isolate women emotionally. The novel equally portrays solidarity among mothers, daughters, and female friends who share experiences of marriage, sacrifice, and suffering. This emotional interconnectedness becomes a subtle form of resistance because it creates a space where women can express their frustrations openly and affirm each other's humanity. The English translation successfully retains the tenderness, intimacy, and sincerity of these relationships, thereby preserving the communal dimension of African feminist consciousness embedded in the original text. Resistance against patriarchal oppression constitutes one of the central feminist concerns of the novel, as the female characters continuously challenge systems that attempt to silence, marginalize, and subordinate them. Patriarchal oppression is represented through practices such as polygamy, male dominance, unequal gender expectations, and the social conditioning of women into submissive roles. However, the women in the novel resist these oppressive structures in different ways. Aïssatou's rejection of polygamy and her decision to leave her husband symbolize direct resistance against male domination and cultural expectations of female endurance. Ramatoulaye's refusal to marry Tamsir after her husband's death equally represents resistance to societal pressure and the objectification of widows within patriarchal culture. Moreover, her narrative voice itself becomes a form of intellectual resistance because she openly critiques the injustices inflicted upon women in Senegalese society. The translation preserves this resistant feminist discourse by retaining the critical tone, emotional depth, and ideological force of the original narrative, thereby ensuring that the novel's condemnation of patriarchal oppression remains effective

in the English version. Translation significantly affects gendered discourse in the novel because linguistic choices shape how women's oppression and resistance are perceived by readers. Although the English translation largely preserves feminist ideology, certain semantic adjustments slightly soften the emotional intensity of the original French expressions. Nevertheless, the translation retains crucial gendered discourses surrounding emotional repression, motherhood, and female suffering. For example, Ramatoulaye's declaration that "*I am not an object to be passed from hand to hand*" (Bâ, 1981, p. 75) preserves the feminist rejection of patriarchal commodification of women. Ramatoulaye's declaration that "I am not an object to be passed from hand to hand" powerfully expresses the feminist rejection of patriarchal commodification and objectification of women within marriage and traditional society. The metaphorical use of the word "object" suggests that patriarchal culture often treats women as transferable possessions whose value depends on male ownership and social utility rather than personal identity and emotional autonomy. By refusing to be "passed from hand to hand," Ramatoulaye rejects the cultural expectation that widows should automatically remarry within the husband's family or submit themselves to male decisions after the death of a spouse. The expression therefore symbolizes her resistance against practices that reduce women to commodities exchanged between men for social convenience and patriarchal continuity. Through this statement, Mariama Bâ foregrounds female subjectivity and affirms a woman's right to self-determination, dignity, and emotional independence. The quotation equally reinforces the novel's broader critique of patriarchal structures that deny women agency and humanity. Within many traditional patriarchal societies, widows are often perceived not as independent individuals but as extensions of male authority whose futures can be determined by family customs and communal expectations. Ramatoulaye's refusal to accept such treatment becomes a direct challenge to the social ideology that positions women as passive recipients of male control. The phrase "passed from hand to hand" figuratively evokes the image of an item circulated among owners, thereby exposing the dehumanizing logic underlying patriarchal marriage systems. Her declaration is therefore not merely personal resistance but also a broader feminist protest against cultural practices that silence women's desires and transform them into instruments of male satisfaction and social obligation. The English translation effectively preserves the emotional force and ideological significance of this statement, ensuring that the feminist consciousness embedded in the original French text remains visible and impactful for Anglophone readers. The phrase strongly communicates female subjectivity and resistance against male authority. Moreover, the translation reproduces the confessional and epistolary tone of the source text, thereby maintaining the intimate feminine voice central to the narrative structure. Through these linguistic and ideological transfers, translation becomes a site where African feminist discourse is negotiated, reproduced, and transmitted across cultures. This confirms Spivak's assertion that translation is deeply implicated in questions of representation, gender, and power relations within postcolonial literary production.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study has examined the translation of feminist ideology in *Une si longue lettre* and its English version, *So Long a Letter*, with particular attention to gendered discourse, ideological transfer, and the preservation of African feminist consciousness. The introduction established that translation is not merely a linguistic activity but also an ideological process through which gender relations, power structures, and cultural meanings are negotiated. The study further highlighted the importance of feminist translation studies in understanding how women's voices are represented across languages and cultures. Through the problem statement, the research identified the possibility that translation may alter or weaken feminist meanings embedded in African literary texts. The review of related literature equally demonstrated that previous studies on feminist translation, postcolonial discourse, and African women's writing have emphasized the importance of preserving female subjectivity and resisting patriarchal silencing in translation practices. The theoretical framework of the study was anchored in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's feminist translation theory alongside feminist and postcolonial approaches to translation. The theory provided an appropriate framework for examining the relationship between language, ideology, gender, and representation in translated African literature. Spivak's theory particularly revealed that translation functions as a site of ideological negotiation where marginalized women's voices may either be preserved or silenced.

Through the analysis of selected passages from the French and English texts, the study demonstrated that the translation largely preserves the feminist ideology of Mariama Bâ's narrative through the retention of emotional discourse, female subjectivity, and critiques of patriarchy and polygamy. The analysis also revealed that the translator employed semantic and culturally sensitive translation strategies that maintained much of the ideological and emotional depth of the source text. Nevertheless, certain lexical and stylistic shifts slightly reduced the intensity of some feminist expressions, thereby illustrating the complexity of transferring African feminist consciousness from one language to another. The findings of this study therefore confirm that translation plays a significant role in shaping gendered discourse and ideological representation in literary texts. The English translation successfully communicates many of the feminist concerns expressed in the original French narrative, particularly themes of female oppression, resistance, emotional suffering, and solidarity among women. The translated text equally preserves the intimate epistolary voice through which Ramatoulaye articulates her experiences within a patriarchal Senegalese society. Consequently, the study establishes that feminist ideology can survive translation when the translator remains attentive to the cultural specificity, rhetorical nuances, and ideological intentions of the source text. The research further contributes to feminist translation studies by demonstrating how African feminist literature functions as a site of resistance against patriarchal and colonial structures. It also reinforces Spivak's argument that the translation of women's writing requires ethical sensitivity in order to avoid the erasure or domestication of marginalized female voices within dominant linguistic systems.

In view of these findings, the study recommends that translators of African feminist texts should adopt culturally and ideologically sensitive translation strategies capable of preserving the feminist consciousness embedded in the source text. Translators should pay particular attention to emotional expressions, gendered language, and culturally specific references in order to avoid weakening women's voices through excessive domestication or simplification. The study also recommends that future researchers explore other African literary translations from feminist and postcolonial perspectives in order to deepen scholarly understanding of ideological transfer in translation. Furthermore, feminist translation studies should continue to engage critically with questions of language, representation, and power, especially in the translation of African women's narratives into global languages. Such scholarly efforts will contribute to the preservation and international visibility of African feminist discourse within contemporary literary and translation studies.

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