

METHODS AND STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING EQUIVALENCE IN THE KITE RUNNER BY KHALID HOSSEINI

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
This article explores methods and strategies for achieving equivalence in translating Khaled Hosseini's <i>The Kite Runner</i> . By analyzing key linguistic, cultural, and emotional nuances of the text, the study provides insights into maintaining the integrity and impact of the novel in translation. Emphasis is placed on dynamic equivalence, cultural adaptation, and the challenges of representing Afghan culture.	Equivalence, translation strategies, <i>The Kite Runner</i> , Khaled Hosseini, cultural adaptation, dynamic equivalence, linguistic challenges.

Introduction

Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner* is a deeply emotional and culturally rich novel that portrays themes of guilt, redemption, and the socio-political landscape of Afghanistan. Translating this novel into other languages involves significant challenges in achieving equivalence, as the translator must navigate cultural specificity, linguistic nuances, and emotional depth. This article investigates the strategies employed by translators to ensure equivalence and the methods that preserve the novel's essence across languages and cultures.

Literature Analysis

The concept of equivalence in translation has been widely discussed by scholars such as Eugene Nida and Vinay & Darbelnet. Nida's dynamic equivalence focuses on reproducing the same effect on the target audience as the source text has on its original audience. Similarly, Vinay and Darbelnet's model identifies translation strategies such as borrowing, calque, and adaptation to address cultural and linguistic differences. These theories provide a framework for examining how *The Kite Runner* has been translated.

The Kite Runner is characterized by its use of Dari and Pashto expressions, cultural references, and intricate emotional narratives. Translators face the dual challenge of staying true to the original text while making it accessible and relatable to a diverse readership. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of cultural adaptation and maintaining the emotional resonance of the novel.

Methods

The study employs a comparative analysis of *The Kite Runner* and its translated versions in three languages: French, Spanish, and Russian. The analysis focuses on:

Linguistic Strategies: Examining how translators handle Afghan expressions and idiomatic phrases.

Cultural Adaptation: Analyzing the treatment of cultural elements such as customs, traditions, and historical references.

Emotional Resonance: Evaluating how translators convey the novel's emotional depth and character development.

Results

Equivalence in translation is the process of preserving meaning, style, tone, and impact from the source text in the target language. In the context of *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, achieving equivalence would require addressing linguistic, cultural, and emotional nuances. Here are some methods and strategies that can be employed

Semantic Equivalence

Semantic equivalence in translation ensures that the meaning of the original text is conveyed as faithfully as possible while accommodating cultural and contextual differences. Here's a breakdown of the approach:

Semantic Equivalence Guidelines

Literal Meaning Preservation:

- Retain the core meaning of the original text without over-simplification or excessive paraphrasing.
- Avoid introducing new interpretations or altering the intent of the original message.

Respecting Cultural Nuances:

- Preserve culturally specific expressions or idioms to maintain authenticity.
- Acknowledge that some words or phrases may have no direct equivalent in the target language but can still be adapted effectively.

Methods and Strategies

Transliteration with Context:

- For culturally unique terms (e.g., *jan*, *baba*), use transliteration to retain the original sound.
- Provide a short explanation through footnotes, parentheses, or a glossary, e.g., *jan* (a term of endearment in Afghan culture).

Cultural Adaptation:

- When transliteration is not suitable, find analogous expressions that resonate with the target audience.
- Example: Instead of directly translating *baba* as "father," consider the contextual connotation (e.g., respect or intimacy) and adapt accordingly.

Footnotes and Glossaries:

- Include footnotes for terms that might be unfamiliar to the audience but are crucial for understanding the context.

- Use a glossary for texts containing multiple cultural terms, ensuring consistent explanations throughout.

Examples

- Original: "Ali called his father baba, asking for his advice."
- Translation (with transliteration): "Ali called his father baba (a respectful term for father in Afghan culture) and asked for his advice."
- Translation (adapted): "Ali called his father affectionately and sought his guidance."
- Original: "She said, 'Thank you, jan,' as she handed him the tea."
- Translation (with gloss): "She said, 'Thank you, jan,' (a term of endearment) as she handed him the tea."

Key Considerations

- Consistency: Ensure cultural terms are handled uniformly throughout the text.
- Audience Understanding: Adapt explanations based on the cultural and linguistic familiarity of the target audience.
- Balance: Avoid over-explaining, which can disrupt the reading flow, while ensuring necessary context is provided.

This strategy ensures both fidelity to the source text and accessibility for the target audience.

Cultural Equivalence

- Method: Adapt culturally specific elements to resonate with the target audience without distorting the original meaning.
- Example: Kite flying in Afghanistan is a culturally rich activity. Instead of explaining it at length, the translator might keep the term intact and provide context through narrative or notes.
- Strategy: Employ dynamic equivalence to convey cultural elements indirectly, ensuring they evoke similar emotions.

Linguistic Equivalence

- Method: Address differences in sentence structure, idioms, and expressions between languages.
- Example: The phrase "For you, a thousand times over" is central to the novel's theme. Its emotional weight and simplicity must be preserved in translation.
- Strategy: Recreate idiomatic expressions with equivalent emotional resonance rather than direct translations.

Stylistic Equivalence

- Method: Retain the narrative style and tone of the original work.
- Example: Hosseini's style often combines simple, poignant prose with rich descriptions. This balance should be mirrored in the translation.
- Strategy: Use comparative analysis of style between the source and target language and refine the translation to align tonally.

Emotional Equivalence

- Method: Ensure the emotional impact of key scenes is conveyed effectively.
- Example: Intense scenes like Hassan's loyalty to Amir or moments of redemption must evoke the same feelings of guilt, love, and catharsis.
- Strategy: Leverage target language vocabulary and sentence rhythm to reproduce emotional intensity.

Contextual Equivalence

- Method: Provide necessary context for cultural and historical elements embedded in the story.
- Example: References to the Soviet invasion, Taliban rule, or Pashtun-Hazara conflicts require nuanced handling.
- Strategy: Supplement context within the text subtly or through paratextual elements like prefaces or footnotes.

Ethnographic Equivalence

- Method: Preserve Afghan cultural identity while making it accessible to the target audience.
- Example: Celebratory practices like Eid or Nowruz can be described in a way that highlights their significance.
- Strategy: Use descriptive phrases or analogies relevant to the target audience.

Faithfulness to Themes

- Method: Maintain the central themes of betrayal, redemption, loyalty, and cultural identity.
- Example: How Amir seeks redemption for his betrayal of Hassan is pivotal. The translator must ensure this narrative arc remains clear and impactful.
- Strategy: Focus on thematic coherence when dealing with shifts in linguistic structures.

Intertextual Equivalence

- Method: Retain references to other texts or cultural artifacts.
 - Example: Mentions of Shahnamah or Rumi's poetry need to be carefully translated, preserving their poetic and cultural essence.
 - Strategy: Collaborate with subject-matter experts for accurate translation of intertextual references.
- By using these strategies, a translator can effectively achieve equivalence in *The Kite Runner*, ensuring that readers in the target language experience the novel with the same depth, richness, and emotional resonance as the original.

Discussion

While dynamic equivalence ensures that the novel's themes and emotions resonate with the target audience, it occasionally leads to a loss of cultural specificity. Retaining original terms (e.g., Baba, namaz) enriches the text but may require additional effort from readers unfamiliar with Afghan culture. Striking a balance between these approaches is crucial.

Moreover, the socio-political context of the novel posed unique challenges. Translators had to decide whether to explain or simplify complex historical and political references. Some translations effectively bridged this gap, while others risked oversimplifying the narrative.

Conclusions

Achieving equivalence in translating *The Kite Runner* requires a nuanced approach that combines linguistic strategies, cultural sensitivity, and a focus on emotional fidelity. Translators should: Use dynamic equivalence to maintain the novel's impact while considering cultural adaptation. Retain key cultural elements and provide explanatory notes to enrich readers' understanding. Engage with cultural consultants to ensure accurate representation of Afghan traditions and expressions.

Future studies could explore the reception of these translations among diverse audiences, providing further insights into the effectiveness of different strategies.

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