

## PECULIARITIES OF ENGLISH CINEMATIC TEXT TRANSLATION USING LIP-SYNC TECHNIQUE

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### Summary

This paper deals with the problem of the English-Ukrainian film translation. The work is interesting for its topicality as the problem of Lip Sync translation requirements is one of the main factors impacting the process, selection of the translation transformations, and result of the translation. Lip-sync translation is the main technique used in film translation when a film is to be dubbed. The result of the translation is also dependent on the use of translation strategies, that is defined by the lip-sync translation process as well. In terms of lip-sync translation technique the frame type strategy of selecting lip-sync units in target language is the most effective one. The grammatical aspect is also of a high influence on selecting lip-sync equivalents, therefore it defines the choice of particular translation transformations. Methods used in the study: a comparative method (contrast of lexical, grammatical and phonetic phenomena in English and Ukrainian), a descriptive method, and a method of observation.

**Key words:** translation, translation transformation, cinematic text, line, lip sync translation, lexical, grammatical and lexico-grammatical transformations.

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### 1. Introduction

Nowadays cinematography is probably the most widespread form of art, and film translation is an important area of commercial and creative translation. Thanks to modern technological achievements, we are able to watch films made by directors from different countries. Since most of the imported films in the Ukrainian movie distribution are Hollywood products, so the films are mainly translated from English. A skilled translator should translate the movie text as close as possible to the original one, and make it as clear as possible for the target audience. Therefore, the problem film translation is relevant, since film production coming to our country must get its viewer.

According to the new laws, all films that are released must be translated into Ukrainian or have Ukrainian subtitles. That is why the Ukrainian translation is now expanding and needs to be developed in the right direction and be strengthened its theoretical and practical basis.

However, film translation in Ukraine is, unfortunately, of an insufficient interest for Ukrainian film translation researchers. It makes a fast integration of experience of foreign researchers impossible and, as a result, it makes impossible to develop their own methodological foundations. Therefore, the study is relevant due to the increased demand for film production translated into Ukrainian, as well as the lack of theoretical and practical work devoted to the study of this problem.

However, there is an attempt to systematize certain theoretical positions concerning the film translation made by representatives of the Kharkiv School of Translation, in particular by T. Lukianova. The research work devoted to the problems of the cinematography is

called “Practical problems of the film translation: subtitling”, there is also a manual called “Fundamentals of the English-Ukrainian cinematography”.

In view of these peculiarities, the translation of films in general and the situation of the film translation problem in particular, the purpose of the study was determined, namely: to identify and analyze the features of translation of English films into Ukrainian using Lip-sync technique, as well as possible translation difficulties and ways of overcoming them.

The purpose defines the following tasks:

- 1) to study the current state of the film translation in Ukraine;
- 2) to consider the structure of a film text;
- 3) to single out some peculiarities of the translation of replicas of movie characters (restrictions on the so-called Lip Sync translation in particular);
- 4) to point out typical mistakes when translating a film text;
- 5) to consider the effectiveness of applying some translation transformations while translating a film;
- 6) to identify the most common translation transformations that are used to successfully overcome translation problems.

The object of the research is English film texts and their translations into Ukrainian, the subject of the research is the peculiarities of English film translation, as well as the difficulties that arise while translating English films into Ukrainian, which are caused by differences in grammatical structures pertaining to both languages.

An English film called “Mary Queen of Scots” and its Ukrainian translation (multi-voiced dubbing) were used as research materials.

To achieve the goal of the study, such methods of the research were chosen: a comparative method (contrast of lexical, grammatical and phonetic phenomena in English and Ukrainian), a descriptive method, and a method of observation.

## 2. A film as a creolized text

A film is a polysemiotic phenomenon, a product of creativity, capable of transmitting meaning through images, speech and music; it is an influential tool for the transfer of values, ideas and information.

A fiction film consists of audiovisual and verbal components. In the course of the study, the conclusion was made that cinematic text is a kind of creolized text. The findings of the researchers are mostly based on the understanding of a film as a creolized text, the inseparable structure of which consists of verbal and iconic means. Anisimova defines creolized text as “a special linguistic and visual phenomenon, a text in which the verbal and figurative components form a single visual, structural, content and functional entity that provides the complex pragmatic influence of the text on the addressee” (*Anisimova, 1992: 75*).

There is a linguistic system in cinematics with two components in it: written (titles and inscriptions that are part of the film world) and oral (the language of the actors, voice-over, songs). There is also a non-linguistic system, which includes the sound component (natural and technical noises, music) and video (images of characters, their movement, landscape, interior, requisite, special effects) that are inseparable and produce a cumulative effect on the addressee. So, it is appropriate to agree with the opinion of Anisimova, who states that the cinematic text is a kind of creolized text.

### 3. Lip-sync technique as the main method

The most significant peculiarity of the cinematic translation is that the original film text may be substantially transformed due to the need of applying the lip-sync translation technique. Lip-sync translation is a process of translation in dubbing, which consists in translating lines according to the principles of phonetic, semantic and dramatic synchronism, that is lip-sync translation must coincide with the articulation and kinesics of the characters on the screen, coincide in sound duration and provide accurate and complete match of the original content with the performance of pragmatic tasks of the translation process.

The lip-sync translation unit is the lip-sync equivalent, i.e. a word or phrase of the source language, which is functionally interchangeable with the corresponding word or phrase of the target language, which corresponds to the principles of phonetic, dramatic and semantic synchronism. When selecting lip-sync translation units (lip-sync equivalents), it is necessary to use translation strategies (the serial principle, frame type principle, character type principle, etc.), as well as clearly identify and understand the pre-translation and the actual translation stages of work on the cinematic text (*Melnyk, 2011: 344*).

Frame type strategy proved to be one of the most efficient strategies, especially while translating the historical drama which was analyzed in the course of the study. If a viewer cannot see a face of a speaker properly, then it is easier for a translator to find the necessary lip-sync equivalents. For instance, the line *I will be the woman she is not – Я буду справжньою жінкою, не як сестра (Mariia – koroleva Shotlandii, 2018)* was translated with the help of addition: the lexical unit *справжньою* was added, which expresses the initial meaning of the speaker's words better. As a result, the translated line is longer and has 13 syllables, while the original line has only 9 syllables. But in this case such addition has not influenced the process of synchronization, as the viewer cannot see the face of the speaker.

The adaptation of a cinematic text is also largely influenced by the grammatical aspect, as obtaining an equivalent translation text is possible only if the correlation between structures and function rules of the original language and the language of translation is taken into account. Since the translation of motion pictures requires dynamic equivalence, most translation transformations are applied at the morphological, word-forming and syntactic levels (that is the grammatical aspect). The so-called Lip Sync translation is of a particular difficulty, because it requires a complete transformation of the units of translation.

### 4. Translation transformations used in film translation

Due to the fact that during dubbing a certain degree of synchronization, coincidence of movements of actors' lips and translated replicas is required, the translator is forced to reduce the source text, transforming it so that the final version coincides with the video. To accomplish it, a translator often uses the grammatical transformation of the omission of lexical units, since in most cases the line of the target language will be longer than the original line of the source language, if the translation is done to retain all components (semantic, grammatical, phonetic), which is related to the different grammatical and phonetic organization of both languages. Thus, each aspect requires applying a particular group of translation transformations.

Consequently, during the research some features of the English-Ukrainian film translation were defined as well as some translation difficulties. Some ways to overcome these problems

through the use of translation transformations were also pointed out. There are three main groups of translation transformations, which were analyzed in the study:

- grammatical (replacements, omissions, addition, zero transformation, grammatical substitutions);
- lexical (specification, generalization, transcoding);
- lexico-grammatical (antonymic translation, compensation, semantic development (or modulation), holistic transformation).

The most commonly used transformations are grammatical transformations, since the grammar structures of the source and target languages are crucially different. There is a variety of cases when the translator uses grammatical substitutions to translate a particular line. Thus, one of the most popular substitutions is the substitution of active voice verbs for passive ones. For example, the line *A supper has been prepared* – *Твою вечерю готують* (Mariia – koroleva Shotlandii, 2018) was translated by applying the grammatical substitution: the passive construction *has been prepared* was substituted with the active verb form *готують*, which is more common in the target language. Such substitution retains the meaning of the whole line making it more usual to Ukrainian-speaking viewers.

If we speak about lexical transformations, the other translation transformation that is often used because of the differences in structures is specification. There is a good example of this transformation in line *We see why our cousin is so fond of the earl* – *Ясно, чому наша кузина так вас цінує* (Mariia – koroleva Shotlandii, 2018). The lexical unit *earl* is translated as *вас*, which makes the information conveyed in the statement more specific. As a result of using a certain transformation, the structure and length of the line may be changed completely, so it is often difficult to match the requirements of the Lip Sync translation. But in this case, like in many others, the line is successfully adapted and synchronized by quickening the speech of the Ukrainian-speaking actor.

The third group of translation transformations, which, according to the research, is of the least applying in film translation, is called lexico-grammatical transformations. These include such transformations as antonymous translation, modulation (or semantic development), and holistic transformation. The most common of these transformations is the modulation (or semantic development).

Modulation provides a translation, which is a consequence of what was stated in the source language replica. This transformation should be applied carefully not to distort the content of the original line. For example, the line *How like is it unto your mistress' face?* – *Це дійсно лице вашої володарки?* (Mariia – koroleva Shotlandii, 2018) Was translated with the help of modulation. The speaker asks whether the portrait bears a strong resemblance to the mistress' face or not, so the translator assumed, that the speaker asks whether it is really the face of that very person.

However, such a conclusion can be drawn only on the basis of the film situation we see on the screen and without involving the context a translator shouldn't translate this line this way. In this case, the transformation of semantic development allowed to emphasize the position of the main character in a particular film situation. We can see the advantage of applying this transformation if we take into account the phonetic composition of the replica: source language replica has 10 syllables, target language replica has 12 syllables, and while applying literal translation we would get a replica of 16 syllables, which would complicate its synchronization in the film picture.

Another example of applying modulation is the translation of the line *Well, then I perceive that my subjects shall obey you and not me* – *Можє, мої піддані тоді вважатимуть вас*

королевою, а не мене? (*Mariia – koroleva Shotlandii, 2018*) The translator made a conclusion out of the original line, because if the subjects obey, they would probably consider this person a queen. Moreover, it made the line witty and sharp, because the queen actually said this phrase to a man. Besides, modulation makes difference between literal correspondences of the translated words or word combinations and is proved to be a qualitatively more complex transformation that requires the translator to think logically.

## 5. Conclusions

If we look closely at analyzed data, we will see that grammatical substitutions occur in this movie more often than any other transformations. The research also reveals the statistical data on the frequency of occurrence of the aforementioned translation transformation. It can be represented in the following table:

Table 1

**Frequency of occurrence of translation transformations**

Type №	Grammatical, %	Lexical, %	Lexico-grammatical, %
1.	Grammatical substitution: 162 occurrences, 44.26%	Specification: 10 occurrences, 2.73%	Modulation: 55 occurrences, 15.03%
2.	Omission: 55 occurrences, 15.03%	Translation transcription: 10 occurrences, 2.73%	Holistic transformation: 10 occurrences, 2.73%
3.	Addition: 28 occurrences, 7.65%	Generalization: 4 occurrences, 1.09%	Antonymic translation: 7 occurrences, 1.91%
4.	Zero transformation: 18 occurrences, 4.92%		
5.	Transposition: 14 occurrences, 3.83%		
6.	Sentence segmentation: 0 occurrences		
7.	Sentence integration: 3 occurrences, 0.82%		

This regularity may be peculiar to any other motion pictures as well.

The analyzed material gives grounds to claim that the Ukrainian film translation is of a high quality, it is performed by taking into account the peculiarities of the source and target languages. The translators have managed to find the successful ways of applying the necessary translation transformations. It should also be emphasized that having a certain theoretical base (knowledge of translation transformations and possible ways of applying them) is crucially important for the process of film translation, so the problem of creating a common translation school and joining together as many modern film translators as possible for the development of film translation remains a major one in the Ukrainian film translation branch.

However, considering the analysis of Internet content, which is perhaps the main source of information for Ukrainians nowadays, we have experienced that the names of translators “pop up” quite seldom, that is, a completely qualitative work on the film translation was done, which is to adapt the English film to Ukrainian realias, and the performer (or performers) of

this work remain mysterious and unknown, and the translation is taken for granted. There is a problem of insufficient audience's attention to the film translation and translator's work first of all. The viewer should know (and he ought to want to know, too) whose words are transmitted to him through the screens, therefore, it would be desirably to popularize the translation activities of the film translators, to develop websites like kino-pereklad.org.ua, not forgetting also about the contribution of a translator to a certain film, while publishing information about a particular piece of cinematography.

The study has found that the Ukrainian film translation has great prospects for development, but rapid and successful development is impossible, if the attention of the researchers to the problem of film translation is absent, as well as if a unified theoretical basis is absent. The observations and conclusions obtained during the work can be used in teaching the course "Theory and Practice of Translation", disciplines related to video and film translation, as well as for journalism to draw attention to the problem.

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