

# Assessing The English Version Of "The Sorrow Of War" Using Waddington's Method C

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## ABSTRACT

Literary translation plays a crucial role in disseminating Vietnamese literature to a global audience. This study aims to assess the English version of Bao Ninh's novel "The Sorrow of War," translated by Phan Thanh Hao and edited by Frank Palmos, using Waddington's Translation Quality Assessment model, specifically Method C. Method C employs a holistic approach to evaluate the translation based on the accuracy of transfer from the source text to the target text, the quality of expression in the target language, and the degree of task completion. The analysis reveals that while the translation reads like a piece originally written in English, there are inaccuracies in the transfer of content that require thorough revision to reach a higher quality. The overall degree of task completion is deemed adequate. Besides, the study highlights the importance of semantic translation in literary works to ensure the accurate representation of the source text's meaning, style, and cultural nuances. The findings would contribute to the development of translation quality assessment frameworks and emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach in evaluating literary translations.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Literary translation plays a vital role in bridging cultural gaps and promoting the global dissemination of literature. It allows readers to access and appreciate literary works from different languages and cultures, fostering cross-cultural understanding and enriching the literary landscape (Haque, 2012)<sup>1</sup>. In the context of Vietnamese literature, translation serves as a gateway for introducing Vietnamese works to an international audience, showcasing the richness and diversity of Vietnamese culture and history (Nguyen, 2014)<sup>2</sup>. Bao Ninh's "The Sorrow of War," a semi-autobiographical novel, has gained international recognition for its unique perspective on the Vietnam War from a North Vietnamese soldier's viewpoint. The novel's non-linear structure and exploration of war's psychological aftermath have contributed to its critical acclaim (Tran, 2019)<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, translated into various languages, the novel has reached a global audience, with the English version, translated by Phan Thanh Hao and edited by Frank Palmos, being widely read and acclaimed worldwide. However, the quality of this translation is crucial in conveying the original work's complex themes of memory, loss, and war's enduring impact (Trieu, 2022)<sup>4</sup>. "The Sorrow of War" thus presents an ideal case for translation quality assessment, offering insights into the challenges of translating culturally rich and structurally complex literary works.

To assess the quality of literary translations, various models and frameworks have been developed. Among them, Waddington's Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) model has gained significant attention. Waddington's model offers a comprehensive approach to evaluating translations, taking into account different aspects such as accuracy, fluency, and overall effectiveness (Waddington, 2001)<sup>5</sup>. Method C, in particular, employs a holistic approach that considers the translation as a whole, assessing the accuracy of transfer from the source text to the target text, the quality of expression in the target language, and the degree of task completion (Waddington, 2001)<sup>5</sup>.

This study aims to apply Waddington's Method C to assess the English version of "The Sorrow of War." By examining the translation through the lens of this holistic approach, the study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of the translation in capturing the essence of the original work and conveying its meaning, style, and cultural nuances to an English-speaking audience. The findings of this study would contribute to the understanding of translation quality assessment in the context of Vietnamese literature and highlight the importance of employing comprehensive evaluation frameworks in the field of literary translation (Trieu, 2017)<sup>6</sup>.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

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## 57 Literary Translation

58 Literary translation involves the translation of liter- 107  
59 ary works, such as novels, short stories, plays, and po- 108  
60 etry, from one language to another (Landers, 2001)<sup>7</sup>. 109  
61 It plays a crucial role in promoting cultural exchange 110  
62 and enabling readers to access and appreciate liter- 111  
63 ary works from different parts of the world (Haque, 112  
64 2012)<sup>1</sup>. However, literary translation is a complex 113  
65 and challenging task that requires a deep understand- 114  
66 ing of both the source and target languages, as well as 115  
67 the cultural, historical, and social contexts in which 116  
68 the literary work is situated (Nord, 2014)<sup>8</sup>.

69 One of the major challenges in literary translation is 117  
70 the transfer of cultural references, allusions, and con- 118  
71 notations that may be specific to the source culture 119  
72 (Nida, 2021)<sup>9</sup>. Translators must find ways to con- 120  
73 vey these cultural elements in a manner that is acces- 121  
74 sible and meaningful to the target audience without 122  
75 compromising the integrity of the original work (Cui, 123  
76 2012)<sup>10</sup>. Another challenge is the preservation of the 124  
77 author's style, voice, and tone (Boase-Beier & Hol- 125  
78 man, 2016)<sup>11</sup>. Translators must capture and recreate 126  
79 these stylistic elements in the target language, which 127  
80 requires a deep understanding of the author's inten- 128  
81 tions and the ability to find equivalent linguistic and 129  
82 literary devices (Venuti, 2017)<sup>12</sup>.

## 83 Translation Quality Assessment

84 Translation Quality Assessment (TQA) is the process 130  
85 of evaluating the quality of a translated text to ensure 131  
86 that it accurately conveys the meaning, style, and tone 132  
87 of the source text (House, 2015)<sup>13</sup>. Various mod- 133  
88 els and frameworks have been developed to assess 134  
89 the quality of translations, each with its own criteria 135  
90 and approaches (Colina, 2008; Munday, 2016)<sup>14,15</sup>. 136  
91 These models aim to provide a systematic and objec- 137  
92 tive framework for assessing translation quality, tak- 138  
93 ing into account the complex interplay between lin- 139  
94 guistic, cultural, and contextual factors (Saldanha & 140  
95 O'Brien, 2014)<sup>16</sup>.

96 One notable TQA model is House's (1997)<sup>17</sup> model, 141  
97 which evaluates translations based on their func- 142  
98 tional equivalence and distinguishes between overt 143  
99 and covert translations. Another influential model is 144  
100 Nord's (1991)<sup>18</sup> functionalist approach, which con- 145  
101 siders the purpose and function of the translation 146  
102 in the target culture. Linguistically-oriented ap- 147  
103 proaches, such as Baker's (2018)<sup>19</sup> model, focus on 148  
104 the linguistic aspects of translation, including cohe- 149  
105 sion, coherence, and pragmatic equivalence.

## Waddington's TQA Model

106 Among various TQA models, Waddington's Method 107  
108 C offers distinct advantages for evaluating literary 109  
110 translations. Unlike error-focused approaches, it pro- 111  
112 vides a holistic assessment suited to literary trans- 113  
114 lation's complexities. Method C evaluates accuracy 115  
116 of transfer, quality of expression, and task comple- 117  
118 tion (Waddington, 2001)<sup>5</sup>, capturing both intangi- 119  
120 ble qualities and content accuracy. As Boase-Beier 121  
122 (2019)<sup>20</sup> notes, "Literary translation involves not just 123  
124 the transfer of semantic content, but also the recre- 125  
126 ation of style, tone, and emotional impact" (p. 23). 127  
128 This holistic approach allows assessment of these cru- 129  
130 cial elements while maintaining focus on source text 131  
132 fidelity, making it particularly valuable for literary 133  
134 TQA.

135 As shown in the table above, method C's five-level 136  
137 scale offers a balanced framework for assessment, ad- 138  
139 dressing both source text accuracy and target audi- 140  
141 ence reception. As Munday (2016)<sup>14</sup> notes, liter- 142  
143 ary translation must balance "adequacy (source-text 144  
145 oriented) and acceptability (target-culture oriented)" 146  
147 (p. 157). Waddington's model achieves this by con- 148  
149 sidering both transfer accuracy and expression qual- 149  
150 ity. Waddington (2001)<sup>5</sup> himself highlights this bal- 150  
151 ance: "This method seeks to reconcile the need for 151  
152 analytic criteria with a holistic appreciation of the 152  
153 translation" (p. 315). Empirical studies have demon- 153  
154 strated the model's strong reliability, addressing con- 154  
155 cerns about subjectivity in TQA approaches. By em- 155  
156 ploying Method C, this study aims to provide a com- 156  
157 prehensive assessment of "The Sorrow of War's" En- 157  
158 glish translation, evaluating both its fidelity to the 158  
159 Vietnamese original and its effectiveness for English 159  
160 readers.

161 Several studies have applied Waddington's model to 161  
162 assess the quality of literary translations. Shahraki 162  
163 and Karimnia (2011)<sup>21</sup> used the model to evaluate the 163  
164 Persian translation of George Orwell's novel "1984," 164  
165 employing both error analysis (Method A) and holis- 165  
166 tic assessment (Method C). Their findings revealed 166  
167 that the most frequent errors were related to inappro- 167  
168 priate renderings affecting the understanding of the 168  
169 source text, and the holistic assessment indicated that 169  
170 the translation was of average quality.

171 Babakordi (2012)<sup>22</sup> applied Waddington's Method A 171  
172 to assess the quality of English-to-Persian translations 172  
173 of literary texts produced by Iranian translation stu- 173  
174 dents, focusing on identifying and categorizing trans- 174  
175 lation errors. The results showed that the most com- 175  
176 mon errors were related to inappropriate renderings, 176  
177 such as faux sens and omissions.

**Table 1: Unitary scale for Method C (holistic)**

| Level   | Accuracy of transfer ST content   | Quality of expression in TL  | Degree of task completion    | Mark  |
|---------|---|--|------------------------------|-------|
| Level 5 | Complete transfer of ST information; only minor revision needed to reach professional standard.   | Almost all the translation reads like a piece originally written in English. There may be minor lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.                                     | Successful                   | 9, 10 |
| Level 4 | Almost complete transfer; there may be one or two insignificant inaccuracies; requires certain amount of revision to reach professional standard. | Large sections read like a piece originally written in English. There are a number of lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.   | Almost completely successful | 7, 8  |
| Level 3 | Transfer of the general idea(s) but with a number of lapses in accuracy; needs considerable revision to reach professional standard               | Certain parts read like a piece originally written in English, but others read like a translation. There are a considerable number of lexical grammatical or spelling errors | Adequate                     | 6, 5  |
| Level 2 | Transfer undermined by serious inaccuracies; thorough revision required to reach professional standard.   | Almost the entire text reads like a translation; there are continual lexical, grammatical or spelling errors.  | Inadequate                   | 4, 3  |
| Level 1 | Totally inadequate transfer of ST content; the translation is not worth revising.   | The candidate reveals a total lack of ability to express himself adequately in English   | Totally inadequate           | 2, 1  |

158 Yousefi and Abbasian (2015)<sup>23</sup> conducted a study  
 159 using Waddington’s model to assess the quality of  
 160 English-to-Persian translations of literary, technical,  
 161 legal, and religious texts. The results indicated that the  
 162 students made more errors in translating literary and  
 163 technical texts compared to legal and religious texts,  
 164 and the overall quality of the translations was average.  
 165 These studies demonstrate the applicability of  
 166 Waddington’s TQA model to literary translations  
 167 and its potential to provide valuable insights into the  
 168 strengths and weaknesses of translations. However, it  
 169 is important to note that the majority of these studies  
 170 focused on English-to-Persian translations, and there  
 171 is a need for further research applying Waddington’s  
 172 model to different language pairs and literary genres.

173

174 **METHODOLOGY**

175 This study employed a content analysis approach,  
 176 combining qualitative and quantitative methods, to  
 177 assess the translation quality of the novel ”The Sor-  
 178 row of War” using Waddington’s Method C (Bennett,  
 179 2015)<sup>24</sup>. The Vietnamese version (ST) from Tre Pub-  
 180 lishing House (Ninh, 2012)<sup>25</sup> and the English version  
 181 (TT) from Anchor (Ninh, 2018)<sup>26</sup> were used in this

study. The researcher carefully read the TT and com-  
 pared it with the ST for further analysis.

**Data Collection Procedures**

The Vietnamese and English versions of the book were  
 converted from paper to digital format (Word and Excel  
 files) to facilitate analysis. Both the ST and TT  
 were transcribed into an Excel file for comparison and  
 analysis.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

The analysis process involved detailed examination  
 and expert review. Using Waddington’s Method C,  
 the researcher assessed the translation based on ac-  
 curacy of transfer from the ST to the TT, quality of  
 expression in the target language, and degree of task  
 completion. A scale with multiple levels was used to  
 provide a nuanced evaluation of the translation’s qual-  
 ity. An expert in English language and translation re-  
 viewed the data at multiple stages to enhance reliabil-  
 ity and accuracy.

Face validity was ensured through external audits,  
 while content validity was established by examining  
 the conceptual framework of Waddington’s model  
 and adapting it to the research objectives and con-  
 text. Construct validity was ensured by selecting

206 Waddington's TQA model based on its strong theoretical  
207 foundation and widespread recognition in translation  
208 studies.

209 To establish reliability, two specific processes were im-  
210 plemented. Firstly, all data was meticulously recorded  
211 in a table, providing an overview of the data collec-  
212 tion process and allowing for ongoing assessment of  
213 results. This tabular format enabled quick interpre-  
214 tation of results for each individual element and fa-  
215 cilitated tracking of the research progress. Secondly,  
216 inter-rater reliability was employed to validate the  
217 data analysis. An expert in the field of English lan-  
218 guage studies was invited to re-analyze 20 randomly  
219 chosen pieces of data. The approved convergent re-  
220 sult threshold was set at 95%, ensuring a high level of  
221 agreement between raters. These measures, combined  
222 with the expert review at multiple stages, significantly  
223 enhanced the reliability and accuracy of the analysis.

## 224 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 225 Results

226 The holistic assessment of the English translation of  
227 "The Sorrow of War" using Waddington's Method C  
228 revealed varying levels of translation quality across  
229 the eight chapters. The assessment considered accu-  
230 racy of transfer, quality of expression, and degree of  
231 task completion. Table 4.1 presents the results of the  
232 holistic assessment for each chapter.

233 The translation of Chapter 1 was assessed at Level 3 for  
234 accuracy of transfer, indicating a transfer of general  
235 ideas but with inaccuracies and lapses requiring con-  
236 siderable revision. The quality of expression was rated  
237 as 9, with the majority of the translation reading like  
238 a piece originally written in English, despite instances  
239 of lexical, grammatical, or spelling errors. The degree  
240 of task completion was considered adequate, resulting  
241 in a mark of 6.

242 *Illustration from Chapter 1:*

243 ST: Ấy là Can, đội trưởng A2, một anh chàng bé nhỏ,  
244 còm nhom, quê ở "câu tôm". Can "câu tôm".

245 TT: It was Can, chief of Squad 2. A small thin boy,  
246 nicknamed "Rattling" Can.

247 In this example, the ST uses the Vietnamese phrase  
248 "câu tôm," which carries a unique cultural reference,  
249 while the TT translates it as "Rattling" Can, losing the  
250 cultural nuance and significance.

251 Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 were assessed at Level 2 for  
252 accuracy of transfer, indicating serious inaccuracies  
253 that undermined the transfer and required thorough  
254 revision. The quality of expression for these chapters  
255 was rated as 9, suggesting that most of the text read  
256 like a translation with continual errors. The degree of

task completion was deemed inadequate, resulting in  
a mark of 3 for each of these chapters.

*Illustration from Chapter 2:*

ST: Ngay cả giọng người, mẹ kiếp, xin nói là còn chán  
mới hòng có lại để giao tiếp với đời. Anh triết lý kinh  
thật. Và đến là bi.

TT: You won't even speak with your normal voice,  
in the normal way again. "You're so damn gloomy.  
What a doom-laden attitude!"

In this example, the ST uses the phrase "triết lý"  
to describe the person's behavior as philosophical or  
thoughtful, while the TT translates it as "gloomy," al-  
tering the intended meaning and misrepresenting the  
character's attitude.

*Illustration from Chapter 3:*

ST: Phòng im phắc, lặng cảm song không phải là Kiên  
đã đi ngủ. Cây đèn hoa kỳ đã cạn dầu, bắc nhỏ cao  
cháy đỏ như mẩu thép nung. Kiên không ở bên bàn  
mà quỳ cạnh cái lò sưởi ở trong góc.

TT: She silently closed the door behind her and softly  
walked over and kneeled beside him. She recalled the  
story of the frenzied destruction of his father's paint-  
ings; she placed her hand over his, to stop him putting  
another page into the fire. Kien was kneeling by his  
stove shoving torn paper into it and lighting and re-  
lighting it.

The TT captures the general essence of the ST but  
omits several details and nuances. In the ST, Kien  
is described as kneeling next to the stove, unable to  
sleep, with the fire fluctuating. The TT simplifies  
this by stating that she kneeled beside him, without  
mentioning his inability to sleep or the fire's instabil-  
ity. The ST includes a reference to the story of Kien's  
father's destroyed paintings, triggering the narrator's  
memory. The TT skips this part and jumps straight to  
the narrator recalling the story and placing her hand  
over Kien's. The ST describes Kiên's startled expres-  
sion and emotional reaction when the fire goes out,  
while the TT only mentions that he looked startled to  
see her. Consequently, the TT captures the basic ac-  
tions but loses some of the atmospheric and emotional  
nuances present in the ST.

*Illustration from Chapter 4:*

ST: Em mệt quá - Phương nói thì thầm, khẽ tựa mình.

**Lần đầu tiên cô xúng em với Kiên.**

TT: "I'm exhausted," she said invitingly. "I just want  
to lie here forever."

The TT does not directly translate or convey the sig-  
nificance of Phuong using the pronoun "em" to ad-  
dress Kien for the first time, which conveys intimacy  
and endearment in Vietnamese. As a result, the TT  
loses the specific cultural and emotional nuances as-  
sociated with the use of "em", though the following

**Table 2: Results of the holistic assessment for each chapter**

| Chapter | Accuracy of Transfer ST Content | Quality of Expression in TL | Degree of Task Completion | Mark |
|---------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------|
| 1       | Level 3                         | 9                           | Adequate                  | 6    |
| 2       | Level 1                         | 9                           | Totally inadequate        | 1    |
| 3       | Level 2                         | 9                           | Inadequate                | 3    |
| 4       | Level 2                         | 9                           | Inadequate                | 3    |
| 5       | Level 2                         | 9                           | Inadequate                | 3    |
| 6       | Level 2                         | 9                           | Inadequate                | 3    |
| 7       | Level 2                         | 9                           | Inadequate                | 3    |
| 8       | Level 5                         | 9                           | Successful                | 9    |

310 sentence seems to highlight the use of the pronoun  
 311 “em” as a change in Phuong’s attitude towards Kiên-  
 312 an endearment that grows stronger.

313 *Illustration from Chapter 5:*

314 ST: Nhiều buổi tối, **đứng bên cửa sổ nghe tiếng ồn**  
 315 **ào của cuộc vui bên buồng nàng**, lòng dạ bị trí tưởng  
 316 tượng ghen tuông hành hạ, Kiên tự hỏi có nên lần sang  
 317 đâm gục, đâm bất kỳ ai trong đám khách khứa rồi thì  
 318 đập tan cái đàn của nàng ra.

319 TT: He had suffered through the nights when she  
 320 had openly tormented him or brought in other lovers.  
 321 Storming into her room could never have helped  
 322 things. Drinking until dead drunk to remove traces  
 323 of her was equally futile. It was over.

324 The TT provides a condensed version of the ST, omit-  
 325 ting several details and nuances, such as Kien stand-  
 326 ing by the window and hearing the noise of the party  
 327 in her room, which triggers his imagination and jeal-  
 328 ousy. This omission results in a loss of specific de-  
 329 tails and emotions associated with Kien’s torment and  
 330 longing for Phuong.

331 *Illustration from Chapter 6:*

332 ST: Trườn theo các lùm cây, Kiên men tới cửa rừng và  
 333 len lén anh nhồm lên, quỳ một chân, nhìn ra trăng.  
 334 Quả lựu đạn đã rút chốt như chỉ chực rớt ngay xuống  
 335 chân Kiên. **Tay anh lạnh ngắt, các ngón run và toàn**  
 336 **thân anh tròn trĩnh, đầu óc chao đưa hầu như**  
 337 **không còn tự chủ được nữa.**

338 TT: Now left behind and relatively safe, Kien crawled  
 339 to a safer position and tried to see what had happened  
 340 to Hoa. As the almost silent but barbarous multiple  
 341 rape of young Hoa continued in the small jungle clear-  
 342 ing in the dying minutes of that harrowing day, Kien  
 343 crept off away from them, towards his wounded men.  
 344 The TT briefly mentions that Kien crawled to a safer  
 345 position and tried to see what happened to Hoa, omit-  
 346 ting the vivid description of Kien’s physical and men-  
 347 tal state, his trembling hands, the horror around him,

and his internal struggle, as depicted in the ST.

*Illustration from Chapter 7:*

ST: Đã bảo cậu sợ thì cậu **téch đi mà lị.**

TT: “If you’re scared, **get out.**”

The ST uses the colloquial expressions “téch” and  
 “mà lị” to convey a sense of urgency and emphasis.  
 However, the TT simplifies the dialogue to “If you’re  
 scared, get out,” losing the specific linguistic variations  
 and the nuanced tone of the original.

Chapter 8 achieved Level 5 for accuracy of transfer,  
 indicating a complete transfer with only minor revi-  
 sions required. The quality of expression was rated as  
 9, suggesting that the translation read as a piece origi-  
 nally written in English. The degree of task comple-  
 tion was marked as successful, resulting in a mark of  
 9.

*Illustration from Chapter 8:*

ST: Ngày mà tất cả đều còn rất **son trẻ**, trong trắng và  
 chân thành.

TT: Those were the days when all of us were **young**,  
 very pure, and very sincere.

In this example, the ST uses the phrase “son trẻ,”  
 which carries nuanced connotations of purity, fresh-  
 ness, and sincerity, while the TT translates it simply  
 as “young,” capturing the general idea of youthfulness  
 but lacking the depth and richness conveyed by the  
 original phrase.

These findings highlight the importance of ensuring  
 accuracy in the transfer of source text content, main-  
 taining a high quality of expression in the target lan-  
 guage, and successfully completing the translation  
 task to provide readers with a faithful and engaging  
 rendition of the original work.

## Discussion

This study adopted a chapter-based approach in  
 applying Waddington’s model to “The Sorrow of

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War," driven by both practical considerations and the novel's unique structure. This method offers several advantages for assessing complex literary works. Baker (2018)<sup>19</sup> notes that "Translators may face different challenges in different parts of a text, depending on the content, style, and cultural references present" (p. 234), making chapter-level analysis particularly insightful.

The approach aligns well with the novel's non-linear narrative. Tran (2019)<sup>3</sup> observes that "The Sorrow of War" "jumps between different time periods and emotional states, creating a fragmented narrative that mirrors the protagonist's fractured psyche" (p. 45). Chapter-by-chapter assessment allows for evaluation of how effectively the translation captures these shifts in perspective and intensity. Moreover, this method can reveal patterns in translation quality that might be obscured in a generalized assessment. Munday (2016)<sup>14</sup> argues that "Detailed analysis of smaller units can provide insights into the translator's decision-making process and strategies" (p. 142). It also facilitates targeted comparison between source and target texts. As Malmkjær (2018)<sup>27</sup> emphasizes, "comparing equivalent units of text [ensures] a fair and accurate assessment of translation quality" (p. 56). Chapters provide natural, coherent units for this comparison in "The Sorrow of War," allowing for precise identification of the translation's strengths and weaknesses.

The holistic assessment using Waddington's Method C revealed varying levels of translation quality across the eight chapters of "The Sorrow of War." While the translation generally read like a piece originally written in English, there were significant issues with the accuracy of transfer, particularly in Chapters 2 to 7.

The inaccuracies in the transfer of source text content can substantially impact the reader's understanding and interpretation of the novel. For instance, the translation of "câu tồm" as "Rattling" Can in Chapter 1 fails to capture the cultural significance and nuance associated with the original phrase, potentially diminishing the authenticity and depth of the translated work (Boase-Beier & Holman, 2016)<sup>11</sup>. Similarly, the omission of significant details and emotions, as seen in the example from Chapter 3, can result in a loss of emotional depth and nuance, affecting the reader's understanding of the characters' internal struggles, motivations, and relationships (Xi-aoli, 2019)<sup>28</sup>. Besides, the quality of expression in the target language, while generally high, was marred by lexical, grammatical, and spelling errors throughout the translation. These errors can disrupt the reading experience and detract from the overall quality of

the translation. The degree of task completion varied significantly across chapters, with Chapter 8 standing out as a successful translation, while the other chapters were deemed either adequate or inadequate. This inconsistency suggests that the translation may not have fully captured the nuances and subtleties of the source text throughout the novel.

The findings above align with previous research that has applied Waddington's model to assess the quality of literary translations (Shahraki & Karimnia, 2011; Babakordi, 2012; Yousefi & Abbasian, 2015)<sup>21-23</sup>. These studies have highlighted the importance of considering multiple aspects of translation quality, such as accuracy, expression, and task completion, to gain a comprehensive understanding of a translation's strengths and weaknesses. The results underscore the significance of employing a holistic approach, like Waddington's Method C, in evaluating literary translations. By considering the translation as a whole and assessing it across various dimensions, this method provides a more nuanced and context-sensitive evaluation compared to error-based approaches (Karimi et al., 2016)<sup>29</sup>.

While Waddington's Method C offers a comprehensive approach to translation quality assessment, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations, particularly the potential for subjectivity (Babakordi, 2012; Yousefi & Abbasian, 2015)<sup>22,23</sup>. However, these challenges are not unique to Waddington's model but are inherent in most TQA frameworks. As Williams (2009) argues, "The quest for absolute objectivity in translation assessment remains elusive, yet Waddington's method provides a structured approach that mitigates subjective bias" (p. 18). Indeed, for literary works that demand multi-dimensional evaluation, the holistic nature of Method C proves particularly valuable (Shahraki & Karimnia, 2011)<sup>21</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

This study's application of Waddington's Translation Quality Assessment model, specifically Method C, to evaluate the English translation of Bao Ninh's "The Sorrow of War" has yielded valuable insights into the complexities of literary translation. The analysis revealed varying levels of translation quality across the eight chapters, with significant issues in content transfer accuracy, particularly in Chapters 2 to 7. While the translation generally read fluently in English, it struggled to preserve crucial cultural nuances and emotional depth inherent in Vietnamese literature.

The findings underscore the need for a TQA approach more attuned to the nuances of literary translation. As House (2015)<sup>13</sup> suggests, "An effective literary TQA

489 model must consider not only the accuracy of transla-  
 490 tion but also its success in conveying the literary qual-  
 491 ities of the source text” (p. 103). A multidisciplinary  
 492 approach incorporating insights from literary studies  
 493 could enhance the TQA process, involving analysis  
 494 of narrative structures, evaluation of literary devices  
 495 transfer, assessment of the author’s voice preservation,  
 496 and consideration of the translation’s impact on the  
 497 target culture’s literary landscape.

498 Despite the need for a more nuanced approach,  
 499 Waddington’s model remains a valuable and widely  
 500 recognized tool in translation quality assessment. Its  
 501 effectiveness has been demonstrated in various stud-  
 502 ies, with Conde (2011)<sup>30</sup> concluding that it ”provides  
 503 a reliable and comprehensive framework for evaluat-  
 504 ing translation quality across different text types” (p.  
 505 108). The model’s adaptability, as noted by Melis and  
 506 Albir (2001), makes it particularly suitable for assess-  
 507 ing translations between linguistically and culturally  
 508 distant languages.

509 The model’s holistic approach also aligns with con-  
 510 temporary views on translation quality. Mariana  
 511 (2014)<sup>31</sup> argues that Waddington’s method C pro-  
 512 vides a balanced assessment by considering both  
 513 micro-level accuracy and macro-level readability,  
 514 crucial for evaluating complex literary works. Its  
 515 widespread adoption in academic and professional  
 516 settings, as observed by Williams (2009)<sup>32</sup>, further  
 517 underscores its value and reliability.

518 Moving forward, researchers and practitioners in  
 519 Vietnam can build upon Waddington’s foundation,  
 520 incorporating culturally specific elements to create a  
 521 more tailored assessment tool. By adapting the model  
 522 to the Vietnamese context, a more nuanced and cul-  
 523 turally sensitive approach to assessing Vietnamese-  
 524 English literary translations can be developed. This  
 525 study not only contributes to the field of translation  
 526 quality assessment but also opens avenues for further  
 527 research into the application of TQA models across  
 528 different literary genres, languages, and cultural con-  
 529 texts.

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