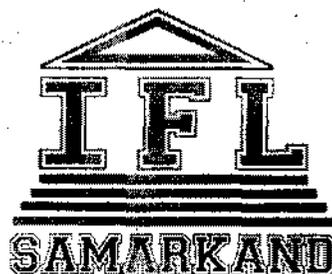


MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION
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SAMARKAND STATE INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES



SELF STUDY

**Theme: Equivalence in Translation opinions of scientists about
equivalency in translation and their levels.**

Student: Xamrayeva Z.

Teacher: Jabborzoda D.

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Plan:

1. Introduction.
2. Types of equivalence in translation.
3. Conclusion

Introduction.

The comparison of texts in different languages inevitably involves a theory of equivalence. Equivalence can be said to be the central issue in translation although its definition, relevance, and applicability within the field of translation theory have caused heated controversy, and many different theories of the concept of equivalence have been elaborated within this field in the past fifty years.

The aim of this paper is to review the theory of equivalence as interpreted by some of the most innovative theorists in this field — Vinay and Darbelnet, Jakobson, Nida and Taber, Catford, House, and finally Baker. These theorists have studied equivalence in relation to the translation process, using different approaches, and have provided fruitful ideas for further study on this topic. Their theories will be analyzed in chronological order so that it will be easier to follow the evolution of this concept. These theories can be substantially divided into three main groups. In the first there are those translation scholars who are in favour of a linguistic approach to translation and who seem to forget that translation in itself is not merely a matter of linguistics. In fact, when a message is transferred from the SL to TL, the translator is also dealing with two different cultures at the same time. This particular aspect seems to have been taken into consideration by the second group of theorists who regard translation equivalence as being essentially a transfer of the message from the SC to the TC and a pragmatic/semantic or functionally oriented approach to translation. Finally, there are other translation scholars who seem to stand in the middle, such as Baker for instance, who claims that equivalence is used 'for the sake of convenience—because most translators are used to it rather than because it has any theoretical status' (quoted in Kenny, 1998:77).

Every translation can be regarded as belonging to a certain type of equivalence. Since each subsequent type implies a higher degree of semantic

similarity we can say that every translation is made at a certain level of equivalence.

Each level of equivalence is characterized by the part of information the retention of which distinguishes it from the previous level. The list of levels, therefore, includes: **1) the level of the purport of communication; 2) the level of (the identification of) the situation; 3) the level of the method of description (of the situation); 4) the level of syntactic meanings; 5) the level of word semantics.**

It is worth noting that the information characterizing different levels is inherent to any unit of speech. Indeed, a unit of speech always has some communicative intent, denotes a certain situation, possesses a certain notional structure, and is produced as a syntactically patterned string of words.

Thus, a translation event is accomplished at a definite level of equivalence. It should be emphasized that the level hierarchy does not imply the idea of approbation or disapprobation. A translation can be good at any level of equivalence.

2. Types of equivalence in translation.

Accordingly, several types of translation equivalence can be distinguished. For example, in **the first type of equivalence** the degree of semantic similarity with source text seems to be the lowest. This type of equivalence can be illustrated by the following examples (cited from the published translations):

1. Maybe there is some chemistry between us that doesn't mix. Бывает, что люди не сходятся характерами. Баъзан одамларнинг характерлари бир-бирларига тўғри келмайди. 2. A rolling stone gathers no moss. Кому дома не сидится, тот добра не наживет. Саёқ юрсанг таёқ ейсан. 3. That's a pretty thing to say. Постыдился бы! Уялмайсанми!

Here we cannot discover any common sense or invariant structures in the original and its translation. An absolute dissimilarity of language units is accompanied by the absence of obvious logical link between the two messages which could lead to the conclusion that they are "about the same thing", i.e. that they describe one and the same situation. Yet, it is evident that the two sentences have something in common as to their meaning. This common part of their contents is obviously of great importance, since it is enough to ensure an adequate communication.

Moreover, it comprises the information which must be preserved by all means even though the greater part of the contents of the original is lost in the translation.

From the examples we can see that common to the original and its translation in each case is only the general intent of the message, the implied or figurative sense, in other words, the conclusions the Receptor can draw from the total contents or the associations they can evoke in him, or the special emphasis on some aspect of communication. In plain English, the translation does not convey either "what the original text is about", or what is said in it" or "how it is said", but only "what it is said for", i.e. what the Source meant, what the aim of the message is.

This part of the contents which contains information about the general intent of the message, its orientation towards a certain communicative effect can be called "the purport of communication".

Thus we can deduce that in the first type of equivalence it is only the purport of communication is retained (kept) in translation.

The second group of translations can be illustrated by the following examples:

He answered the telephone. Он снял трубку. У гўшакни кўтарди. You see one bear, you have seen them all. Все медведи похожи друг на друга. Ҳамма айиқлар бир-бирига ўхшайди. It was late in the day. Близился вечер. Кеч тушиб қолди.

This group of examples is similar to the first one, as the equivalence of translations here does not involve any parallelism of lexical or structural units. Most of the words or syntactical structures of the original have no direct correspondences in the translation. At the same time it is obvious that there is a greater proximity of contents than in the preceding group. Besides the purport of communication there is some additional information contained in the original that is retained. This fact can be easily proved if we compare the examples of the two groups. Consider, for instance, the translations:

1) Maybe there is some chemistry between us that doesn't mix. Бывает, что люди не сходятся характерами. 2) He answered the telephone. Он снял трубку.

In (1) the things referred to are different, so that there is hardly any logical connection between the two statements. The similarity of the original and the translation is restricted to the fact that in both cases we can draw identical conclusions about the speaker's sentiments: there is no love lost between him and another person.

In (2) the incomparable language units, in the original and in the translation describe, in fact, the same action, refer to identical reality, as a telephone call cannot be answered unless one picks up the receiver. Both texts give different information about the same, or, as one sometimes says, they express the same idea

"using different words". It is the type of equivalence that can be well explained in terms of the situational theory. We may presume that such phrases describe identical situations but each is presented in a different way. Thus in this group of translations the equivalence implies retention of two types of information contained in the original — **the purport of communication and the indication of the situation**. Since in each of the two texts the situation is described in a different way, the common feature is not the method of description but the reference to the situation, the possibility of identifying the situation, no matter how it is described in the text. The information which characterized the second type of equivalence can, therefore, be designated as "**identification of the situation**".

In **the third group of translations** the part of the contents which is to be retained is still larger. This type of equivalence can be exemplified as follows: *Scrubbing makes me bad-tempered. От мытья полов у меня настроение портится. Пол ювши мени гашимга мегади. London saw a cold winter last year. В прошлом году зима в Лондоне была холодной. Ўтган йили Лондонга қиш совуқ келди. You are not serious? Вы шутите? Ҳазиллашмаянсизми?*

In this case the translation retains the two preceding informative complexes as well as the method of describing the situation. In other words, it contains the same general notions as the original. This means that the translation is a semantic paraphrase of the original, preserving its basic semes and allowing their free reshuffle in the sentence. Thus we are faced with a situation that can be explained in terms of the semantic theory. The common semes are easily discovered in the comparative analysis of the translations of this group. Consider the first of the examples cited. Both in the translation and in the original the situation is described as a "cause-effect" event with a different pattern of identical semes. In the original: A (scrubbing) causes B (I) to have C (temper) characterized by the property D (bad). In the translation: C (temper) belonging to B (I) acquires the property D (bad) because of A (scrubbing).

The use of the identical notions in the two texts means that the basic structure of the messages they convey remains intact. If in the previous types of

equivalence the translation gave the information of "what the original message is for" and "what it is about", here it also indicates "what is said in the original", i.e. what aspect of the described situation is mentioned in the communication.

We can now say that the **third type** of equivalence exemplified by the translations of the third group, implies retention in the translation of the three parts of the original contents which we have conventionally designated as **the purport of communication, the identification of the situation and the method of its description.**

The **fourth group** of translations can be illustrated by the following samples: *He was never tired of old songs.* Старые песни ему никогда не надоедали. Эски кўшиқлар ҳеч қачон унинг эсонига тегмасди. *I don't see that I need to convince you.* Не вижу надобности доказывать это вам. Буни сизга исботлаш заруриятини кўрмаймман. *He was standing with his arms crossed and his bare head bent.* Он стоял, сложив руки на груди и опустив непокрытую голову. У кўлларини кўкрагига чалиштирган ва яланг бошини эккан ҳолда турарди.

In this group the semantic similarity of the previous types of equivalence is reinforced by **the invariant meaning of the syntactic structures** in the original and the translation. In such translations the syntactic structures can be regarded as derived from those in the original through direct or backward transformations. This includes cases when the translation makes use of similar or parallel structures.

An important feature of this and the subsequent type of equivalence is that they imply the retention of the linguistic meaning, i.e. the information fixed in the substantial or structural elements of language as their plane of content. We can say that here the translation conveys not only the "what for", the "what about" and the "what*" of the original but also something of the "how-it-is-said in the original". The meaning of language units is an important part of the overall contents of the text and the translator strives to preserve it in his translation as best he can.

Thus, the fourth type of equivalence presupposes retention in the translation of the four meaningful components of the original: **the purport of**

communication, the identification of the situation, the method of its description, and the invariant meaning of the syntactic structures.

Last but not least, comes **the fifth group of translations** that can be discovered when we analyse their relationships with the respective originals. Here we find the maximum possible semantic similarity between texts in different languages. These translations try to retain the meaning of all the words used in the original text. The examples cited below illustrate this considerable semantic proximity of the correlated words in the two sentences: *I saw him at the theatre. Мен уни кеча театрда кўрдим. Я видел его в театре. The house was sold for 10 thousand dollars. Уй 10 минг долларга сотилди. Дом был продан за десять тысяч долларов. The Organisation is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members. Организация основана на принципе суверенного равенства всех ее членов. Ташкилот унинг барча аъзоларининг суверен тенг ҳуқуқлиги тамойилларига асосланган.*

Here we can observe the equivalence of semes which make up the meaning of correlated words in the original text and the translation; parallelism of syntactic structures implying the maximum invariance of their meanings; the similarity of the notional categories which determine the method of describing the situation; the identity of the situations; the identical functional aim of the utterance or the purport of communication. The relative identity of the contents of the two texts depends in this case on the extent to which various components of the word meaning can be rendered in translation without detriment to the retention of the rest of the information contained in the original.

Now we can sum up our findings. We have discovered that there are five different types of semantic relationships between equivalent phrases (texts) in two languages. Thus all translations can be classified into five types of equivalence which differ as to the volume and character of the information retained in each. Each subsequent type of equivalence retains the part of the original contents which includes the information preserved in the previous types.

3. Conclusion

The notion of equivalence is undoubtedly one of the most problematic and controversial areas in the field of translation theory. The term has caused, and it seems quite probable that it will continue to cause, heated debates within the field of translation studies. This term has been analyzed, evaluated and extensively discussed from different points of view and has been approached from many different perspectives. The first discussions of the notion of equivalence in translation initiated the further elaboration of the term by contemporary theorists. Even the brief outline of the issue given above indicates its importance within the framework of the theoretical reflection on translation. The difficulty in defining equivalence seems to result in the impossibility of having a universal approach to this notion.

** It should be noted that House's model of situational dimension is adapted from Crystal and Davy's model elaborated in 1969. House gives an extensive explanation of the reasons which motivated her to change, and sometimes omit, some of the information given by Crystal and Davy. Further details can be found in House (1977:38-41), or in D. Crystal and D. Davy, *Investigating English Style* (London: Longman, 1969).*

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