

The Assessment of Quality of Arabic Translation of T.S. Eliot's Poem

"The Naming of Cats" according to TQA Model of Julianne House

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Abstract

This study sets out to assess the quality of Arabic translation by Sabri Hafez of the English poem, "The Naming of cats " of T.S. Eliot using House's TQA model. It aims to find out the mismatches between the original text and its translation, to know the most suitable translation for modern poetry according to this model. A cross a systematic comparative analysis, this study defines the errors between ST and TT then the data have been gathered word by word and sentence by sentence thereupon. In consequence, this model evaluates the translation quality of the selected poem, indicating some covert errors such as author's provenance and stance, social role relationship, etc., and some overt errors like not translated words, a slight change of meaning, creative translation, and so forth. Hence, this paper concludes that poetry can be translated overtly or covertly in accordance with the its type, is it old or modern? So the selected poem is translated overtly since it is a modern poem having every day words. Finally, this paper gives readers good information about House's model and translation measurement which contributes in developing translation by and large. Besides, the findings can be useful for translators and researchers who work on poetry translation.

Keywords: Translation Quality Assessment, Poetry Translation, Julianne House's TQA model Overt and Covert Translation

تقييم جودة الترجمة العربية لقصيدة تي إس إليوت "تسمية القطط" وفقا لنموذج جوليان هاوس لتقييم الجودة

الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم جودة الترجمة العربية التي قام بها صبري حافظ للقصيدة الإنجليزية "تسمية القطط" لت إس. إليوت باستخدام نموذج هاوس لتقييم جودة الترجمة ومعرفة عدم التطابق بين النص الأصلي وترجمته، لمعرفة الترجمة الأكثر ملاءمة للشعر الحديث وفقاً لهذا النموذج. ومن خلال تحليل مقارن منهجي، حددت هذه الدراسة الأخطاء بين النص الأصلي والنص المستهدف، عن طريق جمع البيانات كلمة بكلمة وجملته بجملته. ونتيجة لذلك، قام هذا النموذج بتقييم جودة ترجمة القصيدة المختارة، مع الإشارة إلى بعض الأخطاء الخفية مثل أصل المؤلف وموقفه، وعلاقة الدور الاجتماعي، إضافة إلى بعض الأخطاء الواضحة مثل الكلمات غير المترجمة، والتغيير الطفيف في المعنى، والترجمة الإبداعية، وما إلى ذلك. وقد توصلت هذه الدراسة إلى أن الشعر يمكن ترجمته بشكل صريح أو بشكل خفي وفقاً لنوعه هل هو قديم أم حديث؟ لذا فإن القصيدة المختارة تُرجمت بشكل صريح وواضح لأنها قصيدة حديثة تحتوي على كلمات يومية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تقييم جودة الترجمة، ترجمة الشعر، نموذج جوليان هاوس لتقييم جودة الترجمة،

1.1. Introduction

Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) is a key issue in translation studies. It helps to know the parameters between the source language text (SLT) and the target language text (TLT) which is, accordingly, useful in building the main dimension of the quality of any translation. Hatim and Mason stated that "The assessment of translation performance is an activity, which despite being widespread, is under-researched and under-discussed" (cited in Koudded (2021), p.168).

TQA can be described as a translation criticism process that attempts to evaluate the quality of the translated text. However, the assessment takes place when the assessor seeks to an equivalence between the ST and TT. Thus, the equivalence is considered as one of the core concepts in translation and quality measurement of any text. By this means, House in (2001) said that translation is to reproduce the SLT in equivalence to TLT. Besides, Halliday's et.al (1965) defined translation as a process of textual equivalence from one language into another not word for word equivalence.

Nevertheless, the degree of equivalence increases and decreases with regard to the type of the text due to the fact that text to text is different. Literary texts, for example, are considered as one of the most difficult texts to translate where equivalence becomes almost impossible including poetry because it is hard to translate equally puns, figures of speech, rhythm, and metaphors as well as allusions which are common in modern poetry (20th century poetry). Therefore, translation of poetry needs a talent in appreciating the literary value of the ST and being able to preserve that value in the target text.

Indeed, various attempts have been made by many linguists and theorists aiming to reach to a helpful model for assessing the quality of translation ,among them are Reiss (2000), Williams (2009), Nord (1997), Al-Qinai (1999), House (1977) , etc., but House's TQA model is regarded one of the most effective models.

House's TQA model has various versions in 1977, 1997, and 2015, however, all of these versions are based on Halliday's theory, the functional-systematic theory, which clarifies text function, points out through the linguistic materials and bases on situational constraints. Correspondingly, any text has three functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual while House in her model focuses only on the ideational and interpersonal functions. Totally, House's model tries to assess the quality of translation systematically by a comparative analysis to ST and TT.

The analytic comparison goes over analysis of linguistic-discoursal and also situational particularities of the ST and TT profiles in three distinctive levels: language/text, register, and genre. The register is divided into three parts: Field, Tenor, and Mode. House in 1997 (cited in Rahmanian, (2015) defined them as follows:

(1) Field: " refers to the nature of the social action that taking place, it captures what is going on, i.e. the field, activity, the topic, the content of the text or its subject matter " (p. 108).

(2) Tenor: " refers to who is taking part, to the nature of participants, the address addressor and the relationship between them in terms of social power and social distance" (p. 108)

(3) Mode: " refers to both the channel _spoken or written and the degree of which potential or participation is allowed between interlocutors. " (p.109).

The third level "genre" is defined also by House as " a socially established category characterized in term of occurrence of use, source and a combination of these" (p. 107) [Cited in Rahman, 2015]. Basically, genre is being affected by social and cultural environment and influencing register.

Systematically, House in her model categorized errors into two types: Covertly erroneous errors which arise from mismatches in the situational dimension between the original text and its translation. In contrast, overtly

erroneous errors are identified through comparing the denotation meaning in both TT and ST. Moreover, House in (2009) parted overt errors into seven categories: 1) Not translated, 2) Slight change in meaning, 3) Distortion of meaning, 4) Significance change of meaning, 5) Breach of the ST system, 6) Creative translation, and 7) Cultural filtering.

House (1997) emphasized on the function of individual text, where the text has different functions according to diverse situations. So, she produced two types of translations for the sake of different texts to conform with their situational dimensions and functional equivalence. These two types are covert and overt translation.

Covert translation is a type of translation which directly addresses TT audience. It is as House said, "which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target text. [Cited in Rahmanian 2015]. This type of translation seems as it is the original, not mere a translation. It completely depicts the target text culture due to the fact that it is not tied to ST so does not address the culture of the source text. Knowingly, covert translation attempts to make the message of both (ST and TT) pragmatically equal. In addition, as House said, information booklet, journalistic texts, advertisements, and scientific texts are the texts which should be translated covertly.

In contrast, overt translation addresses ST audience directly: it does not consider a second original of the ST but rather a translation, as it is tied to ST culture and community. This approach employs ST- oriented strategies such as borrowing, literal translation. Illustratively, House divided this translation into two groups:

[A] Overt timeless Source texts: These texts do not belong to a specific time or interlocutors but convey a general human message such as literary texts and dialect texts.

[B] Overt historically-lined source texts: These relate to specific occasions which address a particular

source language audience, for example, religious sermons and political speeches.

Purposely, this study aims to apply House's TQA Model on a modern poem, focusing on assessing the quality of its translation by analyzing, and gathering data to determine whether the translation is overt or covert.

1.2. Significance of the Study

This study is crucial for two primary reasons. Firstly, it attempts to identify the errors or mismatches found in Sabri Hafez's Arabic translation of T.S. Eliot's "The Naming of Cats," evaluating the degree of accuracy and determining the type of translation (covert or overt) in the selected poem. Secondly, it contributes to the development of translation studies, particularly in the domain of poetry translation by refining the application of House's TQA Model to modern poetic texts.

1.3. Problem of the study

Many researchers have attempted to investigate the quality of the translations of poetry by using House's TQA Model, however, most disagree with her view on the literary texts which should be translated overtly as she said. As a result, this study aims to propose another solution, drawing on modern poetry

1.4. Aim of the Study

This study aims to assess the Arabic translation by Sabri Hafez of Eliot's poem "The Naming of Cats " utilizing Julianne House's TQA Model. By identifying mismatches and analyzing translation strategies, the study seeks to determine the most suitable approach for translating modern poetry.

1.5. Questions of the Study

The aim of study was to answer the following question:

To what extent is Julianne House's TQA Model applicable to the translation of modern poetry, particularly in the case of T.S. Eliot's "The Naming of Cats"?

2.1. Methodology

2.1.1. Design

The present study follows the qualitative aspect. It takes place through a comparative analysis of the original text and its translation for assessing the quality of translation using House's TQA Model. Purposefully, it identifies the choice of words, structure, coherence, cohesion, and how these elements convey the idea of the text to make a relationship between the sender and receiver. Hence, this analysis led the assessor to know which type of translation could be good for translating modern poetry.

2.1.2. Material

This study applied House's TQA Model on Sabri Hafez's translation of Eliot's "The Naming of Cats".

2.1.3. Procedure

Using House's TQA Model, this study compared and contrasted Eliot's "The Naming of Cats" and one of its Arabic translations by Sabri Hafez. From one side, this comparison went over these texts lexically, textually, and syntactically. On the other side, the cultural and functional elements inside the texts was carried out. The data have been gathered word by word and sentence by sentence.

2.2. The Poem

"The Naming of cats" is an interesting poem taken from the "Old Possum's Book of Practical cats" that was written by T.S. Eliot in the 1930s to his young godson, Tom Faber. This poem is considered as a crucial part in this book because it produces a glimpse of cat's names which are not exactly for cats; it draws appealingly and uniquely the occult personalities. Eliot's aim is to represent the whimsical identities of feline characters indirectly. Thus, he humanizes the cats and go deep into thorough marbles on identity. Moreover, while Eliot personifies the cats, he intentionally aims to display the intricate layers of these personalities in society reflecting possibly the complex kind of human self-image and characters.

2.2.1. The Author

Thomas Stearns Eliot, who is known as T.S. Eliot, is an influential poet, essayist, and playwright as well as one of the pioneers of 20th century literature, modern English literature. He was born on September 26th, 1888 in St. Louis, Missouri and died in 1965 in London. He studied at Harvard, the Sobonne, Meto College, and Oxford. Eliot wrote many great works known for their complexity and creativity; one of the most popular of those works is his magnum opus "The Waste Land". He won several prestigious awards such as Nobel Prize of Literature in 1948 for his "Four Quartets". While Eliot was known for his complicated poems, he also showed a peculiar side as can be seen from "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" which gives readers of all ages a delightful set of cheerful poems about cats drawing the feline personalities in actual life.

2.2.2. The Translator

Sabri Hafez is an Egyptian critic and teacher of Arabic language who was born in 1949 in Menoufia governorate. He worked as a professor of Arabic literature and comparative literature at the Faculty of Oriental Studies and African Studies in London. He is also the editor of the electric magazine named "Al-Kalima". Sabri Hafez has many books and studies in both Arabic and English including: "Literature and Revolution" in 1985, "The Foresight of Poetry" in 1985, "The Controversy of Different Visions" in 1993, "The Horizon of Critical Discourse" 1996, and "The Mirrors of the Arab Revolution" in 2015. In addition, he is one of those who try to translate English poetry into Arabic language. For example, he translated the poetry book of cats, "Old Possum's Book of Practical cats", into Arabic which is published in 1987 by The General Egyptian Book Organization.

3. Literature Review

Numerous studies have applied House's TQA Model, aiming to evaluate the quality of translated texts and answer the argumentative question that

states, "Does literary texts translate covertly or overtly?" House argues that literary texts should be translated overtly, however, some scholars object her, claiming that literary texts are better to be translated through covert translation. The current study indicates some papers which state that covert translation is the appropriate one for translating literary texts.

Rahmanian (2015), in " The Evaluation of the Quality of Persian Translation of Emily Dickinson's Poems based on the TQA Model of Julianne House" found that House's TQA Model is not completely suitable for assessing the quality of poetry translation. House in her model states that any literary text should be translated overtly, but the researcher claimed that poetry can only be translated through covert translation.

A second study by Shakernia in (2014) discussed how House's TQA Model helps assess the quality of translation and the degree of equivalence between the original text and its translation. This was achieved by comparative analysis to identify mismatches. Hence, this study ended with these results:

(1) The type of translation chosen depends largely on the text type.

(2) When applying House's Model on the short story "Grapes of Wrath " by John Stein for assessing the quality of its Persian translation by Mohammed

Sadegh Shariati, it is found that the covert translation is more suitable than the overt one in translating short story due to the fact that it is straightforward and obvious to target language receivers.

Another Persian study by Chalak, and Taherioun in (2012) employed House's TQA Model to assess the quality of Balooch's Persian translation of Nineteen Eighty-Four by Orwell in (1949). They identified some errors, leading them to disagree with House's perspective on literary texts translation which states that literary texts should be translated overtly since these texts are tied to a specific period of time.

Additionally, research by Yamini and Abdi (2010) applied House's TQA Model to William Shakespeare's play "Macbeth " and its Persian translation by Ala'uddin pasargadi; during a fundamental statistical procedure. It identified a key distinction between two types of errors: overtly erroneous errors and covertly erroneous errors. On one hand, this study disagreed with House's hypothesis, which states that literary texts must be translated overtly, considering any deviation from this model an error. On the other hand, researchers argued that their findings do not undermine the deficiency of House's model ; rather, they demonstrate the strength and weakness of this model.

The following figures shed some light on House's TQA Model:

Figure (1)

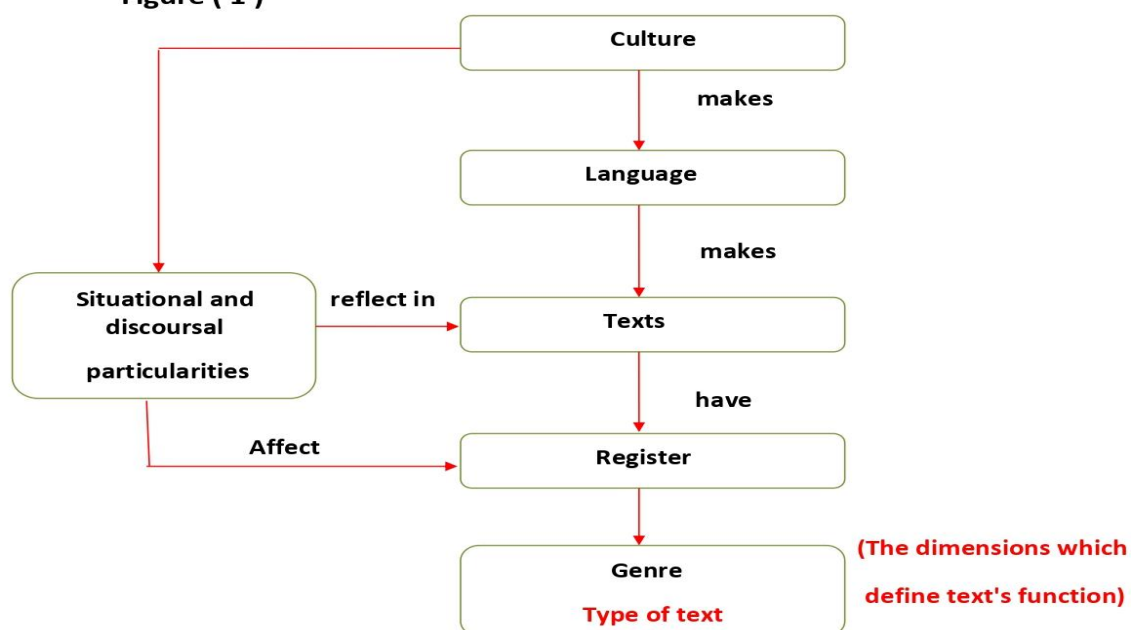


Figure (2)

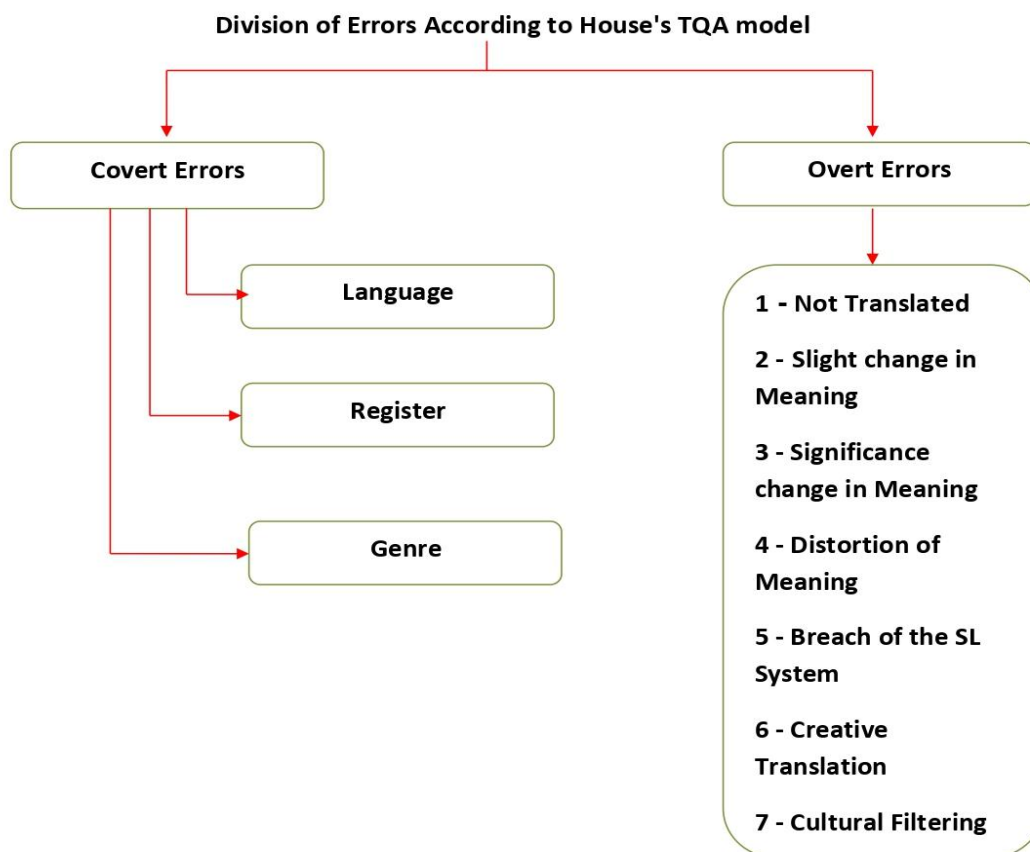
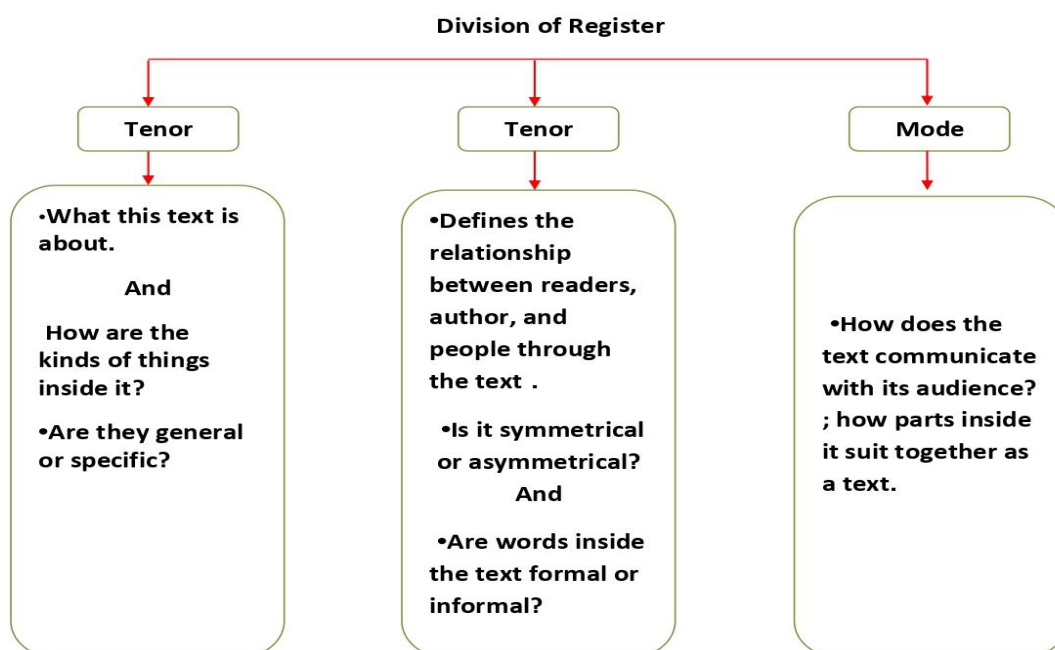


Figure (3)



4. Data Analysis

4.1. Identifying Covert Errors

This type of errors appears through analyzing and comparing the ST and TT profiles including the register, the genre, and the function.

4.1.1. Source Text Analysis

Field: the field of a text is the subject matter and social action. The subject matter is the topic or the role relationship which refers to the relationship of the addresser and addressees. This relationship may be either symmetrical marked by existence of equality or asymmetrical marked by the presence of some kind of authority. In this study, the social role relationship of the source text is symmetrical since there is no authority between the author and the readers. The last situational dimension under this category is social attitude. This dimension takes into consideration the

content of the text. The social action aspect refers to the degree of generality or specificity of the text. The subject matter of this literary text is a poem, and the social action of the text is general.

Tenor: The first situational dimension of this category refers to author's provenance and stance which means the author's position on a social scale. In this regard, the author's provenance and stance of the source text is the poet. The second situational dimension in this category is social formality and informality of the text. So the social attitude of the source text is formal because it has formal words and structure.

Mode: The first situational dimension under this category is medium referring to spoken or written channels. It can be categorized as simple, e.g. written to be read or complex, e.g. written to be spoken as if not written. The second dimension here is

participation which it can also be simple or complex. This poem is written to be read so the medium of the text is simple, and the participation of the source text is complex since it addresses mixture of various means of indirect participation.

Genre: The genre of the source text is poem.

Function: The statement of function based on the House's TQA model can be divided into two categories: ideational and interpersonal. The ideational function refers to language as a means to describe the things and the external world. It also conveys information which can be stated, argued, and explained. On the other hand, interpersonal function language acts as a means to convey the relationship between the author or speaker and his interlocutors. Considering these two statements of function, the source text's function is ideational and interpersonal.

4.1.2. Target Text Analysis:

Field: The subject matter of the target text under this category is a poem, and its social action is general.

Genre: The genre of the target text is poem.

Function: According to the two types of functions definitions, i.e. ideational and interpersonal, the statement function of the target text is ideational and interpersonal.

4.2. Identifying Overt Errors

House in her model divided overt errors into seven categories:

(1) Not Translated: It refers to the words, phrases, or expressions that are not translated due translator's inability or negligence.

(2) Slight change in meaning: It is a little distortion or partial transfer of meaning of ST, but this change doesn't affect the communicative function of the meaning severely.

Tenor: The first situational dimension under this category is the author's provenance and stance. In this regard, the author's provenance and stance of the target text is professor of Arabic language and translator. The second dimension is social role relationship which is further divided into symmetrical and asymmetrical. The target text is symmetrical since the translators considered the readers equal and there is no authority between the translator and the readers. At last, the third dimension of tenor category is social attitude which is further divided into formal and informal. According to the degree of formality and informality of the selected translated poem, the social attitude of the target text is formal

Mode: This category is divided into medium and participation. Thus, the medium of the target text is simple since it is written to be read. In addition, the target text participation is complex due to the fact that it addresses indirect participation.

(3) Significance change in meaning: It appears if there is a big disparity among the ST and the TT.

(4) Distortion of meaning: It is when a complete distortion of meaning of the ST in the TT.

(5) Breach of the SL system: It takes place when the TT has departed from the grammatical and syntactic norms and rules of the ST.

(6) Creative translation: It is when the translator translates freely, he adds some extra words, phrases, or information, not existing in the ST.

(7)- Cultural filtering: It is when the translator tries to filter the cultural words such as local names, titles, etc., in the ST to make an appropriate equivalence by exchanging them, using cultural names or titles in the TT.

4.2.1. Some Overt Errors

Example (1):

ST: " It isn't just one of your holiday games "

TT: فهي ليست مجرد لعبة

/ fahia laysat mujarad luaba /

من العاب تزجية الفراغ في الإجازة

/ min al-abi tazjiat alfaragh fi al'iijaza /

The translator translates the phrase " just one " into " مجرد لعبة"/mujarad luaba/which is considered a slight change in the denotative meaning. He also translates the phrase " holiday games " into من العاب تزجية الفراغ في الإجازة/min al-abi tazjiat alfaragh fi al'iijaza/ which can be classified as a creative translation in order to transfer the meaning more clearer to TT readers.

Example (2):

ST: "first of all "

TT: أول هذه الأسماء

/ awalu hadhihi alasma'a /

The word " الأسماء " /alasma'a/ does not exist in the original text. This translation is contextually and pragmatically true even it is containing a slight change in the denotative meaning.

Example (3):

ST: "There are fancier names if you think they sound sweeter "

TT: ، وهناك أسماء أخرى مبتكرة

/ wahunaka 'asma'a' 'ukhraa mubtakara /

إن كنت تظن أنها ألطف، أو أحلى وقعا،

/ 'iin kunta tazunu 'anaha altafu , 'aw 'ahlaa waqean /

The translator uses the word " أخرى " /'ukhraa/ which forms on nonexistence in the ST in addition to " أحلى وقعا " /ahlaa waqean/, so this can be classified as a creative translation.

Example (4):

ST: " A name that is peculiar, and more dignified."

TT: اسماً غريباً موحياً بالأبهة

/ isman ghrybaan mohyaan bil'ubaha /

The word "more" in the ST doesn't translate in TT due to translator's negligence. And the translator uses the word "موحياً"/mohyaan/as a translation of the word " more " which is distortion of the meaning "more" because the word " more " is stronger than the word " موحياً"/mohyaan/.

Example (5):

ST: " Or spread out his whiskers, or cherish his pride? "

TT: أو ينشر شواربه، ويمدها للأمام

/ 'aw yanshuru shawaribahu,wa ymuduha lil'amam /

أو يزهو بنفسه في عزة وكبرياء

/ aw yazhu binafsihi fi eizatin wa kibria'a /

The translator adds here some words which are not in the ST such as "يمدها إلى الأمام"/ymuduha lil'amam/ and " وفي عزة وكبرياء " /fi eizatin wa kibria'a/. So, this translation can be considered as a creative translation because it is free translation, has adding phrases.

Example (6):

ST: " Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum "

TT: ومن تلك الأسماء الغريبة يمكنني

/ wamin tilka al'asma'a algharibati yumkinuni /

أن أزودك بحفنة،

/ an 'uzawidaka bihafnatin /

The word "kind" does not translate in the TT because of translator's negligence. The translator may write the word " غريبة " /gharibat/, may be considered an explanatory translation which aims at clarifying the meaning to the target language readers. The meaning is pragmatically true.

Example (7):

ST: " such as Bombalurina, or else Jellylorum....
belong to more than one cat "

TT: مثل: بولورينا، أو قل مثلاً جيلي

/ mithla:bulurina,'aw qul mathalan jili /

لورام، أسماء لا تسمى بها أكثر من قطة واحدة

/ luram,'asma'a la tusamaa biha akthar min qitatin
wahida /

The word "else " does not translate because of translator's ignorance. The translator writes words such as "قل"/qul/ and "مثلاً"/ mathalan / that have no existence in the ST. He further translates the word " belong " into " تسمى "/tusamaa/ but this change can be defined as a slight change in meaning due to the fact that it does not impact on the meaning of the original.

Example (8):

ST : "But about and beyond "

TT: ولكن علاوة على هذه الأسماء

/ walakin eilawatan ealaa hadhihi al'asma'a /

وبالإضافة إليها

/ wa bial'iidafati 'iilayha /

The translator adds the word " الأسماء "/al'asma/ and the phrase "بالإضافة إليها" /bial'iidafati iilayha/ which are not in the ST, so it can be classified as a creative translation.

Example (9):

ST: " you will never guess"

TT: لن تتمكن من تخمينه أبداً

/ lan tatamakana min takhminihi 'abadan /

There is a breach of the SL system since the future tense transfers into the present tense; Arabic language doesn't have the future tense in its system.

Example (10):

ST: " But the cat Himself knows, and will never confess "

TT:

This line completely has no translation which can be because of the translator's negligence.

Example (11):

ST:" when you notice "

TT: حينما نتشاهد

/ hinama tushahid /

The word " notice" does not exactly mean "تشاهد" /tushahid/. This error could be classified as slight change in meaning. In fact, the word " notice " has a deep meaning that cannot be produced perfectly by the word " يشاهد ", but the word "يلاحظ" /yulahaz/ is more appropriate, however, this change does not create a distortion in the communicative meaning of this word.

Example (12):

ST: "The reason, I tell you, is always the same"

TT: فإن السبب دائماً ما يكون- أقول لك - :

/ fa'iina alsababa dayiman ma yakoun-aqoul laka: /

The word "the same " is not translated owing to the translator's ignorance.

Example (13):

ST:" a rap contemplation "

TT: بتأمل علوي

/ bita'amulin ealawii /

The word " rap" does not mean "علوي" /ealawii/. It means (short for). Actually, the word "علوي" has

another meaning in Arabic language which does not convey the same meaning of " rap ".

Example (14):

ST: " His ineffable effable

Effanineffable

Deep and inscrutable

Singular Names.

TT: اسمه الغامض، الملعز، السري

/ ismuhu alghamadu, almilighazu, asserry /

اسمه الوحيد المتفرد

/ ismuhu alwahidu almutafaridu /

الذي لا يباح به ابدا

/ alladhi la yubahu bihi 'abadan /

The translation, here, is close to be a creative translation due to the fact that the translator adds some words and does not translate the word "Deep" on account of his negligence.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, this study aimed to evaluate the quality of the Arabic translation by Sabri Hafez of the selected English poem "The Naming of Cats". Translation evaluation was carried out by using House's TQA Model to determine the most appropriate type of translation for this modern poem and identify its translation quality. This study followed the qualitative aspect, relying on gathering data of the comparative analysis between the ST and TT. Hence, this comparative analysis revealed some overt and covert errors. Covert errors relate to author's provenance, the function of the text, social role relationship, social attitude, etc., and overt errors involve: Not translated words, slight change of meaning, significance change of meaning, distortion of meaning, cultural filtering, etc. In fact, House's

TQA Model is suitable for assessing the translation of the selected modern poem which is translated overtly; its translation is largely literal, as it utilizes everyday language of modern age poetry. However, overt translation may not be appropriate to all types of modern poetry because poems are different from each other So future studies could provide new perspectives on translating modern poems, of which some, may be translated covertly or covertly and overtly.

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