



The Presence of Domestication in the American Edition of the First Four 'Harry Potter' Books

Michael Fenger (Marie Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin, Poland)

Domestication is a strategy used in translation since ancient Rome. It involves a source language text being adapted to the target culture, as opposed to the source culture. For Lawrence Venuti (Venuti, 1995:20), a translation theorist, domestication is “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to target cultural values, bringing the author back home.”

The aim of the following work is an attempt to answer the question to what extent the process of domestication is present in contemporary literature, based on the first four volumes of the adventures of Harry Potter. I am going to profoundly analyze the differences in many respects which exist between the British and the American editions of the aforementioned series of books as a confirmation of the theories advanced by Lawrence Venuti. However, it is necessary to underline that the assumed aim of this project is not only to illustrate Lawrence Venuti's theory on domestication but rather an attempt to prove its common presence within the framework of even the same language. The Harry Potter series is a source of inspiration and a springboard to exemplify the aforementioned theory – the way it functions on a practical basis and an explanation why it is so.

The Americanized version of Harry Potter published by U.S. Scholastic Press afforded numerous opportunities to compare and contrast the UK and the U.S edition, and thus, with a multitude of lexical units, spelling alterations, dissimilar punctuation, grammar, syntax, and cultural differences, which will all be analyzed. Apart from the obvious alterations, as in spelling when colour becomes the American color, there are some inexplicable alterations, for instance, when Mr Dumbledore becomes Professor Dumbledore in the American version, which will be elaborated on.

References:

Venuti, Lawrence. 1995. *The Translator's Invisibility*. London – New York: Routledge.