Trancreation in the Audiovisual Translation of Films

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Abstract. Despite the high level of development of audiovisual translation technologies, the direct process of translation and adaptation of verbal content is based on the professional competencies of the translator, among which the ability to carry out transcreational translation plays a significant role. The purpose of this paper is to explore the strategy of transcreation in the audiovisual translation of the film into the Russian language. The relevance of the study is determined by the global scale of film-making industry and the key role of strategies aimed at creative transformation of film texts in the process of audiovisual translation. The correlation between the concepts of localization and transcreation is also of high importance in the present paper. The comparative analysis of original version, Russian subtitles and the dubbed Russian version of the film under study has allowed pointing out the opposition "formal equivalence:: dynamic equivalence" and revealing the effectiveness of using the transcreation strategy in the dubbing process.

Keywords: transcreation, localization, audiovisual translation, subtitling, dubbing, dynamic equivalence.

Research area: theoretical, applied, comparative and contrastive linguistics.

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Транскреация в аудиовизуальном переводе кинофильмов

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена исследованию аудиовизуального перевода кинофильмов, который, несмотря на высокий уровень развития технологий, базируется на профессиональных компетенциях переводчика, в частности на умении выполнять транскреационный перевод. Целью данной статьи является исследование стратегии транскреации при аудиовизуальном переводе кинофильма с английского языка на русский. Актуальность настоящего исследования определяется глобальным масштабом киноиндустрии и ключевой ролью стратегий, направленных на творческую трансформацию текстов фильмов в процессе аудиовизуального перевода. Выполнен обзор современных научных трудов, посвященных проблемам аудиовизуального перевода кинофильмов и локализации полисемиотических текстов. Особое внимание в статье уделяется соотношению понятий локализации и транскреации и обоснованию актуальности их использования в рамках транслатологических исследований. В ходе сравнительного анализа оригинальной англоязычной версии, русскоязычных субтитров и дублированной русскоязычной версии исследуемого фильма выявлена оппозиция «формальная эквивалентность:: динамическая эквивалентность». Авторами доказана эффективность использования стратегии транскреации в процессе дублирования киноскрипта. Выявлены переводческие трансформации, посредством которых реализуется указанная стратегия.

Ключевые слова: транскреация, локализация, аудиовизуальный перевод, субтитры, дублирование, динамическая эквивалентность.

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Introduction

To maintain the status of a demanded specialist, a translator must adapt to constant changes in the professional environment associated with the emergence of new communication formats and translation technologies. In the modern realities of digitalization, multimedia and audiovisual genres such as feature films, documentaries, news, TV series, broadcasts, chat shows, user-generated videos, stand-up comedy, edutainment productions, video games and commercials are actively promoted via TV and the Internet (Diaz-Cintas, Massidda, 2019: 256). This contributes to the active development of audiovisual translation (AVT) and the corresponding field of Translation Studies.

AVT has existed since the inception of the film industry, but it flourished with the emergence of the largest companies specializing in localization of various digital products for foreign markets. In these conditions, the issues of teaching future specialists of this global industry the skills of AVT are of particular impor-

tance. According to J. Díaz-Cintas, training for AVT professionals requires the development of appropriate educational programs, an important element of which is represented with the linguacultural dimension along with technological support and market realities (Bogucki, Diaz-Cintas, 2020: 22).

Audiovisual texts are complex polysemiotic formations, the meanings of which are revealed only taking into account a number of extralinguistic components (Bogucki, Diaz-Cintas, 2020). The problems of audiovisual translation of films are investigated in the works (Chaume, 2004; Ortega Sanz, 2011; Paulinyova, Perez, 2018; et al.). A separate area of academic research is devoted to the problem of multilingual ("polyglot") films in audiovisual translation (Diaz-Cintas, 2011; Heiss, 2004; Sanz Ortega, 2009, etc.), associated with emphasizing the social, cultural, personal characteristics of characters speaking two or more languages, as well as the geographical and political characteristics of the country. Localization of movie titles is also of great research interest (Tkacheva, 2019; Balykin, Osokina, 2019; Anisimov et al., 2019).

According to E. Perego and A. Pacinotti, the translation strategies used to create local versions, remakes and screen translations are not properly investigated yet (Perego, Pacinotti, 2020). Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to explore the strategy of transcreation in the audiovisual translation of the film Cruella (2021) into the Russian language which currently serves as a means of communication not only in Russia, but to some extent as an intermediary language for representatives of other cultures. From this point of view, special attention should be paid to the multilingual transfer of linguacultural markers in the Russian subtexts presented in the form of video translations. For example, in the Slovak cultural space this practice is not the first indirect attempt to broadcast a foreign film using translation techniques and strategies, as evidenced by the Czech-Slovak parallels that arose after the division of the former Czechoslovakia. Based on the adaptation of the Russian translation (for example, some serial feature films of foreign origin, especially from the Spanish language, such as Izaura),

foreign film projects were broadcast on television in Slovakia in the 1990s. Since Russian and Slovak are genetically related Slavic languages, the issue of transferring the content of this kind of artistic production is interesting both from the linguistic and translatological viewpoint

Achievement of the research purpose also requires studying the concept of 'transcreation' in the Language Service Industry, in particular, the role of this process in creating localized versions of films, as well as conducting a translatological analysis of the original English version of the film under study, its Russian subtitles and a dubbed Russian version. The Slovak translation of this film is found so far only in amateur renderings, which are usually created before the cinema production is officially localized by a film company. The relevance of the study is determined by the global scale of filmmaking industry and the key role of strategies aimed at creative transformation of film texts in the process of audiovisual translation.

**Audiovisual Translation
in the Localization Industry**

The introduction of the term 'localization' in the 1980s was associated with the technological revolution and the extension of American companies' scope to the global level. A detailed description of the Localization Industry formed by the 1990s is represented in many studies focusing primarily on the technical aspects of localization process (Pym, 2010; O'Hagan, 2006; Shaler, 2009; Sandrini, 2008; Austermuhl, Mirwald, 2010; et al.). The accurate definition of the localization industry is provided by M. O'Hagan: "It is a business sector that enables the globalization of goods and services by overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers" (O'Hagan, 2006: 39). The localization industry involves all participants of a multistage process – from developers of basic programs to users of finished localized products.

As A. Achkasov points out, the development of computer-aided translation (CAT) technologies, such as translation memory programs, machine translation, spell checking, electronic glossaries, etc. with the aim to optimize the localization process, makes it possible

to trace localization's impact on the tasks and roles of translators through technological factors of production, processing and distribution of texts (Achkasov, 2016: 568). In this regard, translators who are involved in projects for the localization of digital products must, in addition to their main task, perform a number of additional operations: preparing terminological databases, updating translation memory programs, working with source and final files, post-editing machine translations, etc.

Initially, the scope of localization tasks was limited to "computer-to-computer translation" (Van der Meer, 1995), gradually expanding and including new objects (video games, websites, mobile applications, movies), for many of which the verbal component is one of the key in the overall structure of the product. Since 2005, the American consulting company Common Sense Advisory has been publishing annual ratings of the leading language service providers, and as of 2021, the top 5 positions are occupied by RWS Holdings, TransPerfect, Lionbridge, LanguageLine Solutions, Keyword Studios (The Largest Language Service Providers, 2021). The localization services provided by these companies include Software and App Localization, Website Localization, Multimedia Localization, Training materials / eLearning, Subtitles Localization, Document Localization. For example, Lionbridge company offers full-service video translation, localization and transcreation including transcription, subtitling, voiceover, dubbing and other services (Lionbridge).

Despite the fact that the term 'localization' has been used for decades, the issue of its correlation with the concept of translation is still one of the most controversial in the academic community. According to localization industry experts, who emphasize the marketing and interdisciplinary nature of this phenomenon, translation is an integral element of this process, along with technical expertise, the work of managers, programmers, engineers, designers, marketers, lawyers, editors and other professionals. It should be noted that the cooperative model of the translator's activity, emphasizing the need for cooperation with specialists in other fields of knowledge, was proposed by the

translator J. Holz-Mänttäri as early as in 1980s (Holz-Mänttäri, 1990). As an example of the implementation of this model, the researcher points to the process of translating the manuals to electrical devices, carried out by solving the problem of combining verbal and graphic elements in terms of pragmatics and taking into account mandatory national and legislative requirements.

The important role of the verbal component in the general structure of any object of localization determines the active interest of translators in this concept. Localization is the translation of a new era using cutting-edge technology (Mullamaa, Nunez Pineiro, 2006: 60), and E. Pym raises the issue of recognizing the phenomenon as the latest paradigm of translation studies, the main provisions of which give an idea of the scale of changes in translation practices in the context of the economic globalization of society (Pym, 2014: 182). Possibility of using this concept in relation to various genres and models of translation activity leads to the emergence of numerous translatological definitions of localization. For example, in the "Recommendations for Translators, Customers and Editors" approved by the Russian Union of Translators, localization refers to an additional type of translator's activities and is interpreted as adaptation aimed at achieving pragmatic equivalence of the translated text (Duplensky, 2015).

Recent studies have shown a tendency to use the concept of localization in relation to texts of various discourses, suggesting a new perspective of linguistic analysis and contributing to the formation of new communication models. In particular, localization of multimedia, defined as "translation and adaptation of the original version of a multimedia product for a foreign target audience" (MICE & MORE), is in great demand today all over the world. This process, which is based on audiovisual translation, includes a number of steps, the first ones of which are "converting an audiovisual work into print, or creating a script, as well as translation and transcreation of this script, including dialogues, comments, subtitles and other verbal elements, into the language of the target audience taking into

account the audiovisual context" (MICE & MORE). Modern translation of films is also carried out in compliance with localization standards and assumes a creative approach to linguacultural adaptation. The article "How to glocalize a movie blockbuster: Less broccoli, more explosions" provides numerous examples of the localization of brands, characters, and even entire movie scenes, which is ensured, among other things, with the help of a different language use (Frecklington, Matta, 2017).

Los Angeles headquartered SDI Media is considered to be the largest media localization company in the world with its offices in 37 countries (How Rapid Growth in 2018 Transformed Media Localization). As for the Russian scale, there are 7 key dubbing studios in Russia, and according to the Slator Language Service Provider Index 2020, RuFilms company is the best one in the Specialized Companies category in terms of growth rates (RuFilms). The list of completed projects presented on the company's website includes films and series produced by such corporations as XXth Century Fox, Paramount Pictures, Netflix, and others, which indicates a rich experience in the field of film localization. In 2012, the RuFilms company founded the School of Audiovisual Translation, the first educational organization in Russia (School of Audiovisual Translation).

Transcreation of film scripts

For the first time the term 'transcreation' (with the meaning "creative translation") was used in 1957 by the Indian linguist P. Lal to refer to his own "not entirely correct" translations of classical Indian works into English (Lal, 1957). This term like the concept of localization, came into use in the English-speaking professional community of market professional in the 1990s, and as defined by "A Translator's Thoughts" website, transcreation is a process of text translation, involving the obligatory transfer of cultural elements and emotions (A Translator's Thoughts). After analyzing a number of definitions of transcreation posted on the websites of the largest providers of this service (Branded Translations, TransPerfect, Tag, Hogarth World Wide, Alpha CRC, Text-Minded), D. Pedersen noted that despite some

differences, they all focus on the cultural / local importance and commercial value of a brand / product, and also emphasize the need to complement the translation with creative ways of cultural adaptation (Pedersen, 2014: 62). The modern interpretation of the term is offered by E. Novikova: "transcreation is a translation strategy, which implies the addition of the actual translation as a linguacultural transfer by the creative transformation of source text into translated text, or the creative "processing" of the translated text" (Novikova, 2018).

The active use of the term "transcreation" by language service providers is explained by the desire to emphasize the more target-oriented nature of their activities in comparison with traditional translation agencies. The article "Translation, machine translation and transcreation, or Where incorrect translations come from" posted on the website of PROMT, one of the world leaders in the development of linguistic IT solutions, underlines that transcreation is one of the translator's tasks in which computer technologies cannot replace human translators (PROMT). The suggested efficiency of transcretion is also emphasized by "replacing the traditional calculation of the cost of translation by a number of printed characters/index pages by hourly rates" (A Translator's Thoughts).

Despite the high level of development of audiovisual translation technologies, the direct process of translation and adaptation of verbal content is based on the professional competencies of the translator, among which the ability to carry out transcreational translation takes a significant place, as well as "the choice of the necessary translation strategy, taking into account temporal, spatial, cultural and other constraints" (Bogucki, 2004: 72). In this regard, it is important to note the fact that translators work on written texts (scripts), which implies the possibility of using various types of pragmatic adaptation, depending on the communicative task. Mention should be made of the statement of A. Burchardt et al. that "dubbing scripts are always written for later voicing" (Burchardt et al., 2016: 5). Ł. Bogucki also emphasizes this peculiarity, specifying that "in the case of translation for

dubbing, the original text is translated 'written word' for 'written word', and in the case of subtitles, it is merely transformed to a different written form" (Bogucki, 2004: 83). As an exception, it is worth mentioning the work of the famous Russian simultaneous interpreter Leonid Volodarsky who "always dubbed foreign films of the 1990s never looking into the scripts" (Ukhova, 2014: 162).

Creativity is one of the most important qualities of a translator, necessary in dealing with various texts, excluding the procedures of a unifying nature based on the work with strictly established glossaries. E. Perego and A. Pacinotti point out that the level of creativity and transformation in the process of audiovisual translation is so high that the term 'transcreation' seems to be the most appropriate in this context (Perego, Pacinotti, 2020: 37). Besides, a new trend in AVT research, which will be relevant in the future, suggests "shift of attention from textual niceties of the original production to the potential effects of translation on viewers" (Bogucki, Diaz-Cintas, 2020: 28), which requires transformations of the audiovisual text.

The correlation between the concepts of localization and transcreation is an important point of the present paper. It should be noted that "the transcreation process creates localized content for international markets" (The phenomenon of transcreation in localization). Thus, transcreation is a translator's strategy which is used to create localized texts. In most cases, these terms can be used as synonyms. For example, E. Malenova investigates transcreation in the subtitling practice using the example of British TV series "Line of Duty", produced by BBC (Malenova, 2017). M. Tulnova explores the ways of localizing the texts of the globally spreading mass cinematic culture on the example of the animated film Shrek (Tulnova, 2013). Despite the similar object and subject of these studies, the authors use different terms in the same sense.

Both concepts relate primarily to the field of marketing, in which, as you know, localization refers to a wide range of procedures, one of which is translation, and transcreation is used to refer the translation process. This ensures

the importance of both concepts. The exceptions are cases of pragmatic adaptation that do not imply transfer of emotions and the use of a creative approach: localization of software, sections of websites containing practical information, instructions, etc. In these cases, the use of the concept of transcreation seems inappropriate.

Research results

The research material is represented with the original English script of the feature film Cruella (2021) produced by Walt Disney Pictures, as well as Russian subtitles and a script of the Russian dubbed version. The relevance of the study on the material of this film is determined by the leading position of The United States productions in the Russian box office. It should be noted that in Russia, television is almost always local-language only and dubbing is predominantly required for movies (Dubbing and Voice Over Market in Russia).

Table 1 shows the original phrases, their translations in the form of subtitles, and localized phrases of the dubbed version, created using the strategy of transcreation.

Despite the need to take into account the audiovisual context when dubbing of films, there are no significant transformations in the translation of the film under study, such as omission or addition of utterances. Nevertheless, the transformations revealed indicate a high degree of adaptation of individual words and phrases.This corresponds to the opinion of experts of the Russian digital cinema film lab Mosfilm Master working with leading film distributors and direct clients such as Disney that "localization is a key to high-quality dubbing" (Mosfilm Master).

As can be seen from Table 1, the original and dubbed phrases in examples 1–10 have different semantic units. When translating the phrase *"I need you to lie down"* in example 1, the Russian folk proverb *"Тише воды, ниже травы"* is used, which makes speech local. Examples 2–10 lack distinct linguacultural markers, but the use of meaning extension technique also creates colloquial style of the Russian language. This feature is most vividly manifested in such phrases as *"Везёт же", "Поживее",*

Table 1. Original English-language phrases, Russian-language subtitles
and localized Russian-language phrases (Cruella 2021)

	Original	Subtitling	Dubbing
1	I need you to lie down	Ты должна затаиться	Тише воды, ниже травы
2	Oh fuck	О чёрт	Везёт же
3	All must be perfect	Всё должно быть идеально	Держим планку. За работу.
4	I couldn't agree more	Абсолютно согласна	Читаешь мои мысли
5	Keep up, Estella	Не отставай, Эстелла	Поживее
6	Made the corset pencil-thin	Сделай корсаж очень тонким	Талия должна быть осиная
7	No, she did not	Не может быть	Да неужели?
8	Hey!	Эй!	Ку-ку
9	Look at that one!	Посмотрите на нее!	Ишь ты какая здоровая!
10	Really?	Серьёзно?	Да ладно.
11	The Black and White Ball. That's where we'll do it.	Мы провернём это на Чёрно-белом балу	Чёрно-белый бал. Там и свистнем
12	Normal is the cruelest insult	Нормальный – самое жестокое оскорбление	Будь как все – вот самое страшное оскорбление
13	The store hasn't been re-furnished since the Blitz	Интерьер не обновляли со времён войны	Интерьеры не обновлялись со времён бомбёжки Лондона
14	You know what? They said it was an emergency	Знаешь что? Сказали, это срочно	Ничего не знаю. Сказано было, срочно
15	I'm a bit nervous	Я чуток нервничаю	А нервишки-то шалят
16	First two of you to arrive will get very badly hurt	Первые двое очень сильно пострадают	Первым двум смельчакам, что мне попадутся, мало не покажется
17	I would say badly	Я бы сказал, плохо	Плохи дела
18	It's not just rats, but mice, lizards, racoons – mess of different kinds	Тут не только крысы, ещё мыши, ящерицы, еноты – целая куча разных видов	Тут не только крысы, ещё мыши, ящерицы, еноты – зверинец тут, будь здоров
19	I want to make trouble	Хочу причинять неприятности	Хочу победокурить
20	I'm still young	Я ещё молода	Какие мои годы

"Да неужели?", "Ишь ты какая здоровая!", "Да ладно".

In examples 11–20, there is a partial preservation of the original semantic units. In example 11, instead of the stylistically neutral English-language expression *"That's where we'll do it"*, the colloquial expression *"Там и свистнем"* is used. As shown in example 13, the historical culture-specific word *"the Blitz"* is translated using the explication technique. This word denotes the British bombardment during the period from September 7, 1940 to May 10, 1941. In the dubbed version, this word is translated as *"бомбёжка Лондона"*. In example 14, the interrogative form *"You know what?"* is conveyed in the affirmative *"Ничего не знаю"*. This expression is often used by native speakers to emphasize the correctness of their own beliefs and intentions. Such colloquialisms as *"нервишки шалят", "мало не покажется", "Плохи дела", "зверинец тут, будь здоров", "победокурить", "Какие мои годы"* in examples 15–20 also ensure localization of the dubbed version.

Russian subtitles were included in the translatological analysis with the aim to point out the opposition "formal equivalence:: dynamic equivalence" and to reveal the effec-

tiveness of using the transcreation strategy in the dubbed version. Despite the undoubted adequacy of the translation of subtitles (see column 2), against their background, the coloring of live Russian speech created with the help of the creative approach in the dubbed version is obvious.

Conclusion

Summarizing the above, the use of the transcreation strategy in the audiovisual film translation contributes to the creation of localized versions for target markets. This strategy assumes domination of creative approach over the fidelity to the source text. Within the framework of this study, it has been found that in the process of translating a film script of the dubbed version, the use of the transcreation strategy involves the partial or complete substitution of semantic units through application of the technique of meaning extension and explication. The analysis of Russian-language subtitles along with dubbed version makes it possible to compare the translation aimed at creating a semantically equivalent text, on the one hand, and transcreational translation, on the other hand. This allows us to reveal the effectiveness of using the transcreation strategy in the dubbed version in terms of created authenticity of dialogues.

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