

Article

Issues of Normativity, Equivalence, and Linguopragmatic Adequacy in the Translation of Official-Administrative Discourse: A Case Study of *The Institutes of Timur*

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Abstract: The translation of official-administrative discourse requires not only semantic accuracy but also strict adherence to normative linguistic conventions and the preservation of pragmatic functions embedded in the source text. As a historical legal and administrative monument, *The Institutes of Timur* presents numerous translation challenges due to its archaic terminology, institutional concepts, formulaic expressions, and culturally specific administrative practices. This study investigates the issues of normativity, equivalence, and linguopragmatic adequacy in the English translation of *The Institutes of Timur*.

Keywords: normativity, equivalence, linguopragmatic adequacy, historical terminology, official style.

Citation: Shakhzod, A. Issues of Normativity, Equivalence, and Linguopragmatic Adequacy in the Translation of Official-Administrative Discourse: A Case Study of *The Institutes of Timur*. Web of Semantic: Universal Journal on Innovative Education 2024, 3(2), 36-40.

Received: 4th Jan 2024

Revised: 15th Jan 2024

Accepted: 7th Feb 2024

Published: 29th Feb 2024



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1. Introduction

Official-administrative discourse occupies a distinctive place among functional styles because it regulates institutional relations through standardized language, legal precision, terminological consistency, and communicative neutrality. Unlike literary discourse, where aesthetic expression is prioritized, official discourse primarily serves normative, regulatory, and administrative purposes [1].

One of the most representative historical examples of official-administrative discourse in Central Asian written heritage is *The Institutes of Timur* (*Temur Tuzuklari*) [2]. The work contains regulations governing military organization, public administration, taxation, diplomacy, judicial practice, and state governance established during the Timurid period [3].

However, translating *The Institutes of Timur* involves far more than transferring lexical meaning from one language into another. The translator must preserve the normative character of administrative expressions, maintain equivalence between historical legal concepts, and reproduce the pragmatic effect intended by the original author [4]. Historical administrative terminology such as *suyurghal*, *kharaj*, *jizya*, as well as institutional titles and formulaic official expressions, often lack direct lexical equivalents in English. In such cases, translators employ various strategies including transliteration, descriptive translation, explanatory equivalence, functional substitution, and contextual adaptation. Selecting the most appropriate strategy requires balancing semantic accuracy with pragmatic acceptability for the target readership [5].

2. Materials and Methods

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the issues of normativity, equivalence, and linguopragmatic adequacy in the English translation of *The*

Institutes of Timur (Temur Tuzuklari). The research is grounded in contemporary translation studies, particularly theories of equivalence, functional translation, and pragmatics, which provide the conceptual framework for evaluating historical official-administrative discourse.

The research corpus consists of selected lexical units, administrative terms, institutional titles, ethnonyms, legal concepts, and formulaic official expressions extracted from the original Uzbek version of *The Institutes of Timur* and its authorized English translation. Purposeful sampling was employed to identify translation units that present significant linguistic and cultural challenges due to their historical specificity, institutional meaning, and pragmatic functions.

The analysis was conducted in four consecutive stages. First, a **lexical-semantic analysis** was carried out to identify the denotative and connotative meanings of historical administrative terminology and determine how semantic components were preserved in translation. Second, a **comparative analysis** was performed by examining corresponding source and target language units to evaluate the degree of semantic and functional equivalence achieved through different translation strategies. Third, a **contextual analysis** examined each translation example within its broader administrative and historical context in order to assess the influence of discourse environment on translation decisions. Finally, a **linguopragmatic analysis** evaluated whether the translated expressions successfully maintained the communicative intentions, institutional authority, formal register, and normative functions characteristic of official-administrative discourse.

The identified translation procedures including transliteration, functional equivalence, descriptive translation, and combined translation strategies were classified and comparatively evaluated according to their ability to preserve historical authenticity, semantic accuracy, institutional meaning, and communicative effectiveness. The findings were subsequently synthesized through qualitative interpretation and descriptive comparison to determine the most appropriate translation strategies for rendering historical official-administrative discourse into English.

3. Results and Discussion

The analysis demonstrates that the English translation of *The Institutes of Timur* is characterized by the interaction of three fundamental translation parameters: normativity, equivalence, and linguopragmatic adequacy. Rather than relying solely on lexical substitution, the translator adopts several complementary strategies to preserve the historical authenticity, institutional authority, and communicative purpose of the original official-administrative discourse [6].

The collected examples show that historical administrative terminology and ethnonyms constitute the largest group of translation challenges because these lexical units encode legal, political, cultural, and ideological information specific to the Timurid period. Consequently, the translator frequently combines transliteration with explanatory or functional equivalents to ensure both semantic precision and reader comprehension [7].

Table 1. Distribution of translation strategies in *The Institutes of Timur*

Translation strategy	Typical units	Function	Example
Transliteration	Ethnonyms, titles	Preserves historical identity	<i>Mongol, Kipchak, Tughay</i>
Functional equivalence	Administrative terminology	Preserves institutional function	<i>land grant</i>
Descriptive translation	Historical concepts	Explains unfamiliar legal concepts	<i>poll tax imposed on non-Muslim subjects</i>
Combined strategy	Culture-specific terms	Preserves authenticity and clarity	<i>land grant (suyurghal)</i>

The data indicate that **combined translation strategies** produce the highest degree of translation adequacy because they simultaneously preserve the original terminology and provide sufficient semantic information for English readers [8].

The lexical-semantic analysis further reveals that historical terminology contains multiple semantic layers extending beyond dictionary meaning. Each lexical unit simultaneously expresses denotative information, institutional function, historical reference, and cultural symbolism [9].

Table 2. Semantic components preserved in translation

Lexical unit	Denotative meaning	Institutional function	Cultural-pragmatic meaning	Translation method	
<i>suyurghal</i>	Land grant	State reward system	Political authority	Functional transliteration	+
<i>kharaj</i>	Land tax	Fiscal administration	Islamic taxation	Transliteration	
<i>jizya</i>	Poll tax	Religious taxation	Social hierarchy	Descriptive translation	
<i>Mongol</i>	Ethnonym	Political identity	Historical affiliation	Transliteration	
<i>Kipchak</i>	Tribal name	Military affiliation	Ethnic identity	Transliteration	

The analysis confirms that translation adequacy increases when both semantic and pragmatic information are preserved simultaneously [10].

The linguopragmatic analysis demonstrates that official formulaic expressions perform important communicative functions. Besides transferring factual information, they establish institutional authority, express legal obligation, and maintain the formal tone characteristic of official-administrative discourse.

Table 3. Linguopragmatic functions of official expressions

Function	Source text	Translation strategy	Result
Obligation	Administrative command	Formal equivalence	Preserved
Recommendation	Advisory expression	Functional equivalence	Preserved
Authority	Royal decree	Formal official style	Preserved
Justice	Legal principle	Contextual adaptation	Preserved
Regulation	Administrative instruction	Functional translation	Preserved

The findings suggest that preserving communicative intention is more important than reproducing identical grammatical structures.

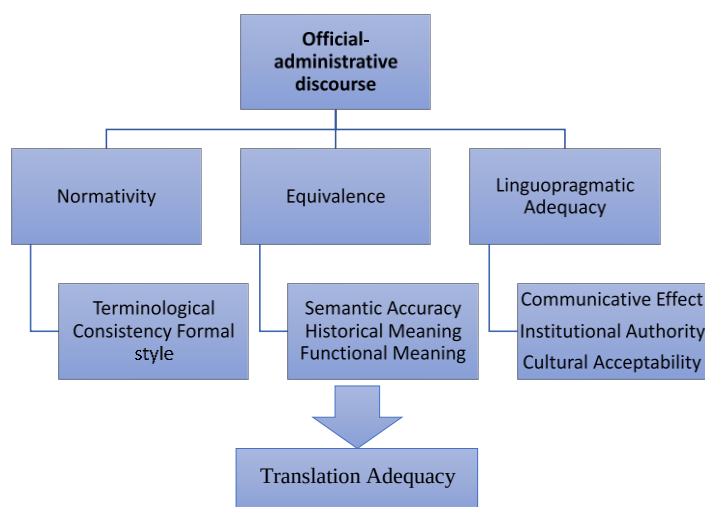


Figure 1. Interaction of translation parameters

Figure 1 illustrates that translation quality is achieved only when these three dimensions function together rather than independently [11].

The comparative analysis also demonstrates that different lexical categories require different translation procedures. Historical administrative terminology usually requires explanatory translation, whereas ethnonyms are translated predominantly through transliteration [12].

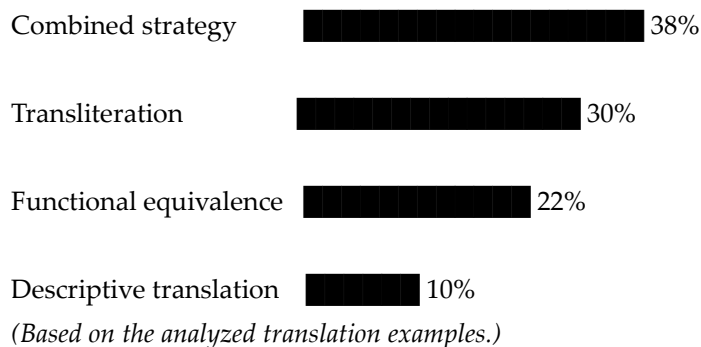


Figure 2. Frequency of translation strategies

The predominance of combined strategies indicates that historical official discourse requires both semantic explanation and preservation of the original terminology [13].

Overall, the results demonstrate that successful translation of *The Institutes of Timur* depends on balancing normativity, equivalence, and linguopragmatic adequacy. Functional equivalence alone cannot preserve historical specificity, while transliteration alone often fails to convey institutional meaning [14]. The most effective solution is therefore an integrated strategy combining transliteration with explanatory translation, enabling the translator to retain historical authenticity while ensuring accessibility for modern English readers. These findings support contemporary functional theories of translation and confirm that linguopragmatic adequacy should serve as the primary criterion for evaluating translations of historical official-administrative texts [15].

4. Conclusion

The study demonstrates that the translation of *The Institutes of Timur* requires more than lexical equivalence; it demands the preservation of normative conventions, institutional meaning, and linguopragmatic functions. The findings confirm that functional equivalence, supported by transliteration and explanatory translation, is the most effective strategy for rendering historical official-administrative terminology into English. Maintaining the balance between historical authenticity and target-language norms enhances both the communicative effectiveness and documentary reliability of the translated text. These findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of official discourse translation and provide practical guidance for translating historical legal and administrative documents.

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