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## Translation Quality Assessment in the Literary Text based on House Model

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### ABSTRACT

The present study aims at Translation Quality Assessment in the Literary Text based on House Model. The main purpose of the present study is to assess the Persian translation of *The Sense of an Ending* based on House's model of Translation Quality Assessment. The researcher used the translated text by Hasan Kamshad. The main problem of the study is judging or assessing literary translation. The translation assessment was based on overt and covert errors and mismatches. The selected pages of translation were analyzed using five categorizations of overtly erroneous errors, on the other hand. The analysis was shown in the tables based on the criteria and the researcher answered the question. It was investigated that any minor or major linguistic changes lead to the transferring the message of original text. With regard to the extra-linguistic effects of translation texts, there was literary effects and changes under any manipulation of translation texts especially in the translation of literary texts such as *the sense of an ending*.

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## 1- INTRODUCTION

It is believed that in Muslim society, the term "assessment" plays a fundamental role in human life and believe that God can assess our daily life, not others. Although the process of comparison to assess the quality of something may seem logical and necessary, there are approaches to translation quality assessment that disregard the comparison of source texts with target texts altogether focusing solely on the translation, for example, the literary-descriptive approach (House, 2009).

House (1997) stated "Evaluating the quality of translation presupposes a theory of translation. Thus, different views of translation lead to different concepts of translational quality and hence different ways of assessing it" (p. 1). Different aspect and concepts with considering to TQA in various schools of translation that are empirically based, transparent, and at least estimating something like intersubjective validation propagators of this approach have an idea that the quality of a translation can most significantly be connected to the "human factor", the translator, whose realization and rendition of the original and her decisions and towards "the optimal translation" are hard rooted in personal science, visions, interpretative skills, and artistic literary competence. How does a person understand when a translation is good? House (2010) points out that the answer to this simple question lies at the heart of all regards with translation criticism.

Bassnett (2006) explains that translation studies containing translation criticism that has been expanding as a distinguished discipline. But, in attempting to assess the quality of a translation one addresses the heart of any theory of translation which is the serious question of the nature of translation or, more particularly, the nature of the relationship between source text and its translation text. Thus, translation is basically an operation in which the meaning of linguistic units is to be held equivalent across languages. According to House, three various opinions of meaning could be prominent. Each of which to various perceptions of translation evaluation. In various opinions, the TQA has its own parameters; in mentalist view of as a concept in language users' heads, translation is likely to be intuitive and interpretative. If meaning is seen as expanding and resulting from, an externally observable reaction, translation evaluation is likely to include response based methods, and if is seen as appearing from larger textual stretches of language in use, involving both context and situational and cultural. But commonly it is regarded to be the evaluation of the criterion of goodness of a piece of translation; in fact, it is a type of measurement far from of noting only the good points and defects (House, 2010).

Translation is not just replacing the word, phrases, and sentences from one language into another one. It also

contains preserving the style and of meaning, cultural elements, social traits and literary genre of the ST into TT (Newmark, 1988). Readers of translation especially literary translation have great expectations. They look for entertainment. They also ask what they read to be amusing and being able to produce magic. The literary translator's job is to recreate the work of art precisely in such a way that it is true to the original and being equally enchanting and perceptive. Beauty, color, sound, and sense must be captured by the translation. Two main factors pave the way to this end, the translator's competence and capabilities and translation quality assessment that has been the main concern of many scholars and translation researchers. It is generally believed that something that is, can be manageable. In the field of translation quality assessment, this means that without some tools to assess the quality of the translation, it is not possible to improve translation quality and if the translation quality is good, how to keep it in that way.

As every community has its own specific culture, traditions, and language with different structures. Consequently, every source text has its own linguistic, semantic, and pragmatic structures that can be different from those of the target text. Thus, bearing this in mind, the translator should take a specific strategy to transfer the meaning and structure of the original text into text. Failing to recognize the structure of the source text and the way of rendering the structure into language affects the quality.

Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) is a type of evaluation, but what is "evaluation"? Michael Scriven defines it as follows: "Evaluation is taken to mean the determination of merit, worth, or significance" (Scriven, 2007, p. 1, as cited in Williams, 2009). This definition itself presents a problem: How value or worth is to be defined, is it moral, aesthetic or utilitarian? By extension, "evaluation" involves asking a question that has challenged thinkers from the earliest time: Is a particular thing good? (Williams, 2009).

Just like evaluation in the broad sense, TQA can be quantitative or qualitative: it can be based on mathematical/statistical measurement (as in the case of most academic instruments) or on readers' responses, interviews and questionnaires (e.g. Nida). TQA can be diagnostic (determining areas for improvement at the beginning of a course of study), formative (measuring progress and giving feedback during a course of study) or summative (measuring the results of learning). In Williams's view, TQA cannot and should not be values-free: to be useful, it must be based on criteria of goodness. Otherwise, all we do is [to] describe defects and strong points in translations.

Translation evaluation is done in many ways and by any means. However, it seems that there are no common yardsticks in assessing translation quality. Both diachronically and synchronically, translation assessment of a particular work does not yield unified results.

Scholars have developed models of quality assessment aiming to provide a systematic method to evaluate translations that allow for "reproducible, intersubjective judgment" (Laubscher 151).

Indeed, translation quality assessment models are commonly criticized for not providing help in practical terms (Laubscher 158). In order to overcome this, many authors (Hönig 6; McAlester 232; Waddington, "Different Methods" 312; Rothe-Neves 117; Williams, Translation Quality Assessment 18) suggest that a more extensive application of the models is needed as they complain of a lack of empirical evidence and the restricted type of texts they have been used on. In spite of the subjective nature of the notion of quality, the lack of universally accepted criteria and the anecdotal evidence provided by the literature, Lynne Bowker emphasizes the need to have models to assess translation quality and provide meaningful feedback to the different parties involved in the translation process (183). House (1977) is one of the first scholars in the field of translation studies who specifically addresses the problem of translation quality assessment by developing a theoretical model for this purpose, which is based upon the concept of equivalence. First, House (1977) finds it necessary to (re) define a number of key terminologies such as translation and function of the text. Consequently, she defines (adequate) translation as "the replacement of in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language" (Pop. 29-30) elaborates a model of translation quality assessment.

House, furthermore, illustrates the function of a particular text practically the function of the text consisting of an educational and interpersonal functional component may be summed up in the following way: the addresser's main purpose is to inform, to pass on factual information as precisely and efficiently as

possible. However, he also wants to make sure that the information is understood properly by the addressees – a novice in his special field – therefore, he adjusts the texts to the particular needs of the addressees. (House 1977, pp. 76-7).

Davy (1999, p. 183) states, a literary translation must reflect the imaginative, the intellectual and the intuitive writing of the author. In fact, literature is distinguished by its aesthetics. Little concern has been devoted to the aesthetics of literary translations because these translations are popularly perceived as unoriginal. In literature, the term aesthetic is used as an adjective for literary works because it is a literary work that carries the intuitive, imaginative and intellectual writings of the author. A literary translation must reflect these qualities. The researcher concluded that different types of translation equivalences can be achieved between two languages.

According to House (1997), the essence of translation lies in a functional match with an ST, two important mismatches must be considered. The first one is overtly erroneous error and another one is a covertly erroneous error. From these above-mentioned elements, finally, she introduced two types of translation which were suitable for different texts based on their situational dimensions and functional equivalence. These two translational types were overt and covert translations. Overt translation is a kind of translation in which TT addressees are not directly addressed. It is overtly a translation. It is also tied to the source language and culture. It should remain as intact as possible. It is a straight-forward translation. Overt translation has got less cultural problems than the covert one.

Judgments of the quality of a translation depend on a large variety of factors that enter into any social evaluative statement. The process of translation criticism, i.e., it is the linguistic analysis which provides grounds for arguing an evaluative.

[...] The choice of an overt or a covert translation depends not on the text alone, or on the translator's subjective interpretation of the text, but also on the reasons for the translation, the implied readers, on a variety of publishing and marketing policies, i.e., on factors which clearly have nothing to do with translation as a linguistic procedure because these are social factors which concern human agents as well as socio-cultural, political or ideological constraints and which—in the reality of translation practice—turn out to be often more influential than linguistic considerations or the professional competence of the translator herself. (House 2001, p. 254).

## 2- BODY

In order to produce an acceptable and functional translation, an assessment should be done. For this purpose, a piece of translation should be evaluated according to the framework, with a definite criterion. The main purpose of the present study is to assess the Persian translation of *The Sense of an Ending* based on House's model of Translation Quality Assessment. In Iran, there are translations especially in the field of literature that have low quality. It can be due to the fact Iranian translators are less familiar with or less interested in the translation quality and the criteria and standards by which translation should be evaluated.

Quality of literary translation can be a fundamental issue for Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) approaches. The serious concern is how to measure and evaluate this quality. Some scholars prompted different approaches to assess the translation, however, it appears that among the proposed approaches, only a few of them sound promising. The researcher used one of the models of Julianne House.

To compare the original textbook of the sense of ending translated by Hasan Kamshad in order to identify the quality of the translated version of *The Sense of an Ending* by Hasan Kamshad based on House TQA model.

The present study focuses on translation quality assessment of Persian translation of Julian Bronzes' *The Sense of an Ending* translated by Hasan Kamshad and two other translators (Noora Mousasi, HusseinFaqani). The researcher used the translated text by Hasan Kamshad. The main problem of the study is judging or assessing literary translation. The researcher found that translators or students of translation may have problems while translating from English to Persian, especially literary translation. The present study is related to previous studies as most studies stress the importance of assessing in literary translation and that readers encounter the problem of untranslatability or unacceptable terms in literary translation. The above-mentioned studies place emphasis on the application of translation quality assessment as a criterion in literary translation. The present study is a comparative descriptive study of the chosen Persian literary texts and its English counterparts. It examines the

original English text and Persian equivalents.

In the present study, the researcher used the book *The Sense of an Ending* which was the winner of the Man Booker Prize 2011. It has been mentioned that the works of Julian Barnes are full of senses and beauties that attract every reader.

The translation scholars assert that the most problematic area in translation is because the original message should be transferred into the target language while preserving emotion, aesthetic values and literary elements like simile, metaphor, and pun antithesis. The perfectibility of a translation means that the translation version could make the same understanding and emotional load for the target reader as the original one. Otherwise, it is too much simple to do a literal translation and rewrite the words based on meaning.

### **3- DATA ANALYSIS**

The main concern of this study is how translation is assessed and judged by the model of House. In this regard, the researcher prepared Persian translation by Hasan Kamshad in order to achieve the goals of this study. The present study is based on qualitative design. The study is going to assess the quality of the Persian translation of *The Sense of an Ending* a novel by Julian Barons (2011) in contrast with its original text according to the Julian House's TQA Model (2015). First, the original text will be read and then compared to its translation to find the strategies used for translation according to the mentioned model. This assessment is based on the similarity between the source text and the target text in terms of the register variables, the genre, and the ideational and interpersonal meaning. Among the theories of literary translation assessments developed by the various scholars, the researcher selected TQA Model by Julian House's (2014). This theory was endorsed by most researchers and had been revised and used in a number of studies recently. And the main goal of translation assessment or judgment is to recognize the good from the bad, the right from the wrong and create rules or theoretical framework for pedagogical and research purposes.

*The Sense of an Ending* is the story of one man coming to terms with the mutable past. Laced with trademark precision, dexterity and insight, it is the work of one of the world's most distinguished writers. Tony Webster and his clique first met Adrian Finn at school. Sex-hungry and book-hungry, they would navigate the girl-less sixth form together, trading in affectations, in-jokes, rumor and wit. Maybe Adrian was a little more serious than the others, certainly more intelligent, but they all swore to stay friends for life.

The researcher firstly talks about translation quality assessment theoretically. Then she focuses on House's TQA model (2014) which she wants to use it as a theoretical framework for her research. Based on the aforesaid model, this study is going to assess the Persian translation of the English book written by Julian Barnes and translated by Hasan Kamshad. According to House *The sense of an Ending* the literary texts should be translated overtly. Therefore, the translator had to use overt translation to translate this book from English into Persian. Now, based on the features of overt translation, this translation of the "*The Sense of an Ending*" will be evaluated.

As the researcher was concerned about translation quality assessment, she selected this field of research. After selecting the materials of study in a systemic randomly way, the researcher compared and assessed the ST and TT on the base of House's TQA.

Model (2015). For assessing the translation, she's going to read and analyze the ST according to the model's factors and then compared it with TT step by step as following ST was analyzed in order to its profile containing the register was obtained. A register analysis was prepared to realize the source text genre; a statement of the function of the source text relevant to ideational and interpersonal definitions was made; the target text was treated in the same steps as the source text was taken; The ST and TT's profile was compared to realize mismatches and overt errors through comparative analysis of both ST and TT with regard to House's overt and covert translation. The explanation of quality of translation was prepared with reference to the translation result;

The errors were summarized in the shape of tables to affirm the error quantity and preparing concluding remarks about translation quality. The researcher used 10 percent of the book (about 23 pages) was selected as the sample. To find the frequency interval, 234 was divided by 23; the result was 10. Every 10th page of the book (source text)

included the pages of 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 110, 120, 130, 140, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, and 230 based on which the text analysis was performed and compared with the TT.

Table 1. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 1; **not translated**

Page				English text	Persian translation
50				So I've been told," I said feebly	به سستی گفتم : اینطور شنیدم
50				Because they don't depend on material in the same way	اتکای آنها به مصالح با هم فرق می کند
60				kissed me <u>good</u> night properly	به درستی آن شب مرا بوسید.

Table 2. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 2; **slight change in meaning**

Page				English text	
10				a river rushing nonsensically upstream, its wave and wash lit by <u>half a dozen chasing torch beams</u>	رودی را که به شکل غریبی رو به بالا دست میروود ونور <u>بند شش چراغ قوه</u> بر موجها و شکسته موجهایش می تابد.
50				Wouldn't mind if my dad had <u>half a dozen</u> wives."	من حرفی نداشتم اگر پدرم <u>شش هفت تا زن</u> می گرفت.

Table 3. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 3; **Distortion of meaning**

Page	English text	Persian translation
30/16	Camus said that suicide was the only true philosophical question	کامو می گوید خود کشتی یگانه مسئله واقعی فلسفی است . کامو گفت : خودکشتی تنها مسئله فلسفی واقعی است .
50	Ted Hughes	تدهیوز
70	Veronica kissed me nearer the corner of my lips than the center ,and then left	من ورنیکا را بوسیدم ورنیکا مرا بوسید.

Table 4. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 4; **significant change in meaning**

Page	English text	Persian translation
10	a river rushing <u>nonsensically</u> upstream, its wave and wash lit by half a dozen <u>chasing torch beams</u>	رودی را که به شکل غریبی رو به بالا دست می‌رود و نور بنچ ششچراغ قوه بر موجها و شکسته موجهایش می‌تابد
30	prim virgin	باکره ی سنگین و رنگین

Table 5. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 5; **breach of SL**

Page	English text	Persian translation
10	bathwater long gone cold behind a locked door	آب وان را که پشت در بسته مدتی است سرد شده درست آن : مدتی است که آب وان پشت در بسته سرد شده است .
30	Camus said that suicide was the only true philosophical question	کامو می‌گوید خودکشی یگانه مسئله واقعی فلسفی است . کامو گفت : خودکشی تنها مسئله فلسفی واقعی است .

Table 6. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 6; **creative translation**

Page	English text	Persian translation
30	“Henry the Eighth, Col?” Adrian <u>suggested.</u>	ایدرین به سخن آمد
40	he depended on us	او به ما متکی است .
50	they seemed to	در حالی که

Table 7. Analysis of text based on overt translation, type 7; **cultural filtering**

Page	English text	Persian translation
30	VD-riddled whore.	روسی سوزاکی در اصل زن فاحشه ایدزی بوده است .
50	they seemed to be an organic continuation of her mind and personality, whereas mine struck me as functionally separate, straining to describe a character I hoped to grow into	در حالی که کتابهای من به نظرم هر یک برای خود سازی می‌زنند تا شاید آدمی را توصیف کنند که من امید داشتم روزی بشوم.
50	Of course, everyone’s wondering what Ted Hughes will do when he <u>runs out of</u> animals.”	البته همه در حیرتند که وقتی حیوانات تدهیوز نه بکشد چه می‌کند .

The covert and overt errors were done to analyze the translation of the sense of understanding based on the systematic sampling and the above tables show the claim. The researcher asked three raters who previously worked on House (1997) model to decide on the kind of errors determined by the researcher. They confirmed the data analysis. The researcher used SPSS software to calculate correlations between the three raters' ratings and that of the researcher. She used the formula of Mackey & Gass (2005; 349) to calculate inter-rater reliability. The formula is;  $\frac{NR}{1+(N-1)R}$  where N is the number of raters (comprising the researcher and three other raters), and R is the average correlation among the raters. The following shows the types of errors, frequency, and percentage.

Table 8. The frequency and percentages of types of errors

Types of errors	Frequency
Not translated	11
Slight change in meaning	7
Significant change in meaning	10
Distortion of meaning	10
Creative meaning	6
Cultural filtering	9
Breach of the language system	10
Total	66

As mentioned previously, covert translation, which focused on the case of language use the translator attempted to re-create an equivalent in the Persian text. Actually, the function of a covert translation was to reproduce in the target text the function the original has in its frame and discourse world. Covert translation is thus at the same time psycho linguistically less complex and more deceptive than overt translation. Since true functional equivalence is aimed at, the original may be manipulated at the levels of Language/Text and Register via the use of a “cultural filter.” The result is the very real distance from the original. While the original and its covert translation need thus not be equivalent at the levels of Language/Text and Register, they must be equivalent at the levels of Genre and the Individual Textual Function. Schematically, the theoretical distinction between overt and covert translation can be displayed as follows:

This subsection is concerned with presenting the results of the statistical procedures. Furthermore, it aims at finding out whether the hypothesis is rejected or verified.

After analyzing the data, the researcher found the way of answering to both research questions of the present study as:

1. To what extent is the quality of the translated version of *The Sense of an Ending* by Hasan Kamshad appropriate based on House TQA model?

In the present study, covert errors are those which result from a mismatch of one situational dimension with a similar one in TT, and overt errors are those which result from a non-dimensional mismatch. Such errors can be divided into seven categories shown at the following scheme: The above figure has been thoroughly explained by House (1997): —If a translation text, in order to be adequate, is to fulfill the requirement of a dimensional, and as a result to this, functional match, then any mismatch along the dimensions is an error. Such dimensional errors were referred to as covertly erroneous errors.

These were differentiated from those overtly erroneous errors which resulted either from a mismatch of the denotative meanings of the source and translation text elements or from a mismatch of the denotative meanings of the source and translation text elements or from a breach of the target language system. Cases, where the denotative

meanings of elements of ST were changed by the translator, were further subdivided into omissions, additions, substitutions consisting of either wrong selections or wrong combinations of elements. Cases of breaches of the target language system were subdivided into cases of ungrammaticality, i.e., breaches of the norm of usage which I defined as the bundle of linguistic rules underlying the actual use of language as opposed to the language system, which is concerned with the potentialities of the language. House (1997, p.45).

Based on the above information, the researcher found that the aspects of the original or popularizations of specialist translations designed for the lay public, and furthermore the translation yielded a special added purpose. And the researcher preserved the function of the source text to apply a cultural filter randomly. Translation Quality Assessment serves as a mirror for translated texts which can be the practical stage in the translation process. After the application of House model (overt and covert), the researcher produced a profile of source text register including field, tenor and mode throughout reading the English corpus text and its comparison. Table 5.4 shows that the total number of overtly erroneous errors was 66 which comprised of 11 not translated, 7 slight changes in meaning, and 10 breaches of the language system. As it was shown on the above table, the most frequent overtly erroneous errors happened in the mentioned translation belonging to the not translated and the least frequent one was —creative meaning by the frequency of 6. The third column indicated the percentage of each error. It shows that the frequency and percentage of three types of overtly erroneous errors were zero.

The results of the study show that quality of the translation. Snell-Hornby (2000) speaks about a reduced standardized form of language, that is, McLanguage or Eurospeak, while Wagner (2000) prefers to call it sub-English. All in all, the quality of such texts is rarely monitored and may be poor. Translation quality assessment is considered a key in the translation of literary or nonliterary works. This study has proven that the field, tenor and mode have astounding effects on translation. Because of its great impact on literary translation.

#### **4- CONCLUSION**

The researcher selected 23 pages of the sense of an ending and its translation systematically. The researcher observed the translations and used the model of House to assess the translations. The researcher applied overt and covert mismatches to evaluate the works of the translator. The data analysis was carried out by the researcher and passed to three professionals in Persian literature. They contributed to accomplishing this study and rated the translations. Inter-Rater reliability was also carried out. The revised and validated theory was applied in this study to evaluate and rate the translated text. The following section discusses the findings of this study.

The results of the study show that quality of the translation. As mentioned before, the translation assessment was based on overt and covert errors and mismatches. The selected pages of translation were analyzed using five categorizations of overtly erroneous errors, on the other hand. The analysis was shown in the tables based on the criteria and the researcher answered the question. In the following chapter, the researcher focused on the conclusion and pedagogical implications of the study.

It is expected that the results of this study will be effective in the improvement and creating a TQA model for the assessment of the translation of literary and non-literary texts from English to Persian. Since this particular study has not been done in Iran. It is also expected that it provides a common yardstick/model to evaluate the quality of translation in a fast parsimonious way. To support the above points, House mentioned that we thought that the potential usefulness of the distinction between overt and covert translation becomes rather relative when House states that “A particular ST does not necessarily require once and for all either a covert or an overt translation, given the different, dynamic ways of viewing a text and different purpose for which a translation may, in the course of time, be required” (p. 77).

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