



## Metaphor Translation: Russian and English-Language Taglines for Feature-Length Films

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**ABSTRACT** This research is based on cognitive and linguocultural approaches to the analysis of taglines containing a metaphor, taking into account cognitive approach to its rendition. Therefore, according to the framework of the following study, the researchers turned to practical material under analysis: original taglines in English for feature films and their rendition into Russian. Thus, the research deals with the interaction of textual and visual components in the analysis of taglines from advertising posters to feature films. Then, original taglines and texts in the target language (TL) are compared with the purpose of determining whether the latter are translations in the framework of a functional approach or cultural adaptations of the original slogans. In fact, it aims to identify how metaphor and means of its renditions reflect cultural experience and mentality, inherent in the languages under analysis. This study showed that in most cases, Russian-language taglines are the result of the adaptation of original English-language texts.

### INTRODUCTION

Metaphor has been an object of study of Russian and foreign linguists for decades. Therefore, within the framework of translation studies, questions have been raised regarding its translatability and the ways of rendering it to another language. Moreover, there is a clear tendency of transition to integrative and interdisciplinary approaches to metaphor studies. In addition, there are a considerable number of papers studying this phenomenon from various angles (Shuttleworth 2017; Permyakova and Antineskul 2018; Tulusina et al. 2018; Pan 2018).

Despite the above statement, the problem of metaphor in terms of its rendition according to cognitive and linguacultural approaches is still not sufficiently disclosed, especially taking into account the stylistic features of the analyzed practical material. Therefore, within the framework of the following study, the researchers referred to the practical material under analysis: original taglines in English for feature films and their rendition into Russian, advertising posters were used as the source of practical material (Mirzoyeva 2014; Lunkova and Pavlova 2018; Badryzlova and Panicheva 2018).

In fact, original taglines and texts in the target language (TL) are compared with the purpose of determining whether the latter are

translations in the framework of a functional approach or cultural adaptations of the original slogans (Burmakova and Marugina 2014; Bondarevskaya 2019). Hence, the present study relies on a cognitive approach to the translation of metaphors of languages of different structures, including Russian and English, in order to identify the manner, in which this linguistic phenomenon reflects cultural experience and mentality inherent in the analyzed languages. In addition, as a part of this study, the analysis of the verbal component of film advertising focuses on the study of the interaction of text and visual components. Consequently, this interaction generates complex conceptual structures that form around the metaphorical core.

### Objectives

This research is based on cognitive and linguocultural approaches to the analysis of taglines containing a metaphor, taking into account cognitive approach to its rendition.

### METHODOLOGY

According to the theoretical and methodological perspectives, this study is based on the ideas and approaches of foreign and Russian linguists who appealed to metaphor study on the material of English and a number of other languages; that is,

Mandelblit's Cognitive Translation Hypothesis (1995) and the concept presented by Deignan et al. (1997), within the framework of which, four models of metaphor translation are defined by considering the cognitive approach (Mandelblit 1995; Chendey 2014; Korolyova et al. 2016). In addition, the study is based on the theory of conceptual metaphor (CMT) developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and the blending theory (BT), elaborated by Fauconnier and Turner (2008). Therefore, the researchers analyzed polysemantic words, phraseological units, "metaphorical expressions" (Lakoff 1993), and cases of metonymy in the context of the interaction of textual and visual components (Sanford et al. 2014; Kovecses 2017).

However, based on the cognitive linguistics, "metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain" (Kovecses 2010). In other words, metaphor is founded on the construction of correspondences between the elements of one area of experience and the elements of the other. It also represents the mapping of the elements in another system. Of course, researchers did not question a significant role of metaphor in the linguistic and mental spaces: it "saw a key to understand the foundations of thinking and processes of creating not only a national-specific vision of the world, but also its universal image" (Arutyunova 1990; Berezhnykh et al. 2018).

It should be noted that the American analytical philosopher Black (1979) is one of the pioneers in the field of a multifaceted cognitive approach to the study of metaphor who proposed his own theory ("interaction view of metaphor"). He adhered to the idea, which was later developed in Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) works. Lakoff and Johnson (2008) demonstrated the formation of the original doctrine of a conceptual metaphor (CMT). Following the monograph "Metaphors we live by" (Lakoff and Johnson 2008), numerous works have been published with the aim of theoretical comprehension and practical study of metaphor as a way of thinking and understanding of the reality and experience. According to Boldyrev, in Russian linguistics, a cognitive approach to the study of language was largely stipulated by the development of the theory of nomination as a theoretical and methodological basis (Boldyrev 2004). Moreover, Arutyunova (1990), Shamayeva

(2014), Yevstafova (2010), and other researchers conducted some studies in the field of conceptual metaphor. Therefore, this study is based on the blending theory (BT) and CMT. According to the blending theory, metaphORIZATION is not exhausted by the projection from the source sphere to the target sphere, as it is stated in the theory of the conceptual metaphor. It involves the formation of the blended mental spaces that produce meanings in the very process of conceptual integration (Budayev 2016; Trim and Śliwa 2019).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the studies, using the transferred meaning of the words corresponds to the pragmatics of any advertising campaign, because the main objectives of advertising are information and persuasion (Crystal 2001; Goddard 1998; Yur'yeva 2015). Moreover, the presence of metaphor in the advertising text characterizes the corresponding sales tactics as not as frank or aggressive, but more modern. On the one hand, the creative use of a conventional metaphor can lead to forming a new idea of the advertised product, and on the other hand, it implies implementing a humorous aspect because a metaphor in conjunction with the word play can shed light on the non-obvious meaning of the polysemantic word and idiomatic or metaphorical expression. A conventional metaphor is understood as a unit reproduced in a language, which is an expression of a view of the world and is common to native language speakers (Yur'yeva 2015). However, both playing up a conventional metaphor with the help of visual images and a creative approach to its use lead to reactivation of correspondences in order to attract attention, create a humorous effect or introduce new semantic nuances (Yur'yeva 2015; Baker and Saldanha 2019).

Altogether, some works highlight the problem of implementing a metaphor in advertising text according to the cognitive approach (Yur'yeva 2015; Baker and Saldanha 2019). In other words, scientists study the interaction of metaphor and culture, as well as aspects of metaphor translation. Here, it is important to note that the most common ways of translating metaphor are substitution, descriptive translation (paraphrase), and deletion. Thus, it is crucial to understand

the ability of pun to surprise, and also to attract the attention of a recipient. In this regard, it is necessary to emphasize how important it is to preserve the possibility to activate word play in texts in the TL and SL with the help of the visual component of the advertising campaign (Baker and Saldanha 2019).

There are various approaches to the rendition of metaphor, though the majority of researchers rely on similar principles.

It is notable that the “hypothesis of cognitive translation” proposed by Mandelblit (1995) formed the basis of the concept of Deignan et al. (1997), who considered four possible ways of metaphor rendition, including a similar conceptual metaphor and equivalent linguistic expression, use of a different conceptual metaphor, words and expressions with similar direct meanings, but different metaphorical meanings, and a similar conceptual metaphor and another linguistic expression. In addition, researchers point to the significance of the culture factor in metaphor translation. According to the cognitive approach to the translation of metaphors, “the cultural component being the basis for the conceptual metaphor makes it possible to see differences in how human experience is structured in different cultures” (Marugina 2008).

According to the framework of this study, the researchers analyzed 300 slogans for feature films during 2016 to 2018. Genre affiliation was not the determining criterion; however, taglines under analysis were selected depending on the country of film production. In addition, sampling involved slogans for films produced in the United States and Great Britain. Therefore, the researchers investigated taglines from advertising posters in the SL and their translations into Russian. Results analysis revealed that only 10 percent of the slogans in the SL contain a metaphor. Thus, the researchers consider a number of examples and correlate the text component with the visual one.

“Family values. Power to the people – stick it to the man”; it is a tagline used for the feature-length film “Captain Fantastic”, 2016, US (Base of advertising slogans (Electronic resource, From < <http://www.kinopoisk.ru/> 22>)). In this slogan, the idiom “stick it to the man” is used in the sense of “giving a rebuff, going against the system”. In fact, a family exists in the center of

the story line that lives in the forest in harmony with nature. This means that circumstances encourage them to leave the house and go to the big city to face civilization. In Russian, the slogan was adapted as follows: “On podgotovil ikh ko vsemu, krome nastoyashchey zhizni” (“He prepared them for everything except real life”). Both taglines correspond to the pragmatics and plot of the film, but it is important to note that the slogan on the TL is not a translation in its broad sense. Actually, translation with the help of an analogue or equivalent is not possible due to the absence of it as such in the TL. Thus, the interaction between verbal and visual components of this advertising campaign is of interest. In other words, the poster depicts seven members of a family in old-fashioned clothes; one of the children is wearing a gas mask which adds an element of absurdity and farce as well as provides a reference to the content of the film.

The tagline “The impossibilities are endless” for the film “Doctor Strange” (2016), USA production, is rendered to the Russian language with the help of a metaphor: “Za gran’yu soznaniya lezhit novaya real’nost’” (“Behind the edge of consciousness, there lies a new reality”), where consciousness is presented as a subject that is limited and has its bounds (Base of advertising slogans (Electronic Resource)). However, in the original tagline, the stylistic method of negation is used: it uses the negative prefix *im-* and the suffix *-less* (in the meaning of absence of any attribute). The poster for the film visually plays on the word “edge”; it depicts the figure of a man surrounded by urban landscapes and skyscrapers that are located around the perimeter of the poster and form edges, acute angles, and broken lines. In our opinion, the Russian-language adaptation is more successful than the text in the SL, because the slogan in the TL is better correlated with the visual component. However, in the original tagline, the word “endless” refers to an infinite number of dimensions. According to the plot, the protagonist of the film demonstrates the ability to transform time and space, and can also travel between parallel dimensions.

“The truth is, we cannot speak other than by our paintings” is the tagline for a full-length animated film “Loving Vincent”, 2017, produced by Poland, Great Britain and the USA (Base

of advertising slogans (Electronic Resource). Despite the fact that this slogan has neither translation nor adaptation, it is of interest from the perspective of how it metaphorically plays on the plot of the film. The painting is the world's first animated feature film, which was completely painted with oil paints on canvas. Then, "paintings" in the tagline are indirectly compared with a language or words that allow us to interact and communicate with the reality and convey the meanings. Finally, the poster for the film depicts a portrait of Van Gogh as if the artist turns to the viewer; the image is made in the technique of Van Gogh himself.

"You're never too old to get even" - the tagline for the film "Going in Style" (2016), USA (Base of advertising slogans (Electronic Resource)). In fact, the advertising text is based on the idiom "get even" in the meaning of "settle accounts with someone". The meaning is actualized due to the fact that the tagline appeals to the use of the content and visual components. As shown, there are three retirement age friends in the center of the story who decide to return their pension savings by committing a robbery of the bank, which has appropriated their money, thereby getting even with it. The poster depicts three men who walk with bags full of money. Then, there is a police mugshot in the background. The Russian-language slogan "Vozrast delu ne pomekha" ("Age is not a hindrance") is an occasional phraseological unit modified by means of the replacement of a component (substitution). Finally, in this case, when adapting the slogan, we observe a substitution of the original metaphor for another.

It was found that the original imagery and metaphoricity can be lost while addressing the stylistic features of the analyzed advertising text in the process of the rendition of taglines containing a metaphor for feature films. Therefore, the term "translation" was not originally applied to advertising texts to indicate the process of their rendition to another language. In other words, the translation of advertising was called "localization", "adaptation", "transcreation" or "rewriting". According to Meshcheryakova, "for many practitioners of promotional activities, the text in a foreign language is used only as a means to understand the idea of the advertised

product, the text itself is often written anew in the language of the consumer country, taking into account its national specificity" (Meshcheryakova 2011).

Hence, rendition of metaphor to another language and the final text in the TL will particularly disclose different and common cultures whose languages are involved in the translation process. It should be also mentioned that the "cultural distance" affects its final product. Of course, it is necessary to teach metaphor to English language learners (Nurkhamitov and Fakhrutdinova 2017). In addition, the term "cultural distance", which is implemented within the framework of the social and ethnopsychology, could be applied in a broad sense in translation studies. It was introduced by psychologists Furnham and Bochner, who used the idea of classifying cultures "by the degree of their differences" (Berezhanova 2010).

The study of practical material indicates that when rendering slogans into Russian, emphasis was placed on the rendition of emotional, stylistic and cultural aspects. Due to pragmatics, culture, semantics and other aspects, the translated tagline often becomes quite a free interpretation of the original text in the SL and has nothing to do with it. In most cases, Russian-language taglines are the result of the adaptation of original English-language texts. This is either stipulated by the absence of an equivalent metaphor as well as the possibility of preserving the original imagery, or it might be dictated by the intention to rewrite the tagline in the TL anew in order to better convey the idea to the recipient.

A multifaceted analysis of the metaphor in slogans showed that the visual component of an advertising campaign plays no less but even more important role than a verbal or textual one: advertising text can be played up by using the image on the poster, thereby building correspondences between the components; a film poster can also be an autonomous element which is not accompanied by an advertising slogan. Nevertheless, it is crucial how the transferred meaning of word combinations functions in both the advertising text and the context of the whole film: owing to the metaphor use, new semantic nuances are created and the plotline of the movie is actualized.



## CONCLUSION

As shown by the analyses, the main issue in the translation is to preserve the original design embedded in the source text. In fact, the stylistic features of the advertising text and the format of the print advertising necessitate such a translation, in which it is possible to preserve the expressiveness and pragmatic value of the original tagline.

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