

Translating Horror: Quality Assessment of Gothic Elements in Edgar Allan Poe's Short Stories Translated into Persian

Negin Doroodian Mehr^{1,*}

Department of English, Faculty of Basic Sciences and Modern Technology, Islamic Azad University, E-Campus, Tehran, Iran

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Abstract: Translating gothic literature poses challenges, particularly in conveying emotions such as fear and anxiety while preserving the atmospheric intensity of the original. This study examines the quality of Persian translations of gothic elements in five short stories by Edgar Allan Poe. Gothic features were identified using frameworks from Harris (2020) and Nodalo (2023), and their translations were evaluated through Nababan's (2012) assessment model, focusing on accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The analysis revealed a clear imbalance: while the translations achieved high levels of acceptability and readability, they demonstrated notably lower accuracy due to shifts, adaptations, and omissions. This suggests that translators prioritized preserving the immersive gothic effect over strict fidelity to the source text. The study highlights the importance of cultural awareness, linguistic skill, and genre sensitivity in translating gothic fiction into Persian and offers implications for translators, critics, and publishers.

Keywords: Acceptability, Accuracy, Gothic, Horror, Readability, Translation Quality Assessment

1. Introduction

Gothic literature is characterized by an ambiance of fear, supernatural threats, and the intrusion of the past into the present (Stockwell, 2018; Birch, 2009; Hogle, 2002). Settings often feature decaying ruins, symbolizing a once-flourishing world. The depiction of horrific events in gothic fiction reflects psychological or social conflicts (Hogle, 2002) and evokes intense emotions through gloomy atmospheres and symbolic colors. Edgar Allan Poe effectively used gothic elements like madness and terror to explore human emotions and create suspenseful narratives (Phuyal, 2021). Harris (2020) identified literary features of gothic fiction, including "metonymy of gloom and horror" and "gothic vocabulary." This genre's translation is challenging due to its unique characteristics (Landais, 2016), although audio descriptions in gothic films can mitigate some difficulties by providing visual and sound context (Stefanini & Matamala, 2023). The complexity of translating gothic texts lies in capturing their genre, register, and intended meaning (Ganjian Khanari, 2017).

Edgar Allan Poe is a central figure in American gothic fiction and literature (Sun, 2015). His writing features a dark, mysterious tone with vivid imagery and intricate language, often exploring themes of death, madness, and the macabre (Stockwell, 2018). Poe's works are characterized by psychological depth, suspense, and meticulous attention to detail, using rich descriptions and sensory language to create a haunting atmosphere. His complex, rhythmic sentences enhance the emotional impact of his stories (Phuyal, 2021). Poe's distinct style has significantly influenced horror, mystery, and psychological fiction, captivating readers with his exploration of the human psyche (Stockwell, 2018).

The book 'داستانهای کوتاه: ادگار آلن پو' [*Short Stories of Edgar Allan Poe*], published in 2021 by Negah Publications in Tehran, features 19 of Edgar Allan Poe's notable short stories, primarily in the genres of gothic, mystery, horror, and crime. Translated into Persian by Ziba Ghanji and Parisa Soleimanzadeh Ardabili, these stories are popular among Iranian gothic literature fans, yet their translation quality has rarely been assessed. For House (2015), translation quality is vital for accurately conveying the source text's meaning and impact, while Nababan et al. (2012) emphasize

* Corresponding Author: negindrm1995@gmail.com

that high-quality translations must be accurate, acceptable, and readable.

While various Persian translations of Edgar Allan Poe's works exist, there is limited research assessing their quality. This lack of analysis impedes an accurate evaluation of how well these translations convey the meaning and significance of Poe's writings to Persian readers. This study aimed to use Nababan's (2012) model to analyze the translations of five of Poe's short stories, focusing on the accuracy, acceptability, and readability of translated lexical and literary elements such as metonymy, vocabulary, and hyperbole. The goal was to determine if these translations preserve Poe's intricate details, mysterious tone, and suspenseful style, enabling readers to experience the same chills as the original audience. To guide this research, the following questions were formulated:

RQ1: How accurate, acceptable, and readable are the Persian translations of gothic elements in Edgar Allan Poe's five short stories based on Nababan's TQA model?

RQ2: What is the overall quality of the Persian translations of gothic elements in Edgar Allan Poe's five short stories?

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Translation Quality (Assessment)

A quality translation accurately conveys the author's intent from the source language (SL) to the target language (TL) without omission, addition, or alteration (McDonald, 2020). It ensures that readers can easily understand the message. Translators should not distort the original meaning based on the formal structure of the TL; their role is to facilitate communication rather than create new content. In summary, a quality translation exhibits three key characteristics: accuracy, readability, and acceptability (McDonald, 2020).

To achieve a good translation, the translator must accurately convey the source text's meaning into the target language. Kovács (2008) emphasizes that high-quality translations require both accuracy and informative value. Massoud (1988, as cited in Hidayat, 2016) outlines eight criteria for a good translation: 1) simplicity; 2) fluidity; 3) idiomatic expression; 4) preservation of literary nuances; 5) differentiation between literal and metaphorical meanings; 6) reconstruction of cultural and historical context; 7) clarity of implicit content; and 8) fidelity to the source text's meaning. These criteria highlight the necessary skills for effective translation.

a) *Accuracy* is the degree of correctness a translation satisfies concerning predetermined standards (Molina & Albir, 2002). Nababan et al. (2012) outline three levels of accuracy: accurate, less accurate, and inaccurate. A description of the assessment criteria accompanies each level. According to Larson (1997), accuracy refers to the accuracy of the information between the source and the target. Any additions, deletions, or modifications are made after a comparison of the source and target texts, taking into account the translation's suitability for the intended context.

b) *Readability* refers to how easily a piece of writing can be understood. A translated text is considered highly readable if it conveys its message clearly, regardless of its alignment with the source language (SL) text. The reader plays a crucial role in determining readability. Effective translation strategies enhance readability, making the text sound natural while maintaining meaning (Dubay, 2004). As Yolanda and Yuliasri (2016) note, readability prioritizes a natural-sounding translation over strict accuracy. According to Nababan et al. (2012), readability in translation means how easily the intended audience can understand the source text.

c) *Acceptability* leads to the prevalence and naturalness of the translated text in TL, following the rules and norms of the language of the TL readers. The text must be accepted and understood by the target reader. Readers will understand the meaning of the sentences that make up a translated text and then relate it to the context of the text's situation. The term acceptability expresses the adherence of the translation to the linguistic rules and textual norms of the target language. It gives the idea that a translation will be adequate if the norms followed come from the source culture and language, while the translation is acceptable if the norms followed come from the target culture and language (McDonald, 2020). He further remarks that an assessment of the accuracy of the transfer of SL text messages into the TL should not be carried out by the researcher alone.

Other people with competence and expertise in the field of translation should be involved in producing a more objective assessment. It should be noted that assessing the accuracy of message redirection will always involve the source and target language texts. In other words, comparing the source language text message and the target language text message is one of the important features of assessing the accuracy of the message forwarding (McDonald, 2020).

According to Nababan et al. (2012), acceptability refers to how well the translated text captures the target culture, norms, and linguistic conventions. The translation must, in theory, adhere to locally recognized norms; this includes language style, which includes unclear terms in some cultures, even if slang is not used. Acceptability is necessary for producing the greatest translation for the intended reader. Similar to readability, acceptability prioritizes dynamic compatibility over accuracy. These factors are assessed in three levels of accuracy, acceptability, and readability based on the following scales:

Table 1. Scale of Accuracy

Scale	Category	Indicators
3	Accurate	The meaning of words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences, or source language text is accurately translated into the target language, and there is no distortion of meaning.
2	Less accurate	Most word meanings, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences, or source language texts have been accurately transferred into the target language. However, there are still meaningful distortions or translations of multiple meanings, or some are omitted, that interfere with the integrity of the message.
1	Inaccurate	The meaning of words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences, or source language texts is inaccurately transferred into the target language or omitted.

Table 2. Scale of Acceptability

Scale	Category	Indicators
3	Acceptable	Translation feels natural; familiarity with technical terms is to the reader; phrases, clauses, and sentences used conform to the grammar of the target language.
2	Less acceptable	In general, the translation feels natural, but there is a slight problem with using technical terms, or there is a slight grammatical error.
1	Unacceptable	Translation is not natural or feels like a translation work; technical terms used are not commonly used and are not familiar to the reader; phrases, clauses, and sentences used do not follow the rules of the target language.

Table 3. Scale of Readability

Scale	Category	Indicators
3	Readable	Words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences, or translated texts can be easily understood by the reader.
2	Less readable	In general, the translation can be understood by the reader, but certain parts must be read more than once to understand the translation.
1	Unreadable	Translation is difficult for readers to understand.

In this study, Nababan’s (2012) TQA model was employed as the main theoretical framework because it is one of the most detailed and frequently used models to evaluate the quality of translated texts.

2.2. Gothic Literature

Gothic literature was introduced to the literary world as a new genre with the help of Horace Walpole, who wrote and published *The Castle of Otranto* in 1764, calling it a gothic story as a sophisticated joke, which led the foundations to start a completely new genre (Abedini, 2022). He further explained that following his success and getting inspired by him, Ann Radcliffe wrote her most well-known story, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, in 1794, which she categorized as a Romance since gothic was not that popular back then. This unpopularity lasted until a publishing house named Minerva Press, founded by William Lane, a bookseller in 1780, brought attention to gothic literature by publishing many novels written mostly by women.

2.2.1. Symbolic Elements of Gothic

The term gothic novel refers to stories that blend elements of horror and romanticism, often involving supernatural events or nature’s uncontrollable phenomena. Key features include gloomy, decaying settings like haunted houses or castles, supernatural beings (ghosts, vampires), curses, damsels in distress, heroes, romance, and intense emotions (Bal, 2023). Common characters in gothic literature include anti-heroes, tyrannical villains, Byronic heroes, and religious figures (Shukhratovna & Doniyorqizi, 2024). Settings typically feature castles and isolated regions that reflect decay, mirroring characters’ internal conflicts and creating an atmosphere of fear. Several thematic elements are central to gothic novels:

1. *Terror and Horror*: Suspense and disgust characterize the reader’s experience, with terror stemming from the unknown and horror from the characters’ actions.
2. *Justice and Revenge*: The protagonist often seeks to rectify wrongdoings, which may involve complex moral dilemmas.
3. *Good vs. Evil*: Gothic literature explores the darker aspects of human nature, challenging readers’ perceptions of morality (Shukhratovna & Doniyorqizi, 2024).

2.2.1. Linguistic Elements of the Gothic

This study evaluates the quality of gothic elements in translation. According to Harris (2020), key literary aspects of the Gothic include:

1. *Metonymy of Gloom and Horror*: This involves using one word to represent another related concept, such as 'rain' for 'sorrow'. It serves as shorthand in films, particularly in somber scenes (see Appendix A).
2. *Gothic Vocabulary*: Appropriate vocabulary is crucial for maintaining the gothic atmosphere, enhancing the dark and intense feel of the genre (see Appendix B).
3. *Hyperbolic Phrases*: Hyperbole exaggerates for emphasis or humor, such as saying, "She had a brain the size of a planet." This technique can add creativity and emotional depth (Glossary of Literary Terms, 2015).
4. *Irony*: As Abrams (1999) notes, irony contrasts the intended meaning with the literal one, creating rhetorical effects where reality differs from appearance.
5. *Personification*: This figurative language assigns human traits to non-human objects or ideas (Abrams, 1999, p.99).
6. *Simile*: A simile makes direct comparisons between different things using "like" or "as."
7. *Symbolism*: Symbolism involves objects or events that signify broader ideas, like a rose representing youth and beauty (Abrams, 1999, p.311; Fadaee, 2011, p.2).

2.3. Translation of Gothic Literature

The transfer of gothic elements in literature is a significant focus in Translation Studies, particularly concerning horror fiction. According to Landais (2016), translating this genre is complex because it relies on the interconnected mechanisms of reality effect and suspense to evoke fear. Translators must balance these elements to ensure readers can experience fear, considering that initial realism is crucial for disrupting supernatural elements.

Landais (2016) emphasizes that translators must navigate between naturalization and foreignization. Excessive naturalization may weaken cultural grounding and reality's impact, while excessive foreignization can create resistance to character identification. Thus, both approaches can hinder the reader's fear experience and compromise the narrative's purpose. Once a fictional world is established, generating suspense becomes paramount, with the narrative's rhythm being vital. Translators should closely adhere to the original text's structure to maintain this rhythm and evoke fear effectively.

Bre'que (1998, as cited in Landais, 2016) presents three strategies for translating cultural references: maintaining them with footnotes, omitting them, or using an alternative that fits the narrative. While footnotes can create a sense of reality, they may disrupt suspense. Omitting references can preserve suspense but may lead to the loss of cultural elements, ultimately affecting the reception and richness of the original narrative. Such dynamics underscore the translator's pivotal role in the success of horror fiction.

The third approach in translation involves finding a cultural counterpart for references and transferring the original message into a different code for an equivalent target message. This requires the translator to ground the counterpart in the source culture while considering the target audience's knowledge. Although challenging, this method is seen as effective in maintaining the realism and suspense crucial in conveying horror. Without appropriate strategies, the emotional impact may falter, making careful translation essential (Landais, 2016; Havlíčková, 2023).

Crime and horror fiction rely on specific plots and strong emotional expression. Translators need to capture intense emotions beyond mere referential methods (Szymyślik, 2018). The language in these genres is typically straightforward and quick to understand, often featuring descriptive elements that are vital to the narrative. Translators need to convey these aspects efficiently for readers to appreciate the work fully (Bassnett, 2011, pp.115-116).

The intricate intertwining of cultural references with narrative detailism is essential for engaging readers in horror literature, especially when significant cultural differences are present. The primary focus of horror is to evoke fear and explore the depths of the human psyche. Effective translation requires a deep understanding of the author's style to resonate with the target audience. This involves capturing the atmosphere, which goes beyond mere words and syntax; it includes the nuances of language, what the author includes or omits, and narrative pacing (Bassnett, 2011; García Agustín, 2003, as cited in Szymyślik, 2018). Translating crime and horror demands sophisticated writing skills and a strong command of language to convey both direct and inferred meanings effectively (Szymyślik, 2018).

2.4. Edgar Allan Poe

2.4.1. Edgar Allan Poe's Gothic Elements

Edgar Allan Poe, an American author, poet, and literary critic, is widely seen as one of the most significant figures in the gothic fiction genre. His short stories, in particular, are filled with gothic elements that generate a feeling of mystery, fear, and discomfort, captivating readers and leaving a lasting impression on literature (Thimman, 2020). Edgar Allan Poe's distinctive writing style, marked by emotional intensity and explorations

of the human psyche, has left a lasting impact on literature worldwide. As a master of gothic fiction and a pioneer of psychological horror, his work remains influential despite his untimely death at 40. Poe's gothic tales, often ironic and macabre, include classics like "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839), "The Masque of the Red Death" (1842), "The Cask of Amontillado" (1846), "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Black Cat" (1843), and "The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843).

The gothic elements in Poe's works are essential to the genre, showcasing his unique ability to create an atmosphere of fear and dread. Through decaying houses, desolate landscapes, and ominous castles, he symbolizes the characters' inner turmoil and the human condition. Poe's exploration of madness and fixation resonates with audiences, while his untrustworthy narrators challenge readers to question the truth, blurring reality and delusion.

Supernatural aspects add mystery to his narratives, highlighting life's fleeting nature and the uncertainties of the afterlife. His use of symbolism prompts deeper interpretations, creating a conflict between light and darkness, beauty and horror. Themes of seclusion and sorrow reflect profound psychological insights, making his stories relatable across cultures and time.

Poe's legacy lies in his mastery of atmosphere, psychological depth, and supernatural elements, influencing future generations of horror writers. His works remain timeless classics that invite readers to confront their deepest fears and desires.

2.4.2. Literary Devices Used by Edgar Allan Poe

Many researchers have examined Poe's literary devices. Nodalo (2023) utilized qualitative research and content analysis to explore the prominent devices in selected crime short stories by Edgar Allan Poe, including *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Cask of Amontillado*, *The Black Cat*, *The Masque of the Red Death*, and *The Tell-Tale Heart*. He identified various literary devices for each story:

- *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*: simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, oxymoron, symbolism.
- *The Cask of Amontillado*: hyperbole, sarcasm, symbolism, simile, double entendre, metaphor, and irony.
- *The Tell-Tale Heart*: personification, hyperbole, simile.
- *The Black Cat*: metaphor, simile, situational irony, dramatic irony, symbolism.
- *The Masque of the Red Death*: imagery, hyperbole, symbolism, color symbolism.

Nodalo (2023) discussed commonalities and differences in literary devices across five selected stories. Common themes include mental illness, a limited cast of characters, death, specific settings, and humor. The differences lie in the narrator's intentions and plot. He highlighted Edgar Allan Poe's use of literary devices such as simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, irony, imagery, and symbolism. These techniques enhance beauty, engage readers, and create vivid imagery, allowing them to experience the story firsthand. Nodalo noted, "Poe utilized succinct words to incite the feeling of fear, and he wastes no time by beginning the story" (p. 505).

Edgar Allan Poe's short stories reveal the darker aspects of life, focusing on themes of illness, betrayal, sadness, fear, and death. Nodalo (2023, p.505) noted that "Poe's short stories leave a chill or a tear in our eye," highlighting his effective use of literary devices. He masterfully created a mysterious atmosphere that engages readers, with unraveling puzzles and crime-solving driving the plots.

2.5. Empirical Background

From a translation perspective, You (2023) explored the interplay between Children's gothic and its (un)translatability across cultures by examining the gothic elements in the original English series and its Chinese translations. The findings indicated that the gothic elements in the Chinese version are weakened, emphasizing moral instruction and local adaptation, which aligns with recontextualization. This process facilitates cultural exchange by adapting stories to ensure compatibility with the receiving culture, addressing untranslatability challenges, and transforming a "radical" genre into a more familiar horror form. Viewing the genre as potentially untranslatable yet readable across cultures fosters sensitivity and appreciation for the complexities of literary, semiotic, and cultural adaptations (You, 2023).

Pezer (2023) explored the challenges of translating horror fiction, specifically Stephen King's short story "1408" (1999). He asserted that effective translation requires more than direct word-for-word conversion; it involves understanding grammatical elements, cultural nuances, and literary devices like metaphors and imagery. These components are essential for creating a horror atmosphere. Translators must make shifts to accommodate structural differences between languages and ensure that the translation is natural and retains the original meaning and style, underscoring the importance of linguistic and cultural knowledge in both languages.

Matahari and Meilasari (2022) analyzed the Indonesian translations of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories, *The Black Cat* and *The Fall of the House of Usher*, using Molina & Albir's (2002) techniques and Venuti's (2006) and Hoed's (2003, as cited in Matahari & Meilasari, 2022) ideologies. They found that 14 out of 24 translation techniques were employed, notably established equivalence in *The Black Cat* and discursive creation in *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Both translations reflected a domestication ideology.

Masri (2022) examined the translation of horror words from English to Arabic using Venuti's domestication and foreignization theory, focusing on their impact on readers. Analyzing King's IT, she explored the challenges of translating onomatopoeic words, noting issues like loss of meaning and difficulties with terror-related terms. She concluded that specific translation strategies are essential to evoke similar emotional responses in both

English and Arabic readers. Masri emphasized that achieving a strong emotional impact through stuttering and onomatopoeia is crucial for effectively translating horror scenes.

Putri (2022) studied the impact of translation techniques on the quality of subtitles in *The White Lady* from the Pamali: Indonesian Folklore Horror Game. Using a descriptive qualitative method, he conducted document analysis and focus group discussions, applying Molina and Albir's (2002) model for translation techniques and Nababan's (2012) model for quality assessment, with input from three raters. The study found that established equivalent techniques improved translation quality, while deletion negatively affected accuracy, acceptability, and readability by omitting parts of the source text. Other techniques, like reduction and discursive creation, also diminished quality by failing to convey the original message fully. Discursive creation reduced accuracy by misrepresenting the source text and causing context issues. Techniques like literal translation and pure borrowing lowered acceptability; literal translation ignored target language grammar, while pure borrowing introduced rarely used terms from the source language, hindering readability. The reported average scores were 2.94 for accuracy, 2.96 for acceptability, and 2.97 for readability, leading to a high-quality score of 2.95 out of 3.

Wiciński (2020) explored the challenges of translating horror fiction, emphasizing the need for translators to balance faithful and unfaithful translations by choosing similar word equivalents. He stressed the importance of maintaining the original feel of horror fiction, particularly the reality effect. Similarly, Botić (2018) in his study, "Translating Horror Fiction - A Case Study of Short Stories by Clive Barker," discussed general translation issues and specific challenges posed by literary elements like metaphors and rhythm. He highlighted the necessity for translators to have specialized skills and expertise in style, register, tone, and language for effective literary translation. Sheikhsosseini et al. (2021) analyzed horror fiction elements like reality and suspense in *The Graveyard* using Vinay and Darbelnet's (1995, as cited in Munday et al., 2022) translation strategies. They found that the translator used adaptation (46%), literal translation (39%), omission (6%), modulation (5%), and transposition (5%), with 89% of adaptations involving footnotes, mostly for proper nouns. They concluded that the translator often overlooked horror-specific elements, reducing the overall horror effect for readers. Alavipour and Noroozi (2020) applied House's TQA model to assess *The Graveyard's* Persian translation. Their findings indicated that the translation differed from the original, categorizing it as a covert translation due to cultural filtering.

3. Method

This study utilized a descriptive and evaluative design to analyze five translations of selected gothic stories by Poe. It focused on textual analysis without incorporating reader response data, investigating accuracy, acceptability, and readability. A text-analysis design was used for the first two questions on accuracy and acceptability, while a rater-based design was employed for testing the readability.

3.1. Corpus of the study

This study analyzed five short stories by Poe, focusing on their Persian translations. The selected works, known for their literary significance and representation of gothic literature, include:

1. *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841; gothic; 26 pages)
2. *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842; gothic; 10 pages)
3. *The Tell-Tale Heart* (1843; horror; 68 pages)
4. *The Black Cat* (1843; horror; 14 pages)
5. *The Cask of Amontillado* (1846; horror; 26 pages)

These stories were chosen for their popularity among gothic literature enthusiasts, their availability in Iran, and their incorporation of gothic literary elements. The translated collection "داستانهای کوتاه: ادگار آلن پو" [Short Stories: Edgar Allan Poe], published in 2021 by Negah Publications in Tehran, includes translations by Ziba Ganji and Parisa Soleimanzadeh Ardabili and features 19 of Poe's most famous stories. The Persian titles of the selected stories are قتل در خیابان مورگ [The Murder in Rue Morgue], قلب افشاگر [The Tell-Tale Heart], بالماسکه سرخ [The Masque of the Red Death], خمره آمونتیلادو [The Cask of Amontillado], and گربه سیاه [Black Cat].

3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

The data for the study included a mixture of the gothic literary elements extracted by Harris (2020) as well as some other literary devices extracted from the same short stories by Nodalo (2023). The data were collected from a representative sample of each of the five stories by Edgar Allan Poe and their translations. To ensure the representativeness of the sample, the researcher applied a systematic random sampling (the first 10 pages or more of each story) procedure.

To address the first research question, the researcher analyzed data on accuracy and acceptability from excerpts of five stories and their translations, documenting similarities and differences between the source and target texts. For readability, five raters with proficiency in Persian were selected from among English literature graduates. They were aged 27 to 29 and had experience with reading literary texts in Persian. The raters received detailed

instructions on readability criteria and were asked to rate sample Persian excerpts with gothic elements on Nababan's (2012) scale of 'readable' (3), 'less readable' (2), and 'unreadable' (1). To answer the second research question, the results from accuracy, acceptability, and readability were compared and analyzed collectively.

The collected data were analyzed to evaluate the quality of translations of gothic elements using Nababan's (2012) scale of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. To assess accuracy, the researcher compared the original and translated texts based on how closely the translations adhered to the source meaning, categorizing them as accurate (3), less accurate (2), or inaccurate (1). For acceptability, the researcher examined whether the translations conformed to the target culture's norms and elicited a sense of horror, using a similar scoring method with selected readers. For readability, five raters rated the translations as readable (3), less readable (2), or unreadable (1). Finally, to determine the overall quality of the translations of Poe's short stories, the researcher averaged the scores from the three criteria for assessment.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents 18 examples of the analyses of the gothic elements extracted from Poe's selected short stories based on Nababan's (2012) TQA model. It is noticeable that the first two criteria on this TQA scale (accuracy and acceptability) are text-based, and the last criterion (readability) is rater-based.

4.1. Textual Analysis

To strengthen the analytical depth of the example-based discussion, the following analyses not only categorize the translations based on Nababan's scale but also explain the reasons behind each assessment. For each example, attention is paid to the translator's possible motivations, such as enhancing gothic atmosphere, improving fluency, or adapting culturally unfamiliar imagery, and the consequences of these shifts for the target reader. Thus, the analysis moves beyond description toward explaining why a translation is (less) accurate and what implications this has for genre effect, reader immersion, and the overall quality of the translation.

4.1.1 The Metonymy of Gloom and Horror

Example 1

ST: After some delay, occasioned by a fruitless attempt to procure admission in the usual manner, the gateway was broken in with a crowbar. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.7)

TT: طبق معمول متعاقب باز نشدن در و کمی معطلی در ورودی ساختمان با دیلم شکسته شد. ص 223

The translation is rated as **accurate (3)** because the metonymic detail ("broken in with a crowbar") is conveyed precisely, and the translator maintains the source text's sequence of events without altering the imagery. No omissions or additions occur; the threatening physical action central to gothic atmosphere is preserved fully. Because the translator retains both the violent imagery and narrative rhythm, Persian readers experience the same sense of intrusion and dread. This supports the gothic effect while maintaining both clarity and narrative tension. It is **acceptable (3)** due to its natural Persian phrasing, and **readable (3)** because raters found the sentence smooth and idiomatic.

Example 2

ST: It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. (*The Cask of Amontillado*, P.10)

TT: در پی آن، صدایی شنیدیم که تشخیص نمی دادم مال فورچوناتوی نجیب زاده است یا نه. ص 106

The translation is assessed as **less accurate (2)** because the translator shifts from passive ("was succeeded by") to active ("صدایی شنیدیم"), reducing the structural emphasis of the original. The shift likely aims to make the sentence more straightforward for Persian readers, since passives can sound heavy in Persian. While the translation remains clear and conveys the emotional effect (recognition difficulty + sadness), it downplays the source text's stylistic suspense, slightly weakening the buildup to Fortunato's voice, i.e., a key gothic cue. Despite this, the translation is **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)** due to its fluency and naturalness.

4.1.2. The Vocabulary of the Gothic

As noted earlier, one of the elements that makes a story 'gothic' is the specific vocabulary used by the writers. Numerous words under different themes were found in Poe's selected five short stories, which were compared with their Persian equivalents in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. A sample of these words from the short story *The Tell-Tale Heart* and *The Black Cat* is presented below:

Table 4. A Sample of Gothic Words

ST (with different themes)	TT	accuracy	acceptability	readability
The Tell-Tale Heart				
1. Mystery (Haunted– P.3)	1. رهايم نکرد ص 205	3	3	3
2. Mystery (Secret– P.4)	2. پنهانی ص 207	3	3	3
3. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Agony –P.8)	3. شکنجه ص 211	3	3	3
4. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Dreadfully–PP.3,5,8)	4. عجیب ص 205، هولناکش ص 207، دهشتناک ص 209	3	3	3
5. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Fear–PP.4,5,7)	5. ترس ص 207، ترس ص 207، می ترسیدم ص 210، می ترسیدم ص 210	3	3	3
6. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Grief–P.5)	6. اندوه ص 207	3	3	3
7. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Horror–P.8)	7. ترس ص 211	3	3	3
8. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Mournful. P.5)	8. غم انگیز ص 208	3	3	3
9. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Shriek PP.6,7,8)	9. جیغ کشید ص 209، جیغ ص 210، جیغ کشیدم ص 210، فریاد زدم ص 211	3	3	3
10. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Terror – PP. 5,6)	10. وحشت ص 207، ترس هایم ص 207، وحشت ص 208، وحشتی ص 209	3	3	3
11. Haste (Anxiety– P.6)	11. اضطرابی ص 209	3	3	3
12. Haste (Hastily– P.7)	12. سریع ص 209	3	3	3
13. Darkness (Night – PP.3, 4, 5, 6, 7)	13. ناگهان ص 207	3	3	3
14. Haste (Suddenly– P.4)	14. کفزی شدم ص 208، خشمم ص 208، خونم به جوش آمده بود ص 211	2	3	3
15. Anger (furious – PP.5,6,8)	15. هارت و پورت کردم. ص 211	2	3	3
16. Anger (Raved – P.8)	16. بی نور ص 206، تاریک ص 210	3	3	3
17. Darkness (Dark – PP.3, 7)	17. تاریک. ص 207	3	3	3
18. Darkness (Darkness – P.4)	18. تاریک تاریک ص 207، سیاه ص 208	3	3	3
19. Darkness (Black – PP.4,5)	19. شب ص 206، شب ص 206، شب ص 207، شب ص 209، شب ص 210	3	3	3
The Black Cat				
20. Mystery (Haunts– P.5)	20. پاتوق ص 15، پاتوق هایم ص 18	3	3	3
21. Mystery (Spirits – PP.5. 8)	21. ذهنم ص 16، ذهنی ص 16، روحم ص 17	2	2	3
22. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Agony PP.10,14)	22. محنت بار ص 20، عذاب ص 24	3	3	3
23. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Despair P.6)	23. نومیدی ص 17	3	3	3
24. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Dread PP. 9,10. 11)	24. ترس ص 19، ترس ص 20، بیم ص 20، میترسیدم ص 20، ترس ص 21	3	3	3
25. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Fear. P.10)	25. ترس ص 20	3	3	3
26. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Fright. P.5)	26. وحشت زده ص 15، وحشتناکی ص 15	3	3	3

27. Largess (Vast – P.10)	27. بسیار زیادش ص 20	2	2	3
28. Darkness (Black – PP.4,8)	28. سیاه ترین ص 20/ ترجمه نشده	2	3	3
29. Darkness (Night. PP.5,6,8,10,11,13)	29. سیاه ص 14، سیاه ص 14، سیاه ص 18	3	3	3
30. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Mournful. P.10)	30. شب ص 15، شب ص 15، شب ص 16، شب ص 18، شب ص 20، شب ص 21، شب ص 22	3	3	3
31. Darkness (Dark – PP.11,13)	31. کربیه ص 20	2	2	3
32. Fear, Terror, or Sorrow (Shriek . P.14)	32. جیغ ص 24	3	3	3

The majority of gothic lexical items in Table 4 are rated as **accurate (3)** because the translators consistently chose direct, semantically equivalent Persian words for Poe's emotion-laden vocabulary (e.g., "agony," "shriek," "mournful," "terror"). In most cases, Persian offers well-established equivalents for words of fear, darkness, and mystery, allowing translators to reproduce the emotional charge without structural manipulation. This lexical precision is crucial in sustaining gothic tone (fear, anxiety, and obscurity) across the text. These choices also enhance **acceptability (3)**, as the selected terms are idiomatic in Persian horror and suspense narratives. Minor deviations (items 15, 21, 27, 28, and 31) reflect either stylistic embellishment or partial omissions, which slightly reduce accuracy but do not disrupt reader comprehension. Raters overwhelmingly found the items **readable (3)**, indicating that lexical fidelity aligns well with stylistic immersion in Persian.

4.1.3. Hyperbolic Phrases

Example 3

ST: The body, as well as the head, was fearfully mutilated —the former so much so as scarcely to retain any semblance of humanity. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.8)

TT: سر و بدن هر دو به شکل دلخراشی چنان مثله شده بود، هیچ شباهتی به پیکر انسان نداشت. ص 224

The translation is **less accurate (2)** due to the omission of "the former," which reduces precision in describing the degree of mutilation. The translator appears to compress the sentence to avoid repetition, prioritizing fluency. While the omission affects micro-accuracy, the translated phrase "چنان مثله شده بود" effectively conveys the gruesome intensity essential to gothic hyperbole. Thus, emotional shock is preserved even with reduced structural fidelity. The translation remains **acceptable (3)** and **readable**, as confirmed by raters.

Example 4

Whenever it fell upon me, my blood ran cold. (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, P.3)

7. هر وقت به من نگاه می کرد خون در رگهایم منجمد می شد. ص 205

The translation is **less accurate (2)** because it adds the visual detail "به من نگاه می کرد" not present in the ST. The translator likely introduces this addition to clarify the cause of fear, making the emotional reaction more explicit for Persian readers. This enhances the immediacy of horror, amplifying the gothic emotional response, but shifts the source meaning by over-specifying the trigger. Thus, while the translation increases affective clarity, it reduces semantic fidelity. It is nonetheless **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)** due to its fluency.

4.1.4. Setting in a Castle or Old Mansion

Example 5

ST: We came at length to the foot of the descent and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors. (*The Cask of Amontillado*, P.5)

TT: بلاخره پای پله ها رسیدیم و کنار هم روی کف نمور دخمه ی گورهای خانواده مونته سور گام نهادیم. ص 101

The translation is **accurate (3)** because it retains the spatial details ("damp ground," "catacombs"), essential to gothic setting. The translator preserves both imagery and structure, reflecting the deliberate, eerie descent. This fidelity allows the Persian reader to experience the claustrophobic, archaic atmosphere characteristic of gothic architecture, thus supporting genre conventions. The translation is **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)** due to natural Persian rendering.

Example 6

ST: There was a sharp turn at every twenty or thirty yards, and at each turn a novel effect. (*Masque of the Red Death*, p.4)

TT: تقریباً پس از 20 متر، راهرو ناگهان پیچ می خورد و از تالاری به تالاری دیگر راه میافت که حال و هوایی بدیع داشت.

The translation is **less accurate (2)** due to additions (“از تالاری به تالاری دیگر”) and cultural adaptation (yards → meters). The changes likely aim to simplify spatial visualization and make measurements familiar to Iranian readers. Although atmosphere is preserved, the rhythmic pacing and precise spatial progression of the ST are modified, slightly altering the architectural eeriness intended by Poe. Still, the translation is **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.1.5. An Atmosphere of Mystery and Suspense

Example 7

ST: His fears had been ever since growing upon him. (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, p.5)

TT: از همان موقع ترس در وجودش خانه کرده بود.

Rated **less accurate (2)** due to metaphor substitution (“در وجودش خانه کرده بود”) and lexical addition (“در وجودش”). Persian metaphorical norms favor internalized, spatial metaphors for emotions, making the phrase more culturally resonant. The shift deepens psychological impact for Persian readers, enhancing suspense and internal tension—key elements of the gothic mood, despite reduced literal accuracy. It remains **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

Example 8

ST: I approached and saw as if graven in bas-relief upon the white surface, the figure of a gigantic cat. (*The Black Cat*, p.7)

TT: نزدیک رفتم و انگار نقش برجسته ای را روی سطح سفید دیوار دیدم، تصویر گربه ای غول آسا.

The translation is **accurate (3)** as the visual details of the bas-relief cat are faithfully rendered. The translator maintains descriptive precision without additions. This preserves the uncanny realism central to the scene’s supernatural suspense. However, raters found it **less readable (2)** because the clause ordering slightly overburdens the Persian sentence.

4.1.6. An Ancient Prophecy

Example 9

ST: In speaking of his intelligence, my wife, who at heart was not a little tinctured with superstition, made frequent allusions to the ancient popular notion which regarded all black cats as witches in disguise. (*The Black Cat*, P.4)

TT: هرگاه صحبت از هوش گربه به میان می آمد، همسرم که در باطن خرافاتی بود، بلافاصله به باور قدیم عوام اشاره می کرد که می گفتند گربه های سیاه جادوگرانی هستند با چهره های مبدل. ص 14

The translation closely follows the words and meanings of the source text. There are no shifts and no alterations. Therefore, it is rated as ‘accurate’ (3). Some words and expressions, such as باور قدیم عوام or در باطن خرافاتی, could be replaced by more familiar words or expressions in Persian, such as ذاتا or به باور قدیمی ها, respectively. As such, it is evaluated as ‘less acceptable’ (2). The raters also referred to the same point, mentioning that the translation would read faster and more easily if more common Persian expressions were used.

4.1.7. Omens, Portents, Visions

No data on this gothic element was observed in the selected stories.

4.1.8. Supernatural or Otherwise Inexplicable Events

Example 10

ST: If now, in addition to all these things, you have properly reflected upon the odd disorder of the chamber, we have gone so far as to combine the ideas of an agility astounding, a strength superhuman, a ferocity brutal, a butchery without motive, a grotesquerie in horror absolutely alien from humanity, and a voice foreign in tone to the ears of men of many nations, and devoid of all distinct or intelligible syllabification. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.21)

TT: حالا اگر به تمام چیزهایی که گفتیم به هم ریختگی عجیب اتاق را هم اضافه کنی، تا اینجا این شواهد را داریم. چالاکي حيرت آور، نیروی فوق انسانی، خشونت ددمنشانه، سلاخی بدون انگیزه، وحشتی عجیب و غریب و غیر انسانی و صدایی که لحن آن برای ملیت های مختلف بیگانه است و عاری از هرگونه مشخصه و هجای قابل فهم. ص 244

“تا اینجا این شواهد را داریم” The translation is **less accurate (2)** due to sentence splitting and the addition. The translator likely separates the long ST sentence to avoid overlong Persian structures. The addition serves an explanatory function. While this improves clarity, it weakens the cumulative, breathless listing that Poe uses to intensify horror. The gothic escalation of supernatural traits becomes more analytical and less overwhelming. It remains **acceptable (3)** but is **less readable (2)** due to complexity.

4.1.9. High, Even Overwrought Emotions

Example 11

ST: And now at the dead hour of the night, amid the dreadful silence of that old house, so strange a noise as this excited me to uncontrollable terror. (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, P.6)

TT: و حالا در آن ساعت بی جان شب، در میان سکوت دهشتناک آن خانه قدیمی صدایی این چنین غریب وحشتی مهارناپذیر در من برانگیخت. ص 209

The translation is **accurate (3)** because both emotional intensity and temporal framing (“dead hour of the night”) are preserved. The translator retains Poe’s exaggerated emotionality and mirrors his syntax closely. The preserved overwrought tone reinforces the panic central to the gothic effect, ensuring equivalent psychological tension in Persian. It is **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.1.10. Women in Distress

Example 12

ST: A search was made in the chimney, and (horrible to relate!) the corpse of the daughter, head downward, was dragged therefrom. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, p.8).

TT: پس از بررسی لوله ی بخاری (بازگو کردنش هم وحشتناک است) جسد دختر را که سر و ته تا ارتفاع زیادی با فشار توی لوله بخاری فرو رفته بود بیرون کشیدند.

Rated **less accurate (2)** because the passive structure becomes active, and the concise “head downward” is expanded into a long descriptive clause. Persian stylistic norms favor explicit elaboration over compressed adjectival phrases. Although emotional clarity increases, the dramatic shock of suddenly discovering the corpse is diluted by explanatory detail. The gothic abruptness of horror becomes more descriptive and less immediate. The translation remains **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.1.11. Women Threatened by a Powerful, Impulsive, Tyrannical Male

No data on this gothic element was observed in the selected stories.

In the following section, some literary devices used more frequently in gothic stories as introduced and proposed by Nodalo (2023) in the same five short stories of Poe, are presented and analyzed. As the number of cases is large, a sample of one example for each literary device follows.

4.1.12. Imagery

Example 13

ST: At the first dawn of the morning, we closed all the massy shutters of our old building; lighted a couple of tapers which, strongly perfumed, threw out only the ghastrliest and feeblest of rays. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.5)

TT: هنگام سپیده دم پرده های سنگین خانه ی قدیمی را می کشیدیم و یک جفت شمع روشن می کردیم که رایحه ی تندی می پراکند و پرتوی بی نهایت هولناک و ضعیف ساطع می کرد. ص 218

The translation is **less accurate (2)** due to the omission of “first” and structural restructuring. The translator condenses the text to avoid heaviness and merges clauses for narrative flow. Despite lost micro-details, the imagery—dim light, heavy shutters—remains vivid, preserving the oppressive mood essential to gothic settings. Thus, while form shifts, atmospheric effect remains strong. It remains **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.1.13. Simile

Example 14

ST: I think the animal now was as afraid as the old woman was. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.26)

TT: دست و پا زدن های پیرزن حالت آرام اورانگوتان را به خشم بدل می کند. ص 252

The translation is **inaccurate (1)** because it invents new actions (“دست و پا زدن های پیرزن”) and emotional triggers absent in the source. The translator replaces the simple simile with a more dramatic scene, perhaps attempting to intensify conflict. This alters narrative dynamics and misrepresents character relationships, reducing the reliability of the translation for literary analysis. It also weakens the subtle irony of the original comparison. Thus, it is **less acceptable (2)** and **less readable (2)** due to unfamiliar or confusing expressions.

4.1.14. Metaphor

Example 15

ST: I felt that the friendship of such a man would be for me riches without price. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.1)

TT: احساس کردم همنشینی با چنین شخصی بسیار مغتتم است. ص 217

The translation is **less accurate (2)** because “riches without price” is compressed into the adjective “بسیار مغتتم.” Persian tends to prefer concise evaluative adjectives rather than extended metaphoric expressions for positive value. While semantic meaning is conveyed, the metaphorical richness and emotional weight of the ST are weakened, reducing the expressive depth. Nonetheless, the version is **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.1.15. Symbolism

Example 16

ST: I was permitted to be at the expense of renting, and furnishing in a style which suited the rather fantastic gloom of our common temper, a time-eaten and grotesque mansion, long deserted through superstitions into which we did not inquire, and tottering to its fall in a retired and desolate portion of the Faubourg St. Germain. (*The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, P.4)

TT: اجازه گرفتم تا خانه ای قدیمی اجاره کنم و بر اساس سلیقه ی تاریک پسند و خیال پردازمان سر و سامانش بدهم، خانه ای درب و داغان و عجیب در گوشه ی دور افتاده ای از خیابان فابورگ سن ژرمن که در اثر خرافاتی که ما به آنها اعتنایی نکردیم، از مدت ها پیش متروکه مانده بود. ص 218

The translation is **less accurate (2)** because of voice shifts (passive → active), lexical restructuring, and repositioning of details. The translator reorganizes the sentence to avoid an overly dense Persian construction and to foreground certain descriptive elements. Although the symbolic depiction of the decrepit mansion remains intact, the syntactic shifts alter narrative rhythm and subtly change the emphasis of Poe’s symbolic contrasts (gloom vs. fantasy). It is **acceptable (3)** and **readable (2)**.

4.1.16. Personification

Example 17

ST: Evil thoughts became my sole intimates—the darkest and most evil of thoughts. (*The Black Cat*, P.11)

TT: افکار شیطانی سیاه ترین و شرر بارترین افکار تنها مونس های من شدند. ص 20

Rated **less accurate (2)** due to changes in thematic progression and noun ordering. Persian prefers explicit pluralization and reorganized structure for emphasis. Despite structural changes, the dark personification is preserved, retaining the gothic psychological self-corruption effect. It remains **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.1.17. Irony

Example 18

ST: I then took up three planks from the flooring of the chamber and deposited all between the scantlings. (*The Tell-Tale Heart*, p.7)

TT: سپس سه الوار از کف اتاق کندم و تمام قطعات بدن پیر مرد را زیر تخته ها جا سازی کردم. ص 209

The translation is **less accurate (2)** because it adds “تمام قطعات بدن پیر مرد را” and changes “between” to “under.” The addition makes implicit information explicit for clarity, and the prepositional shift reflects Persian idiomatic usage. While these choices improve interpretability, they reduce the irony and subtlety of Poe’s phrasing, making the narrator’s action more graphically explicit than intended. The translation remains **acceptable (3)** and **readable (3)**.

4.2. Summary of the Results

4.2.1. Accuracy

In Nababan’s (2012) TQA scale, accuracy indicates how similar the texts are between the source and target languages. It shows, in three levels, how closely the target text adheres to the meaning of the original text. Figure 1 illustrates the degrees of accuracy in the translation of gothic elements in Poe’s selected stories:

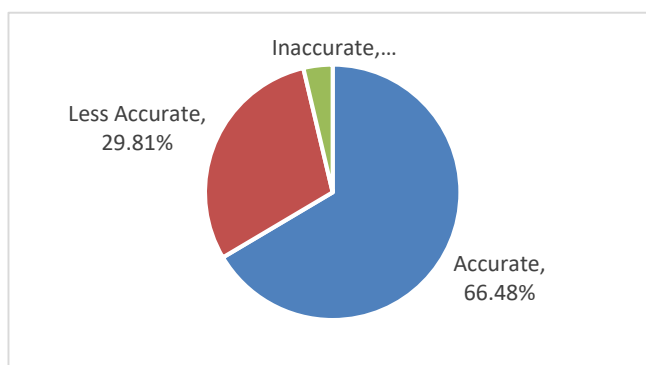


Figure 1. Degrees of

Accuracy

As shown in Figure 1, regarding the accuracy of the translation of gothic elements in Poe's short stories, almost two-thirds (66.5%) of the collected data are rated as 'accurate'. Nearly 30% of the data are rated as 'less accurate', and only 3.7% of the data are rated as 'inaccurate'.

4.2.2. Acceptability

In Nababan's (2012) TQA scale, acceptability describes whether or not a translation complies with the laws, customs, and cultural norms applicable in the target language on both a micro and macro level. It describes, in three levels, how closely the translation adheres to the target language's grammar and culture. Figure 2 illustrates the degrees of acceptability in the translation of gothic elements in Poe's selected stories:

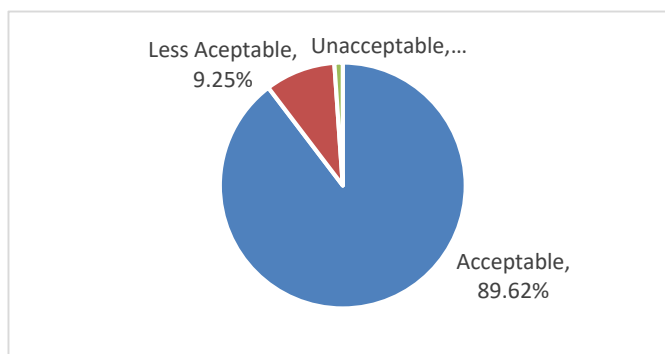


Figure 2. Degrees of

Acceptability

As Figure 2 shows, regarding the acceptability of the translation of gothic elements in Poe's short stories, almost 90% of the collected data are rated as 'acceptable'. About 10% of the data are rated as 'less acceptable', and almost 1% of the data are rated as 'unacceptable'.

4.2.3. Readability

In Nababan's (2012) TQA scale, readability is a factor that takes into account both the translated text's readability in the target language and the target raters' comprehension of the translation. Figure 3 illustrates the degrees of readability in the translation of gothic elements in Allan Poe's selected stories:

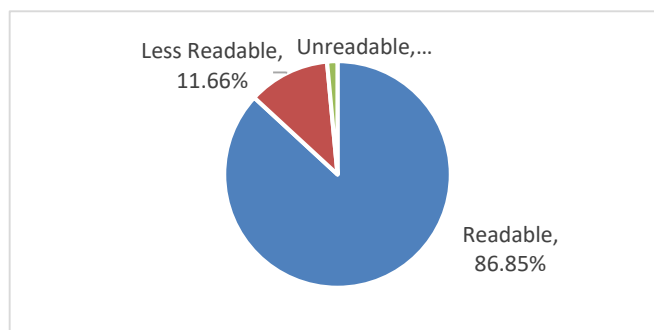


Figure 3. Degrees of

Readability

As shown in Figure 3, regarding the degree of the readability of the translation of gothic elements in Poe's short stories, the selected raters of the texts rated nearly 87% of the collected data as 'readable,' nearly 11.5% as 'less readable,' and only 1.5% of the data as 'unreadable.'

4.2.4. Overall Translation Quality Assessment

Figure 4 illustrates the comparative results presented in Table 4. In the following bar graph, the three sub-criteria are shown overlapped to make the comparison easier.

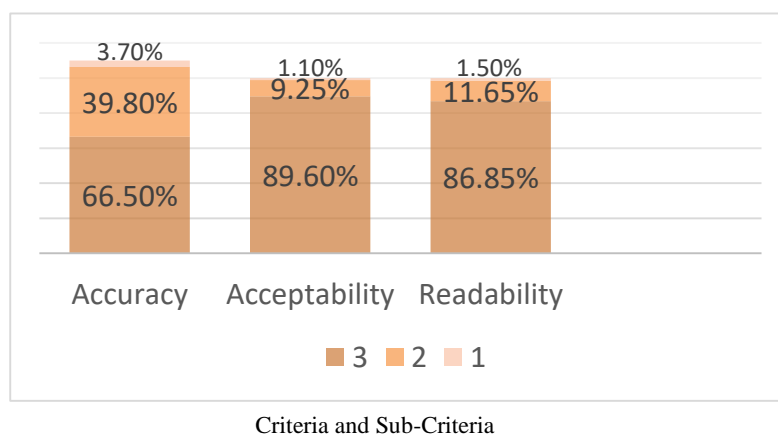


Figure 4. Results

of the TQA

Criteria and Sub-Criteria

As Figure 4 shows, regarding score 3 (accurate, acceptable, and readable – the lower darker parts in the bars), the results obtained above (see Table 4) reveal that the translations are initially acceptable (89.60%), then readable (86.85%), and finally accurate (66.50%), regarding score 2 (less accurate, less acceptable, and less readable – middle parts in the bars), the results show that the translations are less accurate (39.80%) than they are less readable (11.65%) and less acceptable (9.25%). Concerning score 1 (inaccurate, unacceptable, and unreadable), the results show that the translations are inaccurate (3.70%) more than they are unreadable (1.50%) and unacceptable (1.10%).

4.3. Raters' Responses

In this section, the five raters' responses are presented and analyzed concerning the third criterion (readability). The sampled excerpts containing gothic elements were given to the raters. They expressed (in Persian) their general opinion regarding the ease of reading and comprehending the sentences and the flow of the texts. As shown earlier, almost 87% of the raters rated the translations as readable, about 11.66% rated them as less readable, and about 1.5% rated them as unreadable. Some of their opinions are translated and exemplified here:

Rater 1 (male, 27): "I really enjoyed reading the translation of these stories by Ziba Ganji and Parisa Soleimanzadeh. The sentences, except for a few, were quite fluent, and the translators' choice of words to convey the feeling of fear and terror was truly appropriate. I had no difficulty in understanding the translations."

Rater 2 (female, 27): "Although most of the translations were done word-for-word, and the translators did not miss any words, and had little creativity in translation, the texts were quite readable and easy to understand. Only in a few cases, I believe, could the translators have used more emotional and horror-creating replacements. All in all, the translations were ok and readable to me."

Rater 3 (female, 28): "What attracted me to these translations was the translators' choice of horrible sounds and horror-making vocabulary. Some sentences were beautifully rendered and gave me a sense of fear and horror."

Rater 4 (male, 28): "Despite the complexity of the original text (I have already read the English novel), I think no more fluent and readable translation of these texts could be produced. I'd like to say that translators have done their best to produce a beautiful and readable text."

Rater 5 (female, 29): "In some parts, the translations rang English structures in my mind. I mean, they were close to the original text, while the translators could employ more localized structures. Anyway, the translations were readable with no hiccups."

The study found that the accuracy of translating gothic elements in selected Poe stories was lower than acceptability and readability. This likely occurred because translators prioritized aligning their translations with target language norms, employing techniques such as addition, omission, and adaptation to evoke the desired sense of horror and fear in the audience, rather than strictly adhering to the source text.

The research findings align with Pezer (2023), who noted that translating horror fiction requires more than a literal approach. Successful translation must consider grammatical elements, cultural references, and literary devices like metaphors and imagery to create the desired horror atmosphere. This study utilized translation shifts and literary techniques to manage structural differences between languages, ensuring that the target text remains natural, readable, and faithful to the original's meaning and style. The findings partially support those of Putri (2022), who studied the impact of translation techniques on the quality of subtitles in *The White Lady* from the Pamali: Indonesian Folklore Horror Game using Nababan's (2012) TQA model. Putri's study reported an accuracy score of 2.94, an acceptability score of 2.96, and a readability score of 2.97, leading to a high translation quality score of 2.95 out of 3. While both studies found accuracy to be the lowest rank, they differ in that Putri's

readability score was higher than acceptability, whereas this research found acceptability to be higher than readability, possibly due to the translators' techniques and strategies.

The findings contradict Sheikhhosseini et al. (2021), who found that translations often overlooked horror genre elements, resulting in a diminished sense of horror for readers. In contrast, this study showed that translations of gothic elements were highly acceptable and readable, effectively conveying similar feelings of horror and fear to raters. Additionally, the results partially align with Alavipour and Noroozi (2020), who used House's TQA model to examine *The Graveyard's* Persian translation. Their findings indicated that the Persian version deviated from the original due to cultural filters. Similarly, this research considered contextual factors and adaptations to evoke the intended horror and fear, which was mostly confirmed by the raters.

The results of the readability assessment show that the majority of the translations of gothic elements were perceived as smooth, natural, and generally effective by the raters. This is evident in their overwhelmingly high readability scores, even for cases that received lower accuracy ratings. When these rater responses are considered alongside the detailed textual analyses in Section 4.1, a clear pattern emerges: **translators frequently prioritized fluency, emotional immediacy, and gothic atmospheric effect over strict semantic fidelity.**

This helps explain the superficially contradictory finding that while **accuracy** levels were noticeably uneven (with nearly one-third of the examples rated as "less accurate"), **acceptability** and **readability** remained consistently high. The raters' written comments support this interpretation. Many explicitly stated that even when a translation diverged from the source text—through additions, metaphor substitutions, or syntactic restructuring, the resulting Persian sentence still read naturally and conveyed the intended emotion.

A closer look at the examples clarifies this tendency. In several cases (e.g., Examples 4, 7, 12, 18), translators introduced **additions or explicitation** to make psychological triggers or physical events more transparent to Persian readers. Although such additions reduced textual accuracy, they strengthened emotional clarity and helped maintain the tension typical of gothic narration. Similarly, **metaphorical adaptations** (Example 7) and **culturally resonant expressions** often replaced literal equivalents to achieve a more idiomatic and impactful rendering in Persian. These choices demonstrate an implicit strategy of *domestication*, designed to produce a more immersive gothic experience for target readers, even at the expense of lexical or structural precision.

Conversely, the examples with high accuracy, such as Example 1 or Example 11, often retained the original's syntactic or descriptive density and were still perceived as highly readable. This indicates that accuracy and readability are not inherently at odds; rather, Persian readers evaluate readability primarily based on **natural flow and emotional coherence**, not on fidelity to source-text structure. Where accuracy hindered readability (Example 8), this typically resulted from complex clause ordering rather than from semantic mismatch.

Another insight that emerges from the raters' responses is the translators' concern with **preserving gothic atmosphere** rather than reproducing surface linguistic features. Several "less accurate" translations, in fact, intensified the horror or suspense (Examples 3, 4, and 7) by selecting emotionally charged Persian terms or by expanding compressed English imagery. In these cases, the shift away from accuracy enhanced the target reader's sense of fear, tension, or abnormality (key components of gothic narrative), suggesting that translators judged affective fidelity more important than formal equivalence.

Overall, the raters' evaluations reinforce the broader conclusion that Persian translators often adopt a meaning-oriented, reader-responsive approach when dealing with gothic fiction. Their strategies, such as lexical intensification, explicitation, culturally familiar metaphor, and syntactic smoothing, tend to improve readability and acceptability while simultaneously

altering the micro-semantic details of the source text. The trade-off observed in this study, therefore, reflects **a deliberate negotiation between preserving the gothic mood and maintaining natural Persian prose**, rather than a simple loss of accuracy or translator error.

5. Conclusions

This study assessed the quality of Persian translations of gothic elements in five of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories using Nababan's (2012) TQA framework. The findings revealed a consistent pattern: while the translations were highly acceptable and readable for Persian audiences, they were notably less accurate due to omissions, additions, syntactic shifts, and cultural adaptations. These results indicate that the translators prioritized genre effect and reader immersion over literal fidelity. In the context of gothic fiction—where atmosphere, pacing, and emotional tension are essential, such prioritization can enhance the reader's experience even when lexical precision is compromised.

The implications of these findings extend beyond Poe's stories. For translators of gothic and horror literature, achieving a balance between semantic accuracy and atmospheric recreation is crucial. Excessively literal translation may weaken suspense, while excessive adaptation may distort thematic nuances. Therefore, informed decision-making is essential, requiring sensitivity to both genre conventions and target-culture expectations.

For translation critics and researchers, this study demonstrates the value of distinguishing between accuracy and acceptability/readability when evaluating genre-driven texts. The results also suggest that combining text-based and rater-based evaluation provides a more complete understanding of translation quality. Future research may examine how different translation strategies, such as domestication, foreignization, cultural substitution, or rhythm preservation, affect readers' emotional responses to gothic narratives.

Overall, the study shows that Persian translations of Poe's gothic elements successfully convey fear, tension, and atmosphere to target readers, even when they diverge from the source text. This highlights the importance of cultural familiarity, stylistic fluency, and genre awareness in producing effective translations of gothic fiction.

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Appendix A

ELEMENTS OF DOOM AND GLOOM

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ wind, especially howling | ✓ rain, especially blowing |
| ✓ doors grating on rusty hinges | ✓ sighs, moans, howls, eerie sounds |
| ✓ footsteps approaching | ✓ clanking chains |
| ✓ lights in abandoned rooms | ✓ gusts of wind blowing out lights |
| ✓ characters trapped in a room | ✓ doors suddenly slamming shut |
| ✓ ruins of buildings | ✓ baying of distant dogs (or wolves?) |
| ✓ thunder and lightning | ✓ crazed laughter |

Appendix B

GOTHIC VOCABULARY

1. Mystery	diabolical, enchantment, ghost, goblins, haunted, infernal, magic, magician, miracle, necromancer, omens, ominous, portent, preternatural, prodigy, prophecy, secret, sorcerer, specter, spirits, strangeness, talisman, vision
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2. Fear, Terror, Sorrow	or	afflicted, affliction, agony, anguish, apprehensions, apprehensive, commiseration, concern, despair, dismal, dismay, dread, dreaded, dreading, fearing, frantic, fright, frightened, grief, hopeless, horrid, horror, lamentable, melancholy, miserable, mournfully, panic, sadly, scared, shrieks, sorrow, sympathy, tears, terrible, terrified, terror, unhappy, wretched
3. Surprise		alarm, amazement, astonished, astonishment, shocking, staring, surprise, surprised, thunderstruck, wonder
4. Haste		anxious, breathless, flight, frantic, hastened, hastily, impatience, impatient, impatiently, impetuosity, precipitately, running, sudden, suddenly
5. Anger		anger, angrily, cholera, enraged, furious, fury, incense, incensed, provoked, rage, raving, resentment, temper, wrath, wrathful, wrathfully
6. Largeness		enormous, gigantic, giant, large, tremendous, vast
7. Darkness		dark, darkness, dismal, shaded, black, night

Appendix C

HYPERBOLIC PHRASES

Increased Dread

- ✓ deep grief
- ✓ gigantic creature
- ✓ bitterly feel
- ✓ strange sight
- ✓ dark gloom
- ✓ unparalleled misfortunes
- ✓ intoxicating draught

Increased Emphasis

- ✓ intense distaste
- ✓ inestimable benefit
- ✓ ardent curiosity
- ✓ unparalleled eloquence
- ✓ astonishing degree
- ✓ burning ardor
- ✓ strongly excited