

PROBLEMS OF ADEQUACY AND EQUIVALENCE IN THE TRANSLATION OF SUBJECT-SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY

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Annotation: This article explores the key theoretical issues of adequacy and equivalence in the translation of subject-specific terminology. It focuses on the challenges that arise when translating terms from English into Uzbek due to semantic, pragmatic, and cultural differences. Based on classical and modern approaches to translation theory, the article includes examples from law, medicine, technology, and linguistics. It also discusses methods of functional adaptation, adequate translation strategies, and practical solutions applicable in professional settings.

Keywords: adequacy, equivalence, specialized terminology, translation theory, Uzbek, functional translation, terminology adaptation.

Annotatsiya: ushbu maqolada soha terminlarini tarjima qilishda uchraydigan asosiy nazariy muammolar – adekvatlik va ekvivalentlik tushunchalari atroflicha tahlil etilgan. Xususan, ingliz tilidan o'zbek tiliga soha terminlarini tarjima qilishda semantik, pragmatik va madaniy tafovutlar qanday muammolarni yuzaga keltirishi ko'rsatib beriladi. Maqolada tarjima nazariyasining klassik va zamonaviy yondashuvlariga tayanilgan holda, huquq, tibbiyot, texnologiya, lingvistika kabi sohalardan misollar keltiriladi. Shuningdek, terminlarni funksional moslashtirish, adekvat tarjima usullari va tarjima jarayonida yuzaga keladigan muqobil yechimlar haqida fikr yuritiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: adekvatlik, ekvivalentlik, soha terminlari, tarjima nazariyasi, o'zbek tili, funksional tarjima, terminologik moslashuv.





Аннотация: в данной статье подробно рассматриваются основные теоретические проблемы адекватности и эквивалентности при переводе специализированной терминологии. Особое внимание уделяется трудностям, возникающим при переводе терминов с английского языка на узбекский из-за семантических, прагматических и культурных различий. Статья основана на классических и современных подходах теории перевода, с примерами из права, медицины, технологий и лингвистики. Также рассматриваются методы функциональной адаптации терминов и возможные решения, применимые на практике.

Ключевые слова: адекватность, эквивалентность, специализированная терминология, теория перевода, узбекский язык, функциональный перевод, терминологическая адаптация

Translation is not merely a linguistic process; it is a cognitive and cultural act involving decision-making, contextual analysis, and semiotic negotiation. The translation of **subject-specific terminology** poses even greater challenges, particularly in lesser-resourced languages like Uzbek. Two central concepts in this domain—**equivalence** and **adequacy**—have generated ongoing scholarly debate in translation studies.

“Translation involves far more than finding words in another language; it involves understanding contexts, cultures, and cognitive frameworks.”
— (Bassnett, 2002, p. 23)

This paper aims to explore these two fundamental notions in the context of specialized term translation and provide a deeper theoretical discussion supported by practical examples.

Theoretical Background

- The Concept of Equivalence

Equivalence has been one of the most contested concepts in translation theory. It refers to the extent to which the target text (TT) preserves the meaning, function, and form of the source text (ST).



Jakobson (1959) famously differentiated between **linguistic**, **formal**, and **dynamic** equivalence:

- **Linguistic equivalence:** Lexical or structural matching (e.g., *database* = *ma'lumotlar bazasi*)
- **Dynamic equivalence:** The effect of the translation on the target audience matches that of the original.

“There is ordinarily no full equivalence between code-units.”
— (Jakobson, 1959, p. 114)

Other scholars such as Vinay & Darbelnet (1958) and Catford (1965) emphasized **formal vs. functional equivalence**, whereas later theorists like Baker (2011) argued that equivalence should be understood at different levels: lexical, grammatical, textual, and pragmatic.

- Adequacy in Translation Theory

Adequacy, unlike equivalence, relates to whether the translation is appropriate for the **purpose** and **audience** of the target text. The concept gained prominence through functionalist approaches, particularly **Skopos theory** developed by Vermeer (1989), which argues:

“The end justifies the means: the purpose (Skopos) of the translation determines its methods and strategies.”
— (Vermeer, 1989)

Adequacy allows flexibility and prioritizes **communicative value over literal form**.

- Specialized Terminology and Its Translation Challenges

Subject-specific terms often carry technical, cultural, or conceptual loads that make their direct translation problematic. Terms in medicine, engineering, law, and IT require not only linguistic accuracy but **conceptual clarity**, **cultural relevance**, and **institutional alignment**.



“Specialized terminology is not just a matter of language but of worldviews shaped by professional discourse.”
— (Sager, 1990, p. 87)

- Features of Specialized Terms
- **Monoreferential:** Each term ideally refers to a single concept.
- **System-bound:** Terms often belong to culturally specific institutions.
- **Non-transparency:** Many terms are opaque to non-specialists.

Example:

- *Trust* (legal): Has no equivalent in Uzbek legal tradition.
- *Firewall* (IT): Needs functional interpretation beyond its literal translation (*devor*).

Limitations of Equivalence in Term Translation

Equivalence fails in many contexts due to:

- **Lack of terminological development** in Uzbek
- **Different legal, social, and academic systems**
- **Conceptual gaps** in fields not yet domestically established

4.1. False Friends and Misleading Equivalents

Example:

- *Fabric* (textile) ≠ *fabrika* (factory)

“Semantic false friends can be more dangerous than no translation at all.”

— (Newmark, 1988, p. 103)

Untranslatability and Neologisms

Some terms, like *crowdsourcing* or *deep learning*, have no equivalent in Uzbek. Translators resort to:

- Transcription (*kraudsorsing*)
- Calques (*ommaviy jalb qilish*)
- Descriptive phrases (*internet orqali omma yordami bilan yechim topish*)

Towards Adequate Translation of Specialized Terms

- Functional Equivalence and Skopos-Oriented Translation



Rather than seeking literal equivalents, the focus shifts to **functional roles** in the target context.

Example:

- *PhD* → “Falsafa doktori” or “Ilmiy daraja” depending on institutional context.
- Pragmatic Adaptation and Explanation

Sometimes, a single term in English must be translated into **a phrase or even a sentence** in Uzbek to preserve meaning.

Example:

- *Due process* (law) → “Qonuniy asosda adolatli sud jarayoni”
- Hybrid Translation

Using **borrowed terms** with **descriptive clarification**.

Example:

- *Big Data* → “Katta hajmdagi ma'lumotlar (Big Data)”

“Borrowing is not a defeat; it is a phase in the natural evolution of terminology.”

— (Crystal, 2003, p. 151)

Case Examples from Various Fields

Term (EN)	Literal Uzbek	Adequate Uzbek	Translation Type
Algorithm	Algoritm	Algoritm (borrowed, internationally used)	Equivalence (partial)
Plea bargain	Kelishuv sud jarayoni	Sudlanuvchining javob evaziga yengillik olishi	Functional adaptation
Curriculum	O'quv reja	Ta'lim dasturi	Contextual adaptation
Nanotechnology	Nanotexnologiya	Nanotexnologiya	Accepted neologism



The translation of subject-specific terminology from English into Uzbek reveals the limits of strict equivalence and the necessity for flexible, function-based strategies. Adequate translation often means moving beyond the word to preserve **meaning**, **context**, and **intention**. By engaging with theoretical models like dynamic equivalence, Skopos theory, and terminology management, Uzbek translators can overcome terminological gaps and contribute to the development of the national language in scientific discourse.

“To translate terminology well is not to mirror the term but to render the concept within a new cognitive and cultural world.”
— (Hatim & Mason, 1997, p. 144)

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