Equivalence as Controversial Concept in Translation Studies

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Abstract

The concept of equivalence has been widely discussed in the discipline of Translation Studies, and it is the most debatable notion in the discipline. Translation scholars are not unanimous on its definition, importance, and applicability in the field of Translation Studies, and various theories in the discipline view and study this concept. It has been argued by some theories that translation has to be defined in terms of equivalence. These theories describe equivalence as a yardstick of translation and their scholars provide a number of arguments for postulating equivalence as an acceptable concept. However, some others give many reasons to reject this notion completely.

This paper attempts to show how equivalence has been defined and categorized in the discipline of Translation Studies. It also discusses the arguments behind the dominance of equivalence as a key concept in Translation Studies for some theories while others undervalue it and consider it pointless to the discipline.

Keywords: Equivalence, Equivalence Effect, Translation Studies, Translation Theories,

1. Introduction

Equivalence is one of the core concepts in the discipline of Translation Studies although there is a great deal of controversy among translation scholars over its definition, importance, and applicability in the field of Translation Studies, and a number of theories and approaches of the notion of equivalence have been involved deeply in this field since the second half of 20th century.

Equivalence is viewed and studied from different angles: some proponents define translation in terms of equivalence associations (Catford 1965; Nida and Taber 1969; Toury 1980a; Pym 1992a; 1995a; 2004; Koller 1995) while others reject the concept of equivalence outright, postulating it is either extraneous (Snell-Hornby 1988) or damaging (Gentzler 1993/2001) to Translation Studies (Kenny 1997:96). Nevertheless, other scholars behave in a particular way between the above-mentioned two contradictory opinions: Baker adopts the concept of equivalence ''for the sake of convenience – because most translators are used to it rather than because it has any theoretical status'' (Baker 1992:5-6). Thus, equivalence is the most controversial concept in Translation Studies.

Although the scholars of equivalence-based theories are unanimous in describing equivalence as a relation between source text and target text, the nature of this relation and the way of its achievement have caused protracted controversy over this concept since their perspectives on how this relation is established are markedly different.

Linguistics-based approaches have mainly associated with the notion of equivalence, defining translation from the angle of equivalence. Theorists and scholars who are interested in these approaches have carried out several major works and introduced many central concepts to Translation Studies, such as Jakobson's linguistic meaning ,equivalence, and translatability, Nida's formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence, …etc.. Their major contributions were principally aimed to describe the nature of equivalence.

Newer approaches and theories have introduced and stressed a number of new concepts to the discipline. Some of these theoretical models, textlinguistic, functionalist and Descriptive Translation Studies approaches redefine the notion of equivalence, but providing a different understanding of how the concept is established from those proposed by the theoreticians of linguistic approaches. However, other translation approaches, postmodern theories and Cultural Studies, undervalue the major contribution of the concept of equivalence to the field of Translation Studies. They attempt, explicitly or implicitly, to discard equivalence as a needless concept in the discipline.

This research attempts to explore the reasons behind the importance, application and validity of equivalence as a principal concept in the field of Translation Studies for some theories, whereas others seriously underestimate it. Regarding the structure, this paper is designed as follows. It firstly presents the time when equivalence was introduced, how it was defined, and what aims of different attempts were to categorize equivalence into different types. Then the arguments for and against the concept of equivalence within linguistic approaches to translation are discussed in great detail. Finally, the position of equivalence within non-linguistic theories is dealt with.

2. The Concept of Equivalence

Equivalence was a central feature in the linguistics-oriented translation theories during the 1960s and 1970s, though its notion may date back to Cicero and then to the Renaissance theories which assumed that languages are in equal status (Pym 2007:271).

Scholars in both linguistic and textlinguistic approaches are concerned with inventing most suitable translation methods with offering strategies for translators. For these approaches, there is a specific relationship between the source text and the target text in translation, which is usually named equivalence. Although the concept of equivalence has several definitions, it is not absolutely refused (Halverson 1997).

When the target text is reproduced faithfully from the source text, then equivalence is described as sameness or identity, and it does not mean they are interchangeable or reversible,

but they have equal value (Snell-Hornby 1988:13). The plausible reason behind the categorization of equivalence into different types is to specify the relationship between source text and target text, for instance Nida's formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence (Nida 2004), or Koller's denotative, connotative, text-normative, pragmatic, and formal-aesthetic equivalence (Koller 1979), semantic translation and communicative translation (Newmark 1981), overt and covert translation (House 2009). Koller (1992) and House (1997) argue that translations should be separated from non-translation texts, and the translation process can only be applied where an equivalence relation achieves.

With the aim of conceptualizing the notion of equivalence, different theoretical perspectives have been adopted by various paradigms to form an idea about what equivalence is like and how it has to be established. In linguistics-based approaches, much focus has been put on equivalence in meaning between the source text and the target text to define translation, while textlinguistic approaches give consideration to the whole text as the unit of translation to apply equivalence to textual level. On the other hand, functionalist approaches consider translation as an action for a particular purpose. In a more specific sense, if there is the same purpose for producing both source and target texts, the latter text is equivalent to its source text (Vermeer 1989/2004). Therefore, functionalist approaches downplay equivalence to a special case. For Descriptive Translation Studies approaches, equivalence is seen as an axiomatic phenomenon, claiming all translations are equivalent to their sources (Toury 1980). Scholars that favour these approaches view it as a predictable assumption. Subsequently, making different attempts to conceptualize equivalence has generated many intensive debates among translation scholars.

3. Equivalence in Linguistics-based approaches

In the second half of 20th century, scholars started to focus more systematically on translation, not just for giving a philosophical reflection. At that time, Translation Studies started to be more systematic which was significantly affected by applied linguistics since developing translation came from linguists, for instance Jakobson, Vinay and Darbelnet, Catford, Nida, Neubert. Hence, translation was recognized as a linguistic phenomenon, which was seen a process performed on languages. Then, equivalence became a key feature of Translation Studies and its heyday started. From the late of 1950s, most of the scholars who were interested in applied linguistics defined translation with reference to equivalence in one form or another. Here are two of the definitions:

> Interlingual translation can be defined as the replacement of elements of one language, the domain of translation, by equivalent elements of another language, the range of translation. (Oettinger 1960: 110)

> Translation is seen as follows: the replacement of textual material in one language (Source Language) by equivalent material in another language (Target Language). (Catford 1965:20)

The above definitions reveal that linguists are looking at to compare two languages to identify the smallest equivalent unit. The source text is broken-down into smallest units, and then these units are substituted or replaced by their equivalent units which come from the target language to end up two equivalent messages.

The structuralist Roman Jakobson (1959/2004) suggests three types of translation: *intralingual* (rewording), *interlingual* (translation proper) and *intersemiotic* (transmutation). His main contribution to translation is concerning with understanding (transferring) meaning, and he sees translation as a communication model. For him, interlingual translation is ''substituting messages in one language not for separate cods but for inter messages in some other language. It involves to equivalent messages in two different codes'' (ibid: 139). Therefore, there are two messages: a natural-produced (source language) and a translator-produced (target language). They are the same but different in structure, which means 'equivalent in difference'. Thus, ''equivalence'' and ''substituting messages'' are two key words in his definition.

For Vinay and Darbelent (2004:134) equivalence is one of their seven procedures of translation. Their usage of equivalence is different if compared with Jakobson's equivalent messages since it is not used to characterize the relationship between source text and target text, but it is in a specific sense here. In their description, equivalence refers to cases where two languages or cultures have an expression for the same situation, but they are different in terms of syntax and word choice such as idioms and proverbs. Thus, in their perception, equivalence usage is linguistic-based since they consider it as a fixed term and previously existence in target language. However, equivalence, in this sense, does not mean grammatical or syntactical similarity between source text and target text.

Eugene Nida made a valuable contribution in the field of translation theory with introducing two types of equivalence: formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence (2004:156). In the second edition by Nida and Taber (1982), formal correspondence was used instead of formal equivalence to stress the notion of similarity rather than sameness. His contribution was extremely important in bringing a receptor-based orientation to translation theory. Formal equivalence ''focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content'', unlike dynamic equivalence which is based on ''the principal of equivalent effect'' (Nida 2004:156). Furthermore, Nida (1964) claims that achieving equivalent response must be given the priority and is crucial to the accomplishment of translation.

Consequently, according to definitions of proponents of linguistic approaches, equivalence is a key feature of translation with no difficulty about its validity and importance as a notion in translation. As Hermans (1999:47) states that translation, in linguistics-based approaches, was seen as ''the replacement, or substitution, of an utterance in one language by formally or semantically or pragmatically equivalent utterance in another language''. Thus, the focus here is on reproducing meanings/substituting messages/replacing textual

materials in source language by equivalent meaning/message/material in target language in the translation process. For this point, Pym (1992:37) argues that the notion of equivalence is related to target language and target text which defines translation and vice versa. So, we can argue that equivalence was the backbone of translation for those scholars who were interested in linguistic discipline and was the only criterion for distinguishing translated texts from other texts.

4. Why Equivalence?

A generation of scholars who strongly favoured the field of applied linguistics applied the notion of equivalence as a common yardstick to establish a more systematic analysis of translation. To support their perspective, there are certain powerful arguments and grounds that the scholars use to consider equivalence as an acceptable notion in the discipline of Translation Studies. This section therefore discusses some of the main arguments.

Agrument1: Translatability

The theory of untranslatability which claimed that the translation and the full correspondence of meanings between two languages are impossible was criticized by linguistic discipline. For more support on this idea, Ortega y Gasset (1992:93) defines translation as 'a utopian activity' and singles out the shortcoming of translation as:

> ''[…] it is utopian to believe that two words belonging to different languages, and which the dictionary gives us as translations of each other refer to exactly the same objects. Since languages are formed in different landscapes…'' (1992: 96)

However, linguistic scholars argued that abstract language systems have mutual universal features and can express any experience in an equivalent manner; therefore they introduced the notion of equivalence, for instance, formal equivalence or correspondence (Nida 1969, Catford 1965 and Koller 1979). Furthermore, they argue that although languages are different, it does not mean that translation is impossible. As Jakobson (1959) is mainly in favour of translatability since he believes that translation is performed within languages as well between them, and he uses equivalence in difference for translation. More recently, Newmark (1989:17) states that all different ideas and meanings in a source text can be directly or indirectly reproduced in a target text, and hence everything is translatable. Therefore, equivalence in difference (Jakobson 1959), textual equivalence (Catford 1965) and dynamic equivalence (Nida 1964) are evidence for the postulation of translatability. As a result, it can be said that the concept of equivalence was introduced in response to the theory of untranslatability by proposing, not only the opportunity of translation, but sameness between languages.

Argument 2: Naturalness of the message

Linguistic approaches to translation adopted equivalence based on the notion that naturalness is an essential requirement in translation to make a relationship between receptor and the message as the same as that relation existed between the original receptors and the message.

For this claim, Nida (2004:156) states that the main objective of dynamic equivalence is to seek ''the closest natural equivalent to the source language message''. Thus, there should not be found interference from the source language in the target language.

Argument 3: Stability of message (Equivalent in message)

Linguistics-oriented theories assumed that messages have stable meaning which can be reproduced in the translation process, and equivalence brings the identical message of the source text to the target text. Here are two arguments for this belief:

According to Jakobson (2004: 139), ''the translator recodes and transmits a message received from another source. Thus translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes''. For him, translators decode a message from source language and recode the same message in target language to produce equivalent in difference.

Furthermore, in formal equivalence, Nida (2004:156) states that …. ''One is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language''. Here, the main purpose of translation is to obtain the closest equivalent of a source language words and phrases.

Argument 4: Translation vs. Non-Translation

One of the major contributions of linguistic approaches to translation lies in an attempt to consider equivalence as a criterion separating translations from non-translation products. As Pym (2007: 278) mentions that it is the term of equivalence which distinguishes translation from all other products (rephrasing, annotations, and parody, etc.).

To further support to this perception, Pym (1995:9) postulates that it is equivalence which shows the possibility of non-equivalence or non-translation, and all critics, who reject equivalence and defined translation, never explained ''what translation is not''. Thus, it makes translators always think of finding equivalence in target text.

Argument 5: Misunderstanding the term of Equivalence

Scholars that perceive translation in the angle of equivalence argue that some critics of equivalence have misunderstood this notion in Translation Studies. House (2009:32) states that some of the critiques against the term of equivalence as a key concept for translation ''often presuppose a rather narrow view of equivalence based on formal syntactic and lexical

similarities. It tends to be shunned as too mechanistic and restrictive by proponents of the interpretation-oriented and the purpose-oriented approaches to translation''. Thus, critics discard the notion of equivalence that represents similarities between source text and target text which have the same function.

5. Why not Equivalence?

Some translation theoreticians, scholars and proponents who are in favour of non-linguistic theories reject the concept of equivalence entirely since it is retained in the vocabulary. They attempt to avoid this issue that ''it is difference, not sameness or transparency or equality, which is inscribed in the operation of translation'' (Hermans, 1998:61). Furthermore, with developing Translation Studies, a number of aspects which were unnoticed by equivalence-based theories have been put much focus by newer translation theories. Now, some of the principal objections to the concept of equivalence in Translation Studies are discussed here:

Objection 1: The impossibility of equivalent effect

The notion of equivalence effect, which Nida introduced in dynamic equivalence, has been bitterly criticized by many scholars for some convincing reasons. Firstly, Broek (1978) argues that equivalent effect is impossible since Nida's attempt to theorize equivalence based on the same effect of the message has no answer for the following questions: how is the receptor's response to the message measured? How can a text obtain the same response in different situations? Secondly, Gentzler (2001) argues that Nida's dynamic equivalence seeking natural equivalent effect is based only on his practical work, and it is not in that position to serve translation theory as Nida postulates. Thirdly, Quin Hu (1993: 455-456) also states that ''equivalent effect'' is implausible when ''linguistic form not only carries meaning of its own, but also imposes its meaning on the content to which it is inseparably linked''. Finally, Gutt (1991) criticizes the ''equivalent effect'' and considers it as self-illusion. Moreover, translators' cognitive state has impact on transferring messages, and it is difficult to find two people with same cognitive state.

Objection 2: Meaning cannot be equivalent

Although linguistic-based theories consider equivalence in meaning as a yardstick for accurate translation, contemporary translation theories reject this notion outright since not all words belong to different languages have always the same meaning in all situations.

To support this standpoint, scholars of post-structuralism claims that meaning is not fixed and ''context-bound, and thus not amenable to replication, whether in the same or another language'' (Malmkjar 2005:15). Moreover, Eco (2001:5) argues that equivalence in meaning is not possible which is provided by synonym, since two words do not have the same meaning while synonyms.

As a result, it is strongly argued that target text receptors create the meaning outside the text based on their own understanding to the target text even if they are in the same context of original receptors. Thus, receivers may understand one text in different ways.

Objection 3: Equivalence as illusion

One of the fiercest critics of the concept of equivalence in the discipline of Translation Studies is Marry Snell-Hornby (1988:22), who argues against the notion of equivalence as presenting ''an illusion of symmetry between languages''. After comparing the meaning of equivalence in English and Aquivalence in German, she postulates that they do not have the same meaning, in other words, she considers them as ''non-equivalent''. Additionally, she believes that the term of equivalence is irrelevant to translation and it has entered Translation Studies from mathematics (ibid: 22)

However, Juliane House (1997) criticizes Snell-Hornby' argument for rejecting the concept of equivalence as follows:

> ''Snell-Hornby singles out one particular dictionary entry, which supports her claim that equivalence basically equals identity and promptly proceeds to dismiss equivalence as 'an illusion' in translation studies.'' (1997: 26)

In another attempt to respond Snell-Hornby, Pym(1995:6-7) also points out that Snell-Hornby' statement that equivalence presenting ''an illusion of symmetry between languages'' is not convincing since proponents did not propose the concept of equivalence only at langue level but at parole as well which have no illusions that she aims to introduce between the languages.

Objection 4: Equivalence making source text superior

The perception that the target text should be equivalent to its source text which is unanimously agreed by proponents of linguistics-based approaches has been roundly criticized by skopos theory for the reason that equivalence-based theories excessively emphasize the importance of source text. For this point, Nord (1997, 2005), Vermeer (1989, 2004), two outstanding scholars of the functionalist approaches, see the function of a text in the target culture as the yardstick to determine the method of translation contradictory to the equivalence paradigm which believes that this is source text which determines the nature of the target text. In addition, Vermeer (1987:29) argues that the skopos of target text is the only point where translation has to be started from, not source text, since source text tells nothing about target culture and readers. This is in opposition to equivalence-based theories that are in belief that the first step should be taken from the source text in any translation process.

Another attempt to argue against the superiority of source text is that Vermeer (1989/2004) views translation products as serving purposes which are somewhat different to those of source texts, since they are for new receivers in a different culture. Thus, in this sense, equivalence loses its significant role as the superiority of source text and the dominance of equivalence are interrelated.

Objection 5: Equivalence as ahistorical

There is a predefined relation between target text and source text while equivalence is the criterion of a good translation. However, Hermans (1999:48) mentions that equivalence is 'ahistorical' and it can't identify a translation that does not meet the predefined requirements with the source text, since when the target text is shorter or longer than the source text, some receivers may not recognize as a translation but as an adaptation or paraphrasing.

Objection 6: Equivalence is not adequate; similarity is enough

Some translation proponents argue that *similarity* is a more suitable term than *equivalence* since the latter makes the translation process harder than it really has to be. As Chesterman (1996) claims that ''adequate similarity is enough-adequate for a given purpose, in a given context….anything more would be an inefficient use of resources''. Thus, from this perspective, similarity is the most appropriate term in translation because it provides translators with their real work.

However, there is not a consensus of understanding among translation scholars over what they mean by the word *similarity* here. In spite of the resemblance between the source and the target texts, Venuti (2013:54) describes similarity ''as a resemblance between the translation and other values and practices in the receiving situation. These two relationships are not simply opposed, but often mutually undermining''. Therefore, different perspectives on the concept of *similarity* have sparked controversy among translation theoreticians over its inapplicability in the discipline of Translation Studies.

6. Equivalence in Textlinguistic approaches

In the 1970s, in reaction to the linguistics-based approaches which view the word or the sentence as the level at which translation is done, textlinguistic approaches to translation emerged. In textlinguistic approaches, the text is considered as the unit of translation. From this perspective, translation is defined as retextualising the source text as Neubert's definition 'source text induced target text production' (Neubert 1985:18) and producing the text is the main focus. Here translation is not operated on individual words but on the texts in order to produce functional equivalence between two texts. Katharina Reiss (1977/89), one of the most distinguished German scholars working in this theory, identifies three text types (informative, expressive and operative) with their separated translation methods while sought functional equivalence between source text and target text. In her view, any written text can

be assigned for a communicative function, and the communicative function of source text produced in the source culture determines the function of target text in the target culture.

Scholars working in textlinguistics-based approaches introduce functional equivalence to the discipline, and they mention that equivalence should be sought at the level of text in the translation process. However, there have been a number of criticisms of this theory. Indeed, the function of target text may be completely different from the one of the source text. To support this, I would like to draw your attention to my own example: if there is a speech given by one of the candidates for the presidency in a country in order to persuade voters to elect him as a president, and the function of the text is 'operative', do you think that target text should have the same function, if the speech is translated to another language? If yes, what is the aim to persuade the target readers?

Additionally, Venuti (1995) argues that texts do not have fixed meaning and cannot be duplicated in another place. Based on this theoretical perspective, if textual meaning is unstable, it can be said that textual function is unstable too. Therefore, the purpose, the culture, the situation, as well as the audiences of the translation play a leading role in identifying the function of target text, not only the source text.

7. Equivalence in Functionalist approaches

In the 1970s-1980s, a number of German scholars made the discipline of Translation Studies richer through developing functionalist approaches including: Vermeer's (1978, 1996) Skopos Theory, Reiss and Vermeer's (1984, 1991) General Theory of Translation and Holz-Mänttäri's (1984) Translatorial Action. One of the invaluable contributions of functionalist theories lies in moving away from linguistic phenomenon towards intercultural communication which affects translation. In these theories, translation is defined as a purposeful activity (Nord, 1997), as transcultural interaction (Holz-Mänttäri, 1984), as producing a target text for its skopos (Vermeer 1996). Here the focus of the quality of the target text shifted markedly from the equivalence to source text to the appropriateness of target text for its skopos (purpose).

Christiana Nord (1997:36), who is one of the major scholars of functionalist approaches, states that in skopos theory, 'equivalence means adequacy to a skopos'. Hence, functionalist approaches moved from equivalence to adequacy to a skopos of translation, which means the purpose or aim of translation. 'The skopos of the translation determines the form of equivalence required for an adequate translation' (Nord 1997: 36). In this way, when the skopos (purpose) of a translation seeks the functional consistency which is required between the source text and the target text, the target text will be equivalent to its source text.

In skopos theory, 'translations are generally seen as fulfilling functions quite different to those of STs, since they are for fundamentally different audience, in a new culture situation' (Pym, 2009:4). In this sense, one source text can be translated in various ways when the clients have different purposes. Therefore, skopos theory does not reject equivalence

entirely – it provides equivalence with one possibility, where the function of the target text is the same as its source text. Thus, functionalists are relativists to equivalence, and reduce the importance of this concept in the disciple of Translation Studies.

However, over the years there have been a number of criticisms of the functionalist approaches, and some of them are surrounding the concept of equivalence. To determine a translation is equivalence or adequacy, skopos theory has roundly been criticized by House as ''is the failure of the authors to spell out exactly how one is to determine whether a given translation is either adequate or equivalent let alone how to linguistically realize the global 'skopos' of a translation text'' (1997:12).

8. Equivalence in Descriptive Translation Studies

Descriptive Translation Studies, of which Gideon Toury and Hermans are two outstanding figures, define translation as the result of a kind of activity of socially cultural behaviour (Toury 1980). One of the invaluable contributions of Descriptive Translation Studies to the discipline of Translation Studies lies in the introduction of the concept of norms that has been used in a different way within the discipline, as Toury (1995/2004) uses it to refer to 'regularities of translation behaviour'. ''Toury shifted the focus of attention by saying that a translation is every text that is regarded and accepted as a translation by a given community'' (Schaffner 1999:5). Although Toury has put much focus on target culture in translation, he argues that 'translation equivalence is not a hypothetical ideal, but an empirical matter' (Gentzler, 2001). Moreover, Toury associates equivalence with the concept of norms, i.e. translational norms which are a broad theoretical approach to equivalence.

Here Descriptive Translation Studies have a perception of the concept of equivalence which is quite different from the other equivalence-oriented theories and paradigms. Thus, as Toury (2012:112) states that here the concept of equivalence is not a specific relation between source text and target text, but 'it is a functional-relational concept: namely,

that set of relationships which are found to distinguish appropriate from inappropriate modes of translation for the culture in question

Additionally, for Toury, equivalence is a label that is attached to a translational relationship that is supposed to have between two texts (Toury 1980:39). This reversal of perception played a crucial role to make the way available to a reassessment the concept of equivalence. In his postulate, Toury (1980:47) states that ''the right question to ask is not whether two texts are equivalent, but what type and degree of translation they reveal''. Thus, 'translation theories can escape the censure of other schools of thought, where it is widely held that equivalence implies a prescriptive, non-inclusive approach to translation' (Kenny 1997:77). Consequently, equivalence is defined as a collection of relations established between two texts in translation, and it is the prevalent norms that identify equivalence in a particular context and time.

There are some shared and private views between Toury and Vermeer. Both of them downplay the significance of equivalence as a source-target relationship on the basis of reproducing an equivalent message of source text in the target language. They emphasize the target culture, in other words, the target text and its required function is the first step in translation while reproducing meanings and transcoding linguistic signs of source text takes the highest priority in translation task in linguistic approaches to equivalence. What is more, Vermeer reduced equivalence to a small case, and Toury (2012:113) finds equivalence 'between an assumed translation and a text assumed to be its source', and it is 'of little importance in itself'.

Expectedly, Descriptive Translation Studies are generally criticized over viewing the notion of equivalence as too wide. As Snell-Hornby proposes that equivalence in English has been fuzzy and pointless, ''while (Pym 1992a, 1995), Neubert (1994) and Koller (1995) would like to see a more restrictive view of equivalence reinstated, not least because a more constrained view allows translation to be distinguished from non-translation'' (Kenny 1997: 80).

In another effort, Hermans (1999:97) argues that he agrees with Toury for downgrading the notion of equivalence to a mere label, on the one hand, but he criticizes him for 're-introducing it by the black door without further questioning the terms' implications', since Toury' (1995: 86) purpose in each translation is to find 'the balance between what was kept invariant and what was transformed'.

Chesterman (1997) underestimates Toury's equivalence relations and believes that a suitable relation is assessed by the translator based on text types, client's purposes, the functions of source text, and the assumed expectations of receptors.

Regarding the notion of equivalence in Descriptive Translation Studies which is broadened to any relations between source texts and target texts, House (1997) is critical of Descriptive Translation Studies in a question: ''On which criteria are we to legitimately say that one text is a translation, another one not, and what exactly are the criteria for judging the merits and weaknesses of a given translation?'' (House 1997:8)

9. Equivalence in Current approaches

Current approaches to translation which are motivated by postmodern theories and Culture Studies generally perceive translation as a culture phenomenon. From the 1990s onwards, translation scholars working in cultural turn mark a move away from seeing 'translation as a transaction between languages to a more complex process of negotiation between two cultures' (Munday 2009:179). As Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (1990:8), who are two of the most intense figures in cultural and ideological turns, describe 'this phenomenon as the culture turn in Translation Studies' postulating that the fundamental unit of translation is the culture, 'neither the word, nor the text'.

For Venuti (1995:306), who is one of the most eminent scholars in modern translation theory, the target text must be ''the site where a different culture emerges, where a reader gets a glimpse of a culture other''. In addition, Venuti (1995) states that the meaning of text is unstable and it cannot be reproduced in another context.

Though both approaches do not comment on equivalence explicitly, they have the same attitude to discard this concept. To support this, theoreticians that favour in these approaches seem to be distancing themselves from words and texts as the main units for translation. In these theories, the most important consideration in translating texts is the target culture while this consideration is completely marginalized in equivalence-based theories. Additionally, Current approaches to translation claim that the meaning of a text produced for a specific situation and culture cannot be interpreted by equivalence in another situation and culture. Hence, on the basis of the perceptions of these theories, equivalence is denied as it cannot interpret the meaning.

10. Conclusions

The major part of the heated debate over the concept of equivalence noticeably goes to not have a unique definition to separate equivalent from non-equivalent. Scholars of linguistic discipline define translation with reference to equivalence which means identity or sameness between two languages. In linguistic-based approaches, translation is understood as equivalence in meaning and the role of source text in the translation process is rather essential and necessary. However, newer theories, non-linguistic approaches, stress some problems that equivalence theories failed to notice in terms of translation. These approaches define translation with reference to some other aspects to get rid of themselves from this notion which linguistic approaches postulate since they consider equivalence as unnecessary to the discipline. Firstly, skopos theory sees translation as a purpose with a small case of equivalent, not the once-dominant, and the focus relocates from the source text to the target text. Moreover, Descriptive Translation Studies, which view translation as norm-governed behavior, also downgrade equivalence through separating sameness from equivalence and associate equivalence with norms. Therefore, the prevailing equivalence here is no more than a translational relation between two texts which is determined by the target culture, norms. Finally, cultural studies and postmodern theories in opposition to linguistic and textlinguistic theories challenge the word and the text as the unit of translation, but the culture.

In brief, the controversy over the concept of equivalence stems from the fact that Translation Studies is a heterogeneous discipline. Each theory, approach or paradigm stresses some specific concepts and perceptions, and they do not unanimously agree on central concepts. Moreover, they understand and define translation in different angles.

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پوخته

چەمکی هاوتابوون بەشێوەیەکی بەرفراوان لە بواری وەرگێڕاندا تاوتوێ کراوه، وه چەمکێکە زۆرترین مشت و مڕ هەلدەگرێت لەم بوارەدا. تویژەرانی بواری وەرگێڕان هاوڕانین سەبارەت بە پێناسە و گرنگی و جێبەجیٚ کردنی ئەم چەمکە لە بواری وەرگێڕان، وه زۆر تیۆری جیاجیای ئەم بواره لێکۆڵینەوه و خوێندنەوەیان بۆ ئەم چەمکە کردووه. هەندێک تیۆر شوێنکەوتەی ئەم چەمکەن و پێیان وایە کە پێویستە وەرگێڕان لەڕووی هاوتووبوونەوه پێناسە بکرێت. ئەم تیۆرانە وەک پێوەری وەرگێڕان باس لە هاوتابوون دەکەن و تویژەرانی شوێنکەوتەی ئەم تیۆرانەش ژمارەیەک بەلگەیان هەیە بۆئەوەی بانگەشەی ئەوەی پێبکەن کە هاوتابوون چەمکێکی پەسندە لە بواری وەرگێڕاندا. بەپێچەوانەی هەندێک تیۆری تر کە زۆر هۆکار دەخەنەڕوو بۆئەوەی بەتەواوەتی ئەم چەمکە ڕەتبکەنەوه.

ئەم تویژینەوه هەولدەدات ئەوه بخاتەڕوو کە چەمکی هاوتابوون چۆن پێناسە و پۆلێن کراوه لە بواری وەرگێڕان. هەروەها تاوتوێی ئەم بەلگانە دەکات کە لەپشت بالادەستی هاوتابوونن وەک چەمکێکی سەرەکی بواری وەرگێڕان بۆ هەندێک تیۆر، لەکاتێکدا تیۆرەکانی تر لەڕولّی هاوتابوون کەم دەکەنەوه و بە ناپێڕویست لە قەلەمی دەدەن بۆ بواری وەرگێڕان.

الخلاصة

تم مناقشة مفهوم التكافؤ بشكل واسع في مجال دراسات الترجمة، و يعد هذا المفهوم من اكثرها أثارة للجدل في هذا المجال. أنَ علماء الترجمة لا يتفقون بالإجماع على تعريفه ،أهميته، وأمكانية تطبيقه في دراسات الترجمة، و هنالك نظريات متنوعة تتناول وتشرح هذا المفهوم. تدعي بعض النظريات أن الترجمة يجب أن تعَرف من حيث التكافؤ. وبعض النظريات تصف التكافؤ كمعيار الترجمة ويزود الباحثون عدداً من الحجج لافتراض التكافؤ كمفهوم مقبول. مع أن البعض الآخر يعطي العديد من الأسباب لرفض هذه الفكرة تماماً.

يحاول هذا البحث أن يستعرض كيف تمَ تعريف التكافؤ وتصنيفه في دراسات الترجمة. كما ويناقش الحجج وراء هيمنة التكافؤ كمفهوم رئيسي في دراسات الترجمة لبعض النظريات في حين هنالك من يقللَ من شأنه ويعده غير ضروريٍ لدراسات الترجمة.