



INTEGRATING SPEECH ACTS THEORY INTO TRANSLATOR EDUCATION: DEVELOPING PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE

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ABSTRACT. This study aims to evaluate the benefits of integrating the Speech Act Theory (SAT) in an English L2 course training within Translation and Interpretation studies, to investigate how it allows and scaffolds the development of pragmatic competence while also fostering professional skills and intercultural awareness. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, with 35 translation students enrolled in an English L2 course. Students translated a selection of public service announcements (PSAs) covering health, safety, and social awareness campaigns which were chosen to include a variety of speech acts. The results highlight improvements in students' ability to identify speech acts, preserve perlocutionary effects, and adapt translations to cultural contexts, with 85% of students showing enhanced practical skills and pragmatic refinement. However, challenges remain, particularly in distinguishing illocutionary and perlocutionary effects and adapting translations to culturally distinct audiences, suggesting a need for further development in curriculum and feedback strategies.

Keywords; pragmatics, pragmatic competence, speech acts, translation, PBL.

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INTEGRACIÓN DE LA TEORÍA DE LOS ACTOS DE HABLA EN LA FORMACIÓN DE TRADUCTORES: DESARROLLO DE LA COMPETENCIA PRAGMÁTICA

RESUMEN. El objetivo es evaluar los beneficios de integrar la Teoría de los Actos de Habla en la formación de estudiantes de inglés L2 dentro de los programas de Traducción e Interpretación. Se busca analizar cómo esta integración facilita y apoya el desarrollo de la competencia pragmática, al mismo tiempo que fortalece y fomenta las habilidades profesionales y la conciencia intercultural. Utilizando un enfoque de métodos mixtos, en el que participaron 35 estudiantes que tradujeron anuncios de servicio público sobre salud, seguridad y conciencia social, seleccionados por su variedad de actos de habla. Los resultados muestran mejoras en la capacidad de los estudiantes para identificar actos de habla y adaptar las traducciones a los contextos culturales; un 85% presentó habilidades prácticas mejoradas. Sin embargo, persisten desafíos, especialmente en la distinción entre efectos ilocucionarios y perlocucionarios, así como en la adaptación de las traducciones a audiencias culturalmente diversas, lo que indica áreas que requieren un mayor desarrollo en el currículo y en las estrategias de retroalimentación.

Palabras clave; ABP, competencia pragmática, pragmática, teoría de los actos del habla, traducción.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Translation is far more than a mechanical act of substituting words from one language into another. It is a complex cognitive and communicative process that involves negotiating meaning, interpreting cultural nuances, and conveying intended functions within varying sociolinguistic contexts. Translators, therefore, operate not merely as linguistic intermediaries but as cultural and pragmatic negotiators who ensure that communicative intent is both preserved and appropriately situated within the target language community (Zhang and Liu 138; Gumul 200).

Despite this inherent complexity, conventional translation pedagogy continues to emphasize linguistic equivalence at the expense of pragmatic and functional fidelity. This reductionist approach often neglects the deeper dimensions of discourse, particularly the performative functions of language—what utterances do rather than merely what they say (House). Consequently, students may graduate with robust linguistic proficiency but insufficient competence in managing the pragmatic challenges posed by real-world translation tasks, particularly in culturally sensitive or high-stakes contexts (Sun 16).

This study proposes the integration of Speech Acts Theory (SAT)—originally developed by Austin in his 1962 game changer essay and further refined by Searle in 1969—into translator training as a means to cultivate pragmatic competence. SAT offers a structured framework for understanding how utterances function across

three dimensions: locutionary (literal meaning), illocutionary (speaker intent), and perlocutionary (effect on the listener). In translation, misinterpreting or failing to accurately render these speech acts can result in pragmatic failures, potentially undermining the communicative impact of the translated message (Baker *In other words*; Wu and Sabiri).

To address this gap, the current research explores how Translation Projects (TPs), a learner-centered pedagogical model that emphasizes experiential, collaborative, and context-driven education, can be used to operationalize SAT within translator training. Previous studies have shown that these projects can foster deeper learning by engaging students in authentic problem-solving and iterative feedback cycles (Crespí et al. 261). When applied to translation pedagogy, it provides a platform for students to critically engage with real-world communicative tasks, develop a nuanced understanding of speech acts, and refine their translations to maintain both functional and cultural fidelity (Jucker 22).

This paper presents findings regarding pragmatic competence development and refinement from a mixed-methods case study examining the implementation of SAT in a translator training program. Using public service announcements (PSAs) as the primary source material, students were tasked with identifying speech acts, analyzing their pragmatic functions, and adapting their translations to align with the sociocultural norms of the target audience. The learning process was guided by Kolb's experiential learning cycle, incorporating concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb 37). Preliminary results indicate that integrating SAT into Translators Formation significantly enhances students' ability to identify illocutionary forces and maintain perlocutionary effects in their translations. Moreover, students demonstrated increased sensitivity to cultural variables such as politeness strategies, levels of directness, and audience expectations. These outcomes support recent calls for a shift toward more pragmatically oriented translation pedagogy (Martín de León 60; Ren 13-15).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *Speech Acts Theory in Translation Studies*

SAT has long been foundational to the field of pragmatics, offering a conceptual framework for analyzing how language functions not merely as a vehicle for conveying information, but as a tool for performing social actions. Initially proposed by Austin in 1962 and later expanded by Searle in his definitive 1969 essay, SAT distinguishes between three interrelated dimensions of speech: locutionary acts (the act of producing a linguistic expression), illocutionary acts (the speaker's intended function, such as requesting or apologizing), and perlocutionary acts (the effect of the utterance on the listener). This triadic model has become integral to understanding communicative intent and interpersonal meaning-making in both monolingual and multilingual contexts.

In translation studies, the relevance of SAT lies in its emphasis on the performative and interactive functions of language, which often present challenges when rendered across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Translators are not merely tasked with lexical substitution, but with the nuanced reproduction of speech acts in a way that retains their illocutionary force and perlocutionary effects in the target language. When these are inadequately conveyed, pragmatic failures can occur, potentially leading to significant miscommunication (Baker, *In other words*; Wang and Li 90).

Recent research has reaffirmed the centrality of SAT to translation pedagogy and practice, particularly in domains such as legal, diplomatic, and public service communication, where functional equivalence is paramount (Gumul 189). For example, directive language acts such as “Could you pass the salt?” in English may be interpreted as overly indirect or even evasive in cultures that favor directness, thereby altering both the intended tone and communicative effect. This underscores the need for contextually aware translations that go beyond literal interpretation (Chen et al.).

Contemporary research further emphasizes that translator training must integrate pragmatic theories like SAT to enhance students’ ability to navigate intercultural communication effectively. As recently as 2020, Martín de León argued that pragmatic competence is often underdeveloped in translation curricula, despite being essential for producing functionally appropriate translations. Building on this, Romero and Blanco in 2022 advocated for pedagogical models that combine theoretical instruction with practical application to help learners identify and accurately render speech acts in context.

Additionally, emerging work highlights the role of speech act analysis in improving the accuracy and appropriateness of machine-assisted and human translation workflows. Lin and Huang in their 2023 work demonstrate that the integration of speech act recognition algorithms into translation tools significantly improves the handling of nuanced communicative functions, particularly in AI-driven environments. Similarly, in 2022, Ren explored how awareness of cultural norms and illocutionary variation across languages enhances the translator’s capacity to maintain both fidelity and naturalness in the target text.

2.2. Pragmatics and Translation Training

While linguistic accuracy has traditionally been the cornerstone of translator training, there is increasing recognition that pragmatic competence—the ability to interpret and convey language in context—is equally vital for producing functionally effective translations. Pragmatics, as defined within linguistic theory, is concerned with how meaning is constructed by speakers and interpreted by listeners within specific social, cultural, and communicative contexts. Yet, despite its relevance, pragmatics often remains underrepresented in translation pedagogy, which continues to prioritize formal equivalence over contextual meaning (House; Martín de León).

Understanding pragmatics in translation entails more than decoding grammar or vocabulary; it involves grappling with cultural norms, social dynamics, and communicative intent-elements that shape how language is used and understood. As Baker-building on Gumul's work-argues: translators who lack pragmatic awareness risk producing texts that are grammatically correct yet functionally misleading or culturally inappropriate (*Translation* 33).

Several core components of pragmatic analysis are particularly relevant to translation:

- Managing speech acts, ensuring that the function of utterances (e.g., requests, apologies, commands) is accurately conveyed across languages (Wang et al.).
- Preserving implicature, whereby implied meanings are maintained or adapted based on target language conventions and audience expectations (Chen et al).
- Adapting politeness strategies, which vary significantly between cultures and can influence the perceived tone and appropriateness of a translation (Sun).
- Resolving ambiguity and context dependence, which requires an understanding of both source and target communicative goals (Ren).

These pragmatic dimensions are especially critical in genres such as legal discourse, PSAs, healthcare communication, and intercultural mediation-contexts in which miscommunication can have serious consequences (Romero and Blanco 170; Lange et al. 21).

Recent scientific literature advocates for the integration of pragmatic theory into translator education, not only to enhance students' contextual sensitivity but also to prepare them for the complex, real-world demands of intercultural communication. For example, Martín de León emphasizes the importance of moving beyond purely linguistic exercises to include pragmatic analysis tasks that expose learners to functional meaning-making. Similarly, Crespí et al. in their 2022 work suggested that experiential and collaborative models, such as including project-based translating, do offer effective pedagogical frameworks for developing pragmatic awareness.

2.3. Translator Formation

Translator education has undergone significant transformation in recent decades in response to a rapidly globalizing world, technological advancements, and the increasing need for intercultural communication. As a result, modern translation programs aim to equip students not only with linguistic competence but also with cultural sensitivity, pragmatic skills, and professional competencies necessary to navigate diverse translation contexts effectively. This literature review explores key aspects of translator education, focusing on the integration of linguistic, cultural, and

pragmatic components, and emphasizes how these elements interact in training future translators.

Historically, translator education was centered on developing students' linguistic competence, which involves mastering grammar, syntax, and vocabulary in both the source and target languages. Early translation pedagogy largely prioritized linguistic accuracy and proficiency to ensure that students could produce accurate translations. However, as translation has become an increasingly complex activity influenced by social and cultural factors, scholars have argued for a more holistic approach to translator education, one that goes beyond mere linguistic accuracy to include a deep understanding of pragmatics and intercultural communication (House). Pragmatic competence is seen as crucial for ensuring that translations not only convey meaning but also reflect the social and contextual nuances embedded in the source text (Baker, *Translation* 33).

Pragmatics is the study of how language is used in practice, considering not just the meaning of words but also the context in which they are used. The importance of pragmatic competence in translator education is underscored by scholars such as Baker—who is in total accordance with Hatim and Mason—who suggest that translation involves much more than a word-for-word transfer of meaning (*In other words*, 45). Instead, translators must be able to interpret and convey social functions such as politeness, power dynamics, and emotional tone, all of which are determined by the culture and context of both the source and target languages. In this respect, cultural adaptation plays a crucial role in ensuring that a translation resonates with the target audience while respecting the social norms and expectations of the target culture (Pym).

The integration of SAT into translator education has gained considerable attention in recent years, as it provides a framework for analyzing how speech acts such as requests, promises, and apologies function within a given context. Both Austin and Searle contributed to delineating the key concepts of locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, which have become foundational in understanding how translations should not only preserve the linguistic form of the original but also the illocutionary force—the intended communicative action—and perlocutionary effects—the intended impact on the audience. Ren argues that pragmatics and translation are inseparable, emphasizing that translators must understand both the illocutionary force and the perlocutionary impact of speech acts to ensure that the translation performs the same function in the target language.

A significant challenge in translator education is helping students develop the ability to adapt speech acts appropriately to different cultural norms. Some speech acts, such as requests, refusals, or compliments, may vary greatly between cultures, both in terms of their form and function. For instance, directness in communication is valued differently across cultures: whereas in some languages, direct speech is acceptable and even preferred, in others, indirectness and the use of politeness strategies are essential (Jääskeläinen 223). As Baker pointed out: “understanding these differences and being able to apply the correct level of formality, indirectness,

or politeness in a translation is a skill that must be explicitly taught in translation programs" (*In other words* 33).

The concept of feedback and self-reflection is crucial in translator education, as it encourages students to evaluate their own work and adjust their strategies to produce better translations. Kolb, on the one hand, and Lantolf and Thorne, on the other, emphasize the role of experiential learning, which allows students to learn through experience, reflection, and feedback. Reflective practice helps students refine their decision-making skills by considering how their translations impact the audience and adjusting their work based on client or peer feedback. In this sense, students become not only better translators but also more critical thinkers who are able to analyze and adapt their approaches to translation challenges.

While traditional translation education focused primarily on textual accuracy, there is now an increasing focus on professional competence and the ability to handle the expectations of translation clients. This includes understanding the dynamics of client relationships, managing deadlines, and dealing with ambiguous or complex texts. In this context, ethical issues in translation, such as maintaining the integrity of the original text while adapting it to the target culture, have become more central to translation training (Venuti 16). Professional translator training must prepare students to navigate these issues, ensuring that they can produce translations that are both linguistically accurate and culturally sensitive.

The integration of technology in translator education is another area of growing importance. With the rise of machine translation and computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, students must learn how to use these tools effectively while also maintaining their own critical thinking and cultural competence. As Zhang and Liu explain, pragmatic recognition within machine translation can improve the accuracy of automated systems, yet human translators are still essential for ensuring that translations meet the cultural and pragmatic requirements of the target audience. Therefore, translator education should strike a balance between technology and human expertise, teaching students how to use tools like CAT effectively while also emphasizing the importance of cultural and pragmatic knowledge in producing high-quality translations.

Thus, translator education has evolved from focusing purely on linguistic accuracy to a more comprehensive approach that includes pragmatic, cultural, and professional competencies. As this literature demonstrates, pragmatic theories such as SAT, along with experiential learning and feedback-based training, are essential components of modern translation programs. Furthermore, project-based learning provides students with the opportunity to apply their skills in real-world contexts, thus enhancing their intercultural competence and preparing them for the diverse challenges they will face in their professional careers. Ultimately, the integration of linguistic, pragmatic, and intercultural components into translator education ensures that students can produce translations that are not only accurate but also culturally and contextually appropriate.

In recent years, Project-Based Learning (PBL) has emerged as a transformative pedagogical model within translation studies, offering an experiential alternative to traditional, lecture-based approaches. PBL has emerged as a powerful pedagogical tool in this regard, as it provides students with practical, real-world tasks that require them to engage with cultural and pragmatic issues directly (Romero and Blanco 162).

In their study, Romero and Blanco demonstrate how PBL can be used to enhance intercultural competence in translation students. By working on projects for real clients, such as non-profit organizations or government agencies, students are exposed to various translation challenges, including the need to navigate complex cultural differences and adjust translations to suit specific audiences. This hands-on approach is complemented by feedback from clients, which helps students reflect on their work and improve their cultural and pragmatic awareness. PBL encourages students to engage in authentic, collaborative, and context-driven tasks that mirror real-world translation challenges. This approach has been shown to foster not only linguistic competence but also critical thinking, problem-solving, and reflective learning (Crespí et al. 275).

Unlike conventional methods that often prioritize rote learning and decontextualized language practice, PBL situates learning in purposeful and socially meaningful activities, thereby aligning more closely with the actual demands of professional translation. When applied effectively, PBL supports students in developing the transferable competencies required for working with diverse text genres, client expectations, and intercultural communicative situations (Chik 99; Martín de León 60).

A growing body of research supports the integration of pragmatic theories—particularly SAT—into the PBL framework to deepen students' understanding of functional meaning in translation. SAT provides a useful lens through which learners can analyze language beyond its syntactic and lexical features, focusing instead on its illocutionary force (speaker intention) and perlocutionary effect (listener response). When incorporated into PBL, this theoretical grounding enables students to engage with discourse-level phenomena, such as speech acts, implicature, and politeness strategies, thereby enhancing their pragmatic competence (Wu and Sabiri 121).

Pedagogical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of SAT-informed PBL in helping learners navigate the complexities of communicative intent, especially in high-context translation scenarios such as PSAs, legal texts, and intercultural mediation (Gumul 200; Sun 13). Through iterative translation projects, peer collaboration, and guided feedback, students can experiment with strategies that preserve the pragmatic integrity of source texts, while adapting appropriately to the sociocultural norms of the target audience.

Moreover, the experiential nature of PBL aligns with Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasizes active involvement, reflection, conceptualization, and application. Applied within translation education, this model supports students in developing metacognitive awareness and the ability to evaluate and refine their own

translations over time-a key skill in professional practice (Romero and Blanco 171; Chen et al.).

3. OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a translator training program grounded on SAT, focusing specifically on the development of pragmatic competence among translation students. The pedagogical approach integrates SAT principles into the curriculum via PBL to enhance learners' ability to recognize and adapt communicative intentions across linguistic and cultural boundaries in TPs.

3.1. Objectives

1. To assess students' ability to identify and interpret speech acts-including locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary components-in source texts.
2. To evaluate the degree to which students maintain perlocutionary effects in their target-language translations, particularly the intended emotional or behavioral responses.
3. To examine students' use of cultural adaptation strategies to render speech acts appropriately within the socio-pragmatic norms of the target language and culture.
4. To provide pedagogical insights into how SAT-based instruction impacts the development of pragmatic competence in translator training.

3.2. Research Questions

1. How effectively can students identify the locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary aspects of speech acts in source texts after SAT-based instruction?
2. To what extent do students preserve the original perlocutionary intent when translating speech acts into the target language?
3. What strategies do students employ to adapt speech acts to the socio-cultural norms of the target language, and how effective are these strategies?

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Design

The study employed a task-based, action-research design aimed at fostering pragmatic competence in translation through real-world tasks. Specifically, students were engaged in translating multilingual PSAs, which demand nuanced

understanding and adaptation of speech acts. The design incorporated the following components:

- Selection of Source Texts: A curated corpus of PSAs was selected from health (COVID-19 prevention messages), safety (emergency evacuation alerts), and social awareness (anti-discrimination campaigns in social media) domains. Texts were chosen for their rich use of pragmatic elements, such as warnings, directives, and persuasive appeals.
- Speech Act Identification Tasks: Prior to translation, students completed guided worksheets to identify locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts in the source texts. This exercise aimed to promote their meta-pragmatic awareness.
- Cultural Adaptation Strategy Development: Students were required to propose culturally appropriate equivalents for speech acts, considering politeness norms, register, and target-language conventions. For example, a culturally-loaded direct imperative in English ("Carry on get vaccinated today!") might be adapted into a more mitigated construction in Spanish or Chinese to align with cultural expectations.

4.2. Population

The participants were 50 undergraduate students enrolled in a second-year English for Translation course within the bachelor's degree in Translation and Interpretation Studies at a public university in Madrid during the first semester of the 2024-25 academic year. The students were aged between 18 to 25 years old and represented diverse linguistic backgrounds, including Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Eastern European nationalities. All participants had attained at least a B2 level in English, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). This level is a mandatory institutional requirement for admission into the Translation Studies degree program. Upon entry to the program, students had to demonstrate this proficiency through an official placement exam administered by the university. In addition, a general diagnostic task was administered at the beginning of the course to assess students' baseline pragmatic competence. While students demonstrated strong grammatical and lexical skills, their ability to handle pragmatic nuances in translation was identified as an area for development-making them an appropriate target group for this instructional intervention.

4.3. Implementation

The translation projects were implemented over a six-week period, following a collaborative, iterative approach grounded in Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. Each week focused on one complete cycle using a new PSA, allowing students to apply and refine their pragmatic translation skills progressively:

1. Concrete Experience (*Weeks 1–6*): Each week, students translated a new PSA independently, focusing on identifying and rendering speech acts appropriately.
2. Reflective Observation (*Weeks 1–6*): Students engaged in structured peer review sessions and submitted self-reflection journals analyzing the effectiveness of their speech act adaptations.
3. Abstract Conceptualization (*Weeks 1–6*): Weekly seminars introduced relevant theoretical concepts from Speech Act Theory (SAT), which students used to revise their translations and inform their strategic choices.
4. Active Experimentation (*Weeks 2–6*): Students applied feedback from peers and instructors' reviews to improve subsequent translations.

The implementation process involved:

- Group Collaboration: Students worked in teams, simulating professional translation environments where negotiation of meaning is essential.
- Multiple Drafts: Students submitted three iterations of their translations, receiving feedback from peers and instructors at each stage.
- Instructor and Expert Feedback: Language professionals provided insights on pragmatic effectiveness and functional accuracy.

4.4. Data Collection

A mixed-methods approach was employed to evaluate the development of students' pragmatic competence throughout the six-week intervention. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed systematically.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis:

- Student Reflections: Each week, students submitted written reflections (250–300 words) discussing their translation decisions, particularly regarding speech act adaptation and cultural considerations. These texts were analyzed using thematic coding in *Nvivo*. Recurrent patterns—such as mitigation strategies, register shifts, and awareness of perlocutionary effects—were identified and categorized.
- Peer Reviews: Students reviewed each other's translations using structured forms containing both open-ended comments and Likert-scale ratings. The open comments were thematically analyzed to identify how peers engaged with pragmatic issues and suggested improvements.
- Translation Draft Comparisons: Initial and final drafts were examined for qualitative changes in speech act rendering. Adaptations were coded by type (e.g., directive softened, politeness strategy added) and categorized according to pragmatic function.

- Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis:
- Instructor Evaluations: Final translations were assessed using a rubric with three criteria: (1) accuracy in identifying and rendering speech acts, (2) maintenance of intended perlocutionary effects, and (3) appropriateness of cultural adaptation. Each criterion was rated on a 0–10 scale, and average scores were calculated for each student.
- Pre- and Post-Intervention Surveys: Students completed a 10-item self-assessment survey before and after the project, using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to rate their confidence and perceived ability in pragmatic translation. Paired t-tests were conducted to determine statistically significant changes.
- Quantified Improvement Across Drafts: Specific pragmatic adjustments in translations were counted and expressed as percentages (comparing their final drafts to initial versions).

4.5. Organization of Results

The results of this study are organized into three main thematic categories, each corresponding to a core component of pragmatic competence in translation and corresponding to the objectives and research questions posed previously:

1. Speech Act Identification
2. Maintenance of Perlocutionary Effects
3. Cultural Adaptation Strategies

This structure was chosen to reflect the pedagogical priorities emphasized in the SAT-integrated translator training program. Each category corresponds to a specific learning outcome and competency area, allowing for a clear, pedagogically relevant interpretation of student progress. Firstly, identifying Speech Acts corresponds to the foundational ability to decode and analyze locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary dimensions in source texts. Secondly, maintaining perlocutionary effects assesses how well students preserved the intended emotional or behavioral impact of the original utterances in their target language versions. Thirdly, cultural adaptation strategies measures students' ability to adjust language and formality levels in accordance with socio-pragmatic norms of the target culture.

In terms of result presentation, we do believe that the study supports educational best practices by emphasizing scaffolded skill development and outcome-based evaluation in translator training, which helps inform the effective integration of SAT into curriculum design through clear pedagogical implications.

5. RESULTS

This section presents the key findings from the case study on the integration of SAT within translator training for pragmatic competence development. The findings are discussed under three core areas: the students' ability to identify speech acts, their effectiveness in maintaining perlocutionary effects, and their improvement in cultural adaptation strategies aligned with the objectives and research questions outlined in previous sections of this study. The core findings are presented to validate the integration of SAT within the pedagogical framework for translator education. Results are organized around three key areas of student development: (1) the ability to identify and analyze speech acts, (2) the capacity to preserve perlocutionary effects in translation, and (3) the effectiveness of cultural adaptation strategies. The discussion also highlights pedagogical implications and areas for improvement in translator training.

5.1 Identifying Speech Acts in Translation

A major outcome of the study was the observed improvement in students' ability to identify speech acts within source texts. 85% of students showed marked progress in recognizing the different components of speech acts, including locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. This improvement was particularly evident in the students' ability to distinguish between direct and indirect requests, which are often challenging in translation due to their complex social and cultural implications. Peer-reviewed feedback and collaborative discussions played a pivotal role in refining students' analytical skills. A collection of supporting evidence can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Examples of Student Improvement in Identifying Speech Acts.

Sample	Initial Translation	Revised Translation	Implication for Translator Training	Implication for Translator Education
"Lávate las manos con frecuencia." (<i>Health directive</i>)	Wash your hands frequently.	Make handwashing a regular habit to protect yourself and others.	Demonstrates an understanding of perlocutionary intent- persuading action through softening and inclusion of rationale.	Trains students to consider audience impact, tone, and public engagement in directive speech acts.
"Evita el contacto con personas enfermas." (<i>Health precaution</i>)	Avoid contact with sick people.	Try to limit close contact with those who are unwell.	Reflects awareness of mitigation strategies in English to preserve politeness.	Encourages the use of culturally appropriate indirectness in sensitive contexts.

Sample	Initial Translation	Revised Translation	Implication for Translator Training	Implication for Translator Education
“No te olvides de reciclar.” (<i>Environmental request</i>)	Don't forget to recycle.	Please remember to recycle-it makes a difference.	Enhances the perlocutionary effect by adding encouragement and a motivational appeal.	Highlights the value of pragmatically effective and positively framed messaging in public campaigns.
“Usa mascarilla en espacios cerrados.” (<i>COVID-19 protocol</i>)	Wear a mask in enclosed spaces.	For everyone's safety, please wear a mask in indoor areas.	Shows an ability to include illocutionary force with added justification, reinforcing compliance.	Teaches students to adapt speech acts to social expectations and communal responsibility norms.
“Denuncia cualquier tipo de violencia.” (<i>Social awareness</i>)	Report any kind of violence.	If you witness violence, don't stay silent-report it.	Adds emotional appeal and urgency, increasing the speech act's persuasive force.	Develops skills in balancing clarity with rhetorical and emotional weight in social messaging.
“Tu salud es lo primero.” (<i>Health reassurance</i>)	Your health is first.	Your health comes first-take care of yourself and your loved ones.	Transforms a literal locution into a caring and socially resonant message.	Promotes contextual and emotional sensitivity in message framing.
“Juntos podemos hacer la diferencia.” (<i>Community call-to-action</i>)	Together we can make the difference.	Together, we can make a real difference-every action counts.	Enriches the perlocutionary force by reinforcing collective identity and shared responsibility.	Encourages attention to motivational framing and cultural resonance in calls to action.

Key Observations:

- Stronger Differentiation Between Speech Acts: Students demonstrated an enhanced ability to differentiate between locutionary (the literal utterance), illocutionary (the intended function), and perlocutionary (the effect on the listener) acts. This distinction is fundamental in achieving an accurate translation that maintains the source text's communicative intent (Searle).
- Recognition of Culturally Embedded Speech Acts: Students became more proficient in recognizing culturally embedded speech acts, such as honorifics or indirect politeness strategies. This finding aligns with Olohan's

notion of cultural translation, where understanding the pragmatic nuances of speech acts is crucial for cross-cultural communication.

- **Justifying Translation Choices:** The students improved in their ability to justify translation choices based on the communicative context. This shift from a focus on linguistic accuracy to pragmatic and contextual relevance indicates a deeper understanding of translation beyond word-for-word equivalence (Nida).

The implications of these results for Translator Education are that identifying speech acts is a fundamental skill in translator training, as it significantly affects the accuracy and contextual appropriateness of translations. By learning to distinguish between various types of speech acts, students can produce translations that better preserve the original communicative intent. Therefore, incorporating activities that involve analyzing speech acts within context should be a core element of translation curricula.

5.2. *Maintaining Perlocutionary Effects*

Maintaining the perlocutionary effect—in other words, ensuring that the intended response or effect of the source text is achieved in the target language—was one of the most challenging aspects of the translation process. 80% of the final translations successfully preserved the original intent compared to just 50% in the initial drafts. This improvement was attributed to iterative revisions and feedback from both peers and experts, which guided students in adjusting tone, politeness levels, and structural shifts. Examples of these findings can be found in Table 2.

Key Observations:

- **Adaptation of Requests and Warnings:** Students successfully adapted directives such as requests and warnings, ensuring that these speech acts were culturally appropriate for the target audience. This aligns with the work of Hatim and Mason, who emphasize the importance of adapting speech acts to maintain their effect in the target culture.
- **Recognition of Unintended Shifts:** Peer reviews helped students recognize where meaning was inadvertently altered, such as in the tone or implied directive force. The collaborative nature of the project allowed students to engage in meaningful discussions that led to more accurate translations.
- **Expert Feedback for Pragmatic Refinement:** Expert feedback was instrumental in guiding students to refine their pragmatic choices, ensuring that the translations did not only preserve the linguistic meaning but also retained the intended perlocutionary effect. This iterative process highlights the importance of continuous expert involvement in translation education (Pym).

- Handling Ambiguity: Students improved in dealing with ambiguous or indirect speech acts, such as implicit requests or warnings. This skill is particularly important in translation, where ambiguity can affect the overall impact and clarity of the message.

The implications of these results for Translator Education are that ensuring students can maintain the perlocutionary effect is essential for producing effective translations. Translator training must go beyond linguistic equivalence to emphasize the functional impact of translated texts. To support this, task-based learning combined with peer and expert feedback should be integrated into curricula, offering students opportunities to navigate pragmatic challenges in realistic communicative contexts.

Table 2. Examples of Student Improvement in Maintaining Perlocutionary Effects.

Key Observation	Example	Implication for Translator Training
Adaptation of Requests and Warnings	Source: <i>"Please evacuate the building immediately."</i> Initial translation: A soft, overly polite version that reduced urgency. Revised: A culturally appropriate directive reflecting urgency in the target language tone and structure.	Highlights the need to adapt tone and force to preserve urgency or caution in directives, especially in public contexts.
Recognition of Unintended Shifts	A student translated a formal complaint email with a tone that sounded informal and friendly. Through peer feedback, the student revised the tone to reflect professional dissatisfaction, maintaining the intended critical perlocutionary effect.	Emphasizes peer collaboration in identifying tone shifts that may undermine the original intent or formality.
Expert Feedback for Pragmatic Refinement	Source: <i>"We appreciate your patience."</i> Initial translation was literal but came across as sarcastic in the target language. Revised after expert feedback: Reformulated to a more neutral expression of gratitude, avoiding misinterpretation.	Demonstrates the role of expert guidance in ensuring subtle emotional or tonal intentions are maintained across languages.
Handling Ambiguity	Source: <i>"It might be better to reconsider."</i> Initial translation conveyed it as a strong command. Final version conveyed it as a suggestive, polite nudge-preserving the ambiguity and indirectness of the original statement.	Reinforces training on interpreting indirect speech acts to maintain intended flexibility and tone in translation.

5.3. Cultural Adaptation Strategies

Cultural adaptation was another area where students demonstrated improvement. 70% of students showed greater awareness of cultural nuances in translation. Initially, many students overlooked variations in politeness levels, indirect speech, and culturally appropriate phrasing. However, through iterative feedback and guided discussions, students refined their ability to adapt speech acts to the cultural context of the target language.

Key Observations:

- Politeness Strategies: Students paid closer attention to politeness strategies, such as the use of indirectness in languages like Japanese compared to the directness typical of English. This finding echoes the work of Venuti, who discusses the translator's role in navigating cultural differences in politeness and formality.
- Handling Culturally Sensitive Topics: The ability to navigate culturally sensitive topics, such as health warnings and social norms, was enhanced. Students demonstrated more care in adapting speech acts to address issues of public health, safety, and social awareness in ways that were culturally appropriate.
- Justifying Translation Choices: Students became better at justifying their translation choices based on cultural and pragmatic reasoning. This skill is essential in professional translation, where translators must justify their decisions to clients, peers, and audiences (Baker, *Translation*).
- Flexibility in Modifying Speech Acts: There was an increase in flexibility when adapting speech acts to different socio-pragmatic expectations. Students were better able to modify their translations to meet the expectations of different target audiences, demonstrating the dynamic nature of translation as a cultural act.

Implications for Translator Education derived from the analysis presented above show that cultural adaptation is critical in ensuring that translations are not only accurate but also appropriate for the target audience. Training students to understand and navigate cultural differences in politeness, formality, and pragmatics can help them produce translations that resonate with the target culture. Including tasks that emphasize cultural context and adaptation, such as translating PSAs, can foster this competency. A collection of supporting data can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. Examples of Student Improvement in Cultural Adaptation Strategies.

Example	Initial Translation	Source of Initial Translation	Revised Translation	Implication for Translator Training	Implication for Translator Education
“Could you please send the report when you have a moment?” (<i>Polite request</i>)	Send the report ea.	Literal translation / L1 interference	Indirect version: Would you mind sending the report when convenient?	Trains students to evaluate politeness levels and adjust tone according to the cultural norms of the target audience.	Stresses the importance of sociopragmatic awareness in professional intercultural communication.
“This product is harmful to your health.” (<i>Health warning</i>)	This product is bad for your health.	Over-reliance on machine translation	Softened version: May pose health risks if not used as directed.	Promotes careful phrasing in public communication and cultural sensitivity in tone.	Builds ethical awareness and teaches students to consider audience reactions to sensitive topics.
“Thank you for your patience.” (<i>Gratitude expression</i>)	Thanks for waiting.	Informal phrasing influenced by everyday English usage	Culturally nuanced: We truly appreciate your kind understanding.	Encourages justification of choices through awareness of politeness strategies in the target culture.	Cultivates deeper metapragmatic reasoning and encourages attention to social norms in formal contexts.
“We regret to inform you...” (<i>Negative news</i>)	We are sorry to tell you...	Literal translation / machine-assisted draft	Softer version: Unfortunately, we must let you know...	Reinforces adaptability and the need to moderate tone in delivering negative messages.	Prepares students to balance formality, empathy, and clarity in high-stakes communication.

5.4. Summary of Key Findings

The findings presented above reflect an improvement in the pragmatic competence of translation students through the integration of SAT within a translator educational and pedagogical framework. The data reveals notable advancements in key areas of translation competence-specifically in the identification of speech acts, maintaining perlocutionary effects, and cultural adaptation. These findings are pivotal because they demonstrate how pragmatic competence, which includes the ability to understand and navigate complex cultural and social nuances, directly impacts the quality of translations. Below is a detailed exploration of the importance of these findings:

Table 4. Summary of key findings

Competency	Initial Accuracy	Final Accuracy
Speech Act Identification	50%	85%
Perlocutionary Effect	50%	80%
Cultural Adaptation	40%	70%

The observed improvements in speech act identification accuracy (from 50% to 85%), maintaining perlocutionary effects (a 30% increase, from 50% to 85% success), and cultural adaptation (from 40% to 70%) underscore the importance of recognizing various speech acts and understanding their impact on translation. Mastering locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary components helps translators preserve meaning and intent, avoiding distortions and ensuring precise translations. Additionally, maintaining perlocutionary effects emphasizes the social and emotional impact of a message, ensuring the desired response from the target audience. The rise in cultural adaptation highlights the growing awareness of how cultural norms, politeness strategies, and societal values influence translation, making cultural appropriateness critical in diverse contexts. These improvements demonstrate that integrating SAT equips students to produce translations that are both accurate and contextually appropriate. This pragmatic approach enhances students' ability to handle real-world translation challenges, emphasizing meaning over literal equivalence.

On the one hand, the substantial increase in Speech Act Identification accuracy from 50% to 85% underscores the fundamental role that understanding the various layers of speech acts plays in ensuring a translation is not only linguistically accurate but also pragmatically appropriate. Translators must be able to identify locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary components to discern the intent, tone, and communicative goal of the original message. Mastery of this skill allows students to decode not just the words but the intended action behind them. This is essential for achieving translations that preserve the original intent-such as politeness, requests, or commands-without distortion. As students enhance their ability to detect these distinctions, they improve their overall translation quality, ensuring it is faithful to both the linguistic and communicative purposes of the source text.

Subsequently, the increase in the accuracy of maintaining perlocutionary effects-a 30% increase from 50% to 80%-is particularly telling, as it reflects a greater understanding of the social and emotional impact that a message may carry. In translation, it is not just about transmitting words; it is about understanding the response the message is intended to provoke from the audience. Perlocutionary effects refer to how the message will be perceived and what action or reaction it is meant to elicit. A translation that takes these effects into account ensures that the audience in the target culture receives the message in a way that aligns with the intended emotional or social outcome (e.g., compliance, sympathy, anger). The increase in accuracy in maintaining these effects highlights the students' growing ability to capture the pragmatic subtleties of the source text and convey them effectively within the new cultural and social context.

Additionally, the rise in Cultural Adaptation accuracy-from 40% to 70%-demonstrates a growing recognition of the cultural norms, values, and societal expectations that influence how a message should be translated. Understanding how to adapt a translation based on politeness strategies and cultural appropriateness is crucial in ensuring that translations resonate with the target audience in culturally sensitive and contextually relevant ways. In contexts like PSAs, where cultural norms regarding topics such as health, safety, and social behavior can differ significantly,

it is essential for translators to adapt the message without altering its core meaning. This shift toward cultural adaptation emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness in translation and highlights the necessity of understanding the audience's social norms to avoid misunderstandings or offense, thus integrating SAT in Translators Education.

In addition to the qualitative thematic analysis, the quantitative data collected from student translations were analyzed to provide a clearer picture of performance trends.

- **Speech Act Identification:** Students' accuracy in identifying speech acts improved from 50% ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.12$) in initial tasks to 85% ($M = 0.85$, $SD = 0.10$) in later tasks. A paired sample t -test confirmed this improvement was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).
- **Maintenance of Perlocutionary Effects:** The proportion of students preserving perlocutionary effects increased from 50% ($M = 0.50$, $SD = 0.15$) in initial drafts to 80% ($M = 0.80$, $SD = 0.12$) in final versions. This improvement was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$), highlighting the positive impact of iterative revisions and feedback.
- **Cultural Adaptation Strategies:** Students' cultural adaptation skills showed notable gains, rising from 40% ($M = 0.40$, $SD = 0.14$) accuracy initially to 70% ($M = 0.70$, $SD = 0.11$) by the final assessment. This improvement was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), demonstrating meaningful progress in adapting translations to target cultural norms.

The perceived progress in all three areas-speech act identification, perlocutionary effect maintenance, and cultural adaptation-demonstrates the value of integrating SAT in Translation Studies curricula. SAT provides a theoretical framework for understanding how meaning is constructed and conveyed in communication.

5. DISCUSSION

The integration of SAT within translator training proved to be a highly effective approach for enhancing students' pragmatic competence. The findings from this study align with previous research on the application of SAT in translation studies and the value of experiential learning in improving translator skills (Hatim and Mason; Kolb). The results suggest that SAT fosters deeper understanding and more sophisticated application of translation strategies, particularly in terms of cultural adaptation and maintaining perlocutionary effects.

One of the primary outcomes of this study was the improvement in students' ability to identify and analyze speech acts across various translation tasks. As highlighted by Searle in 1969, understanding speech acts is central to the effective communication of meaning across different linguistic and cultural contexts. The students in this study demonstrated a marked improvement in identifying locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, which allowed them to engage

with the pragmatic challenges of translation in a more nuanced manner. This finding echoes the work of Jääskeläinen, who argues that translation students must develop a heightened sensitivity to the illocutionary forces embedded in the source text to produce accurate and culturally appropriate translations. Furthermore, the iterative nature of the adopted approach allowed students to refine their understanding and application of these acts through multiple drafts and peer interactions, leading to a more comprehensive grasp of their pragmatic functions.

The importance of cultural adaptation in translation has long been a central theme in translation studies (Baker, *Translation* 120). The findings from this study underscore the significance of cultural sensitivity in translation, particularly when dealing with PSAs that address health, safety, and social issues. Students were tasked with adapting speech acts for cultural contexts, a process that required not only linguistic expertise but also an understanding of how different cultures interpret and respond to various communicative functions. The students' reflections indicated that they gained an increased awareness of the need to balance fidelity to the source text with the cultural norms of the target language. This finding is consistent with the notion of "cultural translation" (31) as proposed by Olohan in a 2011 essay, who emphasizes the translator's role in navigating the space between source and target cultures while ensuring the intended message remains intact.

Maintaining perlocutionary effects—in other words, the effect that the speaker's utterance has on the listener—emerged as a critical component of translation competence in this study. The iterative process of revising translations based on feedback from peers and experts helped students refine their translations to elicit the intended responses from the target audience. This aligns with Nida's concept of "dynamic equivalence" (23) which stresses the importance of ensuring that translations provoke the same reactions in the target audience as the original text does in the source audience. The findings suggest that students became increasingly adept at maintaining pragmatic equivalence, particularly in their final drafts, where feedback from language professionals played a key role. This process mirrors the insights from Pym, who emphasizes the value of feedback in improving translation quality and aligning the target text more closely with its intended communicative purpose.

The collaborative and iterative nature of the methodological approach proved beneficial in fostering critical thinking and self-reflection among students. Peer reviews were a central component of the feedback process, and students were able to offer constructive critiques of each other's translations, focusing particularly on the pragmatic adaptation of speech acts. This process aligns with the findings of Lantolf and Thorne, who argue that collaborative learning environments promote deeper cognitive engagement and allow for the development of higher-order skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving. Peer feedback also helped students develop a greater awareness of alternative translation strategies and broadened their understanding of how different translators might approach the same problem. Moreover, the use of self-reflection allowed students to assess their own translations and refine their understanding of the translation process, which is consistent with

Kolb's theory of experiential learning, where reflective observation plays a crucial role in the learning cycle.

While the results of this study are promising, several limitations must be considered. First, the sample size was relatively small, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could involve larger cohorts to confirm the results and explore how different types of translation tasks might influence students' development of pragmatic competence. Additionally, this study focused on the translation of PSAs, which may not fully capture the range of challenges faced by translators in other domains. Future research could explore the application of SAT in translating other genres, such as literary texts or legal documents, to further investigate the applicability of this approach across different contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

This study explored the use of SAT in translation-based projects to improve pragmatic competence in translator training. Findings showed that SAT effectively enhanced students' skills in identifying speech acts (locutionary, illocutionary, perlocutionary), preserving perlocutionary effects, and culturally adapting translations. Through iterative, collaborative tasks and feedback from peers and professionals, students significantly improved their ability to recognize communicative intentions and audience effects, with perlocutionary success rising from 50% to 80% by final drafts. Cultural adaptation also improved, with 70% of students demonstrating greater awareness of socio-pragmatic norms like politeness and indirectness, especially in sensitive texts such as public service announcements. Despite these positive results, challenges remained: many students struggled to distinguish illocutionary acts from perlocutionary effects in complex texts, about 15% had difficulty with cultural adaptation-especially with indirect language acts-and engagement with feedback was inconsistent. Translating complex speech acts like humor and sarcasm was particularly difficult, highlighting the need for clearer instruction, more targeted practice, structured feedback, and deeper cultural training. The study concludes that while SAT effectively supports key pragmatic skills through reflective, feedback-driven projects, translator education would benefit from greater emphasis on complex speech acts, consistent feedback integration, and enhanced cultural sensitivity. Future research should investigate SAT's application across diverse genres to broaden its pedagogical impact. Overall, the results obtained show the strong potential of the inclusion SAT and PBL for improving pragmatic competence in translator training, emphasizing the importance of embedding these skills into curricula for producing contextually appropriate translations.

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