

MEANING ANALYSIS AND DYNAMIC EQUIVALENCE

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Abstract

Dynamic equivalence is a translation principle that aims to produce a similar response in the target text readers as the source text does in its original readers. This approach emphasizes achieving the "closest natural equivalent" of the source text, considering both linguistic and cultural contexts.

Keywords: closest natural equivalent, flexibility in translation, context, formal equivalence.

Introduction

If the source language differs greatly from the target language, maintaining the original syntax and grammar can make the translated text difficult to read. Dynamic equivalence allows the translator to make edits as needed so the translated text is comprehensible. Oftentimes, the target audience is not familiar with the source language or culture and needs idioms and references explained or localized to make sense

Main Body: Problems and Solutions with Recommended Resources:

Principle of Dynamic Equivalence:

Dynamic equivalence strives for the "closest natural equivalent" of the source text, ensuring faithful reproduction of the original message and eliciting a similar response from the target audience

This principle is based on the linguistic commonness of all languages and the cultural and psychological similarities among human beings, which facilitate the possibility of achieving similar responses across different languages.

Flexibility in Translation:

Dynamic equivalence offers flexibility in translation, allowing translators to choose words and structures that make sense in the target language, especially when a word-for-word translation would not convey the intended meaning

This approach is particularly useful when translating between languages with significant structural and cultural differences.

Formal equivalence: Formal equivalence is an approach to translation where the aim is to remain as close as possible to the original text. The translated text will preserve the vocabulary and the grammatical structure of the source text

The benefits of formal equivalence

Formal equivalence enables readers to apply their own interpretation to the original text and to consider the nuances of its meaning. However, they may only be able to do this if they are at least somewhat familiar with the source language and culture.

This approach to translation minimises the possibility of the translator imbuing outputs with their own biases. It also reduces the chances of inappropriate alternatives to the original words being chosen. These may alter the inherent meaning of the text beyond simply correcting cultural or lexical differences.

Pitfalls of formal equivalence

Formal equivalence can only ever be a goal and not a reality. There will always be words, phrases and grammatical elements for which no precise equivalents exist in the target language. It could be said there are no exact synonyms of words in any two or more languages as all languages are incredibly nuanced. In addition, grammatical rules vary across languages, and such variations can make formal equivalence impossible. When the grammatical devices employed in the source text do not exist in the target language, a translator may be forced to add or omit elements of text and those changes can transform how the message is perceived. In other words, there may be unintended consequences to formal equivalence. In trying not to alter the text too much, a translator could change its meaning entirely.

Tense, voice, person, gender and number are all grammatical devices that present challenges for translators attempting to adhere to formal equivalence.

The study of the American linguist Eugene Nida: In his book *Toward a Science of Translating*, published in 1964, the American linguist Eugene Nida coined new terminology to describe different approaches to translation. Nida was specifically exploring contrasting approaches to translating the Bible. But his theories of “dynamic equivalence” and “formal equivalence” are relevant to all translations. Nida sparked a scholarly debate that continues to this day. His theories highlighted the relative merits of literal translation and that undertaken with the culture and emotional response of the target audience in mind.

Conclusion

Dynamic equivalence is a valid and flexible translation principle that aims to achieve the closest natural equivalent of the source text. It leverages linguistic commonness and cultural similarities to ensure that the target text elicits a similar response from its readers as the original text does. This approach is particularly beneficial in cases where a direct translation would not effectively convey the intended meaning.

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