

# Translation Quality Assessment of one Translated Version of SALINGER'S "THE CATCHER IN THE RYE" by Ahmad Karimi Based on Julian House Model

**Mobina Baghdar**

*Master of English translation, Islamic Azad University of Karaj, Iran*

\*Corresponding Author Email: [mobina.baghdar2020@gmail.com](mailto:mobina.baghdar2020@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT:** The aim of the present article is indicating to what extent the Iranian translator of J. D. Salinger's „The Catcher in the Rye' could preserve the style of the author and also to understand whether the style of the translators of this literary work had any effect in the translation. Since the researchers were unable to find any existing model in the style of translation or interpreter, they went through basic research and designed a first-hand practice system. The stylistic characteristics of the source book were examined in the authentic English sources by the most prominent and credible critics and formed the corpus of this study along with Ahmad Karimi's corresponding translation.

**Keywords:** Translation, translator's style, stylistic features, House model.

## INTRODUCTION

Literary translation comprises a significant part of the literary life of every country and impacts its culture in many ways. Therefore, it is crucial to study translation product and process closely. One of aspects of a literary work is its style. In the past it was believed that translators should not have their own style and must reproduce the style of the author. But scholars have started to admit that it is impossible to reproduce the ST author's style, and translators' trace can be tracked in a translation by studying style. To pinpoint the style of the translators, the researcher chose the most famous work of J. D. Salinger and tone Persian translation of it to see to what extent the translators have followed the style of the author and what proportion of the product's style belongs to the translator himself.

A look at the history of translation studies in recent decades shows that theorists are increasingly paying attention to the role of ideology in translation. Many translation scholars today believe that the translator is primarily a social activist who has an active rather than a passive presence in the translation process, and that his or her translational behavior is to a social group or class to which he or she is largely dependent on ideology and interests. In the process of translation, the translator is constantly surrounded by various ideologies, each of which in turn influences the translator and leads him, willingly or unwillingly, to specific translation leaders (3, p. 2007, Al-Shahari). This is especially the case for translators who work in inherently ideological settings, such as news agencies or newspaper editorial offices; where the translator generally has to conform to the positions and line of thought of the publisher or employer, and the product of his work is often the ideological smoothness of actions.

House (2009, 1997) model of "evaluating the quality of translation" has a strong analytical capacity due to its strong linguistic structure, adopting a role-oriented approach to translation, and paying attention to the

relationship between textual-linguistic variables and contextual variables. The model does not seem to have evolved in line with the dramatic developments in translation theory, and fundamental adjustments are needed to meet the analytical needs of translation at a time when translation studies have taken a step towards the new "ideological cycle" paradigm.

Julian House Translation Quality Assessment Model (House 1997); 2009, 2015) is based on the premise "translation as re-creation" and is based on Halliday's role-oriented linguistics. Unlike most translation evaluation / critique approaches, House proposed model is one of the few approaches that does not selectively address the achievements of linguistic knowledge and uses the findings of a holistic theory of language at the micro and colonial levels. The House pattern begins at the surface of the text but alternates across the boundaries of the text and systematically shapes the interrelationships between textual and textual components.

The *Catcher in the Rye*, novel by J.D. Salinger published in 1951. The novel details two days in the life of 16-year-old Holden Caulfield after he has been expelled from prep school. Confused and disillusioned, Holden searches for truth and rails against the "phoniness" of the adult world. He ends up exhausted and emotionally unstable. The events are related after the fact.

From what is implied to be a sanatorium, Holden, the narrator and protagonist, tells the story of his adventures before the previous Christmas. The story begins with Holden at Pencey Prep School on his way to the house of his history teacher, Spencer, so that he can say goodbye. He reveals to the reader that he has been expelled for failing most of his classes. After he visits Spencer, he encounters his roommate, Ward Stradlater, who asks Holden to write an essay for English class for him while he goes on a date with a longtime friend of Holden's. Having agreed, Holden writes about the baseball glove of his younger brother, Allie, who died of leukemia. When Stradlater returns, he tells Holden that the essay isn't good, and Holden gets angry when Stradlater refuses to say whether he had sex with his date. This causes Holden to storm out and leave Pencey for New York City a few days earlier than planned for Christmas break. Once he arrives in New York, he cannot go home, as his parents do not yet know that he has been expelled. Instead, he rents a room at the Edmont Hotel, where he witnesses some sexually charged scenes through the windows of other rooms. His loneliness then causes him to seek out human interaction, which he does at the Lavender Room, the hotel's nightclub. After interacting with some women there, he goes to another nightclub, only to leave after seeing his elder brother's ex-girlfriend. When he gets back to the hotel, he orders a prostitute to his room, only to talk to her. This situation ends in him being punched in the stomach.

The next morning, Holden calls Sally Hayes, an ex-girlfriend of his. They spend the day together until Holden makes a rude remark and she leaves crying. Holden then meets up with a former schoolmate, Carl Luce, at a bar, but Luce leaves early because he becomes annoyed by Holden's immature comments. Holden stays behind and gets drunk by himself. After he leaves, he wanders in Central Park until the cold drives him to his family's apartment. He sneaks in, still not prepared to face his parents, and finds his 10-year-old sister, Phoebe. She is upset when she hears that Holden has failed out and accuses him of not liking anything. It is at this time that Holden describes to his sister his fantasy of being "The Catcher in the Rye," which was inspired by a song he heard a little boy singing: "If a body catch a body comin' through the rye." Phoebe tells him that the words are "If a body meet a body coming through the rye," from a poem by Robert Burns. (Burns's poem, "Comin thro' the Rye," exists in several versions, but most render the lines as "Gin a body meet a body / Comin thro' the rye.") Soon they hear their parents come home after a night out, and Holden sneaks away. He calls his former English teacher, Mr. Antolini, who tells Holden he can come stay at his apartment. Holden falls asleep on Antolini's couch and awakes to Antolini stroking his forehead, which Holden interprets as a sexual advance. He immediately excuses himself and heads to Grand Central Station, where he spends the rest of the night. When he awakes, he goes to Phoebe's school and leaves a note telling her that he plans to run away and asking her to meet him at a museum during lunch. She arrives with a packed bag and insists on going with him. He tells her no and instead takes her to the zoo, where he watches her ride the carousel in the pouring rain. This is where the flashback ends. The novel closes with Holden explaining that he has fallen "sick" but is expected to go to a new school in the fall.

Salinger's masterpiece "The Catcher in the Rye" translated by Ahmad Karimi was first published in Mina Publishing in 1345, and with a long pause in 2016, it was published in the second edition of the Scientific and Cultural Publishing. The aim of this article is evaluate the translation of this novel by Ahmad Karimi.

## Literature review

The most challenging branch of translation is literary translation, where literary text – as an "expressive" text type by Reiss (1977/1989) – involves a set of typical features. According to Jones literary texts are in a written form, fictional, and canonical, and they have an aesthetic function, focusing on the expression of emotions, with poetic language, implicit meanings, heteroglossia, and deviations (Jones, 2009, in Baker and Saldanha eds. 2009: 152). According to Huang, X. (2011), (1) literary texts are characterized by rhetorical and aesthetic value, which is the essence expected to be captured and maintained in a literary translation; (2) in literary translation the form interlinks with the content; while in non-literary translation the content may be considered detachable from the

form or structure; (3) literary translators' choices of wording are highly dependent on the target language (TL) and culture while literary texts are solidly rooted in the source language (SL) and culture; (4) a consideration of the target audiences is another important issue in literary translation. Literary translation always has a readership which is likely to be quite different from the one the writer originally had in mind; and (5) literary translation is a complicated act, and to this effect, there is no definite correct translation yet there is a proper or an appropriate translation according to certain criteria or from a certain perspective.

Translation is an artistic communication between the author, the translator, and the reader, and the selection of words by the translator is a core act in the process of translating as communication (Huang, X., 2011). Translation is a communicative act, and literary translation is especially an artistic communication. "Literature is both the condition and the place of artistic communication between senders and addressees, or the public" (Bassnett, 2002: 83). In this communication process, the translator has first to read, comprehend, and interpret the source text, then to represent it in a different medium. Selection is a core act in the process (Huang, X., 2011). The noun style has a long history and wide range of meanings. Style derives from the Latin word *stylus* meaning stake or pointed instrument for writing, and modern meanings are an extension of this. The most relevant meaning provided by the Oxford English Dictionary is: "The manner of expression characteristic of a particular writer (hence of an orator) or of a literary group or period; a writer's mode of expression considered in regard to clearness, effectiveness, beauty, and the like" (quoted in Hawthorn, 2000: 344). Abrams (1993: 203) defines style as "the manner of linguistic expression in prose or verse – it is how speakers or writers say whatever it is that they say". Here how – which is emphasized by Abrams – refers to the technique or craft of writing, his definition emphasizes the linguistic approach of style Stylistics – more strictly known as literary stylistics or linguistic stylistics – is a linguistic approach to style or an approach that focuses on the linguistic properties of a writer's style of a literary text (Huang, X., 2011). Influenced by the Russian formalists and the scholars of Prague School, literary stylistics holds that "Style could be more fully accounted for by text-immanent linguistic explanation and less effectively by means of interdisciplinary approaches" (Carter and Simpson, 2003, p. 2). Literary texts have a hard-to-define "added value", carried by the particular way in which they exploit lexis, grammar, pragmatics, and so on; this added value has everything to do with the text's style (Huang, X., 2011).

According to Leech and Short (1981:38): (1) Style is a way in which language is used: i.e. it belongs to parole rather than to langue. (2) Therefore style consists in choices made from the repertoire of the language. (3) A style is defined in terms of a domain of language use (e.g. what choices are made by a particular author, in a particular genre, or in a particular text).

According to Bell (1991): "Translation is the expression in another language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalence" (p. 5). Such a view assumes that a translation must be „as good as' an original and that translators are seen as „good' translators when their work is transparent and does not show its own style (Bosseaux, 2004). Translators are therefore expected to reproduce the style of the original as closely as possible. However, this way of looking at translation has rightly been questioned by translation scholars such as Baker (2000) and Hermans (1996), since it seems impossible to produce a text without leaving one's imprint on it. Scholars working in the field of translation have paid particular attention to the style for some time now. Formulating a unified definition of what style exactly is, however, remains problematical. It remains both elusive and ambiguous in nature, and the investigation is still unsystematic. Boase-Beier, at the beginning of her book *Stylistic Approaches to Translation*, points out that: From the earliest writings about translation, such as those of Cicero or Horace, style has often been mentioned but, as Snell-Hornby (1995: 119) notices, its role has rarely been systematically explored. Yet style is central to the way we construct and interpret texts. (Boase-Beier, 2006: 1) The comments on style in many translation studies works tend to be ad hoc and impressionistic, and the notion of "style" in those comments is deemed as an abstract and obscure spirit or sense (Huang, X., 2011). Dryden, in 1680 referred to the style, or something similar to it, as the "genius" of a text; Pope spoke grandiosely of the "spirit" and "fire" (Lefevere, 1992: 64, in Boase-Beier, 2006: 11) of the text; Denham spoke of its "spirit" (Robinson, 2002: 156, in Boase-Beier, 2006: 11); Schleiermacher spoke of the need to pay attention to "the spirit not only of language but also of the original author" (Robinson, 2002: 233, in Boase-Beier, 2006: 11). Jean Boase-Beier (2006) clearly underlines the importance of style in literary translation. She believes literary translation "can be seen as the translation of style because it is the style of a text which allows the text to function as literature" (2006: 114). Boase-Beier (2006) stresses the importance of choice, not only for the original author, but also for the translator. The main concern here is to investigate the impact of choices made by the translator on the reading and interpretation of the target text (Lance Hewson). Boase-Beier (2006) claims that stylistics supplies a more varied perspective of a reading and translation and informs translators' decisions. Style was long a primary concern in the pre-linguistics period of translation studies. It has often been approached from two perspectives: firstly, style is the result of choices; secondly, style is the author's or is ST oriented (Huang and Chu, 2014). In general, translators are often taken as "writers" with limited freedom, because "translators are more concerned with questions of options than with servitudes", and "grammar is the domain of servitudes whereas options belong to the domain of stylistics, or at least to a certain type of stylistics" (Vinay and Darbelnet 1958, 16). This indicates that from the perspective of the translator, style in translation is closely

related to the linguistic options taken by translators (Huang and Chu, 2014). However, since it is always maintained that style in translation belongs only to the author and a translator should not have his or her own style, the task for a translator is nothing but to imitate the author's style (Huang and Chu, 2014). In the pre-linguistics period, "loyalty" or "faithfulness" served as one of the key conceptual tools in discussing translations. A translator was forbidden to have his or her own style. To achieve the same stylistic effect of the ST in the TT was one of the ways to attain faithfulness in translation (Huang and Chu, 2014). The ST or the author is placed in the central, sacred position. Style, in the philological period of translation studies, was also taken as a yardstick to make an assessment of the translation (Huang and Chu, 2014). For instance, according to Tytler (1978, p. XXXVI as cited in Huang and Chu, 2014), in good translations, "the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original". Again, the style, more specifically the author's style, is considered to be something sacred in translation. Successful transfer of the ST style is the focus of attention of almost all translators. It appears that discussions about style in translation in the pre-linguistics period were mostly ST oriented (Huang and Chu, 2014).

#### A Review of the Critique of the House Model

House (1997: 101) acknowledged that the (initial) model of translation quality evaluation (1997) has been criticized in four ways: For example, Newmark considers class to be "inflexible" (182, p. 1981, Newmark), and "incomprehensible" (61, p. 1979, Newmark), and generally believes that analytical tools are too complex.

### METHODOLOGY

To study the style of translators, the researcher chose one translation of *The Catcher in the Rye* by J. D. Salinger as the source material, the translation rendered by Ahmad Karimi (1966/2014). The corpus of this study was comprised of 124 examples (consisting of 139 sentences) of stylistic features indicating the style of Salinger. The present research is a corpus-based descriptive comparative study which applied both the qualitative and quantitative research methods. Therefore, the researchers embarked on outlining the stylistic features of the ST and the treatment of the translators with those features. The present study is not a classical one-to-one bilingual comparative study, but a two-to-one study that compares the two target texts with each other, and with their shared source text. Theoretical framework of this study has two parts: the first one clarifies the literary style which would be traced based on the theories House model.

#### Qualitative Data Analysis

Examining the cover of the book translated by Ahmad Karimi, it can be concluded that the translator has well portrayed a 16-year-old Holden Caulfield after he has been expelled from prep school and the background of this book wants to show us the world out of the school. The word with all problems and lies and also its contortion.

But the cover of slinger book wants to show us a wild horse in the world full of joy and also problems. The translator of this book used a boy instead of a wild horse instead of Holden

#### Lexical categories

lexical categories consist of the following subdivisions: general, nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. The examples matching the above category are examined in this novel.

#### Teenage colloquial spoken language

The language of *The Catcher in the Rye* is an authentic artistic rendering of a type of informal, colloquial, teenage American spoken language; it is strongly typical and trite, yet often somewhat individual; it is crude and slangy and imprecise, imitative yet occasionally imaginative, and affected toward standardization by the strong efforts of schools.

Example: 'she didn't give you a lot of horse manure about what a great guy her father was.'

Karimi: هیچ وقت راجع به اینکه پدرش چه آدم بزرگی بود فیس و افاده نمیفرودخت

Karimi's translation is more formal and his rendition is closer to written language than spoken.

#### Trite repetitive vocabulary

Repetitious and trite as Holden's vocabulary may be, it can, nevertheless, become highly effective. For example, when Holden piles one trite adjective upon another, a strong power of invective is often the result:

Example 1: 'because he was a goddam stupid moron'

Karimi: که پسر کله پوک و بیشعوری است.

### Using the more vulgar terms

Her mother was married again to some booze hound.

Karimi: مادرش دوباره زن یک عرق خور دایم الخمر شده بود

Karimi's translation is decent.

### Using many words which are above basic English

An intelligent, well-read ('I'm quite illiterate, but I read a lot'), and educated boy, Holden possesses, and can use when he wants to, many words which are many a cut above Basic English.

Example: The whole team ostracized me the whole way back on the train.

Karimi: موقع برگشتن توی قطار همه اعضای تیم مرا بایکوت کردند.

Karimi's translation is close to ST.

### Rich and colorful slang

Holden's speech is also typical in his use of slang. Holden uses over a hundred slang terms, and every one of these is in widespread use.

Example: It was on the crappy side, though.

Karimi: گو اینکه باز هم نزدیک به افتضاح بود

The translator has maintained the connotation intended by the writer.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to find out to what extent the Iranian translator of J. D. Salinger's „The Catcher in the Rye” have preserved the style of the author and if there was any significant difference between the styles in translating the book. four categories of lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech and context & cohesion were selected to analyze the style of the writer in the source book and the translators in the translated version. Qualitative analysis of the translations of Karimi showed that, in lexical categories, of 49 examples Karimi had preserved 17 stylistic features of the ST. Karimi's translation is more formal and written speech than spoken. When translating vulgar terms, which are one of the main stylistic characteristics of Salinger in The Catcher, Karimi has used more decent wording. Sometimes even Karimi has opted to change the author's connotation. Overall, Karimi has opted to omit some words and phrases. For grammatical mistakes in the ST, translator had no solution.

Analysis of grammatical categories showed that Karimi had preserved 14 stylistic features of the ST out of 30. Here again Karimi's main strategy was to omit. For the figures of speech categories Karimi had preserved 8 stylistic features of the ST out of 23.

Karimi has changed the structure to adjective or adverb. For the context and cohesion categories Karimi had preserved 14 stylistic features of the ST out of 21. He has maintained other context and cohesion features of the ST.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## REFERENCES

- Abrams, M. H., & Harpham, G. 2011. A glossary of literary terms. Cengage Learning.
- Baker, M. 1996. Corpus-based translation studies: The challenges that lie ahead. *Benjamins Translation Library*, 18, 175-186.
- Baker, M. 2000. Towards a methodology for investigating the style of a literary translator. *Target*, 12(2), 241-266.
- Baker, M. Gabriela Saldanha, eds. 2009. *Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*.
- Barr, D. 1957. *Saints, Pilgrims and Artists*. Commonweal, 88-90.
- Bassnett, S. 1996. The meek or the mighty: Reappraising the role of the translator. *Translation, power, subversion*, 23.
- Bassnett, S. 2002. *Translation studies*. Routledge. 8. Belcher, W. F., & Lee, J. W. (2013). *J. D. Salinger and the Critics*.

- Behrman, S. N. 1951. The Vision of the Innocent. Rev. of *The Catcher in the Rye* by JD Salinger. *The New Yorker*, 27(26), 71-6.
- Bell, R. T. 1991. *Translation and translating: Theory and practice*. Taylor & Francis.
- Boase-Beier, J. 2006 *Stylistic Approaches to Translation*, Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Bosseaux, C. 2004. Translating point of view: A corpus-based study. *Language Matters*, 35(1), 259-274.
- Brashers, H. C. 1964. *An Introduction to American Literature*. Stockholm: Bonniers.
- Carter, R., & Simpson, P. (Eds.). 2003. *Language, discourse and literature: An introductory reader in discourse stylistics*. Routledge.
- Costello, D. P. 1959. The Language of 'The Catcher in the Rye'. *American Speech*, 34(3), 172-181.
- Hermans, T. 1996. The translator's voice in translated narrative. *Target*, 8(1), 23-48.
- Hawthorn, J. 2000. *A Glossary of Contemporary Literary Theory* (Vol. 1). Oxford University Press.
- Heiserman, A., & Miller, J. E. (1956). JD Salinger: Some crazy cliff. *Western Humanities Review*, 10, 129-137.
- Huang, L., & Chu, C. 2014. Translator's style or translational style? A corpus-based study of style in translated Chinese novels. *Asia Pacific Translation and Intercultural Studies*, 1(2), 122-141.
- Huang, X. 2011. *Stylistic approaches to literary translation: with particular reference to English-Chinese and Chinese-English translation* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Birmingham).
- Kafil, M. 2012. *An Investigation of the Translator's Style in Rendering Literary Texts: The Case of Daryabandari's Translations* (Unpublished Master Thesis). SheikhabaeeUniversity, Isfahan, Iran.
- Karimi, A. 2014. *NatoorDasht*. Tehran: Ghoghnoos Publications.
- Leech, G. N. & Short, M. H. 1981. *Style in Fiction*, London and New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Mikhailov, M., & Villikka, M. 2001. Is there such a thing as a translator's style. In *Proceedings of the Corpus Linguistics 2001 conference* (pp. 378-386).
- Moshfegh, Z. 2013. *A Study of Translator's Visibility in Rendering Free Indirect Discourse: The Case of Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway and Its Three Persian Translations* (Unpublished Master Thesis). SheikhabaeeUniversity, Isfahan, Iran.
- Nida, E. A. 1969. & Charles R. Taber. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, 12. 28.
- Ohmann, C., & Ohmann, R. 1976. Reviewers, Critics, and "The Catcher in the Rye". *Critical inquiry*, 3(1), 15-37.
- Parks, T. 1998. *Translating style: The English modernists and their Italian translations*. London: Cassell.
- Reiss, K. 1989. Text types, translation types and translation assessment. *Readings in translation theory*, 105-15.
- Saldanha, G. 2004. Accounting for the exception to the norm: Split infinities in translated English. *Language Matters*, 35(1), 39-53.
- Salinger, J. D. 2009. *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951). CLASSIC, 107.
- Venuti, L. 1995. *The Invisibility of the Translator. A History of Translation*. London, Routledge.
- Vinay, J. P., & Darbelnet, J. 1958. *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais: méthode de traduction* (Vol. 1). Didier.
- Winters, M. 2004. F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Die Schönen und Verdammten*: A corpus-based study of loan words and code switches as features of translators' style. *Language Matters*, 35(1), 248-258.
- Winters, M. 2005. *A corpus-based study of translator style: Oeser's and Orth-Guttman's German translations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Beautiful and Damned* (Doctoral dissertation, Dublin City University).