

Domestication and/or Foreignisation of Literary Texts in Translation: a Study of post-Revolutionary Era in Iran

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Abstract – Historically, the specific periods of the 1930s to the 1970s had a major part to play in the historical maturity of translation study, cultural translation in particular, in Iran. Thus, the specific period of time need to be studied precisely. Considering two main cultural strategies of domestication and foreignisation suggested by Venuti, the present study aimed to determine whether authentic texts (English) have been foreignised or domesticated in the meantime. It also tried to identify the dominant translation strategies used by Iranian translators over the intended period of time. To do so, it has been tried to identify and extract some culture-specific items from the research corpora based on the culture-specific items categories suggested by different translation scholars including Espindola and Vasconcellos, Newmark and Pavlovic. In the next step, the researchers analyzed the strategy used in the process of culture-specific items translation based on the translation strategies suggested by Vinay and Darbelnet, and Aixela in order to determine the translators' prominent strategy. Though the obtained results proved that domestication and foreignisation strategies have been commonly used by Iranian translators over the intended period of time, foreignisation has been the most common cultural strategy used in the meantime.

Keywords: translation strategy, domestication, foreignisation, culture-specific item

I. INTRODUCTION

The world today has been witnessing an increasing cooperation and communication among cultures all over the world in fields such as economy, politics, science and technology, culture, etc. for the sake of increastion such as cooperation and communication among different cultures, translation studies has become more important than before. Even we can claim that it turned into a necessary request which is inseparable from people's ordinary life. Yet translation studies, as a new-born academic subject (Munday, 2001, p. 7), like other academic subjects, contains a number of debatable matters. One of the most debatable matters in translation studies is the translation of culture especially culture-specific items. Right here questions regarding how translators would translate cultural texts or how translators would transfer culture from one community to another raised. Considering such questions, according to Venuti (1998), some translators including Venuti himself subjected themselves to the culture-specific items realized in the source text i.e. foreignising. On the other hand, Nida and other translators

subjected themselves to the culture-specific items of the target text i.e. domesticating (Venuti, 1995).

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This paper is based on studying literary texts, since such texts represent a distinctive kind of translating. The present study corpus consists of eleven authentic English fictions with their corresponding Persian translated versions. Regarding the selected translations volume, a fifth of each translated texts has been selected. Table 1 presents fictions used in the body of current study.

Table 1: Translated fictions: post Islamic revolution

Author	Title of book	Published	Translator	Title of book	published
Virginia Woolf	<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	1925	پرویز داریوش	خانم دالوی	۱۳۶۲
Ernest Hemingway	<i>Sun Also Rises</i>	1926	همایون مقدم	خورشید میدرخشد	۱۳۶۲
William Golding	<i>Lord of Flies by</i>	1963	حمید رفیعی	سالار مگس ها	۱۳۶۳
John Steinbeck	<i>The Pearl</i>	1946	نصرت الله رحیمی هادی محمد پور	مروارید	۱۳۶۰
William Faulkner	<i>The Spotted Horses</i>	1931	احمد اخوت	اسب ها خالدار	۱۳۷۰
Raymond Chandler	<i>The Little Sister</i>	1949	اسماعیل فصیح	خواهر کوچیکه	۱۳۷۸
George Orwell	<i>Coming Up for Air</i>	1939	گلرخ سعیدنیا	هوای تازه	۱۳۷۲
Charles Dickens	<i>Oliver Twist</i>	1838	یوسف غریب	البور تویست	۱۳۸۶
Charlotte Bronte	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	1847	محمد بهرام حران	جین ایر	۱۳۸۰
Thomas Hardy	<i>A Pair of Blue Eyes</i>	1837	رضا رضایی	بیک جفت چشم آبی	۱۳۸۷
Jane Austen	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>		ابراهیم یونسی	غرور و تعصب	۱۳۸۱

The present study attempted to determine whether authentic texts (English) are foreignised or domesticated after Iran's Islamic Revolution. It also tried to identify the dominant translation strategies used by translators over intended periods of time. To do so, the first step was identifying and extracting instances of culture-specific items found in the English authentic texts using CSIs taxonomy proposed by Newmark(1998), Espindola and Vasconcellos (2006), and Pavlović (2003).

Table 2: CSIs proposed by Newmark (1998)

Material culture: Houses and towns, clothes, foods and transports	
Social culture: leisure activities and works	
Gestures and habits: cook a snook, spitting	
Ecology: geographical and environmental concepts including flora, fauna, winds, plains and etc.	
Organizations, customs, activities, concepts	a) Political and administrative terms
	b) Religious terms
	c) Artistic terms

Table 3: CSIs proposed by Pavlovic (2006)

Ecology: Different aspects of nature etc.	Leisure/entertainment: name of games/places etc.
Everyday life: Food, clothes etc.	Forms of address
Material culture: products, trademarks etc.	Education: : The education systems
Gestures and habits	Political and administrative functions and institutions
History: Historical events, literature, etc.	Religion: Religious terms
Economy: Money, equity, etc.	The armed forces: The armed forces, ranks, etc.

Table 4: CSIs proposed by Espindola and Vasconcellos (2003)

Toponyms: A place name, a geographical name, etc.	Measuring system: Units
Anthroponyms: ordinary and famous people's names	Food and Drink
Forms of entertainment: public shows, parties, etc.	Scholastic reference: Related to school or studying
Means of transportation	Religious celebration: Related to religious occasion
Fictional character	Dialect:

Table 1: CSIs adopted by the researcher

Toponyms (Ecology)	Political, administrative and local institutions	Artistic terms
Material culture	Armed forces	Religious terms
Foods and drinks	Anthroponyms	History
Social culture	Measuring systems	Fictional characters
Form of addressee	Scholastic reference (education)	Economy

According to tables 2, 3 and 4, the taxonomies proposed by the mentioned translation scholars are relatively the same. Thus, as table 5 shows, in the light of the research needs, the researchers tried to propose a more precise taxonomy. After adopting our taxonomy of culture-specific items, the next step was extracting and categorizing CSIs. The selected English authentic fictions have been chosen as the primary STs to be compared with their corresponding translated TTs. A fifth of each translated text has been selected at random. Considering table 5, through the precise contrasting of the corpus, instances of CSIs was extracted. In the third step, it was tried to check CSIs historical and cultural background through online search, and through using lingual and bilingual dictionaries. Next came adopting taxonomy of translation strategies on the basis of the, Vinay and Darbelnet's (2000), and Aixela's (1996) translation strategies classification.

Table 6 shows Vinay and Darbelnet's (2000), and Aixela's (1996) suggested translation strategies. Based on their classification of translation strategies, translation strategies adopted

in the research were classified into two main category (refer to table 7).Here, it was tried to identify and analyze translation strategies used in translating of CSIs extracted from the selected authentic English fictions on the basis of strategies adopted in table 7. Finally, it was attempted to generalize the obtained results to other fictions translated from English into Persian over the intended period of time using chi-square test and Friedman test.

Table 6: proposed by Vinay’s (2000), and Aixela (1996)

Foreignisation	Domestication
Strategies proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (2000)	
Borrowing	Transposition
Caique	Modulation
Literal translation	Equivalence
	Adaptation
Strategies proposed by Aixela (1996)	
Orthographic adaptation	Absolute universalization
Linguistic translation	Limited universalization
Extra-textual gloss	Synonymy
Intra-textual gloss	Naturalization
Repetition	Compensation
	Attenuation
	Deletion

Table 7: Strategies adopted by the researcher

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The theoretical framework of the present research is associated with the theory put forward by Venuti (1995). According to Venuti, translation of texts from one culture into another usually requires a choice between two translation procedures, namely domestication and foreignisation (as cited in Munday, 2001).

Domesticating translation refers to the translation strategy in which a transparent and fluent style is adopted in order to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers. It means making the text recognizable and familiar and thus bringing the foreign culture closer to that of the readers'. "All translation is fundamentally domestication and is really initiated in the domestic culture" (Venuti, 1995).

Venuti believed foreignising restrain the ethnocentric violence of translation:

Foreignising translation resist against ethnocentrism, racism and cultural narcissism; it pitched against the hegemonic English-language nations and the unequal cultural exchanges in which they engage their global others so he bemoans domestication since it involves an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target language (Anglo-American) cultural values (1995).

III. RESULTS

To account for the translators' possible strategies in the body of fictions translated into Persian after Iran's Islamic Revolution, eleven stories (English) with their Persian translations were selected. By analyzing the translation of 1986 instances of culture-bound items extracted from the randomly selected books, the following result in table 8 has been achieved:

Table 8: F and Frequency Percentage of Dom and for in post Islamic Revolution total corpus

	F	Frequency Percentage
Domestication	504	26%
Foreignisation	1482	74%

Table 8 proves that 74% of mentioned culture-specific items extracted from the corpus were mostly foreignised as the remaining items (26%) were domesticated. It also shows that the difference in the frequency percentage between domestication and foreignisation oriented strategies in dealing with culture-specific items in the intended corpus is 48%. After analyzing the strategies used in the process of CSIs translation, it became clear that the most frequent strategy applied in the post Islamic Revolution total corpus is orthographic adaptation with more than 39% and the least one is attenuation 0.05%. The frequency of adaptation and equivalence also is 0. The next common strategy is borrowing (20%) and the least one is compensation (0.45%). As it is obvious, there is a great gap between the most frequent strategy used in the process of translating culture-specific items and the least one.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Historically, the specific periods of the 1930s to the 1970s have a major part to play in the historical maturity of Translation Study, cultural translation in particular, in Iran. Thus, the specific period of time need to be studied precisely. Considering two main cultural strategies of domestication and foreignisation suggested by Venuti, the present study aimed to determine whether authentic texts (English) were foreignised or domesticated in the meantime. It also tried to identify the dominant translation strategies used by Iranian translators over intended period of time.

Considering the results shown in table 8 and those obtained through performing chi-square test and Freidman rank test, it was possible to answer the research questions. Through conducting chi-square test equal to 481.61 with one degree of freedom, it was concluded that although both of the procedures and their subset strategies have been used by different translators in the process of translation from 1930s to 1970s, foreignisation with 95% confidence has been the most pervasive cultural strategy used after 1979 Iran's Islamic Revolution. Along with the research goals, based on the data gathered through the process of analyzing translated texts in Iran relating to post-Islamic Revolution periods and conducting Freidman rank test, it was found orthographic adaptation with mean rank 6.75 was the most common strategy over intended periods of time and the least one was adaptation attenuation (with 3.53).

Contrary to the previous researches, the present study was conducted based on a mixture of all possible and related proposed culture-specific items/translation strategies. So, through the analysis of a wide range of authentic literary texts which are written by different authors and their Persian corresponding translated texts, such a conclusion was achieved.

The present study just discussed the strategies and producers applied to translation of the culture-specific items in literary texts. It is possible to discuss such strategies in different contexts such as media and informative/advertising text.

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