# A STUDY OF THE STRATEGIES OF FOREIGNIZATION AND DOMESTICATION IN TWO PERSIAN TRANSLATION VERSIONS OF LEWISS CAROLL'S *ALICE IN WONDERLAND*

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**Abstract:** The present study has investigated the translation of cultural translation strategies in an English book as a source text (ST), and its two Persian translations as target texts (TTs). The corpus consists of Lewiss Caroll's "Alice in wonderland" along with two Persian translations by Pirzad (1379) and Honarmandi (1350) as TTs. The data of this study were collected and evaluated based on Venuti's model. This research aimed at investigating the strategies used by translators in rendering the domestication and foreignization. Also, highlighting the frequency of each strategy and identifying the shortcomings of the Persian translations with regard to cultural translation strategies were the other objectives of it. Data were collected by the researcher and were processed through SPSS software. To this end, frequency, percentages, and mean are represented by tables and diagrams. The results of this study indicated that there was a very significant difference between the frequencies of the cultural translation strategies. That is to say, "equivalence" was the most frequent one, but the strategies of foreignization have been used very rarely. In the other words, the domestication strategies applied noticeably more than foreignization strategies.

**Key Terms:** Translation Strategies; Foreignization; Domestication.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Translation has an effective and undeniable role in today's world. Every translation activity has one or more specific purposes and whichever they may be; the main aim of translation is to serve as a cross-cultural bilingual communication vehicle among people (Iranmanesh, 2015). According to Newmark (1998), Translation is rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text. Raffle stated, "as long as the need to know (other culture) is great; the need for translation will be great" (as cited in Golestany, 2009). Many researchers have analyzed the act of translation based on different theories. They have taken into account different issues such as the cultural aspects of the source language and target language or linguistic-based criteria. Translation has many challenges, one of which is the problem of translating collocations. Collocations play an important role in transferring the meaning from the ST to TT. Most of the time it is impossible to predict the meaning of a collocation from the meaning of its parts.

A scan of the literature indicated that there are a copious number of strategies that a translator can use in translating a source language text (SL) into the target language text (TL). One intriguing method in approaching translation from culture perspectives is the model introduced by Venuti (1995), in his model, shed light on invisibility together with two main types of translation strategies, domestication and foreignization. These two strategies concern both the selection of the text to be translated and the translation method to be employed in TL. In his words, foreignization entails choosing "a foreign text developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language" (Venuti, 1997, p. 242); while domestication refers to translating in a transparent, fluent and invisible style in order to minimize the foreignness of the TT (Munday, 2001). The distinction existing between domestication and foreignization is cultural and/ or political, not mere linguistic (Wang, 2002); meaning that in discussing translation from

such point of view, cultural and political differences have priority over the linguistic ones. In fact, we can only talk about domestication or foreignization when there are differences in cultural connotations between the source text (ST) and the TT (Yang, 2010).

As mentioned above, the terms foreignization and domestication were introduced into translation studies (TS) by Venuti (1995). Although readily associated with Venuti, these terms do not represent new concepts. Domestication has been known at least since ancient Rome, and foreignization at least since the Classical and Romantic periods of German culture (Venuti 1998). Foreignization and domestication are translation strategies, but also ethical categories because they include a certain degree of distortion of the original text. The current study focused on strategies of foreignization and domestication in two Persian translations. In the other words, it aimed at comparing the applied strategies by different translators in rendering foreignization and domestication.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Translation is an act of communication that makes a bridge between two languages and cultures. Every translator, after spending many years doing the job of translation, can provide a brand new definition of translation or a new concept or a new understanding that practically proposes no solution to the existing problems on the way of translators (Farahzad, 2009). As this statement implies, translators are permanently faced with the problem of how to treat the aspects implicit in a source text (ST) and of finding the most appropriate technique of successfully conveying these aspects in the target language (TL). These problems may vary in scope depending on the cultural and linguistic gap between the two (or more) languages concerned (Nida, 1964, p.130). According to Venuti (1995, pp. 240-244), It is clear that translation strategies are

necessarily chosen to respond to social situations. Although some of them succeed in native-language translated text, in some cases, their cultural and anthropological distinctions are practically so profound that they have no choice but to preserve them while translating and trusting in the language of the source language, even in the categories and elements there is no translation. Obviously, in such cases, there is no alternative but the foreignization to the translator.Translating across language and cultural barriers is one of the most complicated tasks translator might face. This is due to the fact that text produced in one language and culture contains information about persons, institutions, habits, customers and traditions which accessible to speakers of the source language text but not understood by the speakers of another language (Baawaidhan, 2016). Translators should also make good use of different translation strategies in various cultural settings between diverse languages and cultures in the world. Cultural implications and connotations should be taken into special account by translators, as well. There is obviously an undeniable loss in rendering the image of a cultural source-text expression that should be avoided by translators in the process of translating which is a communicative cross-cultural activity whose ultimate aim is to achieve human interaction across language and culture boundaries. In this respect, a central issue of this study is to highlight Venuti's translation strategies foreignization and domestication that have been used in translating culture-specific elements into English, with special reference to Persian translations of "Alice in Wonderland". In fact, the present study has focused on the translation of foreignization and domestication items in the "Alice in Wonderland" in order to overcome the possible problems and difficulties in translating English culture-specific expressions into Persian. Also, it attempted to propose a better way to deal with these items in the process of translation.

## 3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The current research examined the following research questions;

Q1. What strategies have been used by the translators in rendering foreignization and domestication?

Q2. What is the frequency of each strategy?

Q3. What are the strong and weak points of the translations regarding foreignization and domestication?


## 4. RELATED EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Culturally specific items in translation process have been viewed and analyzed from different points of view. Leskovar (2003), as an example, applied the domestication vs. foreignization dichotomy to the translation style of American prose for Slovenian children. In doing so, he chose some American novels which had been translated into Slovenian language and which were still popular to them. What he found was that most translated books into Slovenian had more been domesticated rather than been foreignized which was more or less due to the explanations and introductions that the translators had added to the books in order to explain and clarify unfamiliar and nebulous cultural references. He also found out that some translators took more steps and related the themes of the source text(s) into the ones which were more familiar to the Slovenian language. In another related research, Validashti (2008) investigated domestication and foreignization dichotomy in five novels of the Harry Potter series and their translated versions into Farsi. The researcher came to this conclusion that while 77.5% of the procedures had been domesticated, only in 22.5% of the procedures foreignization strategy had been applied.

Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoohi (2009) analyzed domestication and foreignization in 6 books of Hemingway, the American well-known writer. They found out, in their study that within the time range from 1950s up to 2000

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domestication strategy was the preponderant one. In investigating their corpus, they found out that in most of the cases the domestication strategy was the only one which was favored by the translators.

In order to analyze CSIs in translation process, Akef and Vakili (2010) conducted a case study and qualitative research. Their case study included the Iranian well-known novel "Savushun". In their research, they were to identify and contrast the CSIs in two Persian translations of Savushun into English. What they could prove and show was that while one of the translators had resorted to extra textual gloss as the main translation strategy, the other translator had used linguistic (non-cultural) translation as the mostly used strategy in translating CSIs. Machali (2012) did a research on cases of domestication and foreignization in the translation of Indonesian poetry into English. In doing so, he examined how cultural translations were correlated with such notions as domestication, foreignization and power. Furthermore, translation cases involving Indonesian-English languages were examined in the light of this correlation. The findings of his study demonstrated that the translation strategies employed by the translator reflect his/her interpretation that dictated the translation process. In other words, he proved that when the cultural elements were regarded as foreign, the translator tended to use the domestication strategy. On the other hand, when the foreign elements were related to a known or obscure genre, the translator tried to use the foreignization strategy. Besides, he showed that both strategies represent the translator's power to manipulate the original text and realize it in the translation. In a parallel study, Pralas (2012) explored domestication and foreignization strategies of the French CSIs in translating Julian Barnes's Flaubert Parrot. He concluded that in most items, the translator used foreignization strategy quite more than domestication one and thus he was visible in translation process. In another research Sharifabad, Yaqubi and Mahadi (2013) investigated the dichotomy of foreignization vs. domestication

in phrasal verbs translation. They found out that translators tended to domesticate the phrasal verbs in news texts and foreignization was not favored by them. Schmidt (2013) ran a research on foreignization and domestication in three Croatian translations of Oscar Wilde's novel "The Picture of Dorian Gray". His study identified the translation strategies that may be termed as foreignising or domesticating. In doing so, he compared three translations in order to see to what extent those strategies were used in the different translations and whether there was any diachronic change among them or not? What he found was that foreignization was the strategy which was used more than domestication in three translations. He also found that within a course of time there seemed an orientation towards domestication. Siregar, Sinar, Lubis and Muchtar (2015) found out that in the process of translation, domestication was the most used strategy used in translating culture- specific items. In their research, they investigated and analyzed both translation strategies, i.e. domestication and foreignization in "The 8th Habit" novel. Sobhan and Ketabi (2015), also, explored domestication and foreignization in a case study-research. They applied this dichotomy to investigate translating culture-specific items in "Shazdeh Ehtejab" novel. What the found was that domestication with 82% was the major strategy which was applied in translating CSIs.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

The present project was descriptive and qualitative. Qualitative research can lead to conclusions about what is possible, what can happen, or what can happen at least sometimes; it does not allow conclusions about what is probable, general, or universal (Williams & Chesterman 2002). However, Descriptive research is a subset of empirical research that "seeks new data, new information derived from the observation of data and form experimental work. As mentioned above, this study was a qualitative and descriptive corpus-based

research and the objectives are, analyzing of a Persian translation, with discovering the frequent strategies. After categorizing the items based on Venuti's model, the frequencies of each strategy were indicated by SPSS software**.**The choice of data collection procedures and preferred methods of analyses depend upon the phenomena under investigation, the questions that are asked and the contexts within which the phenomena exist (Nelson et al. 2009). As mentioned in the previous part, data were collected from the English book "Alice in Wonderland" and its Persian translations. The theoretical framework of the study was based on Venuti's model. After deciding on the corpus of the study, the researcher started to gather the data. In the first stage, the researcher read the English novel line by line carefully to extract and underline the cultural translation strategies. In the second stage, the Persian translations read in the same manner by her. Then, the researcher underlined the equivalent strategies by two translators (Roya Pirzad and Hasan Honarmandi) in rendering foreignization and domestication for comparing. Eventually, the researcher wrote all the related items of the English book and its Persian translations. Analysis involves working with data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others (Zikmund, 2000).

## 6. FINDINGS
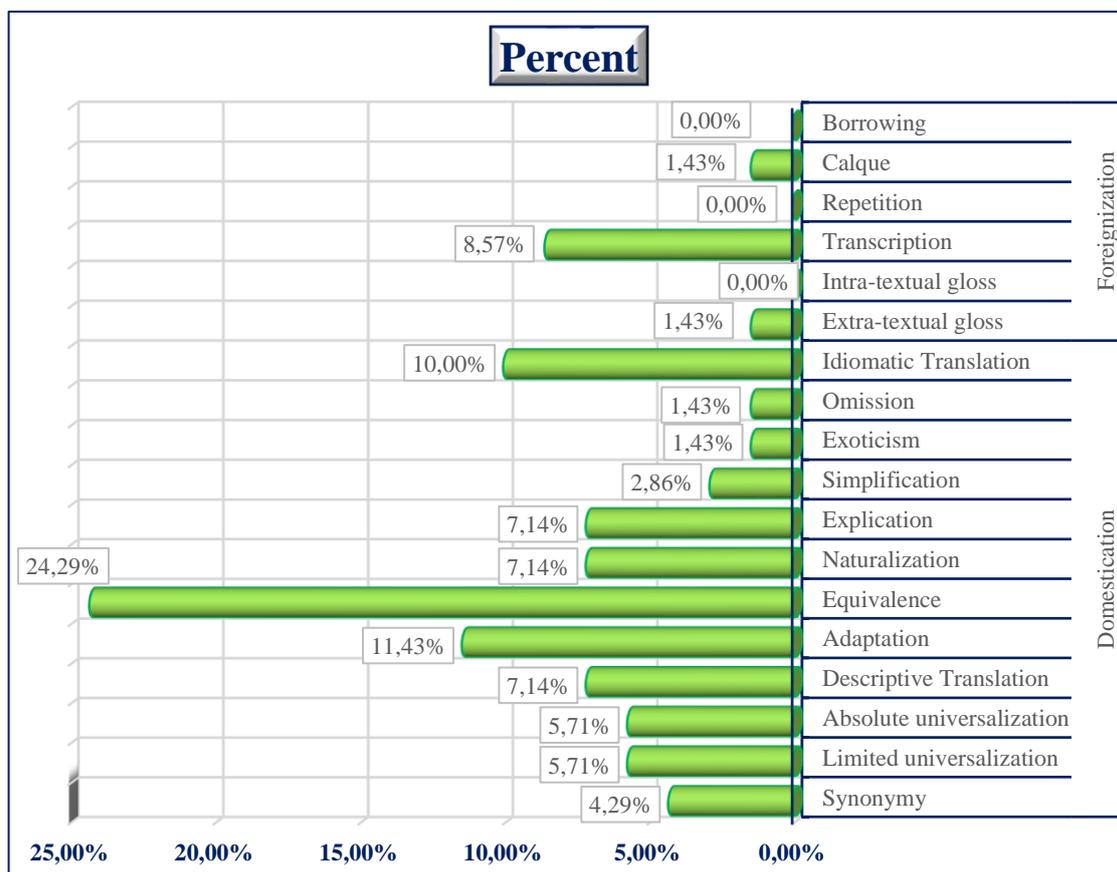


**Diagram 1. Frequency of Translation Strategies in Pirzad's Translation**

As the above diagram illustrated, "equivalence" was the most frequent strategy of domestication category (24.29%). After that, 11.43% dedicated to "adaptation", and 10% to "idiomatic translation" strategy. Moreover, "naturalization", "explication", "descriptive translation" received the same percentage (7.14 %,), and also "limited universalization" and "absolute universalization" got the same percentage (5.71%). In addition, "omission" and "explication" in domestication category, and "extra-textual gloss" and "calque" strategies of foreignization category represented the same percentage (1.43%). As it is clear, "repetition", "intra-textual gloss", and "borrowing" received no frequency.
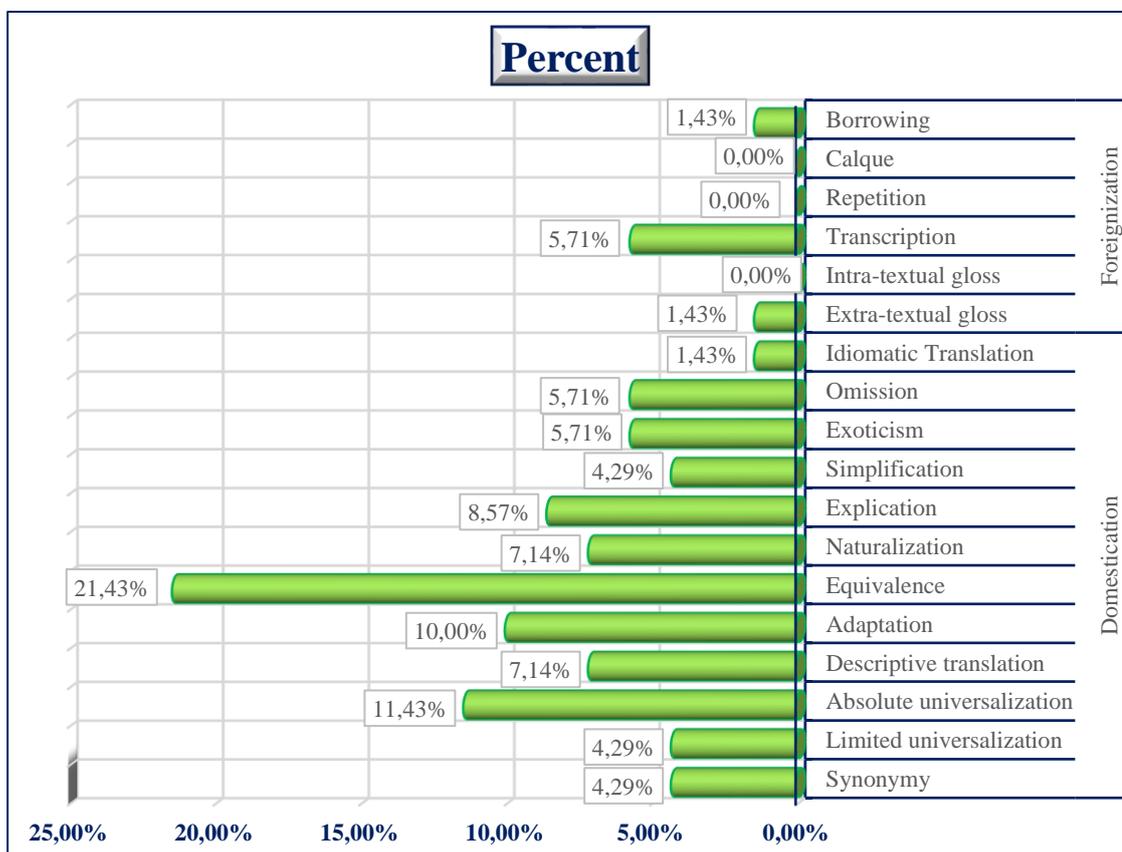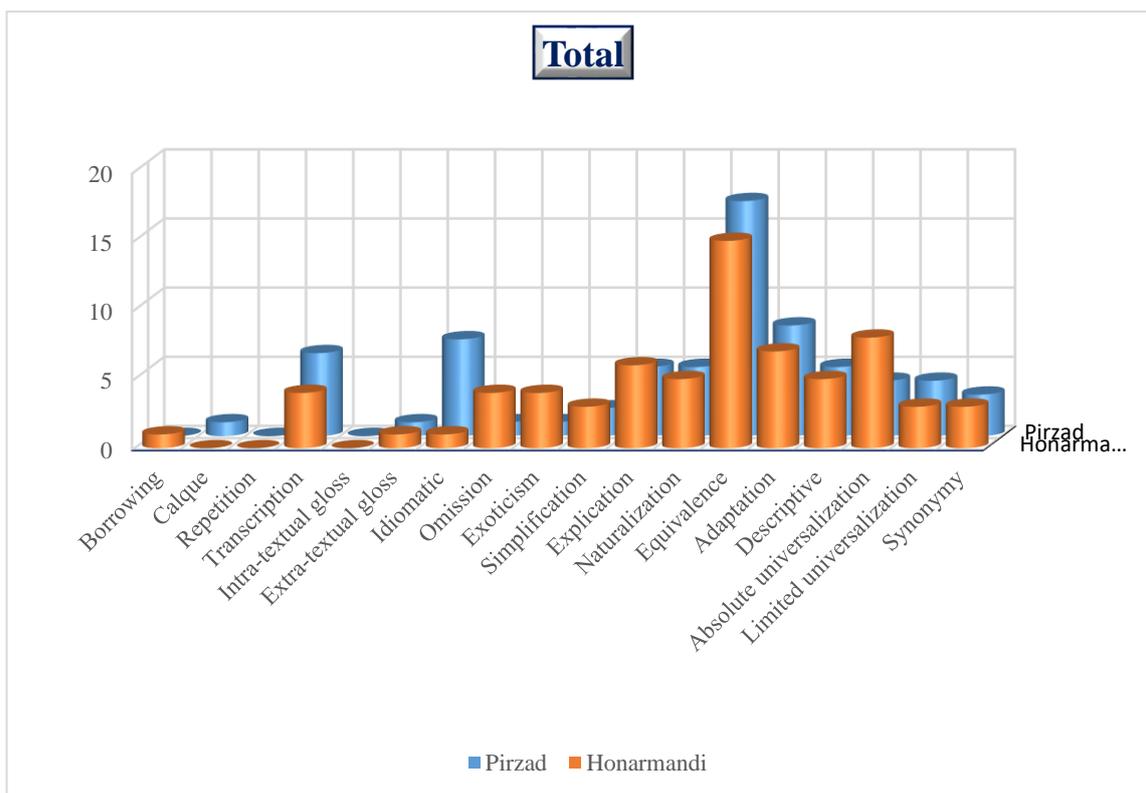
**Diagram 2. Frequency of Translation Strategies in Honarmandi's Translation**

The careful analysis of strategies was done in Honarmandi translation. The results of the above diagram indicated that "equivalence" was the most frequent strategy in the mentioned translation (21.43%). Then, "absolute universalization" and "adaptation" strategies of domestication indicated 11.43% and 10% respectively. "Descriptive translation" and "naturalization" received the same percentage (7.14%), and also "Exoticism", "omission", and "transcription" got the same percentage (5.71%). Furthermore, "limited universalization" and "synonymy" reported the same percentage (4.29%), and "idiomatic translation", "extra-textual gloss", and "borrowing" in foreignization category placed in the last rank (1.43%). however, "intra-textual gloss", "repetition", and "calque" have not been used at all .

## 7. Comparative Analysis

Total



**Diagram 3. Frequency of Each Strategy in T1 and T2**

Diagram .3 compares the frequency of each strategy in T1 and T2. Pirzad's translation has recorded the highest number in application of equivalence strategy. Using Synonymy, Limited universalization, Descriptive, Adaptation, Naturalization, Explication and Simplification methods under domestication translation are equally the same in the two translations. However, Honamandi's translation used the strategies of Exoticism and Omission, 4 times, while the other transition applied it just once. On the other side, Pirzad used Idiomatic translation in 7 cases, while the other translation applied it just once. The methods under Foreignization translation are equally the same in the two translations.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This study tried to investigate the translation of strategies of foreignization and domestication in the mentioned novel and parallel Persian translations based on Venuti's model. After analyzing the data, it has been concluded that "Borrowing" and "Repetition" have not been used at all by translators. However, the most frequent strategy in translating foreignization and domestication was related to "Equivalence" strategy which seemed to be applied due to finding the cases where languages describe the same situation by different stylistic or structural means. The least frequent strategy were "Extra-textual gloss", "Calque", and "Borrowing" applied very rarely, just in one case. By comparing the procedures of domestication, "Equivalence" found more than others that shows cases where languages describe the same situation by different stylistic or structural means. Therefore, when translator attempts to translate the mentioned categories (foreignization and domestication) he/she has to try to find the best correspondences for cultural translation strategies in order to create a translation as acceptable, natural and familiar as the source text.

The result of this study are in line with the Haddawy (2010) that achieved equivalence in translating *"The Arabian Nights*" by preserving the cultural heritage of the classical collection through maintaining the Islamic sense and effect in content and meaning, whereas avoiding strangeness and distasteful structure by reforming these cultural and religious concepts in a familiar form easy for the reader to understand. Thiscombination of foreignization in content and domestication in form is accomplished through his successful method of semantic building blocks. In the recent studies, which of the two translating strategies should be chosen evokes a heated and endless. Many translation scholars tried to find out new perspectives to redefine the

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relation between foreignization and domestication. People who advocated foreignization believed that, as a means of cultural communication, translation should introduce foreign culture and exoticness to target readers, meanwhile taking in new expressions. On the contrary, people who prefer domestication argued that translation should help overcome not only language barrier, but also cultural conflict. For them, the task of a translator is to avoid cultural conflict, and domesticating translation can help readers understand the source text better and finally reach the goal of cultural communication (Suo, 2015). Scholars of these two opposite schools can't convince each other, because they regard these two strategies as water and fire, and believe that they can never coexist harmoniously in translation. In order to solve the endless debate over domestication and foreignization, we need a new perspective generally applicable to all types of translations across different cultures, so that discussions about the strategies can be based on the same level and meaningless arguments can be avoided. From the angle of Skopos of translation, functionalist approaches provide us a new perspective. And only in this way can cultural communication and transplantation go on smoothly and successfully (Suo, 2015).

In one word, from the viewpoint of functionalist, domestication and forignization have different functions in target language culture. A translator can adopt either or both of them in order to achieve the prospective functions. Both strategies have their positive points as well as the negative ones. The relationship between foreignization and domestication is in fact dialectical and complementary. Overemphasizing domestication or foreignization is unscientific and one-sided. We should take a dynamic view to determine which strategy we should use in a translation. There is no point to say that one strategy is better than the other, so long as they can serve the intended function of the text in the target language, each of them has its role in translation. A good translator should use domestication and foreignization properly. In a nutshell,

this study tried to provide a new perspective of looking at the issue of translation strategies, to enhance translation critic's awareness of assessing a translated version by examining whether the translator's choice of a certain strategy fulfils his purpose, and also to enhance the translator's awareness of the importance of consistency in translation strategy. The researcher hopes the present project can be of a little help to the future research in the field of translation.

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