AN EVALUATION OF THE VIETNAMESE TRANSLATION OF "THE THORN BIRDS" BASED ON HOUSE'S MODEL OF TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

ĐÁNH GIÁ PHIÊN BẢN DỊCH TIẾNG VIỆT CỦA "THE THORN BIRDS" DỰA TRÊN MÔ HÌNH ĐÁNH GIÁ CHẤT LƯỢNG DỊCH THUẬT CỦA HOUSE

Vo Thi Thu Huyen, Nguyen Thi Thu Huong*

The University of Danang - University of Foreign Language Studies, Danang, Vietnam

*Corresponding author: ntthhuong@ufl.udn.vn

Abstract – Translation quality plays a crucial role in conveying information between languages. Accuracy ensures equivalence between source and target languages, while acceptability involves adherence to cultural norms, and readability requires clarity for target readers. In this research, House's (1977) Translation Quality Assessment Model was applied to evaluate the Vietnamese translation of the novel "The Thorn Birds" by Trung Dung (2015), focusing on two dimensions: Dimensions of Language Use and Dimensions of Language User. This study illustrates steps in evaluating Trung Dung's Vietnamese translation of "The Thorn Birds", providing examples of mismatches and errors in comparing the source text and the target text. Some covert mismatches are found related to the translation of pronouns and measurement units, while overt ones involve grammatical discrepancies.

Key words - House's Translation Quality Assessment Model; the source text; the target text

Tóm tắt - Việc đảm bảo chất lượng bản dịch là điều quan trọng trong việc truyền đạt thông tin chính xác giữa các nền ngôn ngữ khác nhau. Bản dịch cần đảm bảo độ chính xác hoặc tính tương đương giữa ngôn ngữ nguồn và ngôn ngữ đích; đồng thời, bản dịch cũng phải đáp ứng yêu cầu về mức độ chấp nhận thông qua việc tuân thủ các chuẩn mực văn hóa, và đảm bảo sự rõ ràng, dễ hiểu đối với người đọc. Nghiên cứu áp dụng Mô hình Đánh giá Chất lượng Dịch của House (1977) để xem xét chất lượng bản dịch tiếng Việt cuốn tiểu thuyết "The Thorn Birds" dịch bởi Trung Dũng (năm 2015) (dưới hai phương diện- "Sử dụng ngôn ngữ" và "Người sử dụng ngôn ngữ"). Nghiên cứu này minh họa các bước đánh giá bản dịch của Trung Dũng, đưa ra một số ví dụ về "lỗi" và sự "chênh lệch" khi so sánh bản gốc và bản dịch. Các lỗi ngữ dụng được tìm thấy liên quan đến đại từ, đơn vị đo lường trong khi lỗi ngữ nghĩa liên quan đến sự khác biệt ngữ pháp.

Từ khóa - Mô hình Đánh giá Chất lượng Dịch của House; văn bản nguồn; văn bản đích

1. Introduction

Literary translation involves the conversion of written literary pieces, including novels, poems, plays, and short stories, from one language to another. This process goes beyond mere word translation, extending to the conveyance of the original work's style, tone, and cultural subtleties. The aim is to safeguard the essence and meaning of the content in the target language. According to Lefevere), "translation is the most recognizable type of rewriting, and it is most influential because it can project an image of an author and/or on works beyond the borders of the source culture" [1, p. 17]. It is shown that foreign language proficiency is necessary but not sufficient to ensure one's ability to translate literature. This process demands solid knowledge of language, culture, and literary, historical, and ethnographic aspects.

Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) plays a crucial role in facilitating efficient communication across diverse cultural and linguistic frontiers in the contemporary era of globalization. As societies become increasingly interconnected, the demand for precise and culturally attuned translations escalates. Hewson underscores that Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) seeks to delineate the interpretative potential embedded within translation [2, p.6]. Serving as a mechanism for ensuring quality, accuracy, and appropriateness of translated content,

translation assessment stands as a pivotal step towards meeting standards and effectively conveying intended messages. It scrutinizes translations within a well-established interpretive framework originating from the source text. According to House, obtaining translation equivalency requires taking into account a number of variables, such as language, text, content, and genre. There are several equivalency variances in every translation scenario when comparing the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) [11, pp. 45-47]. Le Meiyun identified various distinctions, including morphological, phonetic, syntactic, lexical, and semantic equivalences [3].

Colleen McCullough's "The Thorn Birds" is one of the most widely well-known works of foreign literature in Vietnam. This work has been translated into many languages, including Russian, French and English. The French translation, titled "Les oiseaux se cachent pour mourir", was carried out by Lagrange and Hall and published by Belfond in 1978. Meanwhile, the Russian version, "Поющие в терновнике" (Poyushchie v ternovnike), was completed by translator Nora Gal in 1986. In Vietnam, two Vietnamese translations of the novel were released under different titles: *Tieng chim hot trong bui man gai* and *Nhung con chim an minh cho che*. The former was translated by Pham Manh Hung and published by the Women Publishing House in 1987 [7]. The latter, translated by Trung Dung and published

in 2015 [4], was selected for evaluation in this study for many reasons. Firstly, as a more recent translation, it reflects contemporary Vietnamese language usage, including updated vocabulary, syntactic structures, and stylistic norms, which enhance clarity and reader engagement. Secondly, the 2015 version tends to minimize the use of outdated or formal expressions that may be less accessible to modern readers, thus making the translation more natural and fluent. Thirdly, Trung Dung's version demonstrates a greater sensitivity to cultural nuances and idiomatic expressions, aiming for dynamic equivalence rather than a strictly literal rendering. This allows for a richer interpretation of the original text's emotional and thematic layers.

Limited research has been conducted on the assessment of Vietnamese translation quality. Therefore, the present study aims to illustrate the application of House's translation evaluation model by examining selected extracts from Trung Dung's Vietnamese translation of "The Thorn Birds". Rather than providing a comprehensive evaluation of the translation, this study focuses on demonstrating how the model can be used to analyze the relationship between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) [12, p.45].

Theories related to translation evaluation will be summarized and will be demonstrated by some examples of comparing the source text and the target text from the novel "The Thorn Birds" (2015) applying House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment.

2. Literature review and theoretical background

2.1. Literature review

The assessment of translation quality has been a central focus in translation studies, prompting researchers worldwide to contribute to the development of comprehensive models. As the author Al-Haddad applies House's model to evaluate literary texts, revealing strengths and weaknesses in linguistic and cultural equivalence [5]. According to Shakernia utilizes the model to analyze "The Grapes of Wrath," assessing covert and overt translation errors [6]. In addition, Pham's research represents a notable departure in translation studies, focusing on the intricate evaluation of Vietnamese translations of English news articles [8]. Rooted in House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment [10], Pham's meticulous analysis navigates the nuanced challenges of journalistic translation, with a particular emphasis on acceptability and equivalence criteria. Through her comprehensive investigation, Pham contributes valuable insights into the intricacies of translation quality within journalism, shedding light on broader cross-cultural communication complexities [8]. The author's work emphasizes House's Model of Translation Quality Assessment is still a valuable tool in various translation fields, as demonstrated by multiple researchers who have applied it to different types of texts. It is a comprehensive approach to translation evaluation, focusing on functionality and register and genre analysis.

Overall, these studies highlight the applicability of House's Model in assessing translation quality, uncovering linguistic, cultural, and contextual nuances. However,

there is a need for more research on the application of House's model and the complexities of cultural adaptation in novel translations because the literature does not sufficiently explore the assessment of translation quality in particular genres like novels, especially in Vietnamese.

2.2. Theoretical background

2.2.1. House's Translation Quality Assessment model

German linguist Juliane House, a well-known figure in translation studies, initially presented her framework for evaluating translation excellence in 1977 through her work titled "A Model for Evaluating Translation Quality" [10]. This initial model received considerable critique, leading to revisions outlined in her updated version published in 1997, named "Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited" [11].

House's model has been extensively developed and utilized within the realm of translation studies, acknowledged as a potent instrument for gauging translation quality. This framework offers a holistic methodology, taking into account myriad crucial elements such as linguistic nuances and the communicative efficacy of the translation. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of appraising the thoroughness, acceptability, and suitability of translated text, alongside cultural and contextual considerations during assessment. Consequently, House's model is esteemed for its adaptability, furnishing an invaluable framework for enhancing translation quality, rendering it an optimal selection for multifaceted research endeavors in translation studies.

House's model explores the assessment of translation quality based on linguistic elements and the communicative purpose achieved in the target language. Therefore, grasping her model necessitates understanding the unique "function" of each text, distinct from the function of language itself. According to House, a text's function pertains to "the application or use which the text has in the particular context of situation" [10, p.36]. An analysis of the source text is necessary in order to determine the degree of functional equivalency between the source and target texts, with due consideration given to the contextual factors shaping its creation. Consequently, the "situational dimensions" outlined in House's model can be divided into two main aspects as follows:

A. Dimensions of Language User

1. Geographical Origin

2. Social Class

3. Time

B. Dimensions of Language Use

1. Medium: simple/complex

2. Participation: simple/complex

3. Social Role Relationship

4. Social Attitude

5. Province

To provide more specificity, Language User introduces three situational dimensions that signify the origin of a text's producer. Geographical origin denotes the producer's

geographical location, typically standardized as British or American English. Social class indicates the producer's position on the social hierarchy, typically portrayed as an educated middle-class speaker of the standard language. Time offers insights into the temporal context of a text's origin.

In the aspect of Language Use, House's model introduces five situational dimensions as follows to facilitate the analysis of both the source text (ST) and the target text (TT).

Medium may be categorized as either straightforward (spoken for auditory reception or written for silent reading) or complex (written for verbal delivery as if not scripted).

Participation can range from simple or complex, where the text involves features indicating addressee participation. The term "simple" refers to a monologue or a dialogue, while "complex" denotes evoking multiple forms of participation and indirect engagement of the addressee in a monologue.

Social Role Relationship is the relationship between the addresser and addressee(s), which may be either symmetrical (characterized by solidarity and equality, or asymmetrical) or asymmetrical (marked by some form of authority relationship).

Social Attitude describes the level of formality or informality, indicating the degree of social closeness or distance. Five different styles or levels of formality are identified by Joos: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate [11].

Province not only reflects the broader context of the text producer's professional and occupational activities but also encompasses the subject matter or theme of the text, essentially defining the scope of language usage, including details of text production inferred from the text itself.

According to Gutt, House's model aids evaluators in identifying functional inequivalences, or mismatches, between the original text and its translation [16, pp. 46 – 49]. These mismatches may stem from translation errors or from variations in language and culture. House's model distinguishes between two kinds of errors.

In House's model, errors occur when there is a misalignment between the profiles of the source text and the translation text. House identifies two categories of errors. Covertly erroneous errors arise from a discrepancy in a single situational dimension, meaning they occur when parameters like field, mode, and tenor are not appropriately considered during translation. In contrast, overtly erroneous errors result from a mismatch that goes beyond these dimensions. These errors can be further subdivided between examples of uncertain acceptability (where usage norms are observed) and violations of the target language system, which include instances of blatant ungrammaticality (where the rules of the target language are clearly broken).

Mistakes involving the rendition of the literal meanings of the source text (ST) and translated text (TT) encompass incorrect selections (resulting from the translator's erroneous or inappropriate choices when translating the source text into the target text, such as incorrect word usage, misinterpreting ideas and concepts, or mishandling colloquial expressions), improper omissions (omitting words from the ST during translation), and instances of ambiguity (resulting in some uncertainty about the intended meaning).

2.2.2. *Definition of mismatches and errors*

a. Definition of mismatches

Concerning the evaluation scheme, House acknowledges that a translation text (TT) is considered appropriate in terms of translation evaluation provided the dimensions and subsequently functional match requirements are fulfilled. Ultimately, "any mismatch along the dimensions is an error" [11, p.45]. She termed these types of errors as covertly erroneous errors, which arise from a misalignment of a situational dimension with a corresponding one in the TT. In other words, mismatches are characterized as a natural mismatch between the original text's expected meaning and its grammatical form, which may cause uncertainty in the translated version. The absence or choice of words, phrases, and sentences that deviate from the source text's intended meaning, function, or communicative intent can also result in these mismatches. Three types of incompatibilities are categorized based on the findings of House's (1997) evaluation model: syntactic, lexical, and textual mismatches [11, pp.45-47].

b. Definition of errors

In their book "The Theory and Practice of Translation", Eugene Nida and Charles Taber state that the study of translation errors is related to the accuracy and equivalency of the translated text with the source text [17]. Similarly, Juliane House (1977) delves into the analysis of errors in her translation quality assessment model, focusing on mismatches between the source text and the translation. House argues that translation errors occur when the target language fails to accurately express the content, purpose, or effect of the source text is not properly conveyed in the target language [10].

Generally, translation errors can be classified based on their detectability and the extent to which they deviate from the norms of the target language. Covertly erroneous errors occur when a translation is grammatically sound but does not appropriately fit the cultural or situational context, making them less noticeable without careful examination. Covertly erroneous errors are examined based on elements of language use including medium, social role relationship, social attitude and province. Meanwhile, overtly erroneous errors are more evident as they break grammatical, lexical, or syntactic rules of the target language. As highlighted by House, this classification aids in recognizing errors that either subtly alter meaning or compromise linguistic accuracy, facilitating more effective assessment and revision in translation.

3. Findings and discussion

3.1. *Profile of the ST*

The House's model will be used to analyze the ST based on the following two types of dimensions.

A. Dimensions of Language User

1. Geographical Origin

2. Social Class

3. Time

B. Dimensions of Language Use

1. Medium: simple/complex

2. Participation: simple/complex

3. Social Role Relationship

4. Social Attitude

5. Province

A. *Dimensions of Language User*

First, Geographical Origin plays a pivotal role as the story unfolds in the Australian outback. It shapes the language employed to depict the surroundings, its effects on characters, and the challenges faced by the Cleary family in their efforts to sustain themselves from the land. Second, the social class dimension examines language variations related to characters' social backgrounds. In the novel, characters may belong to different social classes, influencing their speech patterns, vocabulary, and tone. Last, the text originates from a past timeframe, specifically in 1977.

B. *Dimensions of Language Use*

In terms of **Medium**, the assessment involves examining how language is employed across different communication channels. Within the novel "The Thorn Birds", this Medium encompasses written prose and narrative techniques.

In terms of **Participation**, the source text (ST), characterized by a monologue with embedded (fictional) dialogic elements, is intricate. In "The Thorn Birds", the participants engaged in communication events, along with their roles, relationships, and perspectives contribute to this complexity.

In terms of **Social role relationship**, this aspect delves into how language mirrors social roles and relationships. In "The Thorn Birds", the narrative portrays characters with clear-cut social roles and relationships, encompassing family bonds, romantic affiliations, and societal standings.

In terms of **Social attitude**, this refers to the articulation of opinions, emotions, and attitudes using language. Within "The Thorn Birds", characters express a variety of social attitudes, spanning from feelings of love and passion to instances of conflict and resentment.

In terms of **Province**, the original text, set in Australia, captures the linguistic intricacies that mirror the cultural and regional nuances of the Australian context.

3.2. ST and TT comparison

Comparison between the source text (ST) and target text (TT) according to House's model situational dimensions might uncover mismatches in the following aspects, including medium, social relationship, social attitude, and province.

3.2.1. Covertly erroneous errors

A. Medium: Syntactic means

TT uses some contacts that are not found in ST, and the phrase type is changed. These elements could be idiomatic expressions, cultural references, or phrases specific to the context that are introduced during translation. Altering the phrase type means the form or structure of the expression

has been adjusted to better align with the cultural or contextual framework of the target language. Here are some examples.

ST	TT
(1) (…) "Agnes! Oh, Agnes! she said lovingly, blinking at the doll lying there in a tattered nest." [12, p.3]	*(1)* "Agnès! Ồ Agnès! - cô bé thì thầm một cách âu yếm, mắt sáng lên khi **nhìn thấy** một con búp bê nằm êm ái trong mớ giấy vụn." [4, p.8]
(2) "Wrapping her arms about him, she took comfort from him until his nearness calmed her enough to become aware of how nice he smelled, all horses and sweat and iron." [12, p.11]	*(2)* "Cô bé càng thu mình sát vào Frank, tìm kiếm nơi người an niềm an ủi, cho đến lúc cơn xúc động giảm xuống, cô bé mới ngửi thấy cái mùi dễ chịu từ thân người của Frank, **đó là** mùi ngựa, mùi mồ hôi và sắt nung đỏ." [4, p.6]

In the first example, the phrasal verb "nhìn thấy" is introduced in the target text (TT) to connect the noun phrases "all horses", which was restructured into a subordinate clause "đó là mùi ngựa". The alteration in the TT serves the translator's objective of elucidating and clarifying the situation. As an example *(1),* the translator's goal is to emphasize overjoy. She was so happy that it sat still by her mother's side, being unable to see anything, not remembering anything but the doll her parents gave her. Besides, in the example *(2),* the author wants to emphasize the panic of the little girl when the doll was thrown to the ground by her brother's worker. Until her brother comforted her, her emotions just dropped.

B. Social role relationship

Regarding the lexical mismatch, the TT and ST diverge in the following ways about pronoun usage.

ST	TT
(3) "Look, isn't **she** beautiful? **Her** name is Agnes." [12, p.4]	*(3)* "Các anh xem này, **nó** đẹp quá. **Nó** tên Agnès đó." [4, p.3]
(4) "No! Don't, Jack, please don't! You'll break her, I know you will! Oh, please leave **her** alone! Don't take her, please!" [12, p.5]	*(4)* "Không, không, Jack! Em năn nỉ anh. Anh làm hỏng búp bê bây giờ. Em van anh để cho **nó** yên. Đừng lấy của em..." [4, p.4]

The usage of pronouns in the extract above reflects the cultural differences between the ST and TT. The pronoun "it" is typically used in English when referring to a thing or animal. However, in this instance, the speaker demonstrates a desire to show affection for her toy, the pronoun "her" is used in the lesson. That phenomenon occurs in the above sentences when the agent expresses her affection for the doll. Nevertheless, in Vietnamese, the translation does not maintain the meaning of the words from the ST to the TT, as these pronouns are rendered as examples *(3)* and *(4)* "nó". This decision in translation may originate from variances in cultural perspectives regarding the treatment of objects. Vietnamese culture might not commonly attribute gendered pronouns to non-living entities, and the use of "nó" maintains impartiality, avoiding implications of affection or attachment based on perceived gender.

Therefore, social role relationships expressed through pronoun choice reflect cultural norms and attitudes toward objects and relationships, highlighting differences in perspectives and values between the source and target cultures.

C. Social attitude

On this dimension, in terms of lexical means, the translator adds more abundant words "Một phép mầu thật" *(5)*, "Tôi không thể nào lầm" *(6)* in the target text (TT). This adjustment might stem from the translator's effort to enhance naturalness and align the text with the nuances of the Vietnamese writing. The example is presented below:

ST	TT
(5) "A miracle indeed. Only once in her life had Meggie been into Wahine; all the way back in May, because she had been a very good girl." [12, p.2]	*(5)* "Đúng là một phép mầu. **Một phép mầu thật**. Từ trước đến nay Meggie mới đến cửa hàng Wahine chỉ một lần thôi, hồi tháng 5 vừa rồi, cô bé được cha mẹ thưởng vì đã tỏ ra rất ngoan" [4, p.2]
(6) "You have to be Mary's brother; you're the living image of her." [12, p.96]	*(6)* "**Tôi không thể nào lầm**, ông đúng là em trai của bà Mary, ông giống bà ấy như hai giọt nước" [4, p.69]

In House's framework, "social attitudes" refers to the translator's understanding of the social context and customs of the target language. Here, the translator's choice to add extra terms in the TT shows an awareness of how language is socially utilized and understood in Vietnamese culture. By adding these expressions, the translator aims to capture the tone and style that Vietnamese readers value, demonstrating social sensitivity to language use in the target society.

Consequently, this example is tightly connected to the "social attitudes" dimension of House's model because it highlights the translator's awareness of social norms and traditions in the target language, particularly through vocabulary choices that enhance authenticity and cultural consistency.

D. Province

Regarding syntactic structures, Vietnamese pronouns can vary based on gender and formality, and they might not consistently correspond with English pronouns. Ensuring precise pronoun usage poses a challenge. Upon examining both the ST and TT, specific discrepancies arise concerning pronouns and their references. For instance:

ST	TT
(7) "His left eyebrow flew up. "**My dear Mrs. Carson**, you're a Catholic. You know my vows are sacred. Until my death I remain a priest. I cannot deny it." [12, p.76]	*(7)* "**Bà** Carson thân mến, bà là một tín đồ công giáo - ông nói, mày nhíu lại. - Bà biết rằng ước nguyện của tôi là thiêng liêng; tôi không thể từ bỏ. Tôi sẽ mãi mãi là linh mục cho đến chết." [4, pp.54-55]
(8) "I thought you were perhaps **a man who** doubted." [12, p.78]	*(8)* "Tôi nghĩ ở cha cũng có sự hoài nghi." [4, p.57]

Example 7 illustrates the omission of "my" in the Vietnamese translation, while Example 8 demonstrates the absence of "the man who" in the TT. In the translation process, the translator often refrains from translating pronouns and their references to create clearer sentences.

Mismatched translations of pronouns and their references from English to Vietnamese can create significant hurdles for readers trying to fully understand the intended meaning. English employs pronouns flexibly, relying on

context for reference, whereas Vietnamese requires explicit antecedents to avoid ambiguity. This contrast can lead to subtle yet impactful differences in translated texts [14], [15]. One common challenge is the translation of gender-neutral pronouns like "they" in English, where Vietnamese lacks a direct equivalent. Pham and Dinh [9] explain that translators may choose gendered pronouns or rephrase sentences, potentially altering nuances or revealing information prematurely, affecting readers' perceptions of characters and relationships. Additionally, English distinguishes between singular and plural second-person pronouns ("you" and "you all/y'all"), while Vietnamese does not. Translators must decide based on context, potentially impacting power dynamics and intimacy levels in the narrative. Furthermore, omitting or altering pronoun references can obscure crucial story elements, as pronouns subtly convey emotions, power dynamics, and information flow. Errors in translating these nuances can impede reader comprehension and engagement.

In conclusion, translation discrepancies involving pronouns and their references between English novels and Vietnamese translations are intricate and can significantly affect reader comprehension. Translators must navigate these challenges to preserve the original text's subtleties while considering each language's distinct features. Readers should be aware of these complexities to appreciate the skill and artistry involved in producing translations that capture the essence of the source material.

ST	TT
(9) "it can rise **sixty feet** in a night." [12, p.101]	*(9)* "có lần lên cao đến **mười bảy mét** trong một đêm" [4, p.75]
(10) "Drogheda had two hundred and fifty thousand acres**.** Its longest boundary stretched for **eighty miles.** The homestead was **forty miles** and twenty-seven gates away from Gillanbone, the only settlement of any kind closer than a hundred and six miles." [12, p.104]	*(10)* "Drogheda có một diện tích cả trăm ngàn hecta. Đường ranh dài nhất có tới **một trăm ba mươi kilômét. Sáu mươi lăm kilômét** và hai mươi bảy cái cổng rào ngăn cách căn nhà chính với Gillanbone, điểm dân cư duy nhất nằm trong vòng một trăm năm mươi kilômét" [4, pp.49-50]

In the instances *(9)* and *(10)*, the translator chose synonyms for measurement units to increase the familiarity of the translated text for readers. While "miles" and "Fahrenheit degrees" are typical in English-speaking countries, the translator substituted them with "mét" and "kilômét", which are more familiar to Vietnamese readers and provide a relatable measure for distance. As a result, the translator opted for the synonyms "mét" and "kilômét" to make the measurement terms more accessible to the target audience. The lexical mismatch in the form of synonym choice, where the translator chose culturally and linguistically relevant measurements, contributes to the effectiveness of the translation. It enhances the readability of the translated text for the target audience, preventing potential confusion that might arise from unfamiliar units of measurement.

3.2.2. Overtly erroneous errors

In addition to the previously mentioned mismatches from the ST, the TT exhibits additional deviations.

Firstly, concerning violations of the target language system, the TT exhibits some grammatical errors, illustrated as follows.

ST	TT	Analysis of mismatches
(11) "I thought you were perhaps **a man who** doubted." [12, p.78]	*(11)* "Tôi nghĩ ở cha cũng có sự hoài nghi." [4, p.57]	Pronouns and Pronoun Reference
(12) "Though it was autumn now and the spindling vine was green, in spring the wistaria which **had been planted** the day the house **was finished** fifty years before was a solid mass of lilac plumes, rioting all over the outer walls and the veranda roof." [12, p.71]	*(12)* "Hôm nay, trời vào thu, các gốc nho mọc lên cao những tua xoắn và lá rất xanh. Nhưng vào mùa xuân, những dây đậu tía **trồng** vào lúc tòa nhà **vừa xây** - năm mươi năm trước - kết thành một khối chắc nịch với những chùm cây tử đinh hương, cành tủa ra rậm rạp, đầy hoa bám dài theo tường và trên mái hiên." [4, pp.49-50]	Translation of passive voice
(13) "The road to Drogheda brought back no memories of his youth, **thought Father Ralph de Bricassart**, eyes half shut against the glare as his new Daimler bounced along in the rutted wheel tracks that marched through the long silver grass. " [12, p.70]	*(13)* "Con đường đi drogheda chẳng gợi một chút nào kỷ niệm thời thơ ấu của mình - **cha Ralph de Bricassart thầm nghĩ** như thế." [4, p.57]	Word order

Some of the mismatches mentioned above are illustrated in the examples. For instance, in *(11)*, the phrase "a man who" is absent in the TT. Throughout the TT, the translator tended not to translate pronouns and their references, opting for a more concrete sentence structure. Additionally, in *(12)*, the active voice in the TT ("trồng", "vừa xây") was transformed into the passive voice used in ST ("had been planted", "was finished"). In *(13)*, where the original features complex sentences with multiple clauses, the translator carefully managed subordination in the TT, splitting them into smaller sentences with simpler structures to enhance reader comprehension.

In summary, the mismatches between Colleen McCullough's original work "The Thorn Birds" and Trung's (2015) translation of "Nhung con chim an minh cho chet" can be attributed to the translators' attempt to ensure the target language can be read smoothly while preserving the essence of the source text. This deliberate method emphasizes the purposeful character of overt translation strategies by aiming to preserve the substance and narrative complexity of the source text.

4. Conclusions

In an increasingly globalized world, evaluating the quality of literary translations has become essential. This study illustrates the application of House's (1977) translation evaluation model through an analysis of selected passages from Trung Dung's Vietnamese translation of "The Thorn Birds", with a focus on two key aspects: "Dimensions of Language Use" and "Dimensions of Language Users". Through this analysis, several discrepancies between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) were identified, including covert errors - related to Means, Social Role Relationships, Social Attitudes, and Provinces - and overt errors such as deviations from the norms of the target language system. These findings highlight significant linguistic and cultural shifts during the translation process.

Rather than aiming to comprehensively assess the entire translation, the primary goal of this study is to demonstrate the applicability of House's model in analyzing English–Vietnamese literary translations and to draw attention to potential areas for improvement. Due to the limited scope of this research, only selected examples were analyzed. Further studies are recommended to apply the model to a broader range of chapters in order to validate the findings and contribute more comprehensively to the enhancement of literary translation quality in the Vietnamese context**.**

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