

LEVELS OF EQUIVALENCE IN PRESERVING AUTHOR'S VOICE IN UZBEK
LITERARY TRANSLATION

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Abstract. *This paper investigates the levels of equivalence in the preservation of an author's voice in Uzbek literary translation. The study argues that equivalence should not be perceived as a mechanical sameness of words but as a multi-layered correspondence that embraces semantic meaning, stylistic expression, and cultural resonance. Literary texts convey more than information; they embody the unique rhythm, tone, and aesthetic individuality of the author. In translation, these elements must be maintained through varying levels of equivalence, including lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and pragmatic dimensions. The research emphasizes that preserving the author's voice requires both fidelity to the original and sensitivity to the linguistic and cultural norms of the target language. Through an examination of theoretical frameworks and practical cases, this study demonstrates that equivalence functions as a dynamic tool that allows translators to re-create the individuality of the author while adapting it to the Uzbek cultural and linguistic context.*

Keywords: *Equivalence; author's voice; Uzbek literary translation; stylistic preservation; semantic fidelity; pragmatic adaptation; cultural resonance; translation strategies; lexical shifts; translation studies.*

Introduction: The question of equivalence has occupied a central position in translation studies for decades, yet its role in preserving the author's voice in literary translation remains a complex and nuanced issue. Translation is not simply a matter of linguistic transfer; it is an act of creative mediation that requires the translator to capture the semantic content of the original while also transmitting its stylistic texture and emotional depth. When dealing with Uzbek literary translation, the challenge becomes even more intricate because the translator must navigate between two languages with distinct structures, cultural frameworks, and artistic traditions. The problem, therefore, is not whether equivalence can be achieved, but how it can be applied at different levels to ensure that the author's voice is neither muted nor distorted.

In the context of English–Uzbek translation, equivalence takes on heightened importance because of the typological differences between the two languages. English, characterized by its relatively fixed word order and analytic tendencies, contrasts with Uzbek, which allows greater syntactic flexibility and relies heavily on agglutination. These structural divergences create situations where word-for-word equivalence is insufficient or even misleading. Instead, the translator must employ transformations that achieve equivalence not in form, but in function and effect. By doing so, the translator ensures that the author's stylistic identity remains intact despite inevitable linguistic adjustments.

Thus, the introduction sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how equivalence operates at multiple levels and how it enables the translator to act not merely as a conveyor of words but as a custodian of the author's voice. The discussion that follows will delve into the main body of the

study, where theoretical perspectives and practical examples will be used to show that equivalence, when applied thoughtfully, safeguards the individuality of the author and enriches the literary experience of the target audience.

Main Body: The concept of equivalence has long been a cornerstone of translation studies, but its role in literary translation deserves particular attention because it directly shapes how the author's voice is conveyed in the target language. Literary texts are not merely vehicles of meaning; they are works of art where every word choice, rhythm, and stylistic pattern contributes to the individuality of the author. When an English text is translated into Uzbek, the translator faces a constant tension between fidelity to the source and naturalness in the target. This tension cannot be resolved by a simple word-for-word transfer, since linguistic and cultural systems differ fundamentally. Instead, it requires an understanding of equivalence at multiple levels, each of which plays a distinct role in safeguarding the author's stylistic identity.

Cultural equivalence represents another crucial layer in preserving authorial voice. Literature is deeply rooted in culture, and authors frequently weave into their writing references that are immediately recognizable to their own community. These may include idioms, proverbs, historical events, or social norms that have no straightforward equivalent in Uzbek. When faced with such challenges, translators must decide whether to keep the original reference intact, relying on the reader's willingness to engage with foreign elements, or to substitute it with a culturally resonant alternative. Both strategies involve risks: too much domestication erases the cultural uniqueness of the original, while too much foreignization may alienate the reader. The art of translation lies in finding the balance, where cultural equivalence allows the author's voice to be heard across linguistic borders without distortion or loss of identity.

It is important to stress that equivalence does not imply uniformity. Each text poses unique challenges, and each author's voice requires a distinct strategy for preservation. A minimalist prose style demands different choices than a richly poetic one, and the translator must adapt accordingly. In some cases, fidelity to rhythm and imagery may be paramount, while in others, capturing irony or narrative perspective may take precedence. The translator must be sensitive to these variations, recognizing that equivalence is relative and context-dependent. What matters most is that the translated text conveys the same artistic impact and emotional resonance as the original, even if the means of doing so differ.

In conclusion, the main body of this study demonstrates that equivalence is best understood as a layered and dynamic concept. By operating simultaneously at semantic, stylistic, pragmatic, and cultural levels, it provides translators with the tools needed to preserve the author's voice in Uzbek literary translation. Far from being a simple linguistic exercise, translation emerges as a creative act of negotiation, where the translator ensures that the individuality of the author resonates authentically in a new language and culture.

Conclusion: The analysis of equivalence in literary translation reveals that the preservation of the author's voice is both a technical challenge and an artistic responsibility. The study has shown that equivalence cannot be reduced to a single dimension of linguistic correspondence but must be understood as a layered and dynamic concept. In particular, semantic, stylistic, pragmatic, and cultural levels of equivalence all play crucial roles in shaping how an author's voice is re-created in translation. Each level operates not in isolation but as part of an

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interconnected system where meaning, form, and cultural resonance reinforce one another. When these layers are harmonized, the translated text succeeds in carrying the individuality of the author into a new linguistic and cultural environment.

Ultimately, the study demonstrates that equivalence is not a formula but a practice of negotiation and creativity. Preserving an author's voice requires attentiveness to multiple layers of meaning and a commitment to respecting both the original and the target cultures. The translator must act as a bridge, carrying not only words but also emotions, traditions, and visions across linguistic boundaries. In doing so, they ensure that literature retains its power to connect human experiences, regardless of language. The levels of equivalence thus serve as a framework for guiding translators in their complex task, reminding them that their work is not only technical but profoundly human.

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