

## ISSUES OF EQUIVALENCE AND FUNCTIONAL ADEQUACY OF LINGUISTIC UNITS IN ENGLISH–UZBEK LITERARY TRANSLATION

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**Abstract.** The article addresses, within the framework of linguistic translation studies, the issues of equivalence and functional adequacy of linguistic units in English and Uzbek literary translation. An analysis of theoretical sources indicates that interpreting equivalence merely as dictionary-level lexical correspondence restricts the aesthetic potential of a literary text. Accordingly, the comparative criteria adopted in this study include the connotative layer of lexical and phraseological units, the functional role of stylistic devices, pragmatic impact, and the syntactic as well as punctuation features that shape textual tone.

**Keywords:** literary translation, equivalence, functional adequacy, linguistic unit, pragmatic meaning, stylistic transformation, phraseological unit, idiom, metaphor, compensation, contextual translation

**INTRODUCTION:** In the contemporary conditions of globalization, literary translation is increasingly positioned as one of the most significant instruments of intercultural communication. In particular, the process of literary translation between English and Uzbek is distinguished by challenges related to the mutual adjustment of diverse types of linguistic units and the maintenance of semantic and stylistic coherence. Translating a literary text is not confined to substituting lexical or grammatical units; rather, it requires the recreation, through the resources of another language, of the author’s aesthetic intention, individual style, and national-cultural context. From this perspective, literary translation constitutes a complex and multilayered object of research within linguistic translation studies.

Within linguistic translation studies, the concept of equivalence occupies a central place. In literary translation, equivalence denotes semantic, stylistic, and

functional correspondence between the source text and the translated text. Preserving such correspondence in the translation of English literary works into Uzbek is among the principal tasks facing the translator. This is because English and Uzbek differ typologically, and their syntactic organization, figurative expressive means, and pragmatic capacities diverge considerably. As a result, certain linguistic units may lack direct equivalents, which necessitates the use of various strategies of compensation and transformation in translation.

In literary translation, functional adequacy emerges in an inseparable relationship with equivalence. Functional adequacy refers to the extent to which a translated unit, in the reader's cognition, reproduces the communicative and aesthetic function performed by the corresponding unit in the source text. For instance, metaphors, ironic expressions, or stylistic repetitions frequently employed in English literary discourse may be rendered in Uzbek through different formal means; however, the preservation of their artistic impact remains essential. From this standpoint, functional adequacy assumes greater priority than literal precision in the translation of literary discourse.

In contemporary translation studies, there is a steadily growing interest in analysing, on the basis of English–Uzbek literary translations, the adaptation of linguistic units, semantic shifts, and stylistic transformations. Such research strengthens the scholarly foundations of the translator's activity, clarifies criteria for evaluating translation quality, and contributes to improving literary translation practice. At the same time, a deeper investigation of equivalence and functional adequacy not only enriches translation theory but also supports the development of the translator's professional competence.

The present article aims to elucidate, from the perspective of linguistic translation studies, the issues of equivalence and functional adequacy of linguistic units in English–Uzbek literary translation. In the introductory section, the relevance of the problem is substantiated and the scholarly and practical significance of the study is delineated. The subsequent sections provide an analysis of the issue through

specific literary texts and formulate general academic conclusions.

**LITERATURE REVIEW:** The issue of equivalence in literary translation is regarded as one of the core concepts of translation studies and is commonly interpreted as a complex phenomenon involving the simultaneous transfer of both content and style. Treating equivalence as strict sameness tends, in many instances, to narrow the translational outcome, because a literary text encompasses not only semantic meaning but also aesthetic intention, imagery, intonational patterning, authorial stance, and reader reception. In Nida's works, equivalence is framed in a dynamic sense, and it is argued that the target text should generate an effect in the reader that approximates the effect produced by the source text; this approach has clear practical value for literary translation, since communicative impact often prevails over formal correspondence [6]. Vinay and Darbelnet systematize interlingual shifts and distinguish such operations as borrowing, transposition, modulation, and the search for equivalents; in the analysis of literary texts, this typology helps account for lexical and syntactic displacements [7]. Newmark, in turn, foregrounds the opposition between semantic and communicative translation and notes the necessity, in literary discourse, of preserving stylistic effect and avoiding the loss of connotation and pragmatic meaning [8]. Bassnett conceptualizes translation as a cultural phenomenon and emphasizes that the values, cultural codes, and literary traditions underlying linguistic units must not be left out of consideration in literary translation [9].

Within Uzbek translation studies, the multilayered nature of equivalence has likewise received extensive treatment. In the manual prepared by G'ofurov, Mo'minov, and Qambarov, translation units, levels of meaning, stylistic devices, and degrees of equivalence are analysed systematically, and it is shown that literal, word-for-word rendering may lead to stylistic loss in literary translation [2]. The same source logically substantiates the necessity of seeking equivalence within context and highlights the practical significance of synonymic series, transformation, and compensation [2]. Contemporary articles further demonstrate

that lexical and semantic problems in translation between English and Uzbek are frequently linked to polysemy, cultural realia and nationally marked units, as well as pragmatic load [4]. It is also noted that cultural discrepancies emerging in the translation process, differences in audience reception, and the national model of artistic imagery exert a direct influence on equivalence [3]. Moreover, a number of studies indicate that, in translating phraseological units, idioms, and figurative expressions, ensuring functional adequacy constitutes the principal criterion, whereas literal transfer often diminishes artistic impact [1].

The concept of functional adequacy makes it possible to interpret the problem of equivalence with greater precision. In literary translation, the function of a linguistic unit is frequently not informative but emotional, evaluative, aesthetic, and characterological; consequently, an analogous function must be reconstructed in the target language as well [1]. Verifying functional adequacy across layers such as metaphor, simile, irony, dialogic speech, and authorial commentary contributes to higher translation quality. The role of punctuation in expressing rhythm, pauses, and dramatic intensity is also noteworthy: in a literary text, punctuation can be interpreted as a stylistic mechanism that serves meaning, and in translation punctuation adjustment may be required to preserve tone [5]. Overall, the reviewed scholarship presents equivalence as a multi-level phenomenon: only when lexical correspondence, semantic precision, stylistic fidelity, and pragmatic effect are treated as an integrated system can a literary translation be considered functionally successful [2], [6], [8].

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS**

In examining the issues of equivalence and functional adequacy of linguistic units in English and Uzbek literary translation, this study adopts comparative and contextual approaches as its methodological basis. Given the complex nature of literary language, linguistic units were analysed not only in terms of their formal structure but also with regard to their artistic, semantic, and pragmatic functions. The primary focus was placed on determining the degree of correspondence between

excerpts drawn from English literary works and their Uzbek translations.

Within the analytical procedure, lexical units were investigated separately. Translation solutions for polysemous words, figurative expressions, and idiomatic units characteristic of English were compared with their Uzbek renderings. In some instances, where no direct equivalent was available, the translation exhibited semantic expansion or narrowing. Such shifts were identified as deliberate moves intended to secure functional adequacy, since the principal criterion in literary translation lies in reconstructing, within the reader's cognition, the effect produced by the source text.

In the analysis of syntactic units, it was observed that compact and dynamic sentence structures typical of English are frequently expressed in Uzbek through more extended and explanatory patterns. This tendency can be accounted for by systemic differences between the two languages. At the same time, the findings indicate that when tonal contour and rhythmic organisation are preserved, the emotional impact of the literary text remains strong. Stylistic devices, particularly metaphor, comparison, and irony, were also evaluated as an independent dimension of the analysis. Certain metaphors were rendered in Uzbek through alternative images, a strategy that contributed to maintaining functional adequacy.

The empirical results suggest that, in English–Uzbek literary translation, equivalence does not manifest as absolute sameness but rather as functional correspondence. In the translation process, the meaning and textual function of linguistic units assume primary importance, while formal similarity becomes secondary. As a consequence, the aesthetic value of the literary text and the author's stylistic profile are preserved to the greatest extent possible. This approach therefore provides an effective methodological foundation for the linguistic analysis of literary translation between English and Uzbek.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:** At the textual level, the objective is not confined to transferring content alone; imagery, tone, humour, dramatic intensity, and the naturalness of character speech must also be preserved. Practical analysis

indicates that, in literary translation, the guiding principle is not “word for word” reproduction but rather the reconstruction of “meaning through meaning and image through image”; otherwise, the artistic force of the text is weakened [1].

A form of equivalence that tends to yield stable results is closely associated with functional and communicative correspondence. The decisive criterion becomes what function a source-language unit performs in the target language and what effect it produces in the reader’s consciousness. If the unit’s textual function is disregarded, the translation may convey only its dictionary meaning, while stylistic and communicative meaning becomes distorted [1].

In lexical and semantic equivalence, the primary difficulty is that the full range of meanings carried by a word in one language is not always fully covered in another. As demonstrated in a manual through the example of *hand* and *qo‘l*, units that appear equivalent at first glance do not necessarily coincide in derived forms, figurative meanings, or domains of use [2]. In a literary text, contextual selection becomes particularly acute because lexical choice is intertwined with character portrayal, the spirit of the historical period, and the author’s style. Consequently, when a lexical equivalent is unavailable, strategies such as contextual translation, selection from a synonymic series, and semantic approximation become methodologically appropriate.

In the layer of cultural realia, equivalence becomes even more complex. The term *Cho‘qintirgan ota* may be rendered as *Godfather*; however, the concept may generate different associations in the two cultures. In such cases, it is recommended to reduce semantic loss by introducing clarification, expanding the context, or identifying a culturally appropriate counterpart [4].

Similarly, although *mehmon* corresponds nominally to *guest*, Uzbek culture assigns the guest a distinct social status and value, which may result in pragmatic loss if the translation remains purely nominative [4]. This implies that, in literary translation, restricting equivalence to naming correspondence is insufficient. Phraseological units and idioms constitute one of the most resistant segments of

literary imagery. It is noted that *ko 'ngli ochiq* may be rendered as *open-hearted*, yet due to subtle differences in meaning and habitual usage, direct transfer does not always produce an identical effect [4].

As a practical solution, identifying an equivalent idiom, providing a descriptive rendering of the idiom's meaning, or employing artistic compensation often proves effective. This is particularly relevant in dialogue, where idioms function to express humour, irony, sarcasm, or degrees of intimacy; accordingly, functional adequacy becomes paramount. The national model of imagery also directly influences equivalence outcomes. In similes and metaphors, identical referents may acquire different culturally "standard" images; for example, diligence may be represented by an ant in one language and by a bee in another [10]. Even if literal transfer is semantically accurate, it may fail to produce the expected aesthetic effect in the reader. Therefore, reconstructing the image through culturally appropriate associations or restoring artistic balance through compensation across the text tends to yield stronger results.

With respect to stylistic correspondence, the authorial tone, poetic layer, and emotional register become the most sensitive points. It is observed that Uzbek poetic or emotional expression may be lost in English, and that preserving tone in translation requires creative solutions [4]. In poetic and literary texts, it is also emphasized that the translator must deeply take into account the traditions of both languages, national features, imagery, and the functional role of stylistic devices [2].

Accordingly, equivalence is frequently measured through stylistic fidelity: character speech should sound vivid and natural, and the author's artistic "breath" should remain perceptible. Graphic and punctuation devices likewise appear as integral components of functional adequacy. Comparative analyses indicate that punctuation in English literature more often intensifies pace and dialogic dynamism, whereas in Uzbek literature it can convey silence, inner experience, and psychological depth [5]. In particular, if the dramatic intonation and emotional pauses expressed through ellipsis and the long dash are lost in translation, the artistic

value of the text may be compromised [5].

From the perspective of theoretical approaches, equivalence frameworks provide the translator with a spectrum of choices. The thesis indicates that equivalence-based, functional, and purpose-oriented approaches alike underscore the necessity of adapting linguistic units in accordance with their function in the text [3].

**CONCLUSION:** In English–Uzbek literary translation, equivalence is not limited to word-level correspondence; rather, it emerges through the unity of the text’s semantic, stylistic, and pragmatic layers. Taking functional adequacy as the principal criterion makes it possible to preserve the author’s style, imagery, emotional tone, and reader reception. In translating realia, idioms, and phraseological units, context-based solutions, stylistic adjustment, and compensation strategies reduce the loss of artistic impact. Therefore, the quality of a literary translation is ensured through systematic evaluation of degrees of equivalence, identification of a unit’s function within the text, and the recreation of that function in the target language.

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