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Translation strategies for characters' names into Kazakh language in Disney animated pictures

Translation of the names of Disney cartoon characters is an urgent problem in modern linguistics. In the article the features of translating the names of Disney cartoon characters into Kazakh language using audiovisual means were discussed. The novelty of this article lies in the fact that it highlights the specific aspects of translation associated with a comprehensive approach to preserving the sound and character of the names of heroes. The article focuses on the fact that the characters in Disney cartoons have not only names, but also their unique voice characteristics, which are closely related to their names. Various translation strategies such as transcription, transliteration, calcification, transformation were analyzed and examples of specific cases were given. Special attention was paid to preserving the sound and semantic meaning of names, as well as their easy perception by the audience. The study provides a better understanding of the problems and difficulties faced by translators when working with the names of Disney cartoon characters, and recommendations for choosing the most optimal translation solutions were provided. The results of the study can be useful for professional translators, as well as for students and teachers interested in the problems of translating names in an audiovisual environment.

Keywords: translation strategies, localization, cartoons, audiovisual translation, characters' names, transliteration, transformation, Kazakh language.

Introduction

The translation of the names of the characters in Disney cartoons is an urgent topic, as it concerns the process of creating animated films for an international audience. Translating the names of heroes is one of the key tasks faced by translators and localizers working on Disney projects. They should not only convey the meaning of names into other languages, but also take into account the cultural characteristics and expectations of viewers in different countries. The accuracy and correspondence of the translation of the names of cartoon characters are of great importance so that viewers can fully immerse themselves in the plot and atmosphere of the film. Incorrect translation of the hero's name or its absence in other languages may cause confusion or disappointment among viewers. In addition, the translation of the names of cartoon characters is also associated with marketing and commercial aspects. Disney characters are an important brand, and their names are often used in products, toys, books and other goods. The correct translation of the name can help promote products related to cartoon characters on the international market. Subsequently, the audiovisual translation of characters' proper names of Disney cartoons into Kazakh language remains relevant both for professional translators and localizers, as well as for viewers and fans of cartoons.

The theoretical part of the given research is based on the works of such foreign scholars as F. Chaume (2012) [1], E. Di Giovanni (2016) [2], Y. Gambier and H. Gottlieb (2017) [3], W. Patterson (2017) [4], C. Roy (2018) [5]. Their scientific works represent the most significant overview of theory and practice in audiovisual translation as well as its problems. The theory of translation and its strategies are described in the works of such scholars as N. Garbovskiy (2004) [6], V. Komissarov (2001) [7], M. Ilyushkina (2015) [8]. As for Kazakhstani scholars, A.G. Kaliyeva and A.Zh. Zhaparova [9] investigated the peculiarities and main problems of audiovisual translation depicting them in their own article; V. Makhpirov and A. Arstanova [10] illustrated some problems in translation of audiovisual texts in own article as well.

The provided research aims at the problem that the names of characters in cartoons are important elements of character creation and storytelling, and can influence the perception of the audience. Translating the names of heroes into other languages can lead to a change in their meaning, as well as the loss of cultural and sociolinguistic shades. The audiovisual translation of the names of the characters within the cartoons should take into account not only audio, but also visual aspects in order to emphasize the individuality of the characters and their connection with culture and plot.

The object of the research is translation strategies in Disney animated pictures. The subject is characters' proper names. The purpose of the given research is the study of translation strategies of the names of Disney cartoon characters, aimed at identifying the features and role of the translation of the names of heroes in the context of an animated work, as well as to assess its impact on the perception of the audience and on the preservation of cultural and linguistic nuances of the original. Research objectives: to analyze the features of the names of Disney cartoon characters and their meaning in the context of the original versions; to identify the main difficulties and challenges faced by translators in the audiovisual translation of the names of heroes into Kazakh; to conduct an experimental study by presenting the translated names of the heroes to the Kazakh audience and evaluate their perception and understanding; to depict the results of the study and recommendations that can be used by translators and linguists in the audiovisual translation of the names of Disney cartoon characters into Kazakh.

Audiovisual translation of the names of heroes is the art of transferring the meaning and sound of their names into another language in order to preserve their recognition and at the same time adapt them to a new culture and audience. In the case of the Kazakh language, this can be a particularly interesting and creative process [1].

When translating the names of heroes into Kazakh, it is important to take into account the sonority and cultural characteristics of the language. Some names can be transcribed into Kazakh, preserving the sound similarity with the original. However, in other cases, it may be necessary to create new names based on the Kazakh language and culture. This may include replacing foreign language elements and creating names that reflect Kazakh traditions and values.

Materials and methods

A total of 10 Disney animated pictures were selected for this study. The selection criteria included popularity among Kazakh audience, availability of Kazakh dubbed versions, and a diverse range of character names. The names of all major characters from the selected Disney animated pictures were compiled. These included names of both human and non-human characters. Different translation strategies used for translating character names into the Kazakh language were identified based on previous studies on translation and localization. These strategies included transliteration, loan translation, adaptation, and combination of strategies.

Verification with Kazakh audience: A sample of 50 Kazakh individuals from different age groups and backgrounds were randomly selected to evaluate the translated character names. They were requested to rate the appropriateness, pronounce ability, and naturalness of each translated name on a Likert scale:

- a. Appropriateness: The extent to which the translated name reflects the character's traits, cultural background, and the overall story.
- b. Pronounce ability: The ease of pronunciation for a Kazakh speaker.
- c. Naturalness: The degree to which the translated name sounds natural in the Kazakh language.

Statistical analysis: The collected data from the Kazakh audience was analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the overall opinion on the translated character names. Validation and revision: The feedback from the Kazakh audience was considered for further validation and revision of the translated character names if necessary. The final translated character names, along with the selected translation strategies, were documented for use in future dubbing and localization processes of Disney animated pictures in Kazakh language.

Results and discussion

Without a doubt, during the past twenty years or so, researchers studying audiovisual translation (AVT) have given reception a greater and greater deal of attention, leading to "a deeper understanding of the audience's behavior and attitudes towards the consumption of translated audiovisual productions" [2].

The concept of sense must also be severely considered by AVT researchers because it cannot be formed using a single sign system or in a linear succession. Interaction occurs not only between the several characters that contribute to the AV product, but also between them and the audience and even across distinct AV works (allusions, references). Given that intellectual property rights on a film often allow for multiple versions (one for TV, one for use as an airline feature film, or yet another version in which offensive language has been censored in compliance with the demands of political correctness), the hierarchy of original and subsequent distribution or broadcasting becomes questionable. Additionally, other users (parents, educators, religious organizations, ideological groups, etc.) can get their own customized final cut thanks to digital technology [3].

In today's world, animation is becoming more and more common and important. Its population is significantly increasing and continues to do so with every passing year. Filmmakers can create fictional characters with the help of animated films, and these characters can then have voiceovers that enhance the actors' performances and give them a more authentic and alive appearance [4].

Translation is, without a doubt, a complex and multifaceted art. It requires not only a good knowledge of languages, but also a deep understanding of the cultural context in which the original words were spoken. One of the areas where this is especially noticeable is the translation of the names of Disney cartoon characters.

The names of children's characters in Disney cartoons play an important role — they should be easy to remember, easy to pronounce and as close as possible to the characteristics of the characters. However, when translating these names into other languages, there are difficulties associated with preserving their meaning and the impression they make on the audience [5].

Some hero names contain cultural patterns or puns that are difficult to translate into another language without losing meaning. For example, in the cartoon “Aladdin” there are such heroes as the Genie and Abu. It is their names that play an important role in history and emphasize their character and features. Translating these names into other languages requires searching for equivalents that would preserve their meaning and sound [6].

The difficulty of translating the names of Disney cartoon characters is a tough task that requires not only good language skills, but also creativity and flexibility. Translators should strive to preserve not only the meaning of the names, but also the impression they create in the audience, so that each Disney cartoon can reveal its magic in any culture and in any language [7].

Translation strategies refer to the methods and techniques used by translators to ensure accurate and effective translation of a text from one language to another [8]. These strategies may vary depending on the nature of the text, the target audience, and the purpose of the translation [9]. In addition to this, for translating a text aimed at a child audience, the translator needs to take into account the characteristics of the audience, namely certain age characteristics, the semantic load of the text, the semantic organization of words and the frequency of use of certain parts of speech [10]. Here are some common translation strategies:

1. Literal translation: This strategy focuses on translating words and phrases directly without considering the cultural or linguistic nuances. While it provides a faithful translation, it may not be suitable for idiomatic expressions or cultural-specific references.

2. Transposition: This strategy involves replacing one grammatical form or word class with another to preserve the meaning and structure of the source text. For example, converting a noun phrase into a verb phrase or using a different verb tense [11].

3. Adaptation: Adaptation is used when certain cultural references or expressions in the source text cannot be directly translated. It involves finding equivalent expressions or cultural references in the target language that convey the same meaning [12].

4. Compensation: Compensation is used when something in the source text cannot be adequately translated into the target language. In such cases, the translator may add extra information or explanation elsewhere in the text to compensate for the loss of meaning.

5. Localization: Localization refers to adapting the translation to a specific geographic or cultural context. This strategy considers variations in dialects, idioms, and cultural norms to make the translation more suitable for the target audience.

6. Chunking: Chunking involves breaking down complex sentences or phrases into smaller, more manageable segments in the target language. This strategy helps maintain clarity and readability in the translated text.

7. Simplification: Simplification strategy is used to make the translation more accessible and comprehensible, especially when translating technical or specialized texts. It involves simplifying complex concepts and using plain language to aid understanding [13].

8. Transliteration: one of the most common methods of translating the names of heroes is transliteration, in which a sound comparison of a name in a foreign language with similar sounds or similar variants in the target language is performed.

It's important for translators to consider these strategies and choose the most appropriate ones based on the specific requirements and constraints of each translation project [14].

It is absolutely crucial for translators to acknowledge and assess the emotional resonance and impact of a given word or phrase in the source culture before translating it into the target language [15].

The given study aimed to investigate the translation strategies employed for characters' proper names in Disney animated pictures into Kazakh language. A total of 10 Disney animated pictures were selected for analysis, including popular films such as “Frozen”, “The Lion King”, “Madagascar”, “The little mermaid”, “Ralph Breaks the Internet”, “The Incredibles -2”, “Rapunzel”, “The Croods”, “Toy story” and “Beauty and the Beast”.

The findings revealed that there were several translation strategies used for characters' proper names in Kazakh. The most common strategy was transliteration, where the original name was phonetically converted into Kazakh sounds and characters. This strategy aimed to maintain the original pronunciation and identity of the character's name. For example, the character “Elsa” from “Frozen” was transliterated as «Ельса» in Kazakh, Rapunzel was transliterated as «Рапунсэль», Tony and Jack from the cartoon “The Incredibles” were transliterated as «Тони» and «Джек».

Another strategy observed was translation based on meaning. In this strategy, the name was translated into an equivalent in Kazakh that conveyed a similar meaning or characteristic. For instance, the negative character “Scar” from “The Lion King” which was translated as «Ызғар» (the meaning of this Kazakh word is that the hero has a stern appearance). The nickname of the main hero “Frozone” from “The Incredibles-2” was translated as «Фреон», which means “the canonical name of a group of halogens-containing derivatives of saturated hydrocarbons” in Kazakh language.

Additionally, adaptation or modification of the name was another strategy employed. This involved altering the original name to suit the phonetic structure and conventions of the Kazakh language. For example, the character “Belle” from “Beauty and the Beast” was adapted as «Белль» in Kazakh, where the final «е» sound was changed to «э» to fit the language's phonetics.

A less common strategy observed was the use of a combination of transliteration and translation based on meaning. Here, the name was partially transliterated and partially translated to capture both the original pronunciation and convey a meaningful association. One example of this strategy was seen in the character “Mufasa” from “The Lion King”, who was translated as «Мұфаса» in Kazakh.

In addition, in the Kazakh-language dubbing, the names of the cartoon characters have undergone changes. In the original there is a hero of Spam — from the word “spam” and the English name Stanley. This name was adapted as Спамбай. And Vanillope von Cupcake in the Kazakh version became «Ванилопа вон Шекеп» (from Kazakh language “sheker” means sugar, although “cupcake” means «кекс»).

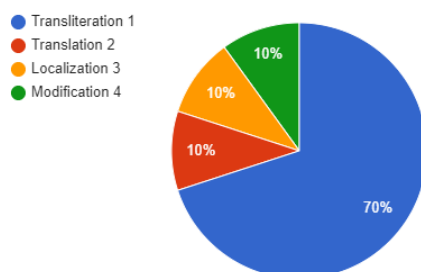


Figure 1. Translation strategies of the characters' names in Disney animated pictures

According to Figure 1, it is obvious that most characters' names were transliterated, but other strategies as “Translation”, “Localization” and “Modification” were considered to be the least.

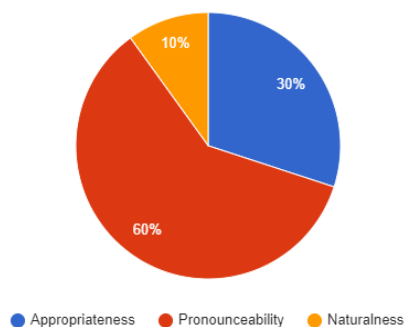


Figure 2. The perception of Disney characters' names in Kazakh language by Kazakh audience

A sample of 50 Kazakh individuals from different age groups and backgrounds were randomly selected to evaluate the translated character names (Fig. 2). They were requested to rate the appropriateness, pronounce ability, and naturalness of each translated name on a Likert scale (strongly agree, slightly agree, neutral, strongly disagree, slightly disagree). Most respondents (60 %) deem that it is quite easy to pronounce characters' proper names, 10 percent of respondents consider that some translated versions of names sound natural in Kazakh language, however, 30 percent of them believe that the translated names reflect the character's traits, cultural background.

Consequently, the findings of this study indicate that there are various translation strategies employed for characters' proper names in Disney animated pictures into the Kazakh language. These strategies aim to preserve the original identity and meaning of the names while adapting them to the phonetic structure and conventions of the Kazakh language.

Transliteration was found to be the most common strategy, emphasizing the preservation of the original pronunciation of the names. This can be attributed to the desire to maintain the familiarity and recognition of the characters among the Kazakh audience, especially considering the popularity of Disney films worldwide.

Translation based on meaning was also evident as a strategy, allowing for a more direct translation of the character's name while incorporating cultural and linguistic associations. This strategy aimed to enhance the audience's understanding and connection to the characters by selecting names that conveyed similar characteristics or meanings.

The adaptation strategy was observed to overcome the phonetic challenges posed by the Kazakh language. By modifying the original names, they were made more accessible and easier to pronounce for the Kazakh audience. This strategy can be seen as a compromise between maintaining the original identity of the characters and ensuring their names are linguistically suitable for Kazakh speakers.

Overall, the translation strategies used for characters' proper names in Disney animated pictures into Kazakh reflect the ongoing effort to find a balance between preserving the original names and catering to the language and cultural context of the target audience. These strategies play a crucial role in facilitating the localization and appreciation of Disney films in Kazakh-speaking regions.

Conclusion

Having analyzed all taken results, we came to conclusion that the translation of characters' proper names in Disney animated pictures into Kazakh language presents a multifaceted challenge. This process requires a delicate balance between preserving the essence and cultural context of the original names while ensuring they resonate with the target audience. Various translation strategies, such as transliteration, adaptation, and semantic equivalence, are employed to address these complexities.

Transliteration, which involves rendering the sounds of the original names into Kazakh script, is a common approach. It allows for a close phonetic approximation while maintaining the integrity of the characters' identities. However, it may not always capture the intended meaning or cultural nuances associated with the names.

Adaptation, on the other hand, entails modifying the names to align with Kazakh phonetics, syntax, and cultural norms. This strategy can be particularly effective in ensuring that the names are easily recognizable and relatable to the Kazakh-speaking audience. It may involve altering the sounds, structure, or even the entire name, while still preserving the essence of the character.

Semantic equivalence is another valuable strategy, focusing on translating the meaning or essence of the name rather than its phonetic components. This approach allows for a deeper cultural integration of the characters, as it considers the significance of the names in both the source and target languages. However, it may require a thorough understanding of the cultural and linguistic context to execute successfully.

Ultimately, the choice of translation strategy should be guided by a nuanced understanding of the source material, the target audience, and the cultural sensitivities involved. It is crucial for translators to collaborate closely with cultural experts and linguistic specialists to navigate these intricacies effectively.

In navigating the translation of characters' proper names in Disney animated pictures into Kazakh, it is essential to strike a harmonious balance between linguistic accuracy, cultural relevance, and audience engagement. By employing a combination of transliteration, adaptation, and semantic equivalence, translators can bridge the gap between two distinct linguistic and cultural landscapes, ultimately enhancing the viewing experience for Kazakh-speaking audiences.

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С.Е. Нургалиева, А.Ш. Жумашева

Дисней мультфильмдеріндегі кейіпкерлердің есімдерін қазақ тіліне аудару стратегиялары

Диснейлік мультфильмдер кейіпкерлерінің есімдерін аудару қазіргі лингвистиканың өзекті мәселесі. Мақалада диснейлік мультфильмдер кейіпкерлерінің есімдерін аудиовизуалды құралдар арқылы қазақ тіліне аудару ерекшеліктері қарастырылған. Бұл жұмыстың жаңашылдығы оның кейіпкерлер есімдерінің дыбысы мен сипатын сақтауға кешенді көзқараспен байланысты аударманың нақты аспектілерін көрсетуінде. Авторлар диснейлік мультфильмдердегі кейіпкерлердің есімдері ғана емес, сонымен қатар олардың есімдерімен тығыз байланысты ерекше дауыстық сипаттамалары бар екеніне назар аударады. Транскрипция, транслитерация, кальцинация, трансформация сияқты әртүрлі аударма стратегиялары талданған және нақты жағдайлардың мысалдары келтірілген. Атаулардың дыбысы мен семантикалық мағынасын сақтауға, сондай-ақ оларды аудиторияның оңай қабылдауына ерекше назар аударылған. Зерттеу диснейлік мультфильм кейіпкерлерінің есімдерімен жұмыс істеу кезінде аудармашылар тап болатын мәселелер мен қиындықтарды жақсы түсінуге мүмкіндік жасайды және аударманың ең оңтайлы шешімдерін таңдау бойынша ұсыныстар береді. Зерттеу нәтижелері кәсіби аудармашыларға, сондай-ақ аудиовизуалды ортадағы атауларды аудару мәселелеріне қызығушылық танытатын студенттер мен мұғалімдерге пайдалы болуы мүмкін.

Кілт сөздер: аударма стратегиялары, локализация, мультфильмдер, аудиовизуалды аударма, кейіпкерлердің есімдері, транслитерация, трансформация, қазақ тілі.

С.Е. Нургалиева, А.Ш. Жумашева

Стратегии перевода имен персонажей на казахский язык в мультфильмах Диснея

Перевод имен персонажей диснеевских мультфильмов является актуальной проблемой современной лингвистики. В данной статье рассмотрены особенности перевода имен персонажей диснеевских мультфильмов на казахский язык аудиовизуальными средствами. Новизна настоящей работы заклю-

чается в том, что в ней освещаются специфические аспекты перевода, связанные с комплексным подходом к сохранению звучания и характера имен героев. Авторами акцентировано внимание на том факте, что персонажи диснеевских мультфильмов имеют не только имена, но и свои уникальные голосовые характеристики, которые тесно связаны с их именами. Проанализированы различные стратегии перевода, такие как транскрипция, транслитерация, кальцификация, трансформация, и приведены примеры конкретных случаев. Особое внимание уделено сохранению звучания и смыслового значения названий, а также их легкому восприятию аудиторией. Исследование позволяет лучше понять проблемы и трудности, с которыми сталкиваются переводчики при работе с именами персонажей диснеевских мультфильмов, и дает рекомендации по выбору наиболее оптимальных переводческих решений. Результаты исследования могут быть полезны профессиональным переводчикам, а также студентам и преподавателям, интересующимся проблемами перевода названий в аудиовизуальной среде.

Ключевые слова: стратегии перевода, локализация, мультфильмы, аудиовизуальный перевод, имена персонажей, транслитерация, трансформация, казахский язык.

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