

THE ALTERNATING AND COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF FOREIGNIZATION AND DOMESTICATION AS TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

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Abstract: From the antiquity through the middle age and the renaissance right up to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, translation scholars and theorists have generally prescribed either the literal or free, word for word or sense for sense, source-text-oriented or target-text-oriented, adequate or appropriate, foreignized or domesticated translation strategies or methods, depending on the period, perception or text type. The choice has often been either one or the other and hardly ever a combination of the two. In spite of this clear-cut theoretical divide in translation strategies, the translation, notably of literary texts has often shown that both foreignization and domestication or literal and free translation strategies are used alternately and complementarily. This paper attempts to show that in prose, poetry and drama translation both foreignization and domestication are used alternately and complementarily. Examples are drawn from corpora of prose, poetry and drama translation to show that both the foreignization and domestication translation strategies are used in all three types of translation. This use is however to varying degrees. The study draws the following conclusions:

1. In prose translation domestication is used more than foreignization.
2. Drama translation, like prose translation, appears to use domestication more than foreignization, but to a lesser degree.
3. Contrary to prose and drama translation, poetry translation employs much more of foreignization than domestication.

Keywords: foreignization, Domestication, Translation Strategies.

1. INTRODUCTION

From 300 BC, when translation practice is said to have begun (Horguelin, 1982), to about 1995, when Toury (1995) forcefully came out with his *Descriptive translation studies and beyond*, translation scholars and theorists prescribed either the word-for-word (literal) or sense-for-sense (free) translation method, depending on the type of text. Although these two basic and extreme translation methods have, over the years, been given various names such as source-language-oriented translation as opposed to target-language-oriented translation, adequate versus appropriate (acceptable) translation, foreignization against domestication, the divide remains basically the same. This means that the translation method has always been either one or the other. Cicero, for instance in 46 BC in his *libellus de optimo genere oratorum* warned against translating *verbum pro verbo* (word-for-word – literal) (Kelly, 1975). Saints Jerome and Augustine strongly recommended the sense-for-sense translation method. Following the footsteps of Saint Jerome, Martin Luther translated the Bible in German using the sense-for-sense translation strategy (Munday, 2001, p. 23). Catford (1964) viewed translation as replacing textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language and thus prescribed a source-language-oriented translation method. Nida and Taber (1969) went a little further than Catford by prescribing that a target text should be the closest natural equivalent of the source text, but remained source-text-oriented in their translation method. Functional translation theories, for their part, tended to be target-text-oriented. Here, what was

important was the re-expression of the source text message in the target language, respecting the idiom and culture of the target language. The dichotomy in the translation method that has evolved since the beginning of translation practice is thus the root of the problem that this study sets out to solve.

2. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Prose

According to Webster's, (cited by Tangyie and Chong, 2003:9): prose is defined as follows:

A literary medium distinguished from poetry especially in its greater regularity and variety of rhythm and its closer correspondence to the patterns of everyday speech.

There are five main forms of prose, namely, allegory, autobiography, biography, picaresque and fable. Allegory is prose in which characters, actions and setting represent abstract or moral qualities. For instance, in John Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress*, characters such as Christian, Worldly, Wiseman and Despair stand for qualities. An autobiography is a person's account of his or her own life. Biography is a detailed account of a person's life by another person. Picaresque refers to the nature of the subject matter as well as the superficial or autobiographical or prosodic features. Finally, fable is a brief story in verse or prose in which human situations and behaviour are depicted through (chiefly) beasts and birds, or gods or inanimate objects (Tangyie and Chong, 2003:11-12) There are four main types of prose forms of discourse, These are narrative prose, descriptive prose, argumentative prose and expository or informative prose. Narrative prose aims at telling a story, which may be true or false, in an interesting a way as possible. It tactfully narrates events in order that they may be interesting. Descriptive prose, for its part, provides details of either general or specific features of people, places, events and experience. Argumentative prose is concerned with providing cogent argument and logic in order to convince the reader on a point or points. It often makes use of comparisons, illustrations, associations, quotations and contrast in a bid to strengthen proof or evidence. Finally, there is expository or informative prose which sets out to present information, giving or explaining related facts and ideas. Apart from these four main types of prose forms of discourse, we also have emotive or expressive prose, which deals with the use of language to give information, while attempting to influence the reader's attitude and emotions. It could be further split into discursive and contemplative prose. The first, discursive prose is mostly used by philosophers, theologians and politicians. It is writing that appeals to the intellect, through the use convincing arguments and ideas. The second, contemplative prose comprises essays or treatises on any subject. It usually deals with reflective ideas on a particular issue. (idem, pp.12-14)

Poetry

Babette and Deutsh (cited by Tangyie and Cheng, 2003:134) ,define poetry as follows:

The art which uses words as both speech and song to reveal the realities that the senses record, the feelings salute, the mind perceives and the shaping imagination orders.

In other words, poetry is the rhythmic, elevated and felicitous use of language in verse form.

Drama

The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1973): succinctly defines drama as follows:

A composition in prose or verse, adapted to be acted on the stage, in a story related by means of dialogue and action, and is represented with accompanying gesture, costume and scenery (p.603)

It is perhaps important to state here that, as far as translation is concerned, .we are dealing with or talking about the drama text or script as it is written

Foreignization

This is a translation strategy in which there is 'close adherence to the source text structure and syntax, (Munday, 2001, p.147). In other words, it is source-text-oriented translation, which gives priority to adequacy, at the expense of appropriacy and acceptability. It is more or less literal translation.

Domestication

According to Venuti, (1995, cited by Munday, 2001, p.146), domestication is a translation strategy which ‘entails translating in a transparent, fluent, invisible style’ in order to minimize the foreignness of the target text’. It is target-text-oriented translation with focus on the respect of target text norms. In Descriptive Translation Studies (Toury, 1995) terminology, it is appropriate and acceptable translation.

3. FOREIGNIZATION AND DOMESTICATION IN PROSE TRANSLATION**Foreignization as seen in *Mission to Kala* (novel)**

Example 1.

ST: *Moi, je suis le sol. Elle n'est que la feuille morte qui vient de se détacher de l'arbre. Elle a beau faire : elle ne peut éviter finalement de tomber sur le sol.*(MT :21)

TT: ‘*I am the earth she rests on*’, he declared fatuously. ‘*By herself she is nothing but a dead leaf that has broken loose from the tree. For all her fluttering and gyrations, in the end she cannot prevent herself falling to the ground.*’(MTK:9)

Example 2

ST: *Durant le discours du patriarche, mon esprit avait travaillé et tout à coup je découvris, dans l'arsenal de ma dialectique cartésienne, un argument qui, me semblait-il, ne pourrait manquer de faire mouche, de me faire triompher du féroce ennemi, de la même façon qu'une balle explosive abat le fauve qui marche sur le chasseur—sauf que dans la situation, ce n'était pas moi le chasseur.*(MT :26)

TT: While the old man had been talking, I had been thinking hard. Suddenly, I discovered in *the arsenal of my Cartesian dialectic*, an argument which seemed absolutely unanswerable, and which I thought would win me a victory over even so ferocious an opposition as this. It would be like the exploding cartridge that knocks out a wild beast in the very act of charging the hunter – except that in the present case I wasn't, so to speak, the hunter(MTK :13).

Example 3.

ST: *Un homme, à son insu, parlait avec la voix du tonnerre*
(MT :28)

TT: There was once a man who, all unbeknown to himself, spoke with *the voice of the thunder.*(MTK:15)

Domestication as seen in *Mission to Kala* (novel)

Example 1.

ST: *Mission terminée*, (title)

TT: *Mission to Kala*(title)

In the French original, we have an accomplished, completed or finished mission or assignment, while the English version simply tells us of a certain mission to a place called Kala. The translator has used a modulation technique which concerns a point- of -view switch. Again, it is within the context of the whole story that the English version can be understood. In its characteristic manner, the French language, generally known to be analytic, provides a conclusive title to the story, while English, which is synthetic, provides a sort of introductory title whereby the reader is told of a certain mission to be carried out in Kala. The English translation is more concrete, while the French is a little bit abstract in the sense that the

title already tells the reader that a certain mission is or was accomplished, or ended.

Looking at the language components of the two versions, we notice that the French title comprises a noun (mission) followed by an adjectivized verb, (terminée) which qualifies it. The English version, for its part, is composed of an abstract noun (mission) and a proper noun (Kala) joined by a preposition (to) to form a sense group (Mission to Kala). All these changes in the English version can thus be attributed to the literary translator's ability to create in the target language.

Example 2.

ST: Pourquoi est-ce de cette histoire que le souvenir reflue vers moi
comme une marée, sans répit, aux jours de cafard autant qu'à
ceux d'exaltation ? Pourquoi s'accommode-t-elle de tout cela :
l'enthousiasme romanesque, la nostalgie et la inédiocrité (MT :9)
TT: Why do the events that form this story plague me so? The
memory of them pours back into my mind again and again, like
a sea tide. I may be depressed or cheerful: it makes no
difference. The impulse absorbs every mood: romantic
enthusiasm, nostalgia, indifference, the lot. Why? (MTK:no page
number,prologue)

The above English version is quite rich in terms of creativity. First of all, the French text has two interrogative sentences, which the English text or translation splits each into two, making altogether four sentences, two of which are interrogative and the other two declarative.

Secondly, we have notably new elements in the English text, namely 'events', 'It makes no difference ', 'the impulse absorbs every mood', 'indifference' and 'the lot'. All these new elements results from the translator's use of the techniques of modulation and expansion, while considering the context and the communicative aspect of the message in the original text. The target text is equally rich in figures of speech. We find metaphor (The memory of them pour back into my mind), repetition (again and again) and simile (like a sea tide)

Furthermore, 'I may be depressed or cheerful' as rendering for 'aux jours de cafard autant qu'à ceux d'exaltation ' is quite an imaginative modulation, which is equally interpretive. Another translator might simply have said 'in off and good days', 'in bad and good days' or 'in sad and happy days'. The same comment may go for the rendering of 'pourquoi s'accommode-t-elle de tout cela' by 'The impulse absorbs every mood'.

Example 3.

ST: Tandis que tous mes souvenirs se désagrègent, se liquéfient et
finalement s'estompent au soleil de mon âge adulte, comme
bloc de glace au vrai soleil du ciel , c'est cette aventure
d'adolescent, elle seule, qui tient tête à la dérouté avec
l'obtination des héros, remplit les vides laissés par la désertion
de mon passé, m'envahit, m'imprègne. (MT :9)
TT : All my other memories exposed to the scorching light of
maturity, break up, melt and blur into nothing, like a block of
ice out in the sun. but this adolescent adventure refuses to
vanish. With lonely and heroic obstinacy it sticks in my mind,
filling the gaps left by my lost youth. It has become an all-
possessive obsession.(MTK:prologue)

The English text is quite a creative rendering of the French, which is a single sentence that has been translated into four sentences in English. 'Tandis que tous mes souvenirs' which could naturally and literally be rendered as 'While all my memories', is translated as 'all my other memories' Here the translator has dropped the conjunction 'Tandis que ' (while) and added the adjective 'other' to make the English rendering communicative. We equally find 'soleil de mon âge adulte' rendered as 'the scorching light of maturity'. Here the image of sun is dropped in favour of the metaphorical phrase 'the scorching light of maturity'. The English text also leaves out the possessive pronoun 'mon' which appears in the original

'S'estompent au soleil' is creatively and communicatively rendered as 'blur in nothing'. Other creative instances include 'Obstination des heros' rendered as 'heroic obstinacy', 'mon passé' as 'my ... youth', 'cette aventure ... m'envahit, m'imprègne' as 'It has become an all possessive obsession'. All these are examples of modulation and communicative translation.

4. FOREIGNIZATION AND DOMESTICATION IN POETRY

Foreignization as seen in Return to my Native Land (poetry)

Example 1.

ST: Dans cette ville inerte, cette foule désolée sous le
soleil,ne participant pas à rien de ce qui
s'exprime,s'affirme,se libère au grand jour de cette
terre sienne.Ni à l'impératrice Joséphine des Français
rêvant très haut au-dessus de la négraille.Ni au
libérateur figé dans sa libération de pierre
blanchie .Ni au conquistador .Ni à ce mépris,ni à cette
audace. (CRPN:35)

TT :In this inert city,this desolate crowd under the
sun,which has no share in whatever is openly
expressed,affirmed,freed in this land.No part in the
French Empress Josephine dreaming high above the
'poor Negro',nor in the liberateur frozen with his
liberating gesture in white stone.Nor share in this
scorn,this freedom,this audacity. (RMNL:34)

Example 2.

S T: un mot-un-seul-mot,et je-vous-en-tiens-quitte-de-la-
-reineBlanche-de-Castille ,un-mot un seul mot,voyez-
vous-ce-petit sauvage-qui-ne-sait-pas-in seul-des-diz
commandements-de-Dieux. (CRPN:39)

TT : ..say-one-single-word –ust-one –and-the-Queen-of-
Castille-wiil-ge-forgotten.Say-a-single-word-just-
one,look-at –the-boy-who-doesn't-know-a-single-of
-the-ten –commandments-of-the-Lord (RMNL:38)

Example 3.

ST Partir

Comme il y a des homes-hyene et des
hommrs-pantheres,je serais un homme-Juif
un homme-cafre
un homme-hindou-de-Calcutta
un homme de Harlem qui ne vote pas.
(CRPN:37)

TT :To leave.

As they are hyna-men and leopard-men,I
would be a Jew-men
a Kaffir-man
a hindou-man –from-Calcutta
a man from-Harlem-who-doesn't vote.
(RMNL:36)

Domestication as in Return to my Native Land (poetry)

Example 1.

ST Il essayait d'abandonner
sur ce banc crasseux de tramway ses jambes
gigantesques et ses mains tremblantes de
boxeur affamé.
TT : He tried relax his gigantic legs
and trembling hungry
pug's fists on the dusty bench

Example 2.

ST: J'entends de la cale monter les male-
dictions enchaînées, les hoquettements
des morants, le bruit d'un qu'on
jette à la mer..les abois d'une femme
en gésine, (CRPN:99-101)
TT: I hear from the hold below the curse
of the chained, the hiccups of the dying,
the splash of someone thrown into the sea
...the baying of a woman in labour.....

Example 3

ST: ..le soleil qui toussote et crache ses
poumons(CRPN :75)
TT: ..the sun with a dry cough
...the sun spitting blood. (RMNL:74)

5. FOREIGNIZATION AND DOMESTICATION IN DRAMA*Foreignization as seen in Waiting for Godot (a play)*

Example 1.

S T: Tu ne serais plus qu'un *petit tas d'ossements* à l'heure qu'il
est, pas d'erreur. (EAG:3)
TT : You'd be nothing more than *a little heap of bones* at the
present minute, no doubt about it (WFG :1).

Example 2.

ST: Je n'aime pas *parler dans le vide*. (EAG :27)
TT : I don't like *talking in the vacuum*. (WFG. :15).

Example 3.

ST: *On n'était pas fait pour le même chemin*... (EAG) :..
TT : *We weren't made for the same road*. (WFG.)

Domestication as seen in Waiting for Godot (a play)

Example 1.

ST: Il fallait y penser il y a *une éternité*. (EAG :3)
TT : We should have thought of it *a million years ago*, in the
nineties (WFG.:2)

Example 2.

ST: Avec la moindre *créature* on s'instruit, on s'enrichit, on goûte mieux son bonheur (EAG:26).

TT: From the minutest *creature* one departs wiser, richer, more conscious of one's blessings (WFG.:14)..

Example 3

ST: *Les larmes du monde sont immuables* .(EAG :29) .

TT : *The tears of the world are a constant quantity*. (WFG.:17)

6. CONCLUSION

So far we have tried to show that although translation scholars and theorists have over the years prescribed either foreignization or domestication, the actual practice of translation, notably literary translation, has often used a combination of both strategies. Using examples from prose, poetry and drama translation, we have attempted to demonstrate that foreignization and domestication as translation strategies are used alternately and complementarily in prose, poetry and drama translation. Finally, the study draws the following conclusions:

- 1 In prose translation domestication is used more than foreignization.
2. Drama translation, like prose translation, appears to use domestication more than foreignization, but to a lesser degree.
3. Contrary to prose and drama translation, poetry translation employs much more of foreignization than domestication.

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