

Exploring the Notion of 'Equivalence' in Context of Translation Theories

استقراء مفهوم "التكافؤ" في سياق نظريات الترجمة

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Abstract: This paper is devoted to 'equivalence' as one of the most pivotal and controversial issues in translation studies. Most translation studies' theories are based on 'equivalence' as the most credible criterion for a good translation. Almost every translation comparison study involves a great deal of investigation concerning 'equivalence'. The problem of 'equivalence' is one of the challenges that many studies and writings about translation have dealt with. Therefore, it is considered one of the controversial issues that face translators. Hence, this encouraged many researchers to deal with it, each in his way, to tackle many sides of the problem of finding the closest equivalence, but they are certainly not the only studies that deal with the entire problem. many discussions about 'equivalence' came after the disputatiousness concerning the matter of finding ways to distinguish between 'literal' and 'free' translations in both: form and content.

Key words: 'equivalence in translation', formal equivalence', 'dynamic equivalence', 'full equivalence', ' approximate equivalence', 'natural and directional Equivalence'.

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Equivalence is such a highly problematic and controversial issue in translation field. It is an important notion in translation theories; therefore, theorists in the field of translation studies are interested in studying and examining this notion in order to discover its effect on the way a translator deals with a text. 'Equivalence' is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as the quality or state of having the same value, function, and meaning. When it comes to language and translation, however, it becomes ambiguous, vague, and open to various interpretations, in contrast to its exact meaning in logic and mathematics. The word 'equivalence' represents a main terminological ambiguity; contrary to the other fields like scientific ones, the term "equivalence" has a precise meaning, but remains vague somehow and goes under many interpretations when it is used in the language and translation field. The issue is whether we can define translation equivalence in terms of sameness or simply as a form of approximation.

'Equivalence' is a key notion in linguistics-based translation theories; it can be traced back to Cicero and later to Renaissance theories that began postulating languages of equal status. Despite its applicability, relevance, and definition in the field of translation theory, 'equivalence' is still regarded as the central issue in translation which provokes heated debate and

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controversial issues. Since no two languages, even if they were twin sisters in the same family, share identical grammar and lexical equivalence in the sense of absolute synonymy and still bringing identical equivalence is a question that is far from being realizable. The most achievable aim that translators can come to is to be as close as possible to the original.

'Equivalence', as a commonly misused term in translation studies, does not imply 'sameness' or 'synonymy' between any two texts (ST and TT). In terms of grammar, lexis, and meaning, two languages cannot be completely interchangeable. 'Equivalence' is a major terminological ambiguity in translation. As a philosophical construct, the concept of 'equivalence' is sometimes ambiguous, misleading, and open to various interpretations.

Taking into consideration that, the target text is equivalent to the source text in many debates among translation theorists in distinguishing between 'literal translation' and 'free translation', as well as the differentiation between 'form' and 'content'. According to George Monan, despite all these conceptions that have emerged about equivalence, it still represents a major topic in discussions, studies, and research. According to Jermy Munday, equivalence is the description and explanation of the relationship between the source text and the target text, which is measured and analyzed by five elements: (1) the writing and editing of words, whether they

are sentences or texts; (2) analyzing the lexical meaning, whether the meaning is explicit or implicit; (3) the effect of communication caused by free equivalence; (4) the similarity of the linguistic characteristics caused by formal equivalence, (5) the status, which is the aim of functional equivalence (Munday, 2008).

Many suggestions about equivalence and its categories were stated among translation theorists. Some of them, such as Jacobson in his 1959 book *The Linguistic Aspect of Translation*, attribute the origin of equivalence back to mathematics, as it is used to indicate the symmetry of value in the mathematical equation. Hence, some translation theorists praised the idea that equivalence refers to an analogy relationship between the data in the source text and another in the target text without a major change. While others opposed this concept of equivalence due to the examples of Snell Hornby who considers that the use of 'equivalence' in this way is unacceptable because there is no identity of equivalence between the source text and the target text which means that there is no complete and absolute equivalence, considering that 'equivalence' is a fixed and mysterious concept (Jacobson, 1959).

In the field of 'Applied Linguistics', most definitions of translation have referred to 'equivalence' in many forms. These

are some of these definitions: 'Interlingual translation' define it as the *replacement* of elements of one language, the domain of translation, by *equivalent elements* of another language, the range [of translation]. (Oettinger 110). Translation may be defined as follows: the *replacement* of *textual material* in one language (Source Language, SL) by *equivalent material* in another language (Target Language, TL). (Catford, 1965, p.20).

Translation consists of 'reproducing' in the receptor language the closest natural 'equivalent' of the source-language message. (Nida and Taber 1969, p. 12; cf. Nida) 1959, p. 33). [Translation] is a switch from a source-language text to a target-language text; that is as close to an 'equivalent' as possible and presupposes an understanding of the content and style of the original (Wilss. 1982, p. 62).

. Close examination reveals that some theories suppose pre-existing equivalents and are thus interested in finding "natural" equivalence. On the other hand, other theories propose that translators actively create equivalents and are thus interested in "directional" equivalence. The first is concerned with what languages ideally do in the first place, and this comes prior to translation; the second focuses on what languages can do after they have been translated. These two approaches are frequently

confused, resulting in numerous misunderstandings as well as biased criticisms of the concept of equivalence.

Translation theorists in the second half of the twentieth century mostly dealt with this type of problem in the context of structuralists' linguistics. There was a line of thought leading from Wilhelm von Humboldt to Edward Sapir and Benjamin Franklin. Different languages, according to Whorf, expressed different worldviews. Whorf's vision is linked to that of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who, in the early twentieth century, explained how languages come together to form systems that are only relevant in terms of the distinctions between the terms.

The problem of 'equivalence' in translation practices began with the translation of religious and literary works. The translator was compared to a role inferior to that of the author of the original work (Bassnett, 2002, p. 147). The translation was regarded as a derivative work. During the 1950s and 1960s, as linguistics became a major discipline, the idea of equivalence dominated translation studies, which led to the appearance of some linguistic approaches to translation, such as the theories proposed by Nida (1964) and Catford (1965). These linguistic approaches urged an investigation of the equivalence between expressions in the source and target languages.

Van De Broek (1978) states, "It is the precise definition of equivalence in mathematics that forms the main obstacle to its use in translation theory. The properties of a strict equivalence relationship (symmetry, transitivity, and reflectivity) do not apply to the translation relationship. "He opposes considering translation equivalence in terms of linguistic synonyms. He sees that complete equivalence of communicative effect" is unattainable and does not exist.

Gorjan sees that translators could try as much as they can to come close to the original, but they cannot achieve complete equivalence. Therefore, no matter how qualified a translator is, he /she ends up with a completely identical rendering of the original. Hence, equivalence cannot be defined in terms of sameness but rather should be defined or viewed as being an approximate rendering of a text.

Taha Abdel Rahman mentions a very serious issue that occurs in translating terms; which leads to a misunderstanding of terms and concepts. Translators ignore the possible discrepancies between the linguistic connotation and the idiomatic connotation. This ignorance leads to using an equivalence that lacks the relation between the linguistic meaning and the idiomatic meaning in a way that affects the translation process.

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An example of the mis-equivalence between the original term and its equivalent used by Descartes is the word "intuition" with its equivalent "الحدس," which in the Arabic language means an intellectual abstract meaning, which is "thinking or guessing," while it is translated as if "intuition" lacks the meaning of vision. Taha Abdel Rahman suggests that it is best translated as "الإستبصار" because it is more suitable and more significant to the meaning. Thus, there is no way to ignore the linguistic connotations of a term (Abdel Rahman, 1994).

Thus, achieving a complete equivalence of both form and content is, to some extent, an unattainable task. A translator faces challenges in which one must be abandoned for the other to be preserved. Campbell sees that "in addition to making sense, translations also convey the spirit and manner of the original" (Nida 19). Savory (1957), in "The Art of Translation," presents an attempt to solve the problematic issue of equivalence, by resorting to two contrasting pairs:

*A translation should render the words of the original.

*A translation should render the ideas of the original.

Thus, the translator is faced with a dilemma wherein he will have to hardly reproduce the linguistic form and content as well as the semantic content of the ST language. Nida postulates

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that 'equivalence' solely lies in "producing in the receptor language and the closest natural equivalent to the message of the SL, first, in meaning and secondly, in style" (Nida 19). In this way, it is in Nida's definition that translation equivalence could be achieved in two stages, one at the stylistic level and the other at the semantic level. This stage is named by Meschonnic as a "literalization phase" or "poetization phase" (Meschonnic, 1973, 58).

In addition, Nida's theory talks about two types of equivalence: 'formal' and 'dynamic' equivalences. 'Formal equivalence' focuses its attention on the message, while 'dynamic equivalence' is oriented toward the receptor response. Although Nida has made significant contributions to the field of translation, his role focuses on 'Bible translation', which means that it is a limited one. Because the translation process varies depending on the type of text, his theory cannot be fully applied when translating other works of creative literature.

The problem in translation simply resides in the fact that both the substance and the style are already present in the original, and as a result, the translator will have to try his best to recreate them as they are in a very different language," explains Zhongde (1991). Zhongde sees 'equivalence' as the major issue with translating literary prose; translators try to use equivalence

methodologies, considering that the term 'equivalence' has many different meanings, including being a prerequisite for translation, a barrier to the growth of translation studies, and a useful category for examining translations. Sometimes it is "damaging" or "irrelevant" (Zhongde, 1991, P. 7). Language building blocks, including morphemes, words, phrases, sentences, idioms, and proverbs, are under the domain of 'equivalence'.

The term "stylistic equivalence" is further defined by Popovic in the discussion of his four types of translation equivalence as a situation where "functional; equivalence of elements in both the original and translation strive for an identity with an invariant of identical meaning". However, Popovic's assumption is debatable in the following ways: Any change in what Popovic refers to as 'variants' or 'shifts in the expression' affects coherence, which, as a reader-motivated standard of textuality, connects the elements of a text to one another; This modifies the so-called "invariant core of meaning" and it is affected by the change.

In addition, the supposedly "invariant" finds expression in variants; as a result, the meaning varies as the form of expression does. Such changes, no matter how little or insignificant, cast doubt on the notion of describing any textual

parts as having the attribute of "invariance." Since Popovic thinks that a text's semantic elements are stable and consistent, he is searching for "an invariant of identical meaning" across languages. However, it is impossible to achieve or establish identical meanings across languages; unless a relationship of symmetry holds between them (Snell-Hornby, 1988, p. 16).

A key principle of structuralist approaches to translation, such as those suggested by Nida (1964), Catford (1965), Larson (1983), and many others, is Popovic's notion that the semantic components of a text are stable and constant. This underlying presumption has three key ramifications: (1) that text is a finite product; (2) that meaning is stable and consistent; and (3) that the semantic components endure translation unchanged. All of the implications are debatable and, in reality, not true. In its purest form, language is an interpretation of the physical universe. Therefore, every written work contains the author's interpretation of the world or another interpretation of language (Fairclough, 1989, p. 80).

Popovic divides equivalence in his book *Theory of Artistic Equivalence* into four sections: (1) Linguistic equivalence; (2) Paradigmatic Equivalence (3) Stylistic equivalent; and (4) Textual equivalent. The identity of the expressed message between the source text and the target text

appears through this distinction. Therefore, whenever a translator moves away from suitable and rigorous equivalence, the problem of equivalence appears clearly.

1- **Linguistic Equivalence**, where there is 'homogeneity' on the linguistic level of both SL and TL texts, (word-for-word translation).

2- **Paradigmatic Equivalence**, where there is an equivalence of 'the elements of a paradigmatic expressive axis', (elements of grammar), which Popovic puts as a higher category than lexical equivalence.

3- **Stylistic Equivalence**, where there is 'functional equivalence' of elements in both original and translation.

4- **Textual (syntagmatic) Equivalence**, where there is equivalence of (the syntagmatic structuring of a text) and equivalence of (form and shape) (Popovic, 1975, 32).

Koller (1979) also added another classification of equivalence:(1) Denotative Equivalence, (2) Connotative Equivalence, (3) Formal Equivalence, (4) Pragmatic Equivalence and (5) Text-Normative Equivalence.

Despite the emergence of the problem of 'equivalence' on the surface in translation works, professional linguists and translation theorists overstretched it by competing in defining

and distinguishing it in a way that labels differ more than the functional form of equivalence. For example, as opposed to the division that Popovic created, Eugene Nida distinguishes equivalence into two types:

(1) **'Formal Equivalence'**, in which Nida focuses on transferring the same message in the same form and context. Nida calls for this type of translation 'Interpretation' that is, a clarification that was intended for the receptor to get a full understanding of the source text as much as possible. The second type is the (2) **'Dynamic Equivalence'** in which, he focused on the ability of the equivalent effect, he meant by that the similarities between the receptor of the source text and the receptor of the target text.

Furthermore, Catford (1965) argued that for translation to occur, a certain condition must be present; both source and target texts must be related to the functionally relevant features of the situation's substance, and those that are functionally relevant are also those that are relevant to the text's communicative function in that situation (Catford, 1965, 94). Equivalences in the unbounded translation are not restricted to a specific rank; they can occur at any level, including clauses, sentences, and other levels. Catford's suggestion about

'translation shifts' is based on the distinction between 'formal correspondence' and 'textual equivalence'. However, despite being a useful tool in comparative linguistics, one of the problems with 'formal correspondence' and 'textual equivalence' is that it appears to be irrelevant or unrelated in terms of (translational) equivalence between ST and TT (Catford, 1965, 28).

Catford considers 'equivalence' as a basic phenomenon in translation on both; the theoretical and practical levels. He also determines conditions and distinguishes between two types:

Textual Equivalence:

focuses on the potential of finding an equivalent for the source text in the target language.

Formal Equivalence:

which focuses on replacing the linguistic elements in the source language with elements that are compatible with themes in the target language, according to the general system that governs the two languages.

In dealing with the problem of 'equivalence', it is found that theorists take turns naming and classifying the types of equivalence with the same characteristics and approaches

despite their different visions. For example, partially, Koller's 'Connotative Equivalence' is similar to 'Semantic Equivalence' in terms of word relations, considering that, this approach is considered the most appropriate strategy (Koller, 1979). 'Referential Equivalence' is also implicit in Naida's classification, which was distinguished by him to enable the translator to process the source text and the target text by putting the same facts and references as the source text. Whereas 'Functional Equivalence' is intended to enable the translator to translate linguistic and cultural elements with a good context in the target language, as it is the best strategy for translating terms and examples.

Eugene Nida's 'dynamic equivalence' is an influential variant. It is based on the 'principle of equivalent effect', which states that 'the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which exists between the original receptors and the message.' Nida's view does have real attractions (Nida & Taber, 1982, 159); he devotes much of his research to meaning in both its semantic and pragmatic aspects in his work on 'Bible translation,' for instance. He rejects the idea that word meanings are unchangeable and proposes a more dynamic approach to meaning. He believes that the context and culture in which words are used determine

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their meanings. Nida differentiates it into three types: linguistic meaning, referential meaning, and emotional meaning (Nida, 1982, p. 38).

'Dynamic equivalent translation' is essential, and translators generally, and 'prose translators', in particular, should clearly grasp it. According to translation theorists, 'dynamic equivalence' is a translation code that directs translators to reproduce the original's content in a way that readers of the target language will undoubtedly find the text engaging, just as they do when reading the source language. According to Taber (1982), when the form of the original text is changed, the message is maintained and the translation is faithful as long as the change complies with the rules of back transformation in the source language, contextual consistency in the transfer, and transformation in the receptor language (Taber, 1982, p. 200).

It is clearly stated that "dynamic equivalence" in translation involves much more than just accurate information transfer. According to Nida, the phrase "the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message" is used to define a 'dynamic equivalent translation'. Notably, three key features are included in this definition: 1) Equivalence, which refers to the source-language message; 2) Natural, which refers to the receptor language; and 3) Closest, which "binds the two

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orientations together based on the highest degree of speculation.

'Natural' denotes three aspects of communication: a natural description should be appropriate for the audience members who speak the receptive language as well as the entire receptive language and culture. As a result, there should be no obvious indication that the translation was made somewhere else. The bold line that follows demonstrates that the translator serves as both a 'recipient' and a 'sender.'

Writer-book-recipient →→→ translator- book-recipient

While Catford states 'dynamic equivalence' as what he calls 'formal correspondence' and makes a distinction for it from 'textual equivalence', he states that "a formal correspondence is any TL category that it may be said to occupy. As nearly as possible, the same place in the economy of the TL as the given category occupies in the SL" (Catford, 1965, p. 56).

Consequently, this type of equivalence achieves matching on the structural level between the SL and TL (literal translation) by maintaining the syntactic and lexical structures of the original text. On the other hand, translation equivalence could be oriented to the receptors of the TL. In this case, translation produces a TL text that is coherent with the receptor's culture by dealing with the "foreignness" of the

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original text. Thus, the result corresponds to all: idioms, lexicon, and grammar.

Kelly and Nida both agree on naming this second type 'dynamic equivalence'. Nida states that it is "based on the principle of equivalence effect, which means that the relation between receiver and message should aim to be the same as that between the original receiver and the source message".

According to Nida, equivalence can be categorized into three categories:

- 1- Full Equivalence**
- 2- Almost full equivalence**
- 3- Approximate equivalence**

It is considered a 'full equivalence' when the two positions of the translated part are identical. It is considered to be full also when the two expressions: the original and its equivalence, are matching in their brevity, redundancy, and semantics, and the effect it made upon the reader's positions, especially those concerning proverbs, sayings, or speeches, is not always similar, so it can be collected in an editable list. The next example is a model of what is called 'full equivalence':

Birds of a feather fly (go) together '

الطيور على أشكالها تقع

in translation of equivalents, its positions are the same, and the symbols that are used are the same too (birds طيور). While '**almost full equivalence**' is presented in expressing the same position using different symbol in a way that achieves full equivalence between the original and the translated as it is in the full- equivalence except for the symbol. For example:

Like a bull in China shop

كالبعير في سوق الحرير

Here positions are the same while symbols are different from that of the TL. bull بغير China shop سوق الحرير

And '**Approximate Equivalence**' is equivalence in which positions or what may indicate it letting alone the symbolic and rhetorical considerations like the following example:

As you make your bed, so you must lie**Or As you sow, so shall you reap**

يمكن ترجمتها كالتالي:

- كما تدين تدان
- الأيام دول
- كل بما جنت يداه
- وتلك الأيام نداولها بين الناس
- أعمالكم عمالكم
- كما تكونوا يولى عليكم
- من أعمالكم سلط عليكم
- وإلى غير ذلك

This categorization enlarges the choices of the translator and encourages his/her innovation methodologically.

There is another type of 'equivalence' in which the translator switches between 'equivalence' and 'adaptation' techniques by expressing a position that does exist in the TL but does not have the same features, which leads the translation to oscillate between equivalence and adaptation. A clear example is as follows:

...that he shall wear the mark of the king

The difference in translating the sentence " the mark of the king into (semaat شارات الشرف، سمات sharat asharaaf ، wessam (وسام) " shows- to some extent- the swing switching between the

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two techniques because the rituals of royal system of the Arabian civilization is totally different from that of the western one, which justifies the production of three different terms for the same word (mark) to three different terms in the Arabic language:

(شارة الشرف / Sharat Asharaf / وسام / Wessam / سمات / Semaat).

The problem of 'equivalence' simply resides in the fact that both the substance and the style are already present in the original, and as a result, the translator will have to try his best to recreate them as they are in a very different language," explains Zhongde (1991). Zhongde sees 'equivalence' as the major issue with translating literary prose; translators try to use equivalence methodologies, considering that the term 'equivalence' has many different meanings, including being a prerequisite for translation, a barrier to the growth of translation studies, and a useful category for examining translations. Sometimes it is "damaging" or "irrelevant" (Zhongde 7). Language building blocks, including morphemes, words, phrases, sentences, idioms, and proverbs, are under the domain of equivalence.

Natural and Directional Equivalence:

Based on the previously mentioned theories of equivalence, here are some of the arguments that were aroused to investigate the next points: Some translation theorists focused on

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the level of language use (parole) rather than the language system. Theorists disagreed with Saussure's claim that there could be no systematic scientific study of parole. Werner Koller (1979), for example, was completely unconcerned about the warning. It would be a huge step forward if something like 'equivalence' could be demonstrated and analyzed. There were also systems that were not limited to language.

On the other side, others stressed that translation works on texts which have many linguistic layers and do not work on isolated words. John Catford (1965) pointed out that 'equivalence' need not to be on all these layers at once, but could be “rank-bound”. Thus, it might be strived for equivalence to the phonetics of a text, to the lexis, to the phrase, to the sentence, to the semantic function, and so on. This was a comprehensive and dynamic theory of equivalence. Another related approach which focused more on lexical semantics, was to make a list of all the functions and values associated with a source-text item, and then see how many of them were duplicated in the target-side counterpart.

Each of those concepts was problematic in its own way. However, they all named or implied an equivalence relation, and they did so in a way that defended the existence of translation

against structuralist linguistics. Their debate should not be underestimated.

Directional vs. Natural equivalence:

The terms "directional" and "natural" are used to describe the various concepts used by translation theories; they are not words used by the theories themselves. Nonetheless, they assist in making sense of a rather perplexing point. The majority of structuralist linguistics' questions concerned purely natural equivalence. For instance, when "the universal bad-luck days" are mentioned as an example, for that linguistic paradigm, there should be no difference in terms of the source and those of the target. For the above definitions of translation, on the other hand, equivalence was something that happens as a result of a directional change. They took a very different approach to the concept. The use of the word "directionality" was perhaps the most profound way which the structuralists linguistics problem was solved. However, in order to comprehend this, naturalistic theories should be understood first.

Strategies for maintaining natural equivalence:

What is meant by naturalism is to feel that translations are not translated. Natural equivalents do exist, but rarely in a state of unchanged nature. They are most frequently the group of

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terminologies, of artificially standard words that are made to correspond to each other exactly. Most specialized fields of culture and knowledge have their own terminologies; this creates “natural” equivalents in an unnatural way. Vinay and Darbelnet try as much as possible to avoid the artificially imposed glossaries. On the other hand, they are seeking equivalents characterized as “natural” precisely because they have supposedly developed without interference from translators and linguists.

Vinay and Darbelnet define seven general strategies that can be used in natural translation, but not all of them are good methods for achieving natural equivalence. For example, when there was no natural equivalent for the ST sentence, they overlook the use of loans and calques, which are directional by definition. They recommended "literal translation," or word-for-word translation, while emphasizing that their directionality could result in unnatural results.

The most important strategies of key interest to Vinay and Darbelnet were 'transposition' and 'modulation': the first, "transposition" means switching of grammatical categories and the second, 'modulation' means adjustments that are made for different discursive conventions. While the other two strategies concerning naturalism are: 'correspondence' and 'adaptation'. In

order to attain semantic sameness, these are the main ways in which linguistic changes could be made

Natural equivalence theories are a little hazy when it comes to how it works. They typically assume that there is some aspect of reality or thought (a referent, a function, or a message) that exists outside of all languages and to which two languages can refer. As a result, the translator moves from the source text to this thing, and then from this thing to the target text. Natural translations are generated only when one goes straight from the source text to the target text, For, the ultimate aim is to find the most idealistic natural equivalence and this aim could be achieved through the pre-translational equivalent that brings all features of the meaning to be expressed. Naturalistic approaches exert little effort to find translation; there is not much analysis of different types of translation, or of translators having different aims. Those things have somehow been decided by equivalence itself. The translation is simply translation. However, for directional equivalence, that is not always the case.

Strategies for attaining 'directional equivalence':

This means what remains the same and what is different after the transition from the ST to TT. Most theories that work within this sub-paradigm are not considered strategies, but

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different types of equivalence. These strategies are concerned with different types of translation, which amounts, as much as possible; to matching the same meaning, since each translator translates quite differently depending on the level at which h/she wants equivalence to work effectively.

As mentioned previously, several theories on this point are based on Nida's two kinds of equivalence, some of them presented as a straight dichotomy. This simply means (you can translate one way or the other). or “dynamic equivalence” (trying to recreate the function the words might have had in their original situation) (Pym, 1997, 282-283).

It is noted that Nida’s definitions of translation claim to be seeking a “natural” equivalent. At one stage he maneuvered with Chomsky’s idea of “kernel phrases”. Nida, however, was pointing to translating the Bible into the languages of non-Christian cultures. What “natural” equivalent should find the name of Jesus or God in a language where they have never been mentioned? Whatever solution is found, it will probably concern a directional notion of equivalence, not a natural one, an ideology of naturalness has been used in this case to cover the idea that the purpose of translation is to make intercultural change.

Theories of directional equivalence permit translators to select whether to render one aspect or another of the source text. Hence, there is no certain assumption of a “natural” equivalent. In *On Translation Studies* for the theorist Werner Koller; equivalents are what translators produce (Pym, 1997). By default, equivalents do not exist prior to the act of translation (cf. Stecconi,1994). Moreover, Koller states that there is no necessary restriction to just two types of equivalence. An equivalent can be found for as many parts or levels of a source text as are considered relevant to the ST. He suggests five frames for equivalence relations: **(1)- denotative** (based on extra-linguistic factors), **(2) - connotative** (based on the way the source text is expressed, **(3)- text-normative** (respecting or changing textual and linguistic norms), **(4)- pragmatic** (with respect to the receiver of the target text) and **(5)- formal** (the formal-aesthetic qualities of the source text). (Pym 283). These frames suggest that the translator chooses the type of equivalence that is most appropriate to the prevailing function of the source text.

Snell-Hornby criticized the concept of equivalence as presenting “an illusion of symmetry between languages” (Snell-Hornby, 1988, 22). This criticism might be true of natural equivalence (especially if tied to an ideology of “natural” usage), but it barely holds for theories of directional equivalence.

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Theories that support natural equivalence were analyzing languages in the first place, battling within the paradigm of structuralist linguistics. On the other hand, directional theories, were working very much at the level of creative language use, in keeping with attempts to analyze parole rather than language.

Within the equivalence paradigm, directional theories have been the most active. This is because they enclose translation and treat it as a dynamic process. However, it faced some opposition: The German theorist Julian House (1977, P. 97) refers to overt and covert translations. Christiane Nord (1988, 1997, PP. 47–52) prefers documentary and instrumental translations.

The theorist Gideon Toury (1995) talks about translations being adequate (to the source text) or appropriate (to the circumstances of reception); the American theorist Lawrence Venuti (1995) opposes resistance to fluent translations. Lying behind all of these, it is found that the early nineteenth-century German preacher and translator Friedrich Schleiermacher (1813) argued that translations could be either foreignization or domestication (Pym, 1998, P. 285). All these oppositions with all being slightly different, all in Schleiermacher's description of two possible actions: either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward that author, or

the translator leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author toward that reader.

These oppositions are considered to operate within the equivalence paradigm. In all cases, the two methods to translate can both represent some aspect or function of the source. The first term of each opposition resembles that of Nida's "formal equivalence"; the second term would incorporate some degree of the "dynamic equivalence". So, through the centuries, translation theorists would be saying the same thing over and over.

In the end, the problem is still under discussion and not solved yet, the purpose is not to support the hypothetical return to the equivalence paradigm, but instead to eliminate some of the more frequent misunderstandings related to the term. To be more specific, the idea that equivalence means domestication that is opposed to creativity, or that it only comes in one version of them. It should be understood that one concept may be able to tackle problems quite different from those it was established for.

Conclusion:

Despite the controversial discussions concerning the definition of equivalence, equivalence in a language cannot be defined in terms of identity and synonymy. Language is an

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extremely complex system with a wide range of features, some of which are related to language structure, while others are beyond this range, such as social and cultural background, which can be considered as extra-linguistic features. Since no two languages have the same structure or social and cultural background, identical equivalence in translation is considered an impossible goal in the same way.

Regardless of how eagerly the translator strives for full equivalence, h/she will never be able to achieve complete, identical equivalence to the original. As a result, translation equivalence should be regarded as a type of approximation of a text from an SL to a TL.

Looking closely at the definitions, in each one, the term "equivalent" describes only one side, the target one. The processes ("replace," and "reproduce") are entirely directional: translation goes from one side to the other, but not back again. Here a question could be raised: what is the target-side 'equivalent' actually equivalent to, there is a spectrum of interesting answers: "language elements," "the message," "source-language text," and "textual material." the theories in this paradigm would seem to agree (target-side equivalents, directionality) but not on others (the nature of the thing to translate).

Thus, fulfilling a complete equivalence of both form and content is, to some extent, an unattainable task, for, actually, in a translation process, the translator faces challenges in which one must be abandoned so that the other is preserved. Campbell sees that "in addition to making sense, translations also convey the spirit and manner of the original" (see Nida 19).

Weinreich suggests that "the semantic mapping of each language is different from that of all other languages.". Thus, the theoretical principles of Campbell & Tytler indicate the difficulty of the translation process because of the spirit and manner of the original text, which gives a complete transcript of the ideas of the original and at the same time has "all the ease of the original" text. This seems to be an unattainable achievement. Nevertheless, Tytler's and Campbell's views are significant only so far as they serve as a definition or a description of the ideal translation. They cannot be considered guidelines in the actual translation process because of the suggestion that "no two languages are identical either in the meaning given to corresponding symbols or in how such symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences" (Nida, 1982, p. 156). Therefore, the translator must differentiate between formal and

functional equivalents and decide which one should be preserved according to the function assigned to the translation.

Since the translation process is a process of reproduction of the original text while attaining the closest meaning and effect; this act of reproduction involves various challenges and frequently does not occur immediately because translation is a process of reproducing the original text while achieving the closest meaning and effect. The fundamental problem with these challenges for the translator is deciding which translation unit in the source text to concentrate on to find equivalence in the target language text. Based on the previous investigations, it is admitted that the SL message 'absolute fidelity' does not guarantee a successful translation. On the contrary, it may cause ambiguity or awkwardness in the translation.

Thus, 'formal equivalence' should not be a word-for-word rendering (undynamic equivalence) of the SL text, but rather to find an 'equivalent' that has the same stylistic function as that of the original. To do that, the translator should avoid awkward or ambiguous renderings of the source text's meaning or message; so, he or she should be independent as long as independence permits and not stick blindly to the original text.

In the same vein, "dynamic equivalence" is what the translator always strives for whenever the original material has a different cultural background, which might make it difficult to translate words for words. The source text message would retain its stylistic appeal of "dynamic equivalence" in this situation and would not solely focus on attempting to adapt "the semantic essence" with "stylistic elements" that are equivalent to those utilized in the original text.

Thus, the translation process has 'formal' and 'dynamic' equivalences with simultaneous relevancy; the formal equivalence is "dynamic" in the sense that it is not a 'word for word' translation. Nevertheless, it is also a transposition of the source text's textual elements from their stylistic norm to an equivalent stylistic norm in the target language. On the other hand, 'dynamic equivalence' is "formal," as its goal is to deliver the communicative effect of the source language with structural elements equivalent to those of the source language.

Therefore, dynamic and formal equivalences are both considered as two interrelated phases of the same process. The translator needs them both to finish his or her translation task. He cannot be restricted only to one of them, and if he did so, the result would be a translation version that might lose its stylistic appeal and/or its communicative effect compared to the original.

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The issue of equivalence continues to be a major topic in research, and there is still room for discussions and debates among translation theorists. Hence, this led to a great deal of development that paved the way for theorizing and handling.

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