

## Translation with Commentary: Emphasising Culture-Specific Items


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A detailed illustration of a study desk. On the left, a wooden bookshelf is filled with books. In the center, a window looks out onto a tree. On the windowsill, there are several potted plants and small decorative objects. On the desk, there are stacks of books, an open book, and a quill pen.

# Translation with Commentary: Emphasising Culture-Specific Items

This presentation explores the nuanced process of translating English texts into Macedonian, focusing on culture-specific items. Through detailed commentary on excerpts from *A Very British Love Story* by John Nichol and *You are What You Read* by Jodie Jackson, we examine translation dilemmas and strategies employed.

Special attention is given to how cultural references are handled to balance fidelity and accessibility. The discussion emphasises the translator's role in bridging cultural divides through strategic choices.



# Translation Challenges in Cross-Cultural Contexts

## Complexity of Culture-Specific Items

Such items carry meanings deeply rooted in their native contexts, requiring adaptations or explanations during translation.

## Linguistic Nuances

Finding equivalent expressions that preserve tone and intent without distorting the message is essential yet challenging.

## Maintaining Reader Engagement

The translated text must resonate while avoiding alienation caused by unfamiliar cultural references.





# The Two Excerpts: Source Texts and Context

## A Very British Love Story

A cultural exploration of British social customs and romantic narratives, rich in idioms and social references.

- British humour nuances
- Traditional customs
- Locale-specific vocabulary

## You are What You Read

Emphasises identity through media consumption, integrating modern cultural jargon and literary allusions.

- Media culture references
- Contemporary idiomatic expressions
- Societal commentary



**A Very British Love Story** by John Nichol is a compelling non-fiction account that delves into the history of the iconic Supermarine Spitfire aircraft and the individuals who flew and maintained it during World War II. Published in May 2018, the book quickly became a Sunday Times bestseller and was named WHSmith’s Non-Fiction Book of the Year 2018

Commonwealth	Commonwealth	<a href="https://enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=12321">https://enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=12321</a> The term <b>Commonwealth</b> , as defined in Macedonian Encyclopedia, refers to a community of nations that were once part of the British Empire and have maintained various forms of association and cooperation. Some of these nations continue to recognize the British monarch as their sovereign. The term "Commonwealth" was first used by Oliver Cromwell in 1649 to describe the English Republic and later the Protectorate, which included Scotland and Ireland. In 1900, the Commonwealth of Australia was established, and the 1926 Imperial Conference recognized the dominions as members of the British Commonwealth of Nation
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**Translation**  
Nichol, John. *Spitfire. A Very British Love Story*. Simon & Schuster UK Ltd., 2018.  
pp. 32- 36.  
**Glossary**

Auxiliary Air Force	Помошни воздухопловни сили	Deighton, L. <i>Lovac. Zračna bitka za Britaniju</i> . Centar za informacije i publicitet. 1984. prev. Konstantin Miles the term "Auxiliary Air Force" refers to a reserve component of the Royal Air Force (RAF) in the United Kingdom. Established in 1924, it was envisioned by Lord Trenchard as a corps of civilians who would serve in flying squadrons during their spare time. This concept aimed to bolster the RAF's capabilities without the need for full-time personnel.
Basutoland	Басутоланд	<a href="https://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?ID=3">https://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?ID=3</a> 6163
Battle of Britain	Битката за Британија	Deighton, L. <i>Lovac. Zračna bitka za Britaniju</i> . Centar za informacije i publicitet. 1984. prev. Konstantin Miles
Battle of France	Битката за Франција	<a href="https://enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=59137">https://enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=59137</a>



**You Are What You Read** by Jodie Jackson is a compelling exploration of how the media we consume shapes our mental health, worldview, and societal well-being. Drawing from her Master's in Applied Positive Psychology, Jackson delves into the pervasive negativity in news reporting and its profound effects on individuals and communities

**Term:** *Learned helplessness*  
**Macedonian:** научена беспомошност  
**Source:** [Bib.irb.hr](#)

**Commentary:** This psychological concept, first developed by Seligman, describes a state where individuals believe they have no control over their situation. Translators should ensure cultural accessibility, especially if the concept isn't widely taught or known in the target culture.

**Translation**

Jackson, Jodie. *You are What You Read*. Unbound, 2019. pp. 63-71.

**Glossary**

Source term	Target term	Source
adaptation	прилагодување	<a href="#">Англиско македонски речник од Зозе Мургоски</a> Bujas, Ž. <i>Veliki englesko-hrvatski rječnik</i> . Nakladni zavod Globus, 2005.
American Society of News Editors	Американското друштво на уредници на весници	<a href="#">Англиско македонски речник од Зозе Мургоски</a> <a href="https://repozitorij.fpzg.unizg.hr/islandora/object/fpzg%3A906/datastream/PDF/view">https://repozitorij.fpzg.unizg.hr/islandora/object/fpzg%3A906/datastream/PDF/view</a>
anger	лутина	<a href="#">Англиско македонски речник од Зозе Мургоски</a>
anxiety	анксиозност	<a href="#">Англиско македонски речник од Зозе Мургоски</a>
apathy	апатија	<a href="#">Англиско македонски речник од Зозе Мургоски</a>
attitude	став	<a href="#">Англиско македонски речник од Зозе Мургоски</a>

# Classic British Love Stories



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## American Society of News Editors

- Macedonian:** Американското друштво на уредници на весници
- Commentary:** This term refers to a specific American institution that is integral to the functioning of journalism in the U.S. It promotes ethical standards and works to ensure quality reporting. For non-American audiences, the concept might need additional context, as there may not be a similar organization or cultural equivalent in other countries. The translator might need to briefly explain this organization's role and significance in the media landscape of the U.S.

## Cynicism

- Macedonian:** цинизам
- Commentary:** The term refers to a general distrust of others' motives, often with a belief that people are primarily driven by self-interest. While the word "cynicism" exists in both languages, its cultural connotations may differ. In some cultures, cynicism is seen as a negative trait that undermines societal trust, while in others it might be viewed as a form of intellectual or emotional survival, particularly in response to political corruption or societal failure. In translation, it's important to recognize whether the term has the same weight or connotation in the target culture.

## Learned Helplessness

- Macedonian:** научена беспомошност
- Commentary:** This psychological term refers to a condition where an individual, after experiencing repeated failures or uncontrollable events, comes to believe they have no control over their circumstances. It's a concept developed by psychologists Martin Seligman and Steven Maier. For audiences unfamiliar with psychology, it may require some explanation or rewording. It is well-known in Western cultures, but in some other cultures, the psychological underpinnings of such behavior may not be as universally recognized or articulated. The translator should ensure the concept is explained properly to avoid misinterpretation.





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## Positive Psychology

- Macedonian:** ПОЗИТИВНА ПСИХОЛОГИЈА
- Commentary:** Positive psychology is a relatively recent field within psychology that focuses on strengths, well-being, and flourishing, rather than pathology or dysfunction. While it's a prominent field in Western academic circles, it may not be as familiar in non-Western cultures where traditional approaches to psychology focus more on illness and treatment. The translator might need to add a brief explanation of this field to ensure understanding. Moreover, the idea of focusing on "positive" human traits might be culturally specific, especially in societies where more emphasis is placed on collective or social values rather than individual well-being.

## News Anchor

- Macedonian:** ВОДИТЕЛ НА ВЕСТИ
- Commentary:** A news anchor is a key figure in delivering news in a television or radio format. While the term has a direct translation in both languages, in cultures with a strong tradition of state-run media, the role of the news anchor may carry different levels of trust and authority. In some countries, the news anchor is seen as an official voice, whereas in others, they might be perceived as entertainers. The translator should consider whether additional context is necessary to convey the role's influence on public opinion and the media.





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## Strategies in Translation: Domestication vs Foreignisation



### Domestication

This strategy involves adapting the source text to align closely with the cultural norms, values, and expectations of the target audience. By localizing references, idioms, and cultural nuances, domestication makes the text more familiar and comprehensible for readers, effectively reducing foreignness and potential barriers to understanding. It is particularly useful when the goal is to engage readers smoothly, though it may risk diluting the original cultural essence.

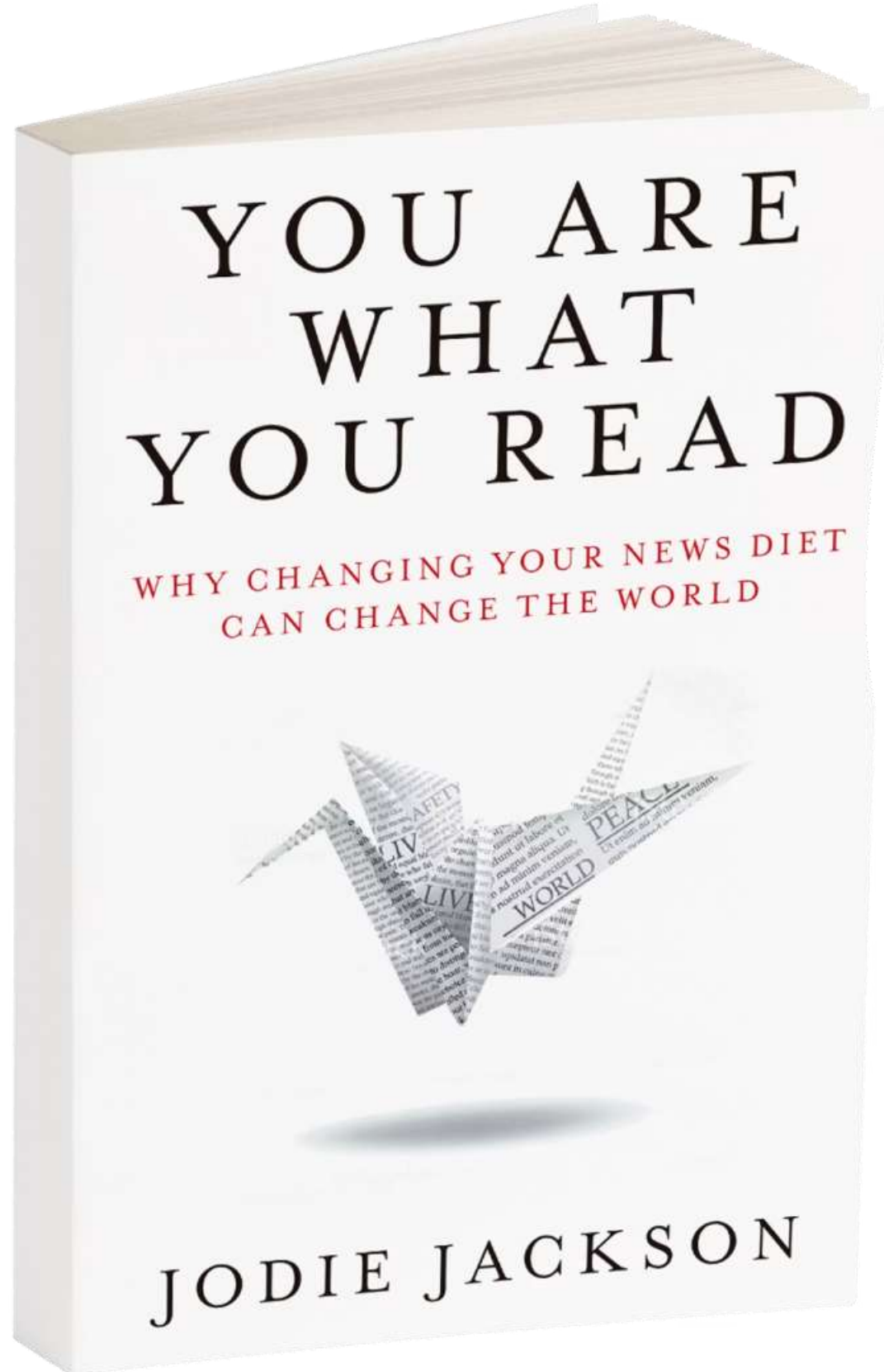


### Foreignisation

Foreignisation consciously retains elements of the source culture, preserving original terms, references, and cultural markers even if they seem unfamiliar or challenging to the target reader. This approach respects the uniqueness and authenticity of the source text, offering readers a direct encounter with a different culture. While it may increase the cognitive effort needed for comprehension, it also encourages cultural awareness and appreciation of the original context.

Both domestication and foreignisation deeply influence how readers engage with translated texts, shaping the balance between cultural accessibility and authenticity. The translator's choice of strategy affects not only readability but also the transmission of cultural identity, potentially transforming the reader's experience and perception of the source culture.





# Advantages & Disadvantages of Domestication

## Advantages

- Fosters immediate reader connection
- Reduces misunderstandings of foreign concepts
- Enhances readability

## Disadvantages

- Risk of cultural dilution
- Loss of original context authenticity
- Potential oversimplification





# Advantages & Disadvantages of Foreignisation

## Advantages

- Maintains cultural integrity of source text
- Educates target audience about foreign culture
- Retains original flavour and nuances

## Disadvantages

- May alienate or confuse readers
- Potential for reduced accessibility
- Requires additional explanation or footnotes



# Practical Application in the Presented Translations

1

## Identification of Culture-Specific Items

Recognising idiomatic, historical, and social terms that require attention.

2

## Strategic Choice Deployment

Applying domestication for clarity or foreignisation to preserve authenticity based on target audience and text purpose.

3

## Result Evaluation

Assessing reader comprehension and cultural impact through feedback and linguistic analysis.





# Key Takeaways and Future Considerations

## Balance is Crucial

No one-size-fits-all approach; translation requires flexible strategies tailored to text and audience.

## Culture-Specific Items Demand Care

They shape reader experience and require careful strategy selection to preserve meaning and accessibility.

## Continuous Reflection

Translators should evaluate their choices against impact, adapting methods as cultural contexts evolve.

This presentation invites ongoing dialogue on how best to navigate the intersection of language, culture, and translation strategy.



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