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Localization of the French Linguoculture Concepts in the English-Language Film Discourse through the Intertextuality

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Abstract. Linguocultural concepts in the film text are a complex aspect of translation. This paper is devoted to the study of the localization potential of linguistic and cultural concepts in the implementation of the film text translation in French-English language pair. The purpose of the article is to analyze the localization potential of linguistic and cultural concepts in intermediated intercultural communication through the cinema resource. The paper provides examples of unsuccessful localization, compiled on the basis of a film target audience anonymous survey. The research material included 4 concepts (*Amour/Love*, *Amitié /Friendship*, *Famille/ Family*, *Patrimoine/National Treasure*) implemented in 70 French films with official localizations into English, released in the period of 1966–2022. The methods of random sampling, mathematical statistics, quantitative analysis, semantic and linguocultural analysis of the text, method of anonymous questioning were used in the study. To conduct a qualitative evaluation of the film text original and localized units perception, we conducted a survey of anglophone and francophone viewers. The results of the study were the identification of various translation transformations used in the localization of functional and pragmatic units of the film text with an analyze of their effectiveness by viewers perceiving the film text in the source language and by viewers perceiving the film text in the target language. The use of statistical analysis methods made it possible to verify the data obtained empirically, and semantic and linguocultural analysis made it possible to analyze the obtained linguistic units in terms of their assessment and linguistic systematization.

Keywords: film discourse, localization, concept, intertextuality, film title and synopsis

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Локализация французских лингвокультурных концептов в англоязычном кинодискурсе сквозь призму интертекстуальности

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Аннотация. Лингвокультурные концепты в кинотексте являются сложным аспектом перевода. Данная статья посвящена исследованию потенциала локализации лингвокультурных концептов при переводе кинотекста в паре языков французский—английский. Цель статьи — проанализировать потенциал локализации лингвокультурных концептов в непрямой межкультурной коммуникации, осуществляемой посредством кинотекста. Авторами приведены примеры неудачной локализации кинозаголовков и синопсисов кинофильмов, составленные на основе анонимного опроса целевой аудитории фильмов. Материал исследования составили 4 концепта в языковых парах (*Amour/Love/Любовь*, *Amitié/Friendship/Дружба*, *Famille/Family/Семья*, *Patrimoine/National Treasure/Национальное достояние*), реализованные в 70 французских фильмах в их официальных локализациях на английский язык, вышедших в период 1966—2022 гг. В исследовании использовались методы случайной выборки, математической статистики, количественного анализа, семантического и лингвокультурного анализа текста, метод анонимного анкетирования. Для качественной оценки восприятия оригинальных и локализованных единиц кинотекста был проведен опрос англоязычных и франкоязычных зрителей. Результатом исследования стало выявление различных переводческих трансформаций, используемых при локализации функциональных и прагматических единиц кинотекста, с анализом эффективности их восприятия потенциальными зрителями на языке оригинала (франкоязычный кинотекст) и на языке локализации (англоязычный кинотекст). Использование методов статистического анализа позволило проверить полученные данные эмпирическим путем; семантический и лингвокультурологический анализ — проанализировать полученные языковые единицы с точки зрения их оценки и лингвистической систематизации.

Ключевые слова: кинодискурс, локализация, концепт, интертекстуальность, кинозаголовки и синопсис

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Introduction

The phenomenon of text localization is a set of actions aimed at “not just to translate the original text elements, but also to adapt them to the culture of the target audience, i.e. the transition from one language and cultural code

to another” [1]. According to O. Zinkevich, localization is understood as one of the processes that includes a set of practices and techniques for adapting the original text to match a new linguistic type [2. P. 135]. In turn, V. Malzumyan understands localization as a special clustering of reality, and its end result is the transformation of the worldview to other linguistic and cultural realities [3. P. 82]. The purpose of the article is to analyze the potential of linguistic and cultural concepts localization in mediated intercultural communication through the film text. We used the techniques of discourse analysis, mathematical analysis, semantic and linguocultural analysis as scientific methods. The methods of mathematical analysis were used to conduct a qualitative analysis of the data obtained empirically. The method of discourse analysis, semantic and linguocultural analysis made it possible to analyze the materials obtained from the point of view of linguistics. The complexity of localization lies in the selection of semantically and culturally close analogies in various linguistic cultures in order to convey the main idea of the text as fully as possible. The phenomenon of localization plays a special role for the sphere of cinema text. This is primarily due to the fact that a modern film product has the property of mass orientation and provides for the release of a number of films for international distribution. For successful distribution of films in the world space, it is necessary to carry out a high-quality and adequate professional translation of the film text contained in the film so that it is understandable to the final recipient. Therefore, the role of the localization phenomenon in the modern cinema discourse is extremely high. It is localization that makes it possible to ensure an adequate transposition of the source cultural code to the code of the host culture. One of the most important points of localization is the localization of the basic concepts laid down in the basis of the movie. In this article we consider the localization of the most frequent concepts of the French cinema discourse in English localization. In particular, in the course of analyzing the materials, we turned to the works of the following researchers in the field of analysis of modern cinema discourse and film production on the Internet: E. Chistova, T. Kolokoltseva, T. Popova [4–6]. The choice of these linguistic cultures is due to the worldwide fame and popularity of French cinema, as well as the popularity of the English language in the modern world and its status as a *lingua franca* for the world community. In addition, such a choice of linguistic cultures allows us to consider differences in the representation of concepts on the example of close linguistic cultures (Great Britain and France are historical neighboring countries, as a result of which the degree of mutual penetration of languages and cultures is very high). By the concept, in this study, following Russian scholars Z. Popova and Y. Sternin we understand concept as a “discrete mental formation, which is the basic unit of a person’s mental code, having a relatively ordered internal structure, representing the result of cognitive activity of the individual and society and carrying complex, encyclopedic information about the reflected object or phenomenon, about the interpretation of this information by public consciousness

and the attitude of public consciousness to this phenomenon or subject” [7. P. 34]. The difficulty in localization of concepts consists, first of all, in the discrepancy between the cultural codes of different linguistic cultures and the semantic and value difference of related concepts and their linguistic designations. At the same time, the concepts represent a linguistic supersystem of culturally significant and nationally precedent phenomena transmission, respectively, carry basic information about the semantic content of the film, create its semantic outline, and therefore their adequate transmission is a task of paramount importance.

Intertextual Parameters of the Film Text

Cinema is a cultural phenomenon. In the works of linguists, the inseparable connection of the cinema discourse with the national and cultural peculiarities of the production country is constantly emphasized. Russian scholars G.G. Slyshkin and M.A. Efremova in the work “Kinotext (experience of linguoculturological analysis)” interpret cinema as a system of meanings, where “specific ways of perception and designation of reality are displayed” [8. P. 34]. The researchers note that “for this reason, it [cinema] does not cease to be a cultural phenomenon that defines, strengthens and transforms the viewer’s worldview” (ibid., p. 34). A.V. Olyanich also notes the ability of the film discourse to reflect the ethnocultural specifics of the creators of the film and the socio-cultural environment in which it is created [9. P. 54].

One of the main characteristics of the film discourse is its “collective authorship”. K. Bubel notes the significant influence exerted by the producer, executive director and other persons on the modern film production. According to the researcher, these co-authors of the film are directly involved in its creation, among other things, approving the shooting of a particular scenario and approving the cast [10. P. 42]. It is important to analyze ability to convey the value components of the ideas of its “collective author” [8. P. 25–26] (director, cameraman, screenwriter and everyone who takes part in the creation of a film production). However, a special role is assigned to the film discourse recipient (a film viewer) K. Bubel emphasizes that “... an active audience assumes that the audience is always an active participant and media content is always open to interpretation” [10. P. 46].

Numerous studies are focused on identifying the main features of the film discourse, among which there is a focus on the viewer as an object of perception of the film industry product [11], focus on oral reproduction [12. P. 129], incompleteness and drama [13. P. 100], attraction to the open text, dialogicity [14. P. 26], as well as polysemiotics, manifested in the dependence of the meaning of the semantic units of the film discourse on a number of linguistic and extralinguistic factors [15. P. 10].

An important characteristic of the film discourse is its iconic nature. The semiotic space of the film discourse, as well as its main component (the film text) and the realization form (the movie) is distinguished by a wide variety of properties and features.

T.V. Dukhovnaya notes the correspondence of the film discourse to the main communicative patterns of a modern native speaker, as well as the orientation of its construction on spontaneous speech communication [16. P. 23]. С. Bubel also underlines the proximity of the film dialogue to spontaneous conversation [10. P. 60]. This property of the film discourse is largely due to the mass spectator of the film industry and the orientation of film production to the modern viewer and the target audience of the film itself. The use of irrelevant communicative samples can lead to misunderstanding of the film content, which, in turn, can negatively affect the perception of the film by the viewer and lead to the failure of the film at the box office. But there is also another opinion about the similarity of the film dialogue and spontaneous communication, e.g. S. Kozloff denies the proximity of the film dialogue and spontaneous conversation: "... the dialogue in the film differs from spontaneous everyday speech. In a narrative film, the dialogue may strongly strive to imitate a natural conversation, but it is always an imitation" [17. P. 18–19].

The film text has various textual categories and exhibits properties similar to printed text, which, in turn, makes it possible to bring into line the products of film and literary discourse (a motion picture and a work of fiction). Such an interpretation makes it possible to compare and identify common features (the possibility of interpreting the screenplay as a special genre of fiction; the similarity of chronotopes; the use of techniques of pragmatic influence on the viewer close to literature) of the film discourse with literary, theatrical and other types of artistic discourse.

Linguists also distinguish three fundamental semiotic components of the film discourse and film text. For Yu. Lotman there are visual, sound and verbal code systems [18. P. 39]. U. Eco distinguishes portrait, linguistic and sound codes [19]. The inseparable combination of these three semiotic components is aimed at building the meaning of the film.

The most important characteristics of the film discourse are the centralization of the point of view of the communication process, the close connection with the national cultural characteristics of a particular country, the property of displaying reality, the pragmatic impact on the recipient, the presence of a subtext in the phenomenon under consideration.

The main structural units of the film text are the functional and pragmatic units of the film text — film titles, synopses and slogans, which are the pragmatically oriented graphic (visual) elements of the film text that precede the release of the film and directly affect its success, endowed with full or partial autonomy in relation to the content of the film production and interacting with each other at the linguistic and pragmatic level, whose main function is to attract as many viewers as possible to watch the film.

The functional and pragmatic units of the film text (film titles, synopses and slogans) occupy a central place in terms of the pragmatic impact degree on the potential viewer before watching the film. The functional and pragmatic units

of the film text are the main graphic (visual) elements of the film text, appear before the potential viewer before getting acquainted with the motion picture and, along with the audiovisual element that precedes the appearance of the film at the box office — the trailer, transmit basic information about the film production coming out (or already released) on the screens. Intelligent compilation of the film title, synopsis and slogan directly affects the desire of a potential viewer to choose this product of the film industry for viewing among all the other films presented, thereby ensuring successful box office receipts for the film.

Precedency and Intertextuality of the Film Discourse

Considering the film discourse and its main component the film text as a semiotic space, we note the important role of references to various precedent texts and phenomena contained in it, especially relevant at the initial stage of public acquaintance with the film industry product. Such appeals of a precedent nature allow a potential viewer to identify a movie with a specific literary work, historical event or precedent personality.

An important theoretical basis for the cinema discourse study is the theory of precedent, which considers the precedent texts and phenomena that are the main ones for the addressee (In the case of cinema and cinema discourse for the potential viewer).

The foundation of the theory of precedent was laid by the Russian researcher Yu.N. Karaulov, who defined precedent texts as “significant for a particular personality in cognitive and emotional relations; having a superpersonal character, i.e. well-known to the wide entourage of this personality, including its predecessors and contemporaries, the appeal to which is repeatedly renewed in the discourse of this linguistic personality “ [20. P. 216]. As examples of precedent texts, the scientist cites quotations, names of characters, titles of works, as well as their authors [ibid., p. 216].

Considering this issue through the lens of the “precedent phenomenon” notion, another Russian scholar V.V. Krasnykh identifies three fundamental characteristics of pretexts: famousness to all representatives of the national linguistic and cultural community (having an invariant of perception of this phenomenon common to all representatives of the nation); relevance in cognitive, emotional and cognitive terms and the presence of appeals in the speech of representatives of the national linguistic and cultural community to this precedent phenomenon, understandable to the interlocutor (a representative of the same linguistic and cultural space) without additional transcription and commentary [21. P. 5].

As example of precedent names in the film discourse we can cite the references to the names of literary works forming the basis of a movie. In such cases, the film adaptation contains a direct mention of the precedent name of the work of art already in its title (*L’amour dure trois ans* — “Love Lasts Three Years”, a film adaptation of the novel of the same name by F. Begbeder; *Le nom de la Rose* —

“The Name of the Rose”, a screen adaptation of the novel by U. Eco), which allows a potential viewer to associate this film with its main precedent text.

Applying the theory of discourse analysis to the film discourse, it is also possible to consider the concepts of “textual reminiscences” and “precedent textual reminiscences” introduced by Russian scholars A.E. Suprun and Yu.E. Prokhorov, respectively [22; 23]. Researchers call quotations or other references present in specific late texts to previously produced texts a direct manifestation of this phenomenon. As examples of textual reminiscences, scientists distinguish various quotations, names of characters, titles of works, names of their authors that are not precedent, direct or indirect references to various situations.

In the synopsis of the French movie *Mes jours de gloire* (2020), an example of textual reminiscence is the mention of one of the most popular characters in children’s literature of the XX century — Peter Pan:

Adrien est un Peter Pan des temps modernes. Il a beau approcher la trentaine, il vit encore comme un enfant. Petit, il a connu le succès en tant qu’acteur mais c’était il y a plus de dix ans et aujourd’hui Adrien n’a plus un sou. Il retourne ainsi vivre chez ses parents et tente de redonner un coup de fouet à sa vie. Entre la possibilité d’une histoire d’amour et celle d’un retour qu’il s’imagine triomphant en tant qu’acteur, le chemin d’Adrien sera semé d’embûches.

Adrien is a modern-day Peter Pan. He may be approaching his thirties, but he still lives like a child. As a child, he enjoyed success as an actor but that was more than ten years ago and today Adrien no longer has a penny. He returns to live with his parents and tries to give his life a boost. Between the possibility of a love story and that of a return that he imagines triumphant as an actor, Adrien’s path will be fraught with pitfalls.

Many of the appeals in the film discourse are based precisely on textual reminiscences. The above characteristics of textual reminiscences allow us to classify them as direct components of intertextual connections in the film discourse and in particular in the small-format texts of the film discourse (movie titles, synopses and movie slogans).

As the precedent texts of the French film discourse we can consider literary works, biographies of famous personalities who have left a significant mark in French and world history, historical events significant for France. Less often, direct quotations familiar to the average representative of the French linguistic and cultural space and biblical texts can be distinguished as precedent texts [1].

Localization as an Issue of Intercultural Communication

Nowadays, localization theory is becoming increasingly popular among researchers of text adaptation in a different culture. In some cases, the Theory of Localization Studies is considered as a special type of translation, but often it replaces this concept and acts as an independent type of text adaptation in the host linguistic and cultural space.

Linguists and translation theorists mean the term “localization” as a part of the process of text adaptation to a new linguistic and cultural environment [24–27]. Localization of the text represents the achievement of structural, substantive and pragmatic equivalence of the text and is, as the Russian linguist-translator L.K. Latyshev rightly noted, “textualization of intentions” [28. P. 46]. Localization of film production in this paper refers to the process of adaptation of film production to the conditions of a different socio- and linguistic-cultural space in order to successfully promote a film at the box office of another country. Localization implies full or partial adaptation of the original product in another cultural space in order to avoid rejection of the film production by the public. An important point in this case is the elimination of taboo and unacceptable categories from the original film text for a foreign cultural viewer, the presence of which in the localized film text may lead to the rejection of the work by the audience and, as a consequence, the failure of the film at the box office. In some cases, the adaptation of the film text may be associated with various political, historical and cultural factors. Therefore, in this study we use the term “localizers” to mean a set of actors who are directly involved in the promotion of the film at the box office: translators and other specialists engaged in cross-cultural adaptation of the text, authors of subtitles, voice actors / dubbing actors, as well as representatives of the distribution company directly involved in the “delivery” of the film to the viewer. The currently popular localization practices in the film industry are closely related to the methods of discourse analysis and focus primarily on the recipient of the message who is the main active participant in the communicative act. Such a technique is based on recreating a completely different linguistic and cultural environment of a communicative situation based on the purpose of translation (translation brief), as well as the needs and expectations of the translated text intended or real recipients [1. P. 441]. A similar approach to text adaptation shifts the emphasis on extralinguistic factors accompanying the text from classical semantic and syntactic strategies of translation theory and practice [ibid., p. 441]. The use of the intertextuality apparatus shows a close connection between the source and translated (In the case of a film discourse — localized) texts. Researchers of intertextual interaction distinguish translation as one of the components of intertextuality. In his concept of *transtextuality*, G. Genette includes translation in the concept of *hypertextuality*, along with such types of text transformation as parody and continuation [29. P.37].

Due to its interlinguistic, intersemantic and intertextual nature, translation is the creation of a new text from an existing one, and each of the stages of the translator’s activity requires referring to various intertextual references [30. P. 66]. The interaction of translation and forms of intertextuality is carried out by scientists on the example of comparing translation and the use of references in it, translation and plagiarism and translation and adaptation of the original text [ibid., P. 66–69]. Intertextuality in the translation of texts is not only quoting the original and possible references to the source text, but also comparing two or more translations with each

other and with the original text. In addition, in the course of translating a literary work, the translator may resort to comments, borrowings, adaptations and, in rare cases, plagiarism in order to better convey the meaning of the source text [ibid., p. 66]. The researchers note that the intertextuality used in the translation of the text enhances the translator's ability to adapt the text for its better understanding by the addressee in a different linguistic and cultural space, especially in cases where a literal (direct) translation can lead to a distortion of meaning. According to scientists, it is even allowed to replace examples or slightly adapt the contexts of the work for better acceptance of the text in the target culture due to the presence of taboo topics in it, for example [ibid., P. 69–70]. Adaptation of the work contexts is especially important in the course of localizing pragmatically significant text components in another culture that directly affect or could affect the perception of the work by the addressee. Despite the fact that the researchers consider translation as a component of intertext interaction, in our opinion, from the point of view of film discourse and functional and pragmatic units of the film text, it is more appropriate to talk about the localization of the source text (film titles, synopses and slogans) in a different linguistic and cultural space due to their specific adaptation. Localization of foreign-language film products in the market of a particular country today acquires a collective character, and the translator does not always have the last word in localization of one or another element of the film text — more often the decision is made by rental (distribution) companies engaged in bringing films to the screens of the country [1. P. 453].

The analysis of intertextual links between the original and localized text, first of all, involves the detection of certain intertextual links. It should be noted that in order to convey the intertextual references and allusions available in the source text, the translator needs a large extralinguistic knowledge base: it is necessary to know well the culture of the country in which the film text was produced, the main appeal models peculiar to a particular linguistic and socio-cultural community, and sometimes the biography of the author of the work. At the same time, in the process of localization in another culture of intertextual connections present in a movie, cases of translational untranslatability may arise, the main reasons for which Russian scholar E.P. Podlegaeva rightly attributes linguistic and extra-linguistic realities associated with the realities of life of a certain society, as well as the impossibility of establishing a proto-text [31. P. 67]. In the process of localizing and adapting a work in another country, it is necessary to take into account the specifics of the host culture, which may differ from the culture of the original text due to differences in worldview, and understand whether intertextual allusions of the source text are acceptable to recipients in the host culture. The preservation of intertextual connections present in the source text may lead to a communicative failure in understanding the work in a foreign cultural environment if the original texts used by the author are unfamiliar to the addressee due to differences in culture or worldview. Thus, the question of the use of intertextuality in the analysis of the

localization of a work in a different socio-cultural space is closely related to the field of intercultural communication, since often the adaptation of a work can be associated precisely with the differences in the cultures of potential addressees.

The work with texts of various discourses and their components requires its own level of localization. Localization of the cinema discourse and its main components, due to the mass character of cinema and its accessibility to all social strata of the population, should be oriented to the average 219 viewers of the country, and its techniques should be understandable to the vast majority of the public. In the course of localizing the form of film discourse realization (a movie itself) in a different linguistic and cultural space, the translator should additionally take into account the target audience of a particular film production, as well as the pragmatic impact of its individual parts on a potential viewer, e.g. intertextual connections and references contained in the film title, synopsis or slogan, in addition to direct appeal to specific pretexts, may also have a pragmatic orientation and be focused more on attracting as many viewers as possible to view the work.

The question of the significance of the culture influence on the communicative behavior of a person in recent years no longer raises questions from researchers. Localizing individual significant units of the film text, the translator in one way or another has to rely on the so-called “communicative values” of the potential target audience, which the Russian scientist T. Larina interprets as “cultural values that have a decisive influence on the communicative behavior of representatives of this culture, predetermine its rules and norms, form the style of communication” [320. P. 35]. It is worth noting that the intertextual references contained in the functional and pragmatic units of the film text, as a rule, are not subject to deciphering, since they are the background cultural knowledge of representatives of a particular country. Localization of the film title, synopsis and slogan, as well as the intertextual connections present in this functional and pragmatic film units, due to their directed pragmatic impact text on the potential viewer occupies a special place. Localization of functional and pragmatic units of the film text can often lead to changes in the presentation of a movie at the box office, for example, a change in its genre. A typical example of such a change in the genre of film production following its functional and pragmatic units in the process of localization of a French film in the English-language box office is the film “*Tout le monde debout*” (“Rolling to You”, 2018). The localized movie title of the tape is skillfully adapted to the most popular age group visiting English-language cinemas: 18–34 years old [33]. The original title of the movie, which can be translated as “Everyone standing”, is not connected to a certain age group of viewers. The film title with which the work appears on the screens for the English-speaking viewer (“Rolling to You”) outlines a certain target audience of the work, due to the presence of youth slang in it.

The analysis of the linguistic material allows us to conclude that the typical strategies of localization of intertextual links in film titles, synopses and slogans

of films are: deletion of the original intertextual links, their replacement with more appropriate to the requirements of the target audience or the traditions of the host culture and transformation of the original references and other intertextual forms while preserving the appeal to the context.

As the intertextual components used in the process of localization of the film text in a different linguistic and cultural environment concerned, it is necessary to separately note the localization of the concepts contained in them that have an important intertextual component. As in the case of intertextual references directly present in the functional and pragmatic units of the film text, in the course of localizing allusions present in the linguistic and cultural concepts of film titles, synopses and slogans of film productions, similar adaptation strategies can be applied, e.g. the concept of *patriotism* and its main component, characteristic of French culture — *patrimoine (national treasure)*, which are the basis of the film “*Paris brûle-t-il?*” (*‘Is Paris Burning?’*, 1966), preserved in a localized name (largely due to the use of the strategy of literal translation), the core of which is the symbol of France — its capital Paris.

The addition of new intertextual connections to the localized synopsis of a movie can cause the transformation of the concept representation itself, e.g. the English-language synopsis of the French film “*Ce que le jour doit à la nuit*” (*‘What the Day Ows the Night’*, 2012) otherwise implements the concept of *amour (love)*, which is contained in the functional and pragmatic units of the film text: the idea appears that love can survive in all adversity: *Entre Jonas et elle naîtra une grande histoire d’amour, qui sera bientôt troublée par les conflits qui agitent le pays* — *Between Jonas and her will be born a great love story, which will soon be troubled by the conflicts which agitate the country*). Moreover, the use of passive voice emphasizes the active role of such a strong feeling in ending conflicts and changing the lives of the main characters, as well as their native country, for the better:

Original (French) synopsis: *Algérie, années 1930. Younes a 9 ans lorsqu’il est confié à son oncle pharmacien à Oran. Rebaptisé Jonas, il grandit parmi les jeunes de Rio Salado dont il devient l’ami. Dans la bande, il y a Emilie, la fille dont tous sont amoureux. Entre Jonas et elle naîtra une grande histoire d’amour, qui sera bientôt troublée par les conflits qui agitent le pays.*

Literary translation: *‘Algeria, 1930s. Younes was nine years old when he was entrusted to his pharmacist uncle in Oran. Renamed Jonas, he grew up among the young people of Rio Salado, with whom he became friends. In the gang, there is Emilie, the girl everyone is in love with. Between Jonas and her will be born a great love story, which will soon be troubled by the conflicts which agitate the country’.*

Localized (English) synopsis: *Algeria, the 1930s. Younes is nine years old when he is put in his uncle’s care in Oran. Rebaptized Jonas, he grows up among the Rio*

Salado youths, with whom he becomes friends. Emilie is one of the gang; everyone is in love with her. A great love story develops between Jonas and Emilie, which is soon unsettled by the conflicts troubling the country.

There are also cases of loss of the concept's intertextuality due to the absence of the concept itself in the localized synopsis.

Original (French) synopsis: *Nathalie a tout pour être heureuse. Elle est jeune, belle, et file le parfait amour. La mort accidentelle de son mari va couper son élan. Pendant des années, elle va s'investir dans son travail, se sentir en parenthèse de sa vie sensuelle. Mais subitement, sans qu'elle comprenne vraiment pourquoi, elle embrasse un de ses collègues. Markus, un homme très atypique. S'ensuit alors la valse sentimentale de ce couple hautement improbable qui va susciter interrogation et agressivité au sein de l'entreprise. Choisit-on vraiment par quel moyen on renaît à la vie ? Nathalie et Markus vont finir par fuir pour vivre leur histoire et leur émerveillement à l'abri de tout. Cette histoire de renaissance est aussi celle de l'étrangeté amoureuse.*

Literary translation: *Natalie has everything to be happy. She is young, beautiful and loved. A fatal accident that her husband gets into will destroy everything in an instant. For many years, she will prefer work to feelings. But one day, without knowing why, she kisses her colleague. Marcus is a rather strange man. Between a couple full of contradictions, a waltz of emotions and subsequent questions and obstacles from colleagues is spinning. Can we choose our own way of returning to life? Natalie and Marcus will finish everything and rush off to write their amazing story alone. The story of rebirth and the strangeness of love.*

Localized (English) synopsis: *A French woman mourning over the death of her husband three years prior is courted by a Swedish co-worker.*

In the localized version of this film synopsis the translator omitted the main idea of the melodrama: love that can bring back to life. Based on the French film synopsis, the main idea of the film is to “resurrect” the main character Natalie to life. It is love that becomes the force that turns out to be able to restore a woman's desire to live. In the original film synopsis, this idea is supported by the presence of a rhetorical question (‘Choisit-on vraiment par quel moyen on renaît à la vie ?’ / ‘Can we choose our own way of returning to life?’) In addition, the original synopsis emphasizes the notorious “convergence of opposites”, supported by the reception of the antithesis (Markus, un homme très atypique/ Markus is a rather strange man) and the final sentence interpreting such love as “strange” or “bizarre” (‘Cette histoire de renaissance est aussi celle de l'étrangeté amoureuse’ / ‘The story of rebirth and the strangeness of love’). It is also worth noting that the story begins in the near future time (Future Proche). This kind of narration seems to attract the viewer, bringing him closer to what is happening on the screen and encouraging him to watch a movie. We also would like to note that along with the original concept that is significant for the film target audience, in the localized for the English-speaking audience

synopsis of the film, which is the most concise summary of the plot of the film, the translator also omitted the above-mentioned figures of speech.

An important component of the preservation and subsequent adaptation of intertextual connections in the host culture is the localization of concepts contained in the original film text. The loss of intertextual connections contained in the key concepts of the film or their basic schemes can negatively affect the perception of the picture by the viewer, which will entail negative feedback from the audience. In addition, omission or incorrect transformation of the original concepts reflected in the synopsis of the movie (e.g. the omission of the concept of amour (love) may lead the viewer to the idea that the genre of the film is not a melodrama, but a comedy), can lead to misunderstanding of the plot by a potential viewer, in connection with which it is possible to visit the movie by a completely different target audience, which may remain dissatisfied with its viewing.

Comparative Analysis of the Original and Localized Movie Titles and Synopses Perception

Due to the fact that localization can significantly change the preview impression of watching a film, we conducted an anonymous questionnaire study on the perception of the main concepts of the film by the audience, based on their reading of the film title, slogan and synopsis, as well as a post-screening survey, implying an assessment of how the viewed film met or did not meet their expectations. For the analysis, we selected 10 films and questioned the recipients to write down up to 5 keywords related to the content of the film, based on their impressions of the film synopsis, title and slogan before and after watching the film itself. The empirical basis of the study was the results of a survey of 100 francophone respondents and 100 anglophone respondents. The anglophone respondents were presented with localized functional and pragmatic units of the film text for familiarization. The francophone respondents were presented with the functional and pragmatic units of the film text in the source language for familiarization. The difference in the perception of functional and pragmatic units of the film text in the original and localized versions (In source and target languages) by the speakers of the considered linguistic cultures and the satisfaction of their expectations from watching the films in question allowed us to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of localization of functional and pragmatic units of the film text and the film as a whole, as well as the success of the film at the box office of the country of production and the country of localization. All respondents were aged 20–45 y. o., were native speakers of French (for a group of francophones) or English (for a group of anglophones), and also had higher educational attainment in various, including art and cinematography education. We have obtained the following results (*Table 1, Table 2*):

Table 1

Results of recipient's watching films localized in English

Original film title (French version)	Localized film title (English version)	Keywords after reading the title, synopsis and slogan of the film	Keywords after watching the movie	
La Daronne	Mama weed	Thriller, mafia, Godfather, double life	Drama, scam, double life, crime, new life	56 %
10 jours sans maman	10 days with Dad	Comedy, dad's education, homemaker, children terror, large family	Housewife, daily routine, large family, comedy, role exchange	87 %
Le sens de la famille	Family Swap	Role exchange, comedy, parents and children, wonder	Role exchange, comedy, parents and children, psychology, mutual understanding in the family	89 %
Le prince oublié	The lost prince	Lovestory, fairy-tale, parent and children, growing up	Fairy-tale, parent and children, growing up, drama	77 %
Tendre et saignant	The Butcher's Daughter	Family drama, heritage, confrontation, family business	Lovestory, confrontation, traditions, family business	46 %
Adieu les cons	Bye Bye Morons	Comedy, family, heritage, dream team, lost baby	Drama, new sense of life, life's final, reminiscence	34 %
Le bonheur des uns...	A friendly tale	Comedy, friends, competition, writer	Drama, friends, jealousy, success, relations	65 %
Messe basse	The Lodger	Horror, love triangle, mystic, survive, neighborhood	Horror, suggestion, psychology thriller, jealousy, madness	31 %
Antoinette dans les Cévennes	Donkey, my lover & I	Lovestory, vacation, countryside, lover and family, comedy	Schoolteacher, repeat, two families, donkey, drama	24 %
Tout nous sourit	Husband, Wife, Kids... and Lovers	Drama, family, double life, conflict, family values	Comedy, family, curious situation, humor, daily routine	32 %

Source: compiled by the authors.

Table 2

Results of recipient's watching original films in French

Original title (French version)	Keywords after reading the title, synopsis and slogan of the film	Keywords after reading the title, synopsis and slogan of the film	Average % match of expectations and movie viewing
La Daronne	Drama, crime, danger, intrigue, double life	Drama, scam, double life, crime, new life	94 %
10 jours sans maman 10 дней без мамы	Comedy, homemaker, role exchange, large family	Housewife, daily routine, large family, comedy, role exchange	89 %
Le sans de la famille	Role exchange, comedy, parents and children, wonder	Role exchange, comedy, parents and children, psychology, new life	89 %
Le prince oublié	Drama, fairy-tale, parent and children, growing up, dad and daughter	Fairy-tale, parent and children, growing up, drama, lost dad	81 %
Tendre et saignant	Family drama, lovestory, confrontation, family business	Lovestory, confrontation, traditions, family business	86 %
Adieu les cons	Drama, new sense of life, black humor, lost baby, illness	Drama, new sense of life, life's final, black humor, death	94 %
Le bonheur des uns...	Drama, writer, friendship, competition, jalousie	Drama, friendship, relations, competition, jalousie	74 %
Messe basse	Horror, madness, mystic, survive, neighborhood	Horror, suggestion, psychology thriller, jalousie, madness	81 %
Antoinette dans les Cévennes	Two families, lovers, donkey, vacation, psychology	Two families, donkey, drama, lovers, comprehension	96 %
Tout nous sourit	Lovers, family, comedy, love, daily routine	Comedy, family, curious situation, humor, love	32 %

Source: compiled by the authors.

According to Table 1, it can be noted that the title of the localized film, as well as the information contained in its slogan and synopsis, can significantly influence the anticipatory reaction of the viewer. Thus, due to the unsuccessful localization of the title and synopsis of the film, the percentage of the audience's expectations

from viewing and impressions after viewing is significantly lower (less than 50 %), as happened to the films “ Tout nous sourit “, “ Messe basse “, “ Antoinette dans les Cévennes “, “ Tendre et saignant “, “ Adieu les cons.” This phenomenon is due to the great pragmatic influence of the functional and pragmatic units of the film text on the potential viewer. Thus, familiarization of the potential viewer with the film title, synopsis and slogan allows:

- to determine the target audience of the movie;
- to determine the genre of the film;
- to get acquainted with the plot superficially;
- to interest the potential viewer.

In case of unsuccessful localization, commercial and non-commercial film distribute companies create conditions for low ratings of films due to an incorrectly selected target audience.

Let’s consider this statement with examples.

“Tout nous sourit” 2020 (“Husband, Wife, Kids... and Lovers”)

The original film title “Tout nous sourit” — “Everything smiles at us” (literally) creates a positive, comedic atmosphere, which is noted by Francophone viewers who watched the original (French) version of the film. Whereas the English-language title “Husband, Wife, Kids ... and Lovers” creates prerequisites for defining the genre of the film as a family drama, which is noted by recipients who have become familiar with the film title, slogan and synopsis in English.

The film synopsis also supports the ideas given by the titles:

Original (French) synopsis: *Tout sourit à Audrey et Jérôme. Ils ont trois merveilleux enfants et leurs métiers les passionnent. Le temps d’un week-end, ils partent chacun de leur côté... avec leurs amants respectifs. Sauf qu’ils ont la même idée : aller dans leur maison de campagne...*

Literary translation: *Everything smiles at Audrey and Jérôme. They have three wonderful children and they are passionate about their jobs. For a weekend, they go their separate ways... with their respective lovers. Except they have the same idea: to go to their country house...*

Localized (English) synopsis: *The members of an apparently happy couple, each with their respective lovers, have the same idea: spending the weekend at their holiday home. Finding each other there is only the beginning of an awkward and hilarious weekend.*

In the original (French) version of the synopsis, the potential viewer gets acquainted (by naming names) with the main characters of the film. The use of ellipsis at the end of sentences allows one to create an atmosphere of awkwardness, intrigue and curiosity, attracting a potential viewer. These moments are absent in the localized version of the synopsis, which does not allow the viewer to correctly interpret the emotive component of the message.

Hence, a potential viewer considers the genre of this film as a family drama, and not as a comedy. In this case, we are faced with the need to localize not only

the textual component of the film, but also the main concepts of *amour* (*love*) and *famille* (*family*) contained in it, which culturally do not coincide in the French and Anglo-Saxon linguistic cultures.

To adequately localize these concepts, the localization team should have used additional speech markers, allowing the potential viewer to correctly identify the genre of the film: family comedy, and also note the confrontation of the concepts *amour* (*love*) and *famille* (*family*) in the text of the synopsis and when choosing the localization version of the title.

Due to the unsuccessful localization of the main semantic concepts contained in the film and the distortion of the emotive component of the text of small-format units of the film discourse, the film rating of the on the original online resource (Allociné) and the English-language distributor (IMBD) differs significantly: the rating of the French-language version of the film is 5.4, and the English-language version is 2.9. We can interpret the results as the effect of unsuccessful localization the film text due to the distortion of the main emotive message and the unsuccessful linguistic and cultural adaptation of the film concepts.

Conclusions

The modern film industry is actively developing and undergoing a number of changes related to the trend of globalization. Hence, the number of real and virtual enterprises providing the opportunity to view the products of the film industry is growing in the world. In accordance with this, there is a growing social demand for the implementation of the localization format: a special translation of films taking into account the recipient's linguoculture. Localization is a complex process of translation and transformation of the film text and its individual units into the target language, taking into account its linguistic and cultural parameters.

In this study, we considered the localization of small-format units of the film text (movie titles, synopses and slogans) of the French film discourse into English and their pragmatic impact on the recipient-viewer. We defined the concept of precedent film text and textual reminiscences as the main objects of localization, and also considered the main concepts of the French film discourse as an important component of the semantic field of film production. As an empirical basis of the study, we conducted an anonymous survey of viewers who viewed the localization of the film and provided data on anticipations of its content before watching the film (after getting acquainted with localized small-format units of the film text) and after watching it, and also calculated the average percentage of adequacy of the viewer's expectations from watching the film.

The results approved that the unsuccessful localization of the film significantly influences the viewing activity of potential viewers, as well as their preview reactions regarding the content and genre of the film.

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