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**Translator's (In)visibility:**

**A Case Study of Persian Translations of the Works by**

**Shel Silverstein**

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Translation Studies

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## چکیده

### الف. موضوع و طرح مسئله (اهمیت موضوع و هدف):

پیدایی مترجم، مفهومی پذیرفته در حوزه‌ی مطالعات ترجمه محسوب می‌شود. هدف این تحقیق، بررسی به‌کارگیری راهبرد خارجی‌سازی و ترجمه‌های نوواژه‌ای در سطح متنی و نیز استفاده از پانویس‌ها، پراگماتیک و پیشگفتار در سطح فرامتنی از سوی مترجمان آثار شل سیلوراستاین بوده است. اهمیت این تحقیق در این است که گرچه مسئله‌ی بومی‌سازی یا خارجی‌سازی موضوع بسیاری از مقالات و تحقیقات در ایران بوده است، پیدایی مترجم از لحاظ استفاده از عناصر فرامتنی و نوواژه‌ها کمتر بررسی شده که نشان می‌دهد موضوع این تحقیق به نسبت بکر و جدید است.

### ب. مبانی نظری شامل مرور مختصری از منابع، چارچوب نظری و پرسش‌ها و فرضیه‌ها

بنا به گفته‌ی ونوتی (۱۹۹۵)، متن ترجمه‌ای، تنها زمانی مورد قبول واقع می‌شود که خوانش سلیسی داشته و فاقد هر گونه ویژگی زبانی یا سبکی خاصی باشد. چنین روندی قطعاً در نزول جایگاه مترجمان نقش بسزایی دارد. بنابراین، ونوتی اصرار می‌ورزد که مترجم باید به نحوی قابل رؤیت و واضح، خود را درون متن جای دهد. وی پیشنهاد می‌دهد که مترجم دست به خارجی‌سازی و روش‌های ابتکاری در ترجمه بزند، به نحوی که به تفاوت‌های فرهنگی و زبانی متن خارجی و همچنین نوواژه‌ها وفادار باشد. علاوه بر این، او بر این باور است که پیشگفتار مترجم حضور او را بیش از پیش پررنگ می‌کند.

دو سؤال تحقیق مطرح شده عبارتند از:

۱. آیا راهبردهای ترجمه‌ای که ونوتی ارائه داده است، از سوی مترجمان شل سیلوراستاین به کار رفته‌اند؟

۲. در صورت پاسخ مثبت به سؤال اول، تلویحات ضمنی استفاده از چنین راهبردهایی چه می‌تواند باشد؟

### پ. روش تحقیق شامل تعریف مفاهیم، روش تحقیق، جامعه‌ی مورد تحقیق، نمونه‌گیری و روشهای نمونه‌گیری، ابزار اندازه‌گیری، نحوه‌ی اجرای آن، شیوه گردآوری و تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها:

پیکره‌ی این تحقیق توصیفی-مقایسه‌ای، سه کتاب شعر نوشته‌ی شل سیلوراستاین و دو ترجمه‌ی آنها بود که از سوی رضی خد/دادی هیرمندی و حمید خادمی ترجمه شده‌اند. برای راهبرد بومی‌سازی یا خارجی‌سازی باید گفت، ۶۰ شعر اول هر کتاب برگزیده و تحلیل شد. برای عناصر فرامتنی و نوواژه‌ها نیز، کل کتاب‌ها که حاوی تقریباً ۴۰۰ شعر انگلیسی بودند، به همراه ترجمه‌ی فارسی آنها بررسی شدند. واحد تحلیل در سطح متنی از کلمه تا بیت متغیر بود. از آنجایی که اطلاعات مندرج در پانویس‌ها، گاهی به یک کلمه، عبارت یا یک قطعه شعر اشاره داشتند، واحد تحلیل در سطح فرامتنی، انواع کلمه، عبارت، بیت یا

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## Abstract

Translator's visibility, the key word of 1990's (Bassnett, 1998), has been a widely accepted concept in the field of Translation Studies. The purpose of this study was to see whether strategies contributing to translator's visibility, i.e. *foreignization* and *neological translations* on the textual level, *use of footnotes*, *bracketed parentheses*, *dedications* and *prefaces* on the paratextual level were used by Persian translators of Silverstein's books, and also to discuss the possible implications of using them. To find answers to research questions, three poetry books by Silverstein named *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, *A Light in the Attic*, and *Falling Up*, and their two Persian translations by Hamid Khademi and Razi Khodadadi Hirmandi were analyzed.

Both translators used the above said strategies, though to different degrees. They were visible in terms of foreignizing strategy with a slight difference of tendency in *Where the Sidewalk Ends* and *Falling Up*. Khademi (called Translator 2 in this Research) was found to overtake Hirmandi (referred to as Translator 1) in all three books, with higher number of neological translations, use of paratextual elements such as footnotes, dedications, and bracketed information. The implications of using such strategies were seen to be of ideological nature, in a way that Translator 2's voice was heard louder and he exerted more power in raising himself to an authorial status.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ST	Source Text
TT	Target Text
SL	Source Language
TL	Target Language
CSI	Culture-Specific Items
D.	Domestication
F.	Foreignization
No.	Number

# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

# Chapter 1

## 1.1. Introduction

In his major work *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti (1995) explains the situation of translators and how they have been invisible and marginalized throughout the history of translation. He points out that writers, publishers, readers and even the translators assess the success of translated texts based on the degree of their fluency, i.e. the more fluent a translation, the more successful it will be.

A translated text, whether prose or poetry, fiction or nonfiction, is judged acceptable by most publishers, reviewers, and readers when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seem transparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text. (Venuti, 1995, p. 1)

According to him, such a trend contributes to translators' "self-effacement" (1995, p. 4), "cultural marginality and economic exploitation" (p. 5). Venuti "calls for a translator-centered translation, insisting that the translator should inscribe him/herself visibly into the text" (Bassnett, 1998, p. 25). What he suggests is a foreignizing translation strategy which impedes fluent reading of the translated text and shows the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, hence visibility



of the translator. The present thesis aimed to analyze the strategies by which the translator's role becomes visible, whether by employing a foreignizing strategy or other elements of visibility such as neologisms, unidiomatic expressions, prefaces, footnotes, and bracketed parentheses. The corpus of this descriptive-comparative study consisted of the translations of Shell Silverstein's works in which the degree of translators' visibility was examined.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

Schleiermacher (Lefevere 1977, in Venuti, 1995, p. 20), whose great impact on Venuti's work can be observed, proposed two methods of translating, saying that "there are only two, either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him". Schleiermacher himself advocates the first method, namely a foreignizing strategy in which the translator makes "the target language reader travel abroad" (Venuti 1995, p. 111). However, Venuti (1995) argues that it is actually the second method or the domesticating strategy which is praised and accepted among readers, publishers and reviewers in Anglo-American culture, leading to translators' invisibility. "The translator's invisibility at once enacts and masks an insidious domestication of foreign texts, rewriting them in the transparent discourse that prevails in English and that selects

precisely those foreign texts amenable to fluent translating” (p. 17). In order to avoid marginalization of translators and make them visible, Venuti advocates a foreignizing strategy in which the translator is “faithful to the linguistic and cultural differences” (p. 301) of the foreign text, “their characteristic discontinuity, the neologisms and syntactical shifts”. This study sought to investigate whether the visibility strategies such as foreignization, neologism and unidiomatic constructions present in the source text, as well as annotations in form of preface, footnote, parentheses and commentary on the translation and the word choice process were used by translators of Silverstein’s collections of poetry.

The previous studies conducted so far in Iran regarding the translator’s invisibility are mainly about the dichotomy of foreignization and/or domestication strategies. This gave the researcher fresh impetus to carry out such research which looked at translator’s visibility from another perspective.

### **1.3. Significance of the Study**

Although the issue of domestication and foreignization has been the subject of various studies in Iran, such studies focusing on translator’s (in)visibility in terms of using footnotes, prefaces, bracketed information, and neologism have been rare which makes this area of research relatively unexplored in Iran.

#### **1.4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate and discover the strategies by which translators became visible. The types of visibility which were dealt with in the present study are textual and paratextual visibilities. As for visibility on the textual level, it is to be mentioned that since there are many theses in Iran dealing with the dichotomy of “Foreignization/Domestication”, this thesis mainly focused on other strategies such as neologism and unidiomatic expressions used to make the translator visible. This, of course, doesn’t mean that examination of possible foreignizing or domesticating strategies were completely ruled out, as when it comes to translator’s (in)visibility, the discussion inevitably leads to the said dichotomous techniques already present in Venuti’s work which is the theoretical framework of this study. Moreover, paratextual visibility was also included in the analysis of the corpus, which, as far as the researcher knows, is relatively unexplored in Iran.

#### **1.5. Research Questions**

**Question 1:** Were the translation strategies proposed by Venuti applied by Silverstein's translators?

**Question 2:** If yes, what are the implications of using the said strategies?

## **1.6. Theoretical Framework**

This thesis was based on the theoretical framework proposed by Venuti (1995) for translator's invisibility. According to him, since fluent and domesticating translation strategies create "the illusion that, this is not a translation, but the foreign text, in fact, the living thoughts of the foreign author" (p. 61), they block out the presence of translators, hence translator's invisibility. He suggests a resistant strategy which brings out the cultural and linguistic difference of the foreign text, demarginalizes translations and eventually helps translators gain visibility. "The point is rather to develop a theory and practice of translation that resists dominant target-language cultural values so as to signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text" (p. 23).

Resistant strategies include a foreignizing translation strategy as well as making use of unidiomatic expressions, unexpected registers and neologisms. Furthermore, Venuti (1995) believes the translator's preface (paratextual visibility) can play a significant role in translator's visibility. Translator can gain visibility "not only by developing innovative translation practices in which their work becomes visible to readers, but also by presenting sophisticated rationales for these practices in prefaces, essays, lectures, interviews" (p. 311).