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**Publication details:**

Perspectives: Studies in Translatology

v. 15

Chapter No. 1

pp. 1-14

**Publication Date:**

2007

**Publisher DOI:**

<http://dx.doi.org/10.2167/pst001.0>

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# Are Readers Lost in the Foreign Land? Investigating the Impact of Foreignised Translation in Guangzhou

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This paper reports on a translation impact study project in the Chinese city of Guangzhou. The project involved firstly presenting two renditions (presumably a foreignised one and a domesticated one) of one and the same English source text to a group of subjects and inviting them to respond to 10 preconceived statements about each rendition. Their responses were then statistically processed in order to answer these two research questions: (1) are the responses to the two renditions significantly different? and (2) if so, are there any significant correlations between responses to statements about the same rendition? The first half of this paper deals with the research design of the study, while the second half discusses its findings. With this study, we hope to contribute to an enhanced understanding of the impact of foreignised and domesticated translations – in this case on Chinese readers.

*doi: 10.2167/pst001.0*

**Keywords:** translation impact studies, exoticism, foreignisation, domestication, the familiar foreign, the foreign familiar

## Introduction

The present study was inspired by an earlier impact study of 35 university students conducted in the Chinese capital of Beijing in 2005 (Zhong *et al.*, forthcoming).<sup>1</sup> In that study, little evidence was found to substantiate hypotheses that, between a domesticated and foreignised rendition, one would be seen as more cognitively accessible, more reader-friendly or more indicative of a good writer, a good book or a developed/civilised society than the other. It was also found that the rendition categorised as 'domesticated' by other scholars had seemed foreignised to some subjects. Likewise, the 'foreignised' rendition was considered domesticated by certain subjects.

Reflections on the Beijing findings helped to set the research orientation of our investigation. Domestication and foreignisation are usually conceived as two distinct styles of translation and, according to Schleiermacher (1813/1992), involve either moving the author towards the reader or vice versa. These opposite styles present a choice of great consequence as, according to Lu (1991), they mean either shutting out the foreign culture or reforming the local culture. Venuti (1995) views them in a postcolonial context, where domestication

ethnocentrically reduces the foreign text to the target-language cultural values (i.e. those of the Anglo-American hegemony in his context), whereas foreignisation ethnodeviantly pressures the target language culture to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text.

Why was it then that the two distinct translation styles did not produce distinguishable impact on the Beijing subjects? Why was it that some of the Beijing subjects saw the domesticated (or foreignised) rendition as foreignised (or domesticated)? Was it because the subjects sampled for the Beijing project were too homogeneous? Was it because the 'Westernisation' of Chinese literary writing was already an accomplished project, as a result of which what used to be distinct writing styles were no longer distinct? Or was it simply because the two renditions were not as domesticated or foreignised as they were assumed to have been?

## **Research Design and Methodology of the Guangzhou Study**

To address the above questions, we decided to set two aims for this study. The first aim was to test the impact of the two renditions on a more heterogeneous sample of subjects in a different Chinese location. For this, we did what we could to compile a heterogeneous sample in the city of Guangzhou. The second aim was to examine the relationship between perceptions about either rendition. That is to say, we intended to find out if there was any correlation between how 'foreign' a text seemed to the subjects and what else they thought of the same text, whether it was labelled 'domesticated' or 'foreignised'. We pre-constructed two aspects of perceptions for this correlative investigation. One aspect was whether reading either rendition would induce an exotic feeling of 'being in a foreign country' and 'being in an unfamiliar place': this was to be the 'exotic' aspect. The other aspect was whether reading either rendition would induce a set of positive evaluations of the sociolinguistic settings of the text: hence this was to be the 'sociolinguistic' aspect. In short, the second aim was to examine the correlation or lack of correlation between the 'exotic' and 'sociolinguistic' perceptions of each rendition.

### **Research hypotheses**

To accomplish the two aims, the following two hypotheses were formulated:

- (1) That the two renditions would induce different perceptions by a group of subjects sampled in Guangzhou.
- (2) That there would be correlations between a subject's 'exotic' and 'sociolinguistic' evaluations of each rendition.

### **Research procedure**

We transplanted the survey procedure used in the Beijing study. This procedure involved presenting simultaneously two sample renditions (one foreignised and the other domesticated, each known as a guise or cue in the

study) of the source text (ST) to the sampled subjects, inviting them to respond to a list of pre-set statements about the two renditions. Then the responses were statistically analysed and interpreted to generate knowledge about the readers' perceptions. In the survey, the subjects were told that they were supposed to evaluate two 'texts' and no explanation whatever was made as to the origin, author, quality and type of the texts.

This procedure could be compared to the matched guise designed and used by Lambert (1967) and his associates to study language attitudes in Montreal in the 1960s. The matched guise had only one variable,<sup>3</sup> that of either English or French vernacular, whereas our study contained two variables, that of the rendition and that of the translator. Yet, we believed that the latter variable of our study was visible to the readers only through the former variable – cf. Venuti's (1995) 'invisibility' of the translator – as a result of which we hoped the latter would be adequately merged and submerged by the former. So we anticipated that our research procedure could also reveal what Lambert referred to as the subjects' 'higher degree of introspection' and 'more private reactions' to two contrasting items.

### The two sample renditions

The two renditions, cited by Wen and Gao (2003) as typical examples of foreignisation and domestication,<sup>2</sup> were extracts from two translations of Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*, first published in 1936. The 'foreignised' sample was taken from a translation by Huang and Zhu (1990) and shall be known as 'Sample Foreign' in this paper:

眼前的他穿着打了补丁、褪了色的军服，满头金发被太阳晒得像褪了色的短亚麻，跟战前她苦恋过的那个从容不迫、目光困倦的男孩子判若两人。然而他却一千倍地令她心神荡漾。从前的他，皮肤白皙，身材修长匀称，现在皮肤变成了古铜色，人又瘦。加上金黄的长髭像骑兵惯常留的那样，挂在嘴巴四周，这就使他看起来像个道道地地的大兵了。

The 'domesticated' sample was extracted from Fu's translation (1979); the 'Sample Domesticated' hereafter:

他回家时，身上穿着褪色补缀的军服，头发已被烈日灼晒成了漂过的麻屑一般，跟战前她所痴迷的那个潇洒风流的男子完全不同了。从前他是风度翩翩的，现在他变成了红铜色了，瘦了。两撇金黄色的长髭须挂在嘴角，竟是一个道地的兵大爷了。

Zhong *et al.* (forthcoming) presented a range of attributes used to classify the two samples as either foreignised or domesticated. We will not repeat that discussion, but merely reprint the original source text below.

This Ashley Wilkes in his faded, patched uniform, his blond hair bleached tow by summer suns, was a different man from the easy-going,

drowsy-eyed boy she had loved to desperation before the war. And he was a thousand times more thrilling. He was bronzed and lean now, where he had once been fair and slender, and the long golden moustache drooping about his mouth, cavalry style, was the last touch needed to make him the perfect picture of a soldier.

### The questionnaire used for testing the hypotheses

The Beijing study (Zhong *et al.*, forthcoming) used a questionnaire that contained 20 pairs of identical statements, each pair describing a judgement about the two renditions. The subjects were asked to indicate on a 1–5 scale to what extent they agreed with each statement. The statements had been constructed to match five preconceived aspects, i.e. four statements in each aspect. The multiple statements in each aspect had been necessitated by the purpose of that project, which was to quantitatively compare the perceptions of two different renditions.

Because this project was also designed to study relations and possible correlations between perceptions of each rendition, we envisaged that it would produce a much larger and more complex quantity of data than the one-dimensional Beijing study. So we decided to use a halved version of the Beijing questionnaire, i.e. its first 10 pairs of statements, two for each of the five aspects. Following are the 10 statements, each statement appearing twice in the questionnaire, one in relation to Sample Foreign and the other in relation to Sample Domesticated.<sup>4</sup>

- (1) I feel as if I am in a foreign country when reading the extract.
- (2) I find it difficult to understand the extract.
- (3) The writer of the extract is imaginative.
- (4) The book from which this extract is taken is cultivated.
- (5) The book extracted from was published in a prosperous society.
- (6) I find the scene described in the extract unfamiliar.<sup>5</sup>
- (7) The extract doesn't make sense to me.
- (8) The writer of the extract shows great literary expressiveness.
- (9) The book from which the extract is taken is a literary masterpiece.
- (10) The book extracted from was published in a civilised society.

The 10 statements were intended to belong to five preconceived aspects including:

- (1) Perceived exoticism, i.e. being in a foreign country (No. 1) and being in an unfamiliar scene (No. 6).
- (2) Perceived cognitive accessibility of the rendition (No. 2 and No. 7).
- (3) Perceived literary quality of the ST author (No. 3 and No. 8).
- (4) Perceived literary/cultural quality of the book extracted from (No. 4 and No. 9).
- (5) Perceived sociolinguistic settings of the book extracted from (No. 5 and No. 10).

### The interviews

In the survey, the subjects were presented with the questionnaire beginning with the two sample renditions, which were presented as Text A and Text B. Words like 'foreign' or 'domesticated' could frame responses and therefore did not appear on the questionnaire instructions. To maximise randomisation, half of the questionnaires had Sample Foreign preceding Sample Domesticated and the other half had Sample Domesticated preceding Sample Foreign. The subjects were told that they could always visit the samples to facilitate their responses to the statements about them. They were then asked to respond to each of the paired statements, one in relation to Sample Foreign and the other in relation to Sample Domesticated, by indicating a degree (from 1 to 5) to which they agreed with each statement.

### Subjects

We intended to create a more heterogeneous sample of subjects than in the Beijing study, but had neither the resources nor the Chinese official endorsement for doing a large-scale genuine random sampling. So we decided to adopt what we called a snowball sampling methodology. Lin, a co-author of this paper and recent returnee to China with an Australian degree in translation studies, was the core of the snowball and started the sampling and survey by interviewing her acquaintances, including friends and former schoolmates and colleagues. Then, through the first batch of interviewees, she got the names and contact details of other potential interview candidates, whom she then approached and interviewed if their consent was acquired. Zhong helped with some of the interviews, at which he had additional extensive, open-ended and in-depth discussions with the subjects on issues not covered by the questionnaire, such as what had prompted or influenced their responses to some particular statements about either rendition.

Still, we selected interviewees with a view to acquire as heterogeneous a sample as possible. As a result, we sampled 36 subjects, including 17 males and 19 females. There was a considerable age diversity in the sample, as shown in Table 1. The professions of the subjects were also quite diverse, as shown by Table 2.

**Table 1** Age distribution of the subjects

<i>Age groups</i>	<i>Number of subjects</i>
Under 20	1
20 to 29	14
30 to 39	5
40 to 49	5
50 and above	5
Not revealed	6

**Table 2** Professions of the subjects

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Number of subjects</i>
Public administration	Cadres	1
	Teachers	3
State-owned enterprises	Engineers	6
	Labourers	5
Foreign ventures	Office staff	6
	Accountants	5
	IT specialists	1
Self-employed	Business persons	1
Not classified	Clerks	2
Not revealed	Not revealed	6

We would also like to add that only a couple of the subjects were known to have been to places other than Mainland China for brief visits, and none had lived in a foreign country. The information was important to our conception of the ‘familiar foreign’, to be discussed in the second half of this paper.

## Data and Data Analyses

We subjected the data of the survey to statistical analyses, and the results are presented in Tables 3–5. Table 3 addresses our first research hypothesis by comparing the responses to the two renditions and indicating if there are any statistically significant differences between perceptions about the two. The other two tables address the second hypothesis by examining the association between responses to Sample Domesticated (in Table 4) and Sample Foreign (in Table 5), especially between the ‘exotic’ perceptions (i.e. responses to Statements 1 and 6) and the linguistic, social and cultural evaluations (i.e. responses to the other statements).

## Was the Foreign Seen as Different from the Domestic?

The first hypothesis of our study was whether the two renditions would induce different perceptions. Statistical analysis of the data suggested that there were significant differences between responses to the two renditions in relation to three statements: 1, 3 and 8. The two renditions prompted no significantly different responses with regard to any of the other seven statements, yielding an ‘insignificant’ ratio of 7 to 3. That is to say, findings of our project presented a greater case for rejecting than accepting the first hypothesis. This was more or less consistent with the Beijing findings, when proportionally even fewer statements (3 out of the 20) showed significantly different responses.

**Table 3** Comparing statistics of responses to the two renditions

1. Statement #	2. Rendition	3. N	4. Means	5. Paired differences	6. Standard deviation	7. T value	8. Signif. level
1	Domestic	34	2.7941	-0.7353	1.5630	-2.743	0.010*
	Foreign		3.5294				
2	Domestic	33	2.0303	0.1818	0.5276	1.979	0.056
	Foreign		1.8485				
3	Domestic	33	2.8485	-0.8485	1.6793	-2.902	0.007*
	Foreign		3.6970				
4	Domestic	33	3.0606	-0.1515	1.4816	-0.587	0.561
	Foreign		3.2121				
5	Domestic	33	3.0303	0.1212	1.2185	0.571	0.572
	Foreign		2.9091				
6	Domestic	34	2.6471	-0.0588	0.6486	-0.529	0.600
	Foreign		2.5882				
7	Domestic	33	1.8182	0.3333	0.9895	1.935	0.062
	Foreign		1.4848				
8	Domestic	34	3.0882	-0.6765	1.7184	-2.295	0.028*
	Foreign		3.7647				



**Table 3 (Continued)**

1. Statement #	2. Rendition	3. N	4. Means	5. Paired differences	6. Standard deviation	7. T value	8. Signif. level
9	Domestic	34	2.8824	0.3529	1.4951	-1.376	0.178
	Foreign		3.2358				
10	Domestic	35	2.6571	0.1429	1.0612	0.796	0.431
	Foreign		2.7941				

\*Significant values, i.e. those of less than 0.05

**Table 4** Correlative values (Corr.) and significance values (Sign.) of responses to Sample Domesticated

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Corr.	N/A	0.005	0.466	0.313	0.117	-0.245	0.275	0.209	-0.123
	Sign.	N/A	0.977	0.006*	0.072	0.524	0.169	0.394	0.235	0.496
6	Corr.	-0.245	0.116	-0.327	-0.334	0.094	N/A	-0.262	-0.317	0.12
	Sign.	0.169	0.521	0.055	-0.054	0.597	N/A	0.135	0.068	0.5

\*Significant values, i.e. those of less than 0.05

**Table 5** Correlative values (Corr.) and significance value (Sign.) of responses to Sample Foreign

<i>Statements</i>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
1		Corr. N/A	0.284	0.276	-0.161	-0.284	-0.336	0.542	0.321	-0.21
		Sign. N/A	0.109	0.12	0.378	0.11	0.056	0.001*	0.064	0.242
6		Corr. -0.284	0.083	-0.076	0.13	N/A	0.44	-0.17	-0.109	0.185
		Sign. 0.11	0.647	0.673	0.471	N/A	0.009*	0.344	0.544	0.303

\*Significant values, i.e. those of less than 0.05

Table 3 presents the data in detail by indicating in Columns 1 and 2 the statement number and renditions and, in Columns 3–8, statistics of responses to each statement, i.e. the number of valid responses (Column 3), the means of responses (Column 4), the difference between responses in relation to the two renditions (Column 5), the standard deviation (Column 6), the T values (Column 7) used for deciding whether to reject the null hypothesis and the significance level (Column 8). We have adopted Miller *et al.*'s 'rule of thumb' for setting the level of significance (Sig.) at 0.05, which 'means that five times out of every 100 you would find a statistically significant difference even if there was none' (Miller *et al.*, 2002: 118). In other words, we have decided that any value of 0.05 or more is not acceptable for verifying the hypothesis.

Findings in relation to our first hypothesis seemed to have raised more questions than provided answers. Why was it that between the two 'exotic' statements, No. 1, which explicitly mentioned 'the foreign country', induced clearly distinguishable perceptions, whereas No. 6, which made an implicit allusion to a foreign land by means of an 'unfamiliar scene' induced indistinguishable perceptions? Then, why was it that Sample Foreign, which had seemingly relocated subjects to a foreign county, 'was not more difficult to understand' or 'did not make less sense' than Sample Domesticated?<sup>6</sup> Did this mean that, to the subjects involved here, what was foreign was not necessarily unfamiliar, strange, alien or outlandish? Furthermore, why was it that the subjects thought differently about the two texts in relation to both Statements No. 3 and No. 8? Why was it that, in the two instances, the difference was consistently biased in favour of the foreignised rendition to the effect of saying that its writer was more 'imaginative' and showed 'greater literary expressiveness' than the writer of the domesticated rendition? Last but not least, why was it that the two texts prompted no distinguishable evaluations in those other sociolinguistic aspects such as the book it was extracted from and the society it was published in? Some of these questions will be addressed in the next section when we discuss the possible correlation between perceptions.

### What Did 'the Foreign' Mean to the Subjects?

Our second hypothesis was that there would be correlations between a subject's 'exotic' perceptions and the 'sociolinguistic' evaluations of each rendition. Would a subject who felt like 'being in a foreign country' when reading a rendition also feel like 'being in an unfamiliar place'? Would he/she also find the text easier to understand? Would he/she also regard its author as a great writer? Would he/she also think it had been extracted from a great literary book? Would he/she reckon that the book extracted from had been published in a good society? In short, what did a sense of exoticism, or feeling 'like being in a foreign country', mean to him/her?

Assuming that, as Venuti (1995: 20) asserted, foreignised translation had the capacities of 'sending the reader abroad', Sample Foreign should better induce readers to imagine being in a foreign country when reading it. Indeed that is what we found when testing the first hypothesis – that our subjects agreed that they did feel as if they were abroad when reading it, more than when they were reading Sample Domesticated. But we soon came across a problem.

Being in a foreign country was meant to be in an unfamiliar, strange, alien and outlandish ambience where one naturally had to grope, to struggle, to tumble and to err – common knowledge to almost anyone who has experienced travelling abroad. Yet, the stand-alone statistics shown in Table 3 showed that our subjects did not find the scene described in Sample Foreign to be more unfamiliar than that described in Sample Domesticated. Nor did they think that Sample Foreign was more difficult to understand or made less sense than Sample Domesticated. Not to mention that they found the writer of Sample Foreign to be more imaginative and have greater literary expressiveness than that of Sample Domesticated. So was there any correlation between perceptions of the same rendition? Testing the second hypothesis provided opportunities to answer the above questions.

To test the second hypothesis, we subjected the responses in relation to each rendition to correlational calculations. We compared responses to Statement No. 1 (containing explicit mentioning of a foreign country) and those to the other statements. We then compared responses to Statement No. 6 (containing an allusion to a foreign country) and those to the other statements. Values generated on the basis of statistical comparisons for responses to statements in relation to Sample Domesticated were entered into Table 4. Values generated on the basis of statistical comparisons for responses to statements in relation to Sample Foreign were entered into Table 5. By doing so, we were able to gain an insight into the correlation between perceptions of each rendition.

To be able to establish a positive or reverse correlation between two responses, we must satisfy two conventions of reading statistics. The first convention, discussed above, specifies that the significance level of a correlative value should be less than 0.05 for the value to be valid. By this convention, only four of the correlative values (those marked \* in the tables) were significant. These four values were created by responses to Statements No. 1/No. 3 and to Statements No. 6/No. 7 in Table 4 and by responses to Statements No. 1/No. 8 and to Statements No. 6/No. 7 in Table 5.

The second convention is about the strength of a correlative value. We have adopted Black's scale of relative strength, according to which a correlative value should be greater than +0.4 or -0.4 to show a moderate positive or reverse association (and greater than +0.7 or -0.7 to show anything more than a strong association) (Black, 1993: 137). In line with this second convention, only three of the valid correlative values showed a moderate positive association. That is to say, we were able to establish a moderate positive correlation between the following three sets of perceptions.

- (1) In relation to Sample Domesticated, a subject who felt like being 'in a foreign country' when reading it had a moderate chance of also agreeing that the text was authored by an imaginative writer.
- (2) In relation to Sample Foreign, a subject who felt like being 'in a foreign country' when reading it had a moderate chance of also agreeing that the text was authored by a writer possessing great literary expressiveness.
- (3) In relation to Sample Foreign, a subject who found the scene described in the extract 'unfamiliar' had a moderate chance of also agreeing that the text 'did not make sense' to him/her.

In short, we were able to establish three instances of moderate positive correlation between 'exotic' perceptions and positive sociolinguistic evaluations of either text. Two of the three were found between feeling like being 'in a foreign country' and seeing the writer of a text as 'imaginative' (in relation to Sample Domesticated) and 'literarily expressive' (in relation to Sample Foreign). The other was found between 'finding the scene' unfamiliar and finding it 'not making sense' (in relation to Sample Foreign). Other than that, there was negligible or no correlation at all between the perceptions in the other 33 instances, as shown in Tables 4 and 5.

## Conclusion

In this paper, we have discussed the findings of an impact study project completed in the Chinese city of Guangzhou involving a quite heterogeneous sample of 36 local residents. The subjects were asked to review two renditions of the same source text, heuristically selected to represent foreignised translation and domesticated translation. They then responded to a list of statements about the two renditions. Their responses were statistically analysed and tabled to investigate whether they experienced any differences between the two texts, and whether there was any association between their perceptions of the individual texts.

The study yielded two major findings:

- (1) There were no significant differences in the way our subjects perceived the two renditions as far as most of the predetermined aspects were concerned. Only in a few aspects were there any significant differences: subjects tended to agree that they felt like 'being in a foreign country' when reading Sample Foreign, and that Sample Foreign was authored by an 'imaginative' and 'literarily expressive' writer.
- (2) There was very limited correlation between an 'exotic' feeling produced by reading a text and other, sociolinguistic evaluations of that same text. To our surprise, there was not even any correlation between feeling like 'being in a foreign country' when reading a text and 'finding the scene (described in that text) unfamiliar'.

Of these two findings, we believe the latter is of greater significance as it could challenge some seemingly commonsensical assumptions in relation to translation theory – assumptions and concepts including the notion and rationale of foreignised translation. For example, the foreign as embodied by a foreign country, language and culture was usually taken to mean the unfamiliar, the unknown, the alien, the strange and the outlandish. When Venuti (1995) promoted using translation as a political project to send readers abroad via foreignised translation, he relied on two premises: that foreignisation would result in cognitive discomfort in the readers and that this could sabotage the cultural hegemony of the target language (i.e. the Anglo-American culture). The two premises were common in the context of Chinese translation theories, too. Wen and Gao (2003), whose work facilitated our construction of the two guises (i.e. the renditions), believed that foreignised

translation was not reader-friendly. In his analysis of brand name translation into Chinese, Zhong (1999) himself echoed Venuti when he argued that transliteration, a method he identified as pro-foreignisation, served the interest of the project of Westernisation.

But in this Guangzhou study, we found no correlation between feeling like 'being in a foreign country' when reading a text and 'finding the scene (described in that text) unfamiliar'. We also found that a text that induced a feeling of 'being in a foreign country' was not seen as cognitively inaccessible, at least no more so than if the text did not induce an exotic feeling. Furthermore, there was no evidence that the subjects made positive or negative sociolinguistic evaluations of either text, even if reading it induced them to feel like 'being in a foreign country', except that its author might be seen as more imaginative or literarily more expressive. In other words, the findings of the Guangzhou study shattered Venuti's two premises.

Our findings also sabotaged the rationale of foreignised translation. Those like Lu who aspired to force the Chinese culture to register the linguistic and cultural subtleties of a foreign text would be disappointed to learn that the foreign language culture had already become familiar and mundane to the current Chinese readers, and that the cultural and social values of a foreign text (excluding its author) were seen as no better than those of a Chinese text. Should this be true, what was the point of foreignised (and, by analogy, domesticated) translation?

With regard to our readers, their perceptions were found to have been much more complex, inconsistent and diffuse than may have been assumed by translation theorists. Subjects might agree that a text identified as foreignised by academics was indeed exotic. They might also agree that an exotic text was authored by a more imaginative and literarily expressive writer. But as to whether an exotic text was accessible or familiar, and whether it was taken from a quality book or published in a good society, some of them agreed and others disagreed. And they might even have agreed sometimes and disagreed at other times. On the whole, we had yet to find a consistent pattern or causal relationship between an exotic feeling and positive sociolinguistic evaluations or otherwise of a text, which could then be used to justify either a wish for or a fear of foreignised translation.

And then there were those concepts, for instance 'the foreign', frequently discussed in translation studies, which needed to be rethought if the findings of this study were to be taken seriously. Though we did not have evidence saying that the foreign was the familiar, the known, the intimate, the mundane and the endearing, we found that the foreign did not necessarily mean the unfamiliar, the unknown, the alien, the strange and the outlandish to our group of Guangzhou subjects. This was in spite of the fact that none of our subjects had spent substantial periods of time in countries other than China. Still, it was obvious that our subjects were anything but simpletons vulnerable to the impact of one translation style or another. They live in a globalised age, and so do we; hence it is time in Translation Studies to start contemplating new conceptual possibilities, such as 'the familiar foreign' or 'the foreign familiar' on the one hand, and the 'alien local' and the 'unknown local' on the other.

## Correspondence

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## Notes

1. A sequel has now been completed, in the form of a similar study conducted in the Taiwanese city of Douliou (Zhong *et al.*, 2008) – ‘Foreign is not unfamiliar: A translation impact study involving Taiwanese subjects’.
2. The two renditions were cited as typical examples of foreignisation and domestication by Wen and Gao (2003) describing a major research project funded by the State Social Sciences Foundation, which is the central research funding council of the People’s Republic of China (Project Serial No. 01BYY030).
3. In their project, Lambert and his associates constructed two ‘guises’ out of English and French utterances by the same speaker: hence the choice of spoken language (English or French) constituted the single variable. See Lambert (1967) for details of the original matched-guise study.
4. The original questionnaire used to survey the subjects was in Chinese. The statements reprinted in this paper are English literal translations by the authors.
5. ‘Unfamiliar’ is an English rendition, not an exclusive or precise equivalent, of the Chinese word 陌生 (pronounced [mosheng]), which means unfamiliar, strange, alien and outlandish in the original language. We had to select this rendition for presentation in this paper but would like our readers to remember the other meanings of the word.
6. In actuality, statistics indicated (see the ‘paired differences’ of responses to Statements No. 2 and No. 7 in Table 3) that Sample Domesticated was seen as more cognitively inaccessible than Sample Foreign, though not to a significant extent.

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