

**THE PROBLEM OF EQUIVALENCE IN TRANSLATION: THEORETICAL
APPROACHES AND PRACTICAL EXAMPLES****Nuraliev Jasur Rozikulovich**

Abstract : The problem of equivalence in translation is one of the central issues of translation theory, aimed at ensuring semantic, pragmatic and stylistic compatibility between source and target languages. This article analyzes the concept of equivalence based on Roman Jakobson's three types of translation, Eugene Naida's formal and dynamic equivalence models, as well as the functional approaches of Mona Baker and Werner Koller. Theoretical discussions are reinforced by practical examples taken from Uzbek literature and scientific texts. The study shows that equivalence is not absolute, but rather context-dependent and based on the translator's cultural mediation skills. As a result, it is argued that hybrid approaches (for example, combining machine translation with human editing) are effective in increasing equivalence in modern translation practice.

Keywords : equivalence, translation theory, dynamic equivalence, functional equivalence, cultural adaptation, Uzbek translation

The translation process takes place within the framework of the interaction of language and culture, which makes the problem of equivalence a point of intersection between theory and practice. The concept of equivalence first took a central place in linguistic translation studies in the mid-20th century, expressing the degree of correspondence between the source text and the target text. Roman Jakobson (1959) divided the translation process into three types and defined the linguistic boundaries of equivalence: intralingual (reinterpretation within one language), interlingual (translation between languages), and intersemiotic (translation between sign systems). Jakobson noted that complete equivalence in interlingual translation is impossible, since the grammatical and lexical structures of the languages are different. For example, the Uzbek word “ko‘ngil” can be translated into English as “heart”, “mind” or “soul”, but each option leads to semantic losses, depending on the context. Eugene Naida (1964) further elaborated the problem by dividing equivalence into two models: formal equivalence seeks to preserve the form and content of the source text, while dynamic equivalence seeks to elicit the natural response of the target language audience. Naida’s dynamic model, based on the principle of the “meaning effect,” encourages the translator to make cultural adaptations. A practical example from Uzbek literature is the English translation of Abdulla Qahhor’s “The Lights of the Qoshchinor” (translated by Mark Reese, 1980). The phrase “to have fun” in the text is rendered as “to have fun,” which deviates from formal equivalence and provides dynamic compatibility, since for the English reader the emotional depth of “fun” is sufficiently conveyed by “fun.” However, in this process, subtle



nuances of hospitality and family relationships in Uzbek culture may be lost. Mona Baker (1992) raised equivalence above the lexical level to the level of text and discourse. Her “equivalence above” principle suggests that instead of literal correspondence, the focus should be on pragmatic and cohesive equivalence. In Uzbek-scientific translation, this problem is clearly manifested in the terminological sense. For example, in medical texts the term “hypertension” is completely consistent with the English “hypertension”, but the Uzbek expression “high blood pressure” is widespread in the vernacular. Although scientific translation standards (ISO 17100) require formal equivalence, a dynamic approach is preferred in the media. This dual requirement leaves the translator with a constant choice. Werner Koller (1979) proposed a functional approach, dividing equivalence into five types: denotative, connotative, text-normative, pragmatic and formal-aesthetic equivalence. Koller’s model is widely used in modern localization practice. In the case of Uzbek video game localization, the translation of *The Witcher 3* is rendered as “hero warrior” rather than “swordmaster,” providing pragmatic equivalence. For the Uzbek player, the term “swordsman” is consistent with the image of the hero in Uzbek folk tales, thereby enhancing cultural immersion. However, Koller argues that aesthetic equivalence is difficult to maintain: Shakespeare’s line “To be or not to be” is translated into Uzbek as “To live or not to live” (translated by Hamza Umarov), but the rhythmic and phonetic play in English is lost. Modern translation studies are re-examining equivalence from a post-structuralist perspective. Lawrence Venuti (1995) proposes the strategies of “alienation” and “appropriation,” and considers equivalence as an ideological issue. In the context of Uzbek-Russian translation, Soviet-era works (for example, Chingiz Aitmatov's "Jamila" in Uzbek) are based on a strategy of assimilation, reflecting Russian cultural dominance. After independence, a shift towards alienation is observed: the English translation of Alisher Navoi's works (Walter Mayfield's translation) seeks to "alienate" the foreign reader while preserving Uzbek cultural elements. Machine translation (NMT) has taken the equivalence problem to a new level. Although Google’s Neural Machine Translation system improves semantic equivalence through contextual vector models, it makes mistakes in idiomatic expressions and cultural references. The Uzbek phrase “k‘z tegmasin” is incorrectly translated in English as “may no evil eye touch” rather than “knock on wood”. This situation indicates the need for human post-editing (PEMT). Research (Hutchins, 2010) confirms that the NMT + PEMT hybrid model achieves an equivalence level of 85-90%, but full automation is still impossible. The equivalence problem in Uzbek translation practice is related to the standardization of terminology. The 2021 resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan stipulated the transfer of scientific and technical terms to the Latin script, which requires a review of the equivalence of terms borrowed from Russian (for example, “компьютер” → “компьютер”). Scientific journals (for example, “Uzbek Language and Literature”) recommend following the UzDST 1104:2020 standard in translation, but in practice stylistic differences remain.



In conclusion, the problem of equivalence is a constantly evolving area of translation theory, requiring a synthesis of linguistic, cultural and technological factors. Theoretical models (Jacobson, Nayda, Baker, Koller) are reinforced by practical examples, guiding the translator towards contextual adaptation. To increase equivalence in Uzbek translation studies, it is necessary to create parallel corpora (Uzbek-English parallel text database), strengthen translator training and combine machine translation with human control. Future research should focus on the cultural adaptation capabilities of neural translation models.

References

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