



RESEARCH PAPER

Translation Quality Assessment: A Case Study of the Novel Peer-E- Kamil

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to evaluate the translation quality of the novel "Peer-e-Kamil" from Urdu to English and seeks to practically apply House's model of Translation Quality Assessment. House's model, proposed in 1997 by Juliane House, facilitates a comparative analysis of the source text (ST) and target text (TT). During this comparison process, errors may emerge and are categorized based on genre and the situational dimensions of register and genre. These errors, referred to as covertly erroneous errors, relate to dimensional discrepancies. Additionally, there are overtly erroneous errors involving denotative mismatches or errors in the target system. Consequently, the translation can be classified as either overt or covert. This qualitative comparative study contributes to the assessment of translation quality by identifying mismatches and errors. The findings suggest that the translator has predominantly opted for a covert translation approach rather than an overt one.

KEYWORDS Register Analysis, Translation Quality Assessment Model, Translation Quality

Introduction

Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) is a crucial topic extensively discussed in various translation theories, focusing on evaluating the overall excellence of a translated text. However, measuring and describing this quality effectively poses challenges due to the involvement of multiple factors and differing perspectives. Many authors have made attempts to define the concept of quality, but its definition remains elusive due to its subjective nature.

Among the numerous translation models and theories, Juliane House's model of Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) stands out as a prominent approach in the field of Translation Studies. House introduced her model in 1996, emphasizing the importance of a comparative analysis between the source text (ST) and target text (TT) profiles. According to House, translation should involve replacing a text in the source language with a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language (House, 2015, p. 23).

This research paper focuses on conducting a Translation Quality Assessment of the novel "Pir-e-Kamil" which has been written in two different languages, aiming to identify any inconsistencies and errors that may exist. The novel, originally published in Urdu in 2004 by Umera Ahmad, was later translated into English in 2011 by Umera Ahmad and her team, and published by Feroz Sons.

The novel revolves around the story of Imama Hashim, a girl who is engaged and belongs to the Qadiyani religious community. Initially unaware of the truth about her community and religion, she undergoes a gradual enlightenment and decides to convert her faith, ultimately leaving her home. The subsequent journey depicts her struggles and pain, but she remains steadfast in her beliefs. Additionally, the male protagonist, Salar Sikandar, comes from a wealthy and well-established Muslim family. Despite initially displaying disobedient behavior and engaging in peculiar activities, he undergoes a transformation, evolving from impracticality to becoming an intellectual man through various experiences.

Literature Review

Translation quality assessment is widely recognized as a crucial aspect within the field of translational studies. It allows researchers to evaluate the quality of translated texts. In a recent study conducted by Asif Aziz, Waqas Faryad, Rana Saleem, and Qasim (2020) in the Pakistani context, the process of translation was based on Vinay and Darbelnet's model of translation shift, specifically focusing on direct translation (DTS) and oblique translation (OTS). The data was initially analyzed qualitatively and then quantitatively to determine the prevalence of different translation techniques. The findings revealed that Urdu translators tended to employ literal translation strategies more frequently in the direct type of translated corpus, while English translators leaned towards using oblique translation strategies.

In another study conducted by Yousefi (2017), the translation of culturally bound terms from Persian into English was examined. The study aimed to identify culturally specific terms using Newmark's (1981) classification or taxonomy. The results indicated that in the short story "Blind Owl" by a Persian writer, the translator predominantly utilized domestication as a translation strategy. The majority of culturally specific terms underwent simplification and naturalization during the translation process.

Alikhademi (2015) conducted research on a medical text titled "Medical Longmans Embryology" using House's Translation Quality Assessment (QTA). The Persian translation of the text was evaluated, and the conclusion was drawn that the translation was done covertly. The researcher examined the lexico-grammatical features of the text, including the field, tenor, and mode. The analysis revealed an abundance of overtly erroneous errors.

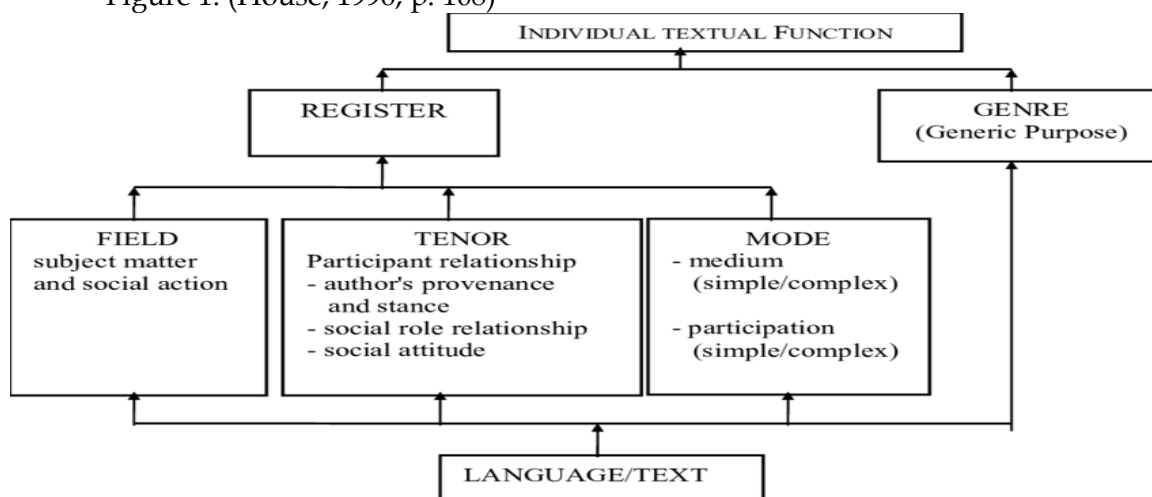
Esmail Faghih and Morvarid Jaza'ei (2015) applied House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment (QTA) in their article titled "A Translation Quality Assessment of Two English Translations of Nazim Hikmet's Poetry." The researchers assessed the quality of both English translations and computed the frequency of errors. These errors were then categorized into overtly erroneous errors and covertly erroneous errors. The researchers established seven categories of overtly erroneous errors, which encompassed untranslated segments, slight changes in meaning, significant changes in meaning, distortion of meaning, violations of the source language system, creative translation, and cultural filtering.

Theoretical Framework

In 1977, House introduced a model for translation quality assessment, which she later revised in response to criticisms it received. The updated model, published in 1997, incorporated elements of discourse analysis, including Halliday's systemic functional model, as well as concepts from the Prague school, speech act theory, pragmatics, and

discourse analysis. The 2014 version of the model still relies on textual and contextual analysis. House's model involves analyzing and comparing the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) at three levels: Language/Text, Register, and Genre, with the latter two considered as "situational dimensions". At the situational dimension level, Register refers to the analysis of the text within its context, further divided into Field (subject matter or topic), Mode (channel and degree of participation between writer and reader), and Tenor (social distance between addresser and addressee). Genre represents the "cultural discourse type".

Figure 1. (House, 1996, p. 108)



House (1997) argues that equivalence is the fundamental criterion for translation quality, not only at the linguistic level but also in terms of semantics and pragmatics. This equivalence requires that the function of the ST is replicated in the translation, considering a pragmatic concept of function where the text and the situational context are not seen as separate entities. The same process is then applied to the TT, and the profiles of both ST and TT are compared, resulting in a statement of mismatches or errors, which can be categorized as covertly (at the Register and Genre level) or overtly (denotative meaning at the text level) erroneous errors. House explains that once errors are identified in the translated text, the final qualitative judgment consists of "listing both covertly and overtly erroneous errors and stating the relative match of the ideational and interpersonal functional components of the textual function" House (1997) defines "overt translation" as one where the intended audience of the translation is clearly aware that it is a translation, as opposed to a "second original." On the other hand, a "covert translation" is one that enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture, not specifically addressed to a particular target culture audience, and may appear to have been created independently (House 69). Equivalence between the ST and the TT is sought at the level of Genre and individual text function, while Language/Text and Register may be modified to incorporate cultural elements by applying a "cultural filter. House's model is based on functional-pragmatic theories of language usage, which allows an interpretation of the source and target texts' "linguistic-discourses and situational-cultural characteristics." In turn, this implies that equivalence is sought at both the semantic and the pragmatic levels between texts that is the use of a text in its context, where it is important to see the denotative sense of terms beyond their referential aspect and to recognize them within a particular communicative situation.

Material and Methods

The present study focuses on the qualitative dimension, utilizing House's model for a comparative analysis of the source text (ST) and target text (TT). This analysis involves examining the lexical, syntactic, and textual aspects of both texts. Through this analysis, the study aims to determine whether the translation is covert or overt by identifying and discussing various mismatches and errors.

The study employs Juliane House's Translation Quality Assessment model, which stands out from other theories by emphasizing the significance of the source text. The model primarily focuses on the comparative analysis of the textual profiles of the source text (ST) and the target text (TT), making it distinct from other approaches. Register analysis and genre analysis are integral components of this model.

According to House's model, translation is categorized into two types:

- **Overt Translation:** The target text is not intended to be perceived as an original.
- **Covert Translation:** The translation enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture.

House's model defines register based on three distinct modes:

- **Field:** Refers to the subject matter and social action, encompassing lexical items.
- **Tenor:** Refers to the addresser's temporal, geographical, and social background, as well as their intellectual, emotional, or affective stance, and formal or informal style.
- **Mode:** Refers to the spoken or written channel and the level of participation between the addresser and addressee.

The "cultural filter," a term introduced by House, plays a vital role in maintaining equivalence at the genre level between the ST and TT profiles. It involves modifying cultural elements.

The model is applied through the following steps:

1. Register analysis to establish the profile of the source text.
2. Description of the genre of the source text identified through the register analysis.
3. Statement of the function of the source text.
4. Replication of the above steps for the target text.
5. Comparison of the source text and target text profiles to identify erroneous errors.
6. Statement of quality regarding the translation results.
7. Categorization of the translation results and providing concluding remarks on translation quality.

Results and Discussion

Register Analysis

Source Text Profile	Target Text Profile
Field	
The novels selected for analysis are 'Peer-e-Kamil' and its English translation, 'The Perfect Mentor,' both written by Umera Ahmed. These novels revolve around themes of mysticism, religion, inspiration, soul-searching, eternal love, and devotion to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The central focus of the novels is the journey of a girl	

named Imam Hashim and her transformation of faith and religion. Additionally, the story introduces the character of Salar Sikandar, an enigmatic individual with an IQ of 150+. Umera Ahmed employs a second narrative technique in these novels, presenting two parallel stories that reflect each other across two distinct cultures. Each book consists of ten chapters, which have been selected for the purpose of conducting a Quality Assessment of the translation.

- **Lexical and Syntactic means**

The language employed in the novel is straightforward. It serves as a means to evoke empathy towards women, highlighting the disparity between the freedom afforded to men in a patriarchal society and the societal expectations imposed on women. The cultural context of the Muslim world is portrayed through words that may carry negative connotations for other religions. The novel consistently emphasizes love and reverence for God, employing sentences that reflect this sentiment, for example

1. "Meri khwahish hai meri shadi is se ho jo Hazrat Mohammad sale Allah alaihi wasallam se ziyada mohabbat karta hon." (Ahmed, 2005, p. 221)
2. "Jalal aap sale Allah alaihi wasallam se ziyada mohabbat karta tha." (Ahmed, 2005, p. 220)
3. "Fikar mat karo aajay gi aik waqt aaye ga jab tumhari har cheez ko samajh aa jaye gi phir tumhari hans khatam ho jaye gi tab tumhe khauf anay lagey ga." (Ahmed, 2005, p. 181)
4. "Mout se bhi aur dozakh se bhi Allah tumhe sab kuch dekha aur bta day ga phir tum kisi se yeh kabhi nahi poocha karo ge wts next two ecstasy." (Ahmed, 2005, p. 181)

There is a balance between active and passive structures. Compound, complex, and compound-complex average-sized sentences have been used with some simple short sentences.

- **Lexical and Syntactic Means.**

Both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) are authored by Umera Ahmed. However, during the translation process, the translator made an effort to maintain a close connection with the readers, resulting in a selection of simpler words and phrases. This approach allows the readers to experience the same feeling as if they were reading the original text.

The concepts presented in the novel are easily comprehensible. The depiction of Pakistani society reflects a prevailing attitude that heavily favors men. For instance, in the translated version, the word 'mother' is rendered as 'ammi', which effectively captures the cultural context. Throughout both texts, the use of words such as 'ammi', 'baba', chowkidar, and sahib further illustrates the cultural nuances of the source text. The text also includes references to the Quran, poetry, and attributes of God. However, certain portions of poetry have been omitted in order to enhance the comfort and readability for the target audience.

1. 'ami I need to discuss something important with you'. (Ahmed, 2011, p. 23)
2. 'You have played here first time but Salar Sahab has been playing here for last three years. (Ahmed, 2011, p. 22)
3. 'Imama Apa, when are you going to Lahore?' (Ahmed, 2011, p. 27)

A balance exists between the use of active and passive structures in the text. Direct narration is predominantly employed, effectively immersing the reader directly into the situations being described.

1. 'Imama are you really engaged?' (Ahmed, 2011, p. 45)

2. 'Why you have stop taking notes during lecture?' (Ahmed, 2011, p. 50)

Tenor

- **Authors' Temporal, Geographical and Social Provenance**

The author employs a simple Urdu writing style, infused with English words commonly used in Asian culture. The story primarily takes place in Lahore and Islamabad, Pakistan, as well as America.

The author employs the English language, utilizing vocabulary commonly used in British culture. The primary settings of the story are in Pakistan and the USA.

- **Author's Personal (Emotional and Intellectual) Stance:**

The author establishes a close relationship with the readers by expressing personal viewpoints, allowing them to experience the depth of emotions conveyed. The narrative emphasizes the significance of religion, faith, and reliance on Allah Almighty and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for leading a successful life. The novel presents a juxtaposition of mystical and contemporary love, showcasing how an intense love for God transcends conventional religious boundaries.

- **Author's Personal (Emotional and Intellectual) Stance:**

The relationship between the author and the readers maintains a closed connection, similar to that of the source text. The writer expresses personal viewpoints regarding religion, love, and the role of women. The novel portrays both mystical and contemporary forms of love, using the word 'love' for the concept of 'ishq,' which in Urdu is typically expressed as 'mohabbat' or 'pyar.' The author emphasizes that love for God and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) transcends the boundaries of conventional religious practices.

- **Social Role Relationship:**

The social role relationship between the writer and the reader can be characterized as asymmetrical, indicating the presence of authority or hierarchy in the communication.

- **Social Role Relationship:**

In this translation, the translator establishes a symmetrical relationship with the readers, aiming for the text to feel like an original piece of writing. The vocabulary selection and sentence structure align with the target culture.

- **Social Attitude:**

Following House's categorization, social attitude can be divided into formal, informal, and consultative. The writer adopts an informal social attitude towards the reader, establishing a casual tone in the text.

1. "I'm a bad person, remember?" Salar chuckled. (Ahmed, 2011, p. 145)
2. "Very well, I won't," replied Salar, to free himself from their pleas and despair. (Ahmed, 2011, p. 145)

The text exhibits a well-structured and coherent narrative, with a logical sequence of events. Nouns are predominantly used instead of pronouns in the source text, contributing to the clarity and cohesion of the writing.

- **Social Attitude:**

The translation blends elements of informal and formal styles. The text maintains a well-structured, clear, logically sequenced, and strongly cohesive narrative. Additionally,

Hear

personal pronouns are utilized extensively.

1. "He's a close friend of yours." (Ahmed, 2011, p. 47)
2. "I can't do this – I told you what problems I'll face!" (Ahmed, 2011, p. 98)

Mode, Medium, and Connectivity

The source text predominantly takes the form of written dialogues and narration. In line with Biber's (1988) oral/literate dimensions, which House (109) utilizes to differentiate between spoken and written mediums, this text exhibits situation-dependent dialogues that encompass interactive elements within a structured, formal, and technical discourse. The participation in the novel is intricate, as dialogues are interwoven with narrative elements.

The target text is similarly presented in written form, primarily consisting of dialogues and narration.

Genre

According to House (1997) Genre is a category that is created socially in terms of communicative purpose, usage, and source.

The novel falls within the genre of Urdu Novel.

• Statement of Function:

The text serves multiple functions, including being evocative, informative, directive, and expressive. Additionally, it incorporates interpersonal function through the use of straightforward, descriptive, religious, and cultural terminology.

The novel falls under the category of English Novel.

• Statement of function:

The translated text is evocative, informative, directive, and expressive. Additionally, it incorporates interpersonal function through the use of straightforward, descriptive, religious, and cultural terminology. The translator has made conscious efforts to employ a sense-to-sense translation technique while considering the syntactic structure as well.

Discussion

When analyzing this novel through House's model of Translation Quality Assessment and Register analysis, it becomes evident that there are various mismatches and errors in the target text (TT). These mismatches are classified as overt errors resulting from a lack of dimensional match, and covert errors resulting from a mismatch between situational dimensions in the TT. The concept of a "Cultural Filter" is applied to maintain genre equivalence and lend an authentic expression to the TT.

The cover pages of the two novels differ. The source text (ST) cover features an image of a girl gazing at the twinkling star in the sky, while the TT cover depicts a desert scene with a mosque and palm trees. The image of the girl with her head covered in the ST conveys religious inclination to the target readers, as she belongs to the Islamic community.

The desert and mosque image in the TT aims to help the target readers understand the culture portrayed in the ST.

The title of the novel in the ST is "Peer-e-Kamil (SAW)," translated as "Pir-e-Kamil (PBUH) THE PERFECT MENTOR" in the TT. By including "The Perfect Mentor" in the TT title, the translator seeks to provide an explanation of the meaning of the ST title, making it more appealing and clear to the TT readers.

Applying House's model of quality assessment reveals that the field is similar for both ST and TT. Both revolve around the story of a girl and a boy, their conversion to Islam, their faith, sufferings, and struggles. However, there are mismatches in the amount of information provided. Comparing the profiles for the ideational strand of meaning, the English translation adopts a simpler and more direct linguistic construction compared to the lengthy, complex, and detailed ST. Terminology is abundant, and lexical items are transformed. The translator often adds, removes, and rearranges words from the ST to effectively convey the message in the TT.

In the TT, different words are used to translate a single word from the ST. For example, the ST may use the word "bura/buri" repeatedly, but in the TT, the translator employs distinct vocabulary such as upset, furious, angry, and frustrated mind to avoid repetition and enhance the vibrancy of the TT. Additionally, the word "khawaish" is translated as dream, thought, wish, and desire in the TT.

Translating a literary text, such as a novel, while maintaining a balance between both profiles can be challenging for a translator. According to House, the ST carries the same significance as the TT. Regarding Tenor, the language used in both novels is formal. Mismatches arise from non-translation, omission, and interpersonal features. Coherence of the text is occasionally disrupted by the omission of facts, words, and sense.

For example, the ST includes a section of composed poetry, which is not translated in the TT. There are also changes in tense and speech patterns due to differences in sentence structures between English and Urdu. In English, the sentence structure follows subject+verb+object, whereas Urdu sentences adhere to the subject+object+verb rule.

1. *You and I cannot get married. It will not be valid.* (Ahmed, 2011, p.121)

"Meri aur tumhari shadi jaiz nahi." (Ahmed, 2005, p.155)

The source text (ST) utilizes various tenses such as past, present, present continuous, and past continuous. However, in the target text (TT), these tenses are transformed into past simple tense, and passive voice sentences are introduced. Additionally, numerous lines from the novel have been omitted, resulting in changes in punctuation. Furthermore, complex sentences found in the ST have been divided into shorter sentences in the TT during the translation process.

1. *This is what happened today. They had come back from school together. When they got down from the car, the younger brother roughly dragged his bag out of the boot as Moiz was picking up his bag. In this process, he bruised Moiz's hand, making him wince with pain.* (Ahmed, 2011, p.08)

"Who dono school sy ikhathay wapis aye thy aur gari sy utarty howay isky choty bhai nay bari darshtee ky sath pechy deggi sy is waqt apna bag nikal raha tha. Bag khanchty howay isky hath ko buri tarhan sy ragar ai." (Ahmed, 2005, p.13)

In the TT, the sentence mentioned above is divided into four lines, using commas and periods as separators. This segmentation aids in clear understanding for the readers and helps emphasize specific ideas and themes. Conversely, in the ST, the same sentence is presented as a simple two-line statement without any punctuation.

To ensure comprehensibility, cohesiveness, and coherence, the translator has omitted unnecessary details present in the ST. This omission can be categorized as covert errors. Additionally, idiomatic expressions like "bal ki khal utarna" (shedding the skin of a hair) or "gadhy k sar sy singh gaib hona" (making a donkey lose its ears) have not been translated in the TT.

The following lines (among others) have been extracted from the ST but not translated in the TT by the translator. The omission of these lines in the target language highlights covert errors and mismatches.

1. "Yeh baat inhy kon samjhay yeh log humy jhoota kehty hain halnkay khudiny humary bary main kuch pata nahi aur hamaray nabi ki talemaat ke baray mein kuch pata ho to yeh log is terhan nah karen. bas molvion ke kehney mein aakar hum par charhtay hain."

(Ahmed, 2005, p. 73)

2. kuch nahi mangta shahoon se yeh Shaida tera. is ki doulat hai faqat naqsh kaf pa tera. (Ahmed,2005, p. 95)

The provided examples serve to underscore instances where the translator has altered the meaning of words within their respective contexts. Such changes can be regarded as distortions of meaning, representing overt errors.

1. 'One should be live to be at least a hundred'. (Ahmed,2011,p.06)

"Kum sy kym soo saal tou milney chhayen insan ko dunya main." (Ahmed,2005,p.12)

In the target text, the sentence mentioned above has been generalized to apply to all human beings, whereas the Urdu version specifically uses the word 'insan' (meaning 'human').

Additionally, there are instances in the target text where additional text is included that is not present in the source text. Words and sentences are added to align with the specific scenario or situation of the event in the target text. These additions are classified as overt errors. For example:

1. 'The cold water on his hands made him shiver for a while. By the time Salar had reached at the last stage of the wuzu under Saad's supervision, the cold water had turned tepid. As he was running his hands over his head, he suddenly stopped.' (Ahmed,2011, p.212)

2. 'We also believe in the prophethood of Jesus and that the Bible is a divine book, so does that make us Christians?' (Ahmed,2011, p.60)

Moreover, the translator occasionally introduces new phrases and expressions to uphold the coherence between sentences, ensuring a smooth and rhythmic flow of the text. For example:

1. 'This is out of the question', (Ahmed,2011, p.06)

"Esa mumkin nahi hai." (Ahmed,2005, p.12)

2. 'He was man for all seasons: he could settle anywhere.' (Ahmed,2011, p.283)

"Isy mah zuban ka koi masla nahi howa tha wo haar pani ki machli tha."

(Ahmed,2005, p.338)

Furthermore, numerous words from the source text (ST) have been incorporated into the target text (TT). Examples include 'chote sahib', 'Salar sahib', 'baba', 'ammi', 'apa', 'chowkidar', 'purdah', 'bibi jee', 'heera mandi', and 'red light area'. By introducing these words, the translator aims to familiarize the target text readers with the cultural aspects portrayed in the source text, allowing them to fully immerse themselves in the text as if it were the original.

In the source text, the author employs pronouns such as 'ap', 'inky', 'isky', and 'tum' to address the reader, reflecting different levels of formality, intimacy, and cultural respect. These pronouns contribute to establishing a specific tone and relationship with the target text readers.

1. 'Imama Apa , when are you going to Lahore?''(Ahmed,2011, p.27)

"Imama apa! Ap Lahore kab jain gi?" (Ahmed,2005, p.35)

2. 'From time to time he would look Mrs. Richards, and then turn back to the view from window. (Ahmed,2011, p.10)

"Waqtan fo waqatan wo bahar sy nazrain hatata ik nazar mrs samntha ko dekhta." (Ahmed,2005, p.15)

The aforementioned lines indicate that both novels are tailored to their respective target readers. In the source text, the teacher's full name is repeatedly mentioned, while in the target text, the translator opts to use only the second name. This choice aligns with British cultural norms, where individuals are often referred to by their second name rather than their first name.

In the target text, the translator uses the phrase 'conservative families' to translate the term 'mazhabi gharana'. This decision reflects the translator's awareness of the target readership. In Western culture, religious individuals or communities may be viewed with some negativity. While people may respect someone's religion, they tend to perceive Islamic individuals as conservative. Hence, the translator employs the word 'conservative' to capture this aspect while considering the expectations and perceptions of the target readership.

1. 'She was very careful about purdah so Zainab thought Imama too was from a conservative background like herself.'

"Who jis tarhan parddy ka khayal rakhti thi Zainab ka khyal tha k wo kisi mazhabi gharany sy taluq rakhti hai. Khud Zainab bhi khasy mazhabi gharany sy taluq rakhty thy aur chadar urrah kari thi." (Ahmed,2005, p.115)

Regarding the Mode, the scenario remains consistent as the novel and its plot are similar in both the source text (ST) and target text (TT). However, in the TT, mismatches arise at the textual level, where many sentences are shortened and deliberate omissions of phrases disrupt the coherence of the text. Additionally, the TT presents additional writing issues, such as word choice, punctuation in complex and compound sentences, and intricate text structure.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Register analysis of the text proves instrumental in identifying mismatches and errors, which in turn contribute to the assessment of translation quality. Through a thorough examination of both texts, the researchers have identified mismatches at the lexical, syntactical, semantic, and grammatical levels. The presence of covert translation is evident, and at times, the translator overtly translates the text. Overall, the application of House's model indicates that the translator has made diligent efforts to maintain the text's resemblance to the source text, preserving its original impact on the readers.

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