

Title: Does Spanish-English translation now produce a false sense of racism?

The paper seeks to elucidate to what extent Spanish-English translation may heighten the racist potential of a text, whereas the inverse operation tends to create the opposite effect. The theoretical analysis will examine relatively recent changes in Anglophone and Hispanic cultures in relation to the predominant interpretation of what constitutes racism and which racial terms are no longer acceptable, and then question how translation might distort this issue as the vastly different colonial histories and concomitant racial sensitivities of both cultures have led to a lexical imbalance which poses significant problems for translators searching for a dynamic equivalence for deeply loaded racial terms. Therefore, the paper seeks to address a specific and increasingly problematic example of the key question posed by this conference – how the intercultural and intracultural criteria for the validation of ideas, theories and sources of knowledge have changed over time. It will examine how translation sometimes apparently cannot bridge the gap between such unequal changes in the two literary cultures and how, in many cases, the result is recourse to avoidance strategies from Spanish into English or the unfortunate creation of a mistaken impression of racial insensitivity and/or inevitable dilution when translating from English into Spanish.