

## ACHIEVING EQUIVALENCE IN CINEMATIC TRANSLATION

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*The translation of film and television texts presents a unique set of challenges for translators. While the goal of any translation is to convey the meaning of the source text as accurately as possible, the specific demands of cinematic translation often require additional considerations. This study explores the complex process of adapting and stylistically transforming text in the context of cinematic translation. By examining the strategies and techniques employed to bridge cultural, linguistic, and stylistic gaps between the source and target languages, this research aims to shed light on the intricacies of this specialized field. The study mainly explores the processes of textual adaptation and stylization in cinematic translation, using *The Pirates of the Caribbean* film series as a case study. The research examines how translators adapt dialogue and narrative elements to align with the target audience's cultural, linguistic, and stylistic norms while preserving the unique tone and character of the original text. Particular attention is paid to the challenges posed by the film's use of archaic language, nautical terminology, humour, and idiomatic expressions, which require creative solutions to maintain the narrative's coherence and emotional impact. The study employs a comparative analysis of the source text and its translated versions, focusing on key strategies like localization, cultural substitution, and stylistic reconfiguration. Findings reveal that successful cinematic translation necessitates a balance between fidelity to the source material and adaptability to the target culture, with textual adaptation and stylization playing a critical role in preserving the immersive quality of the cinematic experience. This research contributes to the field of audiovisual translation by highlighting the complex interplay between linguistic accuracy, cultural sensitivity, and artistic creativity in the adaptation of texts for international audiences.*

**Key words:** film dialogue translation, textual adaptation, stylistic transformation, equivalence, phraseological units, slang, humour translation.

### **Дячук Наталія. Досягнення еквівалентності в кіноперекладі**

Переклад фільмових і телевізійних текстів становить собою унікальний виклик для перекладачів. Хоча основна мета будь-якого перекладу – якомога точніше передати зміст вихідного тексту, специфічні вимоги кіноперекладу часто потребують додаткових міркувань. У цьому дослідженні вивчено складний процес адаптації та стилістичної трансформації тексту в контексті кіноперекладу. За допомогою проведеного аналізу стратегій і технік, що використовуються для подолання культурних, мовних і стилістичних розривів між вихідною та цільовою мовами, у дослідженні прагнемо пролити світло на тонкощі цієї спеціалізованої галузі. Дослідження зосереджується на процесах текстової адаптації та стилізації в кіноперекладі, за допомогою серії фільмів «Пірати Карибського моря» як кейс-стаді. Вивчено, як перекладачі адаптують діалоги та наративні елементи, щоб узгодити їх із культурними, мовними та стилістичними нормами цільової аудиторії, за збереження водночас унікального тону та характеру вихідного тексту. Особлива увага приділяється труднощам, пов'язаним із перекладом архаїчної мови, морської термінології, гумору й ідіом, які потребують творчих рішень для збереження когерентності й емоційного впливу наративу. У дослідженні використано порівняльний аналіз вихідного тексту та його перекладів, зосереджуючись на ключових стратегіях, як-от локалізація, культурна субституція та стилістична реконфігурація. Результати дослідження показують, що успішний кінопереклад потребує балансу між вірністю вихідному матеріалу й адаптацією до цільової культури, текстова адаптація та стилізація відіграють критичну роль у збереженні захопливого характеру кіноперегляду. Це дослідження робить внесок у галузь аудіовізуального перекладу, підкреслює складну взаємодію між лінгвістичною точністю, культурною чутливістю та художньою творчістю в адаптації текстів для міжнародної аудиторії.

**Ключові слова:** переклад кінодіалогу, текстова адаптація, стилістична трансформація, еквівалентність, фразеологічні одиниці, сленг, переклад гумору.

**Problem statement.** Film translating is one of the most challenging forms of interpreting since a film is regarded as a conglomeration of texts from various genres and styles. As a form of audiovisual translation, a film appears to be an exceptionally influential medium for information transfer and intercultural communication, as it can impact the viewer through dialogue, visuals, and music [2; 9]. The task of a film translator is to preserve the overall artistic impression, the author's intent, the quality of dialogue, and the linguistic characteristics of the characters. The language of film characters is often saturated with expressive exclamations and constructions that complicate the translation process [1; 5]. Particular difficulties arise with dialectal speech, slang, idioms, foreign language errors, profanity, and the translation of film titles. It is necessary to find equivalents for phrases, select synonyms, and adapt realities to the cultural stereotypes of the viewer's perception [3; 7]. As a holistic entity, a film serves as a certain expression of nationality, reflecting national character [8]. Therefore, a film translator faces the complex task of reproducing the content of the original text and conveying the end product of their work to the audience, delving into the linguistic elements and the language codes of the film, paying particular attention to the use of realia, terms, dialects, neologisms, jargon, or slang words, etc. Thus, film translation is not merely substituting one language unit with another one. It is a rather complex process that involves several difficulties a translator must overcome. The main goal of translation is to achieve adequacy. That is why it is necessary to choose the right translation strategies. This will help the translator to achieve their goal most successfully [10].

**The study aims** to investigate the characteristics of Ukrainian translation of English-language film productions using the film "*Pirates of the Caribbean*" as a case study and identify the difficulties encountered in translation practice. To achieve this goal, the following **objectives** were set: to analyse and systematise previous linguistic research on the main translation strategies, investigate the difficulties of translating film texts and identify the features of translating film materials through adaptation and stylistic processing of the text.

The primary **research methods** employed in this study include descriptive and comparative linguistic analysis, as well as contextual and com-

ponential analysis. The descriptive analysis was utilised to systematically observe and characterise the linguistic features of the source and target texts, including grammatical structures, lexical choices, and stylistic devices. The comparative analysis enabled the identification of key differences and similarities between the source text and its Ukrainian translation, focusing on how linguistic choices impact meaning, tone, and cultural nuances. The contextual analysis examined the impact of the broader socio-cultural and historical context on both the source text and its translation. The componential analysis was used to break down complex linguistic units, such as idioms, metaphors, and cultural references, into their constituent parts to better understand their meaning and facilitate effective translation. The multi-faceted approach allowed for a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the challenges and strategies involved in translating film texts with a specific focus on the *Pirates of the Caribbean* film series and the Ukrainian translations made by Oleksandr Chaika and synchronised by Oleksa Nehrebetskyi.

This research is highly **topical** due to the increasing volume of films dubbed into Ukrainian, which necessitates the adaptation of foreign films to Ukrainian realities and culture. It is crucial not only to convey the linguistic nuances and full range of meanings of the original text but also to tailor the text for a Ukrainian audience, recreating the film text for a different cultural and ethnic context.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The topic of textual adaptation and stylisation in cinematic translation has garnered significant attention in recent years as scholars delve into the complexities of translating audiovisual media for global audiences. This field intersects translation studies, linguistics, cultural studies, and film theory, making it a multidisciplinary area of inquiry. Scholars such as Díaz Cintas, Gambier, and Pettit stress the importance of balancing linguistic accuracy with cultural relevance to maintain audience engagement. The works of Chiaro, Zanotti, and Ranzato highlight the role of creativity in addressing linguistic challenges, such as translating humour, idioms, and archaic language. Taylor and Gottlieb underscore the necessity of integrating verbal and non-verbal elements in translation to preserve the film's overall meaning and emotional impact. Research by

Pedersen and De Marco points to the translator's role as a cultural mediator, tasked with navigating the tension between domestication and foreignisation to ensure accessibility while respecting the source material's integrity.

In translation studies, including audiovisual translation, several Ukrainian scholars have contributed valuable insights, particularly in textual adaptation, stylistics, and cultural translation. L. Chernovaty has extensively explored issues of equivalence, adaptation, and the role of cultural context in translation. Her works provide theoretical insights that can be applied to audiovisual translation. Y. Kochubey has examined the complexities of intercultural communication and linguistic adaptation, which are central to the challenges of cinematic translation.

O. Synhaivska has written about the stylistic and pragmatic aspects of translation, focusing on how translators address genre-specific challenges, including humour and idiomatic expressions, which are critical for films like *"The Pirates of the Caribbean"*. O. Zabuzhko has discussed the broader implications of translating cultural and historical identities, offering perspectives relevant to adapting culturally specific elements in audiovisual media. S. Shvachko's research in translation methodology and stylistic analysis highlights strategies for adapting texts with complex linguistic and cultural features. Her work often addresses the balance between foreignisation and domestication, a recurring theme in cinematic translation. O. Kostyuk has contributed to understanding subtitling and dubbing practices in Ukraine, particularly adapting films and TV shows for Ukrainian audiences. L. Shumylo's studies focus on literary and cultural translation, emphasising how historical and stylistic elements are conveyed in translated works. These insights are particularly relevant to the stylisation required in cinematic translation. N. Perukhina has examined linguistic creativity in translation, exploring the role of adaptation and stylisation in conveying culturally bound expressions and humour – key challenges in films like *"The Pirates of the Caribbean"*.

In the case of *"The Pirates of the Caribbean"*, these studies collectively provide a framework for analysing how translators address the film's unique linguistic and cultural challenges. The intricate interplay between archaic language, nautical terminology, humour, and stylised dia-

logue requires a multifaceted approach that combines linguistic expertise, cultural sensitivity, and creative adaptation.

**The outline of the main research material.** In contemporary translation theory, the term adaptation is primarily used in two senses. Firstly, it defines a specific translation technique that involves replacing the unfamiliar with the familiar and the unusual with the customary. Secondly, it denotes a method of achieving equivalent communicative effect in the source and target texts. In this sense, adaptation is understood as the adjustment of a text through certain procedures to ensure a maximally adequate, fully corresponding, identical perception by a reader of a different culture [6; 9].

Several types of adaptation can be found in the translation of the film *"Pirates of the Caribbean"* [4]. One is when the original meaning of a word is generalised: *There's some **high-toned and fancy to-do** at the fort* → *Кажуть, у форті сьогодні якась **урочистість***. In this context, this strategy helps to avoid excessive repetition and prevent the creation of a hyperbolic effect. Consequently, the generalization in the translated passage is justified.

There is also an omission of words: *It's supposed to be **fast**, nigh uncatchable*. → *Кажуть, майже невловиме*.

*You are **without a doubt** the worst pirate I've ever heard of!* → *Ти найгірший пірат з усіх, про кого я чув!*

*You need to find yourself a girl, **mate***. → *Краще б дівчину собі знайшов*.

*The Black Pearl is a real **ship***. → *Чорна Перлина існує*.

Admittedly, the omission of words in most cases does not alter the original meaning but rather allows for a more concise expression and avoids unnecessary repetition. In the examined translation, there are also examples where the original meaning of a word is slightly altered, which contributes to a better understanding of the plot: *Easy on the **goods**, darling*. → *Легше, там **ніжні органи***.

*A ship like that makes **this one** here a bit superfluous*. → *Поряд з таким судном **омой малюк** здається зовсім непотрібний*.

*Vile and dissolute **creatures***. → *Розпусні ниці **мерзотники***.

*Come here **boy***. → *Іди до нас, **песуку***.

*Come on, you filthy, slimy, mangy **character!*** → *Перебирай лапами, **собацюро** блохастий*.



Such transformations turn out to be entirely appropriate for revealing the semantic content of the phrase. A shining example is a translation where a humorous effect is created via the use of tautology: *Because the finding of this, finds you incapacitorially finding and/or locating in your discovering the detecting of a way to save your dolly belle ol' what's her face.* → *Бо знайдення його знайде тобі незнаходжений шлях і спосіб знаходження порятунку твоєї незнайденної любі голубки.*

Finding equivalents is a strategy that involves searching for Ukrainian counterparts to original phraseological units or connotative lexemes. We will provide examples of phraseological units for which stable Ukrainian expressions have been selected (by phraseological units, we refer to both proverbs and sayings, as well as fixed phrases):

*A short drop and a sudden stop.* → *Мило і мотузка.*

*Mary, Mother of God.* → *Матір Божя.*

*I must speak my mind.* → *Я мушу відкрити вам серце.*

*We're square.* → *Ми квити.*

*Right about face.* → *Кругом.*

*Present arms.* → *На караул.*

*Really bleak.* → *Проймає до кісток.*

*Mother's love.* → *Мамцю рідна.*

In the examples provided, semantic equivalents were selected for the phraseological units appropriate for the characters' dialogues. Connotatively marked lexemes are also rendered using Ukrainian equivalents:

*Ghastly weather.* → *Препогана погода.*

*I intend to commandeer a ship, pick up a crew in Tortuga, rape, pillage and otherwise pilfer my black weasely guts out.* → *Я хочу експропріювати корабель, набрати на Тортузі команду, і з нею грабувати всіх і все, поки не остогидне.*

*Out of my way, scum!* → *З дороги, падло!*

*We know you're here, porret.* → *Крале, ми знаємо що ти тут.*

*To blazes with the Code.* → *До біса кодекс.*

*Blast!* → *Прокляття!*

*Any idea when Jones might release said terrible beastie?* → *А ти не знаєш, коли Джонс випустить свою гадинку?*

Stylistic neutralisation was also employed in the work on the film [3]. Due to differences in the structures of English and Ukrainian, the translator cannot always preserve the stylistic

colouring of individual elements of the original text [4; 10]. In this case, they are forced to resort to stylistic neutralisation, that is, instead of an expressive expression, use a neutral one, for example:

*Does a father need an occasion to dote upon his daughter?* (phraseological unit) → *Батькові потрібна нагода, щоб зробити приємне дочці?* (neutral phrase, although in this case it would be possible to use the stylistically colored "to indulge his daughter").

*I believe thanks are in order* (phraseological unit) → *Напевно, я маю подякувати* (neutral phrase).

*Sticks and stones, love* (English children's rhyme, which is used as protection against insults and verbal abuse). → *Сама така* (less emotionally coloured).

*And she'll go, without a fuss.* → *I nide muxo. I'm terribly sorry.* → *Вибачайте.*

Another technique the translator uses is stylistic compensation. When a lofty stylistic nuance is lost in the translated text, the translator compensates by using a stylistically marked word or phrase in the following text. In other words, certain elements of the original content are reproduced in the translated text in various ways to mitigate semantic or stylistic loss and achieve a similar emotional and expressive effect.

*But you have heard of me* (neutral phrase). → *Але ж чув таки* (stylistically coloured phrase).

*You seem familiar* (literal translation – "you seem familiar"). → *Знайома пика* (more natural and idiomatic).

*Come on* ("let's go"). → *Перебирай лапами* (more energetic and informal).

*There are a lot of long words there.* → *Дуже вже це кучеряво.*

*Not without my effects.* → *Дай манатки заберу.*

*Hadn't been thought about, heard he was dead.* → *Чув, він здох.*

Some elements of modern youth slang were used in the characters' speech. A high-quality reproduction of oral dialogic speech in Ukrainian translations contributes to the popularisation of native forms of spoken language, which is successfully carried out by translators of foreign film production, gifted with a linguistic flair [4; 6]: *And to what do I owe the pleasure of your carbuncle?* → *А нащо ти оце сюди приповз?*

"Carbuncle" is a cluster of boils caused by a bacterial infection, but as a slang term, it

means “an unpleasant visit”. In the translation, as we can see, not slang is used, but a connotatively marked lexeme “*crept*”. However, the lost meaning is somewhat compensated by the translator’s use of several colloquial elements, such as “*our*” and “*this*”.

Often, when translating, instead of normative elements, slang units are used, which, however, adequately convey the original meaning: *You’re not making any sense at all.* → *Tu tak i ne v’ixav.*

*I’ve noticed lately, the Captain seem to be acting a bit stranger <...>.* → *Tu ne думаєш, що капітан якийсь трохи намаханий <...>.*

Thus, phraseological units, expressively coloured vocabulary, and elements of youth slang are actively used both in the original text and in the translated text, which ensures the expressiveness of statements and accuracy and gives them a greater emotional and expressive colouring. In addition, such linguistic means are important for creating the images of the characters.

The stylistic language level is the most difficult to translate. The translation of the original stylistic means of the film “*Pirates of the Caribbean*” is adequate since finding an equivalent is the most frequent translation strategy in this context. In some cases, when the original stylistic colouring is lost, the translator compensates for it, thereby creating stylistic equivalence.

**Conclusions and directions for further research.** The translation of film texts involves a complex interplay of linguistic, cultural, and stylistic factors. By analysing the challenges and strategies employed in the translation of *Pirates of the Caribbean*, this study highlights the importance of a nuanced and creative approach to cinematic translation. Further research may explore additional case studies, delve deeper into specific techniques, and examine the impact of technological advancements on cinematic translation.

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