

EXPLORING BUSINESS ENGLISH TRANSLATION WITH A FOCUS ON ACHIEVING FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENCE

Galina Koteva^{1*}, Vladimir Kotev², Ivan Jordanov²

¹University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy, 8 Kliment Ohridski Str., Sofia 1756, Bulgaria

²University of National and World Economy, 19 December 8th Str, Sofia 1700, Bulgaria

Abstract

Equivalence in translation has been a subject of debate for a long time, with ongoing discussions about its importance and practicality. Leading scholars have explored the complexities of this concept, assessing whether it is a valid part of translation or merely an "illusory" idea. This paper seeks to emphasize key theories in the field, particularly focusing on the 4Es Standard. The 4Es Standard is a framework used in business translation to ensure that translations are of high quality and effectiveness. It provides a set of criteria—Effectiveness, Efficiency, Economy, and Equity—that help guarantee that translations meet both business needs and professional standards.

Keywords: functional effectiveness, equivalence, business translation, 4Es standard

1. INTRODUCTION

Equivalence has consistently been linked to the concept of translation, highlighting the potential similarities between source text (ST) and target text (TT) segments. Numerous definitions of translation incorporate this idea to stress the significance of similarity or sameness in the process of transferring written content between languages. The term may relate to the translator's efforts or their capacity to create a version that is, according to Bistra Alexieva [1], "equal in value, measure, force, effect, significance" to the original text.

Equivalence plays a pivotal role in linguistic translation, standing as one of the primary objectives of this practice. Despite its central importance, the concept of equivalence is frequently obscured by other related terms, such as adequacy, relevance, or interpretive resemblance. In translation studies, adequacy refers to the extent to which the translated text meets the requirements of the translation brief or the intended purpose. This term often overlaps with equivalence, as an adequate translation must convey the same meaning, style, and intent as the source text. Relevance in translation pertains to how well the translated text aligns with the context and expectations of the target audience. This concept ties back to equivalence by ensuring that the translation is not only accurate but also contextually appropriate and meaningful for the readers. Interpretive resemblance highlights the translator's task of capturing the interpretive nuances of the source text. Interpretive resemblance focuses on maintaining the author's intent, tone, and subtleties in the target language, which aligns closely with the goals of equivalence.

While these concepts provide different lenses through which to view the translation process, they all ultimately aim to achieve a similar outcome: a translation that faithfully represents the source text in terms of meaning, impact, and relevance. Equivalence thus remains an underlying principle, even when it is not explicitly mentioned, guiding translators in their efforts to create translations that are true to the original work in every significant aspect.

2. THE NOTION OF EQUIVALENCE

The concept of equivalence has fluctuated in importance within academic discussions on translation, underscoring its "problematic" nature. Translation scholars have defined, revised, replaced, or rejected equivalence, each emphasizing different facets of the translation process. To comprehend equivalence in linguistic translation, it is essential to review the various paradigms, shifts, and trends that have shaped

translation studies. This overview will reveal the common themes that both differentiate and connect various approaches, fostering constructive dialogue within the field.

The concept of equivalence, introduced in the 1950s by Vinay and Darbelnet [2] and Jakobson [3], primarily belongs to the linguistic turn in translation studies, focusing on the source text's status and the need for equivalence. Vinay and Darbelnet viewed equivalence as a translation technique to replicate the original situation with different wording, emphasizing stylistic impact. Jakobson introduced "equivalence in difference," suggesting translation involves equivalent messages in different code units, acknowledging the challenge of achieving full equivalence. He highlighted the semiotic dimension of translation, recognizing that languages, though governed by conventions, are open to interaction. While Jakobson's perspective remains linked to the linguistic turn, it is less prominent in contemporary translation studies.

Nida [4] further developed the concept of equivalence by distinguishing between formal and dynamic equivalence, emphasizing the closest natural equivalent to achieve the highest possible approximation in language and culture. Nida highlighted the importance of culture and similar effect, but did not provide objective measures for equivalence, indicating it as a relationship between source and target texts that can vary based on needs, text types, and audiences. Nida's theory emphasizes that equivalence is a flexible relationship between the source and target texts, which can be adjusted based on various factors. This means that the degree and type of equivalence achieved in translation are not fixed but rather depend on the specific requirements of the translation project.

According to him, the purpose of the translation plays a crucial role in determining the type of equivalence. For instance, a translation intended for academic purposes may prioritize accuracy and formality (formal equivalence), while a translation meant for casual reading might focus on readability and naturalness (dynamic equivalence). Different genres or types of texts require different approaches to equivalence. Literary texts, legal documents, scientific papers, and advertising materials each have unique characteristics that influence how closely the translation adheres to the source text. For example, literary translations might aim to capture the artistic style and emotional impact of the original, while legal translations must ensure precision and clarity. The target audience's cultural background, language proficiency, and expectations significantly impact how equivalence is achieved. A translation aimed at a general audience might prioritize ease of understanding and cultural relevance, while a translation for a specialized audience might focus on technical accuracy and terminological consistency.

Nida's perspective acknowledges that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to equivalence. Instead, translators must consider these factors to determine the appropriate balance between staying faithful to the source text and making the translation effective and meaningful for the target audience. This flexibility allows for a more nuanced and context-sensitive approach to translation, accommodating the diverse needs and expectations of different translation projects.

Newmark [5] built upon Nida's ideas by introducing his own framework, which divided translation into two main types: semantic and communicative translation. This division corresponds to the long-standing dichotomy between literal and free translation. Semantic translation focuses on preserving the meaning, form, and style of the original text as closely as possible. It aims for high fidelity to the source text, making it akin to Nida's formal equivalence. Semantic translation is typically more suitable for texts where the exact wording and structure are important, such as literary works or legal documents. In contrast, communicative translation prioritizes the effectiveness of the message in the target language, ensuring that it is natural and easily understood by the target audience. This aligns with Nida's dynamic equivalence, where the focus is on conveying the overall effect and intention of the original text rather than sticking rigidly to its form. Communicative translation is often used for texts like advertisements, instructional materials, or popular literature, where clarity and reader engagement are crucial.

Newmark created a V-diagram to illustrate the spectrum of translation strategies, ranging from word-for-word translation at one end to adaptation at the other. This diagram helps visualize the varying degrees of literalness and flexibility that a translator might employ, depending on the nature of the text and the translation's purpose. Newmark's V-diagram and his clear categorization of translation types

provide valuable educational tools for teaching translation. They help students understand the range of options available and the considerations involved in choosing an appropriate translation strategy.

Despite these contributions, Newmark's approach did not significantly advance the theoretical debate on equivalence. His work largely reiterated and expanded upon existing ideas rather than introducing groundbreaking new concepts. The primary focus remained on practical guidelines for translators rather than challenging or redefining the notion of equivalence itself.

Similarly, typologies proposed by other scholars, including representatives of the Leipzig School like Koller [6] and Komissarov [7], aimed to classify and measure types of equivalence. However, these efforts have not succeeded in definitively defining the concept. Instead, they have faced criticism, particularly from those who, like Snell-Hornby [8], argue that such mechanical approaches often limit equivalence to single lexical items or the number of possible equivalents. Snell-Hornby contends that this approach confines equivalence to specific texts and translation cases, preventing broader generalizations. Despite the inherent difficulties in measuring such an abstract concept, the trend to formalize and operationalize equivalence persists to this day.

Although the linguistic approach to translation is now seen as inadequate on its own, the ideas developed within it remain relevant. Scholars who have contributed to this approach offer varying perspectives on equivalence, but they share some common understandings that highlight key aspects of the concept. Equivalence is fundamentally about the relationship between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). This relationship involves finding ways to replicate or convey the meaning, style, and impact of the ST in the TT. Achieving equivalence involves some form of transfer or replacement, where elements of the ST are translated into corresponding elements in the TT. This process is crucial in establishing how closely the TT matches the ST in terms of meaning and effect. The transfer process operates on various levels—such as lexical, grammatical, and stylistic—and ranks, resulting in different degrees or types of equivalence. For instance, equivalence might be achieved at the level of individual words, sentences, or broader discourse structures, and the effectiveness can vary depending on these levels. Measuring equivalence often involves considering extralinguistic contexts, such as the principle of similar effect or cultural factors. This means that equivalence is not just about linguistic accuracy but also about ensuring that the translation has a similar impact or effect on the target audience as the original text does on its audience. Cultural considerations are also crucial, as they influence how the translation is received and understood.

The functionalist, descriptive, and cultural approaches to translation have shifted the focus away from the concept of equivalence, sometimes deeming it unnecessary. Scholars like Reiss and Vermeer [9] from the functionalist school introduced the concept of adequacy alongside equivalence. They argue that equivalence is relevant mainly when the source text and target text perform the same function in their respective contexts. According to this view equivalence is achieved when the target text serves the same purpose or function as the source text in both contexts. This means that the translation must maintain the same effect and role, which often ensures a high degree of semantic fidelity. Reiss and Vermeer acknowledge that achieving perfect equivalence, where texts are absolutely identical in meaning and function, is nearly impossible. They recognize that various factors, including cultural differences and linguistic limitations, make absolute sameness unrealistic.

When equivalence is not feasible or practical due to differences in context or function, the concept of adequacy becomes central. Adequacy refers to the suitability of the translation in achieving the intended communicative function or effect in the target context, rather than mirroring the source text exactly. This approach accepts that translations may need to adapt the content to meet the needs of the target audience, which sometimes means sacrificing strict equivalence for functional effectiveness.

In functionalist terms, equivalence can be seen as reflexive and symmetrical, meaning that if the contexts of the source and target texts are similar, translating content directly can suffice to achieve equivalence. However, if the contexts differ significantly, direct equivalence may not be possible or appropriate. In such cases, adequacy becomes more relevant as it focuses on how well the translation adapts to the new context while fulfilling its intended purpose. These approaches also emphasize the importance of context and function, often sidelining the concept of equivalence in favor of examining how translations operate

in practice. They focus on describing and analyzing translation practices and cultural factors rather than striving for a theoretical ideal of equivalence. In summary, while the functionalist, descriptive, and cultural approaches acknowledge the concept of equivalence, they often view it as secondary to the concept of adequacy, particularly when dealing with different contexts and functions. This shift reflects a more pragmatic and context-sensitive understanding of translation, prioritizing the functional impact of translations over rigid adherence to equivalence.

Pym [10] builds on the critique of equivalence by arguing that it often leads to a circular reasoning problem. According to Pym, equivalence is a category used to define translation, but translation itself is expected to exemplify equivalence, leading to a self-reinforcing and problematic cycle with no clear resolution. To address this issue, Pym [11] proposes a different perspective on equivalence. Pym views equivalence as a flexible, negotiable concept rather than a fixed or absolute one. He suggests that equivalence is determined by the translator, who decides how to approach it based on the specific context and needs of the translation project. This perspective allows for more adaptability and responsiveness to the nuances of different translation situations.

Pym introduces the idea of natural equivalence, which aligns with the concept of formal correspondence. This form of equivalence focuses on maintaining a close, formal similarity between the source text and the target text. It resembles traditional notions of equivalence that emphasize direct, word-for-word or structure-for-structure translation. Pym differentiates natural equivalence from directional equivalence, which is created by the translator. Directional equivalence is more flexible and can involve substantial adjustments in the translation process. This flexibility allows for significant textual expansion or reduction, accommodating differences between the source and target languages or cultures. For example, a translator might expand on certain aspects of the source text to provide additional context or shorten passages to fit the target language's norms or constraints. According to Pym, directional equivalence provides a basis for justifying considerable modifications in the translation. This approach acknowledges that achieving strict equivalence might not always be feasible or desirable and that the translator's decisions can result in adaptations that better serve the translation's purpose and audience.

In summary, Pym's perspective on equivalence challenges the traditional view by framing it as a negotiable and context-dependent concept. By distinguishing between natural and directional equivalence, Pym offers a more pragmatic approach that recognizes the role of the translator in shaping equivalence to fit the specific demands of each translation task. This view aims to move beyond the limitations of a rigid equivalence framework and embrace a more dynamic and context-sensitive understanding of translation. The non-linguistic turn highlights the issues with the traditional concept of equivalence in translation. It demonstrates that the idea of equivalence as a precise, symmetrical sameness does not accurately reflect the complexities of linguistic translation. Consequently, scholars from this perspective argue that equivalence should either be dismissed, re-evaluated, or replaced with different terms, depending on their level of critique. Alternatively, equivalence could be redefined as a broad, relative, and negotiable concept to better align with the nuances of the translation process.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF EQUIVALENCE

It is essential, therefore, to outline the key features of the concept of equivalence and the assumptions that can support its validity. According to Redzioch-Korkuz [12] these points include:

1. First, it's crucial to recognize that equivalence is central to linguistic translation, essentially defining the activity. The term appears in many definitions and names of various techniques and strategies. While not always favored, equivalence distinguishes translation from other processes and is frequently cited in encyclopedic entries. Therefore, it should be preserved and possibly redefined rather than discarded.
2. The main challenge with equivalence is defining it precisely. It's important to clarify that, although equivalence implies equal value, in translation this equality does not mean perfect, bilateral symmetry, absolute sameness, or identity. Instead, it refers to "an appropriate relation of relevant similarity... established and maintained between the source text and the target text" [13].

3. Equivalence is a relative, functional term influenced by the translation context and text composition rather than language similarities. It refers to a genuine relationship of relevant similarity between the source and target texts, assessed individually for each specific case.
4. Texts serve as one of the reference levels for equivalence, which can be achieved at various levels like words, content, and imagery. Different parts of a text can exhibit varying degrees of equivalence, making it a descriptive, gradable, and relative category dependent on multiple factors [14]. This underscores the importance of analyzing texts within their relevant context.
5. To define equivalence in translation, it's crucial to consider context and constraints, which shape the process. Equivalence should be broadly defined to apply to various translations, as it's inherently relative and varies with each task. It's not a rigid standard but a negotiable, adaptable quality. An abstract definition focusing on its essential components is more reasonable.
6. Equivalence is a category of assessment primarily used by translation scholars, critics, students, proofreaders, commissioners, clients, and other professionals involved in translation. For scholars and students, the focus is often on the theoretical status and definition of equivalence. For clients and professionals, the focus is more practical, involving the identification of translation errors, the evaluation of appropriate equivalents, and determining translation strategies. As Chesterman [15] notes, "equivalence is produced by translators, and then implicitly claimed by them, a claim that is (or is not) then accepted by the client and later readers." Equivalence is therefore based on the translator's subjective opinion and should be assessed within a broad context, including extralinguistic factors like immediate context, media, and social actors. In summary, equivalence should be evaluated within a comprehensive context to ensure the translation is appropriate and effective.
7. Equivalence in translation involves criteria like linguistic correspondence, content consistency, and functional meaning. It's a relative, gradable concept without precise rating scales, evaluated from various perspectives. A target text may be more equivalent if it closely mirrors the source text, fits the context better, meets audience expectations, or adheres to conventions. Thorough context-based analysis is essential to fully understand equivalence.

The key observations about equivalence can be summarized as follows: Equivalence reflects a relevant similarity or resemblance between two texts linked by some form of transfer. It is a describable concept with various levels and exists in specific contexts, though numerical scales are rarely used. It is determined by professionals within a defined contextual framework. It is a fundamental aspect of translation, aimed at describing rather than assessing it. It is a relative concept, dependent on perspective.

4. SPECIAL FEATURES OF BUSINESS ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Business English translation has gained prominence recently due to its relevance across various sectors like law, advertising, and customs. This field of translation is marked by its distinct characteristics and complexity.

4.1. Diverse Content: Business English encompasses a wide range of subjects, including legal documents, marketing materials, and industry-specific terminology. Each type of content has its own set of requirements and nuances.

4.2. Business Characteristics: Business English inherently has a business-oriented nature. The translation process must adapt to the specific context and purpose of the content. For instance, translating a company profile requires the translator to highlight the company's business identity and marketing aspects, ensuring the text appeals to the target audience.

4.3. Contextual Variability: Different forms and styles of translation are needed depending on the content type and its context. For example:

- **Company Profiles:** These need to reflect the company's marketing goals and appeal to potential clients or partners.

- **Legal Documents:** These require a precise and formal approach to ensure clarity and avoid any legal ambiguities. The language must be rigorous and avoid any potential for misinterpretation.

4.4. Information and Efficiency: Translators should utilize standards like the 4Es (Effective, Efficient, Economical, and Equitable) to ensure that the translated text is both accurate and suited to its business purpose. This includes ensuring the translation maintains the intended business function and effectively communicates the necessary information. When translating Business English, adhering to standards like the 4Es is crucial to ensure that the translation meets its intended business purpose. Here's how each of these standards plays a role:

1. **Effective:** The translation must successfully convey the intended message and fulfill its purpose. For example, if translating a company's marketing materials, the text should effectively engage the target audience and achieve the desired promotional outcomes. This means the translation should not only be accurate but also persuasive and tailored to the audience's expectations and cultural context.
2. **Efficient:** Efficiency refers to how well the translation process uses resources, including time and effort. An efficient translation process minimizes delays and ensures that the translated text is delivered promptly without compromising quality. This involves using translation tools and technologies effectively, managing the translation workflow efficiently, and ensuring that the translation meets deadlines.
3. **Economical:** This standard focuses on cost-effectiveness. The translation should provide value for money, balancing the quality of the translation with the cost of the service. Economical translation practices involve selecting appropriate translation methods and tools that meet the budgetary constraints while still delivering a high-quality outcome.
4. **Equitable:** Equitability ensures fairness and accuracy in the translation process. This includes maintaining a fair representation of the original content without distortion, respecting the cultural and contextual nuances of both the source and target languages, and ensuring that the translation does not inadvertently misrepresent the original message. It also involves ethical considerations, such as providing transparency about the translation process and any potential limitations.

4.5. Application of 4Es in Business Translation

- **In marketing materials:** For promotional texts, effectiveness is crucial. The translation must resonate with the target market, capturing the promotional tone and persuasive elements of the original text. Efficiency and economy are also important to ensure that marketing campaigns are launched on time and within budget.
- **In legal documents:** In legal translations, effectiveness means ensuring precise and clear communication of legal terms and obligations. Efficiency and economy help manage translation costs and timeframes, while equitability ensures that legal nuances are accurately conveyed without bias or misinterpretation.
- **In company profiles:** Here, the translation must be effective in presenting the company's image and offerings accurately. Efficiency ensures timely updates, and economy manages costs, while equitability maintains fairness in how the company's information is represented.

So, the 4Es standard helps ensure that business translations are not only accurate but also strategically aligned with the intended purpose, efficiently executed, cost-effective, and fair. This holistic approach supports the creation of translations that meet both business needs and quality expectations [16]. Translating Business English requires an understanding of the specific business context, the nature of the content, and the appropriate style and form for each type of text. It is crucial to adapt the translation strategy to align with the purpose and characteristics of the content to ensure effectiveness and accuracy.

Translators need a solid grasp of the industry or sector relevant to the text. Different industries (e.g., finance, law, marketing) have unique terminologies, practices, and expectations. For instance, financial documents will require precise use of terminology related to financial instruments and regulations. Also, translators must understand the cultural and market context of both the source and target audiences. This

includes recognizing regional differences in business practices, communication styles, and consumer behavior. For example, marketing content should be localized to fit cultural preferences and consumer expectations in the target market. Understanding the business objectives of the document is crucial. Whether the goal is to inform, persuade, or comply with legal requirements will influence how the text should be translated. For instance, a company's mission statement should be translated in a way that reflects the company's brand values and strategic goals.

In summary, translating Business English effectively requires a thorough understanding of the specific business context, the nature of the content, and the appropriate style and form. By tailoring the translation strategy to these factors, translators can ensure that the final product is not only accurate but also aligned with the intended purpose and culturally appropriate. This approach enhances the overall effectiveness and impact of the translated text in the target market.

5. ACHIEVING DYNAMIC MESSAGE EQUIVALENCE

The 4Es standard in business English translation emphasizes a flexible approach to ensuring that the translated text achieves dynamic message equivalence. This concept involves aligning the translation with several critical aspects of the source text to ensure it effectively serves its purpose. Here's a breakdown of how the 4Es standard applies, specifically focusing on stylistic, semantic, cultural, and business dimensions.

- **Stylistic Message Equivalence** refers to preserving the tone, style, and overall presentation of the source text in the translation. In business English, this means maintaining the same level of formality, persuasive style, or technical precision. For instance, a formal corporate report should remain formal in the target language, while marketing materials might need to retain a compelling and engaging style.
- **Semantic Message Equivalence** focuses on accurately conveying the meaning and content of the source text. The translation should precisely reflect the same information and concepts as the original text. For example, if a source text describes a product feature in detail, the translation should convey the same feature with equivalent clarity.
- **Cultural Message Equivalence** involves adapting the text to fit cultural contexts and norms of the target audience. Business texts often include cultural references or idiomatic expressions that need to be localized. For example, an advertisement that uses cultural references specific to one country should be adapted to resonate with the cultural context of the target audience in another country.
- **Business Effect Equivalence** ensures that the translation achieves the same business impact or function as the original text. The translation should meet the same business objectives as the source text. For example, a company's mission statement should inspire and align with the company's strategic goals, and a marketing brochure should effectively attract and engage potential clients in the target market.

When applying the 4Es standard to business English translation the translation should mirror the style of the original, whether it's formal, casual, or technical. This helps maintain the intended impact and readability. The core message and details should be preserved to ensure that the translated text provides the same information as the source text. Cultural references and idiomatic expressions should be adapted to suit the target audience's cultural context, making the text relevant and relatable. The translation should support the same business objectives as the original text. For instance, if the original text aims to persuade or inform, the translation should achieve the same effect.

The 4Es standard, particularly when applied as dynamic message equivalence, provides a comprehensive framework for ensuring that business English translations are effective, accurate, culturally appropriate, and aligned with the original text's business goals. This approach helps create translations that not only convey the same information but also achieve the same impact and fulfill the intended business functions.

5.1. Examples of the four types of equivalence with reference to business translation

5.1.1. Stylistic Message Equivalence focuses on maintaining the tone, style, and presentation of the source text in the translation. Here's an example to illustrate this concept in the context of business English translation (see Table 1):

Example: Translating a Corporate Newsletter

Source Text (English):

Dear Valued Clients,

We are thrilled to announce the launch of our innovative new product line, which we believe will revolutionize your business operations. Our team has worked tirelessly to ensure that these products not only meet but exceed industry standards. We invite you to explore our new offerings and experience the excellence that sets us apart in the market.

Warm regards,

The XYZ Company Team

Target Text (Bulgarian)

Уважаеми клиенти,

С голямо удоволствие ви съобщаваме за пускането на нашата иновационна нова продуктова линия, която вярваме, че ще революционизира вашите бизнес операции. Нашият екип е работил неуморно, за да гарантира, че тези продукти не само отговарят, но и надвишават индустриалните стандарти. Каним ви да разгледате нашите нови предложения и да изпитате отличието, което ни отличава на пазара.

С най-добри пожелания,

Екипът на XYZ

	Tone and Formality	Presentation and Structure	Language Style
ST	Uses a warm and enthusiastic tone, with a formal address	The message is structured formally, beginning with a greeting, followed by an announcement, and concluding with a closing phrase	The language is positive and promotional, designed to generate excitement about the new product line
TT	Maintains the same warm and enthusiastic tone with a formal address.	Mirrors the structure, ensuring that the greeting, announcement, and closing are presented in a similar formal manner	Uses positive and promotional language to reflect the same excitement and confidence in the new products
Conclusion: In this example, the stylistic message equivalence ensures that the Bulgarian translation not only conveys the same information as the English source text but also reflects the same tone, formality, and enthusiasm. This helps in maintaining the intended impact and effectiveness of the message in the target language, ensuring it resonates similarly with the Bulgarian-speaking audience as it does with the English-speaking one.			

Table 1. Analysis of Stylistic Message Equivalence

5.1.2. Semantic Message Equivalence focuses on accurately conveying the meaning of the source text in the target language, including its specific details and nuances. This ensures that the core message, information, and intent are preserved, even if the exact wording differs (see Table 2).

Example: Translating a Business Contract Clause

Source Text (English):

The Contractor agrees to complete the project by June 30, 2024. If the project is not completed by this date, the Contractor will incur a penalty of 5% of the total contract value for each week of delay. The penalty amount will be deducted from the final payment.

Target Text (Bulgarian)

Изпълнителят се съгласява да завърши проекта до 30 юни 2024 г. Ако проектът не бъде завършен до тази дата, Изпълнителят ще бъде наказан с 5% от общата стойност на договора за всяка седмица забавяне. Размерът на наказанието ще бъде удържан от окончателното плащане.

	Meaning Preservation	Clarity	Specificity
ST	Specifies the completion date, the penalty for delay, and the deduction method.	Clear about the date, penalty percentage, and how penalties are handled	Includes precise terms regarding deadlines, penalties, and deductions
TT	Accurately translates these details, maintaining the same legal and financial implications	Clearly conveys the same information, ensuring that the terms of the contract are understood in the same way in Bulgarian	Maintains these specifics, ensuring no ambiguity or loss of critical information
Conclusion: In this example, semantic message equivalence ensures that the Bulgarian translation retains the exact meaning and stipulations of the original English contract clause. This is crucial in legal and business contexts, where precise details and conditions must be clearly understood in both languages.			

Table 2. Analysis of Semantic Message Equivalence

5.1.3. Cultural Message Equivalence involves adapting a message to ensure it is culturally relevant and resonates with the target audience while preserving the original intent. This often requires adjusting cultural references, idioms, and context to fit the target culture (see Table 3).

Example: Translating a Business Promotion

Source Text (English):

Join our “Black Friday Sale” and enjoy unbeatable discounts on all products! Experience the thrill of the biggest shopping event of the year, where you can find incredible deals and exclusive offers.

Target Text (Bulgarian)

Включете се в нашата „Голямата разпродажба“ и се възползвайте от неустойими отстъпки на всички продукти! Изживейте тръпката от най-голямото пазаруване на годината, където ще намерите невероятни оферти и специални предложения.

	Cultural Reference	Relevance	Language and Imagery
ST	Mentions “Black Friday,” a well-known shopping event in the U.S. with significant cultural and commercial impact	Targets an American audience familiar with the excitement and significance of Black Friday sales	Uses “unbeatable discounts,” “biggest shopping event,” and “exclusive offers” to evoke excitement and urgency
TT	Adapts the event to a more general term, “Голямата разпродажба” (The Big Sale), since “Black Friday” might not be as culturally significant or widely recognized in Bulgaria.	Ensures that the promotional message is relevant and engaging for Bulgarian consumers, focusing on the excitement of a major sale event that they can relate to.	Retains similar imagery with “неустойими отстъпки” (irresistible discounts), “най-голямото пазаруване на годината” (the biggest shopping of the year), and “специални предложения” (special offers), making sure the excitement and urgency are conveyed in a culturally appropriate manner.
Conclusion: In this example, cultural message equivalence involves adapting the marketing message from an American context to a Bulgarian context. By replacing a culturally specific reference with a more universally understood term and ensuring that the language and imagery resonate with the Bulgarian audience, the message maintains its effectiveness and appeal.			

Table 3. Analysis of Cultural Message Equivalence

5.1.4. Business Effect Equivalence focuses on ensuring that the translated text achieves the same impact and fulfills the same business objectives as the original. This often involves adapting marketing strategies, promotional messages, or business communications to resonate with the target audience while maintaining effectiveness (see Table 4).

Example: Translating a Promotional Offer

Source Text (English):

Unlock your business's potential with our exclusive offer! For a limited time only, enjoy a 25% discount on all our premium consulting services. Our expert team will help you streamline operations and drive growth. Don't miss out on this opportunity to transform your business. Act now and elevate your success with [Company Name]!

Target Text (Bulgarian)

Разширете потенциала на вашия бизнес с нашето специално предложение! Само за ограничен период, получите 25% отстъпка на всички наши премиум консултантски услуги. Нашият екип от експерти ще ви помогне да оптимизирате операциите и да постигнете растеж. Не изпускайте тази възможност да трансформирате бизнеса си. Действайте сега и повишете успеха си с [Име на Компания]!

	Promotion and Call to Action	Discount and Services	Outcome and Motivation
ST	Uses phrases like “exclusive offer” and “Don’t miss out” to create a sense of urgency and exclusivity	Promotes a “25% discount on all our premium consulting services” with a focus on transformation and growth	Emphasizes the benefits with phrases like “streamline operations” and “drive growth.”
TT	Translates these phrases into “специално предложение” (special offer) and “Не изпускайте тази възможност” (Don’t miss this opportunity) to effectively communicate the urgency and exclusivity, ensuring the promotional impact is preserved	Maintains the same discount and service details with “25% отстъпка на всички наши премиум консултантски услуги” (25% discount on all our premium consulting services), ensuring that the financial incentive and value proposition are clear	Uses “оптимизирате операциите и да постигнете растеж” (optimize operations and achieve growth) to reflect the same business benefits, motivating the audience in a way that resonates with Bulgarian business expectations.
Conclusion: Business Effect Equivalence is achieved by translating the promotional message in a way that maintains its persuasive impact and effectiveness. The translation ensures that the promotional offer retains its urgency, appeal, and business benefits for the Bulgarian audience, ultimately achieving the same marketing and business goals as the original English text.			

Table 4. Analysis of Business Effect Equivalence

6. DISCUSSION

In summary, the 4 Es—Effective, Efficient, Economical, and Equitable—serve as a vital benchmark for business translation, guiding translators to produce work that is not only accurate but also strategically valuable. Effective translations achieve their intended impact; efficient processes ensure resource optimization; economical practices offer value for money; and equitable approaches balance cultural and contextual nuances. By adhering to these principles, businesses can enhance the quality and impact of their translations, ultimately supporting their global communication strategies and fostering successful international relationships.

7. CONCLUSIONS

When examining the role of equivalence in translation, it becomes clear that the two concepts are inherently linked and influence each other. Even if we find equivalence lacking due to its limitations, variability, or broadness, and prefer Andrew Chesterman’s view of the relationship between source and target texts as “relevant/optimal similarity,” some degree of similarity must be acknowledged to define a text as a translation. As Anthony Pym [10] points out, “the main reason theory continues to discuss equivalence is that clients and readers, and not just translators, see it as a measure of the quality and value of translated texts.”

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