

**DOMESTICATION VS. FOREIGNIZATION IN ENGLISH
TRANSLATION: ETHICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR
GLOBAL AUDIENCES**

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Abstract

The binary opposition between domestication and foreignization, championed by Lawrence Venuti, remains a central theoretical debate in translation studies. Domestication refers to a translation strategy where the foreign text is assimilated into the target culture, rendering the text familiar and fluent to the English-speaking reader. Conversely, Foreignization retains linguistic and cultural differences of the source text, resisting assimilation and signaling the foreignness of the original. While domestication prioritizes accessibility and ease of reading, it faces ethical critiques for potentially erasing the original culture's identity and promoting ethnocentrism, often rendering the translator "invisible." Foreignization, on the other hand, is viewed as an ethical strategy that challenges linguistic hegemony, making the target reader aware of the source culture's unique perspective. This paper critically examines the ethical and ideological implications of these two strategies when translating into English for global audiences. The analysis demonstrates how the translator's choice—particularly given English's status as a global lingua franca—significantly impacts cultural reception, perpetuates or resists dominant ideologies, and influences the perception of non-Western cultures. The study argues that a deliberate, context-aware use of foreignizing elements can serve as a vital tool for promoting cross-cultural understanding and respect for linguistic diversity in global translation practice.

Key Words: Domestication, Foreignization, Lawrence Venuti, Translation ethics, Ideology in translation, Cultural identity, Lingua franca, Translation strategies, Global audiences, Ethnocentrism

Introduction

The act of translation, fundamentally, involves bridging linguistic and cultural divides. As texts traverse borders, translators grapple with how best to render the source material comprehensible and impactful in the target language. Within the theoretical landscape of translation studies, few concepts have sparked as much debate and scrutiny as the dichotomy between domestication and foreignization. Popularized and critically elaborated by Lawrence Venuti, these terms describe contrasting approaches to the translator's task. Domestication involves assimilating the foreign text into the target culture, making it fluent and familiar to the reader by minimizing linguistic and cultural differences. Conversely, foreignization seeks to retain the source text's otherness, highlighting its foreign origins and resisting complete assimilation into the target culture's norms.

This theoretical tension is particularly salient in the context of English translation, given the language's status as a dominant global lingua franca. When translating into English, the choices made by translators carry significant weight, influencing not only the reception of the text but also broader cultural and ideological currents. The widespread reach of English means that translations into this language often shape how global audiences perceive and understand other cultures and literatures. This raises critical questions about cultural representation, linguistic power dynamics, and the ethical responsibilities of the translator.

The debate extends beyond mere stylistic preference; it delves into profound ethical and ideological considerations. Domestication, while ensuring readability, has been criticized for potentially promoting ethnocentrism and perpetuating cultural hegemony by rendering the foreign palatable and familiar, thus flattening cultural diversity. In contrast, foreignization is often lauded as an ethical strategy that can challenge dominant linguistic and cultural norms, fostering a greater

awareness and appreciation of difference, and resisting the homogenizing tendencies of global communication.

This paper undertakes a critical examination of domestication and foreignization within English translation, specifically focusing on their ethical and ideological implications for global audiences. By analyzing how these strategies influence cultural representation, power dynamics, and the very construction of meaning for a worldwide readership, this study seeks to illuminate the profound impact of translation choices. Ultimately, it argues for a more conscious and strategic application of foreignizing elements to foster genuine cross-cultural understanding and respect for linguistic diversity in our increasingly interconnected world.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while a complete renunciation of domestication might be impractical or even undesirable in certain contexts, a greater emphasis on strategic foreignization is advocated for English translation. This approach allows for the preservation of cultural distinctiveness, encourages critical engagement from global audiences, and contributes to a more equitable and intellectually richer international literary and academic landscape. Translators, armed with an awareness of these ethical and ideological dimensions, are empowered to become agents of cross-cultural dialogue, fostering a more pluralistic and understanding global community through their craft.

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