



**Centre for Comparative Literature**  
**Bhasha Bhavana**  
**Visva-Bharati**  
cordially invites you to

**CARCA: EXERCISE IN COMPARATIVISM**

**Topic: Reading the Voices: Researchers Positioning in  
Translations from the Field**



**Subhashree Sanyal, Ph.D**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**Department of Social Work**  
**Palli Samgathana Vibhaga**  
**[ Institute of Rural Reconstruction ]**  
**Visva-Bharati**

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Bhasha Bhavana



# Abstract

Research in social science needs to examine and interpret diverse methodological outputs documented in assorted languages. This evoked the demand of ‘translation’ that ensures that the outcomes of the research are accessible to a linguistically broad audience which, in turn, facilitates knowledge dissemination and trans-linguistic collaboration (Temple and Young, 2004). Translations in social science need to focus on cultural and ethnic sensitivity, methodological transparency and conceptual equivalence (Brislin, 1986). Hence, translation in social science is more of a ‘cultural adaptation’ than a mere linguistic exercise where a researcher is required to ensure that concepts and terms retain their rooted meaning while attempting to be comprehensible in the target language (Harkness, 2003). This is particularly crucial in disciplines, such as, social work, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and political science, in which terms such as ‘democracy’, ‘social justice’, ‘trauma’ or ‘gender roles’ may carry different connotations across cultures (Wierzbicka, 1997). This reading is a modest attempt to understand translations and how we as social science researchers, position ourselves keeping in view the ideological and ethical genesis that lies within research itself.

