

## РАЗДЕЛ IV. ПЕРЕВОД И ПЕРЕВОДОВЕДЕНИЕ

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***T. D. Seredkina<sup>1</sup>***

*Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University  
coldwinterdays@mail.ru*

***A. A. Tsaran<sup>2</sup>***

*ORCID: 0000-0002-4603-2820  
Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University  
aatsaran@mail.ru*

### THE TRANSLATION OF THE TITLES OF ENGLISH- LANGUAGE FILMS INTO RUSSIAN

#### ***Abstract***

This scientific report is devoted to the study of the correlation between the names of films in Russian adaptation with their original. The main types of translation are determined as well as the methods and technologies used by Russian translators. The theoretical material is accompanied by many examples of famous films. Translation errors and translation difficulties are also considered.

***Keywords:*** translation, title, film, translation strategy, translation difficulties

**Introduction.** Cinema has always attracted the attention of researchers from various fields of science, including linguistics. By focusing on the titles of films they encounter a situation where translators in an attempt to accurately reflect the catchy slogan sometimes fail to capture the essence of the film itself.

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<sup>1</sup> Seredkina Tatyana D. – bachelor-philologist, Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University (NMSTU), Magnitogorsk, Russia.

<sup>2</sup> Tsaran Alexander A. – Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor of the Department of Linguistics and Literary Studies of Nosov Magnitogorsk State Technical University, Magnitogorsk, Russia.

**The relevance** of this scientific article is determined by the prevalence of a large number of English-language films whose original titles differ significantly from those that appear in Russian distribution. As a result, there is a need for adequate translation of their titles since for the viewer the title of the film is the key to understanding it.

The aim of this work is to study the features of film titles and their translations, to establish the most successful translation strategies and tactics applied in the process. In accordance with the stated objective, the following tasks need to be addressed:

- 1) To study translation strategies and tactics used for film titles:
- 2) To identify difficulties that arise during translation.

The theoretical basis of this study is the works of prominent Russian and foreign scholars working in the following areas:

Text theory, Discourse theory (E. V. Erofeeva [4], V. N. Karasik [7], Teun A. Van Dijk [19]);

Film discourse theory (A. N. Zaretskaya [5], A. O. Ivanova [6], I. N. Lavrinenko [10], S. S. Nazmutdinova [13], A. O. Ollomurodov [18]);

Translation theory (L. S. Barkhudarov [2], Ya. I. Retzker [15], L. K. Latyshev [11], V. V. Sdobnikov, O. V. Petrova [16], A. V. Fedorov [17], V. N. Komissarov [8], [9]).

### **Strategies and tactics for translating movie titles**

Turning to the study of E. Zh. Balzhinimaeva [1], Russian translators use the following translation strategies:

- 1) Direct or literal translation
- 2) Name transformation
- 3) Name change

The first strategy is direct translation. Basically, such a strategy is applied to film titles where there are no untranslatable components and there is no conflict of form and content. For the same translation, transliteration or transcription is most often used.

The methods of transliteration and transcription are not very widespread and used separately. More often a combination of both methods is practiced.

Methods of transliteration and transcription are used in the translation of English proper names, geographical names and names of various companies, firms, ships, newspapers, magazines etc.

Transliteration is the exact transfer of characters of one script by characters of another script in which each character (or sequence of characters) of one writing system is transmitted by the same character (or sequence of characters) of another writing system. The examples

of transliteration in translation are: «Sanctum» – «Санктым» (2010), «Pearl Harbor» – «Перл Харбор» (2001), «Avatar» (2009) – «Аватар», «The Aviator» – «Авиатор» (2006).

Transcription is the transmission of the sounds of a foreign word (usually a proper name, geographical name, scientific term) using the Russian alphabet. [14].

The examples of transcription in translation of the film titles are: «Life of Pi» – «Жизнь Пи» (2012), «The Great Gatsby» – «Великий Гэтсби» (2013), «The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey» – «Хоббит: Неожиданное путешествие» (2012), «The Devil Wears Prada» – «Дьявол носит Prada» (2008).

All film titles literally translated into Russian can be conditionally classified as follows:

1. Titles containing heroes and their names: «Bruce Almighty» (2003) – «Брюс Всемогущий», «Ray» (2004) – Рэй, «Alvin and the Chipmunks» (2007) – «Элвин и Бурундуки», «Maleficent» (2014) – «Малефисента».

2. Names containing a geographical name: «Pirates of the Caribbean» (2003) – «Пираты Карибского моря», «Munich» (2005) – Мюнхен, «Pompeii» (2014) – «Помпеи», «Everest» (2015) – «Эверест».

3. Names that indicate the date/day/month or year: «Freaky Friday» (2003) – «Чумовая пятница».

4. Films whose titles mention the profession: «The Guardian» (2006) – «Спасатель», «The Mechanic» (2011) – «Механик», «The Judge» (2014) – «Судья».

Another way to use direct translation is to keep the original names in the form of scientific terms or words that resemble them. For example: «Interstellar», «Oculus», «Sinister», «Divergent». It is believed that this can intrigue viewers because in front of them is a word unknown to them before.

The next strategy is the transformation of the name, more often minor. Retsker defines transformations as «techniques of logical thinking with the help of which we reveal the meaning of a foreign word in the context and find a Russian correspondence to it that does not coincide with the dictionary one».

An example of this strategy is the title of the comedy «Ocean's Eleven» which was translated as «Одиннадцать друзей Оушена» (2001) thereby making the content of the film more clear to the Russian-speaking audience clarifying who these «11» are.

Also, with partial transformation, translators use the technique of lexical additions. For example, the film «Paul» was released in Russian

distribution under the name «Пол: Секретный материальчик» (2011). In this case, the name of the protagonist was preserved in the title which was translated using transcription but the phrase «secret material» was added which is a reference to the popular TV series The X-Files. The same technique is typical for the movie «Vacancy» (2007) which our translators translated as «Вакансия на жертву». For a thriller this title extension was quite fitting because the viewer wouldn't be thinking about the mundane concept of a vacant position. Another example is «Constantine» similar in genre to the above (horror). The official translation is «Константин: Повелитель тьмы» (2005). In this case, the phrase «Lord of Darkness» was added to convey to the viewer the theme of this film.

The opposite of extension is omission. This includes the following titles: «Three Burials of Melquiades Estrada» that is «Три могилы» (2005). If for a foreigner this is quite acceptable then for a Russian viewer it would make it difficult to perceive. The next film is «In time». The literal translation of this title is «Во время», but in the official translation was «Время» (2011). It seems that it fits the description of events in a world where time is a currency.

The third strategy is to change movie titles. Despite the main requirements that the translator faces, i.e. the preservation of semantic-structural equality and equal communicative and functional properties [11, 57] – there are quite a lot of cases of changing the titles of films during translation. An example of a replacement in translation: “The Pacifier” – «Лысый нянька. Спецздание» (2005), “Now You See Me” – «Иллюзия обмана» (2013), “The Intouchables” – «1+1» (2011), “Avengers: Endgame” – «Мстители. Финал» (2019), “That's My Boy” – «Папа-досвидос» (2012), “Silver Linings Playbook” – «Мой парень – псих» (2012).

The translations of the names “Intouchables” (literally “неприкасаемые”) and “Now You See Me” (literally “Сейчас вы меня видите”) seem interesting. In the film «The Illusion of Deception» several times it sounded «The closer you are, the less you see», and we think this phrase refers to magicians who often use it. The task of the translators in this case was to convey the meaning of the film as closely as possible, so you have to use all your creativity.

Another option for replacing the name is “The Cinderella Man” (2005) that is «Нокдаун» (2005) in the Russian adaptation. The translators could not put the word ‘Cinderella’ in the masculine gender (let's say «Cinderella man») so they had to abandon the word altogether and find a replacement that fits the meaning of the film and its genre – sports, drama. In this case the reason for the replacement can be considered

as the impossibility of transferring the internal form of the English-language title as well as genre adaptation.

The film «Bridesmaids» was called «Девичник в Вегасе» in Russian. The English word «bridesmaid» is translated as «подружка невесты», respectively they used a complete replacement of the name. At the same time, the translator tried to keep the main idea of the film – “bachelorette party”. This is also a reference to the famous movie “The Hangover”.

The last case, «I, Tonya», is an example of an awkward translation of the title. They wanted to adapt it as «Ice Bitch» and only after a wave of criticism was it renamed «Тоня против всех».

### **Difficulties in translating titles**

Of course as in any work translators have difficulties because of which they make mistakes.

In translation theory there is such a thing as “false friends of a translator” – these are expressions that coincide in form but are different in meaning, they are also called traps [12, 65].

There are quite a lot of examples of films whose titles were translated completely incorrectly due to the translators “falling into this trap”. At times one gets the impression that the film was not seen before its title was translated. The American thriller «The Jacket» in which the main character is a man named Jacket is known in Russia as «Пиджак» (2005), although there is not a single episode in the film associated with this wardrobe item. Moreover, the hero himself never appeared on the screen in a jacket.

Sometimes the cause of errors is the translator's lack of deep knowledge of the language as a result of which he cannot recognize catchphrases, set expressions, proverbs or quotes that have become famous. The screened novel by the American writer R. Bradbury «Fahrenheit 451» – «451 градус по Фаренгейту» appeared before the English public under the name «Fahrenheit 9/11» and did not make it difficult for the necessary association to appear. In Russia the film «Fahrenheit 9/11» which did not cause any associations among the audience could not be compared with the novel. [3, 140-143].

As you can see, a competent translation requires the use of many techniques and strategies in combination as well as the translator's good imagination, excellent knowledge of the English language and the ability to interpret titles. Despite the difficulties leading to errors translators manage to translate the title in such a way that it still attracts the Russian

audience so English-language films remain popular both in Russia and in other countries although they have different titles from the original.

### **Conclusion**

The translation of the title of the film is a comment that forms the mental attitude of the individual due to which attention and interest are activated. The box office receipts which reflect the economic success of the film, also depend on the wording of the title.

Quite often it is impossible to translate the title of the film literally. Translation is a compromise. You always have to sacrifice something. And in order to choose an alternative translation option a competent translator must perfectly know the language, have a clear idea of the topic, the meaning of the film, be able to think beyond the «language barrier» and certainly master all translation strategies (which were mentioned above).

The most popular strategy used by translators when translating movie titles is literal translation. Substitution is less commonly used due to its complexity.

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## **СПЕЦИФИКА ПЕРЕВОДА НАЗВАНИЙ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНЫХ ФИЛЬМОВ НА РУССКИЙ ЯЗЫК**

*Середкина Татьяна Дмитриевна*

Бакалавр-филолог, специалист, Магнитогорский  
государственный технический университет им. Г. И. Носова,  
455000, Россия, г. Магнитогорск, пр. Ленина, д. 38

*Царан Александр Александрович*

Кандидат педагогических наук, доцент кафедры языкознания и  
литературоведения МГТУ им. Г. И. Носова,  
455000, Россия, г. Магнитогорск, пр. Ленина, д. 38

Данный научный доклад посвящен изучению соотношения названий кинофильмов в русской адаптации с их оригиналом. Определяются основные типы перевода, а также методы и технологии, которые используют российские переводчики. Теоретический материал сопровождается многими примерами знаменитых фильмов. Также рассматриваются ошибки, допускаемые в переводе, и переводческие трудности.

**Ключевые слова:** перевод, название, фильм, стратегия перевода, переводческие трудности

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