

Beyond Subjectivity: Elements of a Holistic Approach to Translation Criticism

ما وراء الذاتية: عناصر لمقاربة شمولية في نقد الترجمات

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Abstract:

The present paper explores the emerging field of translation criticism trying to offer a discussion on the necessity of a systematic approach to the analysis of translations. By outlining components of a possible holistic framework for translation criticism likely to transcend the boundaries of subjectivity. This paper attempts to provide a pattern for an integrated model, which combines interdisciplinary approaches of critical discourse analysis (CDA), cultural context, linguistic features, ethics, and other disciplines.

Keywords: Holistic approach; Interdisciplinarity; Objectivity; Systematic approach; Translation criticism

ملخص:

يغوص هذا المقال في أغوار حقل نقد الترجمات الناشئ، محاولاً مناقشة أهمية المقاربة العلمية في تحليل الترجمات ونقدها. ومن خلال عرض عدد من العناصر والمكونات النظرية التي من شأنها التأسيس لمقاربة شمولية كفيلة بتجاوز قوقعة الذاتية، يحاول رسم تصور لأنموذج تكاملي بمقاربة بينية تشمل عناصر وحقوقاً معرفية متعددة، من تحليل الخطاب النقدي إلى السياق الثقافي وكذا السمات اللسانية والثقافية والأخلاقيات وغيرها. **الكلمات المتاحة:** نقد الترجمات؛ الموضوعية؛ المقاربة العلمية؛ المقاربة التكاملية؛ البينية.

1. Introduction:

The crucial role of translation as a vital channel for cross-cultural communication makes translation criticism an important field within translation studies. Although the need for criteria to distinguish good translations from poor ones has always been a philosophical concern in the history of translation theory in general and translation studies in particular, the expansion of globalization and the growing demand for multilingual texts have made the systematic and standardized evaluation of translations an urgent and essential necessity. Translation criticism is a complex and multifaceted area of research, with many linguistic, social and cultural aspects or sides that require a balance between theoretical rigor and

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practical analysis. By developing more systematic approaches and broadening their action area to the whole context of translations, critics can provide more meaningful and constructive evaluations that advantages both translators and readers.

For a long time, impressions dominated the way people thought about analyzing translations. Critics describe translations as “good,” “bad,” or “fluent,” without a set definition and proper criteria, whilst laypersons simply make subjective judgments regarding translation, failing to recognize that translation is not a merely intellectual activity but a social one. Therefore, the need for a systematic approach to translation criticism has become crucial. Clear boundaries and definitions in translation criticism allow us to eradicate several ambiguities, and therefore, provide useful information for both the critic and the translator.

Going “beyond subjectivity in translation criticism” entails an exploration of translation evaluation or assessment that moves further than the simplistic reliance on the translator’s personal interpretations or opinions. Such exploration aims to establish objective criteria, frameworks, and methodologies for analyzing and assessing translations, which surpass subjective attitudes or judgements. In other words, it entails analyzing the relationship between the original text, the translation, and the target audience, while taking into account linguistic, cultural, and contextual aspects.

Criticism should not be limited to identifying errors but should also consider the translator’s strategies, the intended audience, and the communicative function of the text. In other words, it should consider the “translation horizon” (Berman, 2009), which includes the linguistic, literary, cultural, and historical parameters that shape the translator’s work. By analyzing these factors, critics can provide a more nuanced understanding of translation both as process and product. In short, the focus here is on the ‘Holistic Approach’ mentioned in the title of this paper: the approach that Berman did not use as a term but clearly intended.

By taking into account this range of the abovementioned parameters, translation criticism contributes actively and ‘holistically’ to the advancement of translation studies as an independent academic field and hence should be recognized as a distinct area of research, with its own methodologies and frameworks (Valero, 1995).

2. Subjectivity vs. Objectivity: Navigating Interpretive Challenges

One of the fundamental issues in translation criticism has to do with the dichotomy of subjective and objective interpretation. Every act of translation is interpretative in nature; every translator incorporates his personal biases, experiences and cultural context into the text. Steiner (1975) compares communication to the iceberg, advocating that the visible part of language is merely the tip or the one-third of the iceberg. Under the surface lies the two other thirds that comprise all the contextual, cultural and historical nuances. This analogy brings to the surface the issue of objectivity in evaluation. How would critics measure the degree of faithfulness to the original text while being totally subjective and biased?

Venuti (1995) discusses how translators often face the challenge of remaining “invisible” (objective) or making their presence “visible” (subjective) in the text. He negatively criticizes the prevalence of fluency and domestication in translation, i.e. the tendency of rendering translation fluent and natural as if it had originally been produced in the target language. For him, this strategy of translation tends to disguise the translator’s subjective choices: the reason why he advocates for foreignization to highlight the interpretative and cultural act of mediation in translation.

Translation is never neutral; we cannot but agree with this assertion. It is deeply embedded in cultural and ideological contexts to such an extent that every act of translation involves interpretation, which in turn is shaped by the translator’s subjectivity. Gentzler (2008) emphasizes that translation is not merely a linguistic transfer but a form of cultural mediation,

where the translator negotiates meaning across different and even antithetical worldviews. Hence, translation is an arena for struggle and negotiation. While Gentzler does not provide a prescriptive method for assessing objectivity and subjectivity in translation, his work orient to a more critical approach to translation using critical contextual parameters. By focusing on these parameters, critics might be better able to consider the challenges of interpretation in translation.

However paradoxical it may seem, the role of subjectivity is also undeniable while establishing objective criteria for critique. Critics must openly acknowledge their biases while striving to create a systematic framework for translation assessment. This requires developing methods and approaches to quantify aspects of translation, such as clarity, stylistic choices, and cultural appropriateness for both source and target contexts.

According to Pym (2010), the influential figure in Translation Sociology, to achieve objectivity in translation criticism, clear and measurable criteria must be established, including fidelity to the source text, coherence, readability, and cultural adaptation. The consistent and rigorous application of these criteria, can ensure- to my mind, that translations are evaluated based on their merits rather than personal opinions.

Yet, measurability does not rule out subjectivity. Without a balance between subjective interpretation and objective assessment, translation criticism risks to fall into arbitrary judgments. Henceforth, a systematic approach that comprises both elements can lead to more reliable and valid evaluations, enhancing the discipline credibility and relevance (Munday, 2016).

3.Cultural Context: The Core of Translation Criticism

Understanding the cultural setting of the text is necessary for translation criticism. The culture of both the source and the target texts greatly affects the translation process. Translators act as cultural mediators by interpreting and adapting texts not only to render them linguistically accurate but also to ensure they resonate with the target audience's values, norms, and expectations.

In their foundational work in translation studies and basing on the fundamental concepts of dynamic and formal equivalence, Nida and Taber (1982), although heavily criticized regarding the applicability of their approach to literary texts, argue that effective translation criticism must consider the historical and socio-political factors that shape both the original text and its translation. Their approach helped draw attention to the importance of context in the movement of texts across cultural backgrounds.

By integrating cultural analysis into translation criticism, critics can offer deeper insights into the consequences of translation decisions and choices. This integration will not only promote a better appreciation of how translations contribute to cultural dialogue, but also will enrich theoretical discussions about translation criticism and provide both translators and critics with the necessary tools to critically assess their work. Translating Mohammed Dib's work, for instance, may involve indigenous Algerian nuances that reflect specific cultural traditions or values, which give the text its cultural identity. The critic's challenge is precisely to assess how well this identity balances with that of the target reader.

The translation of politically charged texts, such as revolutionary novels from the Algerian literature for instance, should reflect not only linguistic differences but also ideological reinterpretations that align with or resist "dominant narratives" (Venuti, 1995). Similarly, to translate a literary work with a particular use of language, accent or dialect, the translator will navigate between remaining faithful to the original text and making it understandable to the new audience.

4. Culture, Language Features and Translation Mechanics

The act of translation goes, indeed, beyond the textual fidelity to shape how a literary work is understood across cultures, but not without respect for linguistic features and mastery of what may be referred to here as "The Translation Mechanics", i.e. the technical and procedural elements involved in translating texts.

This study posits that submitting the translated texts to translation mechanics allows for a more objective and scientific analysis. Equally, the exploration of linguistic features is vital for understanding the mechanics of translation. The different lexical, syntactic, and stylistic choices can affect the reader's understanding of a text or even alter his interpretation. This is the reason why the differences between linguistic systems and cultural particularities necessitate careful attention to maintain meaning through translation (Baker & Mona, 2018). This careful examination should focus on the specific linguistic decisions made during the translation process.

By adopting a systematic analysis of the linguistic features of the following trivial example: "*He finally gave her the cold shoulder after weeks of tension.*", we can better understand the decisions of the translators and explore why his lexical, syntactic and stylistic choices matter: The literal translation of this expression (أعطاه الكتف البارد أخيرًا بعد أسابيع من التوتر) fails inevitably to convey its intended idiomatic meaning, as referring to a physical gesture rather than emotional neglect. To adjust it to the natural Arabic flow, he would say for example تجاهلها تمامًا (completely ignored her), which reflects the intended meaning of the idiom "gave her the cold shoulder.", the syntactic structure will be adapted as follows:

تجاهلها تمامًا في النهاية بعد أسابيع من التوتر.

- Lexical Choice: "The cold shoulder" can't be translated literally into Arabic. A cultural equivalent must be used (تجاهلها).
- Syntactic Shift: Arabic prefers verb–subject–object order (e.g., تجاهل (هو)ها), but in practice, the subject is often implied or in the form of enclitic pronoun (ضمير متصل).
- Stylistic Adjustment: Arabic avoids unusual idioms unless they're culturally familiar. For more Stylistic smoothness the English metaphor should be replaced with a more neutral tone in Arabic.

Such kind of analysis can give insight into the deferent choices of the translator and the parameters framing his translation strategy. However, without clear-cut definitions and clear boundaries, these parameters remain open to individual interpretation by critics who, in their pursuit of balance between the source text and its translation, inevitably lapse into subjectivity and adopt a biased perspective. This underscores the need to standardize critical approaches and to align them with roughly systematic criteria.

5. Critical Frameworks: Establishing a Scientific Base

Translation criticism lacks a universally accepted framework. This situation complicates the effort to evaluate translations effectively. Nevertheless, many scholars have proposed that adopting a structured methodology can establish a "science" of translation criticism; This, of course, refers to the systematic analysis of translated texts based on more consensual elements among the scholars. One of the most prominent examples among them is the initiator of the term "Science of translation," who tried to guide translation along the path of linguistics, in the footsteps of Saussure. According to Nida (1964), translation should be evaluated based on its accuracy, clarity, and naturalness. This rigorous 'systematic' approach ensures that translations are assessed fairly and consistently.

Despite the relevance of Nida's approach and particularly his emphasis on dynamic equivalence, he has been criticized by a wide range of scholars on the grounds that there are gaps in his theory, a viewpoint I share to some extent. On the one hand, his focus placed on meaning and impact rather than form can lead to interpretations of the text that diverge from the original one and its cultural context or its situation of communication. On the other hand, Nida's theory is too generalized and does not consider the different purposes of translation. Some texts, like legal or literary texts, demand a more formal, aesthetic or even literal translation in order to maintain their value. Furthermore, his notion of "effectiveness" is too vague and source-oriented, because what may be effective in one audience may not be in another. Nevertheless, Nida's ideas are, in general, certainly valuable and could be integrated with other parameters in order to set pre-determined objective measures to cover such gaps. In this sense, there are several disciplines that can achieve the "scientificity" that Nida aspires to. In fact, what he seeks through this concept is the accuracy and objectivity that could be subject to scientific unanimity. Among these scientific fields is Critical Discourse Analysis.

5.1 Critical Discourse Analysis: A Tool for Scientific Rigor

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA for short) is one such framework that provides essential tools for analyzing translations beyond linguistic forms. CDA examines how power, ideology, and social contexts influence discourse (Fairclough, 1995), allowing critics to investigate how these factors manifest in translation practices.

Fairclough delves deeply into how language as a social practice is interrelated with power in society. He develops CDA as a model for the study of language beyond communication. He argues that language is contexted, and suggests that the study of texts reveal the mechanisms of power, ideology and inequality. Drawing on social theory and linguistic analysis, he explains how language is used and misused in relation to social and power structures. Along these lines, I attempt to advocate in this paper for the idea that what applies to language necessarily applies to translation, as its structure is influenced by the same factors that affect the structure of language production.

The Critical Study of Language shows that participation in social life through language, has to be studied from the sociological and stylistic perspective. Discourse as a social concept reflects the social order and by investigating the ways ideologies are embedded into texts, it is possible to understand not only how such ideologies manipulate social attitudes and behaviors, but also how they shape the translator's way of understanding texts, which underlies his linguistic and stylistic choices

As an example, when critiquing a political discourse that has been translated from one language to another, CDA would analyze how the translator's choices reconstruct the ideological bias of the text. Such analysis involves examining the lexical choices, syntactic patterns, and discursive practices in order to determine whether the translation reverses, confirms, or contests the relations of power that exist in the original text. To illustrate, if the speech being analyzed is characterized by a language which demonstrates a leader's control, the translator may choose to either retain this tone which maintains the relations of power, or dilute it to reduce the authority of the speaker.

Moreover, CDA also demonstrates how translation is practiced in different cultural and institutional contexts by explaining why certain contents are considered acceptable or sensitive enough to be removed in the translation for some audiences. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of text (Description-Interpretation-Explanation) i.e. at the levels of the Text, the Discursive Practice and the Social Practice (Fairclough, N. 1995), allows to translation critics to analyze not only what changes or shifts in the language, but also the

socio-political context and consequences that underpin such change, which illustrates the role of translation as an arena for conflict of ideologies and power.

It is true that reservations can be made about the applicability of the CDA model to literary translation, on the grounds that it focuses on ideology while neglecting the aesthetic and emotional dimensions of language, and that it criticizes subjectivity, which is, in essence, the very root of literary discourse. However, it may serve as an integrative framework for an interdisciplinary approach to applying the narrative model (of Mona Baker for example) or the Skopos theory to balance ideological and functional analyses so that the focus shifts toward aesthetic and emotional dimensions, as follows:

Table 1 : Analytical Framework shifts

CDA Level	Literary Translation Focus
Lexical	Word choices (e.g., "terrorist" vs. "freedom fighter")
Narrative	Focalization shifts (whose perspective dominates?)
Intertextual	Handling cultural references (footnotes? adaptation? Allusion?)
Pragmatic	Speech acts (irony for example)
Stylistic	Tone, register, and rhetorical devices (e.g., metaphor, repetition)

The present study assumes that CDA fits literary translation criticism because it examines how language reflects power structures, ideologies, and cultural biases — key concerns in both literature and literary translation, where choices reshape meaning and worldview (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, 1986).

The analytical instruments that CDA offers permit to reveal the underlying dynamics within translated texts, while focusing on how discursive choices either perpetuate or resist the dominant ideologies. From this perspective, translation becomes an act of ideological and cultural negotiation, where every lexical, syntactic, or cultural decision has an interpretative significance. This is seen in domains such as:

- **Ideological Framing:** Translators mediate cultural/political subtexts, they shape how political or cultural messages are understood by a set of discursive choices to convey and present ideas from one context into another (e.g., translating postcolonial literature).
- **Power Dynamics:** Shifts in voice (e.g., gendered language in feminist texts) changes in the way how gender or authority is expressed can alter a work's critical position in the target context.
- **Intertextuality:** the translator needs to understand allusions to historical/social discourses (e.g., Soviet-era satire) that require ideological unpacking to show these meanings clearly.

As an analytical tool, CDA offers a concentrated focus on interlingual and intercultural subtleties with a solid framework for investigating how translated texts reflect social meanings. By putting forward the function of language and its role in shaping values and viewpoints, CDA facilitates a more profound assessment of translation decisions. I would suggest that it is the best line of attack and invaluable tool in translation criticism for a more nuanced comprehension of the triad Translation-Culture-Ideology.

Nonetheless, CDA remains incomplete if a more holistic approach—encompassing measurable features—is not adopted. Setting up the analysis on pre-established benchmarks offers greater measurability to both translation and critical analysis.

5.2 Translation Quality Assessment: Evaluation through measurable objectives

Along the same vein, methodological approach to translation entails systematic analysis to ensure consistency and objectivity. One of the more effective approaches is TQA (Translation Quality Assessment) model suggested by House (1997). This model evaluates each translation systematically by setting specific goals, such as achieving a target degree of accuracy in language, culture, and text functions.

To assess a translation of an English commercial contract into Arabic using a TQA model for example, the evaluation criteria should be structured as follows:

- a) Linguistic Accuracy (Language Level)**
 - Objective: Ensure grammatical correctness, precise terminology, and clarity.
 - Assessment: Verify that legal terms are correctly translated
- b) Cultural Adequacy (Cultural Level)**
 - Objective: Adapt legal expressions and norms to the target culture while preserving the legal meaning.
 - Assessment: Ensure the translation of the legal terms aligns with Arabic legal terminology rather than a literal or misleading equivalent.
- c) Functional Adequacy (Pragmatic Level)**
 - Objective: Maintain the communicative purpose of the contract (e.g., obligations, rights and duties).
 - Assessment: Check that imperative clauses are correctly rendered in Arabic legal language using appropriate modal verbs.

A TQA model like House's model (functional-pragmatic) assigns scores or qualitative assessments to each level (accuracy, cultural adaptation, functionality...etc.). If the translation fails in one area, corrective actions are proposed. Thus, the TQA model ensures that the translation meets predefined standards by systemizing evaluation through measurable objectives at linguistic, cultural, and functional levels.

Needless to remind that the TQA model, was originally developed to approach and critique technical texts, or what is called in certain contexts 'Pragmatic Texts'. However, an interdisciplinary approach would open up critical possibilities in literary translation, similar to what Susam-Sarajeva, for example, did through her "critical toolkit", by combining linguistic analysis with reader-response surveys, or even through Katharina Reiss's Text Typology and Juliane House's Model through her Overt and Covert translation concept, to name just these examples.

That is to say, what I am putting forward here is not innovative; numerous scholars have already explored this issue and have even proposed hybrid approaches combining CDA and TQA. One of the most explicit hybrid approaches is that of Munday J. (2012) or of Hatim, B., & Mason, I. (1997), which integrate CDA's power analysis with pragmatic TQA criteria (e.g., speech-act fidelity).

The following table, illustrate the potential synergy between CDA and TQA in approaching literary translation. Combined, they can offer a balanced critique of linguistic choices, narrative shifts and cultural adaptations.

Table 2: CDA-TQA Integrated Approach to Literary Translation

CDA Focus	TQA Literary Criteria	Tool/Model
Lexical Ideology	Semantic accuracy + ethical fidelity	House: <i>Overt/Covert Translation</i>
Narrative Shifts	Coherence/characterization consistency	Berman: <i>Deforming Tendencies</i>

6. Ethical Considerations: Towards responsible translation

The translator bears the responsibility of balancing cultural sensitivities when transferring a text from one context to another. This ethical dimension requires a reflective practice that promotes transparency and responsibility in translation choices.

For both Chesterman, A. (2001) and Baker (2006), critics must examine the moral implications of translation choices, taking into consideration the potential consequences of misrepresentation or cultural appropriation mainly via domestication. 'Moral implications' here should not be understood as personal morality, but rather as referring to the broader processes, norms, and structures that govern translation. In short, there should be clear guidelines to ensure accountability. By establishing guidelines for ethical translation practices, translation criticism can contribute to more responsible practices in translation that respect cultural integrity and cross-cultural understanding.

The development of guidelines involves careful observation of practices while building bridges to theory. Within such ethical framework, translation criticism can elevate the standards of the discipline and encourage a more reliable approach to translation.

Let's take an indigenous author's work which incorporates culturally relevant ideas, oral traditions, and other elements unique to his heritage. A traditional critique of this translation from a linguistic perspective would concentrate on fluency, readability, or formal equivalence, leaving aside the questions of responsibility and how the translation misrepresents the source culture. However, if the critic operates within ethical framework, his analysis will extend beyond technical accuracy (Venuti, 1998) to include answers to the following:

1. Cultural Fidelity – Does the translation respect the cultural context and preserve its features and landmarks, or does it domesticate the text to the point of erasing original identity?
2. Faithful Representation – Was the translator in dialogue with the author or with his community to ensure authentic representation?
3. Power Dynamics – Does the translation reinforce structural biases by altering metaphors, idioms, or narrative structures to fit dominant linguistic norms?

In this vein, if the translator alters the indigenous metaphor to a Western one for “easier understanding” – an ethical critique on this scenario would interrogate whether the translator respects the author intents or includes them within the source culture.

That said, incorporating ethical considerations into translation criticism not only improves the quality of translations, but it also provides greater responsibility, inclusivity, and respect for marginalized voices.

7. Interdisciplinary Approaches: Enriching Translation Criticism

Using insights from various fields such as applied linguistics, cultural studies, sociology, and ethics, and advocating for an interdisciplinary approach to translation criticism, Snell-Hornby (2006, p.54) argues that “seeing the text as a product of its culture” leads us inevitably to take it in its three-dimensional existence and consider the three levels of language norms, language dimensions and external perspective. This broadened perspective is likely to enrich the analysis of translation, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved.

By synthesizing diverse theoretical views, critics will be able to use a wider range of analytical tools, allowing for the examination of translations on various levels (Bassnett, 2002: 72). For example, sociological insights can elucidate how translations reflect and shape societal attitudes, while linguistic exploration can provide a detailed examination of language-specific challenges as discussed earlier in this article. This interdisciplinary approach encourages a more nuanced critique that accounts for the multifaceted nature of translation. To further develop translation criticism as a systematic discipline, both academics and

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practitioners must adopt interdisciplinary strategies, fostering cooperation across academic and professional boundaries.

The table below, though tentative in nature and non-exhaustive, aims to highlight and illustrate how an interdisciplinary approach enables the examination of different dimensions of the translated text, with each discipline addressing a specific aspect. By mapping disciplines to specific focus areas, textual examples, and critical insights, it underscores the necessity of interdisciplinary synthesis in translation analysis. The following table presents comparative perspectives drawn from various disciplines to analyze the translation of *Things Fall Apart*. This novel is assumed in this research as an ideal case study for interdisciplinary translation analysis owing to its cultural specificity, complex narrative strategies, and extensive worldwide reception history.

As one of the most extensively translated African books, it provides an excellent opportunity to analyze the impact of linguistic choices, cultural notions, and postcolonial issues on translation strategies across languages and cultures. Achebe's intentional stylistic hybridity—integrating oral African traditions with the European and namely English novel form—complicates translation, making it an exemplary literary work to examine the interconnections of power, representation, and cross-cultural mediation.

Achebe himself, in his seminal essay, frames this fusion as intentional:

"The novel form seems to go with the English language... But I have tried to incorporate oral traditions—proverbs, folktales, idiomatic expressions—to make it African." (Achebe, 1975, p. 62).

Table 3: Interdisciplinary Approaches to *Things Fall Apart* –Comparative perspectives

Discipline	Focus Area in Translation	Example from: <i>Things Fall Apart</i>	Enrichment to Criticism
Linguistics	Lexical choices, syntax, tone	Translating “chi” as “personal god”	Evaluates fidelity and semantic accuracy. How grammar and word choice affect tone.
Cultural Studies	Cultural-specific terms, practices, worldview	“Egwugwu” (ancestral spirits) rituals	Loss / adaptation of cultural depth. Ethnocentric biases in translation.
Postcolonial Studies	Power dynamics, resistance, identity	The colonial court scene	Shows how translation can resist or reproduce colonial ideology.
Gender Studies	Gendered language, roles, and agency	Representation of Okonkwo’s wives	Evaluates shifts in gender representation in translation.
Cognitive Psychology	Emotional resonance, reader processing	Descriptions of fear, shame, masculinity	Explains how emotion-charged passages impact readers across languages.

8. Conclusion

The aim behind the present article was absolutely not to offer any given theoretical or methodological alternative to current practices in translation criticism, nor to confirm or refute the theoretical and practical shortcomings of existing approaches in this nascent discipline. All I have attempted to do is to review a few practical approaches to translation criticism that demonstrate greater elements of rigor and scientific objectivity in their analytical methods, in order to identify the epistemological link between them. A link that outlines, according to my understanding, elements of a holistic and multidisciplinary approach likely to address all the parameters contributing to the emergence of a translation. Translation, criticism, as far as my understanding goes and as I have endeavored to

demonstrate in this article, can only evolve beyond simple opinion to a more productive, dialogic process that respects both the translator's creative freedom and the critic's analytical function.

Because translation is interpretative, critics need to understand how personal insight and analytical rigor work together. Subjectivity can't be completely gotten rid of, and it shouldn't be, but it has to be based on clear standards and strict methods. In this article, we saw that translation criticism is interdisciplinary by definition, yet independent in its focus and application. This dual identity did not prevent it from maintaining its autonomy while remaining open to innovation and collaboration across disciplines.

In this article, I have attempted to outline elements of the frameworks needed to develop this field as a critical discipline. I hope I have not overstated the case in describing it as a holistic approach, while emphasizing the importance of cultural context, linguistic features, ethical considerations, and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Understanding the cultural context in which translations are produced and received is a crucial aspect of this holistic perspective. In this article, I argue that translation criticism can't be separated from the social and cultural foundations that shape language, meaning, and communication. I therefore aim to show that auxiliary disciplines –such as Critical Discourse Analysis, when applied within established critical frameworks- provide the very methodological tools needed to interpret texts both systematically and contextually, with sensitivity to cultural nuances and details. When combined with Translation Quality Assessment, these approaches can support evaluative consistency without sacrificing interpretative depth.

A complete approach to translation criticism should consider ethics, a solid method, and cultural awareness. In my experience, translation is never a neutral act; it is an act of responsibility that is affected by power relations, audience expectations, and the translator's personal ideals. A good critique recognizes this ambiguity by holding translators accountable but also recognizing should consider ethics, a solid method, and cultural awareness.

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