



RESEARCH PAPER

A Study of Translator's In/visibility in Manto's Short Stories

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ABSTRACT

The current study is aimed to find out the use of domestication and foreignization strategies in Manto's short stories. Venuti (1995) states that the domestication strategy makes a translator invisible in the process of translation by confirming to target culture values through the extensive use of target text terms for cultural items. On the other hand, the foreignization strategy makes the translator visible by promoting the source culture values by rendering source text terms for cultural items. The current study explores the two short stories i.e. Toba Tek Singh and Khol Do written by Manto and translated into English. The study highlights the issues of cultural translation. The study aims to provide significant insight into the existing literature about the use of domestication and foreignization to promote the translator's visibility in Urdu-English translation. A detailed comparative textual analysis of the aforementioned short stories suggests that the translator uses both strategies for the translation of cultural items. A thorough reading of the short stories suggests that the translator finds cultural equivalents in the target text for less culturally loaded words and employs the domestication strategy, making the translator invisible. However, the translator opts for the foreignization strategy for certain culture-specific terms that are peculiar to the source culture and have no cultural equivalent in the target culture, making himself visible through the rendering of source text items into the target text. The study concludes that the most dominant strategy used for the translation of culture-specific items in Manto's short stories is foreignization which is in line with the framework given by Venuti (1995) promoting the translator's visibility by maintaining the source culture values and rendering source text lexical items into the target text.

KEYWORDS Cultural Translation, Domestication, Foreignization, The Translator's Invisibility

Introduction

Boas (1942) opines that communication through language is as unique as any other human social phenomenon. Language is an integral part of culture, and every culture has a distinct way of expressing emotions and feelings in a particular context. On this trajectory, the interrelatedness of language and culture makes each communicative event idiosyncratic. Such idiosyncrasies portray the values of a particular culture. Larson (1984) believes that culture is a fusion of mutually shared perceptions, beliefs and rituals codified through a particular set of sounds and symbols. Newmark (1981) also supports this idea by considering culture as a materialization of the communal manifestations expressed through language. All these arguments suggest that human communication is complex.

Thus, translation being an extended form of human communication becomes more complex as it makes a trajectory of two different languages based on totally different cultures. This trajectory demands an utmost careful selection of source text equivalents in the target language. At this point, a translator plays an important role as a transportation agent. Venuti (1995) believes that a translator must translate a text carefully by maintaining the source culture values faithfully and making the translator visible in the final product. Keeping in view the aforementioned arguments, the current study explores the translator's in/visibility by the use of domestication and foreignization strategies as propounded by Venuti (1995) in Manto's short stories.

Many translators have translated the short stories of Manto into the English language. The researcher has analyzed two short stories of Manto i.e. *Toba Tek Singh* translated by Khalid Hasaan and *Khol Do* by Alok Bhalla. *Toba Tek Singh's* story takes place during India's 1947 division into India and Pakistan. The heartbreaking and hilarious story explores the human effects of political decisions and the absurdity of national boundaries. The plot focuses on Lahore mental asylum prisoners along the freshly drawn boundary between India and Pakistan. With the division, the authorities deport Hindus and Sikhs to India and Muslims to Pakistan. Sikh Bishan Singh, the asylum's main figure, is a mystery. Bishan Singh refuses to leave the refuge on exchange day and hides on the India-Pakistan border. He insists that Toba Tek Singh, his hometown, is neither India nor Pakistan. The ridiculousness of the divide drives him insane, so he stays in this in-between realm. The narrative powerfully depicts the partition's arbitrariness, senselessness, and human cost. It depicts the suffering, bewilderment, and displacement of many during that turbulent time. Manto's *Toba Tek Singh* is a riveting look at how political decisions affect everyday life and the absurdity of human-made borders. The story *Khol Do* also takes place amid India's brutal 1947 split. The narrative poignantly explores women's trauma and suffering during the partition. Father Sirajuddin and daughter Sakina are the protagonists. The partition separates them from their family and places them in a chaotic refugee camp in Lahore, Pakistan. Given the lawlessness and hazards women face, Sirajuddin worries about his daughter's safety and honor as they try to survive this troubling time. Sakina arrives at the camp hospital with a fever, and Dr. Mengele examines her. Following this, he instructs her to the prostitutes' camp. The women in that camp were subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation. Sirajuddin desperately strives to save his daughter, pleading and offering money to the authorities, but his efforts fail. Witnessing his daughter being taken to the brothel leaves him feeling powerless and depressed. The narrative vividly portrays women's fragility and suffering amid conflict and societal turmoil, highlighting the horrific destiny of partition-era women subjected to sexual abuse and exploitation. *Khol Do* is a poignant story that explores the human cost of political decisions and moral deterioration during times of chaos and bloodshed.

Being the national language of Pakistan, Urdu is one of the widely spoken languages in Pakistan. It is also spoken in India and other parts of the world. The rich literature of Urdu makes it a significant language. A large amount of literary works from Urdu literature are being translated into other languages every year. Being an international and global language, English is one of those languages in which most of the Urdu literary works are translated. There is a great scope for research in Urdu to English translation. Therefore, the current study aims to provide insight into the translation of cultural idiosyncrasies in Urdu into English translation. The current study describes the use of particular translation strategies adopted by the translator to handle culture. It also highlights how a translator becomes in/visible by using specific strategies in the target text.

Literature Review

Cultural translation is a multifaceted and intricate notion that assumes a pivotal role in the domain of translation studies. It is a term utilized to portray the complex procedure of rendering texts or expressions from one culture into another while maintaining and conveying the cultural subtleties, principles, and significances ingrained in the source text. In essence, cultural translation is not merely about linguistic conversion but also about transmitting the broader cultural framework, which encompasses societal, historical, and ideological facets, to ensure the text resonates with the target audience.

Traditionally, translation was considered a mere alteration of concepts and ideas into the target language without focusing on the source language and source language culture. The traditional approaches of translation made translated works a rewriting rather than a visible translation. The cultural turn in translation caused a shift in traditional translation theory (Yan & Huang, (2014). Bassnett and Lefevere (1998) provided a new approach to translation which primarily focuses on the context of the source language culture. They rejected the rigidity of traditional translation theories and argued for a new methodology with a comprehensive and linguistic perspective by incorporating the cultural values of the source language. This claim was further supported by Venuti (1995) in his work *The Translator Invisibility*. Venuti (1995) also agrees that by using traditional translation theories, the translators produce a plethora of commercial writings intended for the target audience written in the target language and contextualized in the target language culture. This traditional approach makes the translator and source culture invisible. He further adds that a faithful translation must portray source culture values by retaining the source language and source culture in the target language. Retaining such elements makes the translator and source culture visible. For this, Venuti (1995) presents the notion of domestication and foreignization. To him, domestication is the most common and traditional strategy used by translators as it mainly confirms the norms the values of the target language culture. The domestication strategy ignores the source language and its culture by simply altering the linguistic units into the target language. He believes that the translators and all affiliated organizations in America and Europe opt domestication strategy due to commercial reasons as they focus on intended audiences only. Venuti (1995) demands an objective approach that must put attention on the visibility of the role of the translator, the source language, and source culture. This approach will make readers feel that they are not reading a mere piece of fiction confirming their native language and its surrounding culture. It will make them realize that the text they are reading is a foreign one that is based on a different and unique culture as compared to their own. He introduces such a strategy as a foreignization strategy. The use of foreignization makes source culture evident by making the translator visible in the target language. Using a foreignization strategy brings out an actual product of translation (Venuti, 1995).

Material and Methods

The theoretical framework of the current study is based on Venuti's (1995) framework given in his seminal work *The Translator's Invisibility*. Venuti (1995) opines that a faithful translation must reflect the values of the source culture. This can be done by preserving the source language and source culture cultural elements in the target text. It will ensure the visibility of the translator. Venuti (1995) introduces two strategies in his work *The Translator's Invisibility*, to address the issue of visibility. Domestication favors the norms and values of the target culture. In this approach, linguistic units are altered from the source language into the target language which ignores the source language and its cultural context. Venuti suggests adopting an objective approach that emphasizes the visibility of the translator by retaining source culture. This approach is called foreignization which prompts readers to feel a foreign and unique culture. The use of this approach highlights the source culture by making the translator. Keeping in view these

points, the researcher has analyzed two short stories of Manto i.e. *Toba Tek Singh* translated by Khalid Hasaan and *Khol Do* by Alok Bhalla. After a careful comparative reading of both the source and target texts of two short stories, the researcher has marked the cultural idiosyncrasies to understand the translator's in/visibility according to Venuti's perspective.

Results and Discussion

Cultural translation is a difficult procedure that preserves the original text while transferring meaning and cultural context. Retaining cultural markers is important in this process. When translating literature or writings with significant cultural links, such cultural markers ensure that the cultural and contextual characteristics of the source text are accurately transmitted in the target language. In a foreignizing translation following Venuti's theory, the cultural words and references must be maintained without alterations, amplifying the foreign culture's distinctiveness. This approach heightens the translator's visibility as they actively retain these cultural elements, making them more apparent to the target audience and emphasizing the foreign nature of the text.

The translator has aptly preserved the source culture in the story *Toba Tek Singh* through the strategy of foreignization. For example, the terms "Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh lunatics" are culturally loaded words. It reveals a deliberate emphasis on preserving cultural elements and the foreign character of the source text. The essence of this translation method is to preserve particular cultural terms and references in their original form, thereby rendering them more prominent in the target culture. In a foreignizing translation, the initial cultural aspect, "Muslim," remains unaltered, underscoring its religious and cultural precision and emphasizing its foreign nature within the target culture. Similarly, the term "Hindu" is another cultural reference that is retained unchanged, preserving its cultural and religious uniqueness. Likewise, "Sikh" remains unaltered, thus accentuating its foreign cultural and religious connotation. The decision to keep these specific cultural terms and references aligns with the foreignization approach, which seeks to enhance the visibility of the foreign culture's elements within the target culture. Consequently, adopting the foreignizing approach results in the translator's presence becoming more prominent in the translation. The deliberate utilization of these cultural phrases and references originating from the source culture serves to highlight the contrasts and uniqueness inherent in the respective cultures. The text's alien nature is emphasized, potentially rendering it more difficult and unfamiliar within the intended cultural context.

The translator has also preserved the term "Zamindar" without alteration, maintaining the precise connection to the source culture. The decision has successfully preserved the foreign cultural aspect while emphasizing the specific cultural setting inside the source culture. As a result, by the utilization of indigenous cultural phrases and references in a foreignizing manner, the translator has emphasized the foreign culture to the intended recipients. The translator's role has become increasingly prominent, since he has deliberately preserved these cultural features, making them more noticeable in the translation and strengthening the foreign nature of the text.

Some other terms are also preserved. The name "Sardarji" is a distinct feature of Sikh culture, frequently employed as a means of addressing Sikh males. In accordance with a foreignizing methodology, the translator has chosen to preserve the term "Sardarji" to maintain the cultural allusion, accentuating its foreign connotation inside the text. "Hindostora" is a term with potentially derogatory implications, often directed at Hindus. In the context of a foreignizing approach, the translator has chosen to keep "Hindostoras" unchanged, thus preserving the cultural reference and potentially highlighting its

derogatory nature, thereby underscoring the foreign cultural context. The phrase "Pakistan Zindabad" is a patriotic slogan that is closely linked to the nation of Pakistan. In accordance with a foreignizing methodology, the translator has chosen to retain the phrase "Pakistan Zindabad" in its original form, without making any modifications, to uphold the cultural reference and emphasize the distinctiveness of this slogan within its foreign context. The use of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the eulogistic title "Quaid-e-Azam" aims to accentuate the foreign flavour of the content by drawing attention to the material's historical and cultural context. When the translator makes the conscious decision to keep these cultural and historical connections intact, the English translation retains more of its original foreign flavour.

The translator has interwoven several religious allusions that contribute to the impression of unfamiliarity within the content, underlining the distinct religious milieu of Sikh culture. The preservation of the foreign cultural elements inside the translated work is greatly aided by the inclusion of these allusions. Many Sikhs use the phrase "Guruji da Khalsa" to refer to the Khalsa, which represents the entire initiated community of Sikhs. When speaking of a revered Sikh spiritual teacher, the title "Guruji" is often used. The cultural and theological components of the passage are enriched by the addition of the Khalsa and the guru.

Likewise, the word "Guruji ki fateh" can be construed as an expression denoting triumph or success attributed to the Guru. This expression is utilized to recognize the expertise and divine favour of the guru, underscoring the profound spiritual importance of these leaders within the Sikh community. The expression "jo boley so nihal sat sri akal" is a Sikh religious salutation and motto. The act of reciting is frequently employed to express fervour and dedication. The line in question can be translated as follows: "The individual who engages in verbal expression experiences a state of contentment; the divine entity represents an everlasting verity." This tagline serves to emphasize the religious and spiritual aspects inherent in the text.

Toba Tek Singh consists of culture-specific words to political and historical references. The term "Pakistan Zindabad" represents a patriotic slogan in Pakistan, translating to "Long live Pakistan." It carries significant cultural and political connotations. Conversely, "Pakistan Murdabad" is a slogan expressing opposition or animosity towards Pakistan, meaning "Down with Pakistan." This slogan, too, holds cultural and political relevance. The translator's decision to maintain these slogans in their original form is in line with supporting the source culture. These slogans encompass evident political and historical references, particularly linked to the intricate history of India and Pakistan, notably the partition of India in 1947. Preserving these slogans in their original form serves to retain the foreign essence of the text and underscores the cultural and political context within which they are employed, emphasizing the historical and ideological divisions between the two nations.

Maintaining proper nouns or original names is very important in cultural translation. Throughout the story, words like "Hindu," "Sikh," and "Muslim" and original names are preserved. Story characters' identities and affinities depend on these identifiers. "Bishan Singh," "Fazal Din," "Vadhawa Singh," "Amrit Kaur," "Bibir Singh," and "Master Tara Singh," are the original names. Names have historical implications and titles represent social or vocational functions in many cultures. The translator retains the characters' cultural identities and illustrates the story's social hierarchy by keeping these names and titles. It honours the characters' cultural diversity and individuality. These categories and cultural terms have numerous roles in cultural translation. It first verifies the original material to preserve the narrative's cultural and contextual depth. Second, it illuminates

the story's cultural, religious, geographical, and social context. This understanding lets readers experience the culture and relate to the characters. Cultural components enrich the story and make it more meaningful. They explain key cultural practices, beliefs, and identities in the narrative. The cultural, historical, and emotional richness of the tale must be preserved through cultural translation using proper nouns, cultural identifiers, and special cultural terminology. These features let readers connect with the characters and their world, ensuring that the source text's core is authentically represented in the target language while maintaining its cultural integrity. The translator retains the characters' ethnic and religious origins by keeping these appropriate nouns in English. Readers need this preservation to grasp the characters' backgrounds and culture. It deepens the story and helps readers understand the characters' attitudes and intricate cultural relations. Geographical places are proper nouns. The phrases "Chaniot," "Lahore," "Amritsar," and "Toba Tek Singh" are important because they relate to the characters' origins, migrations, and historical and cultural backgrounds. The translator keeps these geographical names in English to ensure tale authenticity and assist readers in locating events and people in their cultural and historical contexts. It enhances readers' knowledge of the story's setting by evoking place and history. Cultural words are also essential. The text mentions culturally significant foods like "chapati" and "mung the dal". They are vital to the characters' daily lives and culture. Keeping these terms in their original form authenticates the narrative and lets readers understand the characters' diets and cultures. It enhances sensory immersion and links to the characters' lifestyles.

The short story *Khol Do* also contains cultural words. The title itself is preserved by the translator as *Khol Do* in translation. The Urdu phrase *Khol Do* translates to "Open it" in the English language. The significance of the title holds symbolic value inside the narrative. In the short story *Khol Do*, an important incident takes place when Dr. Mengele examines Sakina. The physician instructs for the removal of the patient's garments, commonly referred to as "opening" or "khol do," to conduct an examination. The ostensibly ordinary medical examination takes a turn for the worst when she is involuntarily transported to a brothel situated in an area devoid of legal governance where she is raped. The term *Khol Do* refers to a state of vulnerability and the relinquishment of one's innocence. The protagonist of *Khol Do* experiences a tragic and irreversible shift in her life. The depicted scenario illustrates a violation of her dignity and personal safety. During periods of armed conflict, women are often exposed to heightened vulnerability and are susceptible to experiencing many forms of distressing circumstances, as indicated by the term. The English version of *Khol Do* effectively conveys the literal sense of the title, even though it may not entirely communicate the symbolic significance and cultural backdrop connected with it. The cultural genuineness and current relevance of the narrative depend on the safeguarding of its original title. The readers will be able to understand the primary subject matter and pivotal point of the narrative *Khol Do* which effectively retains its impact and importance. Preserving titles, proper nouns, and culturally meaningful expressions is vital in cultural interpretation, notably in the domain of literature, as it ensures the integrity of the original work and eases the transmission of its intended meaning. The importance of the title *Khol Do* in the narrative is a potent reminder of its thematic themes, so it is crucial to uphold its conservation in the target language.

Some other terms are also retained in this short story. The translator has conserved the term "dupatta". "Dupatta" is a cultural symbol for the women of India and Pakistan. It displays respect and modesty. The term "dupatta scarf" depicts a conventional attire, commonly a lengthy neckpiece or wrap, worn by women in South Asian societies, encompassing India and Pakistan. It is utilized to drape over the shoulders and can also perform the purpose of concealing the head. The word "dupatta" possesses a culture-specific character because of its portrayal of a conventional and culturally substantial

garment that is extensively embraced by women in South Asian nations. Its distinct cultural and artistic significance is unique to these regions and may not possess a direct equivalent in other cultural settings. The idea of the dupatta, embracing its application and role in attire, is exclusively intertwined with South Asian cultures, establishing it as a culture-specific term that conveys intricate cultural and sartorial nuances that may remain somewhat elusive when encountered in a distinct cultural environment.

The term "Abba," is also preserved by the translator. The term "Abba," when used in this particular context, exhibits culture-specific traits. In some South Asian and Middle Eastern cultures, "Abba" serves as an informal and endearing manner to address one's father. It draws a parallel to the English terms "Dad" or "Father" but is specific to the cultural contexts of these regions. The incorporation of "Abba" into the text introduces a cultural dimension, and the term's meaning and cultural connotations may not perfectly align with how "father" or "dad" is understood and used in other cultural settings.

Fewer words are retained from the source text *Khol Do* as compared to *Toba Tek Singh*. The translator's visibility is not conspicuously apparent owing to the restricted preservation of terms from the original text. This implies a method that emphasizes adhering to the language and customs of the target context, perhaps embracing an approach in harmony with domestication. The diminished visibility of the translator in this circumstance might suggest a concentration on modifying the storyline to comply with the standards and anticipations of the target language, conceivably at the cost of safeguarding distinct features from the originating culture.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the research has found that cultural idiosyncrasies are present in the target text of both stories. To handle these cultural idiosyncrasies, the translator has used the strategy of foreignization. The translators' choice to maintain these cultural and religious elements ensures that the foreign culture is faithfully retained within the translation. This approach allows readers to gain a deeper understanding of the specific cultural and religious context and the sentiments expressed by the characters, particularly in the short stories of Manto. The translator is not dominantly visible text in the short story *Khol Do* as fewer words are retained from the source text. The translator is visible in the short story *Toba Tek Singh* Due to the consistent use of a foreignization strategy which is in line with the framework given by Venuti (1995) promoting the translator's visibility by maintaining the source culture values and rendering source text lexical items into the target text.

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