Foreignization in English-Kurdish Translations

Produced by the Voice of America

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Abstract—**This paper explores English-Kurdish translations produced by the Kurdish section of the Voice of America (VOA). It is hypothesized that such translations are marked by unnaturalness and foreignness both in terms of linguistic and cultural aspects. This feature seems to be a peculiar characteristic that sets the VOA Kurdish apart from other media outlets producing Kurdish translations. Applying Venuti's (1995/2008) theory of foreignization and domestication and taking a translation-oriented textual analysis approach, the paper sets out to qualitatively examine a set of 15 English journalistic texts translated into Kurdish by the VOA Kurdish. The study encompasses both linguistic and cultural matrices to identify unnatural or foreignized translation occurrences, which are expected to be otherwise rendered naturally in other media outlets. The results of the study show that Kurdish translations produced by the VOA are peculiarly outlandish and orientated towards foreignization. For journalistic translations to be comprehensible by the target audience, media players ought to present their outputs, translation or otherwise, as naturally as possible. Therefore, the paper recommends that the VOA Kurdish change its tendency from foreignization to domestication.**

Index Terms—**English-Kurdish translation, foreignization, domestication, journalistic translation, the VOA Kurdish**

I. INTRODUCTION

Journalism is one of the most vibrant domains of translation activities between English and Kurdish. In today's globalized world, members of community are not only provided with local news but are also exposed to happenings around the globe. Access to international news has been made possible by means of translation. In theory, journalistic translation should be clear and comprehensible to the target audience. In practice, however, this may not always be the case. The Kurdish section of the Voice of America (henceforth VOA Kurdish) is one of the media outlets whose translation outputs appear to sound foreign and untypical when compared to translation products by other Kurdish media players.

This study critically investigates translations produced by the VOA Kurdish, which are perceived to be unnatural and foreignized. The paper aims to attest whether the idea of translation outputs by VOA Kurdish being foreign and unnatural is a factual phenomenon or a mere perception. To that end, the paper specifically seeks answers to the following questions:

1) What are the patterns of cultural and linguistic translation occurrences that manifest foreignization in English-Kurdish translations produced by the VOA Kurdish?

2) What alternative translations can be proposed to mitigate the degree of foreignization in the translations offered by the VOA Kurdish?

The significance of the study is that it does not only aim to diagnose a problematic phenomenon (awkward, foreignized or unnatural translation occurrences) in translation products by the VOA Kurdish but also suggests more natural, familiar and understandable alternatives. This endeavor will help translators working with the VOA Kurdish, and journalist-translators at large, to improve their translation products.

II. DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

The data consist of translated Kurdish journalistic texts along with their English source texts. The Kurdish translations are taken from the website of the VOA Kurdish (www.dengiamerika.com). As for the English source texts, they come from a wide range of media outlets and agencies, including the main website of the VOA, the Reuters, the website of the US Department of State, Aljazeera, Agency France Press (AFP), etc. Overall, 15 Kurdish TTs, along with their English STs, are chosen within a time scale of three months – texts published in the first quarter of 2019. See the appendix for details of the texts (the headlines and the online links of the texts).

A qualitative, translation-oriented textual analysis method is taken to conduct the research. The textual analysis involves a thorough examination of ST-TT pairs to identify translation occurrences that sound odd, exotic or unnatural. Since "categorization is a central element in all kinds of analysis"

(Williams & Chesterman, 2014, p. 94), the next step is to categorize the identified translation occurrences into linguistic and cultural aspects. Instances under each category are further divided into their subcategories. After a qualitative analysis of the nature of each chosen translation occurrence in terms of domesticating and foreignizing orientations, the next crucial phase is to suggest a more natural and appropriate translation.

III. THE VOA KURDISH

Established in 1992, the VOA Kurdish is an influential media outlet. It first started as a radio station, then launched a website and more recently started airing on television. The media outlet offers both translated and authentic journalistic outputs in the form of news reports, interviews, and political and cultural programmes, mostly in Sorani Kurdish and some in Kurmanci. This study specifically focuses on journalistic translations provided in Sorani Kurdish, which is predominantly spoken in Iraqi and Iranian Kurdistan. According to VOA's official website (2018):

> The [Kurdish] service's audience consists of more than 30 million Kurds living in the Middle East and Eurasia and approximately one million Kurds living in Europe and North America. Audience research indicates that the broadcasts are popular among listeners in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey.

VOA Kurdish focuses on two major topics: politics and culture. It has political programmes, such as: *We and Politics*, *Dimensions of the Current Developments* and *With the Events*. It also broadcasts cultural programmes, such as: *Jyan Le Ferhengda* (Life with Culture), *Mêvan û Mija*r (Guest and Topic) and *Deng U Reng* (Sound and Color).

VOA Kurdish has played a great role as an effective media outlet in different stages, especially during the US invasion of Iraq. A 2006 survey by the US State Department describes the VOA Kurdish as "highly popular" among the Iraqi Kurds, stating that "VOA occupies a unique position among Iraqi Kurds as it is the only major international broadcaster offering programs in the Kurdish language". Referring to the effectiveness of the media outlet in covering the post-war Iraq news, the survey explains that "VOA's Kurdish Service has closely followed all major developments of interest to its audience, including the transfer of Iraqi sovereignty to the interim".

Since 2014, the VOA Kurdish has partnered with NRT TV to collaborate in their media services. NRT is a popular and influential media agency in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. According to the VOA public relations (2014, August 8):

> VOA is also providing NRT TV with ad-hoc live coverage. A VOA Kurdish reporter appeared on NRT TV's evening prime news hour Thursday for a 10-minute live Q & A, acting as the station's "U.S. bureau," providing Washington's reaction to the latest developments in Iraq.

IV. TRANSLATION IN THE VOA KURDISH

First of all, the VOA Kurdish tends to offer 'gist translation', which is "a style of translation in which the TT expresses only the gist of the ST; i.e. the TT is at the same time a synopsis of the ST" (Cragie *et al.,* 2000, p. 202). Gist translation is carried out by removing some details of the ST that seem to be redundant or less important to the target audience. Therefore, translations provided by the VOA Kurdish tend to be a short version of their source counterparts. It is worth mentioning that media agencies resort to gist translation at least for three genuine reasons:

1) Financial reason: in gist translation, the quantity of the translation is considerably reduced – it is thus cost-effective.

2) Consideration of time: gist translation is a time-saving technique; by translating only the significant parts of a text, considerably less time will be required in the translation process.

3) Consideration of the target audience: in today's fast-paced world, people do not have much free time to read lengthy opinion pieces and news reports. Besides, lengthy news reports can easily be tedious and boring.

Apart from the above seemingly legitimate reasons for omitting not-so-important parts of journalistic texts, translators may also remove stretches of language that are syntactically or semantically complex and are difficult to translate. Journalist-translators in the Kurdish media resort to omission in the translation process for all sorts of reason, including "omission due to translation difficulties" (Rasul, 2015, p. 239). This is obviously one of the disadvantages of gist translation. Another downside of gist translation is that it usually results in translation loss; in the case of news translation, the complete picture of the news story may not be conveyed to the audience.

What is directly relevant to the present study is the characteristic nature of the translations produced by the VOA Kurdish. When reading translations by VOA Kurdish, one immediately feels the unusually literal and unnatural nature of certain areas of the texts. Audiences with some background knowledge of the Kurdish language can easily set translations offered by VOA Kurdish apart from those produced by other Kurdish media outlets. This unnaturalness has led to the hypothesis that translations provided by the VOA Kurdish seem to orientate towards foreignization as opposed to domestication.

V. FOREIGNIZATION VS. DOMESTICATION

Since the emergence of translation as an independent discipline, different dichotomous translation approaches have been proposed based on the notion of equivalence. Most of these approaches divide along the lines of literal (word-for-word) and free (sense-for-sense) translation. For example, Nida (1964) proposes formal and dynamic equivalence as a yardstick to measure the orientation of translation in terms of the nature of equivalence between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL). As a more practical alternative to Nida's approaches, Newmark (1988) proposes semantic and

communicative translation to determine the degree of literalness and communicativeness of translation between the SL and the TL. A more recent and robust approach is that of domestication and foreignization put forward by Lawrence Venuti (1995/2008), which is comprehensive in nature covering both linguistic and cultural dimensions of translation. Therefore, this study adopts Venuti's domestication and foreignization as a theoretical framework to investigate the nature of translation products offered by the VOA Kurdish.

Venuti is an American translation scholar and a literary translator. He proposes the dichotomous translation approaches of 'domestication' and 'foreignization' in his seminal book *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1995/2008). He uses the term 'invisibility' "to describe the translator's situation and activity in contemporary Anglo-American culture" (2008, p. 1). He raises the point that translation activities in Anglo-American culture are marked by domestication, i.e. closely following TL linguistic and cultural conventions.

Venuti (2008, p. 15) defines domestication as "an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target-language cultural values, bringing the author back home". A translation marked by domestication appears to be natural and free of features of the source language and culture. Thus, the translation product sounds fluent and the translator is invisible. On the other hand, Venuti (ibid.) refers to foreignization as "an ethnodeviant pressure on those [cultural] values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad". A translation characterized by foreignization carries features imported from the source language and culture. Therefore, the translation product sounds foreign and the translator is constantly visible. Yang (2010, p. 77) clearly summaries the resultant translation from the two approaches, as follows:

> Domestication designates the type of translation in which a transparent, fluent style is adopted to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers; while foreignization means a target text is produced which deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original.

VI. FOREIGNIZATION IN THE VOA KURDISH

Although foreignization and domestication are two separate translation approaches, it practically is impossible to maintain one approach throughout and disregard the other. A typical translation includes a combination of the two orientations. In other words, any translation is more or less domesticated and more or less foreignized. The problem with translations offered by the VOA Kurdish is that they are characterized by salient instances of foreignizing translation, i.e. they are predominantly marked by foreignization.

It is crucial to point out that this study is not meant to undermine the quality of translation products by the VOA Kurdish and label them as unacceptable or inappropriate translations. Instead, it aims to highlight the fact that such translations are impregnated with instances of foreign and unnatural translation that are marked enough to cause

interruptions and affect the flow of the translation. If it were not for such marked instances, translations offered by the VOA Kurdish could be considered among the most appropriate translations provided by the Kurdish media.

To systematically study the nature of foreignized translation in the VOA Kurdish, we shall identify the patterns of unusual and unnatural translation occurrences, in the chosen data, at the linguistic as well as cultural level.

A. Foreignization at linguistics level

An appropriate translation is supposed to respect the TL linguistic system (cf. Rasul, 2016, p. 417; Sihombing, 2012, p. 312). However, the VOA Kurdish translations often contain instances that closely follow the linguistic system of the SL and deviate from the TL conventions. The phenomenon is evident at the lexical as well as structural level, and the following specific categories can be distinguished: unusual lexicon, odd collocations, unnatural expressions and unconventional syntactic structures.

1. Unusual lexicon

One of the reasons that a translation sounds unnatural is the use of unusual lexical items. Unusual lexicon occurs when a term or word is used in a context that sounds odd to native speaker's ear. Highlighting unusual lexicon as a pattern of unnatural translation here is different from lexical differences due to sociolect and language variants. The mainstream media is expected to use a natural language intelligible by all walks of life. For instance, the Kurdish word ڕەگەز is a polysemic word that can mean: *gender*, *race* and *ethnicity* depending on the context. But it is not normally used to refer to someone's nationality. In the example below, however, it is used to indicate a person's nationality (هەردوو ڕەگەزی تورکی و ئەمەریکی پێیە), which sounds completely unnatural. The utterance could be best translated as هەڵگری ڕەگەزنامەی تورکی و ئەمەریکییە] 'he holds Turkish and American nationality'].

Example 1:

> Ulucay was detained along with two other local U.S. consulate employees and **a former Turkish-American NASA scientist** in 2017 over terrorism charges.

> ئۆلۆگای له ساڵی 2017 دا لەگەڵ دوو کارمەندی دیکەی کونسوڵخانەکه و **زانایەکی پێشووی ناسای ئەمریکا که هەردوو ڕەگەزی تورکی و ئەمریکی پێیه** به تۆمەتی پەیوەست به تیرۆرەوه دەستگیرکران.

Another example is the word گومانبار, which is used twice as an equivalent to the word *suspect* in the example below. However, it can be argued that such a Kurdish word does not exist at all. Instead, Kurdish has گومانلێکراو ['suspect'] and تۆمەتبار ['accused']. The unusual lexical item گومانبار seems to have been resulted from the overgeneralization of the Kurdish suffix بار -. In other words, the translator might have assumed that, as long as تۆمەتبار can be derived from تۆمەت, one can also derive گومانبار from گومان, which is not a valid assumption.

Example 2:

Police said … they were searching for a **suspect** or **suspects**.

پۆلیس ڕایگەیان هێشتا بەدوای **گومانبار** یان **چەند گومانبارێکدا** دەگەڕێن.

2. Odd collocations

Collocation refers to "the occurrence of two or more words within a short space of text" (Sinclair, 1991, p. 71). Unusual or odd collocation refers to the combination of two words or terms that do not naturally occur together. To produce a fluent and comprehensible translation, translators have to opt for collocations that sound natural and conventional. For example, the term *US Administration* has been translated as ئیدارەی ئەمریکا in almost all Kurdish media outlets as a standard and established translation. It is only the VOA Kurdish that translates *administration* as بەڕێوەبەرایەتی, e.g. *Trump administration* > بەڕێوەبەرایەتی ترامپ, which obviously produced an odd collocation. Likewise, it sounds odd to translate *heartbreaking* as غەمگین in the utterance *The situation in Al-Hol camp is* **heartbreaking**, because the two Kurdish words ڕەوش and غەمگین do not create a natural collocation. Appropriate alternatives would be ڕەوشەکە جەرگبڕە ['the situation is heartbreaking'] and ڕەوشەکە دژوارە ['the situation is difficult']. The rest of the odd collocations found in the data are tabulated below:

Text No.	ST (English)	TT (VOA Kurdish translation)	Suggested translation
Text 1	The **Trump administration** has come under strong criticism…	**بەڕێوەبەرایەتی ترامپ** کەوتە ژێر ڕەخنەیەکی زۆر…	ئیدارەی ترەمپ کەوتە بەر ڕەخنەیەکی زۆر…
Text 1	a **deadly** IS **attack**	**هێرشی کوشندە**ی داعش	**هێرشێکی خوێناوی** داعش
Text 1	the limited U.S. **commitment** in Syria	**وابەستەیی** سنووورداری ئەمریکا لە سوریا	**پابەندیی** سنووورداری ئەمریکا لە سوریا
Text 2	…lead to **potential** sanctions	…**شیانی** هەیە سزای بەسەر بسپێنرێت	…**ئەگەری** هەیە سزای بەسەردا بسپێنرێت
Text 2	Tehran could **reciprocate**…	تێران **"دژە کردار"** دەگرێتە بەر	تاران **کاردانەوە**ی دەبێت بەر
Text 4	The **situation** in Al-Hol camp is **heartbreaking**…	**ڕەوشی** کامپی هەول زۆر **غەمگێنە**…	**ڕەوشی** کامپی ئەلهەول **جەرگبڕە**…
Text 5	The United Nations said it **regretted** Israel's decision.	نەتەوە یەکگرتووەکان… **مەخابنی** خۆی دەردەبڕێت لە بەرامبەر بڕیاری ئیسرائیل.	نەتەوە یەکگرتووەکان… **نیگەرانی** خۆی دەردەبڕێت لە بەرامبەر بڕیاری ئیسرائیل.
Text 7	[British] opposition **Labour Party**	**حیزبی کاری** ئۆپۆزسیۆنی بەریتانیا	**پارتی کرێکارانی** ئۆپۆزسیۆنی بەریتانیا
Text 8	a **safe zone**	**ناوچەی پارێزراو**	**ناوچەی نارام**
Text 9	…clearly **warned** Turkey	…بە ڕوونی **ناگاهیان** بە تورکیا داوە	…بە ڕوونی **هۆشیاریان** بە تورکیا داوە

Text 13	… in Flight to **Space Station**	…ڕەوانەی **بنکەی واڵایی** دەکات	…ڕەوانەی **بۆشایی** ئاسمان دەکات
Text 14	…in a way that doesn't **inject poison into our relations.**	…بەشێوەیەک کە **ژەهر** لە **پەیوەندییەکانی** نێوانمان… ناکات.	…بەشێوەیەک کە **ژەهر** لە نەخانە نێو پەیوەندییەکانمان
Text 15	US diplomat	**کاربەرێکەی** ئەمریکا	**دیپلۆماتکاری** ئەمریکا

3. Unnatural expressions

Unnatural expressions make up another linguistic aspect that characterizes translations carried out in the VOA Kurdish. When reading translations offered by the VOA Kurdish, one often comes across expressions that sound unnatural or awkward. This usually occurs when a TL expression is modeled upon an SL expression. Consider the following example, in which the underlined expressions in the translation sound abnormal and hardly make any sense.

Example 3:

The U.S. withdrawal from Syria may bring to a close an open-ended and **strategically unclear military commitment** and likely put at risk vital **national security interests**, according to some analysts.

ژمارەیەک لە شارەزایان دەڵێن کشانەوەی ئەمەریکا لە سوریا ڕەنگە ببێتە مایەی کۆتاییپێنان بەم **ستراتیژییە نادیارەی وابەستەی لەشکر** کە پێ دەچێت زۆر لە **بەرژەوەندییە ئاسایشییەکانی نیشتمانی** بخاتە مەترسییەوە.

Due to close adherence to the SL linguistic form, the highlighted translated expressions above sound unnatural and result in a foreignizing translation at the linguistic level. The expressions can be rendered more appropriately by following the TL linguistic convention. The expression *strategically unclear military commitment* can be translated naturally as پابەندیی سەربازیی کە لە ڕووی ستراتیژیەوە ناروونە ['a military commitment that is strategically unclear']. Likewise, the expression *national security interests* can be well translated as بەرژەوەندییەکانی ئاسایشی نیشتمانیی ['interests of national security'].

4. Unconventional syntactic structures

Translations produced by the VOA Kurdish seem to closely adhere to the syntactic structure of the SL, which is a trait of foreignizing translation. In the example below, the English sentence is a complex one, which consists of an independent clause (*The U.S. is serious about pursuing peace*) and a gerund clause (*preventing Afghanistan from continuing to be a space for international terrorism & bringing forces home*). Although gerund clauses are non-finite clauses that do not have a subject (cf. Stevenson, 2010, p. 134), they express a complete thought. The problem with the translation here is that the clause is rendered literally, regardless of the discrepancy between SL and TL syntactic structures. The resulting translation is an incomplete sentence with an incomplete thought: پێشگرتن لە تێرۆریزمی نێونەتەوەیی و گەڕاندنەوەی سەربازانی ئەمەریکا بۆ وڵات.

Example 4:

> He added later, "The U.S. is serious about pursuing peace, **preventing Afghanistan from continuing to be a space for international terrorism & bringing forces home.**"

> مایک پامپێۆ له تویتەری خۆی دا نووسی که ئەمەریکا به شێوەیەکی جیدی بەردەوامه لەسەر رەوتی ئاشتی، **پێشگرتن له تیرۆریزمی نێونەتەوەیی و گەراندنەوەی سەربازانی ئەمریکا بۆ وڵات**.

Another syntactic structure that demonstrates a discrepancy between English and Kurdish is non-restrictive relative clauses. In English, non-restrictive relative clauses are put between commas, as opposed to restrictive relative clauses, which are directly embedded within the main clause without commas. In Kurdish, on the other hand, "there is no distinction between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses" (Thackston, 2006, p. 75). To be more specific, non-restrictive Kurdish relative clauses are expressed in the same way as restrictive relative clauses, using a relative pronoun. In the ensuing example, however, the translator modeled the TL non-restive relative clause upon the SL syntactic convention.

Example 5:

> The Massachusetts Democrat, **a leader of the party's progressive wing**, made her announcement on Saturday from an historic site in Lawrence, northwest of Boston, that launched the US organised labour movement.

> ئەو نوێنەرەی ماساچوسێتس، **رێبەرێکی باڵی پێشکەوتووخوازی پارتەکەیه**، له شوێنێکی مێژووی لاورێنسی باکوری رۆژئاوای بۆستن لەوێوه ئەمەریکا بزوتنەوەی کاری رێکخست راگەیاندنەکەی دا.

By following the syntactic construction of non-restrictive relative clauses in the TL, the translation would sound more natural, as follows:

> ئەو نوێنەرەی دیموکراتەکان له ماساچوسێتس **که سەرکردەیەکی باڵی پێشکەوتووخوازی پارتەکەیه** له شوێنێکی مێژوویی ... خۆکاندیدکردنی راگەیاند.

B. Foreignization at cultural level

1. Cultural borrowing

As far as translation is concerned, it is crucial to differentiate between 'established or naturalized' borrowings, on the one hand, and 'new or marked' borrowings, on the other. There is nothing wrong with using established borrowings; they sound familiar and are understood by the target audience. Moreover, some types of established borrowings are used as the only possible way of translation. Proper nouns such as *Mike*, *Massachusetts*, etc. have to be transliterated (i.e. translated by borrowing) obligatorily. However, translations disseminated by the VOA Kurdish are often marked by the use of unusual cultural borrowings, which is not a norm in other Kurdish media players. For example, the VOA Kurdish is the only media outlet that translates the US *Senate* into Kurdish by cultural borrowing (سیناتـ), as in the example below:

Example 6:

> Votel told the **Senate** hearing he was not consulted ahead of Trump's surprise decision to withdraw America's more than 2,000 troops from Syria…

> له دانیشتنێکی ئەنجومەنی **سیناتی** ئەمەریکادا ڤۆتێڵ وتی "راوێژ به من نەکراوه" لەکاتێکدا که دانی بەوەدانا سەرۆک ترامپ به ئاشکرا ئارەزووی خۆی دەربریوه بۆ کشانەوەی هێزەکان له سوریادا.

Other Kurdish media outlets are expected to translate the cultural term *Senate* by recognized translation as ئەنجومەنی پیران. Newmark (1988, p. 89) defines 'recognized translation' as "the official or the generally accepted translation of any institutional term". The question arises here is that: while a cultural term has a recognized counterpart, what is the point of using an unfamiliar borrowing?

Likewise, the term *tornado*, which can be deemed as part of ecological culture (cf. Newmark, 1988, p. 96), is rendered by cultural borrowing as تۆرنادۆ. The resultant translation is unlikely to be understood by the target audience.

Example 7:

> A **tornado** roared into southeast Alabama and killed at least 23 people

> له ئاکامی زریانی **تۆرنادۆ** له ویلایەتی ئەڵەبامای ئەمەریکا 23 کەس گیانیان لەدەست دەدەن

Interestingly, the same news is covered by *Hawler* newspaper, in which the term *tornado* is rendered by its near-synonym گەردەلوول ['whirlwind'], which is a more general and widely used term.

Example 8:

> **گەردەلوولێکی** زۆر بەهێز رۆژهەڵاتی ئەڵەبامای گرتەوه و بەوهۆیەوە ٢٣ کەس بوونە قوربانی.

> A very strong whirlwind hit east Alabama and resulted in 23 casualties.

2. Exoticism

'Exoticism' is a translation procedure that is extremely biased towards the SL culture. Therefore, it results in a foreignized translation. In Dickins *et al.*'s terms "a TT marked by exoticism is one which constantly uses grammatical and cultural features imported from the ST with minimal adaptation, thereby constantly signals the exotic source culture and its cultural strangeness" (2017, p. 36). Literal translation of cultural expressions such as idioms and proverbs makes up a typical example of exoticism, especially when the idiom or proverb is unfamiliar to the target audience or is expressed by totally different structural forms in the TL. Larson (1998, p. 126) believes that "the real danger comes in translating an idiom literally, since the result will usually be nonsense in the receptor language". This is not to claim that idioms cannot be translated literally at all; some idioms can well be rendered by literal translation, especially those that are not culturally bound but

have a universal nature (cf. Baker, 2011, p. 76; Rasul, 2018, p. 124). Consider the cultural idiom *playing with the tail of the lion* in the ensuing example, which is literally translated as یاریکردن به کلکی ئەسەد and resulted in an exotic translation.

Example 9:

Mohammad Ali Jafari … warned, "Know that you are **playing with the tail of the lion**".

جەعفەری … هۆشیاریدایە حکومەتی ئیسرائیل "**یاری بە کلکی ئەسەد**" نەکات.

It is highly speculated that other Kurdish media outlets would opt for a communicative translation and render the idiom as یاریکردن بە ئاگر ['playing with fire']. "A communicative translation is produced, when, in a given situation, the ST uses an SL expression standard for that situation, and the TT uses a TL expression standard for an equivalent target culture situation" (Dickins *et al.,* 2017, p. 14). This translation procedure corresponds to what Baker (2011, p. 76) describes as the replacement of an idiom by "an idiom of similar meaning but dissimilar form". Communicative translation leads to domestication as opposed to exoticism, which results in foreignization.

Similarly, the idiomatic expression *a special place in hell*, in the example below, is translated literally as شوێنێکی تایبەتیان هەیە لە دۆزەخ, which is an exotic translation. The expression was used by the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, to describe the British leaders for their failed plans for Brexit.

Example 10:

British leaders who sold Brexit with no plan for how to deliver it deserve a **"special place in hell"**, the EU's Donald Tusk said.

سەرۆکی ئەنجومەنی ئەوروپا دانۆڵد تۆسک وتی ئەو بەریتانییانەی کە داوای جیابوونەوەی بەریتانیایان کرد لە یەکێتی ئەوروپا بەبێ ئەوەی هیچ پلانێکیان هەبێت بۆ جێبەجێکردنی "**شوێنێکی تایبەتیان هەیە لە دۆزەخ**".

The expression could be translated by a natural-sounding counterpart as بەر نەفرەت دەکەون ['they come under the curse']. Although this suggested alternative has a totally different linguistic form, it conveys the same negative message.

CONCLUSION

This paper has investigated translation products offered by the VOA Kurdish since they are perceived to sound outlandish due to their inherent nature of leaning towards foreignization. For this purpose, a set of 15 translated texts by the VOA Kurdish, along with their English STs, have been chosen for examination. A qualitative textual analysis method was taken to identify instances that make VOA Kurdish translations unnatural and atypical when compared to translations disseminated by other Kurdish media players. The results confirm the hypothesis put forward at the outset of the study

that translations offered by the VOA Kurdish are characterized by foreignization. This foreignizing orientation is evident at both linguistic as well as cultural level.

At the linguistic level, the study shows that translations offered by the VOA Kurdish are impregnated with lexical, phrasal and syntactic instances that sound unnatural in the TL and are mostly modeled upon SL linguistic conventions. Therefore, the translation products are predominantly characterized by foreignizing translation. Systemic differences between languages require the translator to follow the TL linguistic rules in a bid to produce an appropriate translation. This essential aspect seems to have been neglected occasionally by translators working in the VOA Kurdish.

As for the cultural aspects, the VOA Kurdish has a natural tendency towards cultural borrowing and exoticism. Using established borrowed words is a common phenomenon even in languages that have rich vocabulary (such as English, Arabic, Spanish, etc.). However, using borrowed cultural terms that are new and unintelligible to the target audience is a dispreferred translation practice. Yet, translations carried out by the VOA Kurdish often contain such new borrowed cultural terms that can be understood by none but those with a good command of English. Exotic translation, based done literal translation of unfamiliar cultural idioms and idiomatic expressions, is another characteristic of VOA Kurdish translations at the cultural level. Importing SL cultural features, whether they be cultural terms or expressions, results in a foreignizing translation.

The fact that VOA Kurdish tends to apply foreignization in its translation practice does not mean that Kurdish has fallen short in its linguistic and cultural repertoire. As a matter of fact, all the foreignized translation occurrences found in the dataset could be well translated by appropriate counterparts that would sound natural and read smoothly in Kurdish.

To produce and offer a natural-sounding translation, English-Kurdish translators working with the VOA Kurdish are urged to reduce the degree of adherence to the source language and culture. Thus, mitigate the degree of foreignization in their translation products. Ultimately, the aim behind offering journalistic outputs, original or translation, is to provide the audience with the latest national and international developments. The more natural the language of journalism is, the more easily the audience can comprehend and digest it.

APPENDIX

Details of the chosen textual material

Text No.	English STs (Headline & website link)	Kurdish TTs (Headline & website link)
Text 1	**US Syria Withdrawal Risks Vital Strategic Interests** https://www.voanews.com/a/us-syria-withdrawal-risks-vital-strategic-interests/4748554.html	کشانەوەی ئەمریکا لە سوریا بەرژەوەندیە ستراتیژیەکانی ئەمریکا دەخاتە مەترسییەوە https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/us-syria/4748947.html

	English Source	Kurdish Target
Text 2	Iran protests to Poland over Iran-focused summit https://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idAFKCN1P705U?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews	ئێران سەبارەت بە کۆبوونەوەی لوتکەیی مانگی داهاتوو بە پشتیوانی ئەمەریکا لە وارشو ناڕازییە https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/iran-pompeo-warshaw-summit/4741046.html
Text 3	Three killed, four wounded in California bowling alley shooting https://www.reuters.com/article/us-california-shooting/three-killed-four-wounded-in-california-bowling-alley-shooting-idUSKCN1OZ08J	لە کالیفۆرنیا بەهۆی تەقەکردن 3 کەس دەکوژرێن و 4 کەسیش بریندار دەبن https://www.dengiamerika.com/4730175.html
Text 4	Children, babies dying from cold at camp in northeast Syria: WHO https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-camp/children-babies-dying-from-cold-at-camp-in-northeast-syria-who-idUSKCN1PP1K4	ڕێکخراوی تەندروستی جیهانی: لە کامپی هەول لە سوریا مندالان بەهۆی سەرمای سەختەوە دەمرن https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/syria-crisis-children-die-from-cold-weather/4767508.html
Text 5	Palestinians say Israel removing witnesses by ejecting Hebron monitors https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-palestinians-hebron/palestinians-say-israel-removing-witnesses-by-ejecting-hebron-monitors-idUSKCN1PN2CI	دیپلۆماتکاران: ئەمەریکا بۆ بەرژەوەندی نیسرائیل پرۆژە بریارێکی لە ئەنجومەنی ئاسایش بلۆککرد https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/us-israel/4776634.html
Text 6	Turkish court frees U.S. consulate employee: Anadolu https://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-security-usa/turkish-court-frees-u-s-consulate-employee-anadolu-idUSKCN1PO1XB	دادگای تورکیا کارمەندێکی کونسولخانەی ئەمەریکا ئازاد دەکات https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/turkey-releasesus-consulate-employee-in-turkey-/4765851.html
Text 7	UK's May makes Brexit offer in last-ditch bid to win over lawmakers https://in.reuters.com/article/britain-eu-may-idUSS8N1YA02S	لە دوای هەولێدا بۆ رازیکردنی پەرلەمان، تێریزا مەی پێشنیارێک پێشکەش دەکات بۆ جیابوونەوە لە یەکێتی ئەوروپا https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/may-brexit-/4752759.html
Text 8	Erdogan Insists on Syria Intervention, in Face of Growing Opposition https://www.voanews.com/a/turkey-syria-kurds/4804090.html	ئەردۆغان سورە لەسەر دەستتێوەردان لە کاروباری سوریا سەرەرای ناڕەزایی زۆر https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/turkey-syria-kurds/4804281.html
Text 9	Department Press Briefing - March 5, 2019 https://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2019/03/290013.htm	وەزارەتی دەرەوەی ئەمەریکا دەلێت شیانی هەیە لەسەر S 400 سزا بەسەر تورکیا بسەپێندرێت https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/us-turkey/4815556.html
Text 10	US, Taliban May Have Reached Accord on Troop Exit, VOA Told https://www.voanews.com/a/u-s-taliban-agree-on-troop-withdrawal-plan-sources-tell-voa/4759890.html	وەزیری دەرەوەی ئەمەریکا دەلێت لە سەر وتووێژی ئاشتی ئەفغانستان بەردەوامن https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/pompeo-afghanistan-peace-negotiations/4760841.html
Text 11	Democrat Senator Elizabeth Warren launches 2020 presidential bid https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/democrat-senator-elizabeth-warren-launches-2020-presidential-bid-190209174847096.html	سیناتۆر ئیلێزابێت وارن بە فەرمی هەلمەتەکانی بۆ هەلبژاردنی 2020 رادەگەیەنێت https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/4779988.html
Text 12	As U.S. withdraws, top general warns on Islamic State threat in Syria https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-usa/as-us-withdraws-top-general-warns-on-islamic-state-threat-in-syria-idUSKCN1PU1P5	فەرماندەی سەرکردەیەتی ناوەندی ئەمەریکا دەلێت سەرۆک ترامپ راوێژی لەگەلدا نەکردووە پێش بریاری کشانەوە لە سوریا https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/votel-on-us-withdrawal-in-syria-/4774034.html
Text 13	SpaceX Tests Crew Capsule in Flight to Space Station https://www.voanews.com/a/spacex-tests-crew-capsule-in-flight-to-space-station/4810472.html	کۆمپانیای سپەیس نێکس بۆ ئەتیکردنەوە نوێترین کەپسولی رەوانەی بنکەی والای دەکات https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/4810610.html
Text 14	History will judge UK, EU badly if they get Brexit wrong: Hunt https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-eu-hunt/history-will-judge-uk-eu-badly-if-they-get-brexit-wrong-hunt-idUSKCN1QP0SR	وەزیری دەرەوەی بەریتانیا: دەمانەوێت وەکو باشترین یەکێتی ئەوروپا بمێنینەوە دوای جیابوونەوە https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/hunt-uk-eu-brexit/4818748.html
Text 15	Trial Begins Against Turkish Employee of US Consulate https://www.voanews.com/a/trial-begins-against-turkish-employee-of-us-consulate/4848647.html	دادگاییکردنی فەرمانبەرێکی کونسولخانەی ئەمەریکا لە ئستەنبولا دەستپێنکرد https://www.dengiamerika.com/a/turkey-us/4848365.html

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