THE PRACTICAL ASPECT OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE TRANSLATION OF FILM TITLES INTO GERMAN

Abstract. The research deals with the peculiarities of practical aspect of translation of English-language film titles into German. The adaptation of English-language film titles into German languages is classified by the type of the translation tactics used, such as functional translation (application of translation transformations to preserve the ideological content of film titles in the original language), literal translation (semantic duplication of the film titles into the translated language), translation with contextual changes (adaptations of the film titles into the translation language with the expansion or replacement of semantic units) and compromise translation (complete replacement of the original film titles into the translation language in order to preserve the advertising function of the film title, and taking into account the target audience).

An analysis of the translation of English-language film titles into German is modeled, and the model is based on the adequacy and equivalence of the translation.

Within the limits of the defined translation tactics, the translational transformations during the translation of English-language film titles into German are considered. In particular attention is focused on such translation techniques as transliteration, tracing, expansion, replacement, omission, permutation.
It was found that in the translation of English-language film titles into German there is an oversaturation of Anglicisms that has an ambiguous effect on the development of the German-language film titles, because on the one hand it is enriched bringing something “unique”, but on the other hand its own lexical elements are displaced which may lead to a linguistic and cultural problem of German translation in the future.

It is noted that the translation of English-language film titles into German is also characterized by the addition of emotional coloring when adapting some film titles, usually in compliance with the genre and plot and the original title, which realizes the advertising function of the film title, namely promotes the popularity of the picture.

**Keywords:** film title, translation transformation, film translation, English-German translation.

**Problem statement.** The process of globalization and integration contributed to the fact that the problem of implementing the cultural aspect in the translation of audiovisual content is relevant for mutual understanding and knowledge about people of different countries and cultures. Difficulties that arise in the process of intercultural communication are associated with the difference in the linguistic picture of the world among the inhabitants of different countries.

Today cinematography has become one of the most popular arts, a supplier of behavior models for the average holder of modern culture [5, p. 142]. At the same time the titles of the films are their unique business card, as they are indicated on the posters, mentioned in TV announcements, feature and documentary films, etc. So, getting to know any movie begins with its title.

So far there is no clearly formed system of transferring film titles into the translated language as a result of which a significant number of inaccuracies and translation errors are allowed in the translation process. Every year the number of new films are growing and at the same time the audience is expanding, but nevertheless much less work is devoted to the titles of films and the peculiarities of their translation than to the titles of literary works.

The working practice of translators proves that any text can be fully (adequately) adopted into another language while preserving all stylistic and other features characteristic of the author's context. But in order to accurately convey the content it is often necessary to change the structure of the sentence translated according to the norms of the language, that is to rearrange or even replace individual words and phrases.

Researching the translation practice of Hollywood films' the titles into German allows us to assert that it is important for the translator to adapt the title of the film created in a foreign language to the German-speaking culture taking into account both the speech, the value and cognitive attitudes of the recipient.

Thus, the purpose of the research involves the analysis of the peculiarities of English-language film titles' translation into German based on the applied translation tactics modeled by the researches.

Presenting main material. The analysis of translation transformations used in the translation of English-language film titles into German is based on the used modeling method. Through modeling translation experts set themselves the goal of recreating the adoption process in general revealing the tools of translation comprising the translators’ activities, strategy and tactics in the working process, indicating the successive stages of the transition, establishing the level of equivalence and adequacy of the translated product as a necessary condition for ensuring a successful act of interlingua communication.

Adequacy and equivalence of the translation are the basic requirements in our model of analysis of the film titles' translation. Concerning this it should be mentioned that the concept of adequate translation is broader than the concept of equivalent translation. Equivalence is a more specific and narrow category usually denoting a fairly close correspondence between two texts. Adequacy is a certain compromise made by translator to sacrifice equivalence to solve the main task of translation.

In other words, adequacy has an optimal character, rather than a maximal one, that is the translation should optimally correspond to certain conditions and tasks. The fundamental notion of an adequate translation is that a semantically and pragmatically equivalent translation is considered adequate. Of course, the adequacy or equivalence of the translation of film titles is an evaluation result of the translation process itself for everyone's consideration.

In our estimation, the achievement of a certain level of adequacy or equivalence of the result of translation, in particular full, partial or zero, occurs in two stages of the film titles' translation process, namely the pre-translation and, directly, translation stages.

The pre-translation stage or contextualization of the translation of film titles comprises an analysis aimed at determining the significance of the film titles in the socio-cultural context, its content and communicative intent, and also the goals of its receptive orientation.
The translation stage or interpretation of the film title is the adaptation of the film titles in the translated language due to the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the target audience while preserving its primary and pragmatic goals.

Thus, it can be said that in order to achieve the adequacy or equivalence of the translated film titles, it is necessary to carry out its contextual analysis and after that the film title should be interpreted using the chosen type of translation.

Analytical analysis of the publications of researchers who studied the translation of film titles gives reasons to highlight the following basic translation tactics:

1. Functional translation – applying the translation transformations to preserve the ideological content of the film titles in the original language.
2. Literal translation – semantic duplication of the film title in the translated language.
3. Translation with contextual changes – adaptation of the film titles in the translated language with expansion or replacement of semantic units.
4. Compromise translation – complete replacement of the film title in the translated language in order to preserve mostly the advertising function of the film in consideration with the peculiarities of the target audience.

Within the chosen tactic the translator applies translation transformations when adopting a film title into the translated language. In our research great attention is focused on such translation techniques as transliteration, tracing, expansion, replacement, omission, permutation. It is worth noting that the choice of tactics for translating film titles and translation techniques depends on the desire of localizers to preserve the intentions of the authors of the films or to pay attention to the attractiveness of the title for a potential audience.

The analysis of the titles of Hollywood films and their translations into German allows us to state that it is important for the translator to adapt the English-language film title to the German-speaking surroundings, their culture concerning the language, value and cognitive attitudes of the recipient.

Therefore, such a translation tactic as literal translation is actively used. This translation is based on the techniques of transliteration and tracing. As a rule, film titles that do not contain foreign cultural realities that cannot be translated are subjected to this translation tactic. For example: “The Great Dictator” – “Der Große Diktator” (2007); “Prizzi's Honor” – “Die Ehre der Prizzis” (2012); “The Star Wars” – “Krieg der Sterne” (1987); “Pride and Prejudice and Zombies” – “Stolz und Vorurteil und Zombies” (2015).

Another translation tactic is functional translation. It is used by the translator for genre, semantic, linguistic or cultural adaptation of the foreign film title. The transformation process of the English-language film title is mostly held be using such lexical-semantic translation techniques as adding, omitting or replacing words. For example: “Air Bud” – “Air Bud – Champion auf vier Pfoten” (2011); “Bill &

Amplification, that is addition, means that the number of words in the translated text is increased. In some cases, the translator needs to use this technique due to the informality of the semantic components contained in the word combinations in the original language so the translator resorts to amplification to preserve the norms of the translated language. As the result, these or other additions may be caused by certain pragmatic factors, since the information included in the content of the film title might have been accessible to the target audience’s understanding, while it is incomprehensible to the foreign-speaking audience.


Quite often proper nouns that contain the unique ethnic and cultural specificity of a particular nation are used in film titles, and their equivalents may not in the linguistics of other nation. This specificity may not be clear to a foreign recipient, and in this case the translator turns to contextual expansion. For example: “Spy” – “Spy – Susan Cooper Undercover” (2016); “Taxi» – “Taxi Teheran” (2015); “Neighbors 2” – “Bad Neighbors 2” (2016); “Storks” – “Störche – Abenteuer im Anflug” (2016); “Angry Birds” – “Angry Birds – Der Film” (2015); “The Hollars” – “Die Hollars – Eine Wahnsinnsfamilie” (2016).

Such a translation technique as adaptation by omitting words and expressions from the original text is the exact opposite technique to addition. As a rule, the so-called semasiologically redundant words or expressions denoting a meaning that can be extracted from the title and in their absence are omitted most often during translation. In certain cases, the omission becomes necessary due to the peculiarities of the translated language, for example, genre or stylistic realities of the translated text as well as involuntary tautologies that do not have an important stylistic meaning for the film title.

Another type of translation adaptation is complete replacement. This method involves renaming the film, usually based on the content of the screenplay. This method of translation refers to the varieties of semantic development, in this case the transformation does not take place by individual elements, but holistically. Complete replacement is used if it is impossible to convey the pragmatic meaning of the original film title, because it is represented by an untranslatable combination of words, particularly it is impossible to convey the pragmatic meaning of the original title achieved by a compromise translation. “She’s Out of My League” (2015) was released in Germany as “Zu scharf, um wahr zu sein”. In this case the title gets closer to the understanding of the recipients.

The biggest challenge for the translator is the film titles that contain a play on words, for example, “Die Hard” (2008) is translated into German as “Stirb langsam”, which is also justified. Let’s consider the examples of complete replacement of film titles and the factors that motivated the translators: the film “Bald Hairdresser” (2013) was released in German under the title “Den skaldede Frisør”. Probably, this translation was presented on the foreign film market in order not to distract potential viewers with associations with oncology and chemotherapy, as this could significantly reduce the commercial success of the film.

In the translation of film titles from English to German a tendency to their completely replacement in the genre of “arthouse cinema” can be traced. The well-known Hollywood film “Skyfall” (2012), which was released in Germany in 2012, became known under the name “James Bond 007”. To the PR managers’ point of view the audience should have drawn an analogy with the first film “Quantum of Solace” (2008) that was known in Germany as “James Bond 007: Ein Quantum Trost”, but in fact the majority of the German public did not even suspect the connection between these two films. Linguists-translators explain the choice by the fact that this translation was motivated by the active struggle of the language community of Germany against the so-called “Kevinismus”, that is, the penetration of Americanisms into the German language.

Another vivid example of a complete replacement caused by the desire to retreat from Americanism was the film title of the popular American action film “Taken 2” (2012) translated into German as “96 Hours”, but the presented equivalent has nothing to do with the original title of the film. So, the length of time “96 hours” indicated in the title is related to the plot of the film, according to which the main character is given 96 hours to rescue the hostage.

It should be noted that today, in the era of globalization, the German language, like any others, is strongly influenced by English. Anglicisms in the German language have penetrated into all spheres of modern life, such as fashion, politics, advertising, economy, and the film industry was no exception. English words are very often presented in the translation of the Hollywood film titles or partially preserved, supplemented with German words, for example: “Birdman” – “Birdman


Anglicisms in the German language are explained as a rule by external reasons, that they are extralinguistic in nature. It means the globalization of the English language, the widespread popularization of the American way of life in the mass media, the emergence of new technical, computer, and cultural and social terms.

Conclusions. Summarizing the analysis, we can estimate that when adapting film titles, the translators mainly use transformations at the level of words, phrases or sentences, particularly lexical changes take place and the genre of the film and orientation to the target audience are also taken into account in order to ensure their adequate perception.

The continuous sampling method made it possible to find the English-language titles that are adapted into German by using literal translation. In order to preserve stylistic and emotional characteristics the translator can use functional or contextual translation allowing to keep the adequacy of the translation of the film titles and making it as understandable as possible for the perception of foreign-speaking recipients.

It is substantiated that the equivalence includes the semantic proximity of the original and the translation of English-language film titles as much as possible in specific conditions by the correspondence of their lexical composition. Adequacy, in turn, includes the correspondence of stylistic features, the pragmatic accuracy of translation and the selection of analogs, or the search for counterparts for idiomatic and phraseological expressions. At the same time a non-equivalent translation can also be adequate if the translator clearly distinguishes the meaning embedded in the original title, refers to the plot of the film, takes into account the possibility of retaining stable word combinations in film titles, conveys the title in such a way that it remains understandable for the target audience.

References:


