

# *THE STRANGER*

## Translation Analysis

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is for you to gain experience in analyzing variations amongst three translations of selected textual passage.

Method: You will achieve this purpose by analyzing translations.

Details: This assignment is due at the end of the class period today

### Procedure:

1. Read the following translations of Camus's *The Stranger*.
2. Notice the differences in **diction and syntax** from one translation to the next. Then, write a brief sentence or two describing what you have noticed about those differences.
3. Underline, circle, or highlight three of the most meaningful differences in the translations. Be sure to label why you feel these differences are significant.
4. Do these differences affect the tone of the passages? Use evidence from the passages to support your analysis.
5. Inferring the author's purpose, write a well-developed (I-E-C) paragraph that states which translation is most effective for a modern American audience and why that is so.

*... The light leapt up off the steel and it was like a long, flashing sword lunging at my forehead. At the same time all the sweat that had gathered in my eyebrows suddenly ran down over my eyelids, covering them with a dense layer of warm moisture. My eyes were blinded by this veil of salty tears. All I could feel were the cymbals the sun was clashing against my forehead and, indistinctly, the dazzling spear still leaping up off the knife in front of me. It was like a red-hot blade gnawing at my eyelashes and gouging out my stinging eyes. That was when everything shook. The sea swept*

*ashore a great breath of fire. The sky seemed to be splitting from end to end and raining down sheets of flame. My whole being went tensed, and I tightened my grip on the gun. The trigger gave, I felt the underside of the polished butt and it was there, in that sharp deafening noise, that it all started. I shook off the sweat and the sun. I realized that I'd destroyed the balance of the day and the perfect silence of this beach where I'd been happy. And I fired four more times at a lifeless body and the bullets sank in without leaving a mark. And it was like giving four sharp knocks at the door of unhappiness.*

The Outsider translated by Joseph Laredo

*...The light shot off the steel and it was like a long flashing blade cutting at my forehead. At the same instant the sweat in my eyebrows dripped down over my eyelids all at once and covered them with a warm, thick film. My eyes were blinded behind the curtain of tears and salt. All I could feel were the cymbals of sunlight crashing on my forehead and, indistinctly, the dazzling spear flying up from the knife in front of me. The scorching blades slashed at my eyelashes and stabbed at my stinging eyes. That's when everything began to reel. The sea carried up a thick, fiery breath. It seemed to me as if the sky split open from one end to the other to rain down fire. My whole being tensed and I squeezed my hand around the revolver. The trigger gave; I felt the smooth underside of the butt; and there, in that noise, sharp and deafening at the same time, is where it all started. I shook off the sweat and sun. I knew I had shattered the harmony of the day, the exceptional silence of a beach where I'd been happy. Then I fired four*

*more times at the motionless body where the bullets lodged without leaving a trace.  
And it was like knocking four quick times on the door of unhappiness.*

The Stranger – Translated by Matthew Ward

*...A shaft of light shot upward from the steel, and I felt as if a long, thin blade transfixed my forehead. At the same moment all the sweat that had accumulated in my eyebrows splashed down on my eyelids, covering them with a warm film of moisture. Beneath a veil of brine and tears my eyes were blinded; I was conscious only of the cymbals of the sun clashing on my skull, and less distinctly, of the keen blade of light flashing up from the knife, scarring my eyelashes, and gouging my eyeballs.*

*Then everything began to reel before my eyes, a fiery gust came from the sea, while the sky cracked in two, from end to end, and a great sheet of flame poured down through the rift. Every nerve in my body was a steel spring, and my grip closed on the revolver. The trigger gave, and the smooth underbelly of the butt jogged my palm. And so, with that crisp, whipcrack sound, it all began. I shook off my sweat and the clinging veil of light. I knew I'd shattered the balance of the day, the spacious calm of this beach on which I had been happy. But I fired four shots more into the inert body, on which they left no visible trace. And each successive shot was another loud, fateful rap on the door of my undoing.*

The Stranger – Translated by Stuart Gilbert