

# RE-DOMESTICATION, REPATRIATION AND ADDITIONAL DOMESTICATION IN CULTURAL BACK-TRANSLATION\*

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**Abstract:** This paper describes the distinctive features of cultural back-translation. This term is employed here to refer to the translation of source texts into a target language from which most or all of the culture-specific elements of the source text were drawn. It makes an attempt to provide a systematic analysis of the distinctive features of this type of translation with special reference to the concepts of domestication and foreignization. The findings show that cultural back-translation is necessarily domesticating, or more precisely, re-domesticating. Re-domestication has several types: re-domestication proper, repatriation and additional domestication. Domesticating and foreignizing strategies work out differently in cultural back-translation: domestication does not mean adjustment to a different culture but restoring the original cultural context. In re-domestication the distribution of translation strategies used is different from those used in domestication and the purpose and effects of various strategies are different. The whole process from text composition to back-translation may be described as a process of double domestication. It is claimed that while domestication in general reduces readers' processing effort by sacrificing some contextual effects, re-domestication reduces processing effort and at the same time may increase contextual effects. It is concluded that the study of cultural back-translation is worthy of more serious attention and further lines of inquiry are suggested.

**Keywords:** cultural back-translation, re-domestication, repatriation, additional domestication, gains in translation

\* This article is dedicated to the memory of Istvan Bart.

## 1. INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL BACK-TRANSLATION

In most translations we are dealing with source texts (STs) written in a source language (SL) and embedded in SL culture, most conspicuously shown by what we call culture specific elements (CSEs; see section 4). However, along with linguistic elements specific to SL culture, linguistic elements that reflect a culture different from that associated with the SL may occur. In some cases the language of the ST does not at all reflect SL culture: there may be practically no SL CSEs in the text, while large numbers of CSEs are imported from another culture. Travelogues, travel brochures and novels whose scene is laid in a country different from the SL country are of this type: the cultural background as a whole belongs to a different language and culture. In such cases language and culture may be said to go their separate ways.

In writing about a different country with a different culture, authors have somehow to express the CSEs of that country in their own language. In transferring these elements, they may use the same solutions as translators: they may transfer some other-language CSEs into the ST with the help of foreignizing strategies or they may use domesticating strategies. In the former case, other-language CSEs will stand out of the ST like islands in a sea and will be immediately recognizable to SL readers, and in the latter case they may remain submerged, i.e. unnoticeable to SL readers. The extent and nature of such word or phrase level translations depends on the author's assessment of the needs and expectations of the SL audience, the author's intentions and the function of the text – just like in regular interlingual translation. Since it is embedded in a different culture, a text of this type may give the impression that it **is** a translation (cf. Ajtay-Horváth 2012:75, Hansen 2016:59), in spite of the fact that there is no “original” text. We may regard such texts as **partial cultural translations**.<sup>1</sup>

It does happen that such texts are translated into the very language from which its CSEs were drawn. In that case the translation may be regarded as a special type of back-translation (Tu and Li 2017:1).<sup>2</sup>

It is rather difficult to find a concise term for this type of back-translation. The names given to it by Wang (2009, 2015) and other Chinese scholars (*textless back-translation* or *rootless back-translation*) are somewhat misleading. In this study we shall apply the term *cultural back-translation*, which comes closest to the concept of *translation into a target language (TL) of texts that are not translations themselves but describe a culture different from that associated with the SL and contain CSEs imported from the TL culture*. For translation in the classical sense we shall employ the term *regular translation*.

## 2. AIMS OF THE PRESENT PAPER

Globalization has increased migration, and the number of migrant writers is increasing. As a result, the number of texts written in one language but embedded in another culture is also growing. For instance, there are significant numbers of texts in English dealing with Chinese culture (Tu and Li 2017:1). The number of cultural back-translations is increasing in other language pairs, too.

As a result, the study of cultural back-translation today is not such a peripheral phenomenon as it used to be. There is a growing awareness that this type of translation may have special features compared to regular translation, and its study may add new information to our knowledge about the translation of culture-specific elements.

This article will examine the characteristic features of cultural back-translation based on the translation into Hungarian of three English novels whose plot is laid in Hungary. While some literature exists on this topic (see the next section), a novel feature of this paper is that it makes an attempt to provide a systematic analysis of the differences between the translation of CSEs in regular translation and in cultural back-translation, with special reference to the concepts of domestication and foreignization.

## 3. STUDIES ON CULTURAL BACK-TRANSLATION

Cultural back-translation is a relatively new field in TS, and, to use a stock phrase, an under-researched area. In the past two decades or so, however, researchers in several countries have become aware of various aspects of the translation of multilingual and multicultural texts (see e.g. Grutman 2006)<sup>3</sup>. The study of the differences between regular and partial cultural back-translation may be placed within this wider framework.

In recent years Chinese researchers have published a number of studies on what they call “rootless back-translation or “textless back-translation”, and sometimes “cultural back-translation”, i.e., the translation into Chinese of books written by authors of Chinese origin either about the life of Chinese communities in other countries (mainly in the USA) or about China (see Tu and Li’s review article, 2017). There are Chinese detective stories back-translated from English (Wang 2015), autobiographic novels about Communist China written in English and translated back into Chinese (‘writing Red China’; Meng 2019). These studies concern various aspects of cultural back-translation: differences between authors, the creation of the ST, foreignization and domestication in ST creation and back-translation.

Writers of Russian origin have also been writing novels in English; the translation into Russian of one of these novels, Grushina's *The Dream Life of Sukhanov*, about life in the Soviet Union, has received some scholarly attention (Hansen 2016). This study focuses on the translation of interlingual puns.

A Polish author wrote a novel in French about her childhood memories in Poland; this was turned into a French cartoon and then the cartoon was translated into Polish by the author. Some aspects of this translation were analysed in Borodo's study (2018).

A study on the translation into Greek and Turkish respectively of Bruce Clark's *Twice a Stranger* (a book about the Greek–Turkish population exchange in 1923) places emphasis on the ideological aspects of translation (Sidiropoulou and Al-bachten 2019), missing the opportunity to analyse the two translations as special cases of back-translation, paying attention not only to ideologies, but also to linguistic and cultural factors.

The Hungarian translations of two novels, in which the scene is laid in Hungary, were studied by the present authors (Heltai 2008, Klaudy 2018). Some of the data from these studies (available only in Hungarian) will be used in the present paper, augmented by new data drawn from the same sources and data from a third novel.

## 4. CULTURE-SPECIFIC ELEMENTS

The cultural knowledge required for efficient communication is linguistically manifested in culture-specific elements: some grammatical, but most lexical. The latter are often referred to as *culture-specific items* (CSI) or *realia*. A distinction is also made between extralinguistic and intralinguistic cultural references (ECRs and ICR; see, for example, Pedersen 2005). Realia like *haggis* would be classed as ECRs, while greetings like *Top of the morning* as ICRs. In this paper, to indicate that both grammar and lexis may be culture-specific, we shall use the term *culture-specific elements* (CSE), and will subsume both extralinguistic and intralinguistic culture-specific elements under this term.

### 4.1 Transferring Culture-specific Elements: Foreignization and Domestication

Following in the footsteps of Schleiermacher (1813), Venuti (1995) pointed out that there are two general approaches that may be adopted in translating: *foreignization* and *domestication*. A foreignizing translation is distinguished by close ad-

herence to ST structure and syntax, calques, archaisms and even slang – anything that will make the target text (TT) less fluent, less transparent (Munday 2012:220). Domesticated translations are fluent and easy to read (Venuti 1995:5).

While in defining foreignization and domestication Venuti focuses on the syntactic and discourse level, in this paper we will be concerned mainly with the translation of culture-specific elements at the lexical and phraseological level. On this level a domesticating approach will mean that target readers will receive the impression that they are reading a fluent, non-translated text, since most of the culture-specific elements belong to their own culture, while reminders of SL culture have been toned down. In contrast, the essence of a foreignizing approach is that it is evident to target readers that some or many of the CSEs are related to a different culture, reminding readers of the fact that they are reading a translation of a text representing a different culture.

It is important to note that a translation is never entirely foreignizing or entirely domesticating: there will be different mixtures of the two approaches. As Munday notes, “domestication and foreignization are considered to be not binary opposites but part of a continuum” (2012:220).

## 4.2 Foreignizing and Domesticating Translation Strategies

Several authors have attempted to divide the strategies used in translating CSEs into foreignizing and domesticating ones (Newmark 1988; Aixelá 1996; Munday 2001; Espindola & Vasconcellos 2001, 2006; Kwieciński 2001; Davies 2003; Pedersen 2005; Zare-Behtash and Firoozkoobi 2009). Since our primary objective is not a critical appraisal of this literature, we shall simply present a list (based on a survey of the above literature and our practical experience) of foreignizing and domesticating procedures that we have found useful in analysing our data.

We decided that the application of the following procedures may give the reader the impression that they are reading a fluent, non-translated text: *addition, use of descriptive phrase, paraphrase, omission, generalization, neutralization, specification, increased idiomaticity and cultural substitution*. We have listed the following as foreignizing strategies: *complete or partial retention (borrowing), retention + footnote or 'extratextual gloss'* (cf. Aixelá 1996), *retention + in-text addition or explanation or 'intratextual gloss'* (cf. Aixelá 1996) and *loan translation*. Replacement by a third culture element may also have a foreignizing effect.

It should be noted that the boundaries of such categorizations always overlap, and problems may arise in assigning specific translation solutions to any of the above categories (Aixelá 1996). Also, there may be degrees of foreignization and domestication. To make matters even more complex, paradoxically, the same ef-

fect may be achieved by some strategies that are opposites of each other, and the same strategy may have either a domesticating and a foreignizing effect in different contexts. *Loan translation*, for instance, may be domesticating or neutral when transparent compounds that lend themselves easily to literal translation are translated literally (e.g. *Városliget* – *City Park*), but in other cases literal translation may highlight the culture-specificity of the SL item, providing a foreignizing effect (e.g. *pigcheese* instead of *headcheese*, *parliamentarian pastry* instead of *cream puff*, *angel-making* instead of *conducting abortions*; see Heltai 2008).

## 5. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data on cultural back-translation were collected from the original English versions of three literary pieces and their Hungarian translations: *Under the Frog* by Tibor Fischer, *Csardas* by Diane Pearson, and *The Storyteller* by Anna Porter.

Tibor Fischer's novel *Under the Frog* appeared in 1992 and had considerable success in Britain. Fischer's parents emigrated from Hungary to Britain in 1956. Although in childhood he learnt some Hungarian from his parents, his native language is English (Ajtay-Horváth 2012). *Under the Frog* was published in Hungary in 2005 under the title *A béka segge alatt* ('Under the frog's arse'), translated by István Bart.

The plot of the novel is laid in the Hungary of the late 1940s and early 1950s, the first years of communism. It is based on stories related by the author's father. In telling the story, the father must have translated and/or explained to his son a number of Hungarian culture-specific words and their referents.

The novel *Csardas*, written by the well-known English romance writer Diane Pearson, was also very successful: its first edition in 1975 was followed by ten more editions between 1976 and 1993. Translated into Hungarian by Edit Miskolczy, it was published in 2011 under the title *Csárdás*. It is the story of three rich families in the first half of the 20th century. In writing the novel, Pearson did extensive research into the history of Hungary in the interwar period and during and after the Second World War. She consulted many sources and met many Hungarian friends during her visits to Hungary. Her sources must have provided her with explanations and translations of a large number of Hungarian culture-specific elements.

*The Storyteller* by Anna Porter (translated by Petra Novák) is a memoir rather than a novel, containing the author's family history. Born Anna Szigethy in Budapest, Porter emigrated to New Zealand and then Canada, where she became a distinguished publisher and crime fiction writer. Through the family history and the stories told by the author's grandfather a panoramic view of Hungarian histo-

ry unfolds. As in *Csardas*, the plot takes place in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with many references to earlier periods of Hungarian history.

The CSEs occurring in the English STs and their Hungarian translations were identified by close sensitive reading of the three pairs of texts in parallel by both authors. The texts were processed in full. The starting point was the Hungarian translation: it was assumed that the STs do not contain more Hungarian CSEs than the TTs. The number of items recorded for each pair of texts exceeded 500. The authors focused their attention on the following broad categories of CSEs:

- Extralinguistic cultural references or realia: food names, currency units, etc.;
- Proper names: personal names, place names, names of organizations;
- Intralinguistic cultural references: address forms, idioms, proverbs, language-specific collocations, stylistically marked synonyms.

Occurrence of the same translation solution (e.g. the translation of a personal name) was not multiply recorded. Given the nature of this investigation, there seemed to be no point in making statistical analyses.

## 6. RESULTS

Analysis of the data showed that the CSEs found in the TTs fell into three categories: those that were derived from domesticated Hungarian CSEs in the STs, those that were derived from foreignizing solutions in the STs, and those that could not be traced back to Hungarian CSEs in the STs. We dubbed the first group **re-domestication**, the second group **repatriation**, and the third group **additional domestication**. The results will be presented in this order.

### 6.1 Re-domestication of Domesticated CSEs

The STs contained large numbers of Hungarian CSEs that had been domesticated mainly through generalization, paraphrase, or substitution. These were, in most cases, re-domesticated by the translators through the strategies of specification and cultural substitution, thereby restoring the original TL cultural context.

**Realia.** Examples of re-domestication of realia are shown in *Table 1*. (In this and all subsequent tables items from the English ST are placed in the left-hand column, followed by the page number in the English edition; the Hungarian trans-



Table 1  
Examples for re-domestication of realia

Source text	Target text	Literal back-translation
the football team (Fischer 150)	az aranylábú fiúk (Bart 187)	the golden-legged boys
brandy (Pearson 22,23,37)	pálinka <sup>4</sup> (Miskolczy 18,19,31)	
a great pot of meat and beans (Pearson 103)	egy nagy kondér babgulyás (Miskolczy 86)	a great pot of bean-goulash
the velvet tunic and dolman of the gentry (Pearson 287)	díszmagyar (Miskolczy 240)	ornamental Hungarian (dress)
candy-covered cakes (Porter 1)	dobostorta (Novák 10)	Dobos cake

lation is in the middle, followed by the page number in the Hungarian edition. A literal back-translation into English is provided in the rightmost column.

The examples presented in *Table 1* show that the STs used generalization (*the football team, candy-covered cake*), cultural substitution (*brandy*) and paraphrase (*meat and beans; the velvet tunic and dolman of the gentry*) to express Hungarian CSEs, while the translators used specification and cultural substitution (the two are actually inseparable in this case) to re-domesticate. Recognizing that the word *football team* was a reference to the Hungarian national football team of the early 50s, runner-up in the 1954 World Cup, often referred to as the 'Golden team' or the 'golden-legged boys', the translator discarded the literal translation and used the well-known epithet. In the case of *brandy* the translator of *Csardas* must have suspected that Pearson had *pálinka* in mind when she wrote *brandy* (shown, e.g. by her use of the phrase *good Hungarian brandy* on page 22). By substituting *pálinka* for *brandy* the translator restored the original cultural context and facilitated processing for target readers. *Meat and beans* can be recognized as a descriptive phrase for the word *babgulyás*, a popular soup in Hungary, used by Pearson as a domesticating strategy; the translator, in her turn, re-domesticated it by identifying the original name. The meaning of *díszmagyar* was expressed in the ST through paraphrase, giving ST readers an approximate idea of the kind of traditional dress in question. *Candy-covered cake* is obviously a generalization of *Dobos cake*, a layered cake invented by a Hungarian chef; in another place the *Storyteller* borrows the Hungarian name *dobostorta*.

In addition to cultural substitution, specification and omission may also be used as re-domesticating strategies. Omitting information that is redundant for target readers contributes to a fluent, native-like style (see section 7.2). Omission is particularly striking in the translation of *The Storyteller*, the probable reason being that Porter, writing a memoir, took great pains to explain everything to the



English reader, and most of these explanations were deemed by the translator to be redundant for the Hungarian reader. A few examples are presented in *Table 2*.

*Table 2*  
Omission of redundant information in The Storyteller

Source text	Target text	Literal back-translation
the provincial cities of Debrecen and Pécs (Porter 29)	Debrecenben és Pécsset (Novák 45)	in Debrecen and Pécs
Vajdahunyad Castle, a replica of the Hunyadi castle in Erdély. (Porter 37)	Vajdahunyad vára (Novák 56)	the Castle of Vajdahunyad
Arrow Cross Party – Hungary’s own version of the Nazi Party (Porter 39)	Nyilaskeresztes Párt (Novák 61)	Arrow Cross Party

**Proper names.** Most personal names in the STs were transferred from Hungarian unaltered, or only with minor adjustment, but most place names and other proper names were (at least partly) domesticated through literal translation.

In the novel *Under the Frog*, the island *Csepel-sziget* became *Csepel Island*; *Margit-sziget* is *Margaret Island*, and *Városliget* is *City Park*. The culture-specificity of proper names was restored in the translation: the translator reintroduced the original names, and in some cases rendered even what was expressed by common nouns in the ST through proper names (which we may identify as a case of specification and/or cultural substitution).

In *Csardas*, Hungarian proper names were to some extent domesticated in the ST by omitting diacritic marks. The title itself is an example: *Csardas* is spelt *Csárdás* in Hungarian. The ST contains a large number of Hungarian historical names domesticated to varying degrees; these are re-domesticated in the TT. For example *Franz Jozef*, Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, is referred to by his Hungarian name as *Ferenc József*.

In *The Storyteller*, Porter follows a mixed strategy: sometimes she retains Hungarian place names and proper names of historical figures, and sometimes transliterates or literally translates them. A distinctive feature of this ST is that in most cases it adds an intratextual gloss or a paraphrase providing background information on the Hungarian name.

Examples for the redomestication of proper names are presented in *Table 3*.

**Address forms.** Address forms may be classed as intralinguistic cultural references. In all three STs they are adjusted to English conventions and in the back-translations readjusted to Hungarian conventions through addition and cultural substitution. In *Under the Frog* this is seen primarily in the use of the words *bácsi* ('uncle') and *néni* ('aunt') in addressing (and referring to) older people.

Table 3  
Re-domestication of proper names

Source text	Target text	Literal back-translation
at the fairground (Fischer 19)	a Vidám Parkban <sup>5</sup> (Bart 27)	at the Merry Park
the army (Fischer 136)	a Magyar Néphadsereg (Bart 169)	the Hungarian People's Army
the army was destroyed (Pearson 528)	a Második Hadsereget <sup>6</sup> szétverték (Miskolczy 446)	the Second Army was de- stroyed
Russian Army (Porter 24)	szovjet vöröshadsereg (Novák 38)	Soviet Red Army

The Hungarian translation of *Csardas*, to be credible, uses the now defunct pre-war Hungarian system of titles and address forms. This is a notoriously tough challenge, since the translator has to match Anglo-American address forms with contemporary Hungarian address forms based on the characters' relative social standing and the situation.<sup>7</sup> For instance, in English, subordinates address a superior simply as *Sir*; in Hungarian, the name of the rank is added to *úr* (equivalent to both *Mr.* and *Sir*).

In referring to Franz Jozef, Pearson uses *Emperor* or *King*. The Hungarian translation re-domesticates this by using, depending on who the speaker is, *Őfelsége* ('His Majesty') or *császári és királyi felség* ('Imperial and Royal Majesty'). In general, the translator consistently replaces neutral English words with Hungarian words typical of the given age or the characters' style of speaking,

Table 4  
Re-domestication of titles and address forms

Source text	Target text	Literal back-translation
Krúdy had made a fortune ... (Fischer 25)	Krúdy bácsi vagyonokat keresett... (Bart 33)	Uncle Krúdy had made a fortune...
Mrs Vajda, Mrs Csörgő... (Fischer 35)	a Vajda néni meg a Csörgő néni... (Bart 43)	Aunt Vajda and Aunt Csörgő
madame Kaldy (Pearson 62, 92)	Káldyné méltóságos asszony (Miskolczy 52,77)	Mrs. Káldy 'dignified' lady
Madame Ferenc (Pearson 89)	Ferencné nagyságos asszony (Miskolczy 74)	Mrs Ferenc 'great' lady
Sir! I wish to apologize for my behaviour! (Pearson 30)	Tábornok úr! Alázatosan jelentem, bocsánatot szeretnék kérni. (Miskolczy 25)	Mr General! I humbly report, I'd like to apologize.
Sir! (Pearson 507)	Jelentem, beszélek, őrnagy úr (Miskolczy 429)	I report I am speaking, Mr Major!

creating a realistic background to an earlier historical period. This is less successfully realized in the ST, since the underlying domesticating process has erased much of the culture-specificity of the address forms.

In some cases names are re-domesticated by adding the diminutive suffix *-ka*. The two young boys in *Csardas* are called *Leo* and *Jozsef* (Pearson 141). In the TT, diminutives are used while they are children: *Lajoska*, *Józsika* (Miskolczy 118); when they grow up, the full form of their names is used: *József*, *Lajos* (Miskolczy 296).

Terms of endearment are re-domesticated in the TT, with *dear* and *darling* often rendered as *édesem* ('my sweet'), *kicsikém* ('my little one'), *angyalom* (my angel'), *aranyom* ('my gold'), etc. Greetings are also re-domesticated: *Hullo*, *Uncle Zoltán* (Pearson 59) becomes *Csókolom*, *Zoltán bácsi* ('I kiss you, Uncle Zoltán') in the translation (Miskolczy 49), as would have been used by a young girl to her uncle or an elderly relative in the pre-war period.

## 6.2 Repatriation of Foreignized CSEs

**Hungarian words.** All the three STs contain about a dozen Hungarian words (with or without orthographic adjustment) denoting realia: mainly historical references, names of food items, units of currency, place names and other topographical references. They are often accompanied by intratextual glosses or rely on context for their interpretation. Most of the Hungarian words have no exact equivalent in English, and function as exoticisms, introduced for stylistic effect. These items may be expected to sound foreign to ST readers and can be regarded as foreignizing solutions in the ST.

**Loan translations.** The STs also contain some loan translations from Hungarian. These are easily recognized as translations of Hungarian realia by anyone whose native language is Hungarian. They may be supposed to have the same function as the retention of Hungarian words, i.e. they may remind ST readers that they are dealing with a foreign culture. The number of loan translations is particularly high in *Under the Frog*. This feature of the novel may be related to the author's style (see section 6.5).

Back-translating these foreignizing solutions appears to be a straightforward matter: all that the translator has to do is repatriate these elements, i.e. use the same word in the TT or provide a literal back-translation: the word *puszta* (Pearson 62) is simply repatriated as *puszta* (Miskolczy 52). and *angel-making* (explained in the ST text by an intratextual gloss, 'conducting abortions') is back-translated as *angyalcsinálás* (Bart 25,33) (lit: 'angel+making'). Pearson often uses the Hungarian word alternately with its English translation, e.g.:

Uncle Sandor sliced another lump of *szalonna*. (Pearson 102)

Leo held his hand out for another piece of *bacon*. (Pearson 102)

Some examples of repatriating Hungarian words and back-translating loan translations are shown in *Table 5*.

*Table 5*  
Examples of back-translating Hungarian words and loan translations

Source Text	Target text	Literal back-translation
their conduct ... was bunko (Fischer 17)	kifejezetten bunkón viselkedtek (Bart 24)	pronouncedly boorishly behaved
calorie money (Fischer 16)	kalóriapénz (Bart 23)	calorie money
liberating some item (Fischer 27)	felszabadítottak maguknak egyet-mást (Bart 37)	they liberated for themselves one thing and another

*Kalóriapénz* was an allowance paid to (sham) amateur athletes to ensure that they can buy enough food. The meaning of *bunkó* ('boorish') must be gathered by ST readers from the context. The word *liberate* is used in the sense *loot/plunder*, derived from an ironical meaning of Hungarian *felszabadít* ('liberate') acquired at the time of *felszabadulás* ('liberation') – an allusion to the fact that when the Soviet army occupied ('liberated') Hungary, Soviet troops often looted various objects from the population, as is picturesquely described in the novel.

### 6.3 Additional Domestication

It is often the case that a general, neutral item in the ST cannot be recognized beyond doubt as the translation of a Hungarian CSE, yet it is rendered by a CSE in the TT. Consider the following example:

ST: ... [there was] no sanitation. (Pearson 155, 131)

TT: – sem kübli (Miskolczy 131) (lit: 'nor chamberpot')

ST: ... we are beaten, Leo. (Pearson 469)

TT: – törököt fogtunk, Lajos (Miskolczy 395) ('Lit: 'we have caught a Turk, Leo')

We cannot say that the ST author translated (mentally or otherwise) *kübli* as *sanitation*, domesticating a Hungarian CSE – she probably did not even know the word *kübli*, and used *sanitation* as it is, without reference to an underlying

Hungarian CSE. Neither can we say that the idiomatic phrase *we are beaten* is a domesticated version of the culture-specific Hungarian idiom *törököt fogtunk*.

We shall call such cases **additional domestication**, distinguished from re-domestication proper by the fact that it is not triggered by an item in the ST that can be identified as the translation of a TT CSE.

Additional domestication is mainly represented by an increase in intralinguistic cultural references: idioms, language-specific collocations and stylistically marked words. Formulaic language (including idioms and collocations) is a hallmark of native-like speech and writing (cf. Pawley and Syder 1983), ensuring fluency and ease of processing,

**Idiomatic phrases, language specific collocations, formulaic language and stylistically marked words.** In a fairly large number of cases the translations of both *Under the Frog* and *Csardas* use idiomatic phrases to translate neutral expressions in the ST. Increased idiomaticity is less noticeable in *The Storyteller*. The idioms often contain culture-specific, historical allusions.

Table 6  
Domesticating tendencies: increased use of idioms

Source text	Target text	Literal back-translation
you can't rush reality (Fischer 12)	ami nem megy, azt nem kell erőltetni (Bart 18)	what does not work should not be forced
Pataki insisted (Fischer 195)	Pataki kötötte az ebet a karóhoz (Bart 241)	Pataki was tying the hound to the stick
it's a nuisance (Pearson 364)	úgy hiányzik, mint egy púp a hátamról (Miskolczy 305)	I need it like a hump on my back
we are beaten, Leo (Pearson 469)	törököt fogtunk, Lajos (Miskolczy 395)	we have caught a Turk, Leo

The first phrase in *Table 6* is a fake Lenin saying, in common use during the years of communism and even today, although its attribution to Lenin has been forgotten.

The use of familiar language- and period-specific collocations also has a domesticating effect, creating an authentic target culture atmosphere. A good example is the translation of Stalin's name in *Under the Frog*. The words *nagy* ('great') or *elvtárs* ('comrade') are added every time this name occurs, as was customary in the given historical period. Porter usually refers to Stalin as 'Comrade Stalin', except once, but this sole exception was also translated as *Sztálin elvtárs*.

The tendency for translating neutral words through stylistically marked words is present in all three translations, but is particularly strong in *Csardas*. The translator successfully reconstructs the atmosphere of pre-war Hungary by using contemporary forms of address and making the characters speak in ways peculiar to

that period, using words of French, Latin, German and Gypsy origin that reflect the age and the social class of the characters. For instance, the Bogozy girls, the main characters in the novel, often use French loanwords in the Hungarian translation: *low neckline* is translated as *dekoltázs* (French *décollatage*; Hungarian *kivágás*); *allowance* as *apanázs* (French *apanage*; Hungarian *járadék*). The men's speech is riddled with Latinisms: *hobby* is translated as *passzió* (Latin *passio*; Hungarian *kedvtelés* and today also *hobbi*) and *influence* as *nexus* (Latin *nexus*; Hungarian *befolyás*). Those who had served in the common Austro-Hungarian army mix their speech with German words: *My God!* is translated as *Herrgotim-himmel!* In talking to a Gypsy musician, one of the characters says, *Fellow, you must play well*; *play* is translated with the word *bazsevál*, a word of Gypsy origin, often used in the pre-war period.

#### 6.4 Foreignizing Solutions in the TTs

There is very little in the STs that could be back-translated using a foreignizing approach: there are practically no SL CSEs. The only solution type that may be regarded as foreignizing in the translations is non-omission of explanations provided for ST readers who are not familiar with Hungarian culture. For example, the name *Zrínyi*<sup>8</sup> in Fischer's novel comes with a lengthy explanation:

ST: ... in memory of the great Hungarian general Miklós Zrínyi, who had rushed out of his castle, admittedly to do battle with a Turkish force that outnumbered him ten times. (Fischer 18)

TT: ... a nagy magyar hadvezér Zrínyi Miklós emlékezetére, aki szintén kiharant, jóllehet ő az általa védett várból, hogy megküzdjön a tízszeres török túlerővel. (Bart 25)

Literal back-translation: ... in memory of the great Hungarian general Zrínyi Miklós, who also ran out, although he from the by him defended castle, to fight the tenfold Turkish numerical superiority.

The story of Miklós Zrínyi is common knowledge in all sections of Hungarian society, so it could have been omitted. By retaining the explanation, the translator achieves a sort of foreignizing effect, signalling to the TT reader that they are reading an English novel, showing Hungarian history through the eyes of an English author.

There are some other examples showing that the translators, consciously or unconsciously, did not domesticate everything that could have been domesticated.

In *Under the Frog* the phrase *Admiral Horthy's son* is translated as *Horthy admirális fia* (pages 180/223). In Hungary, Miklós Horthy is usually referred to as *Horthy*, *Horthy Miklós*, *Horthy Miklós kormányzó* ('Miklós Horthy Regent'), or a *Kormányzó* ('the Regent'). A fully domesticating translation would have used one of these phrases.<sup>9</sup>

Another case where the translator does not re-domesticate concerns the use of first names. In *Under the Frog* the protagonist's father is referred to as *Elek*, and in *The Storyteller* Porter refers to her grandfather as *Vili* (short for Vilmos, i.e. William). This is obviously interference from English cultural practices: calling parents and grandparents by their first names is unusual in Hungary even today, and these solutions produce a foreignizing effect.

### 6.5 Differences Among *Under the Frog*, *Csardas* and *The Storyteller*

The analysis showed some differences among the three works consulted. The reasons for the difference probably have to do with different author characteristics, such as personal involvement, different styles, different purposes and different translator characteristics.

Fischer, of Hungarian descent and some knowledge of Hungarian, consciously used a number of foreignizing solutions in his novel for stylistic effect. He does not transliterate Hungarian names and often provides explanations of historical figures and events, and uses a good number of literal translations of idiomatic phrases and swear words. Apparently, he uses these exoticisms as a stylistic device. (He uses the English language in a similar way: his preference for rare words was noted, e.g., by Bayer 2006.) Even so, he had to domesticate a number of Hungarian CSEs, as attested by Bart's translation, which re-domesticated them.

Pearson, with no family ties to Hungary, wrote a romantic novel containing some Hungarian CSEs to add *couleur locale*, but most of the underlying translation strategies in her work were domesticating, with generalization, paraphrase and cultural substitution being dominant. In *Csardas* the Hungarian names are transliterated and the proportion of literal translations is much lower. Overall, this novel appears to be less foreignizing than *Under the Frog*.

Porter wrote a memoir, and as a journalist and publisher she was concerned to give her readers exact information about the places, people and events she wrote about. Therefore, the Hungarian CSEs in her book, whether retained in their original form or translated, are usually accompanied by intratextual glosses, paraphrases or explanations.



In spite of the differences, all three works share the feature that they are embedded in a foreign culture different from the SL culture and they necessarily contain large numbers of CSEs from that culture, mostly domesticated.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### 7.1 Domestication and Re-domestication

The results presented in the previous section show that most or all of the translation strategies identified in the TTs were domesticating. While regular translation contains a mixture of foreignizing and domesticating strategies, in cultural back-translation domesticating strategies are used exclusively. This was only natural and to be expected, since the CSEs in the ST had been transferred from the TL.

There also appeared to be significant differences between domestication in regular translation and re-domestication in cultural back-translation.

Firstly, the frequency of individual domesticating procedures appearing in cultural back-translation turned out to be different from that found in regular translation. While in regular translation omission, generalization, paraphrase and cultural substitution are the most common domesticating strategies, in cultural back-translation generalization does not occur, specification and cultural substitution being the dominant strategies. In addition, the nature of cultural substitution and omission is different. Cultural substitution does not mean substituting a TL CSE for a SL CSE, but finding the TL CSEs for items that were transferred into the ST through generalization, paraphrase or literal translation. Omission does not mean omission of CSEs, but omission of the glosses and explanations added to CSEs in the ST.

Secondly, and more importantly, the purpose of domestication is different. In regular translation domestication means making the text sound like fluent original writing, and in the case of imported CSEs this means reducing their foreignness, eliminating some of their culture specificity by generalization, neutralization, paraphrase, cultural substitution or omission. In cultural back-translation the purpose is to create a TT that restores the original cultural context and increases its culture specificity by finding the original TL CSEs domesticated in the ST (and eventually, introducing some more).

Thirdly, the effects of domesticating strategies in regular translation and in cultural back-translation are different. In regular translation domestication is linked to loss of meaning, or, in relevance theoretic terms, loss of contextual effect. In cultural back-translation there appear to be gains instead of losses, since both the translator and the TL reader may be expected to know more about the events

described in the ST and their cultural background than the ST author and the ST readers. These effects will be discussed in section 7.2.

The results show that the Hungarian CSEs appearing in the Hungarian translation of the STs can be divided, according to their genesis, into three groups. In the first group we find **re-domestication proper**: the CSEs in the TTs correspond to general, neutral words or paraphrases in the STs, which can easily be identified as domesticating solutions in the STs, such as *brandy* or *the velvet tunic and dolman of the gentry*. The second group contains CSEs in the TTs that correspond to Hungarian words in the STs or are obvious loan translations from Hungarian, like *bunko* or *calorie money*. In the third group we have Hungarian CSEs in the TTs that are not triggered by ST elements identifiable as translations from Hungarian. We may call re-domestication of items in the second group **repatriation** and the use of those in the third group **additional domestication**.

**Re-domestication** is easy to identify when one reads the English ST in parallel with the Hungarian translation. Comparison of the phrase *record breaking lathe operators* (Fischer 77), and its translation *sztahanovista esztergályosok*<sup>10</sup> (Bart 98) (lit: 'Stakhanovite lathe operators') makes it evident that in the process underlying the creation of the ST the Hungarian word *sztahanovista* was domesticated through paraphrase. The translator, recognizing this fact, replaced it with the original phrase, the phrase that would be used by most Hungarian readers even today in the situation described in the novel.

**Repatriation.** In contrast to regular translation, retention of SL items is not a foreignizing but a domesticating (re-domesticating) strategy, since the retained items are TL words or loan translations. The titles of Fischer's and Pearson's novels are examples of repatriation. *Csardas* is simply back-transliterated as *Csárdás*, and *Under the Frog* is literally back-translated as *A béka segge alatt* ('under the frog's arse'), a common Hungarian idiom meaning 'at a very low level', 'in a hopeless situation'. Repatriated items, however, will not have quite the same meaning in the TT as in the ST: they will not stick out as „foreign words” (see section 7.2).

**Additional domestication.** Re-domestication often involves *additional domestication*: translators may introduce culture specific elements on their own where no underlying translation from Hungarian can be detected in the ST. Increased idiomatycity and the use of language-specific collocations and stylistically marked words (stylistic synonyms, period-specific items, foreign loanwords) may make the text more fluent and native-like and may also enhance the culture specificity of the TT. Additional domestication helps to reconstruct the original cultural context on the macro level (cf. Davies 2003, Drahota-Szabó 2013) and makes the text as a whole more fluent and native-like. As in the case of idioms, translating neutral words by stylistically marked synonyms adds culture-specificity to the TT.

**Foreignization.** Foreignization in the usual sense of the term (retaining SL CSEs in the TT) is not found in cultural back-translation, since there are practically no SL CSEs in the ST. The only form of foreignization is omission of re-domestication. This is quite different from the concept of foreignization in regular translation. Three subtypes of this special type of foreignization were observed: literal back-translation of generalizations and paraphrases deriving from TL CSEs (instead of replacing them with their obvious Hungarian correspondents), non-omission of glosses or explanations that Hungarian readers do not need, and retaining English norms of referring to people. As mentioned in sections 6.1 and 6.4, by choosing to retain explanations and Anglo-Saxon conventions in addressing or referring to people, the translators decided to give the translation a foreignizing touch.

The whole process, from ST creation to TT production, may be described as a process of **double domestication**: in the first phase (ST creation) the author domesticates some of the TL CSEs, while in the second phase (translation) the translator re-domesticates them.

## 7.2 Contextual Effects

In regular translation both foreignization and domestication strategies involve some loss of contextual effect. In re-domestication, there are definite gains. Perhaps the best example to illustrate this claim is the word *disszidál* in the Hungarian translation of the novel *Under the Frog*.

The word *disszidál* denotes a now defunct concept, ‘leaving the country illegally’ – a concept that used to be unknown to many Westerners and was only too well-known in the Eastern bloc. Apparently, there is no exact equivalent in English, so the author of *Under the Frog* used the domesticating strategy of generalization, replacing *disszidál* by several neutral near-synonyms (*get out, flee, depart, escape; flight, departure*). In re-domesticating these words the translator employed specification-cum-cultural substitution, and by restoring the original cultural context he managed to **generate extra contextual effects** for TL readers who were well aware of the consequences of *disszidálás*. If we consider the fact that the novel is about the protagonist’s wish and constant attempts to leave the country, we can say that a key word of the story is missing from the ST, but is present in the TT!

In addition to providing additional contextual effects, specification and cultural substitution may also **facilitate processing** if it results in a TL expression that represents habitual, preferred usage, as shown by the case of *aranylábú fiúk* (golden-legged boys) (*Table 1*) and *sztahanovista* (above). Indeed, the facilitative

effect of habitual, preferred usage is behind the domesticating effect of other strategies, too: an expression that is habitually used in a given situation will exhibit a domesticating effect because it is easier to process for an audience familiar with the cultural background and the preferred ways of referring to that background. This may be the reason why translation strategies that are opposites of each other may have the same effect. Generalization may be domesticating if retaining the ST level of specificity would lead to an unusual level of specificity and, as a result, to increased processing costs in the TT, but specification will be domesticating if more specific expressions represent habitual usage. Both addition and omission may have a domesticating effect: in translating the name *Stalin* as *a nagy Sztálin* ('the great Stalin') or *Sztálin elvtárs* (see Section 6.3) the addition of an extra word provides rich contextual effects for target readers, and although *a nagy Sztálin* and *Sztálin elvtárs* are longer than *Stalin* or *Sztálin*, they do not require extra processing effort – habitual collocations are easy to process. On the other hand, omission of redundant information may also facilitate processing and have a domesticating effect.

Domesticating strategies in regular translation reduce readers' processing effort at the cost of sacrificing some contextual effects. Re-domestication, on the other hand, reduces processing effort and at the same time may be supposed to increase contextual effects. Omission in regular translation usually loses meaning, but omission of intratextual glosses and explanations in cultural back-translation just implicates information that the cognitive environments of target readers can easily supply, and may very well facilitate processing.

In repatriation there is both loss and gain: while in the ST these elements are marked as 'foreign culture', 'exotic' or 'humorous', "the Other", in the Hungarian translation, while recovering their original associations, they lose the ST associations related to foreignness or exoticity. However, additional contextual effects may be derived by target readers due to their wider cultural and encyclopedic knowledge and at the same time – due to their familiarity with the cultural background – their processing will also be facilitated.

Naturally, it is difficult if not impossible to measure and compare contextual effects, especially if we consider the different cognitive environments of individual readers. What can be safely said is that the same words will have different contextual effects with different audiences, as suggested by Santamaria (2010). The same view is taken by Ajtay-Horváth:

The originally intended readership of the novel [*Under the Frog*] is the readership reading in English, among whom first-hand experience of the period may fairly well be excluded. This means that the English readership are neither influenced by the commonly-known facts of the 1956 uprising, nor about

the fact that in the past twenty years quite many artistic interpretations: Hungarian films, memoirs, essays have appeared on the topic. As a result the book represents different levels of novelty, possesses different levels of entropy depending on whether the readership is Hungarian or English. (2012:76)

In our view it is likely that TT readers, who are familiar with their own CSEs, will get more out of the story than ST readers, whose cognitive environment contains less information on the TL and culture, but this has to be confirmed by further research. Thus, we tend to think that the word *liberate* (section 6.2), a semantic loan translation by Fischer, will strike a chord with Hungarian readers, reminding them of the times when the Soviet occupation of Hungary was called “liberation” and its anniversary was a national holiday – associations that ST readers cannot access. On the other hand, the foreignizing use of *liberate* may have novelty value for ST readers. At present it remains an open question exactly what contextual effects are derived from CSEs of Hungarian origin by SL readers and their re-domesticated or repatriated versions by target readers.

## 8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study we have found evidence that the STs examined represent partial cultural translation and the translation of such texts into the TL from which the CSEs were drawn represents cultural back-translation. The study has shown that while regular translation may be more or less domesticating and/or foreignizing, cultural back-translation is necessarily domesticating – more precisely, re-domesticating.

We examined the characteristic features of cultural back-translation compared to regular translation and concluded that a distinction must be made between domestication and re-domestication. Re-domestication differs significantly from domestication, and the very terms *domestication* and *foreignization* have to be re-interpreted in this context. The nature and purpose of domestication is different: the distribution of translation strategies used is different, and the purpose and effects of various strategies are different. We distinguished several types of re-domestication: re-domestication proper, repatriation and additional domestication. The whole process from ST creation to back-translation involves double domestication.

It has been found that a particularly interesting feature of cultural back-translations is that it very likely involves, besides some eventual losses, gains in contextual effects. While this conclusion is based on subjective judgement, future research may find methods for more objective assessment of losses and gains.

Traditionally, TS has focused on issues of regular translation, including the translation of SL CSEs into TLs different from the language of the ST, while the translation of third language and TL CSEs has received much less attention. As described in earlier sections of this paper, STs that can be described as cultural translations and their back-translations are increasing in number and importance, not least because, as our results show, some general concepts used in TS work out differently in cultural back-translation. Therefore, a general conclusion that arises is that the study of cultural back-translation is worthy of more serious attention.

Further lines of enquiry may focus on devising ways of assessing the differences in the interpretation of STs and TTs by the source and target audience respectively, and studying how gains and losses can be related to the cognitive environments of source and target audiences. More detailed studies of how translators cope with the challenge of cultural back-translation and the role of translator characteristics in re-domestication are desirable.

The status of STs that we regard as cultural translations should be further investigated. The process of the creation of such STs, taking into consideration different types of authors, should also be studied, possibly with assistance from psycholinguistics, leading to a better definition of the concept and the processes of cultural translation. The use of foreignizing and domesticating strategies in cultural back-translation should be further explored in multilingual comparisons, comparing cultural translations and cultural back-translations with translations into a third language.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The term *cultural translation* has several different interpretations in various fields (see Gambier and Doorslaer 2010). Here we use ‘cultural translation’ in a narrower sense, meaning ‘translation of only the CSEs’.

<sup>2</sup> The type of text that we regard as a ST for cultural back-translation is in some ways similar to the works of bilingual postcolonial writers writing in the former colonial language, importing some of the characteristics of their native language into the colonial language. It has been claimed that in this case a process of mental translation takes place, and the resulting work gives the impression of a foreignizing translation, with various CSEs, address forms, proverbs, etc. imported from the author’s native vernacular. However, while there are certain similarities, there are also important differences. In cultural back-translation authors write in their native language about a different culture. In postcolonial writing there is usually a conscious foreignizing approach, motivated by ideological reasons, while in partial cultural translation domesticating strategies prevail. Postcolonial authors often use mental translation, while authors of cultural translations draw on several sources in expressing the culture-specific features of the foreign culture.

<sup>3</sup> Grutman mentions heterolingualism (juxtaposing or mixing languages in literature), dialect translation, and in passing touches on cultural translation, too, “when the TL of a translation is none other than the embedded foreign language of the ST” (2006:22).

<sup>4</sup> *Hungarian* fruit brandy, a strong alcoholic *beverage* appreciated for its potency, flavor, and fragrance. <https://www.tripsavvy.com/hungarian-palinka-1501572>



<sup>5</sup> The name of the fun park in Budapest.

<sup>6</sup> The Hungarian Second Army, taking part in Germany's war on the Soviet Union, suffered a crushing defeat at the Don River in 1943.

<sup>7</sup> Before the Second World War there was an elaborate system of terms in Hungary for addressing people of various social standing. These terms are almost impossible to translate. *Méltóság* (derived from the word 'méltóság' (dignity)) was used for most members of the upper middle class and the aristocracy, and it denoted a social rank higher than *nagyságos* (derived from the word *nagyság* ('greatness')). A colonel had to be addressed as *méltóságos úr*; while a lieutenant-colonel was only entitled to *nagyságos úr*. For an explanation of the full system see W1.

<sup>8</sup> *Nikola Šubić Zrinski*, known as *Zrínyi Miklós* in Hungary, was a Croatian-Hungarian general, who defended the southern Hungarian fortress of Szigetvár against Suleiman the Magnificent in 1566. He ordered a final sortie out of the fortress and died with all his men.

<sup>9</sup> Miklós Horthy was Commander-in-Chief of the Austro-Hungarian Navy in the last year of the First World War. He was Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary from 1920 to 1944. (There was no king during this period.)

<sup>10</sup> The word *sztahanovista*, derived from the name of Stakhanov, a Soviet miner who constantly overfulfilled the 'norm' and was touted as a role model for all workers, is still alive in Hungarian.

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