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## TRANSLATION OF THE FILM TITLE AS A CULTURAL PHENOMENON

*The article deals with the problem of film titles translation. The title of the film is translated by usage of transformations, that ensure a proper understanding of the film by representatives of the other language cultures. The translation of the title of any film is closely related to a lot of factors. Among them are the culture of the country that created the film, the pragmatic influence on the understanding of the film and the quality of translation. The problem of interconnectedness and culture is traditionally under the interests of linguists. Direct or word for word translation is used with the most accurate and regular indicators if the title of the film consists of proper titles or includes them in its composition. It is also used when there is a unique name of the characters, which should not be changed to preserve the originality and attract the audience with its novelty. Many movie titles are translated by replacing or adding lexical elements that use keywords for the movie, offsetting the semantic or genre-based literal translation. The last strategy is logical development. This translation strategy is one of the most popular and requires great skills of translators, as well as knowledge of the cultural characteristics of both countries. The change of title is usually made due to the inability to convey the pragmatic content of the original text. This most popular and effective method of translating the title of the film is quite creative (from the advertising point of view of the film) describes part of the plot to attract the attention of future viewers.*

*The following strategies are appropriate in translating English film titles into Ukrainian: direct title translation, logical development or so-called content development, and various types of translation transformations (addition, omission, replacement, transliteration, etc.) in a smaller percentage. The choice of strategy depends on the original title of the film, linguistic cultural components, genre of the film, audience and marketing strategies. It was also found that the translations of the titles of the films into Ukrainian were not always adequate, the translated titles did not correspond to the content, ideological concept and genre of the film.*

**Key words:** film, translation, title, strategy, word for word translation, logical development, translation-explanation.

**Problem statement and relevance.** The translation of the title of any film is tightly bound with the culture of country, which produced this film. Language does not exist outside of culture that is, outside the socially inherited set of practical skills and ideas that characterize our way of life [8, p. 77; 9, p.164].

The problem of the relationship between language and culture has traditionally been included in the interests of linguists. However, in recent decades the concept of “culture” has become more and more widely interpreted. Replacing the understanding of culture as a set of material and spiritual achievements of civilization came an expanded interpretation of the term, which includes all the peculiarities of historical, social and psychological phenomena characterizing exact ethnic group, its traditions, values, views, institutions,

behavior, life, living conditions – in short, all sides of its being and consciousness. V. Komissarov notes that language as a mean of verbal communication is an essential part of culture, and all features of its structure and functioning can be considered as culture reflecting through linguistic perspective in ethnic group of people [3, c. 63].

However, he stresses that the complex and indirect nature of language communication with other elements of culture must be taken into account. The surrounding world, the spiritual life and behavior of people are reflected in human consciousness in certain cognitive structures, which in turn are realized and restructured in linguistic categories and forms. The formation and development of cognitive and especially linguistic structures are influenced not only by external factors, but also by

internal laws that determine the existence of cognitive and linguistic systems as holistic entities [3, c. 63].

According to their iconic nature, film titles comprise a special category of proper names. The most important function of film titles is an informative function that includes an advertising function and the function of influence on a viewer. The film titles differ from each other and from other elements of language with their concise structure and they also show peculiarities that are considered to be common for independent units of language [4, c. 98]. The stylistic function of the film titles is bound with its commercial side and the impact of marketing. Stylistically labeled film titles are those titles whose expressiveness is achieved through linguistic means of different levels.

The great number of films used in the mass media emphasizes not only on the popularity of film titles, but also on the fact that these linguistic units have been included in the class of idioms [1, p. 10; 2, p. 14]. In this work, only the traditional term "film title" is used. The title of film performs some very important functions for film itself, which could not be realized in the absence of it. First of all, the title of film identifies the film. It means that without film title any conversation about the cinema would be impossible, the work of the entire film industry would be extremely difficult, since the designation of the film is necessary at all stages of film production – from the top line in the script to the title in the magazine or the Internet portal. Secondly, it is impossible to advertise and promote film without film title. Furthermore, titles help us understand the endless stream of reviews, trailers, articles, news concerning exact film. Moreover, titles help us structure information about cinematography and everything related to it. Thus, the title is a mean of directing the audience's perception of the film in one direction or another, or just in necessary direction.

The film's authors convey to the viewer the main idea of the film picture, its design, its plot with a help of placing the accents in title, bringing to the title specific thoughts [5, p. 19]. The translation of the film is always accompanied by some difficulties not only linguistic but also technical, which affects the degree of equivalence and adequacy of the translation of the original, as well as its technical implementation on screen. The title of film gives the first information that the viewer receives about the tape. Already judging the title, the viewer decides to view or not to view the tape. A kind of intrigue, a semantic content, the mystery lies precisely in the title. Therefore, the translation of the film title is extremely important. Besides, it is

one of the new problems that translator faces during the process of translation [6, p. 60; 7, p. 92].

To achieve the desired success, the translator needs not only excellent command of foreign and native languages, but also extralinguistic knowledge. In addition, the translator should have good creative skills and intuition. It is the duty of each translator to pay attention to the smallest and invisible details, to be sensitive in the selection of information, to study a foreign culture, to fulfill the professional mission of the translator, to transfer not only the words and ideas of the text of translation, but also the color of cultural life people.

While doing so, the final variant of the translation must be perceived by the recipient of that culture. Thus the translator must achieve the same impact on the recipient by the translated text that renders the original text [10, p. 50-62]. Sometimes it happens when the film title seems to be translated correctly, and it is difficult to find more successful translation, but there is a feeling of discomfort as if something is "wrong". This is the case when the mistake is in the absence of opportunity to keep the stylistic unity of the original title and its translated analogue. In other words the style of the translated film title does not correspond to the style of the original title.

The peculiarities of language are of a great interest for different translation researches, directly or indirectly due to the culture of native speakers, their mindset. Similar features can be found at different levels of linguistic structure, in the rules of verbal communication, in the ways of describing reality etc. According to V. Komissarov, the decisive and crucial role is played by socio-cultural factors in the formation of communicators' knowledge, without which interpretation of linguistic expressions is impossible. The messages that directly reflect the living conditions and customs of a particular culture are also of the great interest for theory and practice of translation. For example, bedrooms in English homes are often located on the second floor, so that the phrase "It's late I'll go up" is easily interpreted as going to bed. When an American announces that he wants to buy a three bedroom apartment, his message will be correctly understood only by someone who knows that in the USA it is obvious to have one common room, except from other individual rooms. So, it is a four-room apartment [3, c. 64].

Studying the cultural peculiarities from verbal communication point of view, it is necessary to mention that culture in general is of great interest for translation studies. V. Komissarov emphasizes that translation activity means not only the interaction

of two languages, but also the contact between two cultures. It should be born in mind along with the unique characteristics that describe each individual culture. There are factors which are common to many or some cultures. In addition, different cultures have always influenced and continue to influence one another.

While Venuti indicates that translation strategies “involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it”. He employs the concepts of domestication and foreignisation to refer to translation strategies. Venuti sees domestication as “translating in a transparent, fluent style in order to minimize the foreignness of the target title”. In accordance with his view of translation methods, any measures aimed at bringing the author (here: film maker, producer, translator) closer to the reader (here: target audience) [10, p.60].

**The purpose of the article.** The purpose of the article is to create a comprehensive system of theoretical and practical knowledge required for the translator in translating the film titles from English into Ukrainian.

**The presentation of the main material.** The database used in the research encompasses over 1000 film titles gathered from the bases of the internet TV service during the years 2015-2020. All the films have been broadcasted in Ukrainian versions by various TV channels and private cinema broadcasting during premiere release. The film genres of the titles were labelled by the service. The labels are congruent with the ones which are found in The Internet Movie Database (abbreviated IMDb) [11], the world's most popular and authoritative source for movie, TV and celebrity content.

The sample of films includes appropriate 300 film titles, and encompasses films with the following labels in the given number:

- Comedies (28%)
- Dramas (20%)
- Thrillers (16%)
- Action films (13%)
- Detectives (10%)
- Adventure films (8%)
- Fantasy (3%)
- Criminal films (2%).

We focus our considerations on an attempt to explain and rationalise the various solutions which can be seen in the titles of films which arrived on Ukrainian screens in the years 2015–2020 and were translated into Ukrainian for the Ukrainian-speaking audience. Translation is perhaps a misleading term, because it notices, fidelity to the original seems

hardly even a significant consideration, much less an aim of the film distributors who provide the titles.

The new titles for the Ukrainian cinema are chosen by professionals to suit the needs, demands and desires of their cinema public. Any new title must above all be memorable and possibly convey an accurate impression of the film's contents. What is more, according to our previous research it is investigated that the most used translation transformations for translation of film titles from English into Ukrainian are the following:

- syntactic assimilation (direct translation/ word-for-word translation) as a brightest and the most effective grammatical title transformation;
- logic development (modulation) as a brightest and the most effective lexical title transformation.

That's why in order to prove this information the films of 2018-2020 years from film corpus were selected for research and statistic creation. Statistic shows the division of presented films into specific film genres and percentage of film genres for each translation transformation type (see Appendix 6, Appendix 7). As a result, provided diagrams represent the percentage of film genres for logic development translation transformation and the percentage of film genres for syntactic assimilation translation transformation.

Free formulation of titles in translation raises questions and doubts in both scholars and film recipients (in forums, blogs etc.). The title is not the only element that is altered; along with the “annihilation” of the initial form, intention and message, a brand new form, intention and message are created.

One of the reasons for altering a title is not the mere whim of the distributor, but its relative untranslatability. The free formulation of a title may originate from translation difficulties of a semantic and/or cultural nature, such as puns/humor; proper names; culture-specific content, such as references to other films and literature, rhymes, idioms, lexical and grammatical shifts, and so on.

Occasional derivatives. A relative untranslatability can be seen in the occasional forming of ad-hoc derivatives. For example, the creation of non-existent verbs built from nouns can pose a difficulty in translation, as in:

Puns. An important problem in translation is caused by puns – witty formulations hinging on the juxtaposition of two relevant meanings conveyed by means of a single surface structure and so also including idiomatic phrasemes:

- “*Your Highness*” – “*Хоробрі перцем*”;
- “*Lawless*” – “*Найп’яніший округ у світі*”;

- “*That’s My Boy*” – “Мій пацан”;
- “*Tucker & Dale vs Evil*” – “Вбивчі канікули”.

Proper names (PN). Names constitute one of the potential problems in the translation of any text. “A proper name is a word or group of words which is used to identify a unique concrete object (human being, animal, thing or place) existing now, in the past or only in human imagination”.

Among the names in original film titles, we can isolate first names; last names, with or without forms of address or combinations of both; nicknames; combinations of nicknames and last names, place-names such as towns, cities, clubs, islands etc., names as components of phrasemes or proverbs:

- “Rebecca” – “Ребекка”;
- “The Aeronauts” – “Аеронавти”;
- “The Grinch” – “Грінч”;
- “Aquaman” – “Аквамен”;
- “Deadpool” – “Дедпул”;
- “Thor: Ragnarok” – “Тор: Рагнарок”;
- “Doctor Strange” – “Доктор Стрендж”.

If the name is rendered in translation, it usually requires some specification lacks the name and the rhyme, but it renders the fact of the third party involved in the relationship very well. There are, however, proper names as fixed elements in phrasemes. When modified (and punned) and not recognized as such and/or ignored, they result in mediocre translations. Exotic sounding proper names seem to be understood as too vague and are rendered in expanded form

Explication and Clarification. We see the translation of certain titles as clear attempts at the clarification of those titles which might not have been understood if either left in unchanged form or translated. The ST might be an abbreviation or a foreign word which is not specific enough. For example:

- “Jobs” – “Джобс: Імперія спокуси”;
- “Hitch” – “Метод Хітча”;
- “Elysium” – “Елізіум – рай не на Землі”;
- “Pain & Gain” – “Кров’ю і потом: Анаболіки”.

As innocent as the ST sounds, the Ukrainian title clarifies that it might be a vulgar film with filthy humor. The original English titles are established on ambiguity, and they often leave the potential meanings to the imagination and the associative skills of the viewer. The typical clarifications in Ukrainian concern titles which were probably considered too general and vague, and so they narrow general titles down to concrete contexts.

Focus shift. Here, certain elements present in the ST are omitted, and different elements are given greater

importance in the TT. Not only do we speak of lexical choices, but also of grammatical solutions leading to new creations and not seldom to semantic shifts, as in:

- “*Unfriended: Dark Web*” – “Видалити з друзів”;
- “*The Week Of*” – “Тиждень до”;
- “*The Open House*” – “Будинок на продаж”.

The semantic shifts consist in placing the focus on different elements of the plot and/or protagonists, thus changing the perspective of the ST which conveys too much of the plot, and even suggests the outcome of the story, where the singularly unpleasant main character is shifted to the semantically capacious.

Stylistic reasons. Many film (title) critics notice that often the title could have been rendered faithfully, yet a certain film was still given a changed one. It can be speculated that certain grammatical forms, such as present and past participles, inflection in Ukrainian play an important role in transferring titles. In our opinion, those titles (both of books and films) attract the attention of the recipient when they are concise, curiously phrased or neatly formulated. Among such are the following film titles:

- “*Ready or Not*” – “Гра в хованки”;
- “*The Good Liar*” – “Ідеальна брехня”;
- “*The Art of Racing in the Rain*” – “Очіма собаки”;
- “*6 Underground*” – “Шестеро поза законом”.

Associational tricks. Ukrainian distributors sometimes make use of a trick by building a non-existent association for a foreign or domestic film. The allusions usually have nothing to do with the original film or its plot, however they make use of an association of the names of actors playing in them with other titles which they featured. Allusions are artificially created to high-grossing films to ensure increased ticket sales. We can list:

- “*The Hangover*” – “Похмілля у Вегасі”;
- “*Shark Tale*” – “Підводна братва”;
- “*Over the Hedge*” – “Лісна братва”;
- “*Tower Heist*” – “Як обікрасти хмарочос”

From global to local. Certain translations into Ukrainian involve visible domestication procedures that is a choice of including local cultural references (to celebrities, songs etc.), among others phrasemes/sayings, or any other element translators deem necessary to preserve the filmic experience and to produce a fresh and engaging translation. As in the following examples:

- “*The Call of the Wild*” – “Поклик прашчурів”;
- “*Ready or Not*” – “Гра в хованки”.

Taking all the factors into account it’s necessary to say that for advertising purposes different approaches in translation can be used. There is



a set of rules and transformations that are used more often according to the peculiarities of both source and target languages. Anyway with a help of all these approaches it's possible to recreate a film title from a foreign language without a great loss in meaning and stylistic attributes and then have success in the local film distribution.

The analysis of the translation of the film titles shows that the choice of a particular translation strategy is influenced by a number of reasons. When choosing a translation strategy, the determining condition is the presence or absence of a cultural component.

As already mentioned, one of the important reasons for changing the names of films due to the linguistic barrier is the need for pragmatic adaptation of cultures realities, phraseologisms, etc. Such techniques as hypo-hyperonymic translation, simulation, descriptive translation, addition, omission, contextual substitutions, calculations, etc. are used in order to realize it.

An example of a narrowing of meaning (based on metonymy) is the translation of a movie title "Dead Man On Campus" – "Мертвяк в коледжі". Actually, campus is a complex of buildings and structures, which includes educational buildings, laboratories, a library, a gym, administrative premises, a student club, a clinic, dormitories, etc. But in Russia, such campuses do not exist and all institutions are located in different places, or within the walls of the same building, so in this case it is preferable to use the concept more familiar to the Ukrainian viewer – college, which is part of the campus.

The use of some translation techniques, such as descriptive translation and additions, is limited in relation to the identifying function of movie titles. It helps film titles to be short and precise.

The cultural aspect in translating movie titles is revealed when there is a genre adaptation of movie titles. Genre adaptation is a technique used to translate language units that relate a movie title to a specific genre, so to speak explaining the genre. For example, the name of the movie "Gun Shy" is translated as "Супершпигун". The title of the detective "City by the Sea" is adapted to the genre "Остання справа Ламаркі"; and the title of horror film "She Creature" is "Жах з безодні" in ukrainian variant. The film title "The Pacifier" in Ukrainian film release was presented as "Лисий нянька: Спецзавдання – комедійний екшн". In addition, the literal translation "Пустушка" has extra negative connotations.

Political views in different countries also influence the translation of movie titles. For example, a movie "Some Like It Hot" which was under strict

censorship in the Soviet Union was called "В джазі тільки дівчата". Although recently the reference to the original title appears more and more often.

Movies from different countries are presented in Ukrainian release, some of them are more popular, others are less. However, this fact is one of the reasons for the change of film titles. For example, the American film "Taxi" released in 2004, was renamed into a "New York taxi" because it was a popular French film with the same title, released in 1997. This translation can be considered optimal because it does not create confusion in movie titles. Ease of reading can also be attributed to linguistic factors that influence the translation of movie titles. For example, there is a version that the movie "300" was presented in Ukrainian release "300 спартанців" in order not to have any graphical coincidences with a word "zoo".

The most untranslatable type of titles is the titles containing a word game or a pun, when translation losses are almost inevitable. For example "Avenging Angelo" – "Помста Янгола". The problem with the internal form is also individually solved. The title of the movie "Jonny English" was translated in different ways: by transliteration and addition of a semantic element – "Джонні Інгліш", "Агент Джонні Інгліш". The title of comedy "Mrs Doubtfire" (doubt – "сумнів", fire – "вогонь, запал") was replaced as "Місіс Даутфайр".

The title of "black" comedy "The Royal Tenenbaum" contains contamination "Royal" which is a name of the main hero and it also has meaning "королівський". The translations of the title of this movie vary depending on the accent you choose: "Сімейка Тененбаум", "Могутня сімейка Тананбаум".

Thus, the choice of strategy for translation of movie titles depends on a number of reasons due to the specificity of the original text (high dominant density of movie titles, the relationship of the movie title to the content of the film), and the linguistic barrier, which requires a pragmatic and genre adaptation, euphemism usage and etc.

**Conclusions.** Thus, our analysis showed that the following strategies are appropriate when translating English-language movie titles into Ukrainian: direct translation of the title, transformation of the title and also logic development. The choice of strategy depends on the original film title, linguistic cultural components, movie genre, viewership, and marketing strategies. It was also found that the translations of the film titles into Ukrainian were not always adequate, as the translated titles did not correspond to the content, ideological concept and genre of the film.

We saw the prospect of the study in the further study of this topic, in particular translation of certain genres of films turned our attention.

The title of the film should be as short as possible. It can also be as a business card. Actually, film titles can be different – bright and of high quality or just not successful for film industry. Unfortunately, or fortunately, not only professional translators but also advertisers, producers and broadcasters are involved in the reproduction of foreign film

titles into Ukrainian or Russian. All of them try to create a real, vivid title. The main purpose of any film title is to catch the viewer and, as a result, sell the movie. Although there is a long list of titles with literal translation, more often than not, the so-called translation of titles can be defined as an adaptation. When translating Ukrainian or Russian variants of the title, the translator takes into account not only the original title and the story, but also future viewers, their mentality, needs and interests.

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#### Клименко Т. А., Суїма І. П. ПЕРЕКЛАД НАЗВ КІНОФІЛЬМІВ ЯК КУЛЬТУРНИЙ ФЕНОМЕН

Стаття присвячена проблемі перекладу назв фільмів. У перекладі назв фільмів найчастіше застосовуються перекладацькі трансформації, які забезпечують належне розуміння фільму представниками інших мовних культур. Переклад назви будь-якого фільму тісно пов'язаний з багатьма факторами. Серед них культура країни, яка створила фільм, прагматичний вплив на розуміння фільму та якість перекладу. Проблема взаємозв'язку мови та культури традиційно включається в інтереси мовознавців. Прямий або дослівний переклад вважається найбільш точним та адекватним і регулярно застосовується, якщо назва фільму складається з власної назви або включає її до свого складу. Він також використовується, коли в мові оригіналу є унікальні імена персонажів, які не слід міняти чи трансформувати, щоб зберегти оригінальність та залучити аудиторію своєю новизною. Багато назв фільмів перекладаються шляхом заміни або додавання лексичних елементів, а використання ключових слів для фільму компенсує семантичну або жанрову відсутність буквального перекладу. Остання стратегія – це логічний розвиток. Ця стратегія перекладу є однією з найпопулярніших і вимагає великих зусиль та творчих здібностей перекладачів, а також знання культурних особливостей обох країн. Зміна назви відбувається через неможливість передати прагматичний зміст тексту оригіналу. Це найпопулярніший та найефективніший метод перекладу назви фільму, оскільки він досить креативно (з рекламної точки зору) описує частину сюжету фільму, щоб привернути увагу майбутніх глядачів.

У перекладі англomовних назв фільмів українською мовою доречними є такі стратегії: прямий переклад заголовка, логічний розвиток або так званий змістовий розвиток та різні види перекладацьких трансформацій (додавання, опущення, перестановка, транслітерація тощо) у меншому відсотковому відношенні. Вибір стратегії залежить від оригінальної назви фільму, лінгвістичних культурних компонентів, жанру фільму, перегляду та маркетингових стратегій. Також було встановлено, що переклади назв фільмів українською мовою не завжди були адекватними, оскільки перекладені заголовки не відповідали змісту, ідеологічній концепції та жанру фільму.

**Ключові слова:** фільм, переклад, назва, стратегія, дослівний переклад, логічний розвиток, переклад-пояснення.