

EVALUATION CRITERIA OF TRANSLATION ASSIGNMENTS

For many years translations have been carried out on the basis of mainly stylistic criteria or according to the translation method used. Historically, many of the texts on translation have been in the form of commentaries by authors on translations performed by other authors; the debate on the used translation method is a constant. Nowadays translation criticism is either non-existent or, if practiced at all, is carried out in a subjective undisciplined way.

We are referring to the translation of literary texts, the field to which evaluation in translation has traditionally been confined. This may involve the evaluation of a single translation of a text or the comparison of several translations of an original text. The former is concerned with translation criticism in the sense in which that term has generally been understood, while the latter is concerned with comparative translation study which may be synchronic (between translations done during the same period of time) or diachronic (translations carried out at different points in time) or multilingual (comparing translations into various languages of a single original text).

The aim of this type of evaluation is to judge a translation, to discuss its merits and demerits, and, sometimes, to propose solutions. In this case, the evaluation debate is closely linked to notions of fidelity and quality in translation: accordingly, evaluation criteria may change, depending on the period, aesthetic taste, literary conventions, the prevailing translation method (literal or free), and others.

Outside the academic context, the evaluation of published translations is generally carried out in the absence of any objective criteria of analysis and, sometimes without even a detailed comparison between the translation and the original text. In some translation a teacher takes only the translation into account,

without consulting the original text. However, in recent decades the academic world has seen the gradual introduction of objective criteria into translation evaluation; moreover, the progress seen in Translation Studies has led to a better understanding of how translation works, as well as to the proposal of analytical categories.

In this case, the object of study is the student's translator competence, as well as the study plan and the program. Student evaluation is concerned with the product and the individual process followed, as well as the procedures used (observation of the appropriate principles). The quality, as well as the quantity of the product can be assessed. Assessment requires translations, assessment criteria, grading and correcting scales, questionnaires, exercises, etc

The aim of assessment may be academic (since it fulfills the need for selection required by the institution concerned), pedagogical (since it forms part of the training process) and speculative (because all reasoned and conscious assessment may have consequences for theory).

Research in the field of translation assessment has not achieved consensus in introducing the assessment criteria in evaluating students' translations by tutors. Different theories offer different approaches regarding evaluating translations in educational environment. Some researchers try to develop models that provide the teachers' needs in evaluating students' translations and try to minimize the gap between translation theory and practice. On the other hand, some researchers try to find the objective criteria regardless of imposing one's taste on translation assessment.

The assessment of translation assignments in practical course units can be based on (some or all of) the criteria outlined below, as per the instructions provided by teachers in each case:

- choice of a suitable source text of appropriate length/format;
- formulation of a clear and plausible translation brief or commissioning instructions and fulfilment of the intended purpose and function of the translation;

- awareness and use of appropriate (professional and/or scholarly) literature to back up the argument being developed in the critical analysis or justify specific translation decisions presented in the discussion;
- command of subject matter and technical or economic terminology, as illustrated by evidence of appropriate conceptual and terminological research in accompanying critical analysis;
- accuracy of target language grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- production of an appropriate target text complying with target language discursive and generic conventions (if it is the aim of the translator to do so). These include collocations, idiomatic structures, cohesive resources, information structure, etc.