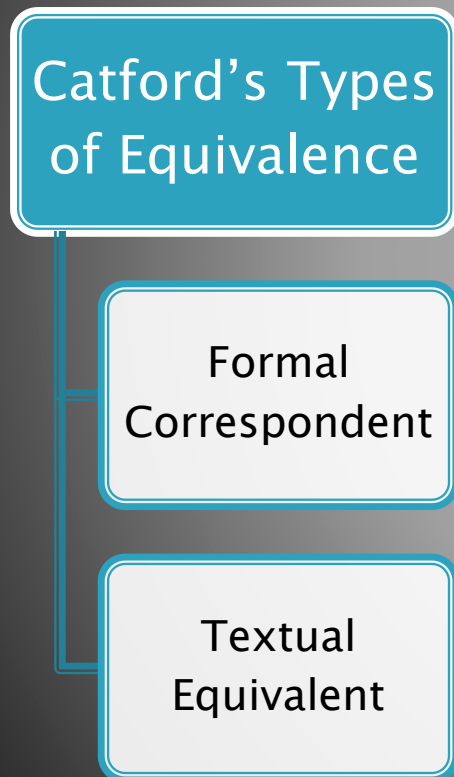


Catford's Models of Equivalence

- ❑ Catford believes that any theory of translation must draw on a theory of language, a general linguistic theory, whose linguistic categories can be used to describe & analyze the translation process. He had based his translation theory on functional linguistics of Firth and Firth's student Halliday
- ❑ Catford builds his definition on the concept of **equivalence**, describing translation as the replacement of textual material in one language by equivalent textual material in another language.
- ❑ Catford offered a number of types of translation according to three variables (extent, rank, and level) whereby equivalence can be sought.
- ❑ He differentiated between two types of equivalence: formal correspondent & textual equivalence.

Types of Equivalence: ➤



- Formal correspondent is “any TL category (unit, class, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the ‘same’ place in the ‘economy’ of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL” (Catford 1965: 27).
- Textual equivalent, however, is defined by Catford as “any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion [...] to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text” (p. 27).

Formal Correspondent: ➤

- ❑ Catford's formal correspondence is a useful tool to be used in comparative linguistics and translation teaching (Al-Manna, 2013).
- ❑ Formal correspondence is a more general system-based concept between a pair of languages.
- ❑ It aims to cover the form and the content of the SL in the TT as much as possible. Hence, in translation process, translators have to reproduce various formal items such as the meanings in terms of the SL context, consistency in word usage, and grammatical units. The reproduction process at the lexical and grammatical levels contains (1) preserving all phrases and sentences intact, i.e. preserve the units' format and structure, and (2) translating verbs by verbs, nouns by nouns, etc. In such a translation, the grammatical segments are usually reproduced and the wording is almost literal, thus the final corresponding units can be easily compared. **Such comparable grammatical categories or units in the translation from English to Arabic or vice versa are rarely obtained and cases are the exceptions rather than the rule. Thus, due to the differences between languages linguistic systems shifts are always taking place between the two languages and the equivalence achieved is the textual one rather than the formal correspondent.**
- ❑ E.g. We are reading the lecture = نحن نقرا المحاضرة .

Textual Equivalent: ➤

- ❑ The discovery of textual equivalents is based on the authority of a competent bilingual informant or translator (Catford, 1965:27). Thus, it could be inferred that the translator can be seen as an assessment criterion to be used in assessing the final product; but how? Catford does not give an answer.
- ❑ Catford offered a test (a formal procedure termed ‘commutation’ for any textual equivalent, in his words, “...we systematically introduce changes into the SL text and observe what changes if any occur in the TL text as a consequence”).
- ❑ Textual equivalence is “that portion of a TL text which is changed when and only when a given portion of the SL text is changed”. Let’s take this example:

The translator is working out the English text.

يعمل المترجم على النص الانجليزي .

If we change the English definite article ‘the’ into an indefinite article ‘a’:

A translator is working out the English text.

يعمل مترجم ما على النص الانجليزي.

The change in meaning caused by the change in the definiteness system is the clue that the Arabic translation is the textual equivalent of the English one.

Catford's model of equivalence

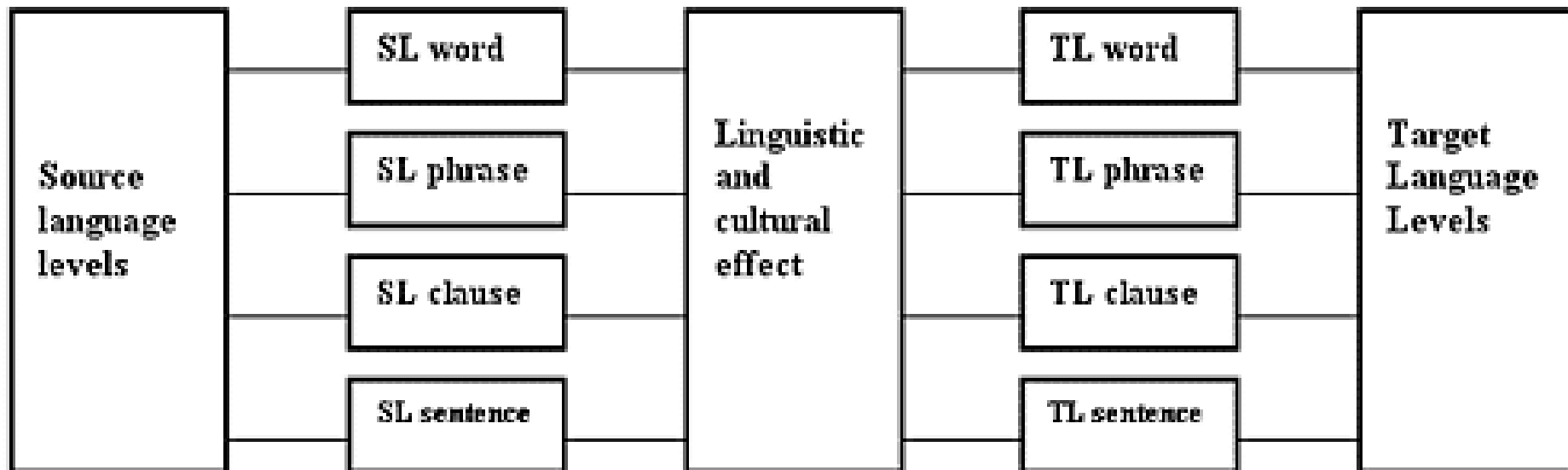
Scholars found out that the process of finding, selecting creating equivalence is not always as easy as it seems. In fact, there are many factors that affect the process of finding and replacing equivalence. Catford (1988) not only defined the translation and translation equivalence but also described the factors that put influence on the process of finding equivalence. He contended that there are at least two different variables that effect finding equivalence in translation. They are linguistic and cultural variables.

Catford's model of equivalence

He said linguistic factors are those factors which exist at the levels of concrete form and abstract meaning of any chunk of language. In addition, cultural factors are those factors that can not be seen at the level of form or meaning of language, however, they exist among the background of mind of speakers and writers of source language, Catford (1988) said that any translator have to consider both cultural and linguistic elements and translate based on these two factors. It seems he meant to covey both cultural and linguistic elements of source language.

Catford's model of equivalence

Equivalence is the central and integral part of Catford's theory of translation. His cultural and linguistic factors which put influence on the equivalent appear to exist cross linguistically. Based on the definition of these elements, this study posits the crucial factors affecting finding equivalence.



Catford's model of equivalence

Further, Catford (ibid) distinguishes between two types of translations, namely *rank-bound translation* and *unbound translation*. In rank-bound translation, an equivalent is sought in the TL at the level of morphemes or words, “thus leading to ‘bad translation’ = i.e. translation in which the TL text is either not a normal TL form at all, or is not relatable to the same situational substance as the SL text” (Catford 1965/2004: 143). In unbound translation, however, equivalents are not tied to a particular rank, but rather they are sought at the level of phrase, clause or sentence.

Catford's model of equivalence

As far as translation shifts are concerned, Catford defines them as “departures from formal correspondence in the process of going from the SL to the TL” (p. 73). Catford argues that there are two main types of translation shifts, namely:

a. ***level shifts*** where the SL item at one linguistic level (e.g. grammar) has a TL equivalent at a different level (e.g. lexis). For example, to express a progressive aspect in English, one can express it grammatically as in: '*He is reading a novel*', '*He has been reading a novel*', '*He will be reading a novel*', etc. However, to express it into Arabic, which has no grammatical category for a progressive aspect, one can resort to lexical items/expressions, such as ' لا يزال/ما يزال *still*', ' الآن *now*', في هذه الأثناء *at this moment*', ' مُنكبًا / منهمكا *busy with*' and so on.

Catford's model of equivalence

b. category shifts which are divided into four types:

1 – Structure-shifts, which involve a grammatical change between the structure of the ST and that of the TT.

Consider the following example in which an active voice is changed into a passive voice:

أشارت فتاة، كالخرساء، بيدها للنافذة المطلة على الحديقة لا تستطيع النطق. تبعتها
الأخرى، ثم الباقيات

(Samira al-Māni' 1997: 7)

A girl gestured with her hand at the window overlooking the garden, like a dumb person, unable to speak. She was followed by another girl, then by the others

(Starkey 2008: 1)

Catford's model of equivalence

2- Class-shifts, which occur when a SL item is translated into a TL item which belongs to a different grammatical class. For examples, there are a great number of verbs in Arabic, such as *عطش*, *جاع*, *سئم*, *حزن*, *فرح* and the like that are best substituted with a linking verb (verb to be, feel, become, get, etc.) plus an adjective in English, as in: 'be/feel happy', 'be/feel sad', 'be/become bored', 'be/feel/become hungry', 'be/feel thirsty' respectively

Catford's model of equivalence

3- Unit-shifts or rank-shifts, which involve changes in rank, such as translating a phrase in one language into a sentence in another, as in translating **بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ** , **كَبِرَ** , and the like.

4- Intra-system shifts, which occur where SL and TL possess systems which approximately correspond formally as to their constitution, but when translation involves selection of a non-corresponding term in the TL system (p. 80). Consider the following example in which a simple present tense expressed by 'show' can be translated into a simple past tense in the TL as the emphasis is on the completion of the action, rather than on its continuity or frequency:

Statistics show that about 9 out of 10 tobacco users start before they're 18 years old' which could be translated into

أظهرت الإحصائيات أن 9 أشخاص من أصل 10 يبدأون التدخين قبل سن الثامنة عشر.

The End

