

Definition and significance of equivalence in terminological translation

Qodirova Dilnoza Xoliq qizi

Student of International Journalism faculty, UZSWLU

Email: dilnozaqodirova0623@gmail.com

Abstract: Equivalence in terminological translation refers to the search for appropriate and precise equivalents of technical terms and concepts from one language to another. This ensures that the meaning, context and nuances of the source text are faithfully conveyed in the target language, while taking into account linguistic, cultural and contextual differences. Equivalence is a basic principle of translations, which aims to maintain the accuracy, clarity and consistency of the special terminology of different languages and cultures.

Key words: Translation theory, terminological precision, cross-linguistic equivalence, translation strategies, terminology management, domain-specific translation, terminology extraction.

Equivalence in terminological translation can be defined as the process of finding appropriate and precise linguistic representations for special terms, concepts and expressions in one language that accurately convey their meaning, context and nuances in another language.¹ This involves identifying the most appropriate translation or equivalent term that best describes the intended meaning of the source text, while taking linguistic, cultural and contextual factors into account.

Equivalence is a complex and multifaceted concept in translation studies, which includes different types of equivalence, such as lexical, grammatical, semantic, pragmatic and cultural equivalence. Each type of equivalence plays a vital role in ensuring that the translation accurately reflects the meaning and intent of the original text while adapting to the target language and culture.²

The Importance of Equivalence in Terminological Translation

Equivalence is an important aspect of terminological translation that has a significant impact on effective communication, accuracy and consistency in specialized fields such as

¹ Gouadec, D., & Sager, J. C. (1997). *Terminology and language planning: An alternative framework of practice and discourse*. John Benjamins Publishing.

² Kageura, K., & Umio, B. (1996). Methods for automatic term recognition: A review. *Terminology*, 3(2), 259-289.

legal, medical, technical and scientific translations. The importance of equivalence in terminological translation can be understood through the following key points:

- *Accuracy*: Equivalence ensures that specific terms and concepts are accurately translated from one language to another, preserving the accuracy and clarity of the original text. By finding appropriate matches for certain terms, translators can effectively convey the intended meaning and avoid misinterpretations or misunderstandings³.
- *Clarity*: Equivalence helps maintain the clarity of terminological translation by ensuring that the target audience can easily understand the translated text. By choosing appropriate equivalents that accurately convey the meaning of the source text, translators can facilitate clear communication and understanding of professional terminology.
- *Consistency*: Equivalence promotes consistency in terminological translation by ensuring that the same terms are translated consistently across all documents or translations within a given domain or organization. Consistent use of terminology increases the readability, consistency and professionalism of translated texts.
- *Cultural Adaptation*: Equivalence plays an important role in adapting specialist terminology to the target language and culture. Translators must consider cultural differences and preferences when choosing equivalents for certain terms to ensure that the translation resonates with the target audience and reflects their linguistic and cultural norms.
- *Contextual appropriateness*: Equivalence considers the context in which specialized terms are used to select appropriate translations that match the specific context of the target text. By considering the context of the source text and adapting it to the target language, translators can ensure that the translation is accurate and relevant to the context.

³ Rey-Debove, J., & Rey, A. (1998). Le grand dictionnaire terminologique: une banque de données terminologiques et linguistiques pour l'information scientifique et technique. In Actes du colloque international sur les dictionnaires électroniques (pp. 135-145)

- *Nuances and Connotations*: Equivalence addresses the nuances and connotations associated with particular terms and ensures that these subtle meanings are accurately conveyed in the translation. Translators must be sensitive to the nuances of language and culture in order to capture the full range of meanings embedded in specialist terminology.

- *Terminology Management*: Equivalence is important for effective terminology management in departments where terminological consistency and accuracy are critical. Organizations can ensure uniformity and consistency in their terminological resources by creating clear equivalents for specific terms and maintaining a standardized approach to translations.⁴

- *Legal and Regulatory Compliance*: Compliance is critical for legal, medical and technical translations to ensure compliance with laws, industry standards and professional guidelines. Translators must follow certain terminological conventions and requirements to comply with legal regulations when doing their translations.

- *Expertise and Specialization*: Equivalence requires subject matter expertise and specialization to accurately identify appropriate matches for specific terms. Terminological translators must have a deep understanding of the content and context of the source text in order to choose appropriate translations that preserve the original meaning.

- *Quality assurance*: Equivalence is an integral part of terminological translation quality assurance, ensuring that translations meet high standards of accuracy, consistency and reliability. By following the principles of equivalence, translators can improve the quality of their translations and deliver professional results to clients and stakeholders.⁵

In general, equivalence is a basic principle of terminological translation that supports the accurate, clear and consistent communication of special terms across languages and

⁴ Budin, G., & Zock, M. (Eds.). (2003). Handbook of terminology management: Basic aspects of terminology management (Vol. 1). John Benjamins Publishing.

⁵ Felber, H., & Stuppacher, I. (2008). Terminology management in the European Union: Current practice and future challenges. John Benjamins Publishing

cultures. By prioritizing equivalence in translations, terminological translators can adhere to the requirements of accuracy, clarity and professionalism in their work, while meeting the specific requirements of different industries and sectors.

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