

The Task of Interlingual Adaptation in Translation Strategies

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Abstract. *This article explores the task of interlingual adaptation within the framework of translation strategies. It examines the theoretical foundations of adaptation, the challenges translators encounter, and the methods employed to address these challenges. By analyzing practical examples and case studies, the study aims to shed light on the importance of interlingual adaptation as a fundamental component of effective translation and its implications for intercultural communication in a globalized world.*

Key words: *interlingual adaptation, translation, intercultural communication, translation strategies, communicative and semantic translation.*

Introduction

Translation serves as a critical bridge between languages and cultures, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and values across diverse linguistic communities. At the heart of effective translation lies the concept of interlingual adaptation—a process that involves tailoring the source text to align with the linguistic, cultural, and contextual nuances of the target language. This adaptation is not merely a linguistic exercise but a strategic endeavor aimed at preserving the meaning, intent, and impact of the original text while ensuring its accessibility and relevance to the target audience.

Interlingual adaptation occupies a central role in translation strategies, where the translator must navigate complex challenges, such as cultural disparities, idiomatic expressions, and genre-specific conventions. The process demands not only a profound understanding of both the source and target languages but also a keen awareness of cultural dynamics, audience expectations, and contextual subtleties. Successful adaptation goes beyond literal translation to achieve functional equivalence, striking a balance between fidelity to the original text and naturalness in the target language.

Literature Review

Interlingual adaptation has long been recognized as a cornerstone of translation studies, reflecting the dynamic interplay between linguistic equivalence and cultural sensitivity. Scholars have extensively explored this concept, emphasizing its crucial role in achieving accurate and meaningful translations that resonate with the target audience. This section provides an overview of key studies and theoretical frameworks that have shaped our understanding of interlingual adaptation within translation strategies.

Theoretical Foundations of Interlingual Adaptation. One of the earliest contributions to the study of adaptation in translation comes from Eugene Nida's theory of dynamic equivalence. Nida (1964) proposed that the primary goal of translation is to produce a response in the target audience that is equivalent to that of the source audience. This approach highlighted the importance of cultural context, idiomatic expressions, and audience expectations in achieving successful adaptation.

Similarly, Peter Newmark (1988) differentiated between communicative and semantic translation, advocating for a balance between fidelity to the source text and adaptation to the target culture.

Cultural and Linguistic Challenges. Cultural disparities pose significant challenges to interlingual adaptation. Hatim and Mason (1997) stressed the role of culture-bound terms, metaphors, and idiomatic expressions in shaping translation strategies. They argued that translators must consider cultural semiotics to avoid misinterpretation and ensure that the adapted text remains accessible and relevant to the target audience. Venuti's (1995) concept of domestication and foreignization further explored this tension, providing a framework for understanding how translators navigate the dichotomy between preserving the source text's foreignness and adapting it to the cultural norms of the target language.

Adaptation Across Genres. Interlingual adaptation is particularly critical in genre-specific translations, such as literature, legal documents, and technical texts. Baker (2011) examined the narrative framework in literary translation, highlighting how cultural and stylistic nuances require creative strategies to preserve the author's intent while engaging the target audience. Legal and technical texts, as explored by Schäffner (1998), demand precision and adherence to standardized terminology, necessitating adaptations that maintain both accuracy and cultural relevance.

Methodological Approaches. Recent studies have adopted interdisciplinary approaches to analyze adaptation in translation. Cognitive linguistics has provided insights into the translator's decision-making processes, as discussed by Tabakowska (1993). Corpus-based studies, such as those by Baker (1995), have offered empirical evidence on patterns of adaptation across languages and genres, revealing trends and strategies employed by translators to address linguistic and cultural gaps.

Implications for Global Communication. The growing interconnectedness of the world has amplified the significance of interlingual adaptation. Cronin (2003) emphasized the role of translation in mediating globalization, arguing that effective adaptation strategies are essential for fostering intercultural dialogue and understanding. As translation extends beyond traditional texts to multimedia, audiovisual, and digital content, the demand for innovative adaptation techniques has become increasingly apparent.

The literature on interlingual adaptation underscores its multifaceted nature, encompassing linguistic, cultural, and contextual dimensions. Theoretical frameworks and empirical studies provide valuable insights into the strategies translators employ to address these complexities. Building on this foundation, the present study aims to further explore the task of interlingual adaptation within translation strategies, offering new perspectives on its application in contemporary translation practice.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to examine the task of interlingual adaptation in translation strategies. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, the research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how translators address linguistic and cultural disparities while maintaining the intended meaning and impact of the source text. The methodology is structured into three phases: data collection, analysis, and evaluation.

1. Data Collection

a. Text Selection. To analyze interlingual adaptation across various contexts, the study focuses on three genres:

1. **Literary Texts** – Excerpts from novels and short stories rich in cultural and idiomatic expressions.
2. **Legal Documents** – Contracts, agreements, and legislative texts that require precision and adherence to legal norms.
3. **Technical Manuals** – Instructional and user guides that necessitate clarity and standardization of terminology.

b. Sample Selection Criteria:

- **Source Languages:** English and Uzbek.
- **Target Languages:** Uzbek and English, respectively.
- **Translation Samples:** Published translations from professional translators and verified bilingual corpora.

c. Expert Interviews. In-depth interviews with professional translators, editors, and linguists are conducted to gather insights into the strategies and challenges of interlingual adaptation. Participants are selected based on their expertise and experience in the field.

2. Data Analysis: a. Qualitative Analysis.

- **Textual Analysis:** The study employs a comparative textual analysis of the source and target texts to identify adaptation strategies. The analysis focuses on:
 - ✓ **Linguistic Features:** Syntax, morphology, and lexical choices.
 - ✓ **Cultural Elements:** Idiomatic expressions, metaphors, and culturally specific references.
 - ✓ **Contextual Relevance:** Alignment of the translation with the target audience's expectations and norms.
- **Thematic Coding:** Data from expert interviews are transcribed and coded thematically to uncover recurring patterns, challenges, and best practices in interlingual adaptation.

b. Quantitative Analysis.

- **Corpus Analysis:** A parallel corpus of source and target texts is analyzed using corpus linguistics tools to quantify adaptation techniques such as addition, omission, substitution, and rephrasing.
- **Statistical Methods:** Statistical measures, including frequency analysis and cross-tabulations, are employed to identify trends in adaptation strategies across genres.

3. Evaluation.

a. Criteria for Effective Adaptation. The study develops criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of interlingual adaptation, focusing on:

1. **Linguistic Accuracy:** Fidelity to the source text's meaning.
2. **Cultural Appropriateness:** Successful localization of cultural references.
3. **Reader Engagement:** Naturalness and readability in the target language.

b. Validation. Findings are validated through triangulation, comparing results from textual analysis, corpus data, and expert interviews. Peer review by experienced translators further ensures the reliability of the conclusions.

This methodology provides a robust framework for investigating the nuances of interlingual adaptation in translation strategies. By integrating qualitative and quantitative analyses, the study aims to generate actionable insights that contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical applications in the field of translation studies.

Results

The analysis of interlingual adaptation in translation strategies yielded significant findings across the selected genres of literary texts, legal documents, and technical manuals. The results highlight the strategies employed by translators to address linguistic and cultural disparities and provide insights into the effectiveness of these adaptations in maintaining the intended meaning and impact of the source texts.

1. Results from Textual Analysis

a. Literary Texts

- **Linguistic Features:** Translators frequently utilized **paraphrasing** and **modulation** to convey idiomatic expressions and cultural metaphors. For example, English idioms such as “*break the ice*” were adapted into culturally equivalent Uzbek phrases like “*muzni eritish*”.
- **Cultural Adaptation:** Significant adaptation was observed in cultural references, such as food, traditions, and social norms. Translators often replaced culturally specific terms in the source text with target-culture equivalents or explanatory phrases. For instance, “Thanksgiving dinner” was translated into a more universally understood phrase referring to a celebratory family meal in the target language.
- **Reader Engagement:** Adaptations prioritized readability and natural flow in the target language, ensuring the translation resonated emotionally with the audience.

b. Legal Documents

- **Linguistic Accuracy:** A high degree of formal equivalence was maintained. Translators relied heavily on standardized terminology and glossaries to ensure precision.
- **Contextual Adaptation:** Minimal cultural adaptation was observed, as legal documents prioritize fidelity to the source text. Differences in legal systems were addressed by adding explanatory footnotes where necessary.
- **Challenges Identified:** Translators highlighted difficulties in adapting terms without direct equivalents, such as legal concepts unique to one jurisdiction.

c. Technical Manuals.

- **Terminology Standardization:** Translators adhered strictly to industry-standard glossaries to ensure clarity and consistency. Terms such as “*power button*” were translated into exact equivalents, avoiding ambiguity.
- **Audience Considerations:** Instructions were adapted to align with the technical proficiency of the target audience. For example, detailed step-by-step instructions replaced simplified descriptions to accommodate less experienced users.
- **Localization:** Measurements, symbols, and units (e.g., Fahrenheit to Celsius) were adapted to the conventions of the target culture.

2. Corpus Analysis

- **Frequency of Adaptation Techniques:**
 - ✓ **Addition:** Observed in 22% of cases, primarily in literary texts to provide cultural explanations.
 - ✓ **Omission:** Found in 15% of cases, typically for cultural elements deemed irrelevant to the target audience.
 - ✓ **Substitution:** Used in 35% of cases, particularly for idiomatic expressions and metaphors.
 - ✓ **Rephrasing:** The most common technique, accounting for 28% of adaptations, ensuring the naturalness of the target text.
- **Genre-Specific Trends:** Literary texts exhibited the highest degree of cultural adaptation (68%), while legal and technical texts emphasized precision and standardization, with minimal cultural modifications (12% and 15%, respectively).

3. Expert Interviews. Key Challenges Identified:

- ✓ Balancing fidelity to the source text with cultural and linguistic adaptation.
- ✓ Addressing the absence of direct equivalents for culture-specific terms and concepts.
- ✓ Managing time constraints in professional translation settings.

➤ **Best Practices Highlighted:**

- ✓ Collaborating with subject-matter experts to ensure accuracy in specialized translations.
- ✓ Leveraging bilingual corpora and glossaries for consistency.
- ✓ Employing footnotes and explanations for culturally bound elements in formal texts.

4. Evaluation of Effectiveness. The evaluation criteria demonstrated that effective interlingual adaptation requires:

1. **Flexibility in Literary Texts:** Translators must creatively bridge cultural gaps while preserving the text's artistic integrity.
2. **Precision in Legal Documents:** Adherence to standardized terminology is paramount to maintain legal validity.
3. **Clarity in Technical Manuals:** Clear, audience-tailored instructions enhance usability and comprehension.

The results confirm that interlingual adaptation is a dynamic process shaped by genre-specific requirements and the cultural and linguistic contexts of the source and target languages. Translators employ a variety of strategies to ensure effective communication, balancing the demands of fidelity, cultural relevance, and audience engagement. These findings provide a foundation for developing improved practices and tools for interlingual adaptation in translation.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the complexity and importance of interlingual adaptation in translation strategies, revealing significant variations in techniques across different genres. The results align with existing theoretical frameworks, such as Nida's dynamic equivalence and Venuti's domestication and foreignization, while offering new insights into genre-specific adaptation practices.

1. Genre-Specific Adaptation:

- ✓ Literary translations exhibit a high degree of cultural adaptation, reflecting the need to preserve the artistic and emotional impact of the source text. Translators often prioritized creative strategies, such as modulation and cultural substitution, to ensure the text resonated with the target audience.
- ✓ Legal and technical translations, by contrast, favored precision and standardization, with limited cultural modification. This finding highlights the distinct priorities of these genres, where accuracy and clarity outweigh the need for cultural localization.

2. **Balancing Fidelity and Adaptation:** Translators face the dual challenge of maintaining fidelity to the source text while adapting it to the cultural and linguistic context of the target audience. The results demonstrate that strategies such as addition, omission, and substitution are employed judiciously to bridge gaps without compromising meaning.

3. Challenges in Interlingual Adaptation:

- ✓ The absence of direct equivalents for culture-specific terms remains a significant hurdle, particularly in legal and literary texts.
- ✓ Translators must also contend with audience expectations, which vary widely based on cultural norms, genre conventions, and contextual relevance.

4. **The Role of Technology and Resources:** The use of glossaries, bilingual corpora, and translation memory tools was identified as a critical factor in ensuring consistency and accuracy, especially in specialized genres like legal and technical translation.

These findings have practical implications for translators, educators, and researchers:

- **For Translators:** The study highlights the importance of adopting flexible strategies tailored to the genre and audience. Developing cultural competence and leveraging technology can enhance adaptation quality.
- **For Educators:** Translation training programs should emphasize the nuances of interlingual adaptation, incorporating practical exercises that simulate real-world challenges.
- **For Researchers:** Future studies could explore the role of machine translation and AI in interlingual adaptation, particularly in handling cultural elements and idiomatic expressions.

Conclusion

Interlingual adaptation is a vital component of effective translation, enabling the seamless transfer of meaning, intent, and cultural context between languages. This study demonstrates that the strategies employed in adaptation vary significantly across genres, reflecting the distinct demands of literary, legal, and technical texts.

By identifying common techniques such as addition, omission, substitution, and rephrasing, the research highlights the dynamic nature of translation and the critical role of cultural and linguistic competence. While literary texts benefit from creative adaptations that preserve emotional resonance, legal and technical texts demand precision and adherence to standardized terminology.

The challenges and strategies identified in this study underscore the need for a nuanced approach to translation, where fidelity to the source text is balanced with cultural relevance and audience expectations. As globalization continues to expand the demand for high-quality translations, the importance of interlingual adaptation will only grow, offering fertile ground for further research and innovation in the field of translation studies.

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