

A Comparative Study of the Characteristics of Domestication and Foreignization in the Sinhalese First Translation and the Retranslation of Chinua Achebe's 'No Longer at Ease'

NM Wijebandara#, JAM Hansani

Department of Languages, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

#nethmiewijebandara@gmail.com

Abstract: 'Retranslation' is a new-born concept still under the research process, which has a number of research gaps to be fulfilled. The most curious part is that the latter is still in hypothetical form, which implies that it needs to be tested furthermore until it reaches towards a theoretical concept. Presently researchers are trying hard to determine the reasons behind this hypothesis and its features globally but not yet in the Sri Lankan context. Domestication and foreignization are such features which have been addressed by researchers as determining features in retranslation within the foreign context. The present study aims at identifying the contrasting features in the two concepts, examine the situations where these two strategies have been used in texts and also the contrasting effect that the first translation and the retranslation have produced towards readership. In the methodology, the study was based on selected extracts from the Source Text (ST) and their corresponding first translation and retranslation. Samples were selected under purposive sampling technique and were qualitatively analysed with content analysis by employing descriptive-comparative analysis method. The major difference in the translated texts were marked and analysed. The data analysis has confirmed major characteristics regarding culture specific terms, vocabulary, style, sentence structure, literal translation, free translation, readability, and extent of faithfulness. The research concludes with a distinguished margin between

foreignization and domestication in the selected two translations that the first translation has reduced the otherness while the retranslation has embraced the foreignness of the ST.

Keywords: Characteristics, Domestication, Foreignization, Source Text (ST), Retranslation

Introduction

At the present age 'Translation' is not a strange concept, but retranslation is worth defining in the local context since the scenario already exists although the theoretical concepts are somewhat alien in the academic research. Newmark (1988) states translation is about "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text." Therefore, there is a question that if a translator has focused on rendering what author has intended in the text then why do the readership need 'Retranslations' of the same source text? The process of retranslation occurs due to various reasons and also various studies have proved significant features about retranslation throughout the evolution of versions of translation. When the process of retranslation is considered, it is about translating the same source text into the target language for multiple times by different authors. According to Koskinen and Paloposki (2010) "retranslation (as a product) denotes a second or later translation of a single source text into the same target language and when

retranslation (as a process) is thus prototypically a phenomenon that occurs over a period of time, but in practice, simultaneous or near-simultaneous translations also exist, and retranslations can occur over a period of time and also simultaneously." The retranslation concept marks its origin with the introduction of 'Retranslation Hypotheses' (RH) by in 1990's. Bensimon and Bermon were the scholars who pioneered in introducing the 'Retranslation Hypothesis (RH). Paul Bensimon was the first theorist to state about the hypotheses among the two translations and further has claimed that there are significant differences and features between the first translation and retranslations.

First translations, according to Bensimon (cited in Koskinen and Paloposki 2001), are often' "naturalizations" of the foreign works and that they are "introductions", seeking to integrate one culture into another, to ensure positive reception of the work in the target culture and also later translations of the same originals do not need to address the issue of introducing the text: they can, instead, maintain the cultural distance.' As Bermon states, (cited in Koskinen and Paloposki 2001), 'the first translation always tends to be more assimilating, tends to reduce the otherness in the name of cultural or editorial requirements, the retranslation, in this perspective, would mark a return to the source-text, emphasis in the text.' This assimilating quality and the otherness tend to produce 'Domesticating' and 'Foreignizing' translations, the two terms were coined by Lawrence Venuti in 1995. As Lawrence Venuti distinguishes the two translation strategies, the translator can either bring the author closer to the reader (Domestication) or the reader closer to the author (Foreignization). As Venuti mentions, domestication is a translation strategy which uses 'a transparent, fluent,

'invisible' style in order to minimize the foreignness and strangeness of the target text' (cited in Munday 2008, p. 144). Foreignization, on the other hand, according to Venuti, 'entails choosing a foreign text and developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language.' (Venuti, cited in Munday 2008). He also states that domestication involves 'an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values,' (Venuti 1995, p.20) where the process makes the translator invisible due to the translated text is read like an original with a promising readability and also where the foreignization performs as its opposite.

Chinua Achebe is an award winning Nigerian novelist whose author profile starts from the publication of his trilogy including three novels namely '*Things Fall Apart*' (1958), '*No Longer at Ease*' (1960) and '*Arrow of God*' (1964). He is considered as the father of African literature. Since his works appeared in the postcolonial periods the stories he has written were based on the identity crisis back at the time of ruling period of British in Africa during the colonisation period. His works are a result of this chaotic time where Africans were experiencing a transitional period. Clash of identity and falling apart of culture are portrayed vividly in Achebe's trilogy. This particular study's storyline is based on the colonialism in the British period in Nigeria, Africa. In 1974, the first Sinhalese translation of '*No Longer at Ease*' as zneoafoka isodĒhgZ, (*Badden Sidādiyata*) was done by P. R. H. Wijesinghe. The second retranslation done by Gamini Viyangoda and was published as zysre nei .sh miqZ (*Hiru Bāsa Giya Pasu*) in 1999. Then the third retranslation was done by Seelawathie Manike Piyasena as zlud l<uek iñ÷ksZ (*Kamā Kaḷamāna Saminduni*) in 2008. The present study is based on the

first translation and the first retranslation of the source.

Since these features are described based on foreign text, it is crucial to study the characteristics behind domesticating and foreignizing in the local context by connecting to retranslation. Up to now no studies have been done regarding retranslation and also about the characteristics of the two terms locally. Retranslation is still new since the boom in the research studies was started within last five to ten years. At present scholars are interested to research extensively about retranslation due to its contrastive features and also because still it is under-researched and under-discussed area of study. Therefore, this study aims at addressing the research question of what are the characteristics of 'Domestication' and 'Foreignization' and compare which translation is more domesticating or foreignizing. The main objectives are to examine domestication and foreignization characteristics practically and identify translation strategies used within the local context and also to investigate the instances where the domestication and foreignization strategies have been used in the translated texts. The present study will also test what is being said in the RH and how much it is valid and will make an effort to relate RH to the Sri Lankan context.

Methodology

Qualitative techniques like content analysis and comparison was used to analyse the texts. Data collecting was done primarily and secondarily. Under primary data ST (Source Text) - *'No Longer at Ease'*, TT1 (Target Text 1) - *zneafoka isodÈhgZ, (Badden Sidādiyata)*, and TT2 (Target Text 2) - *zysre nei .sh miqZ (Hiru Bāsa Giya Pasu)* were used. Samples were selected from the first chapter in all three text in order to explain the concepts within a narrow frame. As secondary data journal articles,

textbooks, magazines, reports were used. Descriptive-comparative analysis method was used to analyse the data. The content analysis method was employed for the explanation of the research problem. Examples was selected by purposive sampling technique, where the researcher read the chapter thoroughly and mark significant and seeming differences as the first step and analyse the collected extracts to identify the strategies and features of domestication and foreignization.

Results and Discussions

The two translations display a significant difference in translating cultural specific vocabulary. In the following examples the TT1 has replaced ST word 'Palm Wine' and 'Pot of Stew' with —**rd mSmam**;a~ and —**uia yÜáhla**~ respectively by adopting to the local cultural setting, while the translator in TT2 has borrowed the foreign words into the target text and rendered keeping the foreignness just as it was in the ST and translated as —**jhska mSmam**~ and —**biagq we;s<shla**~ respectively.

ST - "Two stalwarts emerged from the kitchen area...a simmering **pot of stew** hot from the fire. Kegs of **palm wine** followed, and a pile of plates and spoons...."

TT1 - yeäoeä fokafkla""Wkq Wkqfö yï odk **uia yÜáhla** ,sfmka Wiaidf.k wdjd' **rd mSmam**;a""yeç ms.ka f;d.hl=;a f.kdj'

TT2 - úYd, n;a uqÜáhla Tijd""**biagq we;s<shla** Tijdf.k wdfjdah' l=vd **jhska mSmam**"";snQ ms.ka iy yeç rdYshlao bka miq Yd,djg iemhqfKah'

The following example shows how literal or word-to-word translation will lead to lack of comprehension. TT1 has employed free translation where TT2 has translated the sentence literally without expressing its meaning. TT1 in the text has accompanied the reader with a footnote explaining the story behind the expression which is unique to African culture and communities.

ST - "Whenever Mr. Justice William Galloway, Judge of the High Court of Lagos and the Southern Cameroons, looked at a victim he fixed him with his gaze as a collector **fixes his insect with formalin. He lowered his head like a charging ram...**"

TT1 - —, f,af.daia by< Widúfha;a" ol=Kq leurEkaj,;aZ kvq úi|k ú,shī .ef,dafō kvqldr yduqyrefjd Widúfha hful= Èyd ne,au fy,kjd' ta ne,au **ovhug f.dýrejpk IDñfhl=g fkdie,S bkak" .,a .eyS bkak msīn úi jdhqjla jf.hs**~

TT2- —f,af.daia iy ol=KqÈ. Leureka uydêlrK úksYaphldr ú,shī .ef,dafō lsishī jrolrej|= foi ne'fō lSg úoHd{hl= **f*dau,ska ;=< laIqō Ôúhl= r|jkakdla fuks'**~

The following extract is also the same that TT1 has translated from sense-to-sense and has been able to achieve a good expression rather than the TT2 which has been literally translated. —ug f;afrkafk kE Th ydohd Th jefâg **fudlg w; .eyeōjo lsh,**~ is more expressive than —ug kx ys;d.kak neye ñksyd **wehs Tfydu lf<a lsh,d'**~ The words and expressions in TT1 are more familiar to the readership where the same extracts in TT2 is somewhat alien which means the readers identify it as a raw translation. — **fyd| yeá ys;,d u;,d'** is more natural and colloquial than —**l,amkdfō ksu.akj'**, in which the expression is formal.

ST - "I cannot understand why he did it," said the British Council man thoughtfully. He was drawing lines of water with his finger on the back of his mist-covered glass of ice-cold beer."

TT1 - —ug f;afrkafk kE Th ydohd Th jefâg **fudlg w; .eyeōjo lsh,**"Z ì%;dkH ;dkdm;s ld¾hd,fha fiajlhd **fyd| yeá ys;,d u;,d** lsōjd' Tyq iS;, îr ùyrej msg me;af;a weŌs,af,ka Èh i,l=Kq weka|d'~

TT2 - — zug kx ys;d.kak neye ñksyd **wehs Tfydu lf<a lsh,d'**Z **l,amkdfō ksu.akj** isá ì%;dkH ljqkais,fha ks,Odβhd lSh' YS; îr ùyrej

jfŪg ne£ ;snQ yqud,h u; Tyq ish weŌs,af,ka j;=r bβ wçñka isáfha h'~

The following extract is a pure African expression unique to Nigerians. TT1 has achieved a natural narrative style with interesting choice of words adopting to local context. Replacing the ST with the words like —**jβf. tldg**~ and —**jβf. we;af;la**~. Further the exact sentence structure has not been followed by the translator, instead the expression has more natural taste than TT2. The translator of TT2 being faithful to the ST considering its sentence structure, form and style, has followed ST features as a whole. The contradiction between the two translation is that TT1 has an indigenous touch and adopted into the Sri Lankan dialect with the use of specific words related to Vedda people. Therefore, the readership feel the text close to the own culture than the foreign thoughts.

ST - "For, as the President pointed out, a kinsman in trouble had to be saved, not blamed; **anger against a brother was felt in the flesh, not in the bone.**"

TT1 - —wk;=f¾ jeáÉp **jβf. tldg** fodia lsh lsh bkak tlhe yβ''''**jβf. we;af;la tlal fkdalaldvq fjkkak 'k u;=msáka' ta fkdfyd| fkdalaldvq f,a uia úof.k weglgqj,g ls|d nyskak 'kehe'**~

TT2 - —ukaoh;a" iNdm;s;=ud fmkajd ýka mBÈ" ;ukaf.a **f.da;s%lfhl=** wudrefō jegqKq úg Tyq thska f.dv.ekSu ñi" l< hq;af;a Tyqg nek jeşu fkdjk neúks' **ifydaorfhl=g tfrys fldamh uig oekqK;a weg ñý¿j,g oeksh hq;= fkdfo'**~

In the following extract TT1 projects a unique narrative style polished with the help of additions and omissions. TT2 has achieved a faithful translation by following the sentence structure of the original. The TT2 conversion —**eyeng fydg mdkjg ls|s<sg foia ;shkak'**~ has become an improvised rendition and has got rid of word-to-word rendition of the expression.

ST - "The fox must be chased away first; after that the hen might be **warned** against **wandering into the bush.**"

TT1 - —ydydmqrd lsh,d "yqnøkak 'fk isÖd,hdjhs' fojkqj neßhehs ,eyeng fydg mdkjg ls<sg foia ;shkak"~

TT2 - uq,skau kbhd m,jd yeßh hq;=hs' m÷rla m÷rla .dfka ßx.kafk ke;=j mfriaifuka bkakd f,i fojkqj ls<shg wjjdo l< yelsh'

The following extract clearly displays how TT1 is being creative with a rhythmical style than of literal or word-to-word rendition. TT1 reader does not feel it as a translation as it supports a fluent reading and successfully rendered the ST effect on target readers. The prayer 'Amen' has been omitted and replaced with —**tfyuhs tfyuhs**~ to reduce the strangeness adopting to the thoughts of the readership during the specific time period of the publication. At present 'Amen' is not a strange word and TT2 the latest translation has used the same word without any alteration.

ST - "He that brings kola nuts brings life," he said. "We do not seek to hurt any man, but if any man seeks to hurt us may he break his neck." **Amen**

TT1 - zflda,d f.fkkakd wdhq jvkakd" wmf.ka ldgj;a w;jrhla keye' wmg;a ta jf.a wjysrhla keye' w;jrlrejka f., is| .ks,a,d'Z **tfyuhs tfyuhs**

TT2 - zflda,d weg wrf.k tkfldg Ôúf;ao wrf.k tkjd' wms lsis flfkl=g ßoakak n,kafk keye' ta;a ljqreyß wmsg ßoakak n,kjd kx Wf. fn,a,u leä,d m,hka'Z **wdfuka**

This extract provides the example that TT1 being adhering to the colloquial usage of terms than direct translation of the words. The TT2 translation is being loyal to the content of the ST. TT1 renditions —**l;sfiaie uy;a;fhla**~ is a local term used by the Sri Lankan people and —**le;slsiaujdosfhl**=~ in TT2 is the exact term for '**catechist**'.

ST - Being a Christian convert—in fact a catechist—he could not marry a second

wife. But he was not the kind of man who carried his sorrow on his face.

TT1- ls;= oyu je<|f.k **l;sfiaie uy;a;fhla** fjÉp Tyqg fojeks ißhla ldr ne|.kak bvla ,enqfK keye' ta jqk;a ys;a ;ejq,a t<smg olajkafkla fkdjhsfk Tyq'

TT2 - ls%ia;shdks wd.ug yereKq flfkl=jYfhka" i;a;lskau **le;slsiaujdosfhl=jYfhka**" Tyqg fojeks újdyhla lr.; fkdysls úh' tfy;a Tyq jQ l,s ish ukia;dmh uqyqKska m< l< mqoa.,fhl= fkdùh'

Following extract provides the instance where TT1 has omitted religious reference '**blood of the Lamb of God**' to avoid the reader from strangeness. TT2 has literally translated the sentence without hindering its foreignness to provide the reader with each and every information in the ST. Further TT2 has followed the sentence structure of the ST.

ST - "Umuofia would have required of you to fight in her wars and bring home human heads. But those were days of darkness from which we have been delivered by the **blood of the Lamb** of God.

TT1 - —biair ldf, tfyu kx fi .eghd 'kE fjkafk ygka jeÈ,d **ysl=ka iu** fy<, Wkafk T' f.ä .ug f.akakhs' ta w÷re hqf.afk' **foúhka jykafiaf.a msysfgkqhs wms ta w÷re hqf.ka ñyfk**~

TT2 - —biair kx fi jf.a .egfhla Wfuda*shd m<d;g 'k lf<a hqoafog .sys,a,d ñksia T' wrf.k tkak' ta;a ta wkaOldfrka wms wo ksoyia fj,d ;ssfkhjd' **foúhka jykafiaf.a neg; fmda;lhd.f a,f,aj,g msx isoaO fjkak wo wms fi <uhdj hjkafka oekqu wrf.k tkak'**

Conclusion

According to extracts, domestication and foreignization provide clear cut contrasting features. One can point out and differentiate translations and their qualities easily. As the RH denotes that first

translations are more domesticating than retranslations, the present study also supports the hypotheses and showed results partial to the concept. When concerned about the features of domestication, the translator has used dialectal words and vocabulary to imply the reader that they are reading a true piece of writing without letting them to feel strange. TT1 translator has attempted to translate the text minimizing the strangeness by omitting culture specific terms, religious connotations to avoid the reader from miscomprehensions. It was common to see slight omissions and additions when adopting to the target culture. Most importantly the translator has focused mainly on free or sense-for-sense translation than following the exact sentence structure of the rendition of exact equivalent in to target language with the help of a creative narrative style. Foreignization on the other hand completely takes the opposite direction. This strategy is completely faithful to the ST and the translator has tried to follow the exact content, style, form, sentence structure strictly just as in the ST and to render it to the target language. Sometimes too much foreignness has resulted in inability to understand the meaning since the translator has been too much literal during the rendition. At some instances translator has tried to be moderate while adhering to colloquial terms in the target audience. But as a whole TT2 has kept the faithfulness to the utmost level. TT1 is difficult to identify whether it is a translation or not as it keeps the translator invisible and thus it is naturally read like an original work. In TT2, as it kept the foreignness and faithfulness towards content the readers can identify that it is a translation, as it has tried to translate foreign cultural elements and has kept the translator visible. No omissions and additions were not to be seen in the TT2 text but the loyalty and faithfulness

throughout by translating each and every detail in the ST. Translators could also adopt a moderate combination of these two strategies which will lead to a successful translation in all aspect since too much foreignness will cause problems in comprehension and adequacy and too much domestication will certainly question about faithfulness.

References

- Allan, K (ed.) 2016, *Routledge Handbook of Linguistics*, Routledge, London.
- Baker, M 2008, *In Other Words*, 3rd edn, Routledge, New York.
- Baker, M, & Saldanha, G (ed.) 2020, *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies*, 3rd edn, Routledge, London.
- Catford, J. 1965, *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, Oxford University Press, London.
- Hanna, S. 2016, *Bourdieu in Translation Studies: The Socio-cultural Dynamics of Shakespeare Translation in Egypt* (pp.128-165). New York: Routledge.
- Koskinen, K, & Paloposki, O (ed.) 2001, 'A thousand and one translations: Revisiting retranslation' in *Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies*, pp. 27-38, John Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Koskinen, K, & Paloposki, O (ed.) 2010, 'Retranslation' in *Handbook of Translation Studies*, pp. 294-298, John Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Munday, J. 2008, *Introducing Translation Studies*. 2nd edn, Routledge, New York.
- Newmark, P. 1988, *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall, New York.
- Nord, C. 1997, *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained*. St Jerome Publishing Company, Manchester.

StudyMoose. 2016 *Domestication and Foreignization in Translation*. [Online]. Available at: <https://studymoose.com/domestication-and-foreignization-in-translation-essay> [Accessed: 27 Jul. 2020]

Sunday Times. 2013, He Introduced Achebe to Sri Lankan Readers. *Pressreader*. 1 September, viewed 27 July 2020,

<<https://www.pressreader.com/sri-lanka/sunday-times-sri-lanka/20130901/282991102569058>>.

Taylor & Francis. 2020. *Retranslation: Literature and Reinterpretation*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14781700.2015.1075417>> [Accessed 26 July 2020].