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Balancing Cultural Adaptation and Fidelity in Kachachi's 'The American Granddaughter' using Venuti's Dichotomy

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores selected excerpts from the translated version of Iraqi novelist Inaam Kachachi's novel *Al-Hafeeda Al-Amerkiyya*, which was translated into English as *The American Granddaughter*, in terms of its description of culturally specific references that were translated into English and evaluated from the perspective of Lawrence Venuti's dichotomy of foreignization and domestication (1995). This study employs a qualitative-analytical approach, focusing on the conceptual dichotomy of foreignization/domestication proposed by Venuti (1995). The analysis focuses on selected references to culturally specific vocabulary and social contexts, with Venuti's concepts of foreignization and domestication serving as the key analytical framework. The findings demonstrate that translation primarily utilizes domestication, referring to culturally specific elements that should be comprehensible to the target readers, while foreignization is maintained through elements that highlight cultural identity and Iraqi socio-cultural meanings. The research highlights the importance of assigning such culturally rich texts to translators who possess a profound aptitude in language and knowledge about a particular culture, and ensures that the target audience can gauge not only the authenticity of the narrative but also the intended readability.

KEYWORD: Inaam Kachachi; Foreignization; Domestication; The American Granddaughter; Cultural references.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Literary translation has a central role when it comes to bridging cultural divides, but when translating into another language, it is usually surrounded by the challenge of delivering culturally specific references without losing the meaning or resonance intended. The case of Kachachi's *The American Granddaughter* is firmly immersed in the Iraqi sociopolitical background, and it has many such difficulties, namely, its application of the Iraqi dialect and culturally specific terminology. Under the concepts of foreignization and domestication as presented by Lawrence Venuti (1995), the paper analyzes the aspect of a cultural component in its rendering to English, as well as the repercussions of translation strategy as pertaining to maintaining authenticity but making the work accessible to the intended audience.

Any theory of translation deals with ways of changing the original text, the semantic and stylistic characteristics it contains, defining the purpose of translation, and the means of understanding achieved for the occurrence of communication, and that these questions take place within the framework of the whole phrase and not the singular utterance [1].

Catford (1965) suggested that the theory of translation must be based on a theory of meaning, and without such a theory, several specific and important aspects of the translation process remain indisputable. He put translation into two levels: linguistic level, and the expressive level. Pointing out that the linguistic level deals with the meaning in all components of the text, and this includes the sound, the letter, the word and the sentence, and he concluded that translation lies between two basic