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CULTURAL EQUIVALENCE IN TRANSLATION

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Abstract. *Achieving cultural equivalence is essential for effective communication and ensuring that the translated text is not only linguistically accurate but also culturally appropriate and relevant. Cultural equivalence in translation refers to the concept of accurately conveying not only the linguistic meaning of a source text from one language into a target language but also the cultural nuances, context, and cultural references inherent in the original text.*

Key words: *Translation, cultural equivalence, linguistic meaning, cultural nuances*

Cultural equivalence in translation is a critical concept that addresses the challenge of accurately conveying the cultural nuances, context, and meanings of a source text into a target language without losing or distorting the original cultural elements. This involves maintaining the cultural, social, and contextual aspects of the source text in the translation to ensure that the message remains authentic and culturally appropriate. Achieving cultural equivalence is essential for effective communication and ensuring that the translated text is not only linguistically accurate but also culturally appropriate and relevant. Cultural equivalence in translation refers to the concept of accurately conveying not only the linguistic meaning of a source text from one language into a target language but also the cultural nuances, context, and cultural references inherent in the original text. It involves ensuring that the translated text is not just linguistically correct but culturally appropriate and relevant for the target audience or readers. Achieving cultural equivalence is crucial for effective communication and for preserving the cultural integrity of the source text.

Cultural equivalence is particularly significant in fields like literature, marketing, international diplomacy, and cross-cultural communication, where preserving cultural nuances and context is paramount. It allows for a smoother and more meaningful exchange of ideas and information between different linguistic and cultural groups. Translators play a vital role in bridging these cultural gaps while maintaining linguistic accuracy and cultural sensitivity in their works.

Many authors and scholars have studied cultural equivalence in translation as it is a fundamental concept in the field of translation studies. Mona Baker's book "In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation" discusses various translation strategies, including cultural and communicative approaches to translation. [1] She has made significant contributions to the study of cultural aspects in translation. Lawrence Venuti is known for his work on domestication and foreignization, two strategies that affect how cultural elements are transferred in translation. His book "The Translator's Invisibility" addresses the cultural and political aspects of translation. [6] Anthony Pym's work on translation ethics and the concept of "Intercultural Studies" explores the role of culture in translation and the ethical considerations involved. [5] José Lambert's work on translation and intercultural communication has contributed to the understanding of how culture impacts the translation process. [4]

One of the key point is that the translator should aim to maintain the cultural context and references of the source text so that readers in the target culture can fully understand and relate to the content. It is easy when the same word sets are found in the target languages:

*There's loads of banks around here, not to mention soddin' cafés, so it'll be like looking for **a needle in a haystack**. [2,382]*

*Тут багато банків, не кажучи вже про погані кафе, то ж це буде все одно, що шукати голку в **стозі сіна**. (ukr)*

*Il y a plein de banques par ici, sans parler de foutus cafés, donc ce sera comme chercher **une aiguille dans une botte de foin**. (fr)*

*W okolicy jest mnóstwo banków, nie wspominając o beznadziejnych kawiarniach, więc będzie to jak szukanie **igły w stogu siana**. (pol)*

Translators may need to adapt or replace certain cultural references, idiomatic expressions, metaphors, or wordplay to make them meaningful in the target culture. This adaptation is essential for avoiding confusion or misinterpretation. The following examples are good manifestation of such adaptation:

*But if he is a **big cheese** and Nevil and Gerald are lower down the pecking order, why is he doing grunt work with Nevil? p 290*

*Але якщо він **велика шишка**, а Невіл і Джеральд нижчі за нього, чому він працює з Невілом? (ukr)*

*Mais s'il est **un gros bonnet** et que Nevil et Gerald sont plus bas dans la hiérarchie, pourquoi fait-il un gros travail avec Nevil ? (fr)*

*Ale jeśli jest **wielką szychą**, a Nevil i Gerald są niżej w hierarchii, dlaczego on odwala ciężką robotę z Nevilem? (pol)*

Translators must be mindful of cultural sensitivity and avoid reinforcing stereotypes, biases, or offensive content. They should make choices that respect the values and norms of both the source and target cultures. To do this, translators need to possess cultural competence in both the source and target cultures. This includes a deep understanding of cultural nuances, historical context, and social dynamics:

*Nearly half of the money seized is stolen and the rest believed to be the proceeds of drugs, so that leaves your client **without a pot to piss in** and facing a charge that he murdered the girl for the money. [3, 310]*

*Майже половина вилучених грошей викрадено, а решта, як вважають, є доходами від наркотиків, тож ваш клієнт залишається **без копійки** і його звинувачують у вбивстві дівчини заради грошей. (ukr)*

*Près de la moitié de l'argent saisi est volé et le reste serait le produit de la drogue, ce qui laisse votre client **sans un sou en poche** et face à une accusation selon laquelle il a assassiné la fille pour l'argent. (fr)*

*Prawie połowa skonfiskowanych pieniędzy została skradziona, a reszta prawdopodobnie pochodziła z narkotyków, co oznacza, że twój klient **zostanie z niczym**, i zostaje oskarżony o zamordowanie dziewczyny dla pieniędzy. (pol)*

When translating cultural realities, it's crucial to consider the nuances, values, and historical significance associated with the reference to ensure accurate comprehension in the target culture. Often, it involves a balance between staying faithful to the original meaning and adapting it to make sense within the new cultural

context. Different cultures have unique dishes and ingredients. Translating food names may involve describing the dish in detail or finding an equivalent in the target culture. For example, "Shepherd's pie" is a classic savory dish originating from the United Kingdom. It traditionally consists of minced or ground meat, such as lamb or beef, cooked with onions, peas, carrots, and sometimes other vegetables, all seasoned and cooked in a rich gravy or sauce. Its translation might require explanation or using a term that's understood in the target language, depending on the country and its culinary traditions. In French, it is often called "Hachis Parmentier", in Spanish, "Shepherd's pie" can be translated as "Pastel de pastor", in Ukrainian "м'ясний пиріг", in Polish "ciasto pasterskie".

Achieving cultural equivalence is crucial to ensuring that the translated text effectively conveys the same meaning, tone, and cultural nuances as the source text. Translators can use various tools, resources, and strategies to enhance cultural equivalence in their translations such as bilingual dictionaries and glossaries to look up word meanings, idiomatic expressions, and cultural terms in both the source and target languages. Specialized dictionaries for specific subject areas can also be valuable. While translating, they conduct extensive research on the cultural context, customs, traditions, and social norms of the source and target cultures. This can involve reading books, articles, or consulting experts from the relevant culture. Sometimes it is rather helpful to collaborate with native speakers or experts from the target culture to ensure that the translation accurately reflects the cultural context. Their input can be invaluable in achieving cultural equivalence.

So, cultural equivalence in translation requires a combination of linguistic skills, cultural knowledge, and the use of various tools and resources. Translators should be attentive to the cultural nuances of both the source and target languages and continuously work to improve their cultural understanding and translation techniques.

Cultural equivalence in translation is an essential aspect of ensuring that a message is accurately conveyed across cultures. Addressing the challenges and strategies related to cultural equivalence can help both translators and readers or audiences bridge cultural gaps and engage in meaningful cross-cultural communication.

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