

TRANSLATION ERRORS IN *TWILIGHT* BY STEPHENIE MEYER

Arina TCACIUC,

3rd-year student, gr. EF222TRr, Department of Translation, Interpretation and
Applied Linguistics, Faculty of Letters, Moldova State University

CZU: 811.111`25:821.111-312.9(73).09 E-mail: arinatcaciuc.usm@gmail.com

The given paper explores the influence of translation errors on the communicative function of literary texts, using Twilight by Stephenie Meyer's as a case study. It highlights the comparative performance of two official (OT1, OT2) and two amateur (AT1, AT2) Russian translations in preserving narrative voice, stylistic fidelity, and cultural resonance. The purpose of the study is to demonstrate how translation quality depends on functional relevance and stylistic coherence, as analysed through the frameworks of Christiane Nord and Evanthia Saridaki.

The translation of literary texts demands not only linguistic accuracy but also stylistic intuition, cultural sensitivity, and the ability to preserve the emotional intent of the original. This study investigates the quality of four Russian-language translations of Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight*, comparing two official versions with two widely circulated amateur translations. Rather than assuming professional superiority, the analysis employs a functionalist framework, specifically Christiane Nord's typology of translation errors and Evanthia Saridaki's revised translation error taxonomy. Both were used as a framework to assess how each version handles tone, style and communicative purpose.

Drawing on C. Nord's theory, a translation error is considered significant not merely when it deviates from the source text, but when it interferes with the target text's ability to function effectively for its intended audience [1, p.74]. Accordingly, errors are classified into three main categories: pragmatic errors, which represent violations of text function; linguistic errors, which are primarily grammatical or lexical faults; and cultural errors, which are inappropriate renderings of culturally embedded references. E. Saridaki's model further refines this categorization by identifying subtypes such as nonsense, misinterpretation, incorrect meaning, omission, undertranslation, addition, overtranslation, barbarism, word for word translation, inappropriate paraphrase, and false friends [2, p.28].

To test this model, the study analyses 100 parallel text excerpts from 4 Russian translations of *Twilight*: OT1 (Alla Akhmerova), OT2 (Ulyana Sapsina), AT1 (Ad-elaida Rich), and AT2 (fan group "Гнездо"). The findings of the study are visually represented in two comparative charts below: one illustrates the distribution of errors according to C. Nord's translation error typology, while the other further categorizes these errors using E. Saridaki's translation error taxonomy.

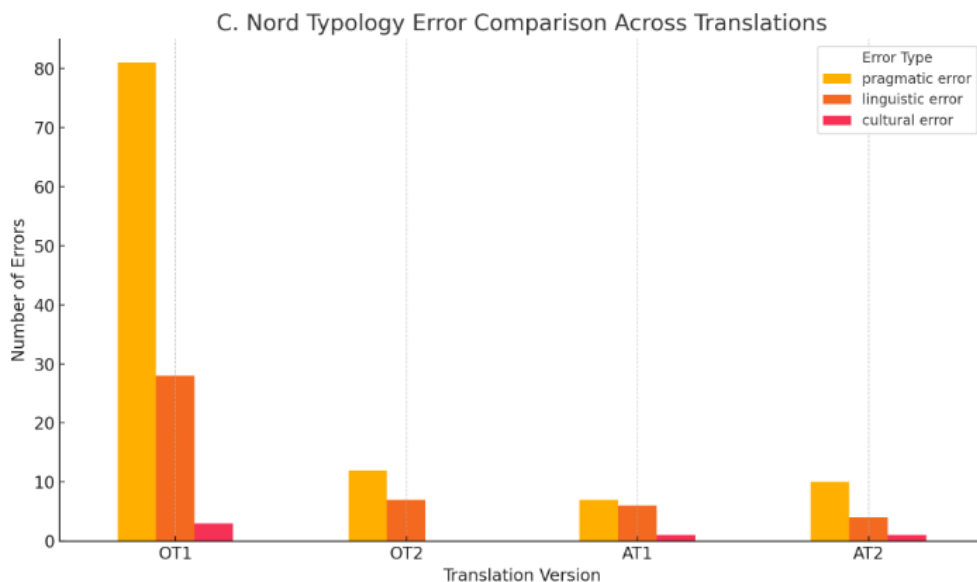


Fig.1 Nord Typology Error Comparison Across Translations

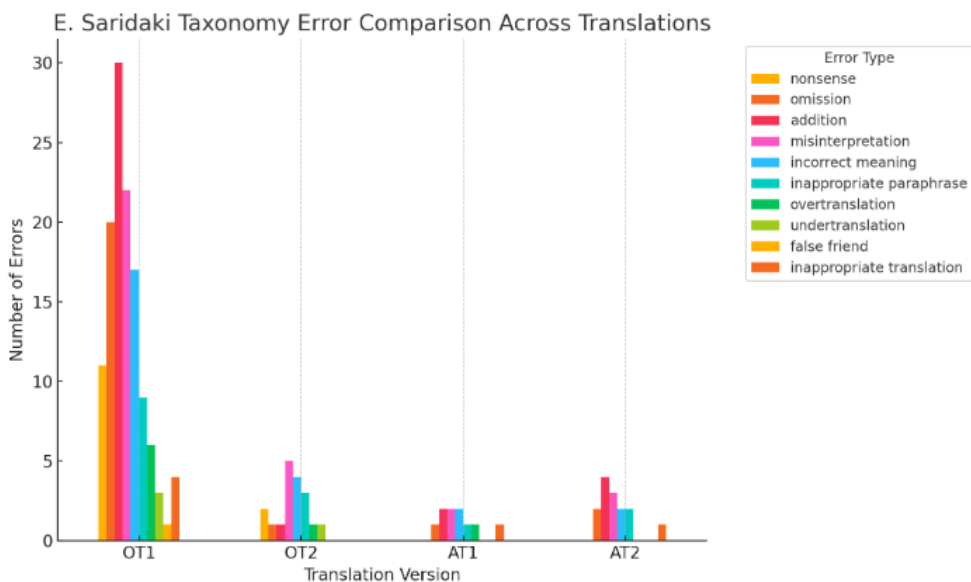


Fig.2 Saridaki Taxonomy Error Comparison Across Translations

The cumulative error analysis revealed that OT1 accounted for 81 pragmatic errors (46.3%), 28 linguistic errors (42.4%), and 3 cultural errors (60%), making it the most error-prone version overall. OT2 followed with 12 pragmatic (6.9%) and 7

linguistic errors (10.6%), while AT1 and AT2 showed significantly lower counts, 7 and 10 pragmatic errors respectively, and 6 and 4 linguistic errors, indicating better alignment with the source's stylistic intentions.

According to Saridaki's taxonomy [2, p.28], OT1 alone was responsible for over 60% of total omissions (20 out of 33) and nearly 58% of all additions (30 out of 52). In contrast, AT1 and AT2 together accounted for less than 15% of all errors across both C. Nord's error typology and E. Saridaki's error taxonomy, underscoring the higher interpretive fidelity and narrative coherence found in amateur translations. These findings support the hypothesis that official status does not guarantee higher translation quality, particularly when emotional nuance and stylistic voice are central to the text's effect.

A recurring issue in OT1 was the overuse of exclamation marks (*1533* instead of the original *173*) and inflated dramatization of dialogue, which disrupted the introspective, restrained tone of the protagonist Bella Swan. This reflects what Nord would define as a covert error, which is primarily a stylistic decision that subtly but significantly changes the effect of the original [2, p.73].

In contrast the amateur versions demonstrated greater sensitivity to tone and character voice. AT1 preserved Bella's internal monologue and emotional hesitations with attention to punctuation, syntactic rhythm, and idiomatic expression. AT1 preserved the contradiction between the protagonist's words and emotions through appropriate lexical choices and sentence pacing. Such examples confirm E. Saridaki's claim that many translation errors reveal the translator's interpretive stance, not just linguistic competence [2, p.27].

The study also revealed differences in how translators handled culturally specific metaphors. The metaphor "*retriever friend*," used to describe a clingy male classmate, was mistranslated in OT1 as «*лекции о петриверах*», a nonsense error. Meanwhile, AT1 effectively localized the metaphor as «*верный пёс*» preserving both the comic tone and implied meaning. This illustrates how cultural errors often stem from the translator's unfamiliarity with genre conventions or figurative language rather than pure lexical issues [3, p.109].

Interestingly, OT2, the second official version, showed moderate improvement over OT1, especially in lexical precision and register. However, it introduced over-translations, exaggerated stylistic renderings that departed from the source's subtlety. These often resulted in pragmatic inconsistencies, adding psychological depth inconsistent in the original, or reinforcing emotional states unnecessarily.

From a functionalist perspective, the amateur translations proved more effective at fulfilling the target text's communicative role. Although less polished in terms of formal correctness, they more often preserved narrative intent, stylistic texture, and emotional depth. They exhibited fewer omissions and additions and generally avoided the false formalism that characterized the earlier official version.

Overall, the findings suggest that professional status does not guarantee translation quality. Instead, the translator's interpretive sensitivity, genre awareness, and

understanding of narrative function play a more decisive role. As Nord emphasizes, the most successful translation is not the one most grammatically perfect, but the one that fulfils its purpose for the intended audience [1, p.71].

In conclusion, this study highlights the value of a comparative, function-oriented approach to literary translation. It shows how translation choices shape character, tone, and reader engagement, supporting a rethinking of how translations are judged. Translators of young adult fiction must balance accuracy with stylistic and emotional authenticity, and functionalist theory offers a practical framework for this.

References:

1. NORD, C. Text Analysis in Translation: Theory, Methodology, and Didactic Application of a Model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005. 148 p.
2. SARIDAKI, E. Translation Errors: A Taxonomic Approach and Their Contribution to Translator Training. In: International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences, 2023, 8(4), pp. 27–30.
3. VENUTI, L. The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation. London: Routledge, 1995. 353 p.

Recommended

Alina LEGCOBIT, university assistant, MA in Pedagogy