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Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**Translation and Cultural Shift: A Domestication and Foreignization Analysis of *Naulakhi Kothi* from Urdu to English****Alishba Noor**

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21009119036@skt.umd.edu.pk**ABSTRACT**

The focus of this research is to examine the translation of Culturally Specific Items (CSIs) in the English translation of the novel Naulakhi Kothi, using the concept of domestication and foreignization by Lawrence Venuti. Newmark's (1988) taxonomy is used to categorized the cultural terms. The analysis is based on the model of domestication and foreignization created by Ramiere (2006), which identifies six translation procedures, namely, borrowing, calque, gloss, omission, neutralization, and cultural substitution. The former three are foreignization strategies, and the latter three are regarded as domestication strategies. This research is based on a mixed-method approach. The result showed that foreignization was most frequent with 64.7%, while domestication appeared 35.3% of the time. This proves that in translating Naulakhi Kothi, the translator leaned more toward cultural preservation rather than adapting it for the target audience.

Keywords: Domestication, Foreignization, Culture-Specific Items

Introduction

The word translation is derived from the Latin word "translatio", which means to carry or bring across. It involves transferring meaning across languages. According to Roman Jakobson, a leading linguist describes translation as the interpretation of verbal signs using another language other than the original one. Translators face challenges in translating culturally loaded text due to lack of direct equivalents in the target language. Yakhkef suggests that linguistic and cultural proficiency is crucial for contextualizing the source and target languages. According to Toury, the process of translation involves two languages and two cultural traditions. This highlights that the involvement of culture in translation is unavoidable. Therefore, translators need to know how to deal with both linguistic and cultural gaps in translation.

The domestication and foreignization are the most common translation strategies to deal with cultural terms. The American translation theorist L. Venuti came up with these approaches (qtd. in Schaffner 4). Venuti defines domestication as adapting a foreign literature to the target culture in order to make the author closer to the reader. On the other hand, foreignization preserves the

culture of the source text and allows the readers to experience foreign culture (20). The study focuses on the English translation of the novel *Naulakhi Kothi*. It was originally written by Ali Akbar Natiq and later translated into English by Naima Rashid. The novel portrays the cultural, social, and historical life of the people during that time. The research aims to explore which translation strategy is most frequently used in translating cultural terms and to find out whether the translator relies more on domestication or foreignization.

Literature Review

The process of translation involves cognitive skills which are performed by humans to translate language. It is more than just a linguistic process. Other nuances that may have an impact on the readers are also included. In order to build a bridge between two distinct cultures, translators should act as intercultural mediators. According to Venuti, translation is a mode of communication, but the ultimate objective is to make sure that the target reader has the same degree of fluency as the source reader.

According to El-Dali, Zhang, Braçaj, and House, translation studies have significantly shifted in the last several decades from linguistically and textually focused approaches to ones that are culturally oriented. As a result, there has recently been a lot of interest in studying culture in translation studies. Culture has been defined by several translation scholars. Larson defined culture as a set of beliefs, attitudes, values, and norms shared by a group of people (431). "The way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression" is another definition of culture given by Newmark (94).

Two closely related ideas that deal with the act of translation are language and culture. According to Hongwei, language reflects culture that contributes to the development of other aspects of it by reflecting, promoting, and sharing it (121). A sign that is significant in one cultural community might not have any meaning in another, and the translator is in a position to recognise this discrepancy and attempt to address it (Hatim and Mason). Since words only have meanings in terms of the cultures in which they function, bilingualism is even more crucial for translation success than bilingualism, as claimed by Nida (161).

According to Braçaj, interpreting CTs seems to be one of the challenging tasks that a translator should do (335). Therefore, translators translate cultures rather than texts. Culture is reflected in the language through culture-specific things. As a result, it is possible to conclude that culture-specific items can be characterised as textual features associated with certain notions in a foreign culture (history, art, literature) that may be unfamiliar to readers of the target text (Aixela 14). Antonini believes education, politics, history, art, institutions, legal systems, units of measurement, place names, foods and drinks, sports, and national pastimes to be cultural references based on the linguistic variety employed in Italian screens (154).

The two most common strategies used in translating cultural terms are domestication and foreignization. These strategies are not new. They were first introduced by German philosopher and theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher as contradictory approaches. In his well-known 1813 speech *On the Different Ways of Translation*, Schleiermacher explains that there are only two ways to translate: either the translator moves the reader towards the author while leaving the author as peaceful as possible, or he moves the author towards the reader while leaving the reader as peaceful as possible (Venuti 1995). The first one is referred to as foreignization, and the other is domestication.

Venuti defines domestication translation as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home" (20). He considered this translation technique to be violent and severely criticised it. Furthermore, Mansour noted that domesticated translation fails to capture the author's entire cultural and stylistic message in the source text. Foreignization, on the other hand, is "an ethnodeviant pressure on those (cultural) values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad" (Venuti 1995, 20). By purposefully adding certain linguistic and cultural components to the target texts, Venuti insisted on highlighting the otherness in translation. According to Yang, Venuti is the spokesperson for those who support the foreignization of translation.

Methodology

This research adopts a mixed-method approach to investigate how translator handle cultural terms. The primary source of this study is the text entitled *Naulakhi Kothi* and its English translation. It is selected based on its cultural richness, and the entire novel is involved in identifying culturally specific items (CSIs). The data is collected through the close reading of the source material. The cultural terms are first identified and highlighted manually in the original text. Then, the translation of these CSIs is located in the English translation of the novel. The cultural terms with their English translation are arranged in a spreadsheet. The meaning of these terms and the translation strategies are also noted.

The cultural terms are categorized according to the taxonomy proposed by Newmark (1988). He suggests five main categories for the division of cultural terms. This study adopts Ramière's (2006) foreignization and domestication model as a theoretical framework. This model divides the translation procedures over a scale with two poles, generally referred to as foreignization and domestication. According to Ramière, there are six translation procedures along the continuum, which include borrowing, calque/literal translation, gloss, omission, neutralization, and cultural substitution (p. 156). The three translation procedures that are regarded as strongly foreignizing, less foreignizing, and slightly foreignizing are borrowing, literal translation, and gloss. Furthermore, the next three procedures, omission, neutralization, and cultural substitution, are considered to be slightly, less and strongly domesticating, respectively. In the following figure, this model can be seen.

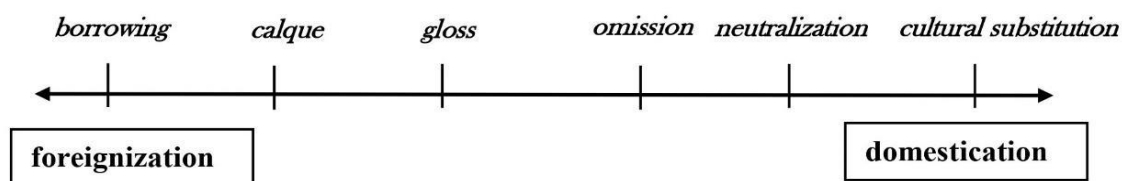


Figure 1. Translation Procedures for Rendering Culturally Specific Items (CSIs)

Data Analysis

The novel *Naulakhi Kothi* was written by Ali Akbar Natiq and published in 2013. It is a South Asian fiction that typically focuses on particular violent and traumatising events. The novel takes place in pre-Partition Punjab and centres on William, who returns to India after eight years in England and is appointed Assistant Commissioner of Jalalabad. It portrays the life of people, particularly in Punjab, during that period. Since the novel represents the life of Punjabi people, it contains many

Culturally Specific Items (CSIs). It is important to note that the novel is originally written in Urdu, the language which is spoken in the culture described in the novel. So, the source language and culture are linked, which makes it easy to identify cultural terms. The domestication and foreignization model developed by Ramiere (2006) is employed to evaluate the translation of CSIs, which are grouped according to Peter Newmark's (1988) taxonomy.

Ecology

This category is referring to the animals, plants, climate, atmosphere, and geographical landscape which are specifically associated with a nation or place.

SL	Meaning	TL	Strategy
کیکر کے پیڑ	acacia tree	Keekar trees	Borrowing
عک کے پودے	a tall, toxic plant with milky white sap	Milkweed bushes	Calque
لسوڑوں کا درخت	a tree that gives small, sticky sweet fruits	Assyrian plum trees	Calque
سنبل کا درخت	a tree with red flowers	Sunbal tree	Borrowing
میٹھے کے پیروں	citrus tree with juicy sweet limes	Limetta trees	Calque
پاپلر کا درخت	fast-growing tall timber tree	Poplar tree	Borrowing
سرکنڈوں	a grass-like plant growing near canals, villages	Reeds	Calque
اٹ ست	a wild herb that grows naturally in forests and empty lands	Gravel	Neutralization
شیشم کے پیڑ	a tree with leathery leaves and pink flowers.	Sheesham trees	Borrowing

In translating ecological terms, the translator mostly uses foreignization strategies like borrowing for culture-rooted plants such as کیکر کے پیڑ (Keekar trees), سنبل کا درخت (Sunbal tree), شیشم کے پیڑ (Sheesham trees), and پاپلر کا درخت (Poplar tree), which helps to keep the cultural flavor of the source text. Calque, another foreignization strategy, appears in the translation of عک کے پودے as Milkweed bushes, لسوڑوں کا درخت as Assyrian plum trees, میٹھے کے پیروں as Limetta trees, and سرکنڈوں as Reeds. On the other hand, the term اٹ ست is translated as Gravel, which is an example of neutralization. Overall, foreignization is dominant in this category.

4.2 Material Culture:

This category includes objects that are used in the daily routine. These terms are connected to the culture of the source language and reflect Punjabi life. The translator mostly uses foreignizing strategies to translate them. The table below highlights the strategies used.

SL	Meaning	TL	Strategy
حُقّہ	smoking pipe	Hookah	Borrowing
چارپائی	Bedstead	Charpoy	Borrowing
لوٹا	small round metal pot with a spout	Lota	Borrowing
چوکی	small wooden seat	Stool	Neutralization
ڈھولکی	small drum	Drum	Neutralization
مُونڈھے	stools made of reed and rope	Stools made of reed and rope	Gloss
کِزبان	a short-curved sword	Kirpan	Borrowing
پیالیوں	Bowl	-	Omission
چائی	earthen vessel or pitcher	-	Omission
گول تکیے	a pillow	Gau takya	Borrowing
قِمِ یض	a kurta-type foreign dress	Shirt + Qameez	Neutralization Borrowing
زَنان خانّہ	special room for women in the house	Zenan khana	Borrowing
ٹانگے	horse-drawn twowheeled carriage	Tonga	Calque
رَوغنی روٹیاں	loaf or nan prepared with oil or ghee	Buttered rotis	Calque
لَسّی	a drink made of yogurt, milk and sugar or salt	Lassi	Borrowing
لاچا	a silken lungi likedress, especially worn in Punjab	Laacha	Borrowing
جانگے	wrestler's breeches	-	Omission

In this category, the translator tries to keep the local culture of the original text. For example, terms like *حُقّہ*, *چارپائی*, *لوٹا*, *کِزبان*, *گول تکیے*, *زَنان خانّہ*, *لَسّی*, and *لاچا* are translated using borrowing. The gloss, a foreignization strategy, is used in the translation of *مُونڈھے* as Stools made of reed and rope. Instead of replacing the word, the translator adds an explanatory phrase to make it understandable for the readers.

The translator generalizes the terms *چوکی*, *ڈھولکی*, and *قِمِ یض* by using neutralization strategy. It is a domestication approach where the translator simplifies the word for the target readers. Omission is also used, in which the translator omits the word completely. In short, foreignization is used more frequently in this section.

4.3 Social Culture:

The terms related to profession, leisure activities, customs, and traditions are included in this category.

SL	Meaning	TL	Strategy
خادم	domestic servant	Maids	Neutralization
مامائیں	midwifery	-	Omission
منشی	a teacher of Persian or Urdu	Munshi	Borrowing
مالش یا ماشکی	masseur, massager	Masseur	Neutralization
ماشکی	water-carrying person	Water carrier	Calque
چپڑاسیوں	Peons	Chaprasis	Borrowing
پَرچُون	Retail	Small shop	Neutralization
پتواری	lowest official of the revenue department who keeps land records in a village	Patwari	Borrowing
پلتھا کھیلنا	a traditional game	Playing Palatha	Borrowing
باند رکے	a game where one player guards' items placed around a wooden stake while others try to steal them.	-	Omission
بانٹے کھیلنا	a local game played with small glass marbles	Playing marbles	Calque
گبڈی	touch and run game between two teams	Kabaddi	Borrowing
پگ بندی	turban ceremony to hand over power and rights	Turban wearing ceremony	Gloss

In translating professions, the translator focuses more on domestication than foreignization. The neutralization strategy is used to translate terms like خادم as Maids, مالشیا as Masseur, and پَرچُون as Small shop. The translation of these terms is simplified to make them easy and clear for the reader. Different translation strategies are used to deal with local games present in the source text. For example, terms گبڈی and پلتھا کھیلنا are directly used as Kabaddi and playing Palatha. The term مامائیں and باند رکے is omitted. The translator also uses foreignization strategies, including calque and borrowing. For example, in the translation of منشی as Munshi, پتواری as Patwari, and چپڑاسیوں as Chaprasis, the translator attempts to retain the original culture. The term ماشکی is translated as Water carrier through calque. Additionally, the gloss is used to translate پگ بندی, a tradition of converting rights, as turban wearing ceremony.

4.4 Organizations, Customs, Activities, Procedures, Concepts:

This category includes political, music, literature, and administrative-related terms. The following table contains terms that reflect the history and identity of the source culture.

SL	Meaning	TL	Strategy
رُم ی ن دار	Landlord	Landlord	Cultural Substitution
جمعدار	authority figure	Jamadar	Borrowing
ذیلداری	feudal landlord's local agent	Authority/local officers	Neutralization
نائب تحصیلدار	subordinate to Tehsildar	Deputy District officer	Cultural Substitution
تَحْصِيل جلال آباد	the subdivision of a district which is under the jurisdiction of deputy tehsildar	Tehsil Jalalabad	Borrowing
پَنچایت	Council or committee of arbitrators	Panchayat	Borrowing
کافر	a denier of God	Non-believers kaafirs	Calque + Borrowing
فتوے	Quran-based decision by Islamic scholar	Passing edicts	Neutralization
الف لیله	imaginary story	Saga	Culture substitution
نغمے	melody, song	Odes	Culture substitution

The translator uses different translation techniques to translate culturally loaded words related to politics and administration. Some terms like جمعدار, پَنچایت and تَحْصِيل جلال آباد are borrowed from Urdu into English as Jamadar, Panchayat, and Tehsil Jalalabad. Cultural substitution is used to translate terms like رُم ی ن دار to Landlord and نائب تحصیلدار to Deputy District officer. This strategy is used when there is no exact word exists in the target language.

The word ذیلداری is translated as Authority and local officers. The translator generalizes this term. The term الف لیله refers to the famous Arabic collection of endless tales. But it was figuratively used in the novel. The character uses it to suggest that talking about his job would be like a complex and never-ending story. In short, the translator uses a blend of both foreignization and domestication strategies, but the foreignization strategy is mostly used in this table.

Findings

The results of the analysis show a dominant use of foreignization strategies in the translation of cultural terms. This is visible in the bar graph given below:

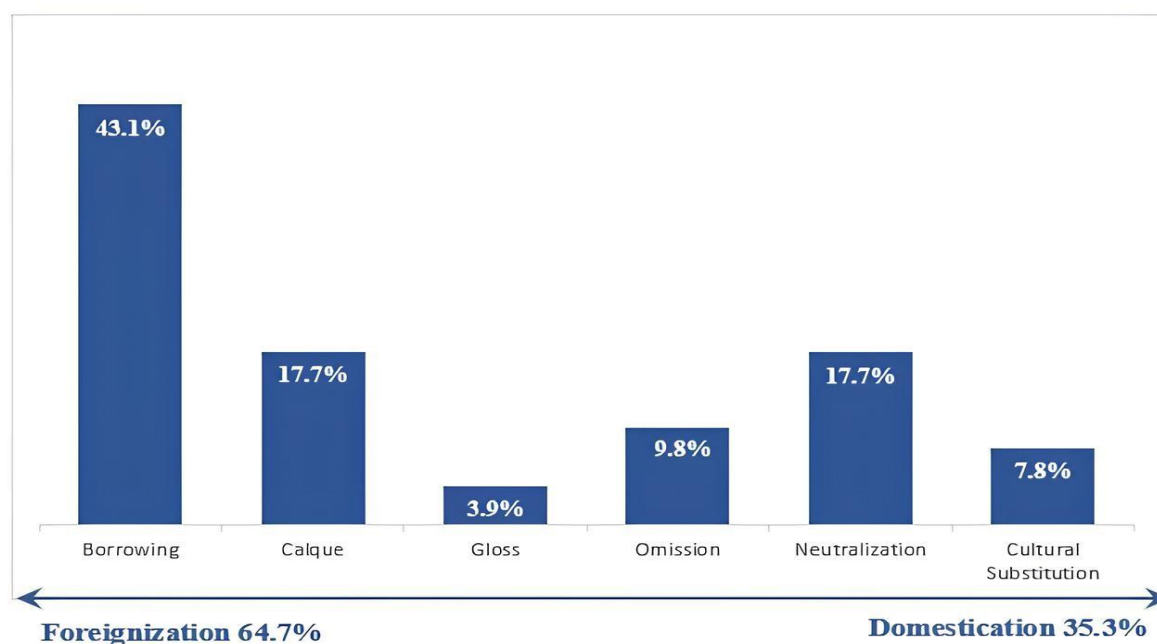


Figure 2. Percentage representation of the translation procedures

One of the most frequently used strategies is borrowing, with a high percentage of 43.1%. In borrowing, many cultural terms are directly taken into the target language without any change. This shows that the translator tried to keep the culture of the source text, and also allows the reader to experience the original culture. The calque was used 17.7%. It also supports the foreignization approach by preserving the tone of the original culture. The gloss procedure was used 3.9% of the time. On the other hand, domestication strategies also used, such as neutralization, appeared at 17.7%. Cultural substitution was used 7.8%. These translation techniques generalize the source culture for the target readers. Omission appeared only 9.8% of the time.

All these findings showed that the most frequently used strategy in translating the CSIs is foreignization, with 64.7%, which prioritizes preservation of the specifics of the source culture. Such a tendency is noticeable especially in the popularity of borrowing and calque that was used to offer a cultural experience to the readers of the English language, and not to make the original cultural sources less strenuous or abstract. On the other hand, the translator also tried to engage the reader by using domestication strategies, which appeared 35.3%.

Conclusion

The study focuses on the translation strategies used in translating cultural terms from the novel *Naulakhi Kothi*. The purpose of this research is to find out which translation strategies are most frequently used in rendering cultural terms. Peter Newmark's (1988) taxonomy for culturally specific items is used to categorized the cultural terms and for the analysis of translation strategies Ramiere's (2006) domestication and foreignization model is utilized. Ramiere (2006) describes cultural translation techniques on an imaginary scale. The scale is referred to as the spectrum of domestication and foreignization. The result shows that the translation relies more on foreignization, with 64.7%. The research is significant for those who are interested in cultural translation and South Asian literature.

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