

“CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE IN TRANSLATION”

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Abstract. *This thesis examines the criteria for evaluating pragmatic competence in translation as a key component of translation quality assessment in contemporary translation studies. It highlights the shift from traditional approaches based on semantic accuracy toward pragmatic and communicative perspectives that emphasize contextual meaning and functional equivalence. The study is grounded in pragmatics, discourse analysis, and translation studies, where meaning is understood through intention, inference, and social interaction in communication. Core criteria include communicative intention, speech acts, implicature, register, politeness strategies, genre conventions, and intercultural appropriateness in translation evaluation. These criteria demonstrate that translation quality depends on functional and communicative equivalence rather than formal similarity alone, providing a multidimensional framework for systematic assessment of pragmatic competence across different text types and communicative contexts in translation studies today.*

Keywords: *pragmatic competence, translation quality, evaluation criteria, speech acts, register, politeness strategies, intercultural communication, functional equivalence, contextual meaning.*

Pragmatic competence in translation is an interdisciplinary concept that connects linguistics, translation studies, and intercultural communication, focusing on how meaning is interpreted and conveyed beyond the literal level through context, intention, and social norms.

The development of pragmatic evaluation criteria is closely related to the evolution of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and functional approaches in translation studies. Although translation has long been evaluated in terms of lexical and grammatical accuracy, these parameters proved insufficient to ensure communicative success.

The theoretical foundations of pragmatic competence can be traced to the philosophy of language and pragmatics, particularly the work on speech acts and implicature, which demonstrated that meaning is not only expressed but also inferred within context.

In earlier stages, translation evaluation focused mainly on equivalence at the level of words and sentences. However, such approaches could not explain why linguistically accurate translations often failed to achieve their intended communicative effect.

The modern development of pragmatic evaluation criteria emerged in the late twentieth century, when scholars began to emphasize the importance of communicative purpose, audience expectations, and contextual appropriateness in translation assessment. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the role of pragmatic competence expanded significantly due to globalization and increased intercultural communication, making it a central requirement for professional translators.

Translation is now analyzed across diverse domains, including academic, legal, media, and digital texts, highlighting the need for systematic and flexible criteria capable of capturing pragmatic effectiveness.

The main criteria for evaluating pragmatic competence are closely linked to communicative function. One of the primary criteria is the preservation of communicative intention, ensuring that the illocutionary force and purpose of the source text are maintained.

Another important criterion is the management of implicature and presupposition, which requires the translator to preserve or appropriately adapt implicit meanings so that the target audience can derive similar interpretations.

The adequacy of speech act realization is also essential, as translators must ensure that communicative acts such as requests, apologies, and commands are expressed according to target-language conventions.

Register and style alignment represent another key criterion, as the level of formality and tone must correspond to the communicative situation and audience expectations.

Politeness and interpersonal strategies are equally important, as translation involves maintaining interpersonal relations and adapting them to cultural norms.

Genre coherence is also a significant factor, requiring translations to conform to the structural and communicative conventions of specific text types.

Finally, intercultural appropriateness plays a central role, as translators must manage cultural references and communicative practices in a way that ensures clarity and effectiveness for the target audience.

To apply these criteria in practice, a multidimensional evaluation matrix is proposed, allowing for systematic assessment of pragmatic features and distinguishing between local and global pragmatic issues.

Overall, the evaluation of pragmatic competence provides deeper insight into translation as a context-dependent communicative activity, emphasizing the interaction between language, culture, and meaning.

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