Lecture: (2)

Equivalence المكافئ الترجمي *in Translation*

The concept of equivalence is considered a key issue in translation studies.

2.1 Definition of Equivalence:

According to House (2009: 32), equivalence refers to *the existence of two texts in two different languages with equal value in such a way that they have similar function or use and convey a similar message.*

Q/ Does equivalence mean the sameness? Why?

It does not mean the sameness or identity because there is no one-to-one correspondence between the original text and the TL text. The relation between these two texts is almost relative.

1.4.2 The founder of Equivalence:

Q/ Who discussed the equivalence first?

A/ Equivalence in translation is first discussed by the structuralist *Roman Jacobson* (1959) who believes that " there is ordinary no full equivalence between code-units ".

Q/ Where does the problem of equivalence lie?

A/ In Jakobson's conception, the problem of equivalence lies *in the differences in the structures and terminology of languages* (i.e. the way languages convey the message).

Q/ Why does this problem occur?

A/ *because any language can convey the message apart from the way by which this message is communicated*. Accordingly, Russian can still express the meaning of ' cheese ' even if it uses more than one lexeme (ibid).

Q/ There are two types of equivalence, what are they?

A/

 a. formal equivalence (form and content)

 b. dynamic equivalence

Q/ Explain formal equivalence.

A/ Formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content between the S.L. text and the T.L. text as in order to enable the T.L. reader to grasp and understand as much as possible of the original text. e.g.,

1. رحلة الالف ميل تبدأ بخطوة   (A journey of a thousand miles starts with a step)
2. يزيد الطين بلة   (Add wetness to the mud)
3. كلب ينبح لا يعض   (A dog that barks does not bite)

Q/ What does formal equivalence aims at ?

A/ Formal equivalence aims at fulfilling accuracy and correctness by concentrating on the SL structure.

Q/ Explain dynamic equivalence.

A/ dynamic equivalence attempts to produce an equivalent effect on the TL receiver as close as that experienced by the original receiver. With this kind of equivalence, the translator should accommodate his translation to the TL receiver's linguistic and cultural expectations so as to make the text flow naturally, e.g.,

1. رحلة الالف ميل تبدأ بخطوة   (From small beginnings come great things)
2. يزيد الطين بلة   (Add fuel to fire)
3. كلب ينبح لا يعض   (His bark is worse than his bite)

Q/ Why are these two types of equivalence suggested?

A/ These two types of equivalence are suggested to ***comply with the nature of text under translation***. Formal equivalence is useful with legal and sacred texts while dynamic equivalence is useful with literary texts.