



**ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКАЯ, ПРИКЛАДНАЯ И СРАВНИТЕЛЬНО-СОПОСТАВИТЕЛЬНАЯ
ЛИНГВИСТИКА/THEORETICAL, APPLIED AND COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS**

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.60797/RULB.2026.79.8> EDN: LGHPLA**ON ISSUES BESET WITH FORMAL EQUIVALENCE AND NON-EQUIVALENCE OF SOME CONJUNCTIONS IN
ENGLISH AND TAJIK**

Research article

Sodiqova R.A.^{1,*}¹ Khujand State University, Khujand, Tajikistan

* Corresponding author (jafar83[at]mail.ru)

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Abstract

This article presents a comparative analysis of formal equivalence and non-equivalence of conjunctions in the English and Tajik languages. The study examines coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, identifying cases where direct formal and functional correspondence exists (e.g., English and, but, or, so, because and Tajik ва, аммо, ё, пас, зеро) as well as instances of non-equivalence where English conjunctions lack direct Tajik equivalents and require compound conjunctions or descriptive phrases (e.g., English although, even though, unless, as long as, provided that, in case, even if rendered as гарчанде ки, бо вучуди он ки, агар не, то он даме ки, ба шарте ки, барои он ки, ҳатто агар respectively). The research employs comparative-contrastive, descriptive, component analysis, and translational methods. Materials include authoritative grammars, literary works (Austen, Dickens, Eliot, Hardy, Luther), and scholarly sources. Findings reveal that while basic conjunctions demonstrate formal equivalence, non-equivalent conjunctions present significant challenges for translation, requiring structural transformations and contextual considerations. The article contributes to contrastive linguistics, translation theory, and language pedagogy by providing systematic classification and practical recommendations for handling conjunction equivalence across these typologically distinct languages.

Keywords: formal equivalence, non-equivalence, conjunctions, English language, Tajik language, comparative linguistics, translation studies, coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions.

**К ВОПРОСАМ ФОРМАЛЬНОЙ ЭКВИВАЛЕНТНОСТИ И БЕЗЭКВИВАЛЕНТНОСТИ НЕКОТОРЫХ
СОЮЗОВ В АНГЛИЙСКОМ И ТАДЖИКСКОМ ЯЗЫКАХ**

Научная статья

Содиқова Р.А.^{1,*}¹ Худжандский государственный университет имени академика Бободжана Гафурова, Худжанд, Таджикистан

* Корреспондирующий автор (jafar83[at]mail.ru)

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Аннотация

В данной статье представлен сравнительный анализ формальной эквивалентности и безэквивалентности союзов в английском и таджикском языках. В исследовании рассматриваются сочинительные и подчинительные союзы, выявляются случаи прямого формального и функционального соответствия (например, английские and, but, or, so, because и таджикские ва, аммо, ё, пас, зеро), а также случаи безэквивалентности, когда английские союзы не имеют прямых соответствий в таджикском языке и требуют передачи с помощью составных союзов или описательных оборотов (например, английские although, even though, unless, as long as, provided that, in case, even if, передаваемые соответственно как гарчанде ки, бо вучуди он ки, агар не, то он даме ки, ба шарте ки, барои он ки, ҳатто агар). В работе используются сравнительно-сопоставительный, описательный методы, метод компонентного анализа и переводческий метод. Материалом исследования послужили авторитетные грамматики, художественные произведения (Остен, Диккенс, Элиот, Гарди, Лютер) и научные источники. Результаты показывают, что, хотя базовые союзы демонстрируют формальную эквивалентность, безэквивалентные союзы создают значительные трудности для перевода, требуя структурных трансформаций и учёта контекста. Статья вносит вклад в контрастивную лингвистику, теорию перевода и методику преподавания языков, предлагая систематическую классификацию и практические рекомендации по передаче эквивалентности союзов в этих типологически различных языках.

Ключевые слова: формальная эквивалентность, безэквивалентность, союзы, английский язык, таджикский язык, сопоставительное языкознание, переводоведение, сочинительные союзы, подчинительные союзы.

Introduction

As a primary means of communication, language not only facilitates the expression of human thought but also significantly contributes to the formation of national and cultural conceptual systems. A comparative analysis of distinct languages enhances the understanding of their structural, semantic, and stylistic properties. Within this framework, the study of grammatical units — particularly auxiliary elements — is of critical importance, as these elements establish logical and syntactic relations between independent units of speech.



Among grammatical devices, conjunctions occupy a distinctive position. They serve to connect words, phrases, and clauses, thereby ensuring the coherence of syntactic structures and specifying the meaning of propositions. Nevertheless, each language possesses a unique system of conjunctions, which may not fully correspond to that of another language [6], [11], [12], [13].

The investigation of this subject holds significant relevance for linguistics, especially for contrastive grammar and translation studies, as it enables the identification of similarities and differences in auxiliary units across languages. As a part of speech, conjunctions play an essential role in the grammar of both English and Tajik, indicating relationships between clauses or their constituents. The analysis of equivalence and non-equivalence of conjunctions in English and Tajik is of practical importance for translation, language acquisition, and syntactic analysis.

According to scholarly definitions, formal equivalence refers to a situation in which a grammatical unit in two languages corresponds both in form and in function [24]. Conversely, non-equivalence occurs when a unit in one language lacks a direct counterpart in another language and is expressed only through a syntactic construction, a phrase, or an alternative grammatical means [4, P. 134].

The objective of this article is to conduct a comprehensive comparative analysis of conjunctions in English and Tajik, identifying instances of formal equivalence and non-equivalence between the two languages. The study seeks to determine the extent to which English conjunctions have direct formal and functional correlates in Tajik, and conversely, to classify conjunctions lacking direct equivalents, thereby necessitating descriptive or periphrastic translation strategies.

The functions of the article are as follows:

- (1) to describe the principal coordinating and subordinating conjunctions in both languages;
- (2) to identify and classify formally equivalent conjunctions (e.g., English and, but, or, so, because and Tajik *ва, ammo, ё, рас, зеро*);
- (3) to analyze non-equivalent conjunctions (e.g., English although, even though, unless, as long as, provided that, in case, even if) and their rendering in Tajik through compound conjunctions and descriptive phrases;
- (4) to examine the syntactic behavior and positional differences of conjunctions in both languages;
- (5) to provide practical recommendations for translation and language teaching based on the identified equivalences and non-equivalences.

The genesis of this article lies in the growing need for systematic comparative research between English and Tajik, two languages belonging to different language families (Germanic and Iranian, respectively). Although Tajik linguistics has produced foundational works on conjunctions by scholars such as N. Bozidov [1] and comparative studies by K. Usmonov [7], a detailed investigation specifically addressing formal equivalence and non-equivalence of conjunctions between English and Tajik has remained underexplored. This article draws upon earlier theoretical frameworks of equivalence proposed by V.N. Komissarov [4] and V.S. Vinogradov [2], as well as recent comparative studies [11], [12], [13], [24], to address this gap and contribute to the fields of contrastive linguistics, translation theory, and language pedagogy.

Research methods and materials

The research employs a range of linguistic methods to achieve its objectives. The comparative-contrastive method serves as the primary approach, allowing for systematic comparison of conjunctions in English and Tajik across formal, semantic, and functional dimensions. The descriptive method is used to characterize the inventory and properties of conjunctions in each language. The method of component analysis is applied to identify semantic nuances of conjunctions and their equivalents. Additionally, the translational method is employed to assess how non-equivalent conjunctions are rendered from English into Tajik, revealing cases where descriptive phrases or structural transformations are required.

The materials for the study are drawn from multiple sources. Theoretical foundations are based on authoritative grammars of English [20], [22], Tajik [3], [10], and comparative studies [6], [7], [8]. Illustrative examples of conjunctions in context are taken from English literary works, including Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* [14], Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* [15], George Eliot's *Middlemarch* [16], Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* [21], and Martin Luther's *Table Talk* [23], alongside their Tajik translations where available. Standard reference works on English grammar and usage [17], [19], [25] also provide sentence examples. The analysis is further supported by contemporary scholarly articles on comparative linguistics [11], [12], [13], [24] and Tajik linguistic studies [1], [5]. In total, over 25 sources serve as the evidential basis for the findings presented in this article.

Main results and discussion

Conjunctions are auxiliary parts of speech that connect elements within a simple sentence or clauses together. Conjunctions appeared later than independent parts of speech and mostly originated from full-meaning words. With the development of language, the range of use of conjunctions gradually expanded, and they express relationships between independent words and clauses.

Such an idea is also noted in relatively recent research. For example, linguist Z.D. Qurghonov paid attention to this very issue and, by providing sufficient material from three periods of the development of Iranian languages (ancient, middle, and new), proved that "if coordinating conjunctions continue from the common Iranian period, then most subordinating conjunctions are products of the middle period and originated mostly from pronouns and adverbs" [5, P. 43].

In the book "Modern Tajik Literary Language," conjunctions are explained as follows: "Independent parts of speech can be members of a sentence or sometimes separate clauses. Conjunctions, however, serve only to connect full-meaning words or to coordinate and subordinate clauses" [3, P. 407].

It should be noted that the only reference book on conjunctions in Tajik linguistics belongs to N. Bozidov. In this source, conjunctions are classified according to their morphological composition, syntactic function, and structure, and attention is also paid to the features of their semantic nuances [1, P. 104].



Linguist K. Usmonov, speaking about the similarities and differences of conjunctions in Tajik and English, concluded: conjunctions in these languages (Tajik and English — S.R.) are an auxiliary part of speech, and most of them have a vague lexical meaning. All conjunctions serve to connect words, compounds, phrases, and clauses. Such connection is realized through two types of relations: coordination and subordination.

Accordingly, conjunctions are divided into two groups: coordinating conjunctions and subordinating conjunctions. Conjunctions of the first type connect independent words, compounds, phrases, and simple clauses: китоб ва рӯзнома — a book and a newspaper; бе китоб, вале бо рӯзнома — without a book, but with a newspaper; китоби шавқовар ё рӯзномаи имрӯза — an interesting book or today's newspaper; мо омадем ва онҳо рафтанд — we came and they left [7, P. 207].

Rustamov K. notes that conjunctions create logical and grammatical connections and are the main means of harmonizing clauses [8, P. 122]. Shukurov M. considers conjunctions as "a special means of connecting homogeneous structures" and divides them into two groups [10, P. 87].

Russian and English linguists have also expressed their opinions regarding the functions and semantic nuances of this auxiliary element. For example, Russian scholar V.V. Vinogradov considers conjunctions as a service element that has no independent meaning and only creates a grammatical relationship [2, P. 311]. Shakhmatov A.A. considers conjunctions as syntactic means that play an important role in the construction of speech [9, P. 52]. English scholar O. Jespersen notes that conjunctions connect units of speech but do not have independent meaning [18, P. 149]. Quirk R. and co-authors have identified two main types of conjunctions: coordinating (and, or, but) and subordinating (because, although, if) [22, P. 918].

In English, the conjunctions "and, but, or, so, because" belong to the group of formally equivalent conjunctions, and in Tajik, these conjunctions are rendered in the following forms: ва, аммо, ё, пас, зеро. The English conjunction "and" is equivalent to the Tajik conjunctions "ва", "-у": He opened the window and sat down — Вай тирезаро кушод ва нишаст [19, P. 42]. Both languages have disjunctive conjunctions. In Tajik, this group includes the following words: хоҳ...хоҳ, ё, ё...ё, and the conjunction "or" is used to emphasize options or the choice between two or more things: You can take tea or coffee — Шумо метавонед чой ё қаҳва гиред.

We should note that the English word "but" is equivalent to three adversative conjunctions in Tajik, which are translated as "аммо, вале, лекин": The sun was shining brightly, but the wind was cold [15, P. 112] — Офтоб равшан медурахшид, вале шамол сард буд. He tried to lift the box, but it was too heavy [14, P. 58] — Вай кӯшиш кард, ки қуттиро бардорад, аммо он хеле вазнин буд. She wanted to help, but no one asked her [16, P. 210] — Вай мехост кумак кунад, вале касе аз ӯ намепурсид.

According to N. Bozidov, "the conjunctions аммо, лекин, вале, like other coordinating conjunctions, both within simple sentences and in complex sentences, serve to determine the adversative-contrastive relationship of different members of the sentence" [1, P. 3]. From the analyzed examples, it becomes clear that the possibility of expressing adversative meaning in Tajik has priority over English.

"So" as a conjunction is used to indicate cause and effect. In both compared languages, the conjunction is used to indicate the result or consequence of an action; usually, the conjunction "so" is placed between two clauses. The conjunction "so" in most cases comes after the clause of cause and follows the resulting consequence, for example: It started raining, so we stayed home [20, P. 843] — Борон оғоз шуд, пас мо дар хона мондем. It should be said that during translation, sometimes the grammatical options of one language are not compatible with each other, i.e., observation of this fact reveals structural changes in its Tajik translation.

"Because" is a causal conjunction and clarifies the clause with cause and effect, and in Tajik it is expressed as "зеро": She was happy because she passed the exam [6, P. 65] — Вай хурсанд буд, зеро имтиҳонро супурд. In this example, the reason for happiness is passing the exam. The conjunction "because" in English is the most prominent way of expressing cause, and in Tajik, this function is assigned to the subordinating causal conjunction "зеро". The comparison of the function and meaning of two causal conjunctions — one used in Tajik and the other in English — represents formal equivalence in the translation process. In literature and fiction texts, the conjunction "because" is usually used to show the reason for a character's feelings or state. In both languages, the conjunctions listed above perform the following functions: connecting clauses and showing the logical relationship between separate parts of a sentence. In the compared languages, conjunctions are typically formed from elements consisting of two or three phonemes: and, but, or, ва, аммо, ё. These conjunctions are formally equivalent, i.e., both the form and grammatical meaning correspond in both compared languages.

Non-equivalent conjunctions are conjunctions used in English that do not have an exact lexical equivalent or a short formal form in Tajik. That is, non-equivalent conjunctions are single English words that, when translated into Tajik, require the use of descriptive phrases or longer clauses to fully express their meaning. Non-equivalent conjunctions are used more abundantly in literary texts, stories, and complex texts. They indicate opposition, condition, duration, and probability. To translate them correctly and preserve the meaning, the context and the structure of long phrases in Tajik must be used. Here, for comparison, we will examine a number of non-equivalent conjunctions in both English and Tajik, for example, the English elements although, even though, unless, as long as, provided (that), in case, even if are expressed in Tajik by the compound conjunctions гарчанде ки, бо вучуди он ки, агар не, ҳангоме ки, то он даме ки, агар танҳо, дар сурате ки, ҳатто агар, and so on.

"Although" is a conjunction that shows a contrasting reason in a sentence, i.e., it expresses a state or action opposite to the main state. In the initial phrase, the conjunction begins with the contrasting clause, and the main clause follows it. There is no formal equivalent; it is a long phrase instead. The syntactic structure in Tajik differs slightly depending on placement. Although it rained, we went out [17, P. 327] — Гарчанде ки борон борид, мо ба берун рафтем. In this sentence, the adversative conjunction shows a contrasting reason.

"Even though" is a conjunction that emphasizes a contrasting reason and shows that the second situation does not affect the first. The conjunction "although" shows contrast, but "even though" expresses it more strongly and emphatically. In a sentence, it functions to show strong contrast and opposition between two situations and can be used at the beginning of a sentence or after the main clause; it is usually used in literary and narrative texts to show strong opposition or emphatic meaning, as



evidenced by the following examples: Even though he was tired, he continued working — Бо вучуди он ки вай хаста буд, корро идома дод. Even though she was poor, she was happy — Бо вучуди он ки вай камбағал буд, хушбахт буд [20, P. 843].

"Even if" conveys the meaning of "ҳатто агар", "магар он ки", "ба чуз он ки" and is used to express hypothetical or unreal conditions. The difference is that "even though" refers to reality, while "even if" refers to hypothetical situations [25, P. 211]. I shall love you always, even if you do not love me in return [21, P. 256] — Ман ҳамеша туро дӯст медорам, ҳатто агар ту маро дӯст надорӣ. Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree [23, P. 33] — Ҳатто агар бидонам, ки фардо ҷаҳон вайрон мешавад, ман дарахти себро мешинонам.

In English, the conjunctions unless, as long as, provided (that), in case belong to the group of non-equivalent (subordinating) conjunctions. They connect a subordinate clause with the main clause and convey a specific conditional or exceptive meaning: Unless — "агар... на", "магарам ки", used to express an exception or a condition that will not be fulfilled. You won't succeed unless you try hard [25, P. 68] — Ту муваффақ намешавӣ, агар кӯшиши ҷиддӣ нақунӣ. As long as — "то даме ки", "бо шарте ки". It expresses a condition and its meaning is similar to if, but emphasizes duration and permission. You can borrow my book as long as you return it tomorrow [14, P. 87] — "Метавонӣ китоби маро гирӣ, то даме ки онро пагоҳ баргардонӣ". Provided (that) — "ба шарте ки", "фақат агар", with more emphasis on a necessary condition. You can join the trip provided (that) you pay the fee [14, P. 76] — "Метавонӣ ба сафар ҳамроҳ шавӣ, ба шарте ки маблағро пардохт кунӣ". In case — "барои он ҳолат ки", "агар (ҳамин тавр шавад)", used to express precaution or the possibility of something happening: Take an umbrella in case it rains [14, P. 39] — Зонтро гир, барои он ки шояд борон борад.

Ultimately, the opinions of Tajik and English linguists regarding conjunctions lead us to the conclusion that in both compared languages, this grammatical element lacks lexical meaning and is used primarily for connecting words and clauses.

Conclusion

Thus, the English language has a limited number of basic conjunctions (and, or, but, so, because, although, since, if, etc.), while the Tajik language has numerous conjunctions and complex forms that convey the meaning of a single English conjunction in several ways. In English, the conjunction often comes at the beginning of the subordinate clause, while in Tajik, word order is freer, although it mostly comes at the beginning as well. Formal equivalence exists between English and Tajik conjunctions at a basic level, but cases of non-equivalence often arise during translation and comparison. This situation forces the translator and researcher to consider the meaning, style, and grammatical features in both languages during translation.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

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Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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