

An Eclectic Method of Translation Evaluation

Sirvan Aminzadeh, Ph.D.

Translation Department

sirvan.aminzadeh@cihanuniversity.edu.iq

December, 2021

Outline

- Objective vs. Subjective TE
- Traditional vs. Modern TE
- An Eclectic Method, its Criteria and Steps

Objective or Subjective TE

Quantitatively speaking, through TE, teachers could determine and mark the students' level of translation competence and describe their progress statistically.

Despite such a necessity, TE is somehow a qualitative act as translation is a multifaceted process which are not at translators or evaluators' disposal.

Despite many theoretical studies (e.g., Newmtrak, 1988; Wilss 1996; House 1997; and Reiss 1977/1989) on TE, a pure objective evaluation is not possible due to the lack of direct observation and description of personal, social, and discursive factors of translation.

Traditional and Modern TE

A variety of TE strategies is being used at the process of translation education:

- *Traditional evaluation:* The teacher evaluates the students' translation drafts by his limited linguistic intuition, knowledge and experience, looking for for is textual equivalence, faithfulness to ST, fluency of TT, its readability and naturalness, etc.
- *Modern evaluation:* teacher focuses on the communicative context, functional equivalence, text typology, cultural norms, the skopos of TT, etc, utilizing available sources (dictionaries, parallel and comparable texts), consulting with experts and professional translators), and testing formats.

An Eclectic TE Method

Mobaraki and Aminzadeh (2012) presented an eclectic method of TE.

- It serves the pedagogical purposes in of Translation Education, via actualizing the existing models in real evaluative situations.

Criteria of evaluation:

- Reliability
- Validity
- Subjectivity
- Comprehensiveness
- Systematicity

Criteria of TE:

Validity: the suitability of the method to the defined evaluative situation.

Reliability: the usability of the method to the similar evaluative situations.

Objectivity: the verification of a method's validity and reliability for the intended evaluative situation.

Comprehensiveness: covering the linguistic and paralinguistic features of the evaluated translation; and applying the available evaluation sources and models in its process;

Systematicity: providing a defined framework and a step-by-step evaluative process, releasing TE from its common chaos. It is pre-required for stabilizing the other four criteria. Designing and demonstrating of the eclectic method is possible via a systematic framework. (Mobaraki & Aminzadeh, 2012)

Translation Competence:

The dominant factor in the process of translation education is “Translation competence” development:

- (1) **Bilingual competence:** mastering to both SL and TL at all linguistics levels,
- (2) **Interlingual proficiency:** knowing how the two languages are similar and different from one another,
- (3) **Intercultural transfer competence:** being able to transfer a ST to TL in its embedding sociocultural context (Toury, 1984).

Assessment of Students' Translation Competence Development

Different evaluative sources, tools, models, and strategies are applied in the different stages of translation education process.

- **Bilingual Competence:** Testing is a good way for assessing the students' abilities in SL and TL. Testing is linguistically objective, valid, reliable, and systematic.
- **Interlingual Competence:** To assess students' realization of differences of the SL-TL structures and lexis, the integration of traditional evaluation and testing formats is recommended.

To measure how much students are successful in achieving equivalence at syntactic and semantic levels- with regard to differences between SL and TL- making tests of bilingual comparable corpora (or translation corpora) is suitable.

- **Intercultural Transfer Competence:** to assess to what extent students are aware of the contextual factors, textual patterns and terminologies, and how this knowledge is represented in their translations, parallel corpora (i.e., texts of the same topic and *genre* in two different languages) are presented in testing formats.

Table 1. Existing TE Strategies

TE Strategies	Traditional Strategy	Modern Strategies:		
		Using real world sources:	Using linguistic corpora	Using testing formats
Explanation	Teacher evaluates students' drafts by his limited linguistic knowledge and experience to make structural, lexical, and orthographic comparison of ST&TT.	Dictionaries and parallel texts are used, and experts and professional translators are consulted with.	Printed dictionaries, parallel texts, and the works of experts are turned to corpus format. Through these corpora, teacher can prove or reject the terminology selections by students.	Different kinds of testing (placement, diagnostic, Progress, etc.) and types (yes/no, multiple choice, matching, etc.) are used in class.
Assessment Criteria Observation	Could not realize the terms objectively and comprehensively.	Is more comprehensive than the traditional one, lacks enough validity and reliability.	Enhance the objectivity of evaluation because of generating valid and reliable textual patterns easily via the corpus.	Validity and reliability are of major interest in testing. Systematic marking is another one. The level of objectivity is enhanced (but just in evaluating linguistic aspect). It is not comprehensive.

Table 2. Process of Eclectic Method of TE

Stages	aims	strategies
1	Evaluation of Bilingual competence	Testing is a good option for assessing the students' abilities on SL and TL separately.
2	Evaluation of Interlingual competence	First phase of this stage: integration of traditional approach into testing format. At the more advanced phase the integration of bilingual corpus-based approach with testing is suitable
3	Evaluation of Intercultural transfer competence	The corpora samples should be presented to students in the form of testing.

Thank you