

# *Reorienting Business Translation Teaching in the AI Era: A Dual-Dimensional Framework*

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**Abstract:** The rapid evolution of generative AI is fundamentally reshaping the professional landscape of business translation. As machine systems increasingly handle linguistic conversion tasks, direct language transfer is no longer the central cognitive hurdle for translators. This transformation has created a growing disconnect between conventional pedagogical approaches and the shifting demands of the industry. Drawing upon insights from Functionalist Translation Theory, Translation Ethics, and Critical Discourse Analysis, the study reconceptualizes the core competencies required in business translation teaching. A dual-dimensional framework is introduced, organized around the interrelated concepts of commercial judgment and discursive responsibility. The former captures the strategic dimension of translation practice, encompassing the identification of communicative goals, assessment of contextual and legal risks, and deployment of discourse tactics aimed at achieving tangible business outcomes. The latter foregrounds ethical considerations, urging translators to remain attentive to textual consequences, asymmetrical power relations, and the limits of professional accountability in AI-mediated workflows. Together, these dimensions sustain translator agency in technologically dense environments. On this basis, the paper advances concrete proposals for pedagogical renewal, including learning objectives, task configuration, and evaluative practices. It contends that business translation instruction must transcend the language-transfer paradigm in favor of cultivating critical judgment and ethical responsibility.

## 1. Introduction

The technological context in which translation occurs has undergone significant changes due to the rapid advancement of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) technology. In particular, in the case of business translation, where the textual norm is fairly stable, and the discourse organization is very standardized, artificial intelligence-based solutions have proven to be very useful in producing initial drafts. The result of this is that the function of the translator is moving more and

more away from being the main text creator toward being an evaluator, editor, and strategist<sup>[1]</sup>. Although the introduction of these new technologies has significantly improved the efficiency of translation, it also has modified the internal structure of translation competencies. Competencies that used to be considered pivotal, such as linguistic transfer, no longer represent the major cognitive bottle neck in low-to mid-complexity business texts<sup>[2]</sup>.

This modification raises a fundamental and critical issue, namely, when machines can perform language translation effectively, what is the professional worth of human translators? In this paper it is argued that the main value of translators is slowly shifting the focus on the mere conversion of speech, into context-specific evaluation, and assuming accountability of outcomes resulting due to the translation choices. The importance of such judgment is particularly high in business environment. The texts written in business style do not belong to neutral means of conveying information but represent specific acts of a communicative event that are aimed at persuasion, risk reduction, building mutual confidence, and balancing various interests. It is the reason why each selection in translation will influence the allocation of commercial benefits, as well as both legal and reputational risks management.

Nevertheless, despite such significant changes the approach to business translation classes continues to be mainly dependent on the conventional language-transfer paradigm.

As a result, a growing mismatch has emerged between what education provides and what the actual industry requires. To bridge this gap, this study combines Functionalist Translation Theory, translation ethics, and Critical Discourse Analysis to develop a two-dimensional framework focused on commercial judgment and discursive responsibility. Under this framework, commercial judgment refers to how effective translation decisions are – in other words, how well the target texts achieve their intended commercial purposes. Discursive responsibility, by contrast, relates to the ethical legitimacy of these choices, stressing awareness of stakeholders' interests and the power relations within communication. These two dimensions work together in a mutually supportive way, helping to maintain translators' professional identity and agency in work environments supported by artificial intelligence.

Against this background, this study aims to explore three interrelated questions. First, in what ways does generative artificial intelligence reshape the composition of translation competence? Second, how should we give a clear conceptual definition to commercial judgment and discursive responsibility? Third, how can this proposed framework be used to guide the reform and reorientation of business translation teaching?

## 2. Literature Review and Theoretical Foundations

Research on translation competence has changed gradually. Early understandings treated translation mainly as linguistic transfer. Recent ideas have come to regard it as a multidimensional structure. The PACTE model divides translation competence into several parts<sup>[3]</sup>. These include bilingual, extra-linguistic, instrumental and strategic sub-competences. The model shows clearly that translation activity is formed by multiple components. The model offers a convincing explanation of the structure of competence. Yet it does not give enough attention to motivation and ethics. These two elements often influence the decisions made by translators.

Research in translation ethics has helped to fill this gap. Chesterman (2016) understands translation as a kind of social action guided by norms<sup>[4]</sup>. He stresses the value judgments and sense of responsibility that shape translators' decisions. Pym (2012) takes an ethical view based on risk analysis<sup>[5]</sup>. He identifies communicative, relational and legal risks in translation. His work provides a useful structure to judge possible results of translation choices. These theories together move the focus away from competence as pure skill. They treat competence more as responsible and

accountable action.

The emergence of a generative AI has accelerated the process of translation competence restructuring. As indicated by Bowker and Buitrago-Ciro, machine translation can be quite effective when it comes to business texts that adhere to fixed patterns and stringent guidelines<sup>[2]</sup>. The role of human assessment and intervention therefore take on greater importance. Kenny agrees with this point. She says that technological advances do not diminish the usefulness of translation competency. They merely alter the internal framework of core skills<sup>[1]</sup>.

The particular aspect of business translation is that decisions are directly reflected in business effects and responsibility distribution. Critical translation studies within the Chinese academic sphere have likewise been concerned with the power relationships and value roles involved in translational decisions<sup>[6]</sup>. As stated by Li, business discourse is characterized by certain patterns<sup>[7]</sup>. This is what allows AI to become popular. According to Zhang, business translation evaluation needs to be based on whether it meets its commercial objectives<sup>[8]</sup>. Besides, Nickerson investigates English as a lingua franca in the international business<sup>[9]</sup>. His findings demonstrate a high correlation between the choice of language, the development of trust, risk identification and the security of business relationships. The emphasis on actual outcomes makes translators go beyond textual equivalence. They should conduct detailed bargaining in multifaceted circumstances of power and interest.

The various spheres of investigation form the theoretical foundation of the dual-dimensional model in the current work. The Functionalist Translation Theory underscores the aim orientation of translation<sup>[10-11]</sup>. It contributes towards the concept of effectiveness in the framework. Translation ethics puts responsibility at the core<sup>[4-5]</sup>. It offers the backbone to the dimension of legitimacy. Critical Discourse Analysis helps uncover the dynamics of power in discourse which are concealed<sup>[12]</sup>. Every theory resolves one important issue. They describe how translation is effective, how it is ethically legitimate and how power operates over the use of language. All these concepts collectively come up with the theoretical framework that is presented in this paper.

### **3. Theoretical Framework and Core Concepts: A Dual-Dimensional Model of Commercial Judgment and Discursive Responsibility**

#### **3.1 The Integrative Foundation of the Dual-Dimensional Model**

The model suggested by this paper has its origins in the methodological synthesis of Functionalist Translation Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis. Functionalism views translation as a professional endeavour driven by specific objectives. The emphasis is on the effectiveness of target texts in specific communicative settings<sup>[11]</sup>. Critical Discourse Analysis is concerned with the connection between language and power. It also performs ethical analysis of various types of communicative behavior. With such an approach, people are encouraged to think about something other than the fulfillment of anticipated functions. They must also decide whether similar strategies reinforce or destroy unjust power relationships.

These two theories are not just theoretically connected. Both of these theories may also complement and support one another. Functionalism will be applied to assess if a translation can achieve intended commercial objectives. CDA will be used to evaluate whether such goals can be reached at the cost of ethical values. This dialectical interaction offers the conceptual grounds to reconsider the problem of business translation. It allows people to view business translation as strategic choice rather than mere linguistic equivalence.

### 3.2 Commercial Judgment: The Dimension of Effectiveness

The commercial judgment is the functional corner or pillar of the model. It means the ability of a translator to determine the commercial objectives, evaluate the risks related to the context, and balance the discourse tactics according to their possible outcomes.

Commercial judgment starts with identifying the communicative purpose. Translators should not be limited to surface-level semantics but determine whether the business text is mainly persuasive, risk-averse, promotional or legally protective in intention. That recognition forms the basis of further strategic decisions. The judgment is followed by the risk estimation. Building upon the typology of risks proposed by Pym, the translators are required to anticipate what the communicative, relational and legal consequences of their actions will be<sup>[5]</sup>. Even the slightest change in tone in business situations, like an overly assertive email, an ambiguous contractual clause may cause reputational harm or litigation.

To sum up, commercial sense is manifested as register management and discourse strategy. Based on the account given by Halliday and Hasan, translators can change field, tenor and mode to suit the audience preferences and power imbalances, altering the degree of commitment and evaluative position to maximize the commercial results<sup>[13]</sup>.

The constraints of generative AI highlight the necessity of human decision-making in this field. As Kenny notes, AI-generated drafts tend to be fluent on the surface but conceal underlying functional inadequacies especially when it comes to contextual risk<sup>[1]</sup>. Commercial judgment thus not only serves as protection against technical mistakes, but also as the distinguishing feature of professional competence in AI-assisted settings.

### 3.3 Discursive Responsibility: The Dimension of Legitimacy

The concept of discursive responsibility is concerned with the ongoing consciousness that a translator must have. Therein, it includes effects of translation choices as well as the ethical stance of the professional practice in AI-assisted work setting. They are three interrelated levels.

The initial level is consequences awareness. The translator must regard translation as a form of social behavior directed by norms<sup>[4]</sup>. It implies that they have to forecast how text options could impact legal liability, business considerations and the connections with stakeholders. Business translators know that minor variations in word selection in contracts may have significant effects on rights and obligations. This implies that translators need to be more cautious and vigilant.

The secondary layer is concerned with sensibility of the relationships concerning power and discursive placement. As established by Critical Discourse Analysis, a language acts as an indication and construction of social relationships. It may support or refute specific interests<sup>[12]</sup>. Translators have thus been urged to perceive the uneven relations in power in commerce conversations. They are required not to automatically repeat unscrupulous depictions, or, marginalize the vulnerable groups.

The next level consists of being aware of professional limits during the era of AI. It is worth noting that according to Kenny, technologies cannot relieve us of ethically responsible behavior<sup>[1]</sup>. Translators are the last authority of text legitimacy. It is impossible to shift the blame to shortcomings of the AI software. Responsibility is not a transferable concept..

### 3.4 The Complementarity of the Dual Dimensions

Commercial judgment and discursive responsibility depend mutually in order to perform optimally. The initial one is based on strategic effectiveness. The second one constrains the process of deciding in terms of its ethical and relational limits. Judgment without responsibility can be

reduced to an instrument of calculation. Responsibility without judgment has no practical basis.

In each of their decisions, translators are faced with two related questions due to their ongoing interactions. It is important to know whether the strategy has reached its goal. There is also a need to think about the outcomes that can be obtained. Both questions are answered simultaneously as the way to restore professional agency in the technologically supported setting.

A two-dimensional model of the core-competencies in business translation is presented in order to clarify the structural logic and operational dynamics of this framework (see Figure 1). Translator agency is central to the model. The model places commercial judgement and discursive responsibility on a horizontal axis. The model situates effectiveness and legitimacy on a vertical axis. It also considers AI as a support layer of infrastructure rather than a decision-maker. The diagram explains the multi-layered and interactive nature of translation competence in the AI era.

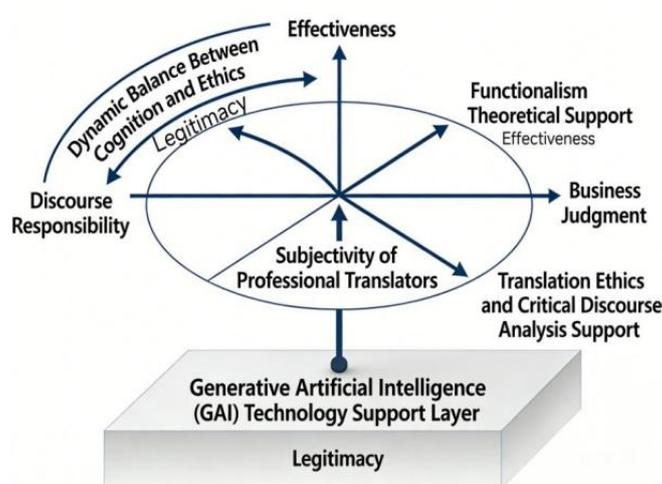


Figure 1. A Dual-Dimensional Framework of Core Competencies in Business Translation

#### 4. Pedagogical Implementation of the Dual-Dimensional Framework

The model developed in this paper is straightforward and practical in guiding business translation education in the age of artificial intelligence. Effective implementation requires a structured approach to change in three interrelated fields. The fields are learning goals, task plans and evaluation systems.

##### 4.1 Reframing Learning Objectives: From Linguistic Transfer to Judgment and Responsibility

The fundamental objective of business translation education in teaching environments based on artificial intelligence should be changed. The training of students to do a simple linguistic transfer has to be abandoned. It is supposed to shift to the creation of professionals capable of making sensible judgments and assume ethical responsibility.

The three related elements of this change in educational objectives are as follows. Firstly, the knowledge objectives ought to be rejuvenated. The students must be introduced to the fundamental concepts of the Translator Theory as proposed by Functionalists<sup>[11]</sup>. They must also be introduced to the taxonomy of translation risks by Pym<sup>[5]</sup>. Besides, they should learn about analytical techniques of Critical Discourse Analysis. Such techniques allow them to examine the relationship of power among various forms of discourse. Secondly, competence objectives need to be increased. The

teaching needs to focus more on enhanced decision-making skills. These skills are the ability to identify the purpose of communication as well as the capacity to assess possible risks. They are also being conscious of discursive positions and defining professional roles clearly. Lastly, professional attitudes should become stronger. The role of translator as a responsible decision-maker should become explicitly understood by each student. As stated by Kenny<sup>[1]</sup>, once people collaborate with an artificial intelligence system, the true worth of translators is not their work pace but their judgment precision and their constant sense of responsibility.

#### **4.2 Principles of Task Design: Integrating Situated Practice and Critical Reflection**

The teaching tasks must shift towards non-traditional language drills. The model to be followed must involve an integrated approach where there is the combination of situation, judgment and responsibility. There are two main principles that uphold this model.

The first principle is learning based on real situations and projects. The development of commercial judgment requires experience in real business environments. Based on Kiraly's social constructivist view, situated learning helps students build professional skills<sup>[14]</sup>. They can do this by dealing with complex and realistic problems. Using materials from actual business practice is helpful. These materials may include international contracts, company promotional texts or documents for investors. Students can then experience the full decision-making process from the beginning to the final version.

The second principle is reflective practice and internalized responsibility<sup>[15]</sup>. Reflection plays an important part in forming real professional competence. Through comparing different translations and exploring alternative situations, students can see how different choices lead to different business results. At the same time, education should help students accept one basic belief. The technology can be supporting, but humanity remains responsible. It is essential that students carefully review drafts done by an AI. They have to own the last documents. They should not delegate this task to technical means.

#### **4.3 Innovating Assessment: A Multi-Dimensional and Dynamic Matrix**

Evaluation determines the course of teaching transformation. It must not be restricted to just one of the linguistic correctness criteria. The complete change in the sphere of assessment, its forms and those involved is required.

When it comes to assessment strategies, greater emphasis could be placed on the overall learning experience. The use of traditional final tests ought to be minimized. Learning portfolios can also be used to assess the development of students. They can consist of evaluations of AI results, other forms of analysis and reflective journal entries. This kind of evidence can demonstrate how students develop their ability to judge and take responsibility.

When it comes to those participating in assessment, it can be done using a combined approach. The model consists of teacher evaluation, peer review and self-assessment of the students. The peer review proves to be very helpful. It will not only enhance the quality but will allow the students to comprehend and embrace the professional standards through assessing the works of others.

According to such concepts, this paper offers a multi-dimensional evaluation matrix which is compatible with the dual framework (see Figure 2). The matrix synthesizes commercial judgment and discursive responsibility to form a process-based evaluation system. Its goal is to go further than the conventional emphasis on linguistic accuracy. It also ensures that assessment is applicable to the new framework of translation competence.

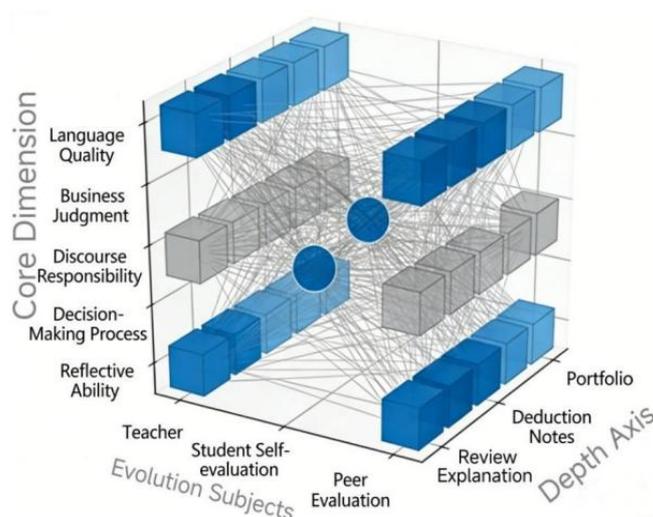


Figure 2. A Multi-Dimensional Assessment Matrix for Business Translation under the Dual Framework

#### 4.4 Pedagogical Application: Corporate Website Localization as a Case

The practical application of the framework could be demonstrated by using the example of localizing the website of a company in relation to an international business.

The teaching process may be subdivided into four stages. At first, students study the reasons behind various sections of the website. The differences between the audience expectations of various sections like product introduction and investor relations are identified. Secondly, students utilize AI to generate initial drafts. Then they assess these drafts on a number of parameters. The parameters are whether the texts fulfill their desired purposes, whether they have any potential hazards and whether they write using appropriate discursive positions. Third, students imagine other scenarios. They restate texts in various legal and cultural settings. The examples are the German market and the markets in the Middle East. They change the level of certainty and the language accordingly. Lastly, students participate in debriefing meetings concerning responsibility. They also participate in peer evaluation. These practices promote the discussion of responsibility at work facilitated by AI.

In this whole process, students are not just involved in translating texts. They also comprehend the transition between the language converter and the strategic decision-maker. In order to enhance practical application, the assessment matrix is extended to become a weighted rubric (see Table 1). It contains precise areas of evaluation and observable signs.

Table 1. Assessment Rubric under the Dual-Dimensional Framework

Evaluation Dimension	Weight	Core Criteria
Linguistic Quality	25%	Terminological accuracy; stylistic appropriateness; conformity to business conventions
Commercial Judgment	30%	Accurate purpose identification; comprehensive risk assessment from communicative and legal perspectives
Discursive Responsibility	25%	Clear anticipation of consequences; explicit accountability; absence of tool-blaming tendencies
Reflective Decision Process	20%	Coherent reasoning; comparison of alternative strategies; depth of reflection

## 5. Conclusion and Future Directions

The current research is a reaction to the increasing disparity between the training of business translators and actual industry requirements due to the impact of AI. The suggested approach is twofold dimensional. It involves integrating functionalist theory, translational ethics and critical discourse analysis. Data indicates that generative AI does not decrease the worth of translation competence. Data only alters its internal makeup. Language transfer turns into an elementary support feature. Commercial decision-making or efficacy and discursive accountability or legitimacy become essential elements of professional identity.

The paper makes three significant contributions. Firstly, it does not limit itself to the general competence models. It concentrates on the result-oriented structure that is unique to business translation. Secondly, it logically integrates theories of various disciplines. Theories are useful in explaining the professionalism of business translation. Thirdly, it converts abstract ethical principles into practical teaching principles. It provides a straightforward solution to the problem of translator education which incorporates ethical issues. Nevertheless, this framework has not been yet evaluated in practice. Future studies may investigate its educational effects in large classes by conducting experiments and analyzing student language data.

Besides, with the increasing complexity of collaboration among people and AI, further studies are required. Researchers must continue to examine the way responsibility may be distributed and traded in algorithm-supported settings.

To sum up, the education of business translation in the era of AI should no longer be based on the language-centered system. It must create a new paradigm that emphasizes sound judgment and moral accountability. To this end, the two-dimensional framework presented within this paper is intended to serve the purpose. It aims to assist education so as to develop translators that are able to exercise sound decision making and behave in a responsible manner in their profession.

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