

TYPES OF EQUIVALENCE IN LITERARY TRANSLATION AND ISSUES OF INTERCULTURAL TRANSLATION

T. H. Akhundova

*Academy of the State Customs Committee, Sabunchinsky district, Mashtaga village,
Zabrat-Mashtaga highway, 2, building 2 24,
AZ1014, Baku, Azerbaijan, tairaakhundova7@gmail.com*

This article analyzes the concept of equivalence in the translation process and examines the types of equivalence. It particularly addresses the translation process of culture-specific language units that lack direct equivalents when translating texts from the source language to the target language.

Keywords: culture, translation, equivalence, literary, text.

ТИПЫ ЭКВИВАЛЕНТНОСТИ В ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОМ ПЕРЕВОДЕ И ПРОБЛЕМЫ МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНОГО ПЕРЕВОДА

Т. Х. Ахундова

*Академия Государственного Таможенного Комитета, Сабунчинский район,
поселок Маштага, шоссе Забрат-Маштага, 2, д. 24,
AZ1014, г. Баку, Азербайджан, tairaakhundova7@gmail.com*

В этой статье анализируется понятие эквивалентности в процессе перевода и рассматриваются типы эквивалентности. В частности, рассматривается процесс перевода культурно-специфических языковых единиц, которые не имеют прямых эквивалентов при переводе текстов с исходного языка на целевой.

Ключевые слова: культура, перевод, эквивалентность, литературный, текст.

The scientific study and analysis of the concept of equivalence in the translation process has always been a focal point for linguists [3; 4; 5; 8; 9]. Scholars' views on some aspects of equivalence theory in the translation process are consistent. Researchers studying the concept of equivalence and its types have been involved not only as translators but also as authors of textbooks and teaching materials on translation. Scholars have identified seven lexical transformations that a translator may use during the translation process. Scholars have made significant contributions to the development of translation theory. Notable works in this field include A. Rechker's «Methodology of Technical Translation» (1934) and «Theory and Practice of Translation» (1974). A. Federov, considered one of the founders of translation theory in the former Soviet Union, was a key figure in Soviet literary translation theory. A. Federov is the author of various works on the theory and practice of translation,

such as «The Art of Translation» (1930), «On Literary Translation» (1941) and «Fundamentals of the General Theory of Translation» (1983).

Scholars discussing the translation process have primarily focused on functional and conceptual translation. The means of achieving equivalence may be functional rather than formal. Therefore, the criterion for a perfect translation is that the result should be as close as possible to the original.

Y. Retsker defines three categories of correspondences in the translation process: equivalent correspondences, variant correspondences, and all types of translation transformations. [8, p. 9].

In essence, the term *equivalent* is defined in two ways. The term *equivalent* is often understood as any form of correspondence to a word or expression within a specific context. However, according to Y. Retsker, this term should also be understood as a constant equivalence that is independent of context. He argues that translation units with constant equivalence in the source language primarily clarify in the translator's mind and help understand the meaning of the surrounding context and the entire expression, even unfamiliar words [8, p. 11]. Moreover, he contends that even in the absence of direct equivalence, the adequate transmission of content is still possible through other means. Equivalents are classified into various categories: full equivalents, partial equivalents, absolute equivalents, and relative equivalents.

What is full equivalence? Full equivalents encompass not just one of the meanings but the entire meaning of the word. Y. Retsker provides the following example of full equivalents: the English word *doctrinarianism* translates to 'доктринерство' in Russian and 'doktrina' in Azerbaijani. It should be noted that when Y. Retsker writes about «equivalents», he always refers to equivalents in the sense of constant equivalence that is independent of context [8, p.45].

Relative Equivalents: Relative equivalents are those that differ in style and expressiveness; for instance, *dirt cheap* can be translated into Russian as 'дешевле пареной репы' and into Azerbaijani as 'buxarda bişmiş şalgamdan daha ucuz'. Another possible equivalent expression in Azerbaijani could be 'worth a penny', which conveys a similar meaning in terms of low value.

Partial equivalents: When talking about partial equivalents, we can show the English word *shadow* as an example. The mentioned lexical unit is 'тень' in the Russian, and its main meaning is 'kölgə' in the Azerbaijani. This is considered partially equivalent. Because *shadow* also has other meanings. It also has the meanings of 'twilight' and 'nightmare'.

Absolute Equivalents: In this type of equivalence, the lexical unit from the source language has a direct counterpart in the target language that carries the exact same semantics. For example, consider the phrase the shadows of the gods. This expression undoubtedly has an absolute equivalent. The absolute

equivalent in Russian is ‘*сумерки богов*’. In Azerbaijani, however, the only acceptable equivalent for this English phrase is ‘*tanrıların alatoranlığı*’. It is important to clarify one point here: if a word has multiple meanings, these potential meanings are not equivalents but rather variant correspondences.

However, the translation specialist discussing equivalent correspondences adds that «when a traditional equivalent correspondence is established between languages, the translator is essentially deprived of the choice. The refusal to use alternatives to the equivalent must be justified by the specific conditions of the context or situation» [7, p. 65]. According to researchers, the creation of equivalents can be more easily studied using the example of translating neologisms. When a new word appears in one language, it is necessary to find the best and, if possible, the most perfect equivalent for it. This corresponding word can be considered an equivalent if it is well understood by readers.

In the book «Fundamentals of General Translation Theory» A. Fedorov refers to Y. Retsker, describing the three categories of justified correspondences identified by Retsker in his article «Justified Correspondences in Native Language Translation»: namely, translation using equivalents, translation using analogues, and translation using adequate substitutions [8, p. 102]. The goal of these various types of translation is the same: to achieve adequate translation.

As mentioned above, equivalents are understood as fixed correspondences that are independent of context. For example, the expression *House of Commons* is always translated into Russian as ‘палата общин’ and into Azerbaijani as ‘İcmalar Palatası’. Similarly, the English term *House of Lords* is translated into Russian as ‘палата лордов’ and into Azerbaijani as ‘Lordlar Palatası’. Thus, these are considered fixed, immutable equivalents. D. Katford adds that in the translation of commonly used terms in scientific and technical literature, equivalents are most frequently employed [6, p. 114]. With the advancement of science and technology, new equivalents for terms are often required, and changes in their meaning and usage are also possible. Consequently, in scientific and technical literature, translators frequently face a challenging task, as they must find appropriate correspondences for many different terms that may not yet have counterparts in the target language and may sometimes even be unfamiliar to them.

Analogues are also used in the translation process. This is sometimes referred to as variant translation.

Using analogues in translation is almost identical to using synonyms. These justified correspondences can be understood as procedures in the translation process. It is also important to note that context plays a crucial role in translation through analogues.

The translator employs the method of adequate substitution, which means that they must rely on the content, ideological direction, and style of the original text to convey the idea accurately. Furthermore, it should be noted that a single type of correspondence may not be sufficient in translating a text; multiple types can be utilized.

The term translation *excellence* (or *adequacy*) has been mentioned several times above, so we need to focus on this term. Excellence is one of the fundamental aspects of translation theory” [1, p. 29].

Excellence in translation involves conveying the content through the characteristics of the form and creating a fully functional stylistic equivalence. In other words, a translation is considered excellent primarily when it achieves functional equivalence with the original and, secondarily, when the translator selects the most appropriate functional tools.

Additionally, it is important to distinguish between *excellence* and *correctness* in scientific literature. Although the terms ‘excellence’ and ‘equivalence’ used by translation scholars are similar, they are also distinct.

The equivalence problem is one of the main issues in translation theory and practice. Linguists' views on equivalence are by no means identical. Thus, V. Komissarov interprets equivalence not as a specific type of regular correspondence, i.e., a one-to-one correspondence between certain units of the source and target languages that is always carried out unambiguously, but rather in a broader sense, as equivalence, which refers to an objectively traceable correspondence between the original and the translation (this concept is close to the notion of adequacy) [7, p. 116-117].

Therefore, the term *equivalence* has been initially proposed in works related to both translation theory and various other linguistic and philological issues as an expression for a constant and unambiguous correspondence between units of the source language and the target language, and it was used in this sense for a long time. However, over time, this term has increasingly begun to be used as a synonym for any correspondence. Currently, it is noted that this term is used in a much broader sense, and its definition has changed considerably.

In translation theory, alongside the term *equivalence*, the term *non-equivalence* is also encountered. Non-equivalence refers to the complete impossibility of finding any correspondence to the original word. In most cases, non-equivalence occurs when translating a purely local event without any correspondence in the culture of the target language, such as words expressing national-specific realities or scientific terms that convey abstract concepts in a particular language.

A. Fedorov adds that «currently, there are a number of lexical units in the Russian language for which it is impossible to find an equivalent» [9, p. 48].

In his opinion, this means «the absence of a precise and permanent lexical correspondence for a specific term; the impossibility of conveying its meaning in context (even through a description, and not in a single word, but in several words); and the fact that it cannot be translated now or in the future». However, A. Fedorov notes that it is incorrect to discuss the untranslatability of something during the translation process. According to him, the key factors here are, first, the content of the context, and second, the analogy with parallel cases. Thus, A. Fedorov explains how equivalents for lexical units in the source language can be found or created in the target language [9, p. 138].

He asserts that, firstly, the content of the context and, secondly, analogy with parallel cases are crucial. Consequently, A. Fedorov concludes that it is inappropriate to speak of «untranslatability» because the meaning of a word can be clarified even in a narrow context during translation [9, p. 138].

The use of non-equivalent vocabulary primarily arises in translations from the languages of different cultures. The Azerbaijani and American nations belong to different cultures, religions, worldviews, and state traditions. The official language of the United States is English. When translating American literature from English – part of the Germanic group of the Indo-European language family – into Azerbaijani, which belongs to the Oghuz group of Turkic languages, certain interesting linguistic phenomena emerge regarding the translation of non-equivalent vocabulary. We would like to explain our views on this matter by examining the Azerbaijani translation of the novel «The Violets of March» by American writer Sarah Jio.

In the novel, we read: «After the kiss, we stood awkwardly, hugging each other – just like Hulk Hogan, who was about to dance with the Fairy Din-Din». A work of fiction is read by all members of society, including intellectuals, peasants, and workers. Naturally, the reference to Hulk Hogan may not be clear to all readers. Therefore, the novel provides an explanation for this specific name. (Hulk Hogan's real name is Terry Gene Bollea, born on August 11, 1953 – an actor and showman. He is a 12 time world champion in the heavyweight division) [2, p. 71]. Better known by his ring name, Hulk Hogan, he is a retired American professional wrestler, actor, TV presenter, entrepreneur, and musician. According to IGN, Hogan is the most famous wrestling star in the world and the most popular wrestler of the 1980s. In fact, although this name is widely recognized, it primarily serves as an indicator of American culture and sport.

As we know, America is considered the birthplace of jazz music. Many of the proper names encountered during the translation process are related to music. For example, «And suddenly, drowning out the roar of the evening waves, music began to flow from the speakers. Nat King Cole's song "When I Fall in Love"» [2, p. 93]. (Nathaniel Adams Coles, an American famous jazz

pianist and singer, passed away in 1965.) The translator provides an explanation of the expression «Nat King Cole», which is used right in the middle of the translated sentence.

I quickly got up. Billie Holiday, with her incomparable voice, was singing «Body and Soul» [2, p. 139]. Billie Holiday, whose real name was Fagan, was an American singer who made exceptional contributions to the development of jazz vocals with her unique singing style. «We danced slowly, incredibly romantically, for a full five minutes under the sounds of 'Ramones,' until my father returned from work»[2, p. 102].

Ramones - an American rock band, one of the pioneers of punk rock.

When translating American literature into Azerbaijani, intercultural differences are more prominently reflected in culinary lexicon.

«Jack entered the living room with two glasses of wine. “Do you like Chardonnay? I absolutely love it!» [2, p. 98]. The translator feels the need to explain that the lexical unit *Chardonnay* refers to a type of wine.

«Jack took me to the dining room, seated me at the table, and brought a salad made with arugula and lobster, topped with parmesan; a dish made with halibut, dill, and béchamel sauce; and freshly baked rolls» [2, p. 99].

The terms *parmesan*, *halibut*, and *béchamel* in the sentence may not be familiar to the reader and are primarily ingredients used in American cuisine. Béchamel sauce (French: sauce béchamel) is a French-origin white sauce. It is particularly used in pasta dishes such as lasagna. This sauce is typically used as the first step when adding other sauces. Considered one of the basic sauces of French cuisine, béchamel is made by combining flour and milk. The consistency of the sauce changes depending on the ratio of flour. The sauce is named after François Pierre La Varenne (1615-1678), who wrote *Le Cuisinier François*, a pioneering culinary book published in 1651.

Halibut refers to fish belonging to the genus Hippoglossus, which are flatfish found in northern seas. Halibut is classified within the phylum Chordata and the class Actinopterygii, specifically in the order Pleuronectiformes and family Pleuronectidae.

Consider the following additional examples that reflect non-equivalent vocabulary in the translation process, particularly with culinary terms: 'Of course, the mocha served in a tall glass was not what I had wished for, but it was still not bad' [2, p. 109].

«Thanking him, I took the salty cracker out of the package and soaked it in the hot, thick soup» [2, p. 107]. A cracker is a type of bread made from fat and flour.

It was already 11 o'clock - it was too early for lunch, but it was the perfect time for a 'Mimosa' cocktail [2, p. 109]. A Mimosa is an alcoholic beverage served after breakfast, made from champagne and orange juice.

After a while, Bi woke up, mixed tonic with gin to make a cocktail, and offered me one as well [2, p. 190]. Tonic is a bitter, non-alcoholic carbonated water. Gin is a type of alcoholic drink first produced in the Netherlands in the mid-1600s by Dr. Franciscus Sylvius de la Boe. The name 'gin' is derived from the Dutch word 'jenever' (juniper), referring to its primary flavor from juniper berries. Gin is a colorless, smooth, aromatic drink obtained through the distillation of a combination of grains, juniper berries, fennel, coriander, angelica, angelica root, licorice, cinnamon, dill, citrus peel, and other plants.

In addition to culinary terms, we also encounter lexical units in American literary texts that express various game names.

When I suggested playing Scrabble to him, not only did he agree, but he also asked with a hint of sarcasm: «Do you really think you can beat me»? [2, p. 187].

Scrabble is a board game that can be played by two to four players, where words are formed from letters on a board with 225 squares.

Thus, in the translation process, both functional and conceptual equivalence are employed. Alongside equivalent vocabulary, various methods are used in the translation of non-equivalent vocabulary, which plays a significant role in the realization of translation that is important for intercultural relations.

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