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**FILM TITLE TRANSLATION AND SEMANTIZATION
(ON ENGLISH, FRENCH, RUSSIAN AND ARABIC MATERIALS)**

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ИМЕНИ ПАТРИСА ЛУМУМБЫ»**

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МОКТАР АЛИЯ

**ПЕРЕВОД И СЕМАНТИЗАЦИЯ НАЗВАНИЙ КИНОФИЛЬМОВ
(НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО, ФРАНЦУЗСКОГО, РУССКОГО И
АРАБСКОГО ЯЗЫКОВ)**

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INTRODUCTION

The given dissertation represents a comparative-contrastive study of English-language film title translation and interpretation into French, Russian and Arabic languages. A film title is considered in the present research as a distinctive unit reflecting the socio-cultural context in different parts of the world. This phenomenon is traced through several target languages by delving into the often-encountered lexicon restrictions or polysemantic ambiguity and vagueness in addition to linguistic relativity or worldview conditioned by particular social, cultural, historical, or other references that are inherently familiar in the source language, yet foreign for target audiences as well as figures of speech that may or may not have direct equivalents in the target language.

The relevance of the research paper lies in the need for a comprehensive study of film titles and a description of their characteristic features as a subtype of onomastics. Like any proper name, a film title marks the film. The title may evoke various associations, trigger different feelings in the potential viewer and affect the perception of the film as a whole. Consequently, the name plays a pivotal role on the fate of the film. In our research, we study English film title as a prototype, and compare it to the title under which a film has been distributed in different countries to reveal any discrepancies, wherefrom conclusions can be drawn as to common patterns, tendencies and translation approaches.

In the framework of film title translation, not only are the lexical elements of the source text translated literally but also adapted to the culture of the intended audience with the purpose of allowing for positive and productive understanding, which can be called a journey from one linguo-cultural code into another. The translated title functions as a bridge between two or more socio-cultural communities. Thus, film title translation plays an instrumental role in intercultural communication as it reflects the socio-cultural context in different corners of the world through various languages in their linguistic repertoires and ideological assumptions, such as specific cultural and historical references.

The degree of development of the research problem. Over the course of the last two decades, the phenomenon of film title discrepancies gained massive attention and has

been discussed under different perspectives on multiple social media platforms and forum websites, yet these discrepancies are seldom studied in academic works.

The scientific works of the following researchers contributed to the theoretical bases of the present study: the Russian scientists (O. I. Aleksandrova, C. A. Alieva, V. E. Anisimov, A. V. Antropova, V. N. Bezruchko, E. Zh. Bal'zhinimaeva, V. V. Vedineeva, V. E. Gorshkova, A. V. Dyadyasheva, Yu. A. Evgrafova, E. V. Knysh, M. V. Kostyunina, I. Milevich, Ya. E. Milyutkina, K. V. Pershina, Yu. N. Podymova, N. A. Frolova, G. T. Khukhuni, etc.) and the foreign ones (D. Ailan, K. Arauzho, B. Vratislav, S. Dekhesdin, A. Ding, V. Leonardi, F. Leklerk, R. Marich, K. Nord, P. N'yumark, Zh. Katto, M. Kadoret, Zh. Oberto, etc.).

Despite their valuable contributions, the above-mentioned researchers predominantly focus on a single target language, which limits the holistic understanding of translation practices that could be achieved through a multilanguage approach. Multilanguage approach applied in the given research provides a more holistic view than studies that focus on only one language pair.

Our study provides a cross-linguistic analysis of title translations across several languages: French, Russian, and Arabic. We examine the nuanced interpretations of film titles distributed in France and Québec for Francophone audiences, juxtaposing these with alternative English-language titles used for international or localized releases. This comprehensive approach offers a novel perspective on the complexities of film title translation across linguistically and culturally diverse markets, the study addressing a gap in the literature on film title translation, which has predominantly focused on binary language comparisons with limited descriptive outcomes while ignoring the impact of context on title interpretation by potential viewers.

The object of the study is translation of English-language film titles into French, Arabic and Russian, and their adaptation in the following aspects: structural-semantic considerations, functional-pragmatic dimensions, linguocultural implications, and lexical-stylistic features.

The subject of the study is examination of translational strategies, methodologies, and techniques employed in cross-cultural adaptation of cinematic appellations, as well

as linguistic and cultural mechanisms utilized to render film titles accessible and appealing to diverse target audiences, while simultaneously addressing the commercial imperatives of international distribution.

The hypothesis of the study is that translation of film titles is inherently influenced by the sociolinguistic and cultural-historical contexts of target audiences. Divergences in film title translations across international markets are not merely inevitable, but reflect complex intersections of semantic constraints, aesthetic considerations, and commercial imperatives. The choice of film titles, both in the original and in translation or adaptation for international distribution, is significantly shaped by marketing strategies and audience segmentation.

The aim of the study is to formulate a comprehensive linguistic analysis of film titles, examining interpretation approaches and translation methods from English into multiple target languages: French, Russian and Arabic; by comparing original English-language film titles with their international counterparts, to identify common translation patterns and recent trends.

To achieve this goal, we accomplished the following **objectives**:

- 1) to formulate a lexical and semantic definition of a film title, analyze its structural-semantic and functional-pragmatic aspects, as well as lexical and stylistic features;
- 2) to identify the linguocultural features of film titles, their influence on the translation of film titles;
- 3) based on empirical data, to consider paradigmatic approaches to translating film titles to identify genre-specific or audience-segment patterns;
- 4) to study the influence of social, historical and contextual factors on the interpretation of film titles by viewers;
- 5) to analyze the practice of choosing alternative English-language titles for international distribution under the influence of linguocultural differences in the countries of distribution;
- 6) to identify current trends in the use and translation of taglines as important elements of film distribution;

7) to analyze the practice of translating film titles in film distribution regions representing target languages (Russia, France and Quebec, Arab countries of the Maghreb and Mashreq) and describe the factors influencing the choice of title translation strategy, as well as the choice of tagline.

The data and methodology of the study. The study employs descriptive, comparative, and contrastive analytical methods, alongside a comprehensive examination of empirical data sourced from online film databases (e.g., IMDb) and official cinema websites. The empirical approach used in our study includes both quantitative and qualitative analyses applied to a variety of sample data and aimed at identifying emerging patterns and trends in the translation and adaptation of film titles in recent years.

The data of the study includes 253 English-language film titles of American, British, and Australian production which have been released from the year 2000 to date. These film titles have been studied from the standpoint of their translations into Russian, French and Arabic languages as well as their semantization and adaptations for overseas distribution. In some instances, the translated titles are studied alongside with their respective taglines.

The selection of French, Russian, and Arabic languages as the target ones offers a rich comparative framework for the research:

Linguistically, these languages employ varied alphabets and grammatical structures, adding complexity to transliteration/transcription decisions. Different grammatical structures and vocabulary impact how titles can be rendered.

Culturally, France, Russia, and the Arab world have distinct cultural traditions that influence the perception and marketing of English-language, primarily American, films. These regions have varying degrees of Westernization/Americanization, affecting localization requirements. Historical relationships with the United States may also impact translation choices.

Cinematographically, France, Russia, and the Arab world represent significant markets for Hollywood, incentivizing careful title translation, each with its own film industry tradition and audience expectations. France's cinephilic culture, Russia's dubbing practices, and the tendency of the Mashriq and Maghreb regions of the Arab world to

retain English-language titles, the source of which is due to the historical influence of France and England in these regions, provide contrasting contexts for film titles adaptation.

A comparative study conducted on the basis of several languages reveals how differences in languages and historical and cultural contexts influence translation strategies, and traces the linguistic, cultural and cinematic aspects that determine the choice of translation, considering the linguacultural specificity of each language and the interpretation of the translation by its native speakers, who are potential viewers.

Theoretical background includes theories and general statements:

In the field of *translation theories*: L. Venuti, J.P. Vinay and J. Darbelnet, G. T. Khukhuni, A. Parshin, P. Mares, C. Nord, and E.A. Nida;

In the study of *headlines*: V. A. Belov, O. Y. Bogdanova, Y. V. Vedenova, N. A. Veselov, N. V. Kojina, S. D. Krijanovsky, E. A. Lazareva, A. C. Popov, I. A. Syrov, V. M. Roginsky;

In the field of *onomatology*: E. L. Berezovich, E. V. Knysh;

In the field of *film title translation into different languages*: C. A. Alieva, A. V. Antropova, V. E. Gorshkova, E. V. Knysh, K. V. Pershina, Y. N. Podymova, N. A. Frolova, O. I. Aleksandrova as well as foreign scholars, C. Araujo, J. Aubertot, F. Leclerc, C. Nord, A. Ding, R. Marich.

In the Russian-language research segment, significant contributions to the study of film title translation are made by the works of such scholars as V. E. Anisimov, V. N. Bezruchko, E. Zh. Balzhinimaeva, V. V. Vedineeva, V. E. Gorshkova, A. V. Dyadyasheva, Yu. A. Evgrafova, M. V. Kostyunina, I. Milevich, and Ya. E. Milyutkina, focusing primarily on the Russian language and its lingo-cultural contexts.

V. E. Anisimov examines the structural and pragmatic features of film titles, taglines, and posters as elements of film text. A. V. Dyadyasheva emphasizes the importance of lexical choices and cultural understanding for effective translations between English and Russian audiences.

Ya. E. Milyutkina's work highlights translation strategies specifically designed for Russian-speaking audiences, while I. Milewicz provides a comprehensive analysis of translation strategies that consider both commercial and cultural dimensions. M. V. Kostyunina examines the adaptation of film titles, focusing on idioms and metaphors relevant to Russian culture. E. V. Knysh's onomastic contributions identify film titles as a unique area of study, offering insights into the linguistic characteristics of titles in English and Russian. V. E. Gorshkova's comparative analysis of English and French film titles translated into Russian underscores the significance of cultural and linguistic features, stressing the preservation of original meanings. V. V. Vedineeva investigates the influence of cultural and linguistic factors on the perception of translated film titles, and V. N. Bezruchko explores stylistic considerations in the translation of English-language titles into Russian. E. Zh. Balzhinimaeva identifies key strategies in translating English titles into Russian, while O. I. Aleksandrova illustrates the challenges and strategies involved in adapting titles across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. The works of Yu. A. Evgrafova are devoted to the study of semiotic structures of screen texts in cinema, on television and on the Internet.

It is important to mention the importance of context and cultural aspects of language in translation, deeply covered in the works of G. T. Khukhuni; the methods and approaches he developed help translators more accurately adapt film titles to the target audience, considering both the lexical and cultural features of the language.

Foreign academic literature on film title translation has been significantly advanced by international scholars who explore various language pairs and their lingo-cultural contexts. Notably, Vanessa Leonardi's 2011 study, "Translating Film Titles: Linguistic Skills, Cultural Awareness or Marketing Strategies", highlights the intricate balance required between linguistic precision, cultural relevance, and marketing effectiveness in translating film titles from English into Italian. Similarly, Ding Ailan applies Peter Newmark's Communicative Translation Theory to the Chinese context, while Berdis Vratislav conducts an in-depth linguistic analysis of English film title translations for the Czech audience. Contributions from Carla Araujo and Jacques Catteau further enrich the discourse by examining Spanish and French translations, respectively.

Notably, there has been an increase in the adoption of English titles within non-English-speaking markets, particularly in France and other French-speaking European nations, initially highlighted in the French journal *Le Monde* in 2008, coinciding with the rise of this practice. Subsequent research contributions from authors such as Cécile Dehesdin (2010), Fabrice Leclerc (2014), and Martin Cadoret (2017) further explore the complex interplay of language, culture, and the film industry, providing a critical examination of this phenomenon.

As a result of the growing popularity and mass consumption of predominantly American cinematography, the demand for the translation of English-language films into various languages is becoming more and more pressing. Alongside with feature films, the translation of film titles is of particular significance since it is the first and foremost facet that potential viewers learn about any cinema production. A film title is by definition a concise statement (i.e. a premise) that provides insights into the genre and storyline of a given film, the main purpose of which is to spark the interest of the prospective audience in order to achieve a wider viewership. Accordingly, the title of a film plays a pivotal role in the performance of cinema production on the market.

A film title in scientific literature is referred to as “filmonym”. Even though the term filmonym has not yet become widespread in linguistic studies, it can hold its place in the study of onomastic terminology, since it has a word-formation structure that involves basic elements, where the first one film denotes the object, and the second component onym means “proper name”, cf. anthroponymy, zoonym, toponymy, metonymy, ethnonym, phytonym, etc. Filmonyms are slowly gaining recognition as a branch of onomastic studies as it has been referred to as such in some recent publications.

Upon contrasting the translations of a given film title into different languages, notable discrepancies are perceived, namely between original title and its translation. Considering the fact that language and culture are closely intertwined, film title translation could turn into a pressing problem for interpreters. A translator must capture the semantic multidimensionality of the original title; a number of cultural-semantic and functional-pragmatic aspects have to be taken into consideration since a film title may

accommodate several latent meanings, such as associations, connotations, collocations, correlations as well as implications with particular geographical or historical contexts, etc. Film titles may also reflect symbolic values and bear cultural significance; therefore, cultural and national assimilation of the original text is advisable in the process of translation. Several other discrepancies are further stemming out of the intersection of aesthetic discourse and commercial ambitions, trademark integument, censorship, etc.

The novelty of the study is in 1) the unique, comprehensive, contrastive analysis of film titles across four linguistically and culturally diverse languages: Russian, English, French, and Arabic, highlighting the inextricable link between language and the sociolinguistic and cultural-historical context of the countries where the films are released; 2) revealing consistent trends and patterns in film title translation practices as well as the traditions of using taglines depending on the country of distribution; 3) identifying discrepancies between the translations of English-language film titles into French for distribution in France or other European French-speaking countries and the titles of films intended for French-speaking audiences in Quebec, influenced by cultural, legal, and linguistic factors.

The theoretical implication of the study lies in elucidating the structural-semantic and linguo-cultural characteristics of English film titles, along with their translations and adaptations. Employing English film titles as prototypes, the study illuminates cross-cultural disparities in titling practices, identifying prevalent region-specific patterns, trends, and translation strategies.

The dissertation study examines the process of translating film titles from English into French, Russian and Arabic, exploring the linguistic, cultural and cinematic aspects that influence these translations. The data, clarifying the impact of socio-cultural context on film titles translation, may be of interest to related disciplines. The results of the study, once again, confirm the existence of an obvious interdependence between language and culture and emphasize the importance of interdisciplinary methodology that allows us to look at language and its usage from different angles and find an explanation for the identified differences.

The findings clarify the complex interplay between linguistic fidelity, cultural resonance, and market considerations in the process of localizing film titles. This research contributes to the fields of modern linguistics, translation studies, dialectology, cultural studies, socio- and psycholinguistics, and linguistic ethnography, as well as to film studies, enhancing understanding of the nuanced decision-making process in adapting cultural products for international audiences.

The applied significance of the present film title translation study presents significant interdisciplinary implications, bridging cinema, international marketing, cross-cultural communication, and translation studies.

The findings offer a robust foundation for future research and have practical applications in areas such as localization, international marketing, and cultural adaptation. By examining the nuances of title adaptation, this study contributes to a more sophisticated understanding of consumer behavior across cultural contexts, informing decision-making in film production and localization. This research elucidates the intricate process of adapting linguistic and cultural elements for diverse international audiences, offering valuable insights that can enhance international film distribution and marketing strategies. Ultimately, this investigation not only deepens our understanding of cross-cultural communication complexities but also offers practical guidance for optimizing international cinema distribution practices, potentially influencing the broader landscape of international media consumption and cultural exchange.

Furthermore, the study's methodology could be adapted to analyze similar phenomena in other media forms, potentially broadening our understanding of linguistic and cultural dynamics in international entertainment.

The findings serve as a crucial pedagogical resource for training translators and media professionals, fostering improved practices in content localization. Academically, this research advances the discourse on translation theory and practice, particularly within audiovisual media.

The propositions to be defended are the following:

1. Film title translation is highly context-dependent, reflecting the intricate interplay between language, socio-cultural backgrounds, and historical contexts of both

source and target audiences. Linguistic constraints often necessitate cultural adaptation to ensure clarity and resonance of the translated title.

2. Film titles possess metonymic properties, serving as a synecdoche for the entire cinematic work. Analogous to a proper name, a film's title significantly influences the reception and commercial fate of the film. Moreover, titles can embody symbolic value and cultural significance, evoking associations and emotions in the audience.

3. Discrepancies in film title translation stem from a complex interplay of factors, including linguistic limitations, cultural nuances, and the tension between artistic integrity and commercial imperatives. These variances reflect the challenges of balancing fidelity to the original with market demands in different cultural contexts.

4. The translation process prioritizes demographic segmentation and genre preferences of the target audience, aiming to craft titles that are not only linguistically appropriate but also commercially viable. This approach recognizes films as cultural products whose success is contingent upon effective branding and marketing strategies.

5. The practice of film title translation exhibits notable trends and patterns, including the increasing tendency to retain or adapt English titles in non-English speaking markets, reflecting the international influence of Anglo-American cinema and changing linguistic landscapes.

6. Translation strategies for film titles extend beyond literal translation, encompassing techniques such as transformation, substitution, and creative adaptation. These approaches aim to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers while preserving the essence and appeal of the original title.

The reliability and validity of the study results are confirmed by a critical analysis of a significant volume of scientific literature on the topic of the research, as well as a comprehensive analysis of solid empirical material, conducted using a set of modern research methods of both qualitative and quantitative nature. The reliability of the study is also ensured by a large-scale study of Russian and foreign theory and practice of translating film titles, which made it possible to identify the absence of studies based on more than two languages, and, accordingly, the use of material from four languages

(English, French, Russian and Arabic) as a research base, and the publication of original scientific articles.

The approbation of the study. The theoretical and practical research results were discussed in 7 scientific articles, 3 of which are in the journals recommended by VAK. The results of the study were presented at 4 international scientific conferences: (1) 10th International Conference on Research and Methodology “Actual Problems in Modern Linguistics and the Humanities” (Moscow, RUDN University 2018), (2) International scientific conference of V Novikov readings "Functional semantics and linguosemiotics" (Moscow, RUDN University 2019), (3) International scientific and practical conference of young scientists “Languages, peoples, cultures” (Moscow, RUDN University 2017), (4) 3rd International Scientific Conference “Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism” (Grozny 2020).

The research work consists of an introduction, three chapters with conclusions, a general conclusion, and a bibliography (290 sources). The total volume of the dissertation without application is 192 pages.

The main results of the present research were published in the subsequent articles:

Research articles published in the VAK RF sources:

1. Krasina E. A., Rybinok E. S., Moctar A. Film Naming: Book Titles and Film Titles // RUDN Journal of Language Studies, Semiotics and Semantics. – 2020. – Vol. 11. – N. 2. – P. 330-340. doi: 10.22363/2313-2299-2020-11-2-330-340.

2. Krasina E. A., Moctar A. On Film Titles: Translation or Retitling? // Bulletin of Moscow Region State University. – 2020. – No. 2. – P. 283-296. DOI 10.18384/2224-0209-2020-2-1014. – EDN NEINVL.

3. Моктар А. Переводческие стратегии передачи смыслов сокращений в русскоязычных названиях кинокартин на русском языке (Translation strategies aimed at conveying the meaning of abbreviations present in English movie titles to Russian) // Современное педагогическое образование. – 2023. – № 3. – С. 250-254. – EDN ТТАРҮҰ.

Related publications:

4. Моктар А. Англоязычные названия художественных фильмов во франкоязычном прокате (English title of feature films in French release) // Современная наука: актуальные проблемы теории и практики. Серия: ГУМАНИТАРНЫЕ НАУКИ. – 2022. – №11/2. – С. 153-158. DOI 10.37882/2223-2982.2022.11-2.27

5. Моктар А. The delicate art of movie title translation // Actual Problems in Modern Linguistics and the Humanities : сборник статей X Международной научно-методической конференции, Москва, 16 марта 2018 года / Российский университет дружбы народов. – Москва: Российский университет дружбы народов (РУДН), 2018. – Р. 393-402. – EDN YRFIWL.

6. Моктар А. Divergence in film title translation // V Новиковские чтения : функциональная семантика и лингвосемиотика : сборник научных статей, Москва, 19 апреля 2019 года / Российский университет дружбы народов. – Москва: Российский университет дружбы народов (РУДН), 2019. – Р. 291-294. – EDN FLLHKN.

7. Moktar A. American Film Titles In French Distribution // European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences EpSBS : 3 rd International Scientific Conference “Social and Cultural Transformations in the Context of Modern Globalism” dedicated to the 80th Anniversary of Turkayev Hassan Vakhitovich, Grozny, 27–29 февраля 2020 года. – European Publisher: European Publisher, 2020. – Р. 750-757. – DOI 10.15405/epsbs.2020.10.0. – EDN SFXSXI

The research work consists of an introduction, three chapters with conclusions, a general conclusion, and a bibliography (290 sources). The total volume of the dissertation without application is 192 pages.

The Introduction presents an overview of the research topic, highlighting the components of the research, stating the theoretical foundations, demonstrating the novelty of the research, defining the object and subject of the study, emphasising the aim and specific objectives, identifying the methods and methodology of the study, and acknowledging the theoretical and practical values.

Chapter I “Theoretical Bases of Film Title Translation” explores the theoretical background of the topic, focusing on the main theories involved in the study. It discusses the concept of the film title and its connection to onomastics studies, its lexical features, different functions, as well as various approaches to film title translation and the factors to be considered, paying special attention to the intersection of both aesthetic discourse and commercial ambitions that are present in film titles.

Chapter II “Context-related and linguo-cultural specificities of film title translation and adaptation” is a detailed analysis of film title discrepancies, including structural-semantic, functional-pragmatic and linguo-cultural specifics, highlighting that language mirrors culture as well as other extra-textual reasons for the translation discrepancies that are observed.

Chapter III “Functional pragmatic data analysis in film title translation” provides the research results obtained using an empirical approach, which involves both qualitative and quantitative analysis of samples from different sources (Internet movie database (IMDb), official web pages of cinemas). The data collected have been studied with the purpose of observing progress and new patterns or trends within the last decade. The research also involves a comparative and contrastive analysis of the linguistic properties of film title translations and/or adaptations and their prototypes to reveal any similarities, common patterns, or specific approaches primarily based on film tagline, genre, or context.

General conclusions summarizes the key supporting ideas discussed throughout the study.

CHAPTER 1. THEORETICAL BASES OF FILM TITLE TRANSLATION

1.1. Defining the phenomenon of a film title

We define a film title as a concise, often multifaceted linguistic construct that serves as the primary identifier and promotional element for a cinematic work. It encapsulates the essence of the film's narrative, themes, or artistic vision, while simultaneously fulfilling practical and marketing functions. This brief summation, typically comprising one or a few words, introduces audiences to the subject matter and tone of the story, acting as a crucial component in the film's marketing strategy and public identity. Film titles appear ubiquitously across various media platforms, including movie posters displayed at cinema theaters, online promotions, movie trailers, physical media packaging (e.g., DVD), print advertisements in journals or flyers, and billboards. The title's significance extends beyond mere identification, encompassing artistic expression, narrative context, and historical relevance. As the most prominently featured element in marketing campaigns, an evocative title can significantly impact a film's commercial success and cultural resonance. Thus, a film title functions as a nexus of creative, commercial, and communicative purposes, serving to attract audience interest, convey essential information about the film's content, and contribute to the overall cinematic experience.

Let us consider the titles of the films that have been released in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, which are marked by the tendency to have short word counts because long-winded film titles have proven to be particularly unmarketable, therefore, they have declined in recent years. The few films that attempted to address loquacity and wordiness were not successful at the box office. Of the first decade's top fifty grossing films (including sequels), according to the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), seventy-eight had titles of two words or less (excluding articles like *the* and *a* and number of sequels at the end), while only three used three or more words and nineteen were sequels with an additional phrase following a colon. These sequels are often referred to by the

original name found in all sequels, such as *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, *Fast & Furious* and *The Lord of the Rings*.¹

In the following three segments, we discuss and study the main characteristics of film titles from three general perspectives: linguistic, cultural, and aesthetic.

1) Linguistic characteristics of a film title

Three main lexical component patterns are distinguished in film titles:

- **Character(s):** protagonist name

Example: “Moana” (USA) (Produced by Osnat Shurer, directed by Ron Clements & John Musker, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016) that was retitled as “*Vaiana*” in France due to copyright restrictions.

In most countries of the world, the film is named *Moana* after its main character. However, due to a registered trademark under the name *Moana*, the name of the protagonist had to be changed to *Vaiana*. The film was released under the title “*Vaiana*” in most countries of the European Union, except for Italy which renamed the heroine as “*Oceania*” in reference to the continent where the story takes place – the islands of Oceania.

Example: “The Good Liar” (USA) (Produced by Bill Condon Greg Yolen, directed by Bill Condon, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2019) retitled as “*L'Art du mensonge*” in France.

Literal translation: the art of mendacity.

In the example above, the original title refers directly to the protagonist qualifying him of being untruthful, whereas the translated title places more emphasis on the plot without mentioning the lead actor at all. Nonetheless, both film titles suggest that a fraud will occur at some point in the story at hand. Unlike French distributors, Russian distributors were satisfied with a literal translation of the film title: «*Хороший лжец*».

There are several reasons for such discrepancies in film title translation. The first reason for these changes is purely marketable. In the example “*The Good Liar*” ⇒ “*L'Art*

¹The full corpus is available in Appendix 1.

du mensonge” (literal translation: the art of mendacity), the translated title sounds significantly more intriguing than the original title. Other reasons may include a lack of lexical units or semantic meaning in the target language. The French language clearly does not lack such basic words as “*good*” or “*liar*”. Namely, the aesthetic approach in the example in question is justified as being driven by distributors’ commercial interests or for demarcating domestic and foreign cinema, as the French take great pride in their national film industry.

- **Setting**, i.e., the time and the place in which the events of the film take place

Example: “Motherless Brooklyn” (USA) (Produced by Edward Norton, Bill Migliore, Gigi Pritzker, Rachel Shane & Michael Bederman, directed by Edward Norton, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2019); retitled as “*Brooklyn Affairs*” in France.

A recurrent phenomenon when a non-English speaking country releases an American film under another English title. This rather new approach to film title adaptation will be discussed later in detail in **Chapter III** of our research, as it raises many questions, such as: why even make the effort to retitling the name of the film again in English for a francophone audience in the first place?

Example: “Zootopia” (USA) (Produced by Clark Spencer, directed by Byron & Howard Rich Moore, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016); retitled as “*Zootropolis*” in the UK and Ireland.

Zootropolis is the abbreviation of two words *zoo*, which means ‘a public facility where animals are kept for public display’, and *polis*, which is a Greek word for city. The compound *Zootopia* is the merger of two words: *zo* and *utopia*, that means ‘virtuous city’.

Interesting fact: the title in question has been transcribed in Arabic letters “زوتروبوليس” based on its UK adaptation but not the original American title.

- **Plot** (event or feelings):

Example: “Murder on the Orient Express” (USA) (Produced by Ridley Scott, Mark Gordon, Simon Kinberg, Kenneth Branagh, Judy Hofflund & Michael Schaefer, directed by Kenneth Branagh, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2017); retitled as “*Le Crime de l’Orient-Express*” in France.

Note how the word *murder*, present in the original title, describing the main event in the film at hand, was substituted by a more general word in French distribution – *crime*.

It is worth mentioning that some title includes a combination of these patterns, for example, "***Murder on the Orient Express***", a movie based on the 1934 novel of the same title by Agatha Christie, is composed of both components: the plot and the location. Movies based on works of literature, such as the one in question, generally keep the original title.

*Example: "A **Fall from Grace**" (USA) (Produced by Mark E. Swinton & Will Areu, directed by Tyler Perry, distributed by Netflix, 2020); retitled as "**Rupture fatale**" in France.*

Literal translation: A fatal break up

Both titles describe the storyline of the film under consideration. Nonetheless, there is a noticeable difference between the original title and the translated one. Grace, which is also the name of a lead character, is used as a narrative tool and has been left out upon distribution in French cinemas. The literal translation of the original title into French would be: La Chute de Grâce. The link between the name and the word with the same meaning in both languages could still have been preserved.

This feature film happens to be a mix-and-match of different genres, as so many are these days. The original title, "**A *Fall from Grace***", sounds more dramatic in comparison to the one translated into French, "***Rupture fatale***" (literal translation: A fatal break up), which sounds rather like a thriller. Genre shifts in film title translation were first discussed by Petr Mares (1982). As a result, this genre shift based purely on personal assumptions, predicated on the respective film titles, may trigger interest in viewership in different demographics in French and English-speaking prospective audiences. Clear patterns have been revealed in viewers' preferences for different genres that are associated with gender and age [Redfern 2012: 45]. The commercial realities that come with such hybrids need to be acknowledged.

2) Cultural characteristics

The translated title conveys the same ideas and tonality to the target audience as the original one. Although one could assume that this is an easy task because a title consists of one or very few words, it is not always achievable because of some culture-specific elements present in the original title alone and the linguistic restrictions of the target language. Consequently, the translator must resort to other methods or neglect minor semantic elements. Essentially, this may mean declining a literal translation, rather than focusing on implications, connotations, associations, and collocations, which both the source and target languages may offer. Puns and wordplay are favorable for transmission through culture-specific expressions to make the new title sound as natural as possible to the target audience. Still, translators also aim to be faithful to the original, as well as to maintain a connection to the film premise. If a film title is impossible to translate, a translator may suggest a new interpretation insofar as they have valid arguments, such as language units indicating realities (also called ‘realia’). In every nation’s culture, there are concepts, phenomena, and objects that are inherent only to a certain nation and connected with its historical, geographical, socio-political, and other conditions of existence.

Modern **slang** and **acronyms** casually used by most American youngsters in everyday speech may not have a direct equivalent in the target language. For example: “*The DUFF*” (USA) (Produced by Susan Cartsonis, McG & Mary Viola, directed by Ari Sandel, distributed by Lionsgate & CBS Films, 2015).

DUFF stands for *Designated Ugly Fat Friend*, meaning an unattractive person, usually a female, who sticks out of a group of friends for her bad looks, and as a result, makes everyone else in the group look better than they are in comparison to her. In Russian distribution, the film in question was released under the title «*Простушка*» (literal translation: A plain girl).

In French distribution, the original title was retained, but a phrase referring to the storyline of the film was added “*DUFF: Le faire-valoir*” (literal translation: make it count/worth it)

In Arabic distribution, the components of the acronym have been broken down and translated word by word: “الصديقة السمينة القبيحة”.

One can easily observe that there is a missing word as well as the repetition of “ال” at the beginning of each word – it is a definite article that conveys the meaning of the word *Designated*:

Ugly ⇒ القبيحة

Fat ⇒ السمينة

Friend ⇒ الصديقة

Aside from being written and read from right to left, Arabic syntactic word order is different from that of English, as one may observe in the noun phrase under consideration. Below is a simplified comparison of the noun phrases:

- English: Adj.1 + Adj. 2 + noun
- Arabic: noun + Adj. 2 + Adj.1 (rearranged word order from left to right)

Every distribution company has its own approach on American film title translation and adaptation. Some of the reasons for these translation discrepancies may include different marketing strategies aimed at attracting specific demographics that may or may not differ from country to country. The acronym DUFF, that is evidently unfamiliar to many non-English-speaking audiences, was kept in French distribution on purpose as a way to convey the American origin of the motion picture and thus lure the young generations of millennials and Gen Z for which the film is intended for in the first place.

- **Language limitations**

There is a common opinion shared by many translation theorists that there are no exact equivalents in two languages that are identical in all aspects, even if the words look and sound similar. There will always be a minor difference between the original and translated texts [Nida 1964: 156].

According to Eugene Nida, "No two languages are identical, either in the meanings given to the corresponding symbols or in the ways in which symbols are arranged in phrases and sentences. It stands to reason that there can be no absolute correspondence between languages. Hence, there can be no fully exact translations." While the impact of

a translation may be close to that of the original, the so called “equivalent word” in the target language cannot be completely identical in all aspects [ibid].

The words in the original language and the target language may even share the same lexical definition but have different associated meanings, as is the case in the next example:

“The Proposal” (USA) (Produced by David Hoberman & Todd Lieberman, directed by Anne Fletcher, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2009).

Plot summary: The editor-in-chief of a huge publishing house based in New York risks deportation due to her expired visa. Determined to retain her position, she convinces her assistant to act temporarily as her fiancé in order to avoid deportation. Her assistant accepts but demands a promotion...

The original title suits the plot of the film perfectly, as it conveys both meanings: a marriage proposal as well as a business proposal. This title was translated into French as **“La proposition”** which actually means ‘offer’ (as in business offer). A marriage proposal in French is: *une demande (en mariage)*. This phenomenon was described by French linguists in 1928, who coined the expression “false friends of a translator”². We believe that the translators and distributors opted for this title **“La proposition”** for associative references.

In the Russian language, the translated title conveys both meanings as the original one.

- a) Деловое **предложение**: business **proposal/offer**.
- b) **Предложение** руки и сердца: a marriage **proposal**.

Nonetheless, «**Предложение**» on its own in Russian culture is rather associated with the latter than with a business offer.

The omitted secondary meanings that are quite relevant to the film synopsis on both parts (French and Russian title translations) were conveyed by each respective tagline.

A movie tagline is a short text which serves to clarify an idea or is designed in the form of a dramatic effect. Many taglines, also referred to as slogans, are reiterated phrases

²Words in two languages that are spelled or sound similar but differ significantly in context.

associated with the film [URL: <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/best-movie-taglines/> (accessed: 15.04.19)]. Let's compare each tagline now:

- a) **English tagline:** *Here comes the bride.*
- b) **Russian tagline:** *Горько?...* (There is no equivalent for this expression in English. It means “bridegroom, kiss the bride!”, usually shouted by wedding guests) The question mark at the end implies that this expression could be used figuratively.
- c) **French tagline:** *Et si votre contrat de travail se transformait en contrat de mariage?* (Literal translation: ‘What if your employment contract turned into a marriage contract?’). A more detailed outline of the synopsis is given mentioning both intended meanings.

We can say for certain that both Russian and French film taglines described above, make up for the lack of dual meaning found in the translated titles.

- **Cultural-specific connotations**

A film title, more often than not, reflects the cultural characteristics to which it belongs. Let us examine at the film title “*Se7en*” (USA) (Produced by Arnold Kopelson & Phyllis Carlyle, directed by David Fincher, distributed by New Line Cinema, 1995). The number *seven* is referring to *the Seven Deadly Sins* which are present in the Holy Bible, also known as the capital vices, or cardinal sins, a grouping and classification of vices within Christian teachings [see: Shawn 2015]:

- a) **English title:** *Se7en* (original title)
- b) **Russian title:** *Семь* (literal translation)
- c) **French title:** *Seven* (the artistic substitution of the letter V by the number 7 present in the original title is neglected)
- d) **Arabic title:** *سبعة* (literal translation).

Most people in English, French and Russian-speaking communities generally share the same spiritual belief and are presumably familiar with this concept, unlike the overwhelming majority of Arabic-speaking communities for which, unfortunately, the literal translation did not come with any additional clarification. Hence, the title is perceived as a random number by the Arabic-speaking public. The film's title is, therefore, ambiguous for this specific public. Besides the linguistic aspect, it is regrettable

that all the translations listed above did not keep the creative graphic design present in the original title. The letter “V” in the word seven was portrayed as the digit “7” in the middle of the word because it looks like the letter “V” turned to the side. This is particularly regrettable for the Arabic title that had the potential to create something original given the fact that the digits that are used in the middle east nowadays are historically Indian and the one used for “seven” is identical to the Latin letter “V” in shape.

3) Aesthetic characteristics

The title is the most important part of a film in terms of first impressions. Film titles nurture audiences’ expectations, evoke the film’s overall mood as well as set up the story before even viewing the motion picture. In fact, film titles create the first impression of the potential audience. The film title speaks about the essence of the film. It hints at what the story revolves around. Therefore, film title ideas should be rigorously calculated before deciding on a final one. It is equally quite crucial for a motion picture to have an outstanding title that sets it apart upon release domestically as well as overseas. In order to achieve some effects beyond language, film titles often use rhetorical methods, such as metaphor, hyperbole, oxymoron, alliteration, rhyme, repetition, personification, contrast, onomatopoeia, etc.

Besides the rhetorical methods mentioned above, the important role of the graphic art design of film titles should not be neglected. The color and form of the letters were also found to be relevant aspects of the perception of the recipient. The graphic art design of film titles (as in “*Se7en*”) has been slowly evolving over the decades, starting from the early years of the last century, before they adopted the form and typography that is customary to us today. From hand-illustrated cards photographed and inserted into a film, during the silent movie era of the 20th century, modernist designs and titles that became iconic images, so much so they became logos of entire sequels as is seen, for instance, in the gun-barrel-shot scene in James Bond sequences released in the second half of the 20th century up to the modern computer-generated montage design.

Film titles are mostly found on film posters. A movie poster can be regarded as a film's advertisement in essence because it fulfills an attractive function. Film titles come in different forms; digital or printed in movie theaters or posted on billboards, banners or on CD covers, etc. In addition to the main object of our research, many other film features are mentioned on a film's poster besides the main object of our research: the title.

Underneath or right above the title, we typically have a tagline that fulfills an important role not only in the promotion of a given film but also in order to add clarity to the title and/or plot of the film in question. Within the scope of film title translation, the tagline may play an important role as a constituent element of the title itself, namely the tagline can account for some omitted meaning in the translated title (as the example discussed above).

The poster of a film comprises the names and sometimes pictures of starring actors, producers, directors, storywriters, production and distribution companies and so on and so forth.

Here is the template of a film poster:



Figure 1: Film poster template.

The genre of a given film, as might be previewed, is based on some extra symbolic features, such as the color of the background and the image portrayed on the poster. There are conventions that are common to all genres. Generally speaking, dark colors are used to convey fearsome feelings or danger, whereas soft pastel or light colors may indicate a

romantic, comedy and family friendly genre or a film that appeals mainly to women and teenage girls (derogatorily called *a chick flick*).

When it comes to overseas film distribution, the background and colors are barely altered. The title, on the other hand, especially when it contains such complex elements as assonance (repetition of similar consonant sounds), alliteration (repetition of similar vowel sounds) or even onomatopoeias (sound imitation of an object or a living being). Onomatopoeia vocabulary often differs in various languages, and these variabilities are only partially explained by dissimilarities in phonological systems.

A pertinent example of this linguistic phenomenon is found below:

“*Splash*” (USA) (Produced by Brian Grazer, directed by Ron Howard, distributed by Buena Vista Distribution, 1984)

- a) **English title:** *Splash* (original title)
- b) **Russian title:** *Всплеск* (Russian equivalent)
- c) **French title:** *Splash* (original title left unchanged)
- d) **Arabic title:** سبلاش (transcription translation)

In French distribution, the film title was not changed. There is a direct equivalent in the French language that is significantly different from the English one: “ploof”. The only disadvantage is that this equivalent does not convey the aftermath effect when water is splashed in drops, but rather gives an impression of a quick-ended action much like the sound of a dive with no drops of water at all. Therefore, French distributors decided that the original title would sell more. Commercial and aesthetic ambitions are at the heart of film title translation.

There has been a noticeable trend in American films upon distribution in France. Many titles were neither translated nor preserved. They were retitled and distributed under a new English title. Some examples of this practice are illustrated in the present section. This practice is thoroughly discussed in Chapter 3.

The main purpose of releasing films with English titles for non-English-speaking audiences is to highlight the American origin of the movie. English can become a selling point when the film is intended for an adolescent audience, hence “*Sexy Dance*”, the original title of the franchise is: “*Step Up*” (USA) (Produced by Jennifer Gibgot, Adam

Shankman, Patrick Wachsberger, Erik Feig, Jon M. Chu, Dede Nickerson and Zeng Tian, directed Anne Fletcher, Jon M. Chu, Scott Speer, Trish Sie & Ron Yuan, distributed by Buena Vista Pictures, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, Lionsgate Entertainment & Lionsgate Films, 2006-2019). This is a clear illustration of the popular tendency of inserting captivating or startling words in the title [see: Araujo 2016]. An English title may sound more modern and, thus, more appealing to the younger generation, which is the main consumer of cinema production. Regardless of this new trend, it does not affect in any case the film product itself. As a rule of thumb, a film is always translated by voiceovers or captions for release in French theatres for the general public regardless of its title.

1.2. Film title functions

The title performs several functions, combining almost all text categories: information content (the name of the text on one of its topics); modalities (emotional appraisal); completeness (distinction of one text from another); connectivity (pass-through repeats that permeate the text); prospectuses (correspondence to readers' expectations); conceptuality (disclosure of the main idea of the work) [Kuharenko 1988: 90-101]. Thus, in the title of the text, understood as the proper name of the work manifested by the text, three most important intentions can be realized: reference - the correlation of the text with the art world, with the external chronotope of the hero's being or with the hero himself (internal chronotope); creative - the correlation of the text with the creative will of the author as the organizer of some communicative event; receptive - the correlation of the text with the creative empathy of the reader as a potential implementer of this communicative event [Tyupa 2001: 116]. Thus, the title is motivated by the text itself; its semantic deployment and pragmatic filling are carried out throughout the text space. According to V.A. Lukina, "the semantics of the title tend to expand, to accommodate the content of the whole text" [Lukin 1999: 61].

As an essential constituent of a motion picture, a film title "sets the mood" and "captures the audience" before anything else. As previously stated, three main naming patterns were observed in film titles. They are usually named after the protagonist, the

location (time or place), or the plot of a film. Some titles came about via a combination of patterns, for example “*Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*” (USA) (Produced by Joe Roth, Angelina Jolie & Duncan Henderson, directed by Joachim Rønning, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019) that is made up of both components: the name of the leading character as well as a hint at the plot.

Regardless of its pattern, each and every film title performs a number of functions simultaneously. According to Yu. N. Podymova, the most important function of filmonyms is communicative, more specifically informative, i.e. based on a film title, it is possible to predict the synopsis or genre of the film e.g. the thriller “*Taken*” (US) (Produced by Luc Besson, directed by Pierre Morel, Distributed by 20th Century Fox & EuropaCorp International, 2009). Other “filmonym” functions are classified by E.V. Knysh and Y. V. Vedeneva as follows:

I. Nominative

The onomastic feature of the notion “filmonym” indicates its fundamental nominative function. A “filmonym” is used to refer to a specific movie in the same manner as any proper name is used to refer to a person by which an individual is specifically known or designated with. In addition, it is believed that a person’s name determines his or her fate.

II. Communicative

The communicative aspect of “filmonyms” is implying the fact that it conveys certain information which is processed by a recipient (a potential viewer).

This function is divided into four subcategories:

1. Reference function: indicates the connection between the film and the title.
2. Informative function: film titles usually contain clues, as previously mentioned.
3. Pragmatic function: a film title can have a positive, negative or neutral effect on the potential viewer because words are emotionally charged.
4. Evaluative function: Marketing and media decision-maker vision towards the film expressed in the title.

III. Advertising

Many advertising strategies make a film more successful, but when it comes to the title, it seems that the most common strategy is to insert catchy or shocking words. This is the case with many titles that include terms, such as love, sex, or even hell.

IV. Aesthetic

A title must be appealing to the target audience regardless of genre. Cinema is an art, and in order to satisfy the preferences of the viewer, film titles have artistic attributes. Creative features of movie titles can be achieved through the fair use of literary devices. There are two aspects of these literary devices. They can be treated as either Literary Elements or Literary Techniques. Thus, it is convenient to define them separately.

Literary Elements have an inherent existence in literary pieces and are extensively employed by writers to develop literary pieces and titles (e.g., plot, setting, narrative structure, characters, mood, theme, morals, etc.). Literary Elements contribute to the creation of desired final work in a thoroughly professional manner [URL: <https://literarydevices.net/literary-devices/> (accessed 01.10.21)].

Literary Techniques, on the contrary, are structures usually a word or phrases in literary texts that writers employ to achieve not merely artistic ends but also readers a greater understanding and appreciation of their literary works. Examples include metaphors, similes, alliterations, hyperboles and allegories... [ibid]

Common literary elements

1. Plot: This is the logical sequence of events that develops a story.

For example: “Kill Chain” (USA) (Produced by Paul Hertzberg, Avi Lerner & Gary Preisle, directed by Ken Sanzel, distributed by Amazon Prime, 2020).

2. Setting: This refers to the time and place in which a story takes place.

For example: “Last Christmas” (USA) (Produced by Paul Feig, Jessie Henderson, David Livingstone & Emma Thompson, directed by Paul Feig, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2019).

3. Protagonist: This is the main character of story.

For example: “Harriet” (USA) (Produced by Debra Martin Chase, Daniela Taplin Lundberg & Gregory Allen Howard, directed by Kasi Lemmons, distributed by Focus Features, 2019).

4. Antagonist: This is the character in conflict with the Protagonist.

For example: “It” (USA) (Produced by Roy Lee, Dan Lin, Seth Grahame-Smith, David Katzenberg & Barbara Muschietti, directed by Andy Muschietti, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2017).

5. Narrator: A person who tells the story.

For example: “Crocodile Hunter³” (USA & Australia) (Produced and directed by John Stainton, Judi Bailey, Carole Tomko Recka & Steve Irwin, original networks Animal Planet, Discovery Channel & NBC, 1996-2007).

6. Narrative method: The manner in which a narrative is presented comprising plot and setting.

For example: “Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark” (USA) (Produced by Guillermo del Toro, Sean Daniel, Jason F. Brown, J. Miles Dale & Elizabeth Grave, directed by André Øvredal, distributed by Lionsgate, 2019).

7. Dialogue: Where characters of a narrative speak to one another.

For example: “I Don't Know How She Does It” (USA) (Produced by Donna Gigliotti, directed by Douglas McGrath, distributed by The Weinstein Company, 2011).

8. Conflict: This is an issue in the narrative around which the entire story revolves.

Example: “Bombshell” (USA) (Produced by Aaron L. Glibert, Jay Roach, Robert Graf, Michelle Graham, Charles Randolph, Margaret Riley, Charlize Theron, AJ Dix & Beth Kono, directed by Jay Roach, distributed by Lionsgate, 2019).

9. Mood: A general atmosphere of a narrative.

Example: “A Rainy Day in New York” (USA) (Produced by Letty Aronson & Erika Aronson, directed by Woody Allen, distributed by Amazon Studios, 2019).

³“*Crocodile Hunter*” is the nickname given to Stephen Robert Irwin, an Australian zookeeper, television personality, wildlife expert.... Irwin achieved worldwide fame from the television series named after him.

Common literary techniques

1. Imagery: It is the use of figurative language to create visual representations of actions, objects, and ideas in our minds in such a way that they appeal to our physical and mental senses.

For example:

“*Waves*” (USA) (Produced by Kevin Turen, Jessica Row & Trey Edward Shults, directed by Trey Edward Shultsm, distributed by A24, 2020)

“*Come to Daddy*” (USA, Canada, New Zealand and Ireland) (Produced by Mette-Marie Kongsved, Laura Tunstall, Toby Harvard, Daniel Bekerman, Emma Slade & Katie Holly, directed by Ant Timpson, distributed by Saban Films United States, 2020)

2. Simile and Metaphor: Both methods compare two distinct objects and draw similarities between them. The difference is that Simile uses “as” or “like” and Metaphor does not.

For example:

a. Simile:

“*Just Like Heaven*” (USA) (Produced by Walter F. Parkes & Laurie MacDonald, directed by Mark Waters, distributed by DreamWorks Pictures, 2005)

“*Think Like A Man*” (USA) (Produced by Will Packer, directed by Tim Story, distributed by Screen Gems, 2012)

b. Metaphor:

“*Playind with Fire*” (USA) (Produced by Todd Garner & Sean Robins, directed by Andy Fickman, distributed by Paramount Pictures, 2019)

“*Blinded by the Light*” (UK) (Produced by Jane Barclay, Gurinder Chadha & Jamal Daniel, directed by Gurinder Chadha, distributed by Entertainment One Films, 2019)

3. Hyperbole: It is deliberate exaggeration of actions and ideas for the sake of emphasis.

For example:

“*Just Mercy*” (USA) (Produced by Gil Netter, Asher Goldstein & Michael B. Jordan, directed by Destin Daniel Cretton, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2019)

“*End of the World*” (USA) (Produced and directed by Steven R. Monroe, distributed on DVD, 2019)

4. Personification: It gives a thing, an idea or an animal human qualities.

For example:

“*Motherless Brooklyn*” (USA) (Produced by Edward Norton, Bill Migliore, Gigi Pritzker, Rachel Shane & Michael Bederman, directed by Edward Norton, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2019)

“*Wrath of the Titans*” (USA) (Produced by Basil Iwanyk & Polly Cohen Johnsen, directed by Jonathan Liebesman, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2012)

5. Alliteration: It refers to the same consonant sounds in words coming together.

For example:

“*A Score to Settle*” (USA) (Produced by Kevin DeWalt, Eric Gozlan & Danielle Masters, directed by Shawn Ku, distributed by RLJE Films, 2019)

“*The Sun Is Also A Star*” released by the USA (Produced by Elysa Koplowitz Dutton & Leslie Morgenstein, directed by Ry Russo-Young, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2019)

6. Allegory: It is a literary technique in which an abstract idea is given a form of characters, actions, or events.

For example:

“*Angel Has Fallen*” (USA) (Produced by Gerard Butler, Alan Siegel, Matt O'Toole, John Thompson & Les Weldon Yariv Lerner, directed by Ric Roman Waugh, distributed by Lionsgate. 2019)

“*Girls with Balls*” (France and Belgium) (Produced and directed by Olivier Afonso, distributed by Netflix, 2018)

7. Irony: It is use of the words in such a way in which the intended meaning is completely opposite to their literal meaning.

For example:

“*Fair Game*” (USA) (Produced by Jez Butterworth, Akiva Goldsman, Doug Liman, Bill Pohlad, Jerry Zucker & Janet Zucker, directed by Doug Liman, distributed by Summit Entertainment, 2010)

“*Good Boys*” (USA) (Produced by Lee Eisenberg, Evan Goldberg, Seth Rogen & James Weaver, directed by Gene Stupnitsky, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2019)

Because of the universality of literary devices, they also allow readers to compare the title of one film to that of another to determine its worth. They not only embellish the piece of art but also give deeper meanings to it, testing the very understanding of the target audience along with providing them with entertaining content. In addition, they help motivate the recipients’ imagination to visualize the characters and scenes more clearly.

In terms of translation, we proceed based on the fact that the title is the main creator of the text concept as a dynamic entity on the recipient side. We considered that it is fundamental for the recipient is to comprehend the semantic subtleties of the title in order to adequately evaluate it. The concept of the title is encoded by the author in such a way as to "help" the reader decode the true meaning of the content. Sometimes, this is achieved by repetition, that is, by directly building up the content to incorporate headwords through usage in different contexts in the film itself. The semantics of words specified in the title “permeate” the entire text ensuring its semantic and conceptual unity at an implicit level.

The structural connection between the important textual position of the title and the main text (film script) is revealed using two main forms of communication: explicit and implicit. The main way of expressing an explicit connection is distant repetition, and the closest connection between the title and the main text (film script) appears when distant repetition pervades the entire work, while the beginning and end of the story form a kind of frame saturated with latent meanings. If the title is implicitly associated with the main text, the connection between them is indirect, and the meaning of the title can be expressed symbolically. The keywords and main ideas of the work are closely interconnected and represent the universal meaning-forming signs of artistic space.

1.3. Evidence that film title choice is pivotal

The multidimensionality of the artistic and aesthetic universality of the title, the complexity of its structural, semantic, and pragmatic organization urges the use of different interpretations, analysis methods and techniques that have been successfully

applied by the modern “polyparadigm”, as defined by E. S. Kubryakova, philological science for various research purposes, many of which were substantiated and empirically tested for a long time by translators of fiction. The purpose of this section is to consider the translation specifics of the title as a marker of the first - the author – interpretation of a film [URL: <http://study-english.info/article026.php> (accessed 15.01.20)].

In our reasoning, we proceed from the understanding of the text as an integral communicative unit, characterized by a complex semantic and formal-grammatical organization of its components, which, entering the boundaries of the text in special system relations, acquire a qualitatively new, intentionally determined stylistic and pragmatic effect. Yu. M. Lotman emphasizes the importance, along with others, of the meaning-forming function of the text, since it appears “not as a passive package of a predetermined meaning, but as a generator of meanings” [Lotman 1992: 200–202]. Significant in this regard is the thought of B. M. Gasparov regarding the paradoxical nature of linguistic communication as a text: it “represents a unity, a closed whole, but it is a unity that arises from an open interaction that cannot be fully accounted for... many factors, and such a closed a whole that is able to induce and absorb into itself the open, going to infinity work of thought” [Gasparov 1996: 321]. In terms of translation, it is important to recognize the “dialectics of the text”, which means the research view of the text as a single paradigm in the broad sense, as a varying invariant or construct formed by a combination of properties ... Dialectics allow to look at the text from a certain angle (a worldview) in contrast to the worldview reflected in the text. In terms of translation, it is important to emphasize that the title is the first interpretation of the work proposed by the author himself, whose worldview must be considered when translating.

Around the middle of the 20th century, film titles slowly evolved into an art form of their own. An overall 10% jump in box-office receipts was evidence that this was a profitable improvement for any motion picture marketing campaign. [URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Film_title_design (accessed 15.04.21)]. The following example is a great classic and a very popular motion picture in Russia that illustrates this best: *«Ирония судьбы, или С лёгким паром!»* (Literally: ‘The Irony of Fate or Enjoy your bath!’). This movie has two names because it was denied telecast under its first name

due to the pessimistic mood the original title sets (The Irony of Fate) for New Year's celebrations in particular. It is fair to mention another reason that contributed to its ban. The movie features numerous drinking scenes, while Gorbachev's anti-alcohol campaign was ongoing. [URL: <https://russian7.ru/post/pochemu-pri-gorbachyove-zapretili-pokaz/> (accessed 15.04.21)]. However, the film was reintroduced in 1976 under a different name (Enjoy your bath!). This new title changed the perception of the movie as a whole, regardless of the restrictions that had not been lifted at that time. It is now one of the most successful Soviet television productions and remains highly popular in modern Russia.

Nowadays, some filmmakers spend years trying to think of a movie title that will be striking and marketable. Most films are produced under a "working title" because the official title has not yet been decided upon. It is equally important to underline another essential component that sets a movie for international success: the title under which it is released overseas. Despite being the most spoken language in the world, English film titles are being translated as well as retitled in English when released overseas for various reasons, such as to exclude or, in contrast, introduce Britishisms in American translations and Americanisms in British translations or domestication and foreignization practices.

With the overall development and internationalization of world economic processes, the specific practice of translating advertising texts (film titles) and slogans (taglines) has increased in demand. An increasing number of films is produced every year and distributed internationally. Film production companies do not usually require the creation of new advertising images, but they do so for the translation and adaptation of texts and videos (trailers) for other, which have already proven to be successful domestically other countries' markets.

The transfer of the non-equivalent realities of English advertising texts is a non-trivial process. The decision on the choice of a particular technique will directly depend on the task that the translator faces: to preserve the national tint of the lexical unit with possible loss of semantics or to convey the meaning of language realia (if it is not familiar to the receptive audience), while losing national tint and language peculiarities. In both cases, a compromise in the majority of cases must be made.

In the process of translation from one language to another, several differences are revealed in the field of the lexical composition of the language and its grammatical structure. Semantic nonequivalence presents significant difficulties in the translation process.

Nonequivalent vocabulary refers to foreign words and phrases denoting objects, processes, and other realities of life that do not have equivalents in the language of translation at this stage. The complete impossibility of finding any correspondence to the word of the target language (the phenomenon of nonequivalence in its pure form) is relatively rare, that is mainly when the original word refers to a purely local or cultural phenomenon or concepts that do not correspond to the everyday life of another community.

Translation of vocabulary that does not have correspondences in the target language presents a certain challenge, but the practice of translation has the following methods of transmitting equivalent vocabulary: in order to make up for these linguistic limitations, some foreign words are borrowed, others are coined, and thus, neologisms are introduced into the target language. In George Pierce's point of view, "calques and loan words have enriched the target languages". Furthermore, he believes that "translators have helped substantially to shape the language into which they have translated" [Pierce 2018: 1].

Creating a new word (term) in the target language is another technique for translating a nonequivalent vocabulary. This technique differs from tracing by the absence of an etymological connection with the original word. When creating a neologism, the translator can use existing lexical and morphological elements. The disadvantage of this method of translation is that the coined term may not be rooted in the language of translation.

Thus, each of the described methods for translating non-equivalent vocabulary has both advantages and disadvantages. The method that is used in each case should be decided based on context. It is necessary to bear in mind the possibility of a combination of different methods of transmitting non-equivalent vocabulary, for example, tracing paper + descriptive translation or transliteration + descriptive, explanatory translations +

generalization technique. In the latter case, the generalization technique with the omission of a specific part of the initial content is permissible only if we are discussing insignificant, minor details.

Ways to translate nonequivalent vocabulary cannot be attributed to either permutations or transformations. They should be considered as separate groups of translation techniques.

It is important to note that all languages are changing dynamically. This change may occur at different levels of the language system (phonetic, grammatical, syntactic, and semantic) during the course of the historical development of any language. The reasons for language changes are diverse and can be caused by both external and intra-systemic reasons [see: Raymond Hickey 2001]. Among the most important in linguistics, the following traditionally stands out:

1. Economy of words and phonetic reduction also referred to as the principle of least effort.
2. Language contact and environment: borrowing words and constructions from other languages [ibid].

The latter reason is most relevant when it comes to film title translations. It is sometimes easier to introduce a foreign word than to explain it thoroughly using multiple lexical units. At the very beginning of Chapter 1 of the present research, a study involving word count has proven that the shorter the title, the more appealing it is to the public. This fact brings us back to the principle of least effort explained through an example above.

An approximate (likening) translation is a method of non-equivalent vocabulary transmission: to designate foreign realia in the target language, a concept is sought. Although it does not coincide with the original, it has significant semantic similarity with it and, to a certain extent, reveals the essence of the described phenomenon to the recipient of the translation.

The advantage of approximate translation is its clarity. The recipient of the translation deals with concepts that are familiar to him/her. However, this method of transmitting nonequivalent vocabulary is always associated with a certain risk stemming from the essence of this method, which is based on the replacement of the original concept

with its approximate correspondent equivalent. Therefore, an approximate translation must be used carefully.

When resorting to an approximate translation, the translator must know very well the essence of the described phenomenon, consider the context and the function of the text, and that basis, decide whether those deviations in the content that are inevitably associated with the approximate translation are permissible. It should also be remembered that in the meaning of the word, in addition to the denotative component, various connotations can be contained, such as correlation with a specific geographical or social environment and era. Otherwise, cultural and national assimilations are inevitable. Therefore, it is impossible to consider the following film title as the best choice for assimilation, because it acquires a completely new meaning:

“*Stuber*” (USA) (Produced by Jonathan Goldstein & John Francis Daley, directed by Michael Dowse, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2019) retitled as «*Али, рули!*» in Russia. Literal translation: Drive, Ali!

The film revolves around a mild-mannered Uber driver named Stu. The original title comes from a combination of Uber (the popular ride-hailing company) and the name of the protagonist Stu. It also means ‘stupid’ in English slang. In Russian distribution, the name of the lead character was changed to Ali in order to highlight the foreign origin of the cab driver. Most taxi drivers in Russia are immigrants from the former Soviet Republics with Muslim names.

As an object for interpretation, a film title intentionally or otherwise makes the first (and possibly last) impression of a viewer. Based on the film title, a potential viewer predicts the events taking place in a movie. Thus, it is important to study how a film title is perceived and its influence in different contexts on prospective audiences’ demographics.

The practice of film title translation is chiefly built on several dichotomies: foreignization/domestication as translation strategies, literal/free translation, faithfulness to the source text/intention to capture the international audience’s affection as a priority, prescriptive/descriptive approaches, etc. A film title can be studied separately from the film as the title of a given film might be highly publicized prior to a movie’s premiere

according to V. E. Gorshkova [see: Gorshkova 2014] the title might trigger some associations on the recipient's behalf, and thus, influence his/her willingness to watch a film or total rejection on his/her part based on preferences and background.

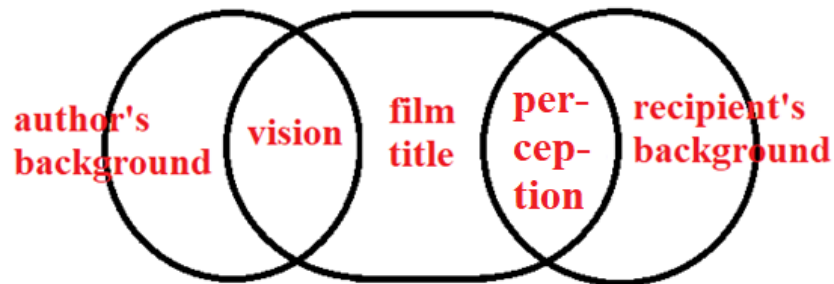


Figure 2: Author's vision versus recipient's perception

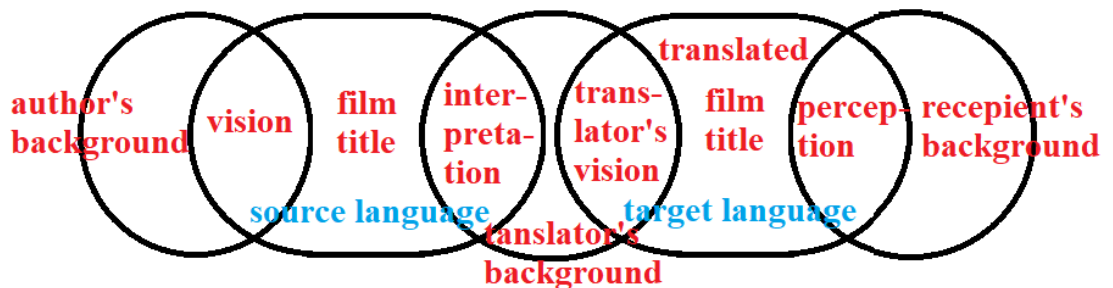


Figure 3: Representation of translator's central role in title transition

[Figure 2 and 3. Aleksandrova O.I., Krasina E.A., Rybinok Eu.S. [Precedential phenomena of a film text: film title in the aspect of translation]. In: *Philologicheskije nauki [Philological studies]*.

Moscow: 2019, № 5. Pp. 22 – 33].

The idea that a film title can be studied separately from the film highly debatable on the other hand. According to O. I. Aleksandrova, "...stages of new title selection are as follows: watching the film and getting familiar with extra materials (slogan, press release, abstract, synopsis, description of characters, trailer, etc.) >> translation of the film text >> literal translation of the original title >> study of all the meanings included in the lexical unites >> building bonds between the original name and the film content >> correction with visuals and the slogan (if any) accompanying the primary representation of the title >> selection of criteria that are the most significant for this film title (bonds with the plot, expressiveness in terms of ideological-and-philosophical content, clarify, attractiveness, genre correlation, recognition, etc.) >> new name ”

[Aleksandrova 2018: 107–136]. This implies that when there is no equivalent in the target language, the genre and plot are primarily relied upon for choosing a new title. Nonetheless, the translated title must meet certain imperative criteria. It is essential for the title to be intelligible for the targeted audience, it must have a logical connection with the storyline of the film, and, last but not least, the title must be marketable. [see: Araujo 2016]

Translation of an advertising text, such as a film title or its secondary advertising text (tagline), requires a great deal of preparation because it is absolutely not enough to complete a competent translation to complete a high-quality and adequate translation of film title. Scientific studies show that, due to its specificity, the advertising text can almost never be translated verbatim, because in this case, it loses its meaning and impacts the pragmatic value.

In addition, when translating an advertising text, it is necessary to take into account the ethical and psychological characteristics of the audience and its behavioral stereotypes, which can vary significantly in different countries; sometimes, the text that makes the inhabitants of a country smile can cause bewilderment and even anger in other countries. Therefore, it is necessary to consider traditional national and social characteristics, stereotypes of behavior of a particular audience.

1.4. Main insights on translation theories

Although there are many methods of film title translation, such as literal translation, free translation, and transliteration, there are still some problems and confusion; thus, these methods cannot accurately convey the connotations of the film. According to Eugene Nida, a renowned American linguist and translator, the most efficient way to study various theories of translation is to assemble germane (relevant to the subject under consideration) theories. In the present research, we provide an overview of the six main approaches within contemporary translation theory: the sociolinguistic approach, the communicative approach, the hermeneutic approach, the linguistic approach, the literary approach, and the semiotic approach, which are based on three disciplines that serve as a starting point for some basic ideas:

1. Philology, although often called “literary criticism” or “literary analysis”: literary approach, hermeneutic approach.

2. Linguistics, in particular social linguistics (the language used in communication in various social settings): Sociolinguistic and linguistic approaches.

3. Semiotics, more specifically social semiotics, and study of the sign systems used in human communication: Communicative and semiotic approaches.

Not only are these approaches that have been rearranged under the fields of study of the various disciplines unique, each with their own irreducible central or defining moment, but they are also inextricably related and intertwined. Each unique aspect reflects the others analogically. This analogical reflection is a reference, taken from the vantage point of one aspect, to another aspect of experience.

This arrangement of disciplines reflects historical developments. Each of these translation approaches has been approved and adopted by several researchers. At the same time, it is important to understand some of the important contributions that other related disciplines make to translation, for instance psychology, information theory, philology and sociology and so on.

However, almost all translation theory approaches have two basic flaws:

1. Proponents of a particular theory tend to construct their ideas on a specific discipline and rely often on its applicability to a single literary type or discourse.

2. A primary or exclusive interest regarding designative (denotative) rather than associative (connotative) meanings.

This is particularly applicable to translation theories which rely on some form of proposed logic to provide categories for establishing equivalence, a degree of resemblance and adequacy [Nida 2001: 107–115].

Then, E. Nida sets forth three factors that must be considered in translation:

1. Nature of the message: In some messages, the content is of primary consideration, and in others, the form must be given a higher priority.

2. The purpose of the author and of the translation is to transmit accurate information in both form and content; to aim at full intelligibility of the reader so he/she may understand the full implications of the message and for imperative purposes that aim

not only to understand the translation but also to ensure no misunderstanding of the translation.

3. Type of audience: Prospective audiences differ in both decoding ability and potential interest.

While reminding that while there are no such things as "identical equivalents" in translating, Nida asserts that a translator must find the "closest natural equivalent." He distinguishes between two approaches to the translation task and types of translation: Formal Equivalence (F-E) and Dynamic Equivalence (D-E).

Formal Equivalence focuses attention on the message itself in both form and content. Such translations would then be concerned with correspondences such as poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence, and concept to concept. Such a formal orientation that typifies this type of structural equivalence is called a "gloss translation" in which the translator aims at reproducing as literally and meaningfully as possible the form and content of the original.

The principles governing a Formal Equivalence translation would then be the reproduction of grammatical units, consistency in word usage, and meanings in terms of source context.

Dynamic Equivalence on the other hand aims at complete "naturalness" of expression. A Dynamic Equivalence translation is directed primarily towards equivalence of response rather than equivalence of form. The relationship between the target language receptor and the message should be substantially the same as that between the original (source language) receptors and the message.

The principles governing a Dynamic Equivalence translation would then be conformance of a translation to the receptor language and culture as a whole, and the translation must be in accordance with the context of the message which involves the stylistic selection and arrangement of message constituents.

In summary, based on the available information above, we can say that:

- **Dynamic equivalence** as a sense-for-sense translation (translation of the meanings of phrases or whole sentences) with a view to readability.

- **Formal equivalence** as a word-for-word translation (translation of the meanings of words and sentences in a more literal way) while maintaining word fidelity.

Componential analysis of meaning is based on the hypothesis that each lexical unit is composed of a certain number of semantic components and that the words of a language can be grouped into semantic domains. The most well-known example of this componential analysis technique is: "bachelor" = male + unmarried [Pierce 2018: 94]. This approach could be helpful in terms of words and concepts that cannot be translated literally or do not have a direct equivalent in the target language. Thus, the closest equivalent can be revealed by comparing and contrasting all semantic attributes.

E. Nida and L. Venuti have proved that translation studies belong to a much more complex discipline than may first appear, while a translator having to look beyond the text itself, to deconstruct it on an intra-textual level and decode on a referential level – assessing specific cultural items, idioms and figurative language to achieve an understanding of the source text and embark upon creating a translation that not only conveys what words mean in a given context, but also recreates the impact of the original text within the limits of the translator's own language system. For example, a statement that Jesus "met" someone must be carefully translated into a language which distinguishes between "met for the first time", "met habitually" and "encounter."

Example: “The Five People You Meet in Heaven” (USA) (Produced and directed by Mitch Albom, distributed on DVD, 2004). However, the example at hand is more than likely to be associated with the meaning "meet for the first time". In actuality, the five people referred to in the title under consideration are people the protagonist had already met before.

1.4.1. Philological insights

Philology has been the primary basis for discussing translation theories and practice as it is the study and evaluation of written texts, including their authenticity, form, meaning, and cultural influence for over 2000 years. From this perspective, a translation should not be considered a linguistic endeavor but a literary endeavor since language has energy, words are emotionally charged, so to speak. This manifestation of energy through

words that is the result of cultural experience is what gives it strength and ultimately, meaning: this is what must be translated.

The choice between literal and free translation has been debated since the Classical Roman world by Cicero, Horace, Catullus, and Quintilian. For the most part, Roman writers opted for free translation. Free translation generally means that a translator is given greater freedom of expression while translating the original source language into the target language. The practice of translating and concern for the principles of effective interlingual communication largely died during the early Middle Ages.

Translation studies later regained attention during the Renaissance period with growing interest in the translation of literature and, as some judged controversial, sacred religious scripts into Latin, and later into and between vernacular tongues, because they feared that the word of God could have a different interpretation in the language of translation, as some passages may have no direct equivalent.

In 1680, Dryden (1631-1700) proposed a translation theory of based on three major types: **metaphrase**, **paraphrase**, and **imitation**. By **metaphrase** Dryden implied a direct, word-for-word interpretation of a text, and by **imitation** he meant deviation from literal meaning, a text that may or may not closely follow the form or organization of the original. Subsequently, **paraphrase** is the middle ground representing the logical compromise between rigid word-for-word translations and complete latitude resulting in discrepancies between the original text and the translated text.

In 1862, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) rejected Dryden's position and insisted on conserving the original form, even though the aesthetic features and, partially, the significance of the text were both likely to be dropped. Such practices of literal translation proved largely unsatisfactory; therefore, some philologists insisted that translation is simply impossible.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the philological approach to translation regained interest in Russian structuralists – the so-called Formal School, the Prague School, British functionalism, and anthropological linguistics in the United States. The focus of philology shifted from formal features of literary texts to the role of language as a symbolic code, a system of communication, and an integral part of culture.

Conceivably the biggest role of linguistics in philology is focused on text linguistics, the study of how texts are structured formally and thematically into several different “genres,” for example, narratives, conversations, discourses, arguments, jokes, riddles, genealogies, sermons, lectures and lyric poetry. Some of the principal contributions to text linguistics have come from such scholars as Roman Jakobson (1960), Michael Halliday (1970), Teun A. van Dijk (1975), Robert De Beaugrande and Wolfgang U. Dressler (1981).

Currently, we are dealing with “film genres” or categories. These include action, adventure, animation, biography, comedy, crime, documentary, drama, family, fantasy, history, horror, musical, mystery, romance, sci-fi, sport, superhero, thriller, war, and Western. If the film title is not translated literally, the choice of translation strategy is mainly based on the genre of the film. It is crucial to convey the right tone through the choice of language depending on the context; formal language for documentaries, for example, because the title of a film contains insights on what to expect from watching a given film. Nonetheless, many movies include two or more genres, such as romantic comedies; therefore, the primary focus is on the intended audience. For example, the title of a romantic comedy can be translated with greater emphasis on the humoristic or romantic part through a well thought out pragmatic choice of terms in the translated title as a way to trigger interest in watching the movie in one or, ideally, several demographics.

1.4.2. Linguistic insights

Linguistic insights of translation have been studied by renowned linguists, such as: Jean-Paul Vinay, Jean Darbelnet, John Langshaw Austin, Jean-Charles Vegliante, and Georges Mounin. According to their perspective, any translation should be considered from the viewpoint of its basic constituencies: words, syntagms, phrases, or clauses, and ultimately, the sentence. They were also interested in structuralism (interpretation of cognition, behavior culture and experience focusing on the contrast between elements) and pragmatics (the context in which language is used).

The traditional classification of translation procedures can be traced back to 1958 and is the work of two French scholars, named Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, that

explored the linguistic aspects of translation. It consists of the seven categories listed below:

Literal translation (meta-phrase by Dryden) refers to word-for-word translation. This is acceptable only if the target language retains the same syntax, meaning, and style as the source language. The rendering of a text from one language to another word at the expense of some idiomatic meaning containing expressions that are natural only to a native speaker of the source language is not always justified.

Example: “White Collar” (USA) (Produced by Margo Myers Massey, Matt Bomer, Tim DeKay & Don Kurt, directed by Jeff Eastin, distributed by 20th Television, 2009-2014); literally translated as «*Белый воротничок*» in Russia.

«*Белый воротничок*» (Eng. *white-collar worker*) – a designation adopted in Western sociology for an employee engaged in mental work involving the storage, use and processing of information: employee, official, administrator or manager. Antonym: «*Синий воротничок*» (Eng. *blue-collar worker*) – a term denoting the employee's belonging to the working class, whose representatives, as a rule, are engaged in physical labor with hourly pay. Blue-collar workers may or may not have qualifications and, as a rule, work in industrial enterprises, mines, construction sites, etc.

Calque: usually understood as a translation in parts of a foreign language word (compound or derivative) or a combination of words with the subsequent addition of the translated elements together. Thus, the components of an equivalent word or phrase are replaced by their literal correspondences in the target language, for example: *skyscraper* – *un gratte-ciel*- *небоскреб* – *ناطحة سحاب*. In other words, the borrowing of a foreign syntagm with literal translation of its elements [Vinay and Darbelnet 1958: 6] is mainly used in the case of mult-component terms for a film title, such as in “*Skyscraper*”.

Example: “Skyscraper” (USA) (Produced by Beau Flynn, Dwayne Johnson, Hiram Garcia & Rawson Marshall Thurber, directed by Rawson Marshall Thurber, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2018) calqued as “*Gratte-ciel*” in French.

This film has been released in Canada under the title “*Gratte-ciel*” for a French-speaking audience. Whereas, in France, the original title was conserved because “*Skyscraper*” is a simple English term, and as a method to keep the American origin of

the film obvious. (We are going to explore this new tendency in more details in Chapter II.)

Equivalent translation occurs when the meanings of words do not depend on the context. These words can be proper names, days of the week, months, or numbers. However, this technique may also include names of institutions, interjections, idioms, or proverbs present in both linguocultural environments.

Example: “13” (USA) (Produced by Rick Schwartz, Jeanette B. Milio & Valerio Morabito, directed by Géla Babluani, distributed by Anchor Bay Films, 2005); calqued as “13” in French, but transcribed as «*Тринадцать*» in Russia. Literal translation: Thirteen.

If it is impossible to carry out a successful direct (literal) translation with the preservation of the structural and semantic features of the title, the genre of the film often becomes the basis of the translation, which determines the choice corresponding stylistic and lexical means of the target language. Oblique translation occurs when literal translation procedures cannot be applied.

Borrowing leads to reuse of the original title of a term or phrase from the original title. However, the word that is "*borrowed*" must be a word known and adopted in the target language, but if it weren't integrated in that language, it must be written in italics. This technique is the origin of many neologisms.

Example: “Catfish: The Movie” (USA) (Produced by Andrew Jarecki, Marc Smerling, Henry Joost & Ariel Schulman, directed by Henry Joost & Ariel Schulman, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2010) is an American documentary film. It involves a young man, Nev, being filmed by his brother and friend, co-directors Ariel and Henry, as he builds a romantic relationship with a young woman on the social network website Facebook. The film is credited with coining the term *catfishing*: a type of deceptive activity involving a person creating a fake social network profile for nefarious purposes.

Transposition is the shift from one part of speech to another during the translation process but does not change the overall meaning of the expression. This is a shift in the part of speech. In fact, it acts at the grammatical level, consisting of the replacement of the word by another without losing the meaning of the word in the original language.

From a stylistic perspective, it has been investigated that although the transposed expression conveys the same meaning as the original, its value is not identical. They are often regarded as literary characters, but the difficulty lies in determining the appropriate form for a specific context.

Example: “*Homeless to Harvard*” (USA) (Directed by Peter Levin, produced by Michael Mahoney, distributed by Lifetime Television, 2003); translated as «*Гарвардский бомж*» into Russian. Literal translation: Harvard’s vagrant

The translator must be aware that the substitution of the sequence of the part of speech while translating into any target language can alter its meaning of the source language text. In our example, the title that is translated into Russian sounds more shocking for the purpose of drawing people’s attention. In the original title, we are noticing a journey or an evolution with a clear demarcation between the past and the present of the lead character. In the Russian translation, the protagonist’s past does not separate from their old identity. There are no impressive or inspiring acts on their behalf, but a noticeable loss of meaning and an additional derogatory tone.

Modulation refers to the use of a phrase or word that is different in the source and target languages to convey the same idea. The message can be transmitted via a development of the idea of the source language.

For instance, the reason is replaced by the effect: It was a “*Very Bad Trip*” because of the “*The Hangover*”.

Example: “*The Hangover*” (USA) (Produced by Todd Phillips & Daniel Goldberg, directed by Todd Phillips, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2009). Distributed as “*Very Bad Trip*” in France; translated as “*Lendemain de veille*” in Quebec. Literal translation: Next day after a late night

“*Lendemain de veille*” is a well known and commonly used Quebecois expression in informal settings that means the day after a binge of alcohol consumption, generally characterized by a hangover. The common expression used in France to designate the same state is “gueule de bois” which is a colloquial, idiomatic expression. The literal translation into English would sound like “wooden face”.

Adaptation or adjustment: The use of a cultural equivalent that refers to the same concept as in the target language. Let us now consider onomatopoeic words, for instance. Although a particular sound is heard similarly by people in general, it is often expressed using different consonant strings in different languages.

Example: “Splash” (USA) (Produced by Brian Grazer, directed by Ron Howard, distributed by Buena Vista Distribution, 1984); distributed as «*Всплеск*» in Russia.

In French distribution, the film title was not changed at all. There is a direct equivalent in the French language that is significantly different from the English one: “ploof”. The only disadvantage is that this equivalent does not convey the aftermath effect when water is splashed in drops, but rather gives an impression of a quick-ended action much like the sound of a dive with no drops of water at all. Therefore, the French distributors decided that the original title would sell more. Commercial and aesthetic ambitions are at the heart of film title translation.

Linguistic insights are tightly linked to the sociolinguistic approach, which defines what is and is not translatable, and what is or is not acceptable within a given social context, e.g., censorship. A translator is inevitably a product of his or her society. His or her socio-cultural background is present in any of his or her translations. Cultural specifics (context) are a common feature of much research in translation studies. The present approach is associated with the School of Tel Aviv and renowned scholars in the field of translation studies such as Annie Brisset, Even Zohar and Gideon Toury. The notion of norms in different cultures is described in the poem below:

Words in One Language Elegantly us'd
 Will hardly in another be excus'd,
 And some that Rome admir'd in Caesars Time
 May neither suit Our Genius nor our Clime.
 The Genuine Sence, intelligibly Told,
 Shews a Translator both Discreet and Bold.
 Earl of Roscommon

1.4.3. Socio-semiotic insights

Standard vocabulary definitions report that semiotics (semiology) is a scientific discipline that studies the nature, types and functions of signs, sign systems and the sign activity of a person, the sign essence of natural and artificial languages in order to build a general theory of signs [Belyy 1994: 5]. From the perspective of semiotics, in order to have meaning, there must be collaboration between sign, object, and interpreter bearing in mind the relativity of each socio-cultural context. Signifying practices are interpreted in specific social and cultural circumstances. Socio-semiotics attempts to explain meaning-making as a social practice. Semiotics was originally defined by Ferdinand de Saussure, as "the science of the life of signs in society".

One major advantage of this insight over the others listed above in interlingual communication is that it deals with all types of codes and systems of signs used in any human society. In the present research, besides the title, there are secondary components that play an important role in the perception of a motion picture, such as the poster and the tagline, the choice or inscription/font and the color of the inscription as well as the background of the film poster.

Semiotics dates from the writings of Plato and Aristotle, but their contemporary foundation is based on the classical ideas of Charles Sanders Peirce (1934). According to Peirce, meaning is nonexistent if there is no sign pointing to another sign (mediation). The triadic cooperation between the three elements that have been mentioned earlier (a sign, its object, and its interpreter) are defined by Peirce as: "Namely, a sign is something, A, which brings something, B, its interpreting sign determined or created by it, into the same sort of correspondence with something, C, its object, as that in which itself stands to C." [Peirce 1902: 20–21].

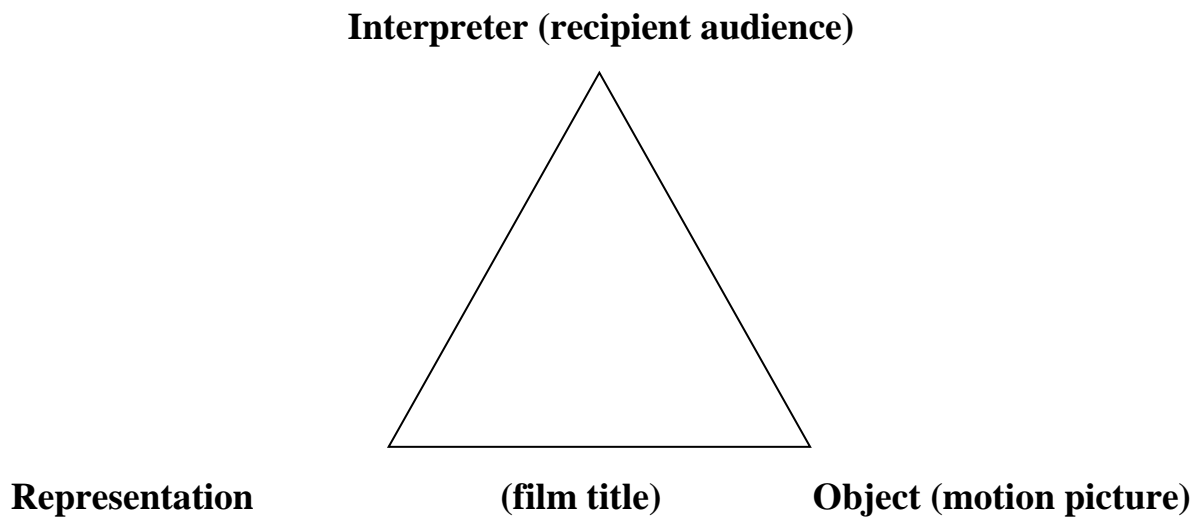


Figure 4: Pierce's model as a semiotic triangle.

[Charles Saunders Pierce's Semiotic Analysis. Created by Abdul Basit A. in 2017 and released into the public domain. URL: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Health-Communication-in-The-Quran%3A-Charles-Saunders-Basit/45eaa7b2076ebad07d86207c510202d687149091> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

In the figure above, we have mentioned film title as the representation, as it is the main focus of our investigation, although it could be substituted by a tagline or any verbal or non-verbal entity, such as the background of the poster's image or even colors. Semiotic insights deserve equal attention to designative (denotation) and associative (connotation) meanings because signs of any form in terms of all the other verbal as well as nonverbal signs must be addressed within context or in related texts, such as the tagline. The overall first impression of a film is based on the set of main features of the film poster or trailer discussed in a previous passage. The percipient subconsciously receives several subliminal codes starting from the title to the imagery or choice of color.

1.5. CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 1

The title of a film has metonymic properties since it refers to the film as a whole. It has been equated to a proper name in many instances because they have some properties in common. The name is never arbitrary, as it always evokes associations on the recipient's part. The title can accommodate several latent meanings because it may, for instance, be characterized by symbolic value with cultural significance. Therefore, titles must therefore be studied from a contextual perspective.

The greatest challenges in terms of film title translation are stemming from the intersection of both aesthetic and commercial discourses present in the title. From an aesthetic point of view, a film title can include some rhetorical methods such as metaphor, rhyme, personification, onomatopoeia, etc... An evocative title can be the most effective element of a large-scale advertising campaign. This is because it is always brought to the fore; displayed on billboards, in TV commercials, online or in printed ads, and so on... Graphic design has also proven to be relevant. From the smallest details, for example, the color tones chosen or the characteristics of the front of the text. Commercial and aesthetic ambitions are at the heart of the translation of film title. Nevertheless, the affinity between the title and the cinema product must be guaranteed.

It has been proven that a film title plays a decisive role in the promotion of a film, which is why film distributors take it very seriously. When a film is distributed abroad, it is preferable to keep the original title, as it has proven itself in the country of origin. Nevertheless, most film titles are significantly changed when they are translated from one language to another. A film title can have many variations in different languages and even in the same language in different regions of distribution. Still, the original distributors must approve the new title beforehand. We have discussed this matter and given numerous examples of film title discrepancies.

There could be several reasons for the differences between the original title and its translation. The Linguistic restrictions in the target language prove to be quite an obstacle. Consequently, the translator must resort to other methods in order to fill the semantic void with the help of the tagline, which has proven to be effective in some cases. Otherwise, the translator must renounce on literal translation and find another expression in the target

language that incorporates other aspects of the target language that are familiar to the recipient's culture, but the new title must still convey the same message as the original. This is a clear approach to domestication because the translated title will be interpreted by the target audience as if it had been translated in the first place. In the case of the complete absence of a concept in the target language, component analysis could be of substantial support. It compares all semantic properties and thus determines the closest equivalent in the target language.

The choice between a literal and free translation has been highly debated since the dawn of time. According to E. Nida and L. Venuti, a translator must look beyond the text in order to deconstruct it on an intratextual level and decode it on a referential level. In doing so, they must evaluate specific cultural elements, idioms, puns and figurative meanings in order to achieve a thorough understanding of the source text and produce a translation that not only conveys what the words mean in a given context, but also reproduces the same effect of the original text within the semantic constraints and linguistic repertoire of the target language.

In other words:

- **Dynamic equivalence** as a sense-for-sense translation (translation of the meanings of phrases or whole sentences) with a view to readability.

- **Formal equivalence** as a word-for-word translation (translation of the meanings of words and sentences in a more literal way) while maintaining word fidelity.

In addition, it is necessary to take into account the ethical and psychological characteristics of the audience, their behavioral stereotypes, which can be very different in different countries - sometimes the text that makes the inhabitants of one country smile causes confusion and even anger in other countries. Therefore, it is necessary to take into account the traditional national and social characteristics as well as the behavioral stereotypes of the audience.

Accordingly, a comprehensive study of the different features of film title translation is required in order to reveal the reasons behind these discrepancies as well as to discover any possible patterns and tendencies in this practice.

The present passage reveals the following facts:

1. Three main lexical characteristics are observed: character, setting and plot.
2. Three factors that must be considered in title translation (according to E. Nida): nature of message, purpose, and type of audience.
3. Several functions of the title have been discussed and illustrated using examples from modern cinematography (according to E.V. Knysh and Y.V. Vedenova's classification): nominative, communicative and advertising, aesthetic.
4. The traditional classification of translation procedures was discussed (according to Jean Paul Vinay and Jean Derbelnet): literal translation, calque, equivalent, borrowing, transposition, modulation, and adaptation.
5. The translation of a film title may result in: literal translation, transformation or complete substitution.
6. Six main approaches within contemporary translation theory have been studied and applied to film title translation. They were arranged according to their respective disciplines:

- Philology, although often called "literary criticism" or "literary analysis": literary approach and hermeneutic approaches.

- Linguistics, in particular social linguistics (the language used in communication in various social settings): sociolinguistic approach and linguistic approaches.

- Semiotics, more specifically social semiotics, and the study of the sign systems used in human communication: communicative approaches and semiotic approaches.

From a **philological** perspective, translation should be considered a literary endeavor, because words are emotionally charged. At the beginning of the 20th century, Russian structuralists, British functionalists and anthropological linguists in the United States changed their preference from a translation focused on formal features to symbolic code as an internal part of culture.

From a **linguistic** point of view, according to the perspective of many renowned linguists in the field, any translation should be considered from the viewpoint of its basic constituencies: words, syntagms, phrases, clauses, and ultimately the sentence. They were also interested in structuralism (interpretation of cognition, behavior culture and

experience focusing on contrast between elements) and pragmatics (the context in which language is used).

One major advantage of **socio-semiotic** insight over interlingual communication is that it involves all types of codes and systems of signs used in any human society. In the present research, besides the title, there are secondary components that play an important role in the perception of a motion picture, such as the poster and the tagline, the choice or inscription and the color of the inscription as well as the background of the film poster. The overall first impression of a film is based on the set of main features of the film poster or trailer that have been discussed in a previous section. The recipient receives several subliminal codes starting from the title to the imagery and even the choice of shade.

At the same time, it is important to understand some of the important contributions that other related disciplines make to translation, such as psychology, information theory, computer science and sociology.

CHAPTER 2. CONTEXT-RELATED AND LINGUO-CULTURAL SPECIFICITIES OF FILM TITLE TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION

2.1. Linguistic and Cultural-specific Challenges in Film Title Translation

The question of whether language can reflect culture is of crucial importance in modern linguistic and translation studies. The answer to this depends on how the ability of a language to reflect realia, which is a part of culture, is solved. The values that are present in one national community and absent in another contribute to the national sociocultural background, which is reflected in language in one way or another. The study of the sociocultural background and vocabulary reflecting it seems necessary in order to fully and deeply understand the original text and reproduce information about these values in translation using the language of the target culture.

V. S. Vinogradov, a Russian linguist and philologist, calls the sociocultural information that is characteristic only of a certain nation or nationality and reflected in the language of a given national community, a background information [Vinogradov 2001: 37]. The latter includes specific facts of history, features of the state structure and geographical environment of the national community, characteristic objects of material culture and folklore concepts – usually referred to as realia in translation studies.

Through **realia** in translation studies, we understand not only the facts themselves, phenomena, and objects, but also their appellations. Concepts that apply to realia are national in nature and belong to the category of non-equivalent vocabulary, which E. M. Vereshchagin and V. G. Kostomarov, Soviet and Russian linguists, define as words that serve to express concepts that are absent in another culture and language, words related to specific cultural elements, as well as words that have no equivalents beyond the language to which they belong [see: Vereshchagin & Kostomarov 1980].

The lexicon of any language forms a system because each word and, accordingly, each concept occupies a certain place in it, outlined by relations to other words and concepts. The nature of the isolation of specific links in the real world, their grouping, as well as transmission in another language depends on the presence of the corresponding

words in the language. In this regard, in the process of translation from one language into another, the so-called lacunae or lexical gap problem arises.

Lacuna (lat. *lacuna*– ‘deepening’, ‘hollow’) means the absence an appellation of an object or concept in one of the languages (either source or target language). In linguistics an accidental gap, also known as a gap, accidental lexical gap, lexical gap, lacuna, or hole in the pattern, is a word or other form that does not exist in some languages but is permitted by the grammatical rules of the language. Accidental gaps differ from systematic gaps, those words, or other forms that do not exist in a language because of the boundaries set by phonological, morphological, and other rules of that specific language [see: Crystal 2003]. The conditions of socio-political, socio-economical, socio-cultural, and everyday life customs and traditions of a nation, their worldview, psychology, etc., determine the emergence of concepts that are absent in languages spoken by other communities. Accordingly, in other languages there are no one-word dictionary equivalents for their transmission. L. S. Barkhudarov [see: Barkhudarov 1975], Soviet linguist, expert in Russian grammar and vocabulary, editor of the multi-volume Dictionary of the Literary Russian Language, I. I. Revzin and V. Yu. Rosenzweig [see: Revzin & Rosenzweig 1964], Russian linguists and semioticians associated with the Tartu–Moscow Semiotic School, as well as several other scholars were interested in the problem of semantic gaps.

Lacunae are conditionally divided into motivated and unmotivated. Motivated lacunae are associated with a lack of realia within a language community. Motivated lacunae come to light in the sphere of so-called non-equivalent vocabulary. They are usually provided during translation with explanations.

Unmotivated lacunae cannot be explained through the lack of realia; there are corresponding realia, but the people, for cultural and historical reasons, seemed to notice them, did not formulate concepts about these realia. Consequently, they are left unnamed.

Compare:

“*Travels with My Aunt*” (USA) (Produced by James Cresson & Robert Fryer, directed by George Cukor, Distributed by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1972);

«*Путешествия с моей тетей*» in Russia;

“*Voyages avec ma tante*” in France;

“رحلات مع عمتي” in Arabic-speaking countries.

Languages use different systems of terminology to refer to the individuals a person is related to owing to its unique classification of kinship relations. There is no distinction between aunt from the maternal or paternal side of the family in English, Russian or French. Whereas, in Arabic, the distinction is expressed using two different words:

Paternal aunt means ‘sister of one's father’; IPA: /ʕim.ma/. عمّة

Maternal aunt means ‘sister of one's mother’; IPA: /ħa:.la/. خالة

Comparing the way kinship terms appear in different languages and cultures can reveal quite much about the nation and its values, such as being conservative, or family centered.

The meaning of such nuance words usually becomes clear in context (synopsis). In Arabic, there is no need for a translator to provide explanations (e.g. explanatory taglines). The problem of "elimination of semantic gaps" is closely related to the problem of translating lexical units into the national marking – language realia.

V. S. Vinogradov calls realia all the specific facts of history and the state structure of the national community, the features of its geographical environment, the characteristic household items of the past and the present, ethnographic and folklore concepts, referring them to the class of non-equivalent vocabulary [ibid].

Linguist also identify associative realia that find their materialized expression in the components of the meanings of words, in the shades of words, in emotionally expressive overtones, in the internal verbal form, etc. Researchers note that when translating realia, it requires a special approach. Being the carriers of national tint, realia do not have exact correspondence in other languages.

Most scholars (A. V. Fedorov [see: Fedorov 2002], S. Vlahov, S. Florin [Vlahov & Florin 1980], and others) believe that realia can also be expressed in separate words and phrases (phraseologies) that are semantically equal to words. In linguistics, phraseology is the study of set or fixed expressions, such as idioms, phrasal verbs, and other types of multilexical units (often collectively referred to as phrasemes), in which

the component parts of the expression take on a meaning more specific than or otherwise not predictable from the sum of their meanings when used independently.

A phraseme, also called a set phrase, idiomatic phrase, multi-word expression, or idiom [see: Cowie 1998] [see: Dobrovol'skij 2005, Goddard 2001] is a multi-word or multi-morphemic utterance at least one of whose components is selectively constrained or restricted by linguistic convention such that it is not freely chosen [see: Mel'čuk 1995]. Notions-related or fixed expressions include simile, cliché, proverb, idioms, collocation, and phrasal verbs.

“*The Bucket List*” is ‘a number of experiences or achievements that a person hopes to have or accomplish during their lifetime’. Early 21st century: from the phrase *to kick the bucket* ≈ ‘to die’ [URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/fr/dictionnaire/anglais/bucket-list> (accessed 22.04.2019)], popularized by the 2007 film named “*The Bucket List*” (USA) (Produced by Craig Zadan, Neil Meron, Alan Greisman & Rob Reiner, directed by Rob Reiner, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2007).

All the words in this expression are chosen restrictedly, as part of a chunk. At the other extreme, there are collocations such as *hearty laughter*, where one of the words is chosen freely (*laughter*) based on the meaning that the speaker wishes to express, while the choice of the other intensifying word (*hearty*) is constrained by the conventions of the English language. Both types of expressions are phrasemes and can be contrasted with the so-called free phrases, expressions where all the members (barring grammatical elements whose choice is fixated by the morphosyntax of the language) are chosen freely, based exclusively on their meaning and the message that the speaker wishes to communicate.

Free word combinations and collocations are usually translated using calque (word-for-word translation). However, translating attributive word groups is challenging, because one and the same attributive word may be translated differently depending on the meaning of the defined head word [URL: <https://studfile.net/preview/5111025/page:3/> (accessed 22.04.2019)]. The list below presents the semantic classification of Phraseological units (according to V. V. Vinogradov):

1. Phraseological collocations requiring transformations:

Example: “Sound Asleep” (USA & Canada) (Directed and produced by Aisling Chin-Yee, distributed by Prospector Films, 2014). Meaning: ‘asleep, such that one is difficult to awaken’

2. Phraseological unities are sometimes translated by one word or equivalent combinations:

Example: “Taking Chances” (USA) (Produced by Lori Christopher, Larry Furlong, Michael Aguilar & David Guy Levy, directed by Talmage Cooley, distributed by Lionsgate, 2009). Meaning: ‘to risk’

3. Phraseological fusions (idioms) are translated into Russian equivalents, analogs, or descriptions.

Example: “Private Eye” (USA) (Produced by Pang Brothers, directed by Oxide Pang, distributed by Universe Films Distribution Company, 2007). Meaning: ‘detective’.

A distinctive feature of realia and phraseology when compared to other terms can be considered national and historical coloring and folklore. The lexical and phraseological categories under consideration differ in how they are absorbed by other languages. This new term is adopted along with the object or concept. Realia is adopted by another language most often from literature and through the media.

It should be noted that only those that are marked by a national tint within the original language can be considered genuine realia. A number of realia and phraseologies may represent deviations from literal norms. First, they should be sought among dialecticisms. Relatively few realia and phraseology are among the elements of a reduced style, and they practically do not occur among deviations that arose as a stylistic device of the author.

2.2. The alternative English film title within the English-speaking world

This passage lists feature films released under different English language film titles, essentially American films that were distributed in the United Kingdom under an alternative title, as well as some American films that have different titles domestically and internationally. The categories of such work include foreign releases of feature films. If not otherwise specified, UK film titles are also used in most other countries, apart from

Canada, which generally tends to use US film titles. Australia and France will sometimes introduce a third alternative title but quite often follow the UK or US usage. These differences are mentioned where known. Listed are minor changes due to differences in American and British English spellings.

Example:

“***Rumor Has It***” in the USA (Produced by Ben Cosgrove, directed by Rob Reiner, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2005)

“***Rumour Has It***” in the UK and Canada



Figure 5: A side by side comparison of USA and UK spelling variants present in the film title [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0398375/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

English film titles can vary from country to country for many reasons, such as specific cultural and historical references that could be misunderstood or incorporated into marketing strategies to attract the attention of a larger audience. The expression “alternative film title” is used in this passage for reference to a “new English-language film title” that is given for the same film upon release in another country (such as the UK, Ireland, Australia, or even France). Both titles are in English but adjusted for various reasons, for instance, censorship or other reasons, to exclude the risks of trademark violation. Some features of the film poster may also be discussed when relevant.

In the present section, we study 14 English film titles released by the United States and three by Great Britain. Each of these titles was changed upon distribution in other English-speaking markets in hope of gaining to a deeper understanding of the necessity of film title translation discrepancies in other languages at a more fundamental level.

For example:

“The 51st State” (UK & CA) (Produced by David Pupkewitz, Malcolm Kohl, Andras Hamori & Mark Aldridge, directed by Ronny Yu, distributed by Momentum Pictures (UK) & Alliance Atlantis (Canada), 2001)

“Formula 51” in the UK and internationally

“The 51st State” is a 2001 British/Canadian action-comedy film. Re-titled as *“Formula 51”* since the original title was seen as potentially offensive. The expression ‘51st state’, in this context, refers to perceived American influence over the United Kingdom.



Figure 6: American flag with 51 stars representing *“The 51st State”* A fictitious American flag with 51 stars.

Created by Jacobolus using Adobe Illustrator in 2006 and released into the public domain [URL:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:US_flag_51_stars.svg#/media/File:US_flag_51_stars.svg (accessed 22.03.2019)].

In various areas, 51-star flags have been designed and used as symbols by supporters of statehood in various areas. This is an example of a possible 51-star flag. Before Alaska and Hawaii became parts of the United States in 1959, the corresponding expression was "the 49th state" [URL: <https://www.flaginstitute.org/wp/2015/01/flag-week-usa-51-stars/> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

We have listed several interpretations of this set phrase below. These definitions are taken from different web sources and may range from friendly to pejorative:

1. "51st state", in post-1959 American political discourse, is a phrase that refers to areas or locales that are – seriously or facetiously – considered candidates for U.S. statehood, joining the 50 states that presently compose the United States. The phrase has

been applied to external territories as well as parts of existing states which would be admitted as separate states in their own right [URL: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/divided-puerto-ricans-head-to-polls-to-vote-on-us-statehood_n_593d41cae4b0b13f2c6b4b6b (accessed 22.03.2019)].

2. The phrase "51st state" sometimes has international political connotations not necessarily having to do with becoming a U.S. state. The phrase "51st state" can be used in a positive sense, meaning that a region or territory is so aligned, supportive, and conducive with the United States that it is like a U.S. state [ibid].

3. It can also be used in a pejorative sense, meaning that an area or region is perceived as under excessive American cultural or military influence or control. In various countries around the world, people who believe their local or national culture has become too Americanized sometimes use the term "51st state" in reference to their own countries. [URL: <https://www.journalisten.se/artikel/20463/eu-kritiserar-svensk-tv> (accessed 22.03.2019)]

The film follows the story of an American master graduate with a degree in chemistry (Jackson) who heads to Britain to sell his formula for a powerful new drug, also referred to as "*Formula 51*" which inspired the new title. Note the contrast between the images portrayed on both UK and US posters, as illustrated below. The one named "*Formula 51*" has pills all over its title in an attempt to unveil the idea behind the alternative title.

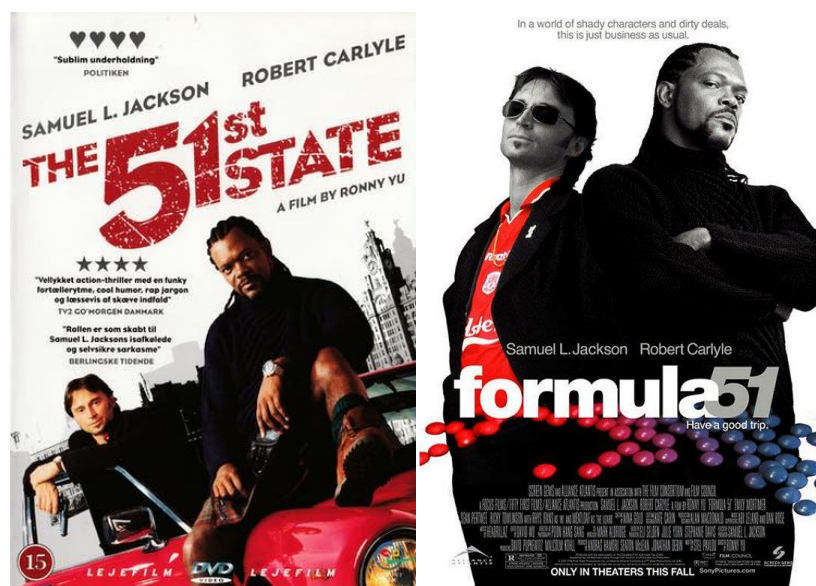


Figure 7. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0227984/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

On the same topic of making intentional reference to the country of origin, “**XXX: State of the Union**” (USA) (Produced by Neal H. Moritz & Arne L. Schmidt, directed by Lee Tamahori, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2005) which is an American action film and the second installment of the XXX franchise (2002-2017) was released as “**XXX2: The Next Level**” and “**XXX: State of Emergency**” outside North America. The State of the Union Address (sometimes abbreviated as SOTU) is an annual message delivered by the President of the United States to a joint session of the United States Congress at the beginning of each calendar year in office [URL: <https://history.house.gov/Institution/SOTU/State-of-the-Union/> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. The title was presumably changed as distributors thought international audiences would not understand the original title.



Figure 8. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0329774/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“**Spooks**” (UK) (produced by Kudos production company, directed by David Wolstencroft, broadcasted by BBC One and BBC Three, original release 2002 – 2011) is a British television spy drama series that was distributed as “**MI-5**” in the US as well as several other countries. The original title is a popular colloquialism for spies, and the series follows the work of a group of MI5 officers; hence, the alternative title.

MI5 (Military Intelligence, Section 5) is the United Kingdom's domestic counterintelligence and security agency [URL: <https://www.mi5.gov.uk/whats-in-a-name> (accessed 22.03.2019)]

In contrast, the US, "*Spooks*" is a derogatory and offensive slur used to refer to Americans of African descent [URL: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=spooks> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. Therefore, for alleged censorship reasons, an alternative title was implemented for distribution in North America.

In Canada, the programme originally aired as "*MI-5*" but now airs on BBC Canada as "*Spooks*" despite the possible risk of losing a large segment of viewers.



Figure 9. USA and UK posters with different film titles

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0160904/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Speaking of censorship, "*Hummingbird*" (UK) (Produced by Guy Heeley & Paul Webster, directed by Steven Knight, distributed by Lionsgate & Roadside Attractions, 2013) which is a British action-drama film was released as "*Redemption*" in the United States. The protagonist is an alcoholic veteran haunted by his war crimes; he befriends a Catholic nun, becomes involved in organized crime, and takes revenge on a man who beats and kills prostitutes.

The original title could be a euphemism of the word prostitute [URL: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Hummingbird> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. For this reason, an alternative title was introduced, most likely in order to lift the age restriction on the film and, as a result, conquer larger audiences.



Figure 10. USA and UK posters with different film titles

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1893256/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

One of the most important functions of the film title is its advertising function. There are many advertising strategies for making a film more successful on the market but when it comes to the title, it seems that the most common strategy is to add catchy words or even shocking ones. This is the case of many alternative film titles that include such words as “*love*”, “*sex*”, “*hell*”, etc. [see: Araujo 2016].

Example:

“*No Strings Attached*” (USA) (Produced by Jeffrey Clifford, Joe Medjuck & Ivan Reitman, directed by Ivan Reitman, distributed by Paramount Pictures, 2011)

“*Sex Friends*” in France



Figure 11. USA and French posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1411238/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“*No Strings Attached*” is a 2011 American romantic comedy film. The film is about two friends who decide to make a pact to have “*No Strings Attached*” relationship, without falling in love with each other.

The title under which the film was released in France is more precise to the subject of the film. The words selected are commonly used and easily understood, even for people with poor English language knowledge.

The process of re-titling is usually because French people may not understand or pronounce some English words found in the original title, which is quite crucial for the promotion of any film [see: Leclerc 2014].

Besides, a film that has an English title may sound more modern and, thus, more appealing to youngsters, which are the main consumers of cinema production. This marketing approach is justified as being driven by distributors' profit motives or for demarcating domestic and foreign cinema, as the French take great pride in their national film industry.

Regardless of this new trend, it does not negatively affect the film product itself in any case. As a rule of thumb, the film is always translated by voiceovers or subtitles for release in theatre.

“*American Hustle*” (USA) (Produced by Charles Roven, Richard Suckle, Megan Ellison & Jonathan Gordon, directed by David O. Russell, distributed by Sony Pictures

Releasing) is an American black comedy crime film that was distributed in France under the title “*American Bluff*”.

The term “hustle” is a difficult word to translate, seeing as the connotation goes beyond cheat or swindle; it can mean anything you do to make money and was also the name of a 70s dance craze [URL: <https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/american-movie-titles-weird-translations> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

The slang word “Bluff” is used here in reference to someone or something dishonest, such as to cheat in poker. This word is borrowed by many languages including French and even Russian [URL: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=bluff> (accessed 22.03.2019)].



Figure 12. USA and French posters with different film titles
[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1800241/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“*Joy Ride*” (USA) (Produced by J. J. Abrams & Chris Moore, directed by John Dahl, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2001) is an American road horror thriller film that is also known as “*Roadkill*” in the UK and Australia as the interpretation of this mostly American phraseological expression “*Joy Ride*” differs from one English-speaking country to another. We consider the two definitions of this expression here below.

1. Informal: the crime of stealing a vehicle and driving fast and dangerously for fun [URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/joyriding?q=joyride> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

2. Chiefly British: a pleasant trip taken for pleasure especially in an automobile [URL: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/joyride> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

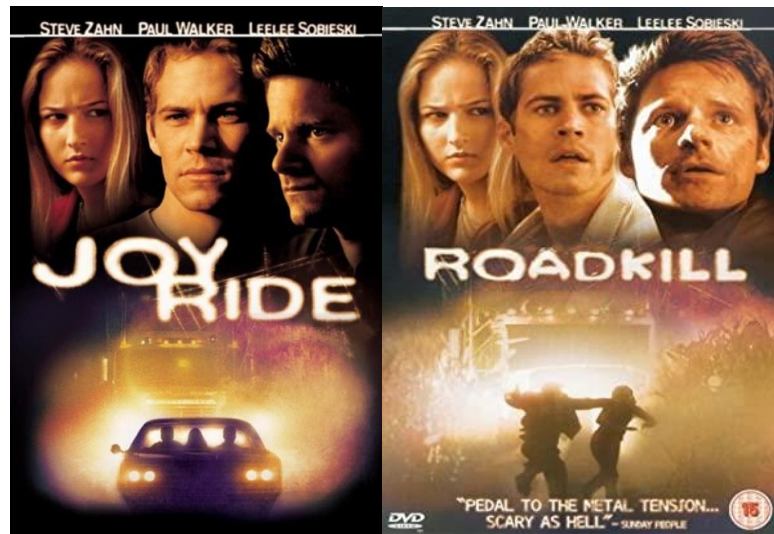


Figure 13. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0206314/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“Neighbors” (USA) (Produced by Evan Goldberg, Seth Rogen & James Weaver, directed by Nicholas Stoller, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2014) is an American comedy film released in some countries, such as the UK under the title *“Bad Neighbours”*. The spelling of the word “Neighbors” was obviously adapted to the British way of spelling of the same word. The alternative title also added the adjective “bad”, referring to the plot, in order to avoid confusion with the unrelated Australian soap opera with the same name “Neighbours”, due to its popularity in the UK.



Figure 14. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2004420/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“Hoosiers” (USA) (Produced by Carter De Haven & Angelo Pizzo, directed by David Anspaugh, distributed by Orion Pictures, 1986) is an American sports film that was distributed as **“Best Shot”** in the UK. Term "Hoosier" is a demonym for residents of the State of Indiana and is generally unknown outside the US.

Even though some people in America do not even know what a "Hoosier" is, they probably have a vague understanding that the term is related to the US state of Indiana and maybe to a sports team.

UK and Australian distributors changed the title to **“Best Shot”** because no one outside of the United States would understand this reference (unless they follow college basketball).



Figure 15. USA and UK posters with different film titles
 [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0091217/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“Fast Five” (USA) (Produced by Neal H. Moritz, Vin Diesel & Michael Fottrell, directed by Justin Lin, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2011) is an American heist action film that is alternatively known as **“Fast & Furious 5”** or **“Fast & Furious 5: Rio Heist”** in the UK. It is the fifth installment in the Fast & Furious franchise (2001-2019). This film title was extended to avoid confusion with the Kung Fu Panda franchise (2008-2016), which uses the term "Furious Five".

Another alternative title of this sequel was created by simply numbering it. This film is known as **“Fast & Furious 5”** in some international markets. It seems that the UK and Ireland will be treated for rebranding, with the movie now christened **“Fast &**

Furious 5: Rio Heist” does not exactly roll off the tongue that one. The source for this rebranding is the new UK one sheet poster, which features Dom and Brian, and the new title [URL: <https://scannain.com/movie-news/fast-and-furious-5-uk-onesheet/> (accessed 22.03.2019)].



Figure 16. USA and UK posters with different film titles

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1596343/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“The Rundown” (USA) (Produced by Marc Abraham, Bill Corless, Karen Glasser & Kevin Misher, directed by Peter Berg, distributed by Universal Pictures & Sony Pictures Releasing International, 2003) is an American action-comedy film that is known as *“Welcome to the Jungle”* in the UK and internationally.

In the film, the protagonist, played by The Rock, is a bounty hunter who travels to Brazil to retrieve his employer's son (Scott). The main events take place in a jungle; hence, the new title. If the previous film changed its title to avoid confusion, the title at hand would be very similar to the film title *“Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle”* (USA) (Produced by Matt Tolmach & William Teitler, directed by Jake Kasdan, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2017) which is also starring the Rock.



Figure 17. USA and UK posters with different film titles

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0327850/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“*Zootopia*” (USA) (Produced by Clark Spencer, directed by Byron & Howard Rich Moore, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016) is an American 3D computer-animated comedy film which becomes “*Zootropolis*” in UK and Ireland “*Zoomania*” in Germany. Disney explained the reason of changing the film title as "to merely allow the film to have a unique title that works for UK audiences." [URL: <https://www.screendaily.com/news/disneys-zootopia-renamed-zootropolis-for-uk/5084129.article> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

A compound “*Zootopia*” is the merger of two words: zo and utopia, that means ‘virtuous city’ [URL: <https://www.definitions.net/definition/ZOOTOPIA> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

In most European countries, the film title and city are referred to as “*Zootropolis*” (a word combination of zoo and metropolis). A possible reason for this renaming is the existence of a registered trademark of a Danish zoo in Europe according to the British press [URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2016/mar/09/why-are-film-titles-still-being-changed-for-international-release> (accessed 06.04.20)] [URL: <https://trademarks.ipo.gov.uk/ipo-tmcase/page/Results/4/EU008214249> (accessed 22.03.2019)].

Because of this change in the title, all lines with the word “*Zootopia*” were reshot in order to change it to “*Zootropolis*” and several scenes had to be reshot for the same reason.

“*Zootropolis*” or “*Zootopia*” was renamed as “*Zoomania*” in Germany due to the copyrights of Kay Fischer, who wrote a book in 2010 with the similar title “*Zootropolis*”. The film is also titled “*Crazy Animal City*” (back translation) in China [URL: <http://chinafilm insider.com/netizens-slam-animated-knock-off-disney-zootopia/> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. Other English-speaking countries including Australia, the Philippines, and South Africa used the original US title.



Figure 18. USA, UK and German posters with different film titles
[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2948356/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

On the same page, “*Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle*” (USA) (Produced by Nathan Kahane & Greg Shapiro, directed by Danny Leiner, distributed by New Line Cinema, 2004) is an American stoner comedy film, also known as “*Harold & Kumar Get the Munchies*” in the UK. White Castle chain of restaurants does not trade outside the US. The reason for this movie’s title change is quite simple: The white Castle is an American franchise and foreign distributors thought it would not be understood by international audiences [URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/15-films-completely-different-titles-other-countries-movies-translation-a7929166.html> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. Therefore, they replaced “*Go to White Castle*” with “*Get the Munchies*”.

Nonetheless, “*Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle*” is distributed under its original title in Australia.

To “*Get the Munchies*” means to become insatiably hungry so that one has the urge to continuously eat, especially junk food. The term is also often used to describe one of the stereotypical effects of marijuana use [URL: <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/get+the+munchies> (accessed 22.03.2019)].



Figure 19. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0366551/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“*Winter's Tale*” (USA) (Produced by Akiva Goldsman, Marc E. Platt, Michael Tadross & Tony Allard, directed by Akiva Goldsman, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2014) is an American romantic fantasy film based on Mark Helprin’s 1983 novel “*Winter’s Tale*”. The film was distributed under the title “*A New York Winter’s tale*” in the UK and Ireland to highlight the American origin of the film as a foreignization approach. The name of the city “*New York*” was added since some of its popular locations are featured in the film.



Figure 20. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1837709/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“13 Going on 30” (USA) (Produced by Susan Arnold, Donna Arkoff Roth, Gina Matthews & Todd Garner, directed by Gary Winick, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2004) is an American fantasy romantic comedy film.

The film story revolves around a little teenage girl who yearns to be popular; in an attempt to fulfill her wishes, she tearfully wishes to turn 30 on her 13th birthday. That explains the original title. However, in Australia, the title was changed to *“Suddenly 30”*.

The expression that the original title uses is more commonly heard in American culture compared to Australian, and according to the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), it was changed to *“Suddenly 30”* because distributors thought audiences would misunderstand the original title [URL: <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/films/15-films-completely-different-titles-other-countries-movies-translation-a7929166.html> (accessed 22.03.2019)].



Figure 21. USA and Australia posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0337563/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“*Winter Passing*” (USA) (Produced by David Koplan & P. Jennifer Dana, directed by Adam Rapp, distributed by Focus Features, 2005) is an American comedy drama film.

The film premiered in 2005 to mixed reviews, and was not distributed in the United Kingdom until 2013, when it was released under the new title “*Happy Endings*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0380817/> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. Perhaps, this change was made in an attempt to resurrect the film in a different light.



Figure 22. USA and UK posters with different film titles [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0361693/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

We gathered information on 17 film titles from three popular movie Websites: Internet Movie Database (IMDb), RottenTomatoes and YahooMovies as well as an article dedicated to this issue: The Independent (<http://www.independent.co.uk/>). Each case was thoroughly evaluated by checking the number of possibilities that led to the changes in the film title. Not only did we encounter slight spelling differences due to British and American English variations, but also different interpretations that could turn offensive in some instances as it was shown with “*Spooks*” or phrases that mean completely different things in American English versus British English. In France, they substituted complicated words and expressions with straightforward ones. Releasing an American film under another English title for a non-English-speaking country is a recurring practice in France. This peculiar approach to film title adaptation will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III as it raises many questions.

Some titles were changed to avoid confusion with some already famous shows or even worse getting sued for trademark infringement. Donyms, national events, and particular spots that were only locally popular were either introduced or abolished. L. Venuti's considered that the dichotomy between domestication and foreignization was an ideological one. He views these practices as ethical choices that translators have to make [Gile 2009: 251–252]. Distributors and studios predict cultural differentiation and carefully broaden references and locations to appeal to international audiences.

2.3. Film taglines

“A movie tagline is a short text which serves to clarify an idea for, or is designed with a form of, dramatic effect. Many tagline slogans are reiterated phrases associated with the film” [URL: <https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/best-movie-taglines/> (accessed 15.04.2019)].

General considerations for movie taglines:

- a. It can speak directly to the plot of the film
- b. It can speak to the experience a viewer might have watched the film
- c. It will often use puns or turns of phrase [ibid]

In short, a film tagline is a phrase or two that highlights or clarifies what a film is about; it emphasizes a value or trait or helps to distinguish the brand [URL: <https://www.tailorbrands.com/blog/what-are-taglines> (accessed 15.04.2019)]. These are important components of the overall image of the film.

Consider the following example:

Tagline: “Who ya gonna call?”

“*Ghostbusters*” (USA) (Produced and directed by Ivan Reitman, distributed by Columbia Pictures, 1984)

After reading this tagline, Ray Parker Junior's theme tune starts playing in one's head automatically. Equally as probable is that if someone were to shout, "who ya gonna call" in a room full of people, most of them would yell back, **“*Ghostbusters!*”** [URL: <https://mashable.com/2015/05/14/greatest-film-taglines-brandspeak/> (accessed 15.04.2019)].

This phrase is almost, if not equally, as iconic as the famous James Bond catch phrase.

Tagline: “You know the name. You know the number”

“*GoldenEye*” (USA) (Produced by Michael G. Wilson, directed by Martin Campbell, distributed by MGM/UA Distribution Co. and United International Pictures, 1995)

A tagline performs a variety of functions that are essential to propelling a given film on the market. It holds the second place after the film title. In just few words, one can elevate a film above the competition and gain the audience's attention by telling the world what a film is about and what it can provide for the potential viewer.

Nonetheless, some international feature films, like **“*Titanic*”** (USA) (Produced by James Cameron & Jon Landau, directed by James Cameron, distributed by Paramount Pictures North America & 20th Century Fox International, 1997) or **“*La La Land*”** (USA) (Produced by Fred Berger, Jordan Horowitz, Gary Gilbert & Marc Platt, directed by Damien Chazelle, distributed by Lionsgate, 2016), for example, have achieved success without promoting a clear or consistent official tagline. When released overseas, some film taglines are introduced to films that did not have one to begin with.



Figure 23. “*Titanic*” and “*La La Land*” posters without taglines [URL: <https://cineday.orange.fr/actu-cine/oscars-2017-la-la-land-egale-le-record-de-titanic-CNT000000BOnf9.html> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

However, taglines can be a valuable component of any branding strategy. A catchy slogan is particularly effective for upcoming films that require advertisements to spread awareness and inform the prospective audiences about the new film.

Tagline: “In Space, No One Can Hear You Clean”

“*WALL-E*” (USA) (Produced by Jim Morris, directed by Andrew Stanton, distributed by Walt Disney Pictures Motion Pictures, 2008)

This tagline is a funny tribute to the famous tagline of the iconic “*Alien*” movie’s. The horror genre of this film was made obvious by its tagline.

Tagline: “In space no one can hear you scream”

“*Alien*” (USA) (Produced by Gordon Carroll, David Giler & Walter Hill, directed by Ridley Scott, 20th Century Fox, 1979)

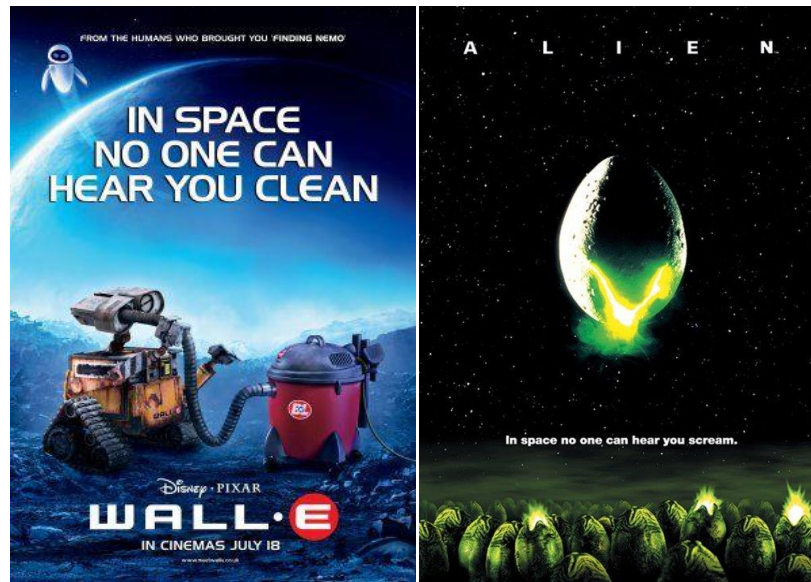


Figure 24. “WALL-E” and “Alien” posters with similar taglines [URL: <https://www.mauvais-genres.com/en/content/114-best-taglines-on-movie-posters> (accessed 15.04.2019)]

This movie tagline is one of the most famous ever created, and a source of inspiration for many movie posters created since then. It would have been imagined by the wife of Phil Gips, who is the co-creator of the Alien US movie poster, with Stephen Frankfurt [ibid].

2.3.1. Different types of taglines

Distributors consider many approaches to come up with a suitable tagline. The final choice depends on the marketing goals and demographic segmentation of the intended audience.

If the film title lacks information judged critical about the film product or its storyline after being translated, for example, then that information could be mentioned in the tagline.

On the other hand, if a film’s purpose is to share a story or some beliefs, then the tagline should focus on the film’s purpose, principles, and ideals in order to connect with the target audience at an emotional level.

The list below includes several tagline types and accompanying examples from famous films:

1. The differentiation tagline

The differentiation tagline is like a slogan that is aimed at making the motion picture stand out from the competition. An example of an effective differentiation tagline is:

Tagline: “Size Does Matter”

“*Godzilla*” (USA) (Produced by Dean Devlin, directed by Roland Emmerich, distributed by TriStar Pictures Worldwide & Toho Japan, 1998) is an American film about an enormous monster hence the tagline.

2. The informational tagline

An informational tagline explains exactly what expected to be in a film. If the title of a film is generic and ambiguous, an informational tagline can be an effective approach as a means to specify what to envision and narrow down the possible events that unfold in a motion picture.

Tagline: “The last place you'd ever expect to find yourself”

“*Moon*” (USA) (Produced by Stuart Fenegan & Trudie Styler, directed by Duncan Jones, distributed by Sony Pictures Classics, 1998)

3. The results-oriented tagline

The results-oriented tagline is one that emphasizes the positive outcome from watching a film.

Tagline: “The weight is over”

“*Kung Fu Panda 3*” (USA) (Produced by Melissa Cobb, directed by Jennifer, Yuh Nelson & Alessandro Carloni, distributed by 20th Century Fox Worldwide, Oriental DreamWorks China & Netflix Japan, 2016)

This 3D computer-animated wuxia comedy film is about a chubby panda, hence the paronomasia (calembour). The correct spelling of the word “wait” was replaced by its homophone “weight” hinting at the main character’s size. When pronounced out loud, there is no difference at all. The film tagline at hand informs the viewer that the new sequel to Kung Fu Panda franchise (2008-2016) is finally out.

4. The value-focused tagline

As it has been mentioned in the beginning of this segment on film taglines, the value-focused tagline helps connect with the potential viewer at a deeper level, based on their emotions, principles, or purposes.

Tagline: “Beauty isn't everything. It's the only thing”

“*The Neon Demon*” (USA) (Produced by Nicolas Winding Refn & Lene Børglum, directed by Nicolas Winding Refn, distributed by Amazon Studios, Broad Green Pictures & Scanbox Entertainment, 2016) is an American psychological horror film about rivalry in the modeling industry. Many people would share the opinion that obsession with beauty has become a mental illness nowadays. Therefore, this tagline is rather a provocative one.

Note that value-focused taglines are effective largely because of the emotions they evoke in their audiences; a value-driven tagline is powerful in that it can turn disinterested customers into avid supporters.

5. The audience-targeted tagline

Some film distribution companies opt for audience-targeted tagline phrases that speak directly to their potential audiences. A tagline that personally refers to its target moviegoers shows whether a film storyline is relevant to them. If audience segmentation is broad, an audience-targeted tagline might be unnecessary as it could even serve to alienate potential customers that might feel excluded. The next example is a film tagline that challenges its audience. It has been proven that challenges ultimately lead to superior performance, proving an urge for fulfillment in people [URL: <https://medium.com/mop-developers/psychology-of-challenges-7dedc6f8a8a5> (accessed 15.04.2019)].

Tagline: “We dare you”

“*Nerve*” (USA) (Produced by Allison Shearmur & Anthony Katagas, directed by Henry Joost & Ariel Schulman, distributed by Lionsgate, 2016)

6. The "brand awareness" tagline

Some a film taglines' primary purpose is to promote brand awareness, such as a sequel's tagline that alludes to previous releases and highlights its brand, which already has an established fan base audience. A brand awareness tagline can achieve this by

directly mentioning the keywords associated with the story. Below is mentioned a superheroes' film tagline. The distributors made sure to disclose that “*Venom*”, which is based on the Marvel Comics character of the same name, is a new superhero as it was unfamiliar to most moviegoers at the time of release in cinema theaters.

Tagline: “The world has enough Superheroes”

“*Venom*” (USA) (Produced by Avi Arad, Matt Tolmach & Amy Pascal, directed by Ruben Fleischer, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2018)

Overall, a film tagline fulfills a number of important functions with an eye toward propelling cinema products on the market. A few common features are distinguished in taglines. They concretize the plot by unveiling the experience of awaiting a prospective viewer. Taglines also incorporate wordplay and turn phrases to distinguish a film in a sea of competitors.

Some taglines are considered iconic, so much so that new movies use them as inspiration for their own in hopes of embracing the same image and fame, thus paying tribute to its successful predecessor.

After a film title has been translated, a part of its significant or latent meaning could be omitted unintentionally due to lexical shortages in the target language, for instance. In this regard, taglines can be a valuable tool for concealing the resulting semantic void.

2.3.2. Film title and tagline parallelism in translation

In this section, we examine 30 memorable taglines from Disney animated movies because they are known for their puns or turns of phrases. We will compare them to their interpretations in Russian, French and Arabic (if available) languages, without disregarding their respective titles, in an effort to reveal the different levels of affinity between the film title and its tagline in the source and target languages. The literal translation of each title and tagline is provided in parentheses.

Most titles of Disney animated movies that are listed below are named after the protagonist, whose name is left unchanged (unadapted) for distribution in countries with distant cultural backgrounds. In recent decades, Disney has made an effort to diversify and broaden its princess cast, responding to criticisms that the brand is too white and casts

women in passive roles. Since the introduction of Jasmine in 1992, four young women of color have been added to the company's official princess lineup: Pocahontas, Moana, Tiana and Mulan [URL: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/05/24/726129132/how-disney-princesses-influence-girls-around-the-world> (accessed 15.04.2019)]. Walt Disney Company has expanded the classical vision of what princess is, which in turn has definitely weighed in their favor as there is something mystical and magical about every imaginary, remote and sometimes exotic location coupled with unordinary fairytale characters from different eras.

“*Brave*” (USA) (Produced by Katherine Sarafian, directed by Mark Andrews & Brenda Chapman, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2012)



Figure 25. Posters of the Disney animated movie “*Brave*” in four languages [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1217209/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“*Brave*” in the USA and internationally / **Tagline:** “Change Your Fate”

“*Rebelle*” in France, Quebec and Belgium (Eng. Rebellious in USA) / **Tagline:** “Changez Votre Destin Le 1^{er} Août” (Eng. Change your destiny August 1st)

«*Храбрая сердцем*» in Russia (Eng. Brave heart) / **Tagline:** «ИЗМЕНИ СВОЮ СУДЬБУ ЛЕТОМ 2012» (Eng. Change your destiny in summer 2012)

“أسطورة مريدا” in Arabic-speaking countries (Eng. the legend of Merida) / **Tagline:** No tagline

The story takes place in the imaginary kingdom of medieval Scotland. Princess Merida, an independent girl who refuses to marry, accidentally turns her mother into a bear after an argument and must find a way to save both her mother and the kingdom without giving up her ideal of life.

The Arabic translation of the title is a descriptive one. Perhaps, it is exactly for this reason that a tagline was deemed excessive. Unlike the original title and its many variants, it involves the name of the protagonist – “Merida” (Transliterated in Arabic letters).

The film title was translated into Russian as “*Храбрая сердцем*” (Eng. brave heart). The distributors in Russian did not fear confusion with another American film that has a very similar title “*Храброе сердце*” (Eng. Braveheart)

The events also take place in Scotland roughly around the same period. The only minor difference between the two titles was due to grammatical declensions in accordance with number and gender. Slight differences were observed at the end of each word.

The taglines of both Russian as well as French releases are consistent with the original one yet they both added the date of the expected release. It is quite strange to introduce the date of release in this or that country as the date passes but the tagline is conserved forever. Russians mentioned an approximate period in the summer of 2012. In contrast with the French, who went as far as to provide the exact date – of August 1st. Could this difference be conditioned by cultural differences of notion of time?

Stereotypically, punctuality is not the strongest aspect of Russians. Russian culture (as well as Latin American and some Mediterranean cultures) is polychronic, which means that people like to have flexible plans [URL: <https://understandrussia.com/time/>

(accessed 15.04.2019)]. The famous American anthropologist Edward Hall described culture as monochronic or fixed time and polychronic or fluid time. The US, UK and most European cultures are monochronic – in these cultures time is perceived as a frame for behavior, deadlines are respected, and punctuality is an important trait [ibid].



Figure 26: Salvador Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory*⁴ [URL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Persistence_of_Memory#/media/File:The_Persistence_of_Memory.jpg (accessed 22.03.2019)]

However, Moscow's Sheremetyevo (SVO), Russia's largest air transport hub and one of the world's biggest airports, is the most punctual departure and arrival point for passengers and aircraft movements, according to international statistics collected by the Air Travel Information Publisher OAG [URL: <http://www.rusaviainsider.com/russia-sheremetyevo-is-worlds-most-punctual-airport/> (accessed 15.04.2019)].

In France, Quebec and Belgium, the title "***Brave***" was changed to "***Rebelle***" (Eng. rebellious) and not for a lack of words. English and French languages have this word in common. It is spelled identically and has the exact semantic properties. In addition, according to the online dictionary Merriam Webster, the term "***Brave***" was borrowed from Middle French, but the full etymology of these words could not be traced to ancient Greek or Latin, as it is of uncertain origin [URL: <https://www.merriam->

⁴ Salvador Dalí's iconic 1931 oil painting on canvas (24.1 x 33 cm), also known as "Profile of Time", exhibited in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York City. Photograph taken in 2004 and released into the public domain.

webster.com/dictionary/brave (accessed 15.04.2019)]. Perhaps the change was due to a registered trademark in one or all the countries that introduced this alternative title, which is inspired by the predominant trait of the character of the heroine.

Regarding trademarks, the Disney film company was sued for copyright infringement. The Breast Cancer Organization's 'Trust Your Journey LLC' claims that Disney distributors illegally used their slogan in the movie "*Frozen II*" (USA) (Produced by Peter Del Vecho, directed by Chris Buck & Jennifer Lee, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019). The slogan 'Trust Your Journey' has been owned by the organization for more than ten years [URL: <https://kinoafisha.ua/news/eto-nash-slogan-na-kinokompaniua-disney-podali-v-sud> (accessed 15.04.2019)].

The film company uses this tagline as an advertisement for the film, printing it on T-shirts, posters, jewelry, and many other items, in turn, which shortens the income of the organization for the fight against breast cancer because they also print their slogan on such merchandise. In its lawsuit, the organization demands that Disney stop using the slogan and transfer part of the profit from the film to them. Disney did not comment on this situation [ibid].

"*Frozen II*" in the USA and internationally / **Tagline:** "Trust Your Journey" (prior to lawsuit)

"*La Reine des neiges 2*" in France, Quebec and Belgium (Eng. snow queen) / **Tagline:** no tagline

«*Холодное сердце 2*» in Russia (Eng. cold heart) / **Tagline:** no tagline

«*ملكة الثلج ٢*» in Arabic-speaking countries (Eng. snow queen) / **Tagline:** no tagline



Figure 27. Posters of the Disney animated movie “*Frozen II*” in four languages [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4520988/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

As one can notice, there are no taglines in any of the languages listed above. This is directly connected to the lawsuits that have not been settled to date. There is not a single poster available online featuring a tagline, not even in the original language. Some popular cinema websites, such as Russian websites, there is a hyphen in place of the tagline in their datasheets. This could be a risk averse scheme. In case Disney is compelled by law to compensate for the organization’s pecuniary losses, the amount in dispute would be a share of the profits made by the film prior to tagline withdrawal.

All titles are numbered as a way to differentiate the new sequel from its previous one, either with Roman, Eastern or Western Arabic decimal digits. There was no literal

translation of the original title upon distribution to other countries. It was translated as “snow queen” (back translation) into French and Arabic. Could this be a simple coincidence?

The “*Snow Queen*” is a well-known classic fairy tale written by Hans Christian Andersen, a popular Danish writer, in 1844 and translated into countless languages. The story centers on the struggle between good and evil. Disney credits the original fairytale as inspiration for its film [URL: https://www.andersen.sdu.dk/vaerk/register/info_e.html?vid=68 (accessed 15.04.2019)]. In 2019, works published in 1923 and prior to this date fell into the public domain according to legislation passed in 1998. [URL: https://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/public-domain/welcome/#expired_copyright (accessed 15.04.2019)]. Therefore, the use of the same title is logical.

In Russia, the distributors went for “cold heart” (back translation), perhaps this alternative title was introduced to distance the new film from the classical fairytale. The original Disney film was released incipiently under a dissimilar title for the same reason.

Many films have multiple taglines. Composing ad copies for posters and trailers is generally the first step in marketing a film and setting strategic directions for the product. The example below is already listed in the previous section, but with only one of its many different taglines. This is a list that includes all the taglines associated with this particular film (according to www.imdb.com):

Example:

“**WALL-E**” (USA) (Produced by Jim Morris, directed by Andrew Stanton, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2008)

Taglines:

“An adventure beyond the Ordinar-E”

“In Space, No One Can Hear You Clean”

“After 700 years of doing what he was built for - he'll discover what he's meant for”

“The newest sensation in waste allocation!”

“He's got a lot of time on his hands”

“From the humans who brought you Finding Nemo and Ratatouille”

[URL: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/taglines?ref=tt_str_y_tg (accessed 15.04.2019)].

“*WALL-E*” in France, Quebec and Belgium

Tagline: “Tu fais quoi ces 700 prochaines années” (Eng. What are you doing during the next 700 years?)

«*ВАЛЛ-И*» in Russia (transcribed in Cyrillic letters)

Tagline: Любовь- дело техники (Eng. Love is a technical matter)

The film title remains the same in both Russian and French. However, the taglines do not match any of the English taglines from the list above. The suggested translations were rather humorous notes. Conceivably, the advertising hook aimed at accommodating a preteen target group.

Although the film under consideration is primarily designed for younger audiences, it carries an important message of awareness. *WALL-E* is the last being on Earth. 700 years earlier, humanity deserted our planet because it was incredibly polluted, leaving this little machine to clean the Earth. The film has earned 4 awards and 16 nominations [URL: http://www.allocine.fr/film/fichefilm_gen_cfilm=123734.html (accessed 15.04.2019)].



Figure 28. Posters of the Disney animated movie “*WALL-E*” in three languages [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

The examples studied above clearly demonstrate that a film title featuring a proper name is usually left unchanged or simply transcribed in various language scripts designed

for Russian or Arabic audiences, for instance. In order to reveal any parallelism between film titles and taglines within the process of translation, we must analyze film titles that are discrepant before all else. Within this framework, we may observe how film taglines and titles occur in parallel by comparing the original language and its corresponding translation. Therefore, the examples listed below do not include film titles featuring proper names. For this purpose, we are no longer studying Disney film titles and taglines but films that have been selected at random and that include various genres and distribution companies.

Table 1. Parallelism of Film Tagline and Title

	Original film tagline	Original film tagline	Original film tagline	Original film tagline
1	Southpaw “Fighters fall. Champions rise”	Левша «Преодолей судьбу»	La Rage au ventre “Son plus grand combat se joue en dehors du ring”	Le Gaucher “La rage au cœur”
2	Shark Tale “Behind every little fish is a great white lie” “A new school's gonna rule...”	Подводная братва «Мальки ответят за базар...»	Gang de requins “Même les petits poissons ont de gros sushis”	Gang de requins “Même les petits poissons ont de gros sushis”
3	Braveheart “Every man dies, not every man really lives” “What kind of man would defy a king?”	Храброе сердце «Все умирают, но не все живут по- настоящему»	Braveheart “Un seul homme pouvait défier le Roi”	Cœur vaillant “Un seul homme pouvait défier le Roi”
4	Knowing “Knowing is Everything...” “What Happens When The Numbers Run Out?”	Знамение «Что будет, когда закончатся числа?»	Prédictions “si vous connaissiez la date de l'apocalypse que feriez vous”	Prédictions “si vous connaissiez la date de l'apocalypse que feriez vous”

5	The Butterfly Effect “Change one thing, Change everything”	Эффект бабочки «Изменишь одно, изменится все»	L'Effet papillon «changer une chose...change tout»	L'Effet papillon «changer une chose...change tout»
6	The Sixth Sense* «Not every gift is a blessing.» «Discover the secret of 'The Sixth Sense'!»	Шестое чувство «Иногда дар – это проклятие»	Sixième Sens « Connaissez-vous son secret ?»	Le Sixième Sens « Il n'y a qu'une obsession, le retrouver. Il n'y a qu'une crainte, lui ressembler»
7	Memento “Some memories are best forgotten”	Помни «Некоторые воспоминания лучше забыть»	Memento “Tatouer pour ne plus oublier”	Memento “Tatouer pour ne plus oublier”
8	Phone Booth “Your life is on the line.” “Hang Up And You Die”	Телефонная будка «Линия жизни на линии огня»	Phone Game “un incroyable killer dont chaque minute est affûtée pour vous coller au fauteuil”	La Cabine “un incroyable killer dont chaque minute est affûtée pour vous coller au fauteuil”
9	Interstellar “Mankind’s next step will be the greatest” “Mankind was born on earth. It was never meant to die here”	Интерстеллар «Следующий шаг человечества станет величайшим»	Interstellar “l'Homme est né sur Terre, rien ne l'oblige à y mourir”	Interstellaire “l'Homme est né sur Terre, rien ne l'oblige à y mourir”
10	Self/less “God created man. Man created immortality.” “Would you take a life to live forever?”	Вне/себя «У бессмертия есть побочные эффекты»	Renaissances “Et vous, que feriez-vous si vous aviez une seconde chance?”	Im/mortel “Et si vous pouviez vivre éternellement?”
11	Inside Out “Meet the little voices inside your head.” “A Major Emotion Picture”	Головоломка «Нет слов, одни эмоции»	Vice-versa “Faites connaissance avec les petites voix qui vous prennent la tête!” “Faites connaissance	Sens dessus dessous “reconnaissez les petites voix à l’intérieure de votre tête”

			avec vos émotions”	
12	The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo “She's Coming”	Девушка с татуировкой дракона «Она приближается»	Millénium : Les Hommes qui n'aimaient pas les femmes No tagline	Millénium : Les Hommes qui n'aimaient pas les femmes No tagline

*“*The Sixth Sense*” introduced two additional taglines alluding to the film’s achievements and performance after distribution. “America's #1 Movie Four Weeks In A Row!” “The #1 Thriller of all time!” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0167404/taglines> (accessed 15.04.2019)].

Detailed list of films listed in Table 1.

1. “*Southpaw*” (USA & China) (Directed by Antoine Fuqua, produced by Todd Black, Jason Blumenthal, Steve Tisch, Peter Riche, Alan Riche, Antoine Fuqua & Jerry Ye, directed by Antoine Fuqua, istributed by The Weinstein Company, 2015)
2. “*Shark Tale*” (USA) (Produced by Bill Damaschke, Janet Healy & Allison Lyon Segan, directed by Vicky Jenson Bibo Bergeron & Rob Letterman, produced by Bill Damaschke, Janet Healy & Allison Lyon Segan, distributed by DreamWorks Pictures, 2004)
3. “*Braveheart*” (USA) (Produced by Mel Gibson, Alan Ladd Jr. & Bruce Davey, directed by Mel Gibson, distributed by Paramount Pictures North America & 20th Century Fox International,1995)
4. “*Knowing*” (USA) (Produced by Alex Proyas, Todd Black, Jason Blumenthal & Steve Tisch, directed by Alex Proyas, distributed by Summit Entertainment, 2009)
5. “*The Butterfly Effect*” (USA) (Produced by Anthony Rhulen, Chris Bender, Ashton Kutcher, JC Spink & A.J. Dix, directed by Eric Bress & J. Mackye Gruber, distributed by New Line Cinema, 2004)
6. “*The Sixth Sense*” (USA) (Produced by Frank Marshall, Kathleen Kennedy & Barry Mendel, directed by M. Night Shyamalan, distributed by Buena Vista Pictures Distribution, 1999)
7. “*Memento*” (USA) (Produced by Suzanne Todd & Jennifer Todd, directed by Christopher Nolan, distributed by Newmarket Films, 2000)

8. *“Phone Booth”* (USA) (Produced by Gil Netter, David Zucker, directed by Joel Schumacher, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2003)
9. *“Interstellar”* (USA & UK) Produced by Emma Thomas, Christopher Nolan & Lynda Obst, directed by Christopher Nolan, distributed by Paramount Pictures North America & Warner Bros. Pictures International, 2014)
10. *“Self/less”* (USA) (Produced by Ram Bergman, James D. Stern & Peter Schlessel, directed by Tarsem Singh, distributed by Focus Features, 2015)
11. *“Inside Out”* (USA) (Produced by Jonas Rivera, directed by Pete Docter, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015)
12. *“The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo”* (USA, UK & Sweden) (Produced by Scott Rudin, Ole Søndberg, Søren Stærmose & Ceán Chaffin, directed by David Fincher, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2011)

Data collection & discussion:

The data contains specific information regarding 12 movies that cover six major genre categories: thriller, romance, action, drama, comedy, and animation. The movies were released during the 1995–2015 period in theaters and on DVD.

Table 1 provides a summary of these data, such as movie titles and taglines that were placed side by side with their respective translations or discrepant interpretations in Russian and French (France and Quebec) to compare and contrast the parallelism in film title and tagline translations.

On average, most American films included in the table have at least three different taglines. The number of taglines was reduced to include only those that somewhat matched the taglines of the same film in Russian and French languages for relevance reasons.

We gathered the information on the 12 movies from four popular movie Websites: IMDb (<https://www.imdb.com>), AlloCiné (<https://www.allocine.fr>), КиноПоиск (<https://www.kinopoisk.ru/>), and IVI (<https://www.ivi.ru/>). These films were selected at random and only films that featured proper names were excluded.

These websites allow visitors to look up the different details of any film. Relevant to our investigation is the reference of all taglines (or slogans on some websites) that are associated with this or that film.

The following table will feature the same films as in **Table 1.** but with a literal translation of its titles and taglines with the purpose to facilitate a comparison of these component parts.

Legend:

The asterisk (*) indicates that the original title was unchanged.

** indicates that the original title was transcribed in Cyrillic scripts.

*** indicates that the film was re-titled in English.

[d] indicates cases in which the title is discrepant.

[t] indicates cases in which the title is translated.

Table 2. Parallelism of Film Tagline and Title (back translation)

	Original film tagline	Original film tagline	Original film tagline	Original film tagline
1	Southpaw “Fighters fall. Champions rise”	The Left handed [t] “Overcome fate”	Rage in the belly [d] “His biggest fight is outside the ring”	The Left handed [t] “The rage in the heart ”
2	Shark Tale “Behind every little fish is a great white lie” “A new school's gonna rule...”	Underwater lads [d] “The fry will be responsible for the deal ...”	Gang of sharks [d] “Even small fish have big sushi”	Gang of sharks [d] “Even small fish have big sushi”
3	Braveheart “Every man dies, not every man really lives” “What kind of man would defy a king?”	Brave Heart [t] “Everyone dies, but not everyone lives for real”	Braveheart* “Only one man could defy the King”	Valiant heart [t] No tagline
4	Knowing “Knowing is Everything...”	The omen [d] “What happens when the	Predictions [d] “If you knew the date of the	Predictions [d] “If you knew the date of the

	“What Happens When The Numbers Run Out?”	numbers run out?”	apocalypse, what would you do?”	apocalypse, what would you do?”
5	The Butterfly Effect “Change one thing, Change everything”	The Butterfly Effect [t] “Change one thing, everything will change”	The Butterfly Effect [t] “To change one thing, changes everything”	The Butterfly Effect [t] “To change one thing, changes everything”
6	The Sixth Sense* “Not every gift is a blessing.” “Discover the secret of 'The Sixth Sense'!”	Sixth Sense [t] “Sometimes a gift is a curse”	The Sixth Sense [t] “Do you know his secret?”	The Sixth Sense [t] “There is only one obsession, to find it. There is only one fear, to resemble him”
7	Memento “Some memories are best forgotten”	Remember [t] “Some memories are best forgotten”	Memento [t] “To tattoo so as not to forget anymore”	Memento [t] “To tattoo so as not to forget anymore”
8	Phone Booth “Your life is on the line.” “Hang Up And You Die”	Phone booth [t] “The line of life on the line of fire”	Phone Game*** “An incredible killer whose every minute is sharpened to stick you to the chair”	The cabin [t] “An incredible killer whose every minute is sharpened to stick you to the chair”
9	Interstellar “Mankind’s next step will be the greatest” “Mankind was born on earth. It was never meant to die here”	Interstellar** “The next step of mankind will be the greatest”	Interstellar* “Men were born on Earth, nothing forces them to die there”	Interstellar [t] “Men were born on Earth, nothing forces them to die there”
10	Self/less “God created man. Man created immortality.” “Would you take a life to live forever?”	Outside/oneself [d] “Immortality has side effects”	Rebirths [d] "And you, what would you do if you had a second chance?"	Im/mortal [d] “What if you could live eternally?”

11	Inside Out “Meet the little voices inside your head.” “A Major Emotion Picture”	Puzzle [d] “No words only emotions”	Vice versa [d] “Get to know the little voices that take your mind!” “Get to know your emotions”	Upside down [d] “Recognize the little voices inside your head”
12	The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo “She's Coming”	The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo [t] “She’s approaching”	Millennium: Men who didn't like women [d] No tagline	Millennium: Men who didn't like women [d] No tagline

The three tables below reflect the numbers of each release separately in order to facilitate their comparison.

Table 3. Numbers of data collected from Table 2 in Russian distribution

	Discrepant title	Translated title	Tagline number
Tagline match	1	2	3
New tagline	3	6	9
No tagline	0	0	0
Title number	4	8	12

Table 4. Numbers of data collected from Table 2 in French distribution

	Discrepant title	Translated title	Tagline number
Tagline match	1	3	4
New tagline	5	2	7
No tagline	1	0	1
Title number	7	5	12

Table 5. Numbers of data collected from Table 2 in Quebecois distribution

	Discrepant title	Translated title	Tagline number
Tagline match	1	2	3
New tagline	3	4	7
No tagline	1	1	2
Title number	5	7	12

The results revealed in the course of the study on film title and tagline parallelism are as follows:

- Approximate results in all three distributions
- Discrepant titles are most likely to adopt a new tagline in all three releases
- Translated or borrowed titles in French and Quebecois releases almost always translate one of the taglines provided in the original language.
- In Russian release, most titles are translated literally; nonetheless, they almost always adapt a new tagline.
- Descriptive titles are less likely to require a tagline at all.
- Even when a French film title translation does not match its Quebecois variant, the taglines are identical or very similar in meaning.

Although common patterns can be observed, it must be noted that, in terms of film title and tagline translation, each and every film distribution case is unique and is approached individually. There are no strict rules that require a translated or borrowed title to stick to one of the taglines from the original distribution, or prohibit the translation of the taglines provided in the original language.

In some countries, this art has appeared relatively recently. However, in Western countries, a considerable part of the budget for the picture is allocated to talented copywriters who make up the slogans for films.

In addition to a marketable title, the success of the whole picture sometimes depends on the film's correct slogan. This phrase is remembered immediately after the film's name. The whole ploy is to choose a slogan that sparks a direct association with this particular film on the viewer's part.

2.4. CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 2

Language is inevitably marked by the sociocultural and historical backgrounds of its native speakers. It is often said that language mirrors culture, the conditions of socio-political, socio-economical, socio-cultural, and everyday life customs, values and traditions of a nation, their worldview, psychology, etc. These concepts might be present in the speech of one community but absent in another. The lack of lexical units to reproduce the same message in a target language is called lacuna. Literal translation of film titles has been proven ineffective by Nord as well as several other scholars and experts in the field. Translating a film title is quite challenging keeping in mind that language and culture are intertwined and the intersection of aesthetic and commercial discourses and ambitions.

When translating an advertising text, such as a film title, it is necessary to consider the ethical and psychological characteristics of the audience and its behavioral stereotypes, which can vary greatly in various settings. Sometimes, the text that makes the inhabitants of a country smile causes bewilderment and even anger in other countries. Film titles are also altered due to already registered brandname copyrights in order to avoid trademark infringement or mere confusion.

The title under which a film is released overseas is the result of collective work. Translators, advertisement, PR companies as well as the distributors are involved in the final decision of film title translation. They must ensure that all semantic and pragmatic particularities as well as any minor nuances, such as language, tonality, expressions, cultural components, slogans, mottos, calembour, associations, and so on and so forth, are under evaluation.

When a film is distributed overseas, it is preferable to retain the original title (borrowing or literal translation), as it has shown effectiveness in the country of origin. Nonetheless, most film titles change significantly when translated from one language to another. A film title can have discrepant interpretations in different languages, and even in the exact same language, in different regions of distribution. In this regard, the original distributors must approve the new title before releasing the motion picture.

On the other hand, film sequels and franchises have proven to be most advantageous on the market under extended titles, descriptive of the new series of events that take place in the new sequel. Audiences have shown a preference for extended titles as opposed to simply numbered ones. A descriptive title shifts the expectations of the already established fan base, namely because the additional information somewhat detaches the new film from the previous sequel.

Films with combined genres that are reflected in the original title brought a problematic factor to the translation of film titles. The decision of the film genre that should be prioritized in the target language must be made primarily with regard to the demographic segmentation of the potential audience to ensure not only a suitable title, but also an advantageous one.

Research has shown that drama and comedy are film genres that may lose interest and value when translated into a language that reflects a distant cultural background. In view of the considered problems of intercultural communication, it is imperative for the international potential to be factored in the process of selecting a quintessential film title as commercial and aesthetic ambitions are at the heart of film title translation.

In French distribution, we have identified three main practices, as well as some unusual tendencies: keeping the original American title, translating the title into French, and paraphrasing or re-titling the title once again in English. Research on the dynamics of these three practices revealed that most American films that are distributed in France are nowadays released under English titles (adapted or unaltered). Distributors in France tend to substitute complicated words or expressions with straightforward ones that are generally based on the core of the film. Each title was roughly studied by checking for a number of reasons for these discrepancies. It is imperative that the selected title be comprehensible and intelligible to the intended audience. The affinity between the title and the cinema product must be ensured. In other words, the film title must have a direct connection with the storyline of the film. Finally, yet importantly, the film title must be appealing and subsequently easily sold.

To achieve a deeper understanding of film title discrepancies, we studied a number of English film titles that have been released under alternative English titles

internationally. We also studied taglines, which are another key component in any film branding. A catchy slogan is particularly effective for upcoming films that require advertisements to spread awareness with the purpose of informing prospective audiences about the new film. We studied film title translation and tagline parallelism and revealed some tendencies. For instance, a translated film title or a borrowed one in French and Quebecois release almost always translates one of the taglines provided in the original language, as opposed to the Russian distribution, where most titles are translated literally but almost always adapt a new tagline. Discrepant titles introduce a new tagline in all three releases.

Although, general tendencies were observed, in terms of film title and tagline translation parallelism, each film is different and must be considered individually. In addition to a marketable title, the success of the whole picture sometimes depends on the film's well-chosen slogan.

Distributors and studios predict cultural differentiation and carefully broaden references and locations with the purpose of appealing to an international audience. As it appears, colloquialism, as well as cultural, national, or historical references are not completely understood by other communities. In some instances, a neutral text can be interpreted as derogatory in a different socio-cultural environment. All semantic and pragmatic particularities as well as any minor nuances of the original and target languages must be evaluated with great attention. In summary, the final choice of a film title is not only dependent on the marketing ambitions of its distributors, but also, to a large extent, on the interpretation and perception of the prospective demographic segmentation of its potential audiences for which the film product is intended because the fate of the whole cinema product is heavily dependent on the reception of its title.

CHAPTER 3. FUNCTIONAL-PRAGMATIC DATA ANALYSIS IN FILM TITLE TRANSLATION

3.1. Film Genre and Its Role on the Choice of Translation Approach

At present, we are dealing with “film genre” or categories of films and how they are reflected in the film title itself and in the choice of translation approach. These include: action, adventure, animation, biography, comedy, crime, documentary, drama, family, fantasy, history, horror, musical, mystery, romance, sci-fi, sport, superhero, thriller, war, Western and other combined genres [URL: <https://www.lemonde.fr/blog/correcteurs/2008/10/23/alors-on-ne-traduit-plus/> (accessed 16.10.19)], e.g., “*Guns Akimbo*” (New Zealand, United Kingdom & Germany) (Produced by Felipe Marino, Joe Neurauder & Tom Hern, directed by Jason Lei Howden, distributed by Madman Entertainment & Altitude Film Distribution, 2020). The cited example is both an action and a film comedy film. One can come across films with other genres combined, for instance, a romantic comedy and the like.

Undoubtedly, as it has been mentioned earlier in chapter one, film titles often clearly present the genre, especially together with the poster or advertising campaign. If a film title is not translated literally for one of the reasons studied in the two previous chapters, the genre of the film in question is prioritized in the choice of a new discrepant yet suitable title for the most part. Nonetheless, a film often belongs in between two genres [ibid].

Do we want to sell the film as a musical rather than as a romance or drama movie? “*La La Land*” (USA) (Produced by Fred Berger, Jordan Horowitz, Gary Gilbert & Marc Platt, directed by Damien Chazelle, distributed by Lionsgate, 2016) is a 2016 American film that has a number of genre affiliations. The many Award-winning film “*La La Land*” received 14 nominations at the 89th Academy Awards and tying records for most nominations by a single film with “*All About Eve*” (USA) (Produced by Darryl F. Zanuck, directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 1950) and “*Titanic*” (USA) (Produced by James Cameron & Jon Landau, directed by James Cameron, distributed by Paramount Pictures & 20th Century Fox, 1997). “*La La Land*” is a romantic musical film as well as a comedy-drama [see: Shoard 2017].

The film title at hand clearly speaks of some linguistic limitations to convey the predominantly musical set of the feature film; therefore, it was merely transcribed in Cyrillic for the Russian audience as «*Ла-Ла Ленд*» which is, for the average Russian, an unintelligible repertoire of sounds peculiarly when presented in Cyrillic letters.

The title was also transliterated in Arabic script for the Arabic-speaking public as “لا لا لاند” but the repeated onomatopieic sounds imitating a singing voice in English bears a completely different meaning in the Arabic language because “لا” (IPA: /la:/) actually means “no”. One could thus understand the title incorrectly as “a forbidden land”.

As for the French-speaking viewers, the French kept the original title unaltered, whereas Quebec provided a new French title that can also have a negative interpretation. The title is literally translated in English as “for the Love of Hollywood”. In English as well as in French, the new title can be misinterpreted as it sounds practically like a commonly used expression in both languages to accompany an urgent request or to express annoyance or surprise: “for the love of God” [URL: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/love> (accessed 06.04.20)].

The semantic particularities of each and every respective language must be taken into consideration because the title translated literally or one that is completely different from the original one as the Quebecois title or even the original title kept as it is, like the Arabic version of the title that was simply transliterated in Arabic letters may have a completely different meaning and undertone in the perception of the target audience. The main reason for this choice of translation strategy was to conserve the main genre affiliation (musical) of the film that is evident from the sound of the original title, but a number of linguistic nuances were clearly neglected.

“*La La Land*” (released by the US in 2016);

«*Ла-Ла Ленд*» in Russia;

“لا لا لاند” in Arabic-speaking countries;

“*La La Land*” in France;

“*Pour l'amour d'Hollywood*” only in Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **For the Love of Hollywood**



Figure 29. Five posters of the romantic comedy musical film “*La La Land*” with different film title interpretations [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3783958/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

The dilemma of which film genre category is to be prioritized in the process of film title translation should be given prominence to provide a suitable film title. Therefore, the primary focus is on the demographic segmentation of the intended audience and their wide range of interests in an effort to ensure an advantageous title that will ideally play a favorable role in the success of the motion picture on the market.

The results of a psychological study show that about 80% of newspaper and magazine readers pay attention only to headlines [Madonish 2014: 2]. In the same order, the choice of a movie for the potential viewer is dependent on the title in the first place and only then to the description of the plot. On average, a consumer takes approximately

1.5–2 seconds to decide whether he or she is interested in the stated topic [Vedineeva 2012: 2–3]. Therefore, the translation of the film’s name goes through the marketing department. The final decision on the name of a motion picture must comply with the principles of advertising; it must be short, catchy, easy to pronounce and remembered [ibid].

Besides a title that resonates with a particular audience, there are countless methods that spark the interest of the prospective audience on a psychological level, i.e. playing on the fear of missing out (FOMO) [URL: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2018/03/29/grab-readers-attention-with-these-13-headline-writing-tips/#5fff439f3a6e> (accessed 06.04.20)]. Getting the target viewers curious and getting them to think, for example: “*Everybody Knows*” (Spain, France, Italy) (Produced by Alexandre Mallet-Guy & Álvaro Longoria, directed by Asghar Farhadi, distributed by Focus Features, 2018).

The title “*Everybody Knows*” raises the question of what is known by everyone? It has an engaging purpose, resulting in one wondering what could possibly be discussed in the film and could he/she perhaps be the only one left out. The title is a brief yet emotionally powerful statement leading to an unsatisfied need-like state that motivates seeking information capable of reducing undesirable states of uncertainty about specific unknowns, thus leaving the curiosity of the recipient unsatisfied unless they watch the feature film in question.

It is absolutely crucial to reproduce the same vision and tonality that is embodied in the original title through the choice of language that is dependent on linguistic context: formal language for documentaries dealing with serious subject matters like science or history, for instance, since the title of a film is a concise statement that is expected to provide insights into the subject matter of a film, namely, what to look forward to from watching a given film. Hence, it is reasonable to expect that the title of a feature film will have an impact on its subsequent market performance.

The results of a large number of studies involving film genre indicate that, on average, action and comedy movies have higher potential on the market, in contrast to dramas [Hofmann 2012: 79–80]. Nonetheless, the revenue prospects of dramas and

comedies may be reduced from an international perspective owing to the effect of cultural void. These two film genres, in particular, lose some of the appeal when the film is released in a country with a distant culture because these cinema products depict specific social and cultural settings present in the original country [Lee 2006: 259-278].

These particularities are mirrored in the title making it problematical to reproduce the same film title in another language. Studios have begun to co-finance and co-produce more international titles because projects that originate in local markets tend to fare better at box offices abroad. Bruce Berman, CEO of Village Roadshow Pictures, summarizes the strategic transformation of the leading producers and distributors in the following manner: ‘Factoring in the international potential of a movie is very much a part of the decision-making process for which movies get made. Five to ten years ago, it was not given as much attention [ibid]. This new concern with international audiences also requires producers to reconsider the combination of creative components during development and production in order to make content more appealing to geographically diverse audiences: Stories that are intended for North American consumers must not necessarily work with international audiences. This phenomenon is discussed under the term ‘cultural discount’ – the diminished value of an imported film due to differences in (narrative) style, relevance, cultural meanings and consumers’ preferences [Vogel 2007: 86] – a pitfall that studios and distributors need to be aware of [see: Mohr & Snyder 2005].

Sood and Drèze [Sood and Drèze 2006: 60], who analyze consumers' psychological reactions to the nature of a sequel's title but do not measure economic success, find that dissimilar sequels with title extensions or descriptive titles, e.g., “*Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man’s Chest*” (USA) (Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, directed by Gore Verbinski, distributed by Buena Vista Pictures, 2006) perform better than those with simply numbered titles, e.g., “*Spider-Man 2*” (USA) (Produced by Laura Ziskin & Avi Arad, directed by Sam Raimi, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2004).

Previously successful franchises may attract more customers than the original screenplay because of the established familiarity or even popularity of the storyline and an already existing fan base [Moon, Bergey & Iacobucci 2010: 108–121]. Hence, they have the advantage of generating larger profits over than immersing counterparts.

A few marketing researchers have examined sequels as brand extensions of an experience product [Yalcinkaya, Goksel & Aktekin, Tevfik: 2014]. Moviegoers tend to view the high quality of the original movie as an indicator of the quality of a sequel because they tend to associate various products of the same brand with product quality [Erdem 1998: 51]. With generous production budgets and heavy advertising based on the original movie's brand, a sequel usually achieves box office success, even if it does not meet the box office levels attained by its prototype movie [Basuroy and Chatterjee 2008: 798–803] [Ravid 2003: 103–117].

Such contradictory numbers are attributable the fact that viewers build on the original movie's success higher expectations for the sequel, which are quite often challenging to meet, consequently leading to dissatisfaction [Anderson 1973: 38–44]. Moviegoers may be less satisfied and less impressed as a result of satiation on experiential attributes a rising from a sequel's lack of novelty and surprise, which results in lower ratings and poor reviews on the viewers' part. Speaking metaphorically, when the punch line is known, humor is less effective. Distancing a sequel somehow from the expectations of the original with title extensions or a descriptive one compensates for it [Sangkil Moon, Paul K. Bergey, & Dawn Iacobucci 2008: 71–82].

3.2. Comparison of American film title discrepancies in French, Russian and Arabic distribution

According to the definition provided by the Cambridge Online Dictionary, a discrepancy is the difference between two things that should be the same [URL: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/fr/dictionnaire/anglais/discrepancy> (accessed 06.04.20)]. In the present passage, we tackle the most frequent cases of film title translation discrepancies (differences between the original title and its various transitions) by comparing the different interpretations of a given English film title into Russian and French. We will take a deeper look at the discrepancies in English language film titles released in France as well as in Quebec, since there are many cases of film title translation discrepancies when distributed in both francophone regions, despite the fact that both territories officially speak the same language, also known as – la langue de Molière.

Words or expressions with no direct equivalent in the target language, e.g., culturally specific terms, sayings and idioms are common reasons for translation discrepancies. Other additional linguistic reasons may include ethical or legal matters, such as already registered trademarks, to avoid any possible confusion with some well-known objects or concepts bearing the same name in the target language culture, or Britishisms and Americanisms that need to be introduced or removed as domestication and foreignization approaches [Venuti 2008: 285]. Let us examine how it works in the following case.

Example:

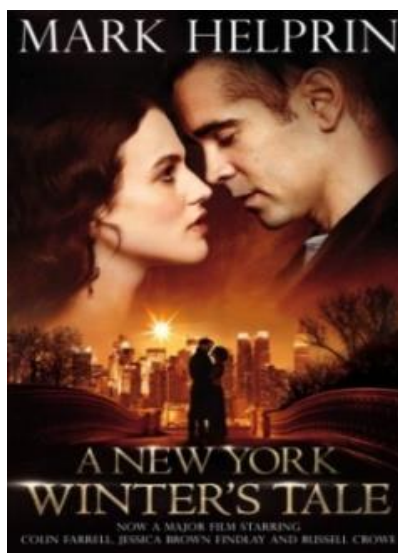
“*Winter’s Tale*” (USA) (Produced by Akiva Goldsman, Marc E. Platt, Michael Tadross & Tony Allard, directed by Akiva Goldsman, distributor Warner Bros. Pictures, 2014)

“*A New York Winter’s tale*” in the UK and Ireland

«*Любовь сквозь время*»⁵ in Russia

“*Un amour d’hiver*»⁶ in France

“*Conte d’hiver*»⁷ In Quebec



⁵ Literal translation: **Love across time**

⁶ Literal translation: **Winter’s Love**

⁷ Literal translation: **Winter’s Tale**



Figure 30. Five posters of the American romantic fantasy film “*Winter's Tale*” based on the 1983 novel by same name with different film title interpretations. [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1837709/> (accessed 16.05.2020)].

In order to highlight the American origin of the film, *New York* was added to the original title upon its release in the UK and Ireland. The practice of retitling marks a growing trend in other EU countries, such as France, which released the film as “*Un amour d'hiver*” [URL: <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/647656/traduction-film-france> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. In Russia, the original title was completely replaced with an outline of the synopsis, literally translated and retitled “*Love across time*”. The protagonist travels in time to find his significant other who was once deceased, whereas in France, the title was only partially changed; the word *tale* was replaced by *love* literally “*Winter's Love*”. Adding “catchy” words to film titles is a commonly used advertising technique [URL: <https://www.sites.univ-rennes2.fr/lea/cftr/veille/2016/02/05/la-traduction-des-titres-de-films/> (accessed 22.03.2019)]. Only in Quebec, the French-speaking part of Canada, was the original film title translated word-for-word into French, literally “*Conte d'hiver*”. See the posters depicted above for comparison.

3.2.1. American film titles in French distribution. France and Quebec Discrepancies

Some films keep the original English title when distributed in France (see first example below) but others are adapted (in English) for an audience that is non-native in English (see second example below)

Example 1:

“*Charlie's Angels*” (USA) (Produced by Doug Belgrad, Elizabeth Cantillon, Max Handelman & Elizabeth Banks, directed by Elizabeth Banks, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2019)

“*Charlie's Angels*” in the France

“*Charlie et ses drôles de dames*” in Quebec*

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Charlie and his odd ladies**

* Note that the title has been translated into French exclusively for distribution in Quebec. This kind of discrepancies will be explained later on in this section.



Figure 31. Three posters of the movie “*Charlie's Angels*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5033998/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Example 2:

“*No Strings Attached*” (USA) (Produced by Jeffrey Clifford, Joe Medjuck & Ivan Reitman, directed by Ivan Reitman, distributed by Paramount Pictures, 2011)

“*Sex Friends*” in France*

“*Ça n’engage à rien*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **It doesn't commit to anything**

* The title under which the film was released in France is more specific to the subject of the film. The words selected are commonly used and easily understood, even for people with poor English language knowledge.



Figure 32. Three posters of the movie “*No Strings Attached*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1411238/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

The process of re-titling is usually due to the fact that French people may not understand or pronounce some English words found in the original title which is, in fact, quite crucial for the promotion of any film [see: Leclerc 2014].

Example:

“*Anger Management*” (USA) (Produced by Jack Giarraputo & Barry Bernandi, directed by Peter Segal, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2003)

“*Self Control*” in France

“*Méchant Malade*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Evil sick**



Figure 33. Three posters of the movie “*Anger Management*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0305224/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Example:

“*Knight and day*” (USA) (Produced by Cathy Konrad, Todd Garner & Steve Pink, directed by James Mangold, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2010)

“*Night and Day*” in France

“*Nuit et Jour*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Night and day**

The Anglo-Saxon paronomasia (or word play) “*Knight and day*” has been disregarded in France, but even more puzzling is the title under which this film was released in Quebec because it seems like it has been translated from the “French” release rather than the original one. In other words, the word “knight” (USA) was changed to “night” (France) and then translated into French “nuit” (Quebec).



Figure 34. Three posters of the movie “*Knight and day*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1013743/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Example:

“*Silver Linings Playbook*” (USA) (Produced by Donna Gigliotti, Bruce Cohen & Jonathan Gordon, directed by David O. Russell, distributed by The Weinstein Company, 2012)

“*Happiness Therapy*” in France

“*Le Bon Côté des choses*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **The good side of things**



Figure 35. Three posters of the movie “*Silver Linings Playbook*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1045658/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Likewise, catchy or even shocking words introduced in the film title in order to attract larger audiences are likewise a notable reason for some film title discrepancies [see: Araujo 2016].

Example:

“*Trainwreck*”* (USA) (Produced by Judd Apatow & Barry Mendel, directed by Judd Apatow, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2015)

“*Crazy Amy*” in France

“*Cas désespéré*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Hopeless case**

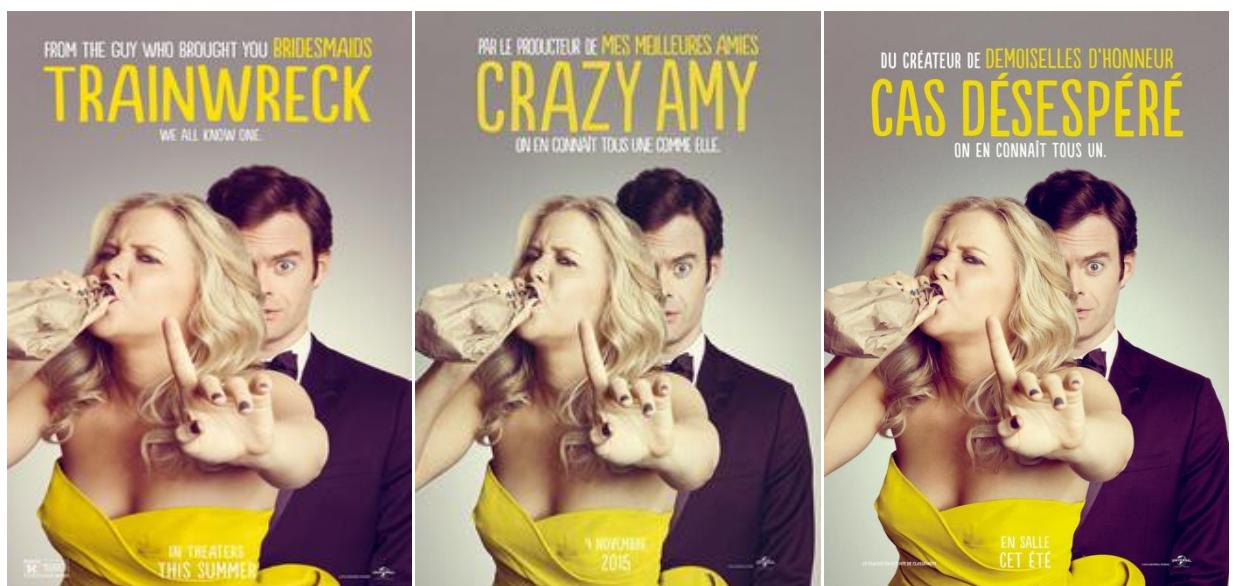


Figure 36. Three posters of the movie “*Trainwreck*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3152624/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

*A byword refers to someone or something that is a complete failure or very bad [URL: <https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/trainwreck> (accessed 06.04.20)].

The expression used for release in Canada “*Cas désespéré*” is the exact equivalent in French.

Example:

“*Youth in Revolt*” (USA) (Produced by David Permut, directed by Miguel Arteta, distributed by Dimension Films, 2009)

“*Be Bad!*” in France

“*Ados en révolte*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Teens in Revolt**



Figure 37. Three posters of the movie “*Youth in Revolt*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0403702/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Example:

“**What’s Your Number?**”* (USA) (Produced by Beau Flynn & Tripp Vinson, directed by Mark Mylod, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2011)

“**[S]ex List**” in France**

“**C’est quoi ton numéro?**” In Quebec***

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **What is your (phone) number?**



Figure 38. Three posters of the movie “*What’s Your Number?*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0770703/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

* The meaning behind the expression “*What’s Your Number?*” is the number of sex partners one has had [URL: <https://thoughtcatalog.com/alexandria-brown/2016/03/the-truth-behind-asking-someone-whats-your-number/> (accessed 06.04.20)].

** The French title simplified the expression and made the topic discussed in the film obvious to the average French consumer of cinema production.

*** The Canadian translation is questionable and quite confusing because in the French language there are two ways to translate the word number: “*numéro*” or “*nombre*”. The concepts of “*numéro*” and “*nombre*” are closely linked. Sometimes, it becomes difficult to differentiate them out of context. When we are asking someone “*C’est quoi ton NUMÉRO?*” The first thing that comes to mind is: **What is your PHONE NUMBER?** On the other hand, the French term “*nombre*” represents a quantity or a value [URL: <https://www.futura-sciences.com/sciences/questions-reponses/mathematiques-difference-chiffre-nombre-numero-6990/> (accessed 06.04.20)].

Therefore, it would have been more logical to translate the title as “*C’est quoi ton NOMBRE?*” instead of “*C’est quoi ton NUMÉRO?*”

However, the question remains: is the translation of film titles into French almost to go by the wayside?

"The French public has become quite familiar with the English language and, as a result, we are translating fewer and fewer titles," says a MK2 distribution executive in the October 2008 issue of Studio magazine [URL: <https://www.lemonde.fr/blog/correcteurs/2008/10/23/alors-on-ne-traduit-plus/> (accessed 16.10.19)].

According to the opinion of a cinema sociologist interviewed in the same magazine, “if the titles of Anglo-Saxon films are translated less and less, it is not that bad. It is a sign of cultural openness, and that France has now absorbed the Anglo-Saxon culture” [ibid].

In the distribution of American films in France, a discernible trend emerges: while the titles are predominantly retained in English, they often deviate from their original titles. This marketing approach is primarily motivated by distributors' profit objectives, which are meticulously aligned with specific demographic segments of potential

audiences. Additionally, this strategy serves to delineate domestic cinema from foreign productions, reflecting the French's strong national pride in their film industry.

Example:

“*Happy Death Day 2U*” (USA) (Produced by Jason Blum, directed by Christopher Landon, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2019)

“*Happy Birthdead 2 You*” in France

“*Bonne fête encore! 2*” In Quebec*

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Happy birthday again**

* The expression “**Bonne fête**” is usually used in Canada and Switzerland instead of the usual French “**Joyeux anniversaire**” which means “**Happy birthday**”.

The French attempted to make the title sound as close as possible to the internationally well-known phrase “**Happy birthday**”. However, if we look closer into the French title, “*Happy Birthdead*” makes absolutely no sense, as birth is the exact opposite of death resulting in an oxymoron compound word construction. As for the original title, the word “**birth**” was substituted by “**death**”, resulting in a clever play-on-word.



Figure 39. Three posters of the movie “*Happy Death Day 2U*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8155288/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

What to do – translate, keep the original English title, or introduce a new one, but still in English, irrespective of the language that is spoken by the target audience? How do they settle upon titles for American movies for release in France, in contrast to those distributed in other francophone regions like Quebec or Belgium, for example? Is the film product itself affected by contemporary trends? Why do they translate some movie titles but not others? For what purpose, bearing in mind that it is intended for non-English speaking audiences? Finally, yet importantly, how is this modern trend further developing? These are some of the issues that we address in the current exploration [URL: <https://urbania.ca/article/francais-se-moquent-titres-de-films-quebecois/> (accessed 06.04.20)].

When translating foreign film titles, not only are the source text elements translated, but they are also adapted to the culture of the target audience, i.e., meaning transition from one language and cultural code to another [Aleksandrova 2018: 107-136].

Example:

“*The Hangover*” (USA) (Produced by Todd Phillips & Daniel Goldberg, directed by Todd Phillips, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2009)

“*Very Bad Trip*” in France

“*Lendemain de veille*” In Quebec*

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Next day after a late night**



Figure 40. Three posters of the movie “*The Hangover*” with different film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1119646/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

* Quebecois informal expression which designates the state of an individual who consumed a very important quantity of alcohol or other substances the day before, is generally characterized by a hangover [URL: <https://www.laparlure.com/terme/etre-lendemain-de-veille/>(accessed 06.04.20)].

The common expression used in France to designate the same state is “gueule de bois”, which is a colloquial, idiomatic expression. The literal translation into English would sound like “wooden face”.

The challenge of translating film titles is also due to the intersection of artistic and commercial discourse. A translator faces a difficult choice between fidelity to the original title, revealing the content of a film, its genre, scriptwriter’s vision, and prioritizing advertising/commercial purposes [see: Anissimov, Borissova, Konson, 2019]. According to C. Nord, insisting on a “faithful” translation of the original title is ineffective [see: Nord 2019]. Besides, in the film industry, there are numerous arguments against literal translation, not only from a linguistic point of view, but also because of some extra-lingual challenges (e.g., trademark infringement and lawsuits).

Hollywood capitalizes on cultural differences. With an industry that has become even more reliant on the importance of the international box office, there is an increased need for films to be clearly branded and shaped for specific audiences. In a similar decision, the intriguingly named action sequel “*Live Free or Die Hard*” became “*Die Hard 4.0*” outside North America because 20th Century Fox (distribution company) feared international audiences would not understand the title’s connection to the New Hampshire state motto. [URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2016/mar/09/why-are-film-titles-still-being-changed-for-international-release> (accessed 06.04.20)].

Example:

“*Live Free or Die Hard*” (USA) (Produced by Michael Fottrell, Directed by Len Wiseman, Distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2007)

“*Die Hard 4.0*” internationally (outside the USA)

“*Die Hard 4 : Retour en enfer*” in France

“*Vis libre ou crève*” In Quebec

Literal translation of the French title: **Return to hell**

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **live free or croak**



Figure 41. Four posters of the movie “*Live Free or Die Hard*” with film title discrepancies in the USA, internationally, France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0337978/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Here and now, we discuss the title decision-making process for American films that are distributed in France in comparison to those distributed in other French-speaking territories such as Quebec by describing some common patterns in order to get to the bottom of why film distributors translate some film titles but not others. We also attempt to observe how this new trend has been evolving over the last three years and how it may or may not affect the film product as a whole.

A film title is a concise statement that provides insight into the genre and premises of a given film. The translator must capture the semantic multidimensionality of the original title in order to convey the same vision and tonality embodied in the original title; thus, any film title must be studied as a complex linguistic unit.

Title translation plays an instrumental role in intercultural communication as it reflects the cultural and sociopolitical situation or shifts in the world [Aleksandrova 2018: 107-136]. Given the fact that this variety of translation could face numerous both intra and extra lingual challenges, e.g., trademark infringements, it could turn into a hot potato for interpreters.

A film title has a major influence on the fate of a film as it can be a potential key to a film's success on the market since it may or may not appeal to the target audience [ibid].

It is also necessary to emphasize that the linguistic and cultural localization of film titles is collective creativity. In this process, with varying degrees of influence on the result, several translators, distribution companies and advertising agencies can occur at once. The final word, as a rule, remains with the latter [ibid]. Nonetheless, the translated title must meet certain imperative criteria. It is essential for the title to be intelligible for the targeted audience, it must have a logical connection with the storyline of the film, and, finally, the title must be marketable [Aubertot 2016].

The central purpose of this segment is to compare the number of American films that have been distributed in France under an English title (original or retitled in English) and those that have been actually translated for the purpose of revealing new tendencies in American film title translation in French distribution.

We then proceed with an empirical approach that involves both quantitative and qualitative research. We begin by observing common patterns in American film titles upon distribution in France in comparison to Quebec. We identified three main practices, which are:

- a.** Keeping the original American title
- b.** Translating the title into French
- c.** Paraphrasing/retitling the title in English

[URL: <https://www.lemonde.fr/blog/correcteurs/2008/10/23/alors-on-ne-traduit-plus/> (accessed 16.10.19)]

Then, we introduce quantitative research by comparing numbers from samples collected from IMDb: Internet Movie Database (<https://www.imdb.com/>) to observe the evolution of this new trend over the last three years.

Common patterns in film titles upon distribution

Primarily, it is necessary to identify the target audience that the film product is intended for children, teenagers, students, elderly people, etc., and thus, the image that one wants to convey, then its genre [ibid]. A film often belongs in between two genres. Do we want to sell it as a comedy? As a drama? Or as a horror movie? These questions should be considered for providing a suitable title. Although some common patterns can be identified, there are always a few exceptions.

a. **We usually translate film titles that are intended for children.**

Example:

“*Lion King*” in the US (Produced by Jon Favreau, Jeffrey Silver & Karen Gilchrist, directed by Jon Favreau, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)

“*Roi Lion*” in Quebec and France

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Lion King**



Figure 42. Three posters of the movie “*Lion King*” with identical film title interpretations in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6105098/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

Exception: “*Toy Story 4*” in the US and France (Produced by Mark Nielsen & Jonas Rivera, directed by Josh Cooley, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019).

“*Jouets 4*” only in Quebec

Unlike France, Quebec is bound by law to translate everything into French; for instance, commercial signs or film posters in our case. This law, referred to as the Charter of the French language (or Bill 101), which was passed in 1977, is aimed at preserving the French language as the official language, since Quebec is a French enclave completely surrounded by Anglophones. [URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20070402153735/http://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/english/charter/preamble.html> (accessed 16.10.19)].

b. **We change or translate titles that are not clear for the target audience**

Example:

“*Five Feet Apart*” in the US (Produced by Cathy Schulman & Justin Baldoni, directed by Justin Baldoni, distributed by CBS Films via Lionsgate, 2019)

“*À deux mètres de toi*” in France

“*À cinq pieds de toi*” in Quebec*

Literal translation of the French title: **At two meters from you**

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **At five feet from you**

*At first glance, the Quebecois title is a literal translation because “*cinq pieds*” is a word-for-word translation of “*Five Feet*”. However, three different measurement systems have been used in Quebec since 1534. Nowadays, young people express distance in meters, but older people do so in feet. [URL: <https://foncier.mern.gouv.qc.ca/documents/conversion/pdf/historique.pdf> (accessed 16.10.19)].



Figure 43. Three posters of the movie “*Five Feet Apart*” with film title discrepancies in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6472976/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

“Most American films of international caliber therefore have two French dubbing, one in France, one in Quebec. The titles serve to differentiate them” explains Martin Bilodeau, editor-in-chief of [Mediafilm.ca](http://www.mediafilm.ca), a renowned Quebec film press agency. [URL: <http://www.slate.fr/story/155672/cinema-titres-films-quebec-francais> (accessed 16.10.19)].

As stated earlier, Quebec is bound by law to translate everything into French, for instance, commercial signs or film posters in our case. This law, referred to as the Charter of the French language (or Bill 101), was passed in 1977 and is aimed at preserving the French language as the official language and to keep it as “the normal and everyday language of work, instruction, communication, commerce and business” of the majority since Quebec is a French enclave completely surrounded by Anglophones. [URL: <https://web.archive.org/web/20070402153735/http://www.oqlf.gouv.qc.ca/english/charter/preamble.html> (accessed 16.10.19)].

In the 1970s, Quebec was in the midst of a linguistic debate. La Belle Province, however, predominantly French speaking, is dominated by English-speaking elites. French speakers watch with concern the English language devouring Montreal, neighborhood by neighborhood. It is in this context that the famous Law 101 was adopted, which confirms French as the official language of Quebec and imposes its exclusive use in public communications [ibid].

c. We translate or adapt the film title in English if it is too hard to pronounce or remember, exception: “*Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*” (US) (produced by Michael Costigan, Nicolas Chartier, Joe Berlinger, Ara Keshishian & Michael Simkin, directed by Joe Berlinger, distributed by Netflix, 2019)

Example:

“*Hustlers*” in the US (Produced by Jessica Elbaum, Will Ferrell, Adam McKay, Elaine Goldsmith-Thomas, Jennifer Lopez & Benny Medina, directed by Lorene Scafaria, distributed by STXfilms, 2019)

“*Queens*” in France

“*Arnaque en talons*” in Quebec

Literal translation of the Quebecois title: **Heel scam**



Figure 44. Three posters of the movie “*Hustlers*” with film title discrepancies in France and Quebec [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5503686/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

The main purpose of releasing films with English titles for a non-English speaking audience is to highlight the American origin of the movie. English can become a selling point when the film is intended for an adolescent audience, hence “*Sexy Dance*” (original title of the franchise 2006-2019: *Step Up*) which, in true French fashion, is a clear illustration of the popular trend of including captivating or startling words to the title [see: Araujo 2016]. An English title may sound more modern and, thus, more appealing to the younger generation, which is the main consumer of cinema production. Regardless of this

new trend, it does not affect in any case the film product itself. As a rule of thumb, the film is always translated by voiceovers or subtitles for release in theatres [ibid].

Data collection and analysis

Now, let us look at this tendency throughout the last three years by comparing three blockbuster lists that have been ranked by IMDb: Internet Movie Database (<https://www.imdb.com/>). We are going to compare the top 25 films from each list with translated, adapted, or those that kept the original title upon distribution in France to demonstrate whether this trend is increasing in popularity. The list for 2019 was ranked by expected worldwide box office.

Table 6. TOP 25 BLOCKBUSTERS OF 2019

Original title	French title
Avengers: Endgame	Avengers: Endgame
The Lion King	<i>Le Roi Lion</i>
Star Wars: Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker	<i>Star Wars, épisode IX : L'Ascension de Skywalker</i>
Spider-Man: Far from Home	Spider-Man: Far from Home
Toy Story 4	Toy Story 4
Frozen 2	<i>La Reine des neiges 2</i>
The Secret Life of Pets 2	<i>Comme des bêtes 2</i>
Captain Marvel	Captain Marvel
Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw	Fast and Furious: Hobbs and Shaw
Pokémon Detective Pikachu (also known as Detective Pikachu)	<i>Pokémon: Détective Pikachu</i>
Aladdin	Aladdin
Jumanji: NextLevel	Jumanji: NextLevel
It ChapterTwo	<i>Ça: Chapitre 2</i>
Godzilla: King of the Monsters	<i>Godzilla II Roi des Monstres</i>

How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World	<i>Dragons 3: Le monde caché</i>
Shazam!	Shazam!
Joker	Joker
The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part	<i>La Grande Aventure Lego</i>
Dumbo	Dumbo
Men in Black: International	Men in Black: International
Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood	Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood
Terminator: Dark Fate	Terminator: Dark Fate
John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum	<i>John Wick Parabellum</i>
Glass	Glass
Gemini Man	Gemini Man

*Titles in italics are translated into French or are discrepant from the original title.

The same applies for **Tables 7** and **8**.

The exact numbers are reflected in Figure 7:

- a. Retitled: 1 out of 25 (4%)
- b. Original title: 15 out of 25 (60%)
- c. Translated titles: 9 out of 25 (36%)

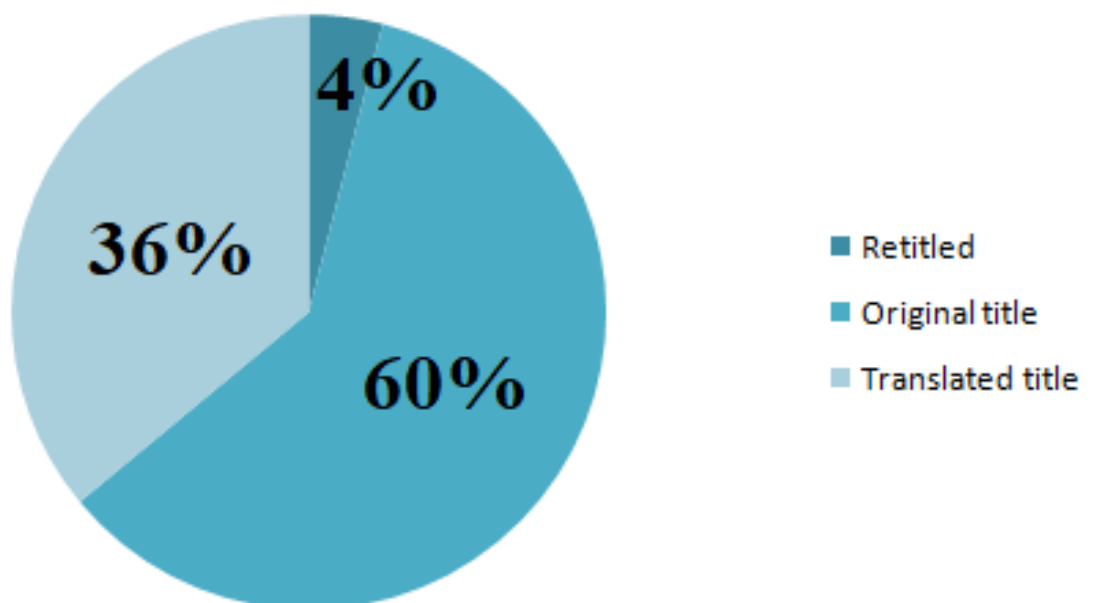


Figure 45. Pie chart reflecting data collected from **Table 6**.

Table 7. TOP 25 BLOCKBUSTERS OF 2018

Original title	French title
Avengers: InfinityWar	Avengers: InfinityWar
Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom	Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom
Mowgli: Legend of the Jungle	<i>Mowgli: la légende de la jungle</i>
Ready Player One	Ready Player One
Black Panther	Black Panther
Ocean's 8	Ocean's 8
Tomb Raider	Tomb Raider
Dark Phoenix	X-Men: Dark Phoenix
Deadpool 2	Deadpool 2
The New Mutants	<i>Les Nouveaux Mutants</i>
Incredibles 2	<i>Les indestructibles 2</i>
Ralph Breaks the Internet	<i>Ralph 2.0</i>
Aquaman	Aquaman
Maze Runner: The Death Cure	<i>Le Labyrinthe: Le remède mortel</i>
Alita: Battle Angel	Alita: Battle Angel
Solo: A Star Wars Story	Solo: A Star Wars Story
Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald	<i>Les animaux fantastiques: Les crimes de Grindelwald</i>
HotelTransylvania 3: Summer Vacation	<i>Hôtel Transylvanie 3: Des vacances monstrueuses</i>
Venom	Venom
Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse	Spider-Man: New Generation
Rampage	<i>Rampage: Hors de contrôle</i>
BohemianRhapsody	BohemianRhapsody
Mission: Impossible – Fallout	Mission: Impossible – Fallout
The Meg	<i>En eaux troubles</i>
A Star Is Born	A Star Is Born

The exact numbers are reflected in Figure 8:

- a. Retitled: 3 out of 25 (12%)
- b. Original title: 14 out of 25 (56%)
- c. Translated titles: 8 out of 25 (32%)

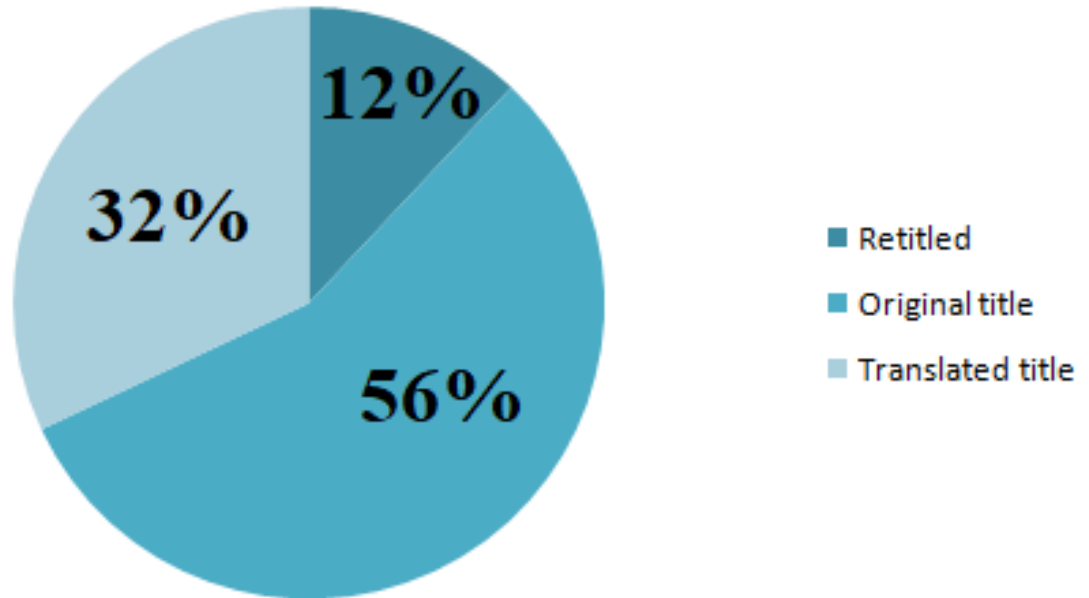


Figure 46. Pie chart reflecting data collected from **Table 7**.

Table 8. TOP 25 BLOCKBUSTERS OF 2017

Original title	French title
Star Wars: Episode VIII – The Last Jedi	<i>Star Wars: Episode VIII - Les derniers Jedi</i>
Beauty and the Beast	<i>La Belle et la Bête</i>
The Fate of the Furious	<i>Fast&Furious 8</i>
Despicable Me 3	<i>Moi, moche et méchant 3</i>
Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle	<i>Jumanji: Bienvenue dans la jungle</i>
Spider-Man: Homecoming	Spider-Man: Homecoming
Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2	<i>Les gardiens de la galaxie Vol. 2</i>
Thor Ragnarok	Thor Ragnarok
Wonder Woman	Wonder Woman
Coco	Coco
Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales	<i>Pirates des Caraïbes: la Vengeance de Salazar</i>

It	Ça
Justice League	Justice League
Logan	Logan
Transformers: The Last Knight	Transformers: The Last Knight
Kong: Skull Island	Kong: Skull Island
The Baby Boss	Baby Boss
Dunkirk	<i>Dunkerque</i>
War for the Planet of the Apes	<i>La planète des singes: Suprématie</i>
The Greatest Showman	The Greatest Showman
Kingsman: The Golden Circle	<i>Kingsman: Le cercle d'or</i>
The Mummy	<i>La momie</i>
Cars 3	Cars 3
Fifty Shades Darker	<i>Cinquante nuances plus sombres</i>

The exact numbers are reflected in Figure 9:

- a. Retitled: 2 out of 25 (8%)
- b. Original title: 10 out of 25 (40%)
- c. Translated titles: 13 out of 25 (52%)

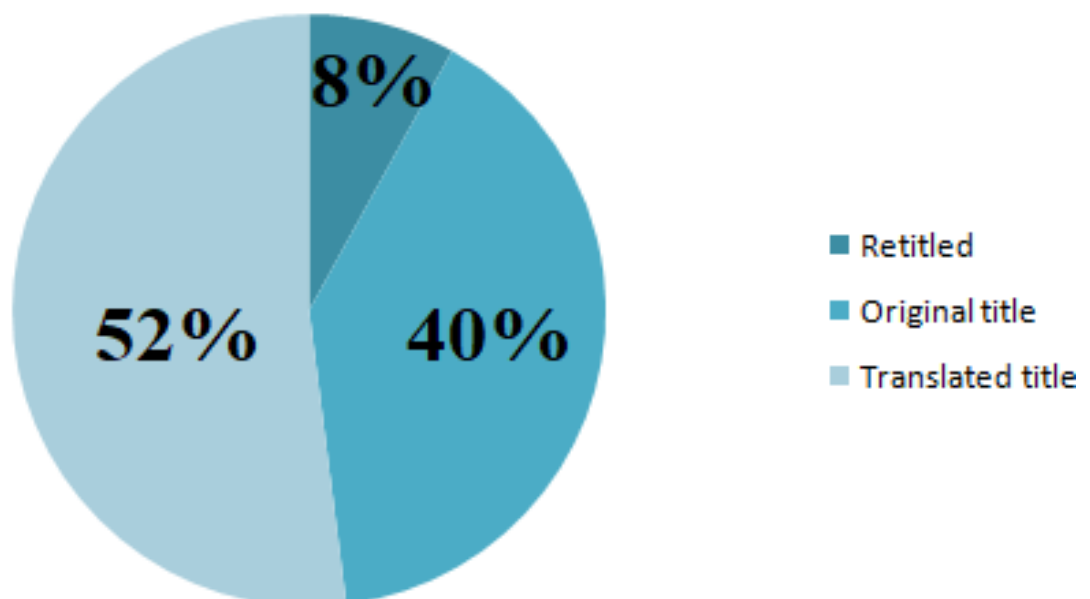


Figure 47. Pie chart reflecting data collected from **Table 8.**

Looking for and finding film titles

The bar chart mirrors a growing preference for keeping the original title or re-titling it in English compared to titles translated for distribution in France based on the data collected from the following resources (release within 2017–2019-time frame):

- Blockbusters released in 2019
[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls040646089/> (accessed 10.10.19)]
- Blockbusters released in 2018
[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls022130977/> (accessed 10.10.19)]
- Blockbusters released in 2017
[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/list/ls062615156/> (accessed 10.10.19)]

When we compare the number of film titles that have not been translated into French in 2017, 2018 and 2019, we notice immediately that it has increased significantly, by 20%.

The number of adapted film titles peaked in 2018 but decreased by half in 2019 (in comparison to 2017). This trend was expected to grow as it allows distributors to incorporate eye-catching words in the title as a marketing strategy to attract more viewers (see: **Figure 10**):

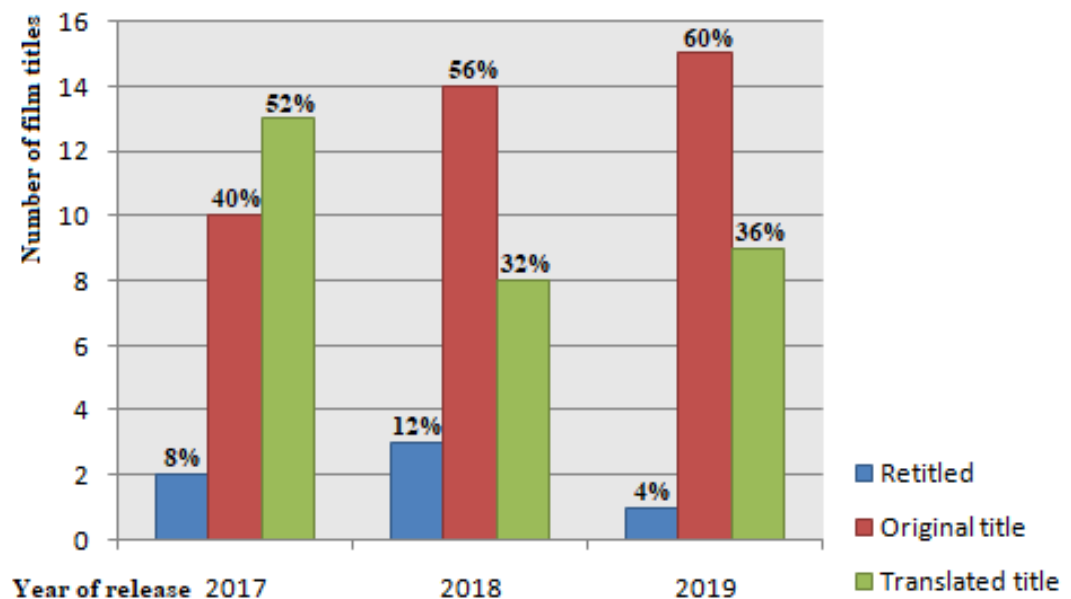


Figure 48. Bar chart combining data collected from 2017 to 2019.

A film title plays a major role in the promotion and further success or failure of any motion picture. The process of finding a title has turned into an art form of its own. Analogous to a person's name, it marks the film permanently and sets the first and last impression. The translated title is equally as important, if not more so, as the original title [URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2016/mar/09/why-are-film-titles-still-being-changed-for-international-release> (accessed 06.04.20)]. Translating a film title is quite challenging given the fact that language and culture are overlap.

A title, translated, adapted, or unchanged must satisfy crucial requirements. It is indispensable for the chosen title to be comprehensible, directly connected to the storyline of the film, and finally yet importantly, it must be appealing and eventually readily sold.

By comparing all three pie charts, we can clearly observe that in 2017, about half of the American film titles were translated into French, but over the last three years, these numbers have changed significantly. Most American films are now released under English titles, reflecting an undeniable growth in this new trend.

The data selected for the current investigation are, alas, not sufficient to present exact statistical data but mark the general dynamics of this relatively modern trend. Nonetheless, through their prism, tendencies and prospects can be easily perceived, and they can serve as a solid basis for further in-depth research on the same topic.

3.2.2. Russian intake on American film title translation.

Common patterns, challenges, and translation strategies:

English-language films of American origin are gaining increasing popularity in Russia. As a book is chosen "by its cover," so the choice of a film is often determined by its title. The name of the film plays an important role in its perception. Thus, the problems of translating film titles for Russian-speaking viewers are of particular interest.

In order to translate a film title, three strategies are used, highlighted by E. Zh. Balzhinimaeva: direct translation, transformation of the name and replacement of the name [Balzhinimaeva 2009]. The first strategy is used if the translation rules for cultural-specific components are not violated, and there is no conflict between form and content, For example:

- **“The Aviator”** – **«Авиатор»** (USA) (Produced by Michael Mann, Sandy Climan, Graham King & Charles Evans Jr., directed by Martin Scorsese, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures North America & Miramax Films International, 2004);

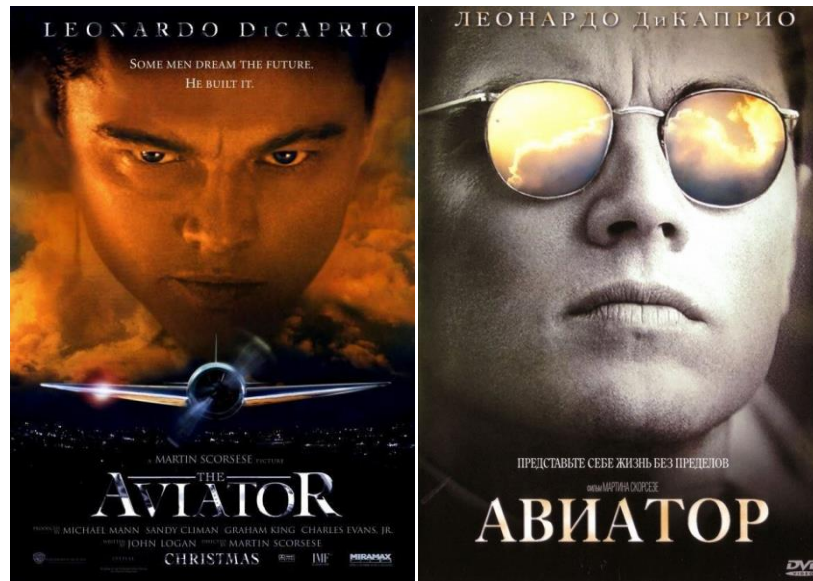


Figure 49. Original and Russian posters of the movie **“The Aviator”**

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0338751/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

- **“The Guardian”** – **«Спасатель»** (USA) (Produced by Armyan Bernstein Lowell D., Blank Zanne & Devine Beau Flynn, directed by Andrew Davis, distributed by Buena Vista Pictures, 2006);



Figure 50. Original and Russian posters of the movie **“The Guardian”**

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0406816/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

- “*A Better Way to Die*” – «*Лучший способ умереть*» (USA) (Directed and produced by Scott Wiper, distributed by Columbia TriStar Home Video, 2000);



Figure 51. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*A Better Way to Die*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0168504/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

- “*Night of the Living Dead 3D*” – “*Ночь живых мертвецов 3D*” (USA) (Directed and produced by Jeff Broadstreet, distributed by Lux Digital Pictures, 2006).

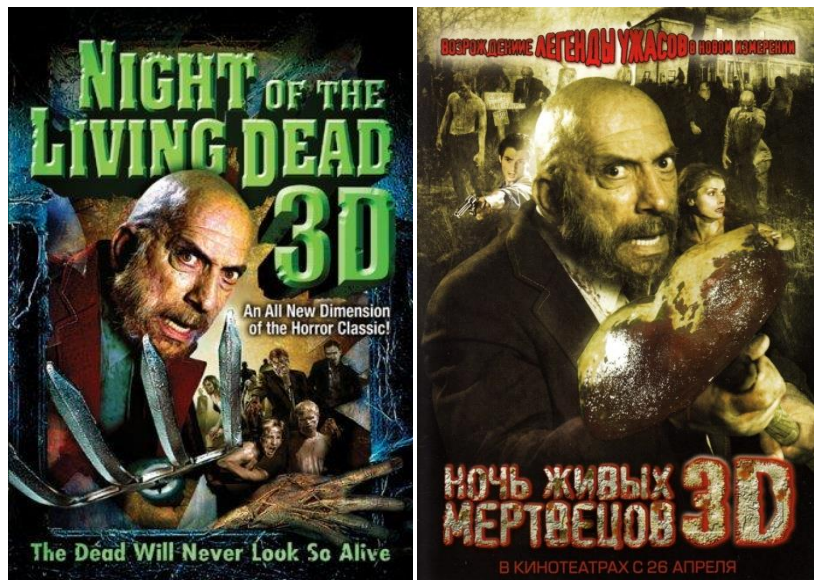


Figure 52. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Night of the Living Dead 3D*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0489244/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

For this strategy, we also include translation techniques, such as transliteration and transcription of proper names that do not have an internal form. Undoubtedly, such proper names

carry a certain cultural component, however, when translated, they become irrelevant. Thus, the following movie titles are transliterated in Cyrillic letters:

- *“Aquaman”* – «*Аквaмeн*» (USA) (Produced by Peter Safran, Rob Cowan, Zack Snyder, Deborah Snyder, directed by James Wan, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2018);



Figure 53. Original and Russian posters of the movie *“Aquaman”*
[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1477834/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

- *“Agent Cody Banks”* – «*Агент Коду Бэнкс*» (USA) (Produced by David C. Glasser, Andreas Klein, Dylan Sellers, Guy Oseary, David Nicksay, directed by Harald Zwart, distributed by MGM Distribution Co., 2003);



Figure 54. Original and Russian posters of the movie *“Agent Cody Banks”* [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0313911/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

- “*Maleficent*” – “*Малефисента*” (USA) (Produced by Joe Roth, directed by Robert Stromberg, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2014).



Figure 55. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Maleficent*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1587310/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

If direct transmission is not possible, translators turn to transformation. Transformation is a change that is mainly an alteration or substitution with which one can transition from original linguistic units to translation linguistic units. The second strategy is to transform the name.

Translation studies recognize that transformations in translations are caused by various factors: lexical, stylistic, functional, and pragmatic. Recently, transformations have been studied from the standpoint of the features of cognitive processes, the specifics of the picture of the world reflected in a work of art [Podymova 2001].

For example, one may notice that many movie titles are translated by expanding cognitive information by replacing or adding vocabulary elements and entering movie keywords compensates for the semantic or genre deficiency of literal translations in the title. I. Milevich [Milevich 2007: 65-71] gives the following examples. The name of the comedy about the youngest son of the devil “*Little Nicky*” (USA) (Produced by Jack Giarraputo & Robert Simonds, directed by Steven Brill, distributed by New Line Cinema,

2000), is translated with the additional lexical elements: «*Ники, дьявол-младший*»⁸. A comedy with a name that reflects only the last name of the protagonist, – “*Bowfinger*” (USA) (Produced by Brian Grazer, directed by Frank Oz, distributed by Universal Pictures, 1999), translated into Russian as «*Клевый парень*»⁹ or «*Безумный Боуфингер*»¹⁰. In addition, such a translation will not allow the identification of this film, for example, with a detective story or biographical drama [Gololobova & Gasparyan 2013].

However, the aim is to make the movie title more interesting and appealing, correlating to the advertising function of movie titles. Separate phrases are incorporated to the original title in order to make the film a great success at the box office. A classic example: “*Hitch*” (USA) (Produced by Will Smith, James Lassiter & Teddy Zee, directed by Andy Tennant, distributed by Columbia Pictures 2005), and its Russian release version «*Правила съёма: Метод Хитча*»¹¹. Essentially, this is a story about a man who taught other men how to deal with women. And arguably, the Russian title sounds more intriguing to a potential audience than simply “*Hitch*”.

There is no direct equivalent for the word “*Hitch*” in Russian. Dictionaries state the meaning of **HITCH** as follows:

Hitch, v.

1. Informal: To travel by asking other people to take you in their car by standing on the side of the road and holding out your thumb or a sign (see: coll. hitchhike);
2. To move a part of your body or something that you are carrying in a high position.

Get hitched – informal: *get married*.

“*Hitch*” (as in expression *get hitched*) is taken for the nickname of the protagonist who coaches other men in wooing the women of their dreams. Therefore, a tagline has been added to the film title for more clarity. In Russian, the original title has been transcribed in Cyrillic letters followed by an outline of the plot and formed a simulation

⁸Originally and literally: *Nicky the Devil Jr.*

⁹Literally: *Cool guy*

¹⁰Literally: *Crazy Bowfinger*

¹¹Literally: *Pickup Rules: Hitch Method*

of literal translation: *Hiring Rules: Hitch Method*→*Правила съема: Метод Хитча*. Such a variation in film title translations once again presents *Hitch* as a person who invented and applied a certain method to represent the main character of the film story. Compare the posters below and see the similarity in the visual representation of the main character by Will Smith.



Figure 56. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Hiring Rules: Hitch Method*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0386588/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

The same strategy applies as well for the translation of the movie title “*Vacancy*” (USA) (Produced by Hal Lieberman, directed by Nimród Antal, distributed by Screen Gems, 2007), – «*Вакансия на жертву*»¹². The genre of this film is a thriller; therefore, such a translation can be considered acceptable, and for the average audience, the word "vacancy" is associated with work.

To sum up the analysis, one can clearly see that translation and retitling are applied in parallel for the purpose of making film titles adapted and, thus, acquired more efficiently by audiences of some languages and cultural traditions.

Additionally, and contrary to other transformations, translators practice using the method of omission, which is rather often meaning a lexical gap, for example, “*The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*” (USA and France) (Produced by Luc Besson, Michael Fitzgerald & Pierre-Ange Le Pogam, directed by Tommy Lee Jones, distributed by Sony

¹² Literally: *A Vacancy for the Victim*

Pictures Classics, 2005) was released as «*Три могилы*»¹³ in Russian cinemas. This is justifiable because the first name *Melquiades* as well as the last name *Estrada* would be quite overwhelming, unreadable, and neglected for the Russian-speaking audience. Whereas, for the English-speaking audience from North America, this is a perfectly acceptable Hispanic name, bearing specific associations. On the other hand, for the Russian audience that is unfamiliar with Western geolocation, it is just a regular foreign name that does not evoke any associations, which only complicates the perception of the name and the film title as well. This example relates to pragmatic adaptation, which is one of the main points of the transformational translation strategy. Note that translation difficulties are caused by certain layers of vocabulary, which include realities, phraseological units, individual and occasional word creation, nonce borrowings, etc.

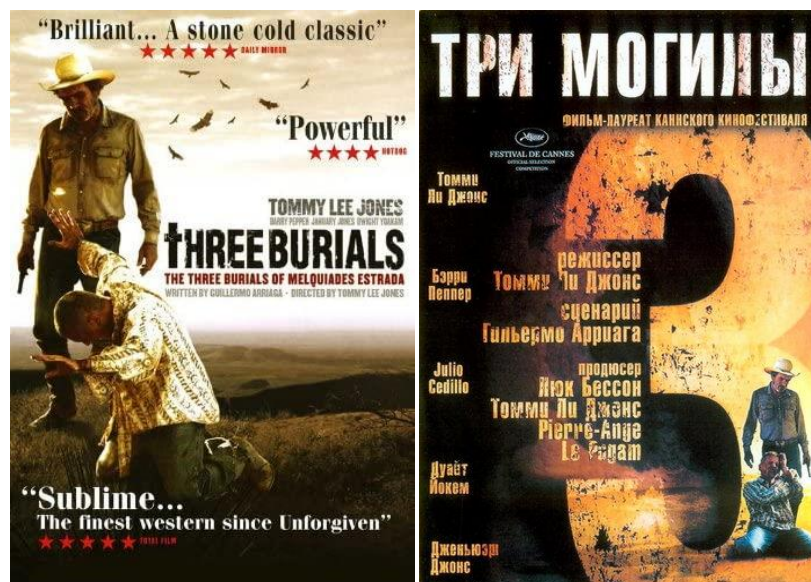


Figure 57. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*The Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0419294/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

The next strategy that Russian translators use is the total replacement of film titles. The total replacement of foreign film titles or retitling is another strategy that is widely used in Russian film naming.

Despite the basic requirements faced by translators, the preservation of semantic and structural co-equivalence, and similar functional communicative properties

¹³ Literally: *Three graves*

[Latyshev 2007: 57]. There are many cases, in which the title of a film is changed completely and beyond recognition. Analysis of the translation of film names shows that several factors affect the choice of a specific translation strategy. We believe that, when choosing a translation strategy, the presence or absence of a culturological component becomes a determining condition [ibid]. Translation of film titles is associated with a few regular specific challenges, and according P.V. Ivanova, they could be combined into three groups [Ivanova 2005: 218]:

1. Challenges of intercultural communication.
2. Challenges related to convenience requirements.
3. Linguistic challenges [ibid].

The first set of challenges is due to differences in cultures, traditions, and perceptions of people from different countries. The second set of challenges imposes restrictions on the form of the translation. When translating any text, the translator uses certain techniques that violate the formal structural similarity of the translation to the original but ensure the achievement of a higher level of conformity to the culture of the language it is translated to (domestication). The third set of challenges is related to the language of the original title and its reflection in the translation. Patterns are dictated by the functional impact on a single unit [Ivanova 2005: 225].

Most often, there are examples related to the first set of challenges, which, in our opinion, can be systematized in the previously discussed category:

– **Realia.** These are phenomena and objects associated only with a certain culture and are difficult to understand for speakers of another language and representatives of a different culture. For example, the name of the film “*The Village*” (USA) (Produced by Sam Mercer, Scott Rudin & M. Night Shyamalan, directed by M. Night Shyamalan, distributed by Buena Vista Pictures, 2004) is translated into Russian as – «*Таинственный лес*»¹⁴. For the word “village” in Russian there is a direct lexical word correspondence to ‘*деревня*’, but for people living in Russia, and quite unlike for the representatives of English-speaking countries, this word causes completely different

¹⁴ Literally: *The Mysterious Forest*.

associations. As to the Russian people, negative associations are possible, such as ‘devastation’, ‘poverty’, ‘remoteness’; and, positive ones are ‘nature’, ‘relaxation’, ‘a small private house’. The original name of the film, in turn, directly indicates the plot and location of the action will take place. Therefore, based on the plot of the film and for the meaning of the original title not to lose its significance and mystery, the translator chose a different name, which is more suitable to reflect the main content of the film – “Mysterious Forest”. Replacement, in fact, retitling in this case is justified and does not diverge from the main idea of the film.



Figure 58. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*The Village*”

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0368447/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

– Titles that include the sense of "tutorial", e.g., *guide* such as of films “*Scouts Guide to The Zombie Apocalypse*” (USA) (Produced by Todd Garner Andy Fickman, directed by Christopher B. Landon, distributed by Paramount Pictures, 2015) and “*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*” (USA) (Produced by Gary Barber, Roger Birnbaum, Jonathan Glickman, Nick Goldsmith & Jay Roach, directed by Garth Jennings, distributed by Buena Vista Pictures, 2005), might evoke an association with a story in which the protagonist is a narrator. Whereas for Russian viewers the title would be more attractive by putting forward its adventure or action genre, or both, translated accordingly:

«*Скауты против зомби*»¹⁵ and «*Автостопом по галактике*»¹⁶, while their titles no longer contain an allusion to the sense of “tutorial”.

– **Transformations** are often related to the peculiarities of the current political situation and censorship in force in the country of distribution. One of the most striking examples is the translation practice of the comedy title of the “*Some Like It Hot*” (USA) (Directed and produced by Billy Wilder, distributed by United Artists, 1959), as «*В джазе только девушки*»¹⁷. Due to sociocultural characteristics and since the film was released in the USSR in 1966, when concern for the level of morality was much higher, the literal translation of the film title «*Некоторые любят погорячее*» wasn’t acceptable due to the moral censorship. It seems the same as to “*Captain America: Civil War*” (USA) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Anthony & Russo Joe Russo, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016), which was released in Russia under the title «*Первый мститель: Противостояние*»¹⁸ due to the current situation in the world, the literal translation like “*Civil War*” would be inadequate. “*Riot*” (USA) (Produced by Kevin McLaughlin & Pal Schoenberger, directed by Kevin McLaughlin, distributed by AKM Movie Distribution Company, 2016) the provocative title of this American film about prison riots caused by a Russian prisoner was translated as «*Джек Стоун*»¹⁹, since in connection with the current political situation – the conflict between Russia, the Ukraine, the United States and the European Union, a film named “*Civil war*” (USA) (Produced by Holly Wiersma, David Mimran & Jordan Schur, Directed by John Curran, distributed by Overture Films & Relativity Media, 2010) can cause negative associations.

¹⁵ Literally: *Scouts vs Zombies*

¹⁶ Literally: *Hitchhike across the galaxy*

¹⁷ Literally: *Only Girls in Jazz*

¹⁸ Literally: *The First Avenger: Confrontation*

¹⁹ Literally: Jack Stone



Figure 59. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Riot*” [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4642044/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

– **Phrasemes or set expressions.** The title of the American feature musical film “*Into the Woods*” (USA) (Produced by Rob Marshall, John DeLuca, Marc Platt & Callum McDougall, directed by Rob Marshall, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2014) was translated into Russian as «*Чем дальше в лес...*»²⁰. This is part of the well-known proverb ‘*Чем дальше в лес – тем больше дров*’. This saying is explained as “the further events progress, the more unexpected difficulties and complications arise” according to electronic source URL: dic.academic.ru [URL: <https://translate.academic.ru/%D1%87%D0%B5%D0%BC%20%D0%B4%D0%B0%D0%BB%D1%8C%D1%88%D0%B5%20%D0%B2%20%D0%BB%D0%B5%D1%81%2C%20%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BC%20%D0%B1%D0%BE%D0%BB%D1%8C%D1%88%D0%B5%20%D0%B4%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B2/ru/en/> (accessed 10.03.20)]. The main characters of the film, each with their own story, go to the forest, where adventures await them. The literal translation «*В лес*»²¹ would hardly have interested or intrigued the Russian audience, but thanks to the associations with their native culture, it’s understandable that the characters are expecting something unusual and interesting in this very forest.

²⁰ Literally: *The Farther Into the Forest*

²¹ Literally: *Into the Forest*



Figure 60. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Into the Woods*”
 [URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2180411/> (accessed 16.05.2020)]

There is an English expression that says ‘*Every cloud has a silver lining*’ meaning that even on the cloudiest day there are gaps among the clouds with sun rays, therefore, one should never feel hopeless because difficult times always lead to better days. Difficult times are often associated with dark clouds that pass overhead and block the sun [URL: <https://www.ecenglish.com/learnenglish/lessons/why-do-we-say-every-cloud-has-a-silver-lining> (accessed: 10.03.20)]. The film title “*Silver Linings Playbook*” (USA) (Produced by Donna Gigliotti, Bruce Cohen & Jonathan Gordon, directed by David O. Russell, distributed by The Weinstein Company, 2012), has got a literal translation as «*Сценарий серебряных просветов*» and renders no specific or metaphorical meaning in Russian. Once again, if one chooses the equivalent translation, the closest thing would be «*Свет в конце тоннеля*»²², which has got a negative connotation in Russian, while the genre of the film is difficult to trace and determine it as a romantic comedy. The film was released in Russia under the title “*Мой парень — псих*”²³, which indicates its comic component, but does not offer a happy ending.

²²Literally: *The Light at the End of the Tunnel*

²³ Literally: *My Boyfriend is Crazy*



Figure 61. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Silver Linings Playbook*”

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1045658/> (accessed: 16.05.2020)]

– **Proper names.** The titles of English-language films often include proper names, but if one conserves or transcribes them literally, it will be practically impossible for Russian viewers to capture the embodied meaning (as a literary device) of this or that film title, so translators usually substitute the proper name with plot elements. For example, the American film released in 2012, has the original name “*Ted*” (USA) (Produced by Scott Stuber, Seth MacFarlane, John Jacobs & Jason Clark, directed by Seth MacFarlane, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2012) – the name of the main character, derived from *Teddy*, referring to *teddy bear*– actually a cultural symbol, does not mean anything to a person with a Russian mentality, but the film was released in Russia under the title «*Третий лишний*»²⁴. While the Russian title «*Третий лишний*» alludes to a classical scenario where the best friend of one or both partners is being annoying and clingy and in some cases getting jealous to the point of questioning the friendship.

²⁴Litarily: *The Third Wheel*.



Figure 62. Original and Russian posters of the movie “*Ted*”

[URL: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1637725/> (accessed: 16.05.2020)]

The title of the film should carry a semantic load since it affects the popularity of the film at the box office and, ultimately, the amount of profit. While adapting the film title, it is important to keep this task; however, it presents a certain difficulty due to the use of historical and sociocultural concepts in movie titles, as well as difficulty in translating lexical units that are inherent in the source language of the original film but absent in the target language. In view of the considered problems of intercultural communication during the process of translation, the choice of translation strategy for conveying the meaning of English film titles cited as illustrations was determined by the peculiarities of perception and associations of Russian viewers.

3.2.3. American film title translation in the Arabic-speaking world

The Arabic-speaking world is roughly speaking divided into two major blocks. The eastern part of the Arab world is known as the Mashriq, and the western part of the Maghreb. Mashriq has English as a second language because of British colonization. The other half (Maghreb) was colonized by the French. Therefore, the American movies that are released in cinema theaters and broadcasted on television using normal antennas are typically the same as those in France. Nonetheless, several Middle Eastern TV channels are free-to-air and provide ideal satellite coverage in this western region. Most middle-

class households have been able to afford satellite dishes and special mandatory devices used to decode incoming signals since the early 2000s, through which many TV programs that broadcasted by these Mashriq channels are viewed all over the Arabsphere. Some of these TV channels are even dedicated to broadcasting modern English-language films (predominantly of American origin), such as MBC2 which is the first free-to-air movie channel in the Arab world that offers a 24-hour non-stop stream of Hollywood movies, from blockbusters to classics and international films [URL: <https://www.mbc.net/channels/mbc2> (accessed: 10.03.20)].

The situation with American film translation into Arabic is quite exceptional. Aside from the language aspect, the economic range is quite disproportional between the two blocks with the major oil-exporting countries of the Mashriq being much wealthier than the Maghreb following the oil boom of the 1970s. For this account, only the wealthy part of the world can contribute to film title translation. However, since English is the second language of the primary target audience from the Arabian Peninsula (Mashriq), it is assumed that potential viewers will understand the content of the film or, for the very least, most of it. Therefore, most foreign films that are distributed and broadcasted on television in these regions are in English. The distributors and prospective viewers are contempt with simply adding Arabic subtitles as a mere “backup” option. The pressing demand for the release of innumerable foreign films in cinema theaters at the earliest dates can also be considered a relevant component in this respect.

Only in the year 2010 did MBC Max, a fairly new Saudi TV channel, provided the ability to watch some English-language movies with Arabic voices, along with watching English-language movies (original English voices) with or without Arabic subtitles [URL: <https://www.mbc.net/channels/mbc-max/grid> (accessed: 10.03.20)].

Whatever, titles of these English-language films are seldom translated. However, there are very few exceptions observed that require an Arabic voiceover of the film itself, as well as a high-quality translation of its title. The common patterns in film titles upon distribution the Arabic-speaking audiences are as follows:

a. **We usually translate film titles that are intended for children.**

In the English-speaking part of the Arabsphere, children start learning English as their second language around the age of 6 in primary school. They may certainly collect a few words from different sources, given the fact that they are in one way or another exposed to the language. Still, the younger audience has yet to acquire the basis of the English language at this stage. Hence, many film animations and cartoons that are intended for younger audiences are translated into Arabic. Therefore, it is essential to identify the demographic segmentation of the target audience.

Example:

“*Inside Out*” (USA) (Produced by Jonas Rivera, directed by Pete Docter, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015)

”قلبا وقلبا“²⁵ in Arabic-speaking countries



Figure 63. Original and Arabic poster of Disney PIXAR animation “*Inside Out*” [URL:

<https://e7na..online/%d9%81%d9%8a%d9%84%d9%85-moana-2016-arabic-%d9%85%d8%af%d8%a8%d9%84%d8%ac/> (accessed: 16.05.2020)]

“*Luck*” (USA & Spain) (Produced by John Lasseter, David Ellison, Dana Goldberg and David Eisenmann, directed by Peggy Holmes, distributed by Apple TV+, 2022)

”حظ“²⁶ in Arabic-speaking countries

²⁵ Translation: Heart and soul

²⁶ Translation: Luck



Figure 64. Original and Arabic posters of the animation “*Luck*” [URL: [فيلم حظ 2022 مدبلج اونلاين \(niimaty.store\)](https://www.niimaty.store/) (accessed: 26.03.2022)]

b. Films that have gained large popularity

There is a very restricted number of modern feature films that have been actually dubbed or translated by voice-over into Arabic. The only films that were translated are those that gained immense interest, such as the American romantic comedy musical film. “*La La Land*” (USA) (Produced by Fred Berger, Jordan Horowitz, Gary Gilbert & Marc Platt, directed by Damien Chazelle, distributed by Lionsgate, 2016).



Figure 65. Original and Arabic poster of the romantic comedy musical film “*La La Land*” [URL: <https://e7na..online/%d9%81%d9%8a%d9%84%d9%85-moana-2016-arabic-%d9%85%d8%af%d8%a8%d9%84%d8%ac/> (accessed: 16.05.2020)]

“*Mrs. Harris goes to Paris*” (United Kingdom, France & Hungary) (Produced by Anthony Fabian, Xavier Marchand & Guillaume Benski, directed by Anthony Fabian, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2022)

²⁷“السيدة هارس تذهب إلى باريس” in Arabic-speaking countries



Figure 66. Original and Arabic posters of the historical comedy drama film

“*Mrs. Harris goes to Paris*” [URL: [مترجم اونلاين Mrs. Harris Goes to Paris 2022 فيلم](https://www.niimaty.store) (niimaty.store) (accessed: 26.03.2023)]

Here is a screenshot of the homepage of a famous Arabic website offering to watch new movies with Arabic subtitles. As one can notice the film titles are not translated as the posters are left unchanged. The scripture at the bottom of each poster follows the pattern: film + year of distribution + name of the film in English + translated + online.

²⁷ Translation: Mrs. Harris goes to Paris

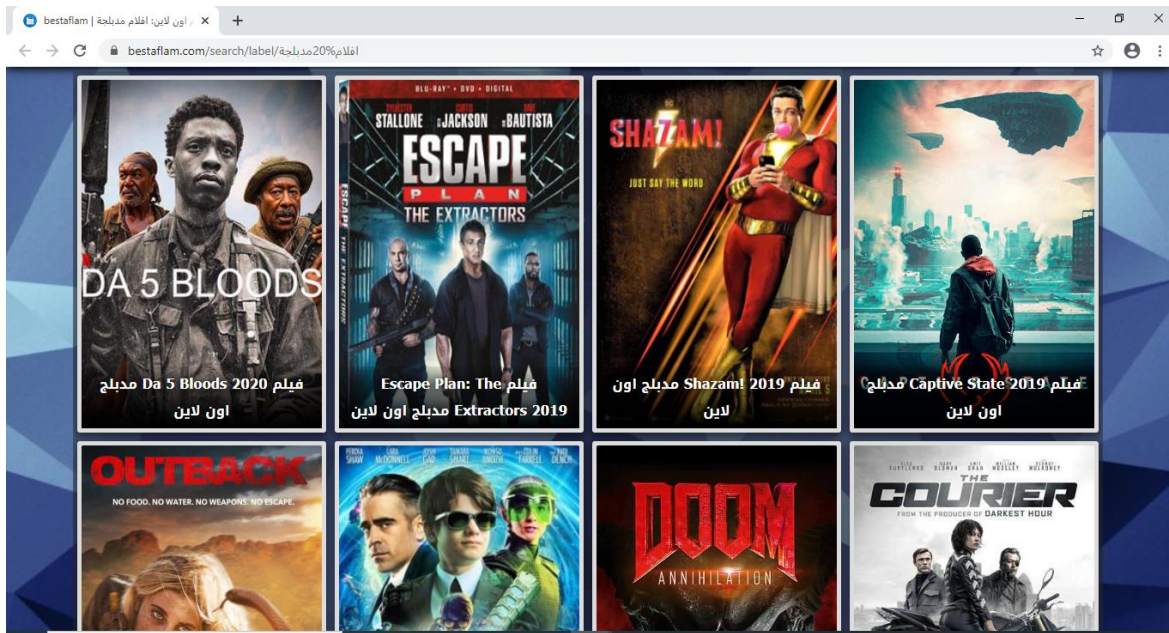


Figure 67. Homepage of a popular Arabic website offering to watch the latest movies online with Arabic subtitles [URL:

<https://www.bestafam.com/search/label/%D8%A7%D9%81%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%85%20%D9%85%D8%AF%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%AC%D8%A9> (accessed: 16.05.2020)]

c. Documentaries

Documentaries are often translated than not for the Arabic-speaking public due to the educational aspect and complex terminology used in some particular fields of science. The translation of documentaries is fundamentally different from the translation of feature films. The basis of a documentary film includes filming of real places, events, people and facts. There is a need for a thorough study of the issue or phenomenon to be discussed, moreover, professional vocabulary, nomenclature, technical terminology professional expressions are not to be disregarded. Without this, it would not be possible to translate the text correctly and convey the documentarian's exact idea to the viewer.

In documentaries, the addressee is necessarily defined as the target audience, which will watch, and most importantly, listen to the material. For example, if the recipient is a teenager, the translator uses speech that is natural for young people; however, if the film is scientific, the translator uses complex terms. Thus, the translator always retains the meaning, manner of transmission and the ideas of the author. Additionally, when translating a documentary film, the text is adapted for the audience of a particular country, considering the general mentality, cultural values, and other features of the perception of information. The same applies to the title of other documentaries.

The following example involves a poster of a National Geographic documentary named “*Wild Cats of India*” (USA) (Produced and directed by Sandesh Kadur, distributed by Felis Creations, 2020). The translated title of which was modestly added underneath the original one.

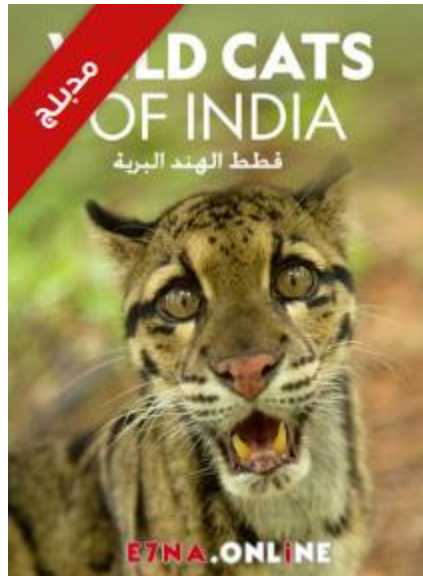


Figure 68. Arabic poster of a National Geographic documentary film “*Wild Cats of India*” [URL: <https://e7na..online/%d9%81%d9%8a%d9%84%d9%85-%d9%82%d8%b7%d8%b7-%d8%a7%d9%84%d9%87%d9%86%d8%af-%d8%a7%d9%84%d8%a8%d8%b1%d9%8a%d8%a9-%d9%85%d8%af%d8%a8%d9%84%d8c/%ac/> (accessed: 16.05.2020)]



Figure 69. Arabic poster of an award-winning documentary film “*The Marshes*”. [URL: <https://m.imdb.com/title/tt27099949/> (accessed: 26.03.2022)]

In the wake of funding constraints of the Maghreb regions of the Arabic-speaking world, only the major oil-exporting countries of the Arabian Gulf can contribute to the translation of modern English-language films. Nonetheless, these eastern countries of the Arabsphere adopted an unconventional approach in this regard. With English as a second language, the overwhelming majority of these films are distributed with Arabic subtitles apart from very restricted instances.

However, if a motion picture is translated into Arabic by voiceover, its title is translated accordingly. Based on the examples provided in the present section as well as in the previous sections, we can note that there are two main approaches to this practice: the title is either translated literally or transliterated/transcribed with Arabic scripts. However, every rule has its exceptions. There are cases that compel a degree of insignificant alteration. In a general sense, they are conditioned by linguo-cultural nuances, for instance the kinship word “aunt” (see example on page 69). In Arabic, the distinction between “aunt” from the maternal or paternal side of the family is expressed through two different words. Therefore, the degree of precision of the target language is inevitable.

3.3. CONCLUSIONS TO CHAPTER 3

The choice of a film is determined by its title, as it reveals its content to the prospective viewer. One could decide whether they are interested in the subject of a film under consideration solely based on its title. On average, a movie-goer spends around two seconds of his/her time deciding whether they are interested in the topic by simply reading the title. Therefore, it is safe to say that the title of a film marks it permanently and sets the first and last impression in the same manner as a person's name.

Many cinephiles or regular movie-goers may wonder “what was the original title of a cinema product?” However, it is sometimes impossible to draw a connection between the original title and its translation. Why and how have these changes been introduced? Who decides what to name a movie for release in this or that country? Are there any tendencies or patterns in film title translations? These are the main questions discussed in this section.

In this chapter, we describe the three main translation procedures in film title translation. In parallel, we also discussed the different challenges that could be combined into three groups: intercultural, technical, and linguistic challenges that involve a number of subtypes. All passages are illustrated with numerous relevant examples for each case.

Main film title translation procedures:

1. Literal translation
2. Transformation (both addition and omission)
3. Replacement (total or partial)

In addition to the above-mentioned translation procedures, we conducted research involving discrepancies not only in the translation of film titles, but also on discrepancies of a given title within the same language, such as French, as many films are distributed in different areas under discrepant titles. We compared the titles of American films that are distributed in France and Quebec (a large French-speaking area in Canada).

We identified three main practices, which are:

1. Keeping the original American title
2. Translating the title into French
3. Paraphrasing / re-titling the title once again in English

The research conducted in the present chapter on the dynamics of these three practices revealed that most American films that are distributed in France are nowadays released under English titles (adapted or unaltered) reflecting an undeniable growth in this new trend. While the titles are predominantly retained in English, they often deviate from their original titles. This marketing approach is primarily motivated by distributors' profit objectives, which are meticulously aligned with specific demographic segments of potential audiences. Additionally, this strategy serves to delineate domestic cinema from foreign productions, reflecting the French's strong national pride in their film industry.

A film title, translated, adapted, or unchanged must satisfy several imperative requirements. The chosen title must be comprehensible and intelligible to the target audience. The affinity between the title and the cinema product must be ensured. In other words, the title of a film must have a direct connection with the storyline of the film. Finally, yet importantly, the film title must be appealing and subsequently marketable.

The combined film genres that are reflected in the original title posed a problematic factor in the translation of film titles. The decision on which genre should be prioritized in the target language must be made primarily with regard to the demographic segmentation of the potential audience to ensure not only a suitable title but also an advantageous one.

Research has shown that drama and comedy are two film genres that may lose interest and value when translated into a language reflecting a distant cultural background. In view of the considered problems of intercultural communication, the choice of the translation approach intended to convey the direct or latent meaning(s) of English film titles that illustrated this chapter, with very a few exceptions, was mainly determined by the peculiarities in perception and associations of prospective viewers. Therefore, it is imperative for the international potential to be factored in the process of selecting a quintessential film title.

On the other hand, film sequels and franchises have proven to be the most advantageous on the market, mainly because of the already established fan base and branding, sc. a familiar film title. The titles given to new sequels are usually simply numbered or extended – descriptive of the new series of events that occur in the new

sequel. Audiences have shown preference for the latter as the provided additional information somewhat detaches the new film from the previous sequel, i.e., shifts their expectations.

The literal translation of film titles has been proven ineffective by Nord and several other scholars and experts in the field. Translating a film title is challenging, keeping in mind that language and culture are closely intertwined, as is the intersection of aesthetic and commercial discourse.

One must capture the semantic multidimensionality of the film title; otherwise, there will be omission of content as in “*Knight and day*” (USA) (Produced by Cathy Konrad, Todd Garner & Steve Pink, directed by James Mangold, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2010) that was translated as “*Night and Day*” into quite a few languages for lack of lexical components that are homophones, as in *Knight* and *Night* in English. Note that most film title translation challenges are caused by certain layers of vocabulary, which include realities, phraseological units, individual and occasional word creation, nonce borrowings, etc.

Translation studies recognize that transformations in translations are caused by various factors: lexical, stylistic, functional, pragmatic. Lately, transformations have been studied from the standpoint of the features of cognitive processes and the specifics of the picture of the world reflected in a work of art (conception or vision of the screenwriter).

The title under which a film is released overseas is the result of collective work. Translators, advertising, PR companies and the distributors are involved in the final decision regarding a new film title. They must ensure that all semantic and pragmatic particularities as well as any minor nuances, such as language, tonality, expressions, cultural components, slogans, mottos, calembour, associations, and so on and so forth, are under evaluation.

When a film title involves a proper name that carries specific cultural connotations understood only by the inhabitants of a specific geographical location, a simple transliteration of the name would be insufficient to transmit the semantic multidimensionality of the original film title. The title of a motion picture has an

intercultural communication component as it plays a noticeable role in transmitting the sociopolitical and cultural situation in the country of origin as well as the target country.

Thus, a film title must be clearly branded and shaped for a specific audience. A translator must look beyond the text of the title itself, deconstruct it on an intra-textual level and decode it on a referential level in order to achieve a thorough understanding of the source text and embark upon creating a translation that recreates the same impact of the original title on the intended audience.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

In concluding this dissertation on film title translation, it is essential to revisit the multifaceted nature of film titles and their critical role in the cinematic landscape. As demonstrated throughout this study, film titles are not merely linguistic labels but complex semiotic entities that fulfill diverse functions: nominative, informative, communicative, advertising, aesthetic, and cultural. These concise verbal representations, typically comprising one or two words, serve as powerful conduits of meaning, encapsulating the essence of a motion picture while navigating the intricate interplay of artistic vision, commercial imperatives, and cultural nuances. The semantic content of film titles often derives from key elements such as characters, settings, or plot points, strategically crafted to evoke interest and shape audience expectations. This research has underscored the challenges and complexities inherent in translating film titles across linguistic and cultural boundaries, highlighting the need for adaptive strategies that extend beyond literal translation to effectively convey the multifunctional nature of these cinematic paratexts to diverse target audiences.

This dissertation explores the crucial significance of film titles within promotional strategies and their influence on market performance. Research indicates that audiences typically spend only two seconds assessing their interest in a film based solely on its title, which serves as a powerful branding tool that can determine the film's commercial success. Much like a person's name, a film title leaves a lasting impression, encapsulating the essence of the cinematic work while evoking emotional responses and cultural associations. Additionally, the title functions metonymically, acting as a shorthand reference to the entire film, thereby carrying symbolic weight that resonates with viewers.

The translation of film titles for diverse audiences demands a sophisticated approach, requiring translators to move beyond superficial analysis to deconstruct titles at an intra-textual level. This involves a comprehensive understanding of the source text to ensure that the translated title retains its original impact. Our research identifies three primary translation strategies: literal translation, transformation (which includes both addition and omission), and substitution (total or partial). The complexities of film title translation can be categorized into linguistic, intercultural, and practical challenges, often

arising from semantic limitations and cultural nuances in the target language. These transformations are influenced by various factors, including lexical and stylistic considerations, and are examined through cognitive processes and the unique worldviews reflected in feature films, emphasizing the importance of structuralism and pragmatics in understanding these dynamics.

Language serves as a profound reflection of the sociocultural and historical contexts of its native speakers, encapsulating the nuances of socio-political, socio-economic, and socio-cultural life, as well as everyday customs, values, traditions, worldviews, and national psychology. This intrinsic connection poses substantial challenges for translation, particularly through the phenomenon of *lacunae*, where certain concepts lack corresponding lexical units in the target language. Scholars like Christiane Nord have illustrated the semantic limitations of literal translation in the context of film titles, highlighting the intricate interplay between language, culture, and the dual imperatives of aesthetic and commercial discourse. Furthermore, translating advertising texts, including film titles, demands a nuanced understanding of the ethical and psychological traits of the target audience, whose behavioral stereotypes can differ markedly across cultural landscapes. Additionally, considerations such as existing trademark registrations may necessitate modifications to film titles to prevent infringement or confusion, further complicating the translation process.

Determining a film title for international markets is a complex process that requires the collaboration of translators, marketing teams, public relations firms, and distributors to meticulously address every semantic and pragmatic aspect, including linguistic tone, expressions, and cultural nuances. Our comparative investigation into the translation of film titles from English into various languages has illuminated both universal challenges and region-specific considerations, revealing the intricate interplay between language, culture, and market dynamics. This analysis underscores how distinct linguistic frameworks and historical contexts shape translation strategies, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication and marketing within the international film industry. While retaining the original title — either through borrowing or literal translation — is often advantageous due to its established resonance in the country of

origin, significant modifications frequently occur during translation. A single film may possess varying title interpretations across different languages or even within the same language across distribution regions, necessitating the approval of original distributors for any new titles prior to international release. This research validates the hypothesis that the intrinsic connection between language and the socio-cultural contexts of its speakers necessitates that film titles be strategically crafted to resonate with both domestic and international audiences, as language serves as a reflection of culture.

In examining film title translation practices, particularly in the context of American films distributed in France, a growing trend emerges where films are released under their original English titles or simplified English titles for better comprehension, reflecting the non-Anglophone nature of the French audience. Three predominant practices have been identified: retaining the original American title, translating it into French, and paraphrasing or re-titling in English. This practice serves to distinguish domestic cinema from foreign productions, underscoring the strong national pride in the French film industry. In contrast, Quebec's legislative efforts, such as Bill 101, aim to preserve the French language amid a predominantly English-speaking environment, leading to notable differences in film distribution practices and title translations influenced by cultural, legal, and linguistic factors.

By comparing American film titles that are translated into French for distribution in France or other European French-speaking countries to those intended for Quebec, one can discern significant differences within the same language influenced by cultural, legal, and linguistic factors, as Quebec's French language has developed uniquely from that of France due to various historical, cultural, and social influences. This evolution is reflected in contemporary aspects like film title translations, showcasing the dynamic nature of the language in a modern context.

The research highlights the prevalent translation strategies employed by Russian translators, which include direct translation, transformation, and complete replacement. Direct translation is preferred when the original title lacks culturally specific elements, while transformation enhances meaning or compensates for inadequacies in literal translations. Complete replacement is common for culturally bound references or

idiomatic expressions, with the political and censorship landscape in Russia significantly impacting translation choices.

In the Arab world, particularly in the Gulf states, the distribution of English-language films often relies on Arabic subtitles, with many titles remaining untranslated due to high English proficiency among audiences. Exceptions are made for children's films and documentaries, which are more likely to be translated. In contrast, the Maghreb region, influenced by historical ties to France, is a consumer of the same cinema products that are intended for France, reflecting economic disparities between regions, where only wealthier segments of the Gulf states can afford to invest in translation efforts into Arabic. The translation landscape in the Arab world exemplifies a complex interplay of cultural, historical, and linguistic factors, necessitating careful strategies to effectively engage local audiences.

To achieve a deeper understanding of film title discrepancies, we examined English film titles released under alternative international English titles, as well as taglines, which are crucial components of film branding. Our analysis revealed tendencies in film title translation and tagline parallelism across markets. For instance, translated or borrowed film titles in French and Québécois releases often incorporate elements from one of the original taglines, whereas Russian distribution tends to favor literal title translations with adapted taglines. Discrepant titles typically introduced new taglines across all three releases. The employment of taglines is entirely disregarded during the distribution of American films in nations where Arabic serves as the primary language, as the translation of titles into Arabic is the sole focus during this process. While general tendencies in film title and tagline translation parallelism were observed, each film requires individual consideration. The success of a film can hinge not only on a marketable title, but also on a well-chosen slogan.

Distributors and studios are increasingly aware of the necessity for cultural differentiation as they expand their references and locations to engage international audiences effectively. This awareness stems from the understanding that colloquialisms and cultural, national, and historical references may not be universally comprehensible, where neutral expressions in one context could be interpreted as derogatory in another

socio-cultural setting. Consequently, a meticulous evaluation of all semantic and pragmatic nuances inherent to both the original and target languages is essential. Moreover, the selection of a film title is not solely influenced by the marketing objectives of distributors; it is significantly shaped by the interpretations and perceptions of the target demographic segments. The title's reception can profoundly impact the overall success of the cinematic product, highlighting the critical importance of strategic and thoughtful title translations within the international film industry. Thus, navigating the complexities of cultural differences and audience expectations is paramount for achieving favorable outcomes in global film distribution.

The following findings could contribute to the **development of standards for cultural adaptation and film marketing** by:

1. Informing decision-making processes for title translation based on linguistic, cultural, and market factors.
2. Providing a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of different translation strategies.
3. Emphasizing the importance of cultural sensitivity and localization in international film marketing.
4. Offering insights into genre-specific adaptation strategies.
5. Highlighting the need for collaborative, interdisciplinary approaches to title adaptation.
6. Demonstrating the value of data-driven analysis in informing translation and marketing decisions.

This research enhances our understanding of the complex interplay between language, culture, and marketing in the international film industry, providing a foundation for more effective and culturally nuanced title adaptation practices.

In conclusion, this comprehensive study on film title translation offers multifaceted contributions to various academic disciplines and professional fields. This research's in-depth analysis of translation strategies across multiple languages elucidates the intricate challenges inherent in rendering culturally loaded texts, thereby advancing the field of Translation Studies. By examining the adaptation of film titles for diverse target

audiences, this study underscores the critical role of the cultural context in translation, enriching our understanding of cross-cultural communication. Exploring film titles as marketing tools and their impact on international branding provides valuable insights for marketing studies and branding. From a linguistic perspective, this research addresses comparative linguistics and semantics, particularly when dealing with lexical gaps between languages. The study's examination of genre expectations and cultural preferences in title translations contributes to Film Studies, an academic discipline that critically examines cinema as an art form and medium, focusing on its theoretical, historical, and cultural contexts rather than on film production techniques). Its analysis of audience expectations demonstrates the application of pragmatic principles. Furthermore, the research touches upon sociolinguistic factors influencing translation choices, employs a mixed-methods approach that serves as a methodological model for Translation Research, and illustrates the complexities of cultural product adaptation relevant to Global Studies, an academic discipline that examines the multifaceted processes of globalization, which interconnect societies worldwide through various means of interaction. The investigation of taglines alongside titles offers practical lessons for Advertising and Copywriting in an international context. This multidisciplinary research not only provides rich, real-world examples for educational purposes across various academic programs, but also significantly enhances our comprehension of the nuanced decision-making processes involved in translating and adapting cultural products for international audiences, underscoring the intricate relationship between language, culture, and marketing in film title translation, thereby serving as a valuable resource for both academic inquiry and professional practice in related fields.

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The 50 Highest Grossing Movies of the 2010s.

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1. “*Avengers: Endgame*” (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Anthony Russo & Joe Russo, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
2. “*Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens*” (US) (Produced by Kathleen Kennedy, J. J. Abrams & Bryan Burk, directed by J. J. Abrams, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015)
3. “*Avengers: Infinity War*” (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Anthony Russo & Joe Russo, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2018)
4. “*Jurassic World*” (US) (Produced by Frank Marshall & Patrick Crowley, directed by Colin Trevorrow, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2015)
5. “*The Lion King*” (US) (Produced by Jon Favreau, Jeffrey Silver & Karen Gilchrist, directed by Jon Favreau, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
6. “*The Avengers*” (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Joss Whedon, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2012)
7. “*Furious 7*” (US) (Produced by Neal H. Moritz, Vin Diesel & Michael Fottrell, directed by James Wan, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2015)
8. “*Avengers: Age of Ultron*” (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Joss Whedon, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2015)
9. “*Black Panther*” (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Ryan Coogler, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2018)
10. “*Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*” (US) (Produced by David Heyman, David Barron & J. K. Rowling, directed by David Yates, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2011)
11. “*Star Wars: Episode VIII - The Last Jedi*” (US) (Produced by Kathleen Kennedy & Ram Bergman, directed by Rian Johnson, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2017)

12. ***“Frozen II”*** (US) (Produced by Peter Del Vecho, directed by Chris Buck & Jennifer Lee, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
13. ***“Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom”*** (US) (Produced by Frank Marshall, Patrick Crowley & Belén Atienza, directed by J. A. Bayona, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2018)
14. ***“Frozen”*** (US) (Produced by Peter Del Vecho, directed by Chris Buck & Jennifer Lee, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2013)
15. ***“Beauty and the Beast”*** (US) (Produced by David Hoberman & Todd Lieberman, directed by Bill Condon, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2017)
16. ***“Incredibles 2”***(US) (Produced by John Walker Nicole & Paradis Grindle, directed by Brad Bird, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2018)
17. ***“The Fate of the Furious”*** (US) (Produced by Neal H. Moritz, Vin Diesel, Michael Fottrell & Chris Morgan, directed by F. Gary Gray, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2017)
18. ***“Iron Man 3”*** (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Shane Black, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2013)
19. ***“Minions”*** (US) (Produced by Chris Meledandri & Janet Healy, directed by Pierre Coffin & Kyle Balda, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2015)
20. ***“Captain America: Civil War”*** (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Anthony Russo & Joe Russo, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016)
21. ***“Aquaman”*** (US) (Produced by Peter Safran, Rob Cowan, Zack Snyder & Deborah Snyder, directed by James Wan, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2018)
22. ***“Spider-Man: Far from Home”*** (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige & Amy Pascal, directed by Jon Watts, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2019)
23. ***“Captain Marvel”*** (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige, directed by Anna Boden & Ryan Fleck, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
24. ***“Transformers: Dark of the Moon”*** (US) (Produced by Lorenzo di Bonaventura, Tom DeSanto, Don Murphy & Ian Bryce, directed by Michael Bay, distributed by Paramount Pictures, 2011)

25. "*Skyfall*" (US) (Produced by Michael G. Wilson & Barbara Broccoli, directed by Sam Mendes, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2012)
26. "*Transformers: Age of Extinction*" (US) (Produced by Lorenzo di Bonaventura, Tom DeSanto, Don Murphy & Ian Bryce, directed by Michael Bay, distributed by Paramount Pictures, 2014)
27. "*The Dark Knight Rises*" (US) (Produced by Emma Thomas, Christopher Nolan & Charles Roven, directed by Christopher Nolan, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2012)
28. "*Toy Story 4*" (US) (Produced by Mark Nielsen & Jonas Rivera, directed by Josh Cooley, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
29. "*Toy Story 3*" (US) (Produced by Darla K. Anderson, directed by Lee Unkrich, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2010)
30. "*Joker*" (US) (Produced by Todd Phillips, Bradley Cooper & Emma Tillinger Koskoff, directed by Todd Phillips, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2019)
31. "*Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*" (US) (Produced by Kathleen Kennedy, Allison Shearmur & Simon Emanuel, directed by Gareth Edwards, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016)
32. "*Aladdin*" (US) (Produced by Dan Lin & Jonathan Eirich, directed by Guy Ritchie, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
33. "*Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*" (US) (Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, directed by Rob Marshall, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2011)
34. "*Despicable Me 3*" (US) (Produced by Chris Meledandri & Janet Healy, directed by Pierre Coffin & Kyle Balda, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2017)
35. "*Finding Dory*" (US) (Produced by Lindsey Collins, directed by Andrew Stanton, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016)
36. "*Alice in Wonderland*" (US) (Produced by Richard D. Zanuck, Joe Roth, Suzanne Todd & Jennifer Todd, directed by Tim Burton, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2010)

37. ***“Zootopia”*** (US) (Produced by Clark Spencer, directed by Byron Howard & Rich Moore, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016)
38. ***“The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey”*** (US) (Produced by Carolynne Cunningham, Zane Weiner, Fran Walsh & Peter Jackson, directed by Peter Jackson, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures 2012)
39. ***“Despicable Me 2”*** (US) (Produced by Chris Meledandri & Janet Healy, directed by Chris Renaud & Pierre Coffin, distributed by Universal Pictures, 2013)
40. ***“The Jungle Book”*** (US) (Produced by Jon Favreau & Brigham Taylor, directed by Jon Favreau, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016)
41. ***“Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle”*** (US) (Produced by Matt Tolmach William Teitler, directed by Jake Kasdan, Distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2017)
42. ***“Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1”*** (US) (Produced by David Heyman, David Barron& J. K. Rowling, directed by David Yates, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2010)
43. ***“The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug”*** (US) (Produced by Carolynne Cunningham, Zane Weiner, Fran Walsh& Peter Jackson, directed by Peter Jackson, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2013)
44. ***“The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies”*** (US) (Produced by Carolynne Cunningham, Zane Weiner, Fran Walsh & Peter Jackson, directed by Peter Jackson, distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures, 2014)
45. ***“Star Wars: Episode IX - The Rise of Skywalker”*** (US) (Produced by Kathleen Kennedy, J. J. Abrams & Michelle Rejwan, directed by J. J. Abrams, distributed by Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2019)
46. ***“Bohemian Rhapsody”*** (US) (Produced by Graham King & Jim Beach, directed by Bryan Singer, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2018)
47. ***“Spectre”*** (US) (Produced by Michael G. Wilson & Barbara Broccoli, directed by Sam Mendes, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2015)
48. ***“Spider-Man: Homecoming”*** (US) (Produced by Kevin Feige & Amy Pascal, directed by Jon Watts, distributed by Sony Pictures Releasing, 2017)

49. ***“Ice Age: Continental Drift”*** (US) (Produced by Lori Forte & John C. Donkin, directed by Steve Martino & Michael Thurmeier, distributed by 20th Century Fox, 2012)

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