

Studying Students' Skill in Domesticating Translations from English into Arabic

Prof. Dr. Kadhim K. Al-Ali

kadhim.khalaf@uobasrah.edu.iq

Ahmed Fakhir Majeed

Ahmedmajeed@uobasrah.edu.iq

Abdullah Najim Abdullah

njmmurtadha@gmail.com

University of Basrah / College of Arts/ Department of Translation

Abstract

The present study explores the skill of advanced students of translation (third-year students) at the University of Basrah / College of Arts/ Department of Translation in domesticating translations from English into Arabic. The study benefits from the longstanding controversy in translation studies concerning domestication and foreignizing strategies. Starting with Schleiermacher's (1813/1992) delineation of "moving the reader towards the author" (foreignizing) versus "moving the author towards the reader" (domesticating), later adopted and reformulated by Venuti (1995), it situates its students' practices in this theoretical framework of strategies. Whereas foreignization has the effect of the source culture remaining foreign and distant, domestication allows the target language to influence the translated text, so it resembles the linguistic and cultural norms of the target culture. The study is structured around two questions: what strategy do students prefer when presented with a choice between domestication and foreignization? And how competent are they in applying domestication as a translation strategy? To answer these questions, the methodology employs two-steps instrument. In the first step, a questionnaire presents participants with examples of source and target sentences- one domesticated and the other foreignized- allowing students to indicate their preference. However, the second step is that a translation task is being given to the same (25) students, in which they are required to translate domestically into Arabic language. After that, the outcomes of their translation are going to be evaluated via a rubric-based assessment, in which fluency, cultural adaptation and lexical appropriateness are considered and this is done by following the frameworks suggested by Williams (2013) and Waddington (2001). There is mixed method is used in the data analysis in which a combination of descriptive statistics from questionnaire alongside with qualitative assessment of the sentences that are been translated by the students. The findings are expected to reveal a sharp divergence between students' preferences for the two strategies and their skill and applying domestication. The discussion situates the results within the broader to context of translation pedagogy and cultural mediation in English-Arabic translation, emphasizing the pedagogical importance of raising awareness of translation strategies. The conclusion highlights the implications for translation training programs, particularly the need to balance the theoretical instruction with practice-based assessment

Keywords: Domestication, Foreignization, Culture-bound expressions, domestication skill

Received: 19/11/2025

Accepted: 24/2/2026