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## Study of House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment on the Short Story and Its Translated Text

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# Study of House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment on the Short Story and Its Translated Text

Shabnam Shakernia

**Abstract-** House model on comparative ST-TT analysis is leading to the assessment of the quality of the translation, highlighting mismatches or errors. This analysis is through lexical, syntactic and textual means. Her analysis also refers to what information is being conveyed and what the relationship is between sender and receiver. On the process of comparison ST to TT, errors are produced and categorized according to genre and to the situational dimensions of register and genre. These dimensional errors are referred to as covertly erroneous errors. Also, there are overtly erroneous errors which are denotative mismatches or target system errors. Then the translation can be categorized into one of two types: over translation or covert translation. Through the analysis of the translation and the source text, it is possible to determine whether the text is translated covertly or overtly and the translator made the write decision in choosing the type of translation in his rendering. This paper tends to apply her model on a short story named the Grapes of Wrath by John Stein Beck. It is translated by Mohammad Sadegh Shariati. This paper applies House's model on this short story to find out whether the translated works is translated covertly or overtly.

## I. INTRODUCTION

House's (1997) model of translation quality assessment is based on Hallidayan model which is a systematic – functional theory. This model is a systematic comparison of an original and its translation on three different levels: the levels of language/text, register (filed, tenor and mode) and genre. Register is categorized into three parts: Filed refers to the subject matter and social action, Tenor includes the participant relationship. It involves the author's provenance and stance, social role relationship and social attitude. The last one as a mode relates to channel and the degree of participation between addresser and addressee. She believes that the fundamental criterion of translation quality is the equivalence. The first requirement for this equivalence is the function. This function has two components which she calls them ideational and interpersonal. She also uses the other two terms for these components as referential and non – referential. The function of a text can be determined through opening up the linguistic materials based on the situational constraints. House

divided the category of situational dimensions into two sections: dimensions of language user and dimensions of language use. For each part, she uses several subcategories. There are geographical origin, social class and time features for the dimensions of language user. Also she considers medium, participation, social role relationship, social attitude and province features for the dimensions of language use. A textual profile is obtained for the ST by using there situational dimensions, a textual profile for TT is Gotten. There profiles act like a norm against which the quality of the TT is to be measured and the function of ST and TT is matched. Any mismatch along the dimensions is an error. There dimensional errors are called covertly erroneous errors. There are also overtly erroneous errors which result from a mismatch of the denotative meaning of ST and TT elements or from a divergence from the target language system.

House focuses on three aspects of the meaning that are important for translation: a semantic, a pragmatic and a textual aspect. She believes that translation is recontextualization of a text in L1 by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in L2. House created a translation typology which she considered it is related more to the translators of the texts we are rendering but, it is essential to know that what kind of translation is suitable for the source text. According to house, there are two types of translation, overt translation and it is not the second original. The addresses of this translation text are not directly addressed. The ST is culture – bound. It is tied to the source language community and culture. It is ST – oriented. Readers know that they are reading a translation. House believes that equivalence has to be chosen at the level of language and text, register and genre. Text function can not be the same in TT and ST because the ST is tied to a special historical event in the source culture or because of the special condition that the ST has in the source culture. For having and adequate translation in overt translation, TT should take a second level function. In overt translation, source text may be divided into two types: overt historically linked STs as non – fictional texts which are related to particular historical facts. These texts focus on specific source receptors in specific occasion such as political discourse. Overt, timeless STs are the other type of

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source text in overt translation which are fictional texts going higher than a particular historical meaning. They are showing language user dimensions. There two types of STs need overt translation and second level function because the function of ST and TT can not be matched and the translator can not transfer the same function from ST and TT because of the purpose of the STs. In overt translation, the work of the translator is important and visible. It is the translator's duty to give target members access to the original text and its cultural impact on source culture members. The translator puts target culture members in a position to observe this text from outside. The second type of translation which proposes by house is covert translation. A covert translation is a translation which enjoys the status of and original ST in the target culture. In fact, covert translation is not ST or TT. It is created in its own right. A covert translation is a translation which is not tied to the source language community and culture. In this translation, Both ST and TT addressees are equally addressed. ST and TT have equivalent purposes. The same function of ST is transferred to TT. However, because these texts are not source – culture bound; in translation they need more attention to the cultural translation and evaluation problems. To remove such difficulties in the differences in the culture and evaluator's duty is to find out whether the application of such a filter is necessary and appropriate. The inappropriate use of a cultural filter leads to the production of a covert version; however, special audiences. This study tends to focus on the two specific House's translation typology, covert and overt translation. Then it applies these two types of translations on a short story and its translated text. In Persian and analyzes the data which are gathering through analyses to find out whether this translated works follows covert translation or overt translation.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Rui Rothe – Neves (2002), in his article "Translation Quality Assessment for Research Purposes an Empirical Approach" stated the model of quality assessment by Houses (1987; 2000) as the most famous example in this field. In her book, a landmark in translation research, House introduces the concern towards a scientific treatment of quality in translation. She also revises empirical studies directed to the reception of the translated text by the target – culture render and brings to the field the very used and still very useful concept of communicative competence. The pragmatic background of her model opened a way to further studies that incorporated cultural aspects to the understanding of translation. But her model was directed towards translation as an L2 classroom exercise, and this puts a serious limit to it as a tool to investigate translations as an end.

2. Herdrun Gerzymisch – Arbogast (2001), in his article "Equivalence parameters and Evaluation" presented the new thoughts for a re – definition of the concept were formulated which no longer viewed" equivalence as an overall encompassing concept but as a concept relative to certain parameters which may vary by individual text which were introduced by House (1997)
3. Malcolm Williams (2001), in his article "The Application of Argumentation Theory to Translation Quality Assessments" presented the model of House (1997) which introduced a detailed non – quantitative, descriptive – explanatory approach to translation quality assessment. House dismisses the idea that translation quality assessment is by nature too subjective. House (1997) mentioned that "Unlike the scientifically based analysis, the evaluative judgment is ultimately not a scientific one, but rather a reflection of a social, political, ethical, moral or personal stance."
4. Jamal Al – Qlnai (2000), in his article "Translation Quality Assessment. Strategies, Parameters and Procedures" introduced objectivity instead of subjective impressionism in judging translation quality through study of House's model (1976). He mentioned as House (1981) describes it, "it seems unlikely that translation quality assessment can ever be objectified in the manner of natural science". He declared House's pragmatic - textual approach as a translation operates not with sentences but with utterances.
5. SARA VIOLA Rodrigues (1996), in her article "Translation Quality tested Juliane House's Analysis" model on ideational and interpersonal English source texts translated into Portuguese from a wide range of provinces. She quoted, "The advantage of knowing House's model then is that besides illuminating the translator's mental operation, it sheds more light on the problematic area of the situational dimensions of a text, pointing to the need for careful choice of lexical items adequate to the text's special topics or province.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of this study is to find out what type of translation which were proposed by House (1997) would be followed in the Persian translated text of the short story by the translator. This study looks for the effects of this approach (overt and covert translation) on the translations of the stories. According, the study seeks answers to the following research questions:

## IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Which of these translations (convert and overt translation) is suitable for translating short stories?

2. How are the functions in the TTs of the short stories? Are they compatible to the STs functions or not?
3. What is the role of culture in choosing the appropriate approach for translating short stories?

## V. HYPOTHESES

My hypothesis is that covert translation is appropriate for translating short stories.

## VI. METHODOLOGY

### a) Design

The present study concern qualitative aspect. It is going to be done through comparative ST – TT analysis of House's model which is leading to the assessment of the quality of translation. This analysis is through lexical, syntactic and textual means. It also refers to what information is being conveyed and what the relationship is between sender and receiver. The analysis of the translation and the source text make it possible to determine whether the text is translated covertly or overtly.

### b) Material

This study tends to apply this model of House (covert and overt translation) on a short story named

The Grapes of Wrath by John Stein Beck which is translated by Mohammad Sadegh Shariati.

### c) Procedures

This study is going to be carried out through applying Houses model on comparative ST – TT on the first paragraphs of the ten chapters of this short story. It tends to go over the text through lexical, syntactic and textual means. It also goes through function and cultural factors in the texts. It analyzes the texts and gathers the data word by word and sentence by sentence.

### d) Data Analysis

After gathering the data, this paper tends to analyze the data to find out this translation of this short story is following covert or overt translation and what the translator's tendency is in choosing the adequate approach of the translation.

## VII. APPLICATION

### Paragraph 1, Introduction:

Uncle John said, "We've never been paupers before." "Maybe we have to learn," Tom said. "We never were forced off our land before."

عمو جان گفت: «قبلاً فقیر نبوده ایم.»

تام گفت: «شاید ناچار شویم تجربه کنیم. قبلاً هرگز از سرزمین مان رانده نشدیم.»

-This translation is not exactly literal translation. It is not word by word translation. So, it is not tied to SL structure. For example, in the first sentence, "We" is not translated separately. Also, "Paupers" mean "very poor people". Here it is just translated "فقیر" rather it is translated "آدمهای بسیار فقیر". So the translator is not tied to the lexicons of SL. It is important for him to transfer the meaning and the function which it implies in ST into TT. In the next sentence "we have to learn", it is

translated "ناچار شویم تجربه کنیم". It is not word by word; however, just the meaning pragmatically is transferred. The translator pays attention to the TT readers. This translation is not for special audiences and special time or place. He wants a kind of translation has House's covert translation features so it is a covert translation.

In October 1929, Wall Street, the center of finance in the United States, crashed. This was the start of the Great Depression, which lasted through the 1930s.

در اکتبر 1929، وال استریت، مرکز مالی ایالات متحده سقوط کرد. این آغاز رکود بزرگ بود

که تا دهه 1930 به طول انجامید.

In this part of the translation, translator doesn't clarify and define the meaning of the words. "Wall Street" may be is not familiar with TT readers. I think the translator thinks this place is known for the readers because of its fame. Rather it is better that he defines it more completely or use a footnote to mention his definition. In the next sentence he translated the "Great Depression" which is in capital as proper names. It shows that it is a common event for ST readers in their culture; however, it is translated word by word in TT without any extra definition. So it makes ambiguity for

the TT readers therefore, in this translation the addresser's geographical and social provenance is not paid attention and as it is considered the divergence from the situational constraints lead to covertly erroneous errors.

### Paragraph 1, Chapter 1:

The clouds appeared, but went away again. It seemed they did not even try to make rain. The surface of the earth had formed a dry hard layer.

ابر ها ظاهر شده ولی دوباره رفتند. ظاهراً دیگر نمی فواستند ببارند. در سطح زمین لایه خشک

ممکنی تشکیل شده بود.

This translation is not tied to ST completely. In this part of the texts, "they did not even try to make rain" is translated "دیگر نمی فواستند ببارند" it is not ST oriented and not translated literally. The meaning is transferred pragmatically. The function of ST and TT is compatible. In English, the tense is past perfect; however in Persian,

it is passive past perfect. So based on the translation, this one is covert translation.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 2:*

All over the Southwestern states, the owners of the land came onto the land, or more often, someone came for them. All of the owners told their tenants the same thing. "You know the land's getting poorer".

در تمام ایالت‌های غربی، مالکان سرزمین‌ها آمدند، یا کسی جاییشان آمد. همه مالکان به

اجاره داران یک چیز می گفتند « می دانید که زمین فقیرتر می شود.»

This translation is completely shown that is not stick to the ST. it is a free translation. The meaning is and pragmatically transferred. However, it is not completely semantically transferred. "southwestern states" is translated "ایالت‌های غربی" in which south is not translated. In the next sentence "the owners of the land came onto the land" is just translated to "مالکان به سرزمین‌ها آمدند". Here land is rendered "سرزمین‌ها". A shift happened as the singular noun is translated plural. Because land here means an area of the ground not a country. - "more often" is missed here and not rendered. "Someone came for them" is not translated word by word as "کسی برای آنها آمد", rather it is rendered

"کسی جاییشان آمد". And in the last sentence "You know the land's getting poorer" is "می دانید زمین فقیرتر می شود" getting is not translated. So, based on the evidence, this translation is not tied to ST. the reader of the TT are paid attention. It is not exactly a translation. The function of ST and TT is compatible. Therefore, it is considered to have a covert translation.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 3:*

Highway 66 was the main route for a people in flight from dust and empty land. All day the cars and trucks filled with families and everything they owned streamed along the road.

بزرگراه 66 مسیر اصلی شفصی بود که از فاک و سرزمین پوچ پرواز می کرد. در طول روز

ماشین‌ها و کامیون‌های انباشته از خانواده‌ها و وسایلسان در طول جاده جریان داشت.

This translation is not literal. TT is not tied to ST. However, they have equal concern for source and target language readers. In the first sentence "for a people" is rendered "شفصی". It is not its equivalence; however, it is created in its own right. ST and TT have equivalent purposes. The function of ST keeps equivalent in TT.

According to the evidences, this translation is covert rather overt.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 4:*

Joads and Wilsons slowly moved west along 66 as a team. That night they are only pieces of bread, cold and hard, left from breakfast.

خانواده‌های جود و ویلسون به صورت گروهی آراه به طرف جاده غرب در جاده 66 به راه

افتادند آن شب تنها تکه‌های نان، بیات مانده از صیمانه را خوردند.

This translation is covertly rendered. The focus of the meaning in both ST and TT is kept equivalent; however, TT is not tied to the ST. the translator pays attention to the TT reader as the author of the original does to the ST readers. ST and TT have equivalent purpose. In English text, just by mentioning "west", it is considered the road toward the west part of the area. So it doesn't need for the ST readers to be mentioned. However, the translator through the skill and knowledge

tries to view ST through the glasses of a target culture member.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 5:*

The cars of the migrant people came slowly out of the side roads onto the great cross – country highway. In the daylight, they hurried to the west, and as the dark caught them, they grouped near to shelter and water.

ماشین‌های مهاجرین آهسته از جاده‌های فرعی وارد تقاطع بزرگراه می شدند. در روشنایی

روز به سمت غرب می شتافتند و همینکه تاریکی فرا می رسید نزدیک پناهگاه و آب جمع می شدند

These two texts are equivalent in function and meaning. Each text is compatible for its own readers. In English, it is mentioned "people" as in Persian, it is not rendered because through the Persian readers, they will identify that the meaning of people is hidden in the word

"migrant" so it doesn't need to be mentioned again. Or the word "caught them" in their culture and language is known for the ST readers.

However, in the translated text, it is rendered “**فرا** **می رسد**” that these two clauses are not equivalent in meaning but they have the same function in ST and TT and for each reader is familiar. So it is translated covertly as TT is not tied to ST.

ST and TT have the same function and purposes. The focus in the structure in ST and TT are the same. ST and TT have pragmatically equal concern for source and target language renders. The focus of the translator is toward TT renders. As he rendered “tenants” “**کشاورزان اجاره دار**”. He clarified this concept for

In fact, in this rendering, ST and TT syntactically and semantically are the same except in two points; first the word “wages” which are rendered “**دستمزد**” has intra – system shift. Wages are plural, however in its rendering, it is singular. And the word “stayed up” is rendered “**ثابت بود**”, they are not semantically equivalent;

The TT is not tied syntactically to the ST. there is a rank shift would happen; several verbs are translated as nouns. The translator goes through the entire paragraph in translating the paragraph not sentence by sentence. He tries to look at ST through the glasses of target readers. This translation is created in its own right. ST and TT functions are kept equivalent. The translator attempts to make the translation readable for the TT

At it is obvious, TT doesn't follow ST in rendering. It is not tied to ST. it is rendered in its own ways to be understandable for the TT readers. On the other side, the same concern is for the source addressees in the viewpoint of ST. Translator looks over the text through the view of TT readers. In the first sentence, the focus of the structure is changed. The place of theme and rheme is changed in English text and its translated text. An intra – system shift is happened. A plural noun is rendered singular in Persian. “Signs” is translated “**تابلوی**”. “People appeared” is missed in translation. So through the above explanation, it is considered that this translation is covert.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 6:*

In Kansas and Arkansas, in Oklahoma and Texas and New Mexico, the tractors moved in and pushed the tenants out. Three hundred thousand in California and more come.

**در کانزاس و آرکانزاس، در اکلاهاما و تگزاس و نیو مکزیکو، تراکتورها وارد شدند و کشاورزان**

**اجاره دار را بیرون کردند. سیصد هزار در کالفرنیا هستند و بیشتر می آیند.**

the TT readers. In this way, it is considered that this rendering is covert.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 7:*

The migrants would work for low wages. They would work for food. And this was good because wages went down and prices stayed up.

**مهاجرین با دستمزد کم کار می کردند. برای غذا کار می کردند. و این خوب بود چون دستمزد**

**پایین می رفت و قیمت ها ثابت بود.**

however, they have the same function and purpose. So it is considered that is rendered covertly.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 8:*

The companies and banks that owned the large farms also owned the factories that canned the fruit. They paid the pickers low wages and made the price of fresh fruit go down.

**شرکت ها و بانکهایی که مالک کزارع یزرگ و همپنین مالک کارخانجاتی بودند که میوه ها را**

**کمپوت می کردند، به میوه پینان دستمزد کم می دادند و سبب می شدند قیمت میوه خام پایین برود .**

readers and dismisses the ambiguity for them. Therefore, this text is rendered covertly.

*Paragraph 1, Chapter 9:*

Cotton Pickers Wanted said the signs along the road. People appeared, ready to work. They picked the cotton and put it into large bags.

**تابلوی کتر جاده می گفت پنبه پین می فوایم. مردم برای کار آماده بودند. آنها پنبه می**

**پیدند و در کیسه های بزرگ می گذاشتند.**

## VIII. DISCUSSION

Through the selected paragraphs which it was worked on, the results show that the translator is preferred not to tie to the source language, community and culture. Rather he enjoys the original ST in the target culture. He concentrates on the TT addresses to have readable, adequate and understandable translated text with fewer cultural difficulties and differences. However, through comparing ST and TT, it is recognize that ST and TT functions are kept equivalent. They have the same purposes. Therefore, this translated text tends to have covert translation than overt translation.

## IX. CONCLUSION

The comparative ST and TT analysis in House's model is leading to the translation quality assessment. This analysis focuses on lexical, syntactic and textual means. It also focuses on the function of a text which she categorized into ideational and interpersonal function. The fundamental criterion of translation quality is equivalent. She posits that a translation text have a function equivalent to that of its source text. The function is recognized through linguistic materials in the set of situational constraints. Any divergence of these constraints lead the text to have covertly erroneous errors and any mismatches of the denotative meanings of ST and TT elements cause overtly erroneous errors. She proposes a typology for the translation, covert translation and overt translation. Covert translation is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture. Both ST and TT address their receivers directly. It is not tied to source language, culture and community. It is created in its own right. The function of ST is equivalent in TT; however, overt translation is overtly a translation not a second original. It is tied to the source language, culture and community. Original function of the ST doesn't match TT function, so in overt translation, a second level function is created. Choosing overt or covert translation is somehow subjective but on the other side it depends on the text also. If the text is for special purpose, overt translation is proposed. If not, it is based on the status of the text producer to choose whether it is covert or overt translation. In this study, it is shown that short stories are preferred to be cover translation to have the same function of ST for the TT receivers and ST is viewed through the glasses of a target culture member. This translation is more straightforward for the TT receivers and especially preferable for the short stories' translations.

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