Transadapting the Cultural Realia of Soviet Russia to an Arab Audience: The Case of the Film Утомленные Солнцем (Burnt by the Sun)

Katsiaryna Panasiuk & Rashid Yahiaoui, Arab Soecity of English Language Studies

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Transadapting the Cultural Realia of Soviet Russia to an Arab Audience: The Case of the Film Утомленные Солнцем (Burnt by the Sun)

Katsiaryna Panasiuk
Translation and Interpreting Institute, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar

Rashid Yahiaoui
Translation and Interpreting Institute, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Doha, Qatar

Abstract
Since the advent of the cinema, films started playing an important role in promoting knowledge about different countries and peoples. Taking the film Утомленные Солнцем (Burnt by the Sun) as a case study, the authors aim to describe translation strategies for transadapting cultural realia in their own Arabic dubbing script, and to look at them from the perspective of the translation norms that are operational in the Arab society. For the analysis of strategies of transadapting cultural realia into Arabic, the researchers use the taxonomy developed by Pedersen (Pedersen, 2005). They also employ the concept of norms by Toury (Toury, (1995/2012)) since these norms take into account cultural and social constraints of the community, which have an impact on the translator’s choices. The results of the study show that mostly source text-oriented strategies were used for transadapting the Soviet Russia cultural realia, with the exception of the realia belonging to the category of linguistic culture. It is true, however, that the norms operating in the Arab society and the constraints of the dubbing and subtitling modes can impact the translator’s choice to a large extent.

Key words: cultural realia, norms, Russian cinematography, Russian into Arabic dubbing, transadaptation

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Introduction

Throughout history, people have been using different media to obtain information. A turning point came with the creation of cinematography when films, in addition to fulfilling their aesthetic and entertainment functions, also started playing a leading role in disseminating knowledge and bridging gaps between cultures.

The Russian cinema of the early post-Soviet period is an indispensable part of world heritage. The movies of that time were influenced by the important historic events that took place on the threshold of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Interest in those events especially increased after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and continued perestroika. This innovative political course eventually led to the collapse of the USSR in 1991—an event which affected the countries of the Soviet bloc and reshaped the world map.

Naturally, the interest in the country was followed by an interest in its cinematography. Nowadays, due to the close cooperation between Russia and the Arab world in an array of spheres, Arab residents of the Gulf are coming to know more about Russian culture and history, which have influenced many aspects of life in the whole world. A brief survey conducted among 28 Master’s degree Arab students in Qatar suggests that, in general, Arabs of the Gulf have some knowledge about Russian and Soviet history; however, their knowledge remains limited. At the same time, they are eager to learn more from different sources, and consider movies to be a reasonable channel of information.

With all this in mind, the researchers have chosen to study the issue of transadapting culturally bound items, or cultural realia, of the Russian film Утомленные Солнцем ([Utomlennye Solntsem], Burnt by the Sun) (Mikhalkov, 1994) for the Arab audience in the Arabic language. By transadaptation the authors mean what Gambier, (2003) calls “a term which might allow us to go beyond the usual dichotomy (literal/free translation, translation/adaptation, etc.) and take target audiences into consideration more directly” (p. 178), and which includes different types of audiovisual activity, such as subtitling and dubbing.

The movie Утомленные Солнцем is an Oscar-winning film by Nikita Mikhalkov that was officially issued with closed English subtitles. The film elucidates and covertly criticizes life in the USSR at the peak of the Stalinist repressions in the 1930’s and speaks about Soviet cultural phenomena that have played an important role in modern Russia’s development up to the present day. Moreover, along with the international importance of the epoch depicted in the film, as well as the film’s aesthetic values, it also touches on the topics of freedom of speech and repressive regimes, progressive technologies, and state security—all of which are highly relevant to the world in general and the Arab world in particular.

As a common practice, movies screened for film festivals are subtitled into English and the language of the country. However, subtitles, although having many benefits for the viewers and film distributors, have their own disadvantages. These drawbacks are mostly associated with the fact that subtitles often prevent viewers from concentrating on the visual parts of the film. In the case of the film Утомленные Солнцем, it can be regarded as a substantial disadvantage, since the movie has received many international accolades, including praise for the visuals. Driven by the desire to transmit that visual beauty to the viewers, overall, dubbing was opted for while only subtitling songs and visual signs (posters) into Arabic.
For this research, transadaptation in Arabic for sections of the film that include instances of cultural realia was prepared, and the strategies opted for were analyzed through the prism of a specific theoretical model. The following sections will shed light on the scope of the concept of cultural realia and the applied theoretical model.

**Cultural Realia and Their Rendering in Audiovisual Translation (AVT)**

Taking into consideration the multiplicity of studies dealing with translating cultural elements, it is not surprising that different scholars use different terms and definitions while referring to the same phenomenon. For example, as Terestyenyi, (2011) posits, “it is not always clear which words and expressions should be considered culture-specific items, even in the literature of translation several names exist for these items: realia, culture-specific items and culturally bound items” (p. 13). Chaume, (2012) offers other terms, such as micro-signs, culturemes, extralinguistic references and culture entities. Scholars also have different understandings of culture, sometimes including in it the concept of ideology. Thus, according to Calzada Pérez, (2003) ideology is “the set of ideas, values and beliefs that govern a community by virtue of being regarded as the norm” (p. 5). On the other hand, she considers culture as “an integrated system of learned behavior patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society” (p. 23). As Yahiaoui, (2014) rightly notices, “It is evident that the difference is barely tangible between the two definitions” (p. 13). However, despite this overlap, Yahiaoui, (2014) claims, “I do not use these two notions interchangeably, I use ideology to indicate religious, political and personal opinions, and culture to the acquired traditions, customs and way of life of a given society” (p. 14), thus separating the two concepts from each other.

On another note, issues commonly regarded as linguistic, also tend to be analyzed within the research on culture-bound elements. Thus, Leppihalme, (1997) admits that culture-bound elements “can be more problematic for the translator than the semantic or syntactic difficulties of the text” (p. 2–3). Although she says that “some researchers have focused on mainly extralinguistic phenomena, from natural (topography, flora and fauna, etc) to man-made (social institutions, buildings, trademarks, etc)” (Leppihalme, 1997, p.2-3), culture-bound elements are not limited to these notions only. Leppihalme, (1997) agrees that culture-bound translation problems can be seen as “intralinguistic and pragmatic (involving idioms, puns, wordplay or ways of, for instance, addressing a person, complimenting him or her, or apologizing)” (p. 3), which allows the researchers to broaden the scope of the phenomenon.

**AVT in the Arab World**

In the Arab world, studies of AVT were carried by several scholars. To the best of the writers’ knowledge, the earliest research dedicated to the Arabic subtitles was carried by Khuddro (2000). In his study, the author discusses the types of subtitles in general, the common mistakes in Arabic subtitling, and the issue of censorship. A broader spectrum of linguistic, ideological and cultural aspects, and technical constraints of Arabic subtitling was analyzed by Mazid (2006), Abd-El-Kareem (2010), and Thawabteh (2011). A detailed study of the problems of euphemisation and dysphemisation in subtitles was conducted by Al-Adwan (2015) and Thawabteh (2012) who based their researches on the American sitcom Friends and the Egyptian film Ramadan atop the Volcano respectively. One of the newest research papers on Arabic subtitling, specifically fansubbing, has been recently published by Eldalees, Al-Adwan and Yahiaoui (2017) who analyzed amateur Arabic subtitles of the American movie The Wolf of Wall Street.
When it comes to research in Arabic dubbing, an array of topics has been studied by different scholars. For example, Maluf (2003, 2005) explored the reasons of failure of some American TV products and success of Mexican soap operas dubbed into Educated Spoken Arabic. Zitawi (2003) and Di Giovanni (2016) carried out their researches of linguistic, cultural, social and political alterations in the Arabic dubbing of cartoons. The issue of ideological and cultural constraints in dubbing was raised by Yahiaoui (2014) who analyzed the American sitcom *The Simpsons*.

However, the analysis of AVT in the Arab world leaves many areas for further investigation. As Gamal, (2013) puts it, AVT “needs to be examined on a much broader level that examines not only polysemiotic nature of the audiovisual text but brings in the multidisciplinary impact of the overarching term ‘audiovisual translation’” (p. 372). It is also worth mentioning that, to the best of the authors’ knowledge, no analysis at all has been carried out in terms of Russian-Arabic AVT in general, not to mention cultural phenomena. Anecdotal evidence based on the transient references in various articles on the topic of dubbing and subtitling from Russian suggests that there might have been old Soviet movies in the 1950’s and 1960’s dubbed into Modern Standard Arabic, but no solid proof of this was uncovered. Meanwhile, studies on dubbing into Arabic were carried out by Maluf (2003, 2005), Gamal (2013) and Yahiaoui (2014), however, they were done within the English-Arabic language pair. Therefore, this research provides a good opportunity to start an academic conversation in the Arab and Russophone worlds about Russian-Arabic dubbing and to promote further studies in the area of dubbing in general.

**Theoretical Framework**

In order to clear any possible ambiguities and to facilitate the consistency of the terminology used in the paper, in the beginning, the authors clarified the scope of the key concepts. For the purpose of this study, and taking into account that ideology and culture are closely intertwined, the writers analyzed the ideological concepts of the film within cultural realia. Like Leppihalme, (1997), they also included in their analysis instances of cultural realia that are expressed linguistically, specifically idioms, word play, and the ways of addressing people. It is important to mention that in this paper, for the sake of consistency, the writers used the term *cultural realia*, which they see as synonymous to all the terms mentioned previously.

Cultural realia in the Arabic script were analyzed in light of Pedersen’s model (2005) due to its clear taxonomy, connection with the AVT mode and consideration of paratextual parameters that may influence the translator’s decisions. Taking into account the target audience, the Arab society, which, as Yahiaoui (2014) puts it, “as open and liberal as it may be, lives by religious, cultural, and in some countries, tribal values” (p. 138–39), Toury’s concept of norms is also used in the analysis of the transadaptation strategies. Toury (2012) sees norms as “the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right or wrong, adequate and inadequate – into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations” (p. 63). This statement is particularly valid when it comes to the analysis of norms of films in the Arab society with its rejection or euphemisation of topics dealing with sex, religion, bodily functions, and its intolerance of insults and foul language (Al-Adwan, 2015; Yahiaoui, 2014).

As mentioned before, the researchers applied Pedersen’s (2005) model for describing the strategies to which they resorted in their translation of cultural realia for the Arab audience. The logical intertwining of Pedersen’s (Pedersen, 2005) model and the concept of norms by Toury
is underlined by Pedersen himself while discussing the notion of translation crisis points in translating extra-cultural references (ECR’s). According to Pedersen, (2005), translation crisis points mean “the turning points at which the translators have to make active decisions, and these points are thus indicative of overall strategy and to what norms the translator professes” (p.1).

Seven strategies were singled out—retention, specification, direct translation, generalization, substitution, official equivalent and omission—all of which were found in the analysis of the researchers’ data. According to Pedersen’s model, the first three strategies are considered to be source text (ST)-oriented. Retention is identified as “the most SL-oriented strategy” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 4) since it allows an ST element to enter the target text with or without being adjusted to the target language. Specification, is realized in two ways: either through explicitation which involves “expansion of the text, or spelling out anything that is implicit in the ST” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 4) or through addition which implies adding some latent information about the cultural realia. Direct translation, being on the borderline between ST- and target text (TT)-oriented strategies, does not cause any changes in the semantic load.

The next two strategies are considered to be more target language (TL)-oriented; generalization, means replacing an instance of cultural realia referring to something specific by something more general, hence hyponymy, while substitution, presumes replacing the source text realia either with a cultural realia operating in the target text (cultural substitution), or does not involve introducing cultural realia into the target text at all. In this scenario, the translator deals with paraphrase which can be realized in two forms: either through transferring the meaning and connotations of the source text cultural realia into the target text (paraphrase with sense transfer), or by complete removal or replacement of the cultural realia, regardless of the original sense (situational paraphrase).

The last two strategies in Pedersen’s (Pedersen, 2005) taxonomy, official equivalent and omission, lie beyond the ST-TT dichotomy. Official equivalent strategy leads to a fixed standard expression in the target language for the word or expression in the source language and is unlikely to create any translation crisis point. As for omission, it presumes replacing instances of cultural realia with nothing for an array of reasons, among which it being “the only viable option” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 9) or due to translators’ “laziness” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 9).

Figure 1 gives a pictorial view of Pedersen’s strategies, which according to him, are arranged from the most ST oriented (in yellow) to the most TT oriented (in blue).
Applying the abovementioned definitions of cultural realia, the authors extracted 230 instances from the corpus of the film. Taking into account the norms operating in the Arabic society, the target audience familiarity with the subject of the film, and the restrictions of subtitling and dubbing, the researchers transadapted the instances of cultural realia. In the end, conclusions were made about the patterns applied to translating cultural realia belonging to different semantic categories.

In order to look at certain paradigms applied to the translation of Soviet cultural realia, first, the writers divided them into semantic categories. For this purpose, they used the taxonomy suggested by the studies of Vlakhov and Florin, (1980) and Ku, (2006) as cited in Fernández Guerra, 2012, p. 3–4). In spite of the fact that these categories are rather tentative and occasionally overlapping, they illustrate the richness and variety of the analyzed material and are convenient for use in the discussion of the translation strategies. Therefore, after analysis of the corpus, the authors singled out four semantic categories which in total include 230 instances.

**Translating Geography and Environment**

This category encompasses environment, including ecology and place names, and is mainly borrowed from Ku’s (2006) (as cited in Fernández Guerra, 2012, p. 3–4). This is the least represented semantic category with 26 extracted instances. Some of the examples of geographic realia and their translation into Arabic are presented in table 1.
Table 1. *Strategies for rendering geographic realia*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
<th>Strategy for rendering into Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Вы прослушали выступление генерального прокурора Союза ССР товарища Вышинского. [You have listened to the speech by the prosecutor general of the Union of the SSR comrade Vychinsky].</td>
<td>لقد استمعتم لخطاب النائب العام للاتحاد السوفيتي الرقيق (فيشينسكي). [You have listened to the speech of the prosecutor general of the Soviet Union comrade Vychinsky].</td>
<td>Official equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (Под Парижем играл в ресторанчике маленьким). Сейчас здесь, под Москвой. В Подольске. [I was playing near Paris in a small restaurant. Now, here, near Moscow. In Podolsk].</td>
<td>كنت أعزف في مطعم قرب باريس). والآن - قرب موسكو، أخيراً. [I was playing at a restaurant close to Paris. Now near Moscow, since recently].</td>
<td>Substitution (situational paraphrase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Почитай родителей. И люби свою советскую родину. [Respect your parents. And love your Soviet fatherland].</td>
<td>إحترمي والديك. وأحبي وطنك السوفيتي. [Respect your parents. And love your Soviet fatherland].</td>
<td>Direct translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Помогите. Загорянка или Загоренка, деревня? [Help. Where is Zagorianka or Zagorienka, village?]</td>
<td>آسف. ساعدني. أين قرية (زاغورينكا) أو (زْغورنكا)? [Help me. Where is the village of Zagorienka or Zagorienka?]</td>
<td>Retention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, geographical realia in the movie included the names of the local villages (ex. Zagorianka, Petriaevo), cities (Moscow, Podol'sk), areas (vicinities of Moscow) and the country (the USSR). According to the analysis, the most recurrent strategy used while translating geographical places was that of retention. Out of 26 instances, 21 geographical realia were translated into Arabic employing this strategy. Although, Pedersen, (2005) himself calls retention “not the most felicitous way of solving an ECR crisis point that involves a Monocultural ECR” (p. 4), he agrees that this strategy “displays most fidelity towards the ST” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 4). This adds to the credibility of the dubbing script of the movie which tells about the events unfolding in a foreign country with a background different from the target audience’s.

In many cases, geographical references are repeated, as in the case of the driver looking for the village Zagorienka or Zagorianka (example 4), which is mentioned in the movie eight times.
Although this village seems to be unknown even to the local residents, this reference is central on the macro level, since the driver’s search for that place links all the events into a single whole in the end and even causes his death, therefore it is required to be transferred to the audience. In spite of the fact, that the Arab audience, understandably, may hardly guess what the word Zagorianka refers to in general, the initial use of this name followed by the hyperonym village makes the task easier in the other seven cases. Therefore, after having explained the meaning of the cultural realia once in the co-text through addition of the more general term village, the authors did not have to perform the same task every time in order to disambiguate the meaning of the place name.

Another case is the translation of the city Podolsk in example 2. Since this city is mentioned in passing just once and does not play a significant role in the plot, initially, the researchers chose to remove it from the dubbing script so as not to overload the target audience with the extra information. However, after the character pronounces the first part of the sentence Сейчас здесь, под Москвой. ([Now, here, near Moscow]), it is visible that he still continues moving his lips, saying something although the camera is not in a close-up. Therefore, this constraint of the dubbing, specifically, lips synchronization, made the authors of the paper search for words to fill in that time stretch where the actor notably utters words. In this case, the writers decided to remove the name of the city and replace it with something that fits the situation, irrespective of the sense of the original cultural realia, which in Pedersen’s (2005) taxonomy is called situational paraphrase.

Examples 1 and 3 are rendered through selecting an official equivalent and direct translation strategies respectively. Overall, out of 26 instances of geographical realia, 21 were translated into Arabic through retention, three through direct translation, one through official equivalent and one through substitution (situational paraphrase).

Translating Cultural Heritage
The second category, cultural heritage, also offered by Ku, covers “religious beliefs, historical events, characters, festivities, folklore, housing, objects, etc.” (cited in Fernández Guerra, 2012, p. 3–4). Overall, the researchers came across 73 instances belonging to this category. They cover a wide range of subcategories: historic personalia and cultural figures (14 instances), names of currencies (two), household objects and structures (16), holidays and historic events (20), folklore characters (nine), literary and musical pieces of arts (three), traditions (two), songs (five), and poems (two).

All the seven strategies were exploited to render the meaning of cultural realia belonging to the category into Arabic. Out of the 73 instances, 43 cases were rendered through direct translation, 11 cases through retention, nine through substitution (three through paraphrase with sense transfer, six through cultural substitution), five through specification (two additions and three explicitations), three cases through official equivalent, two cases of generalization, and one through omission. Also, in one case the authors had to refer to the combination of strategies, specifically specification (addition) and retention.

As it follows from the breakdown of the strategies for this category, the most popular strategy was that of direct translation. The instances rendered through direct translation were all the songs and poems, 19 instances of references to historic events and holidays (out of 20), 11 references to household objects and structures (out of 16), as well as a small number of cultural
realia from other categories. According to Pedersen (2005), while applying this strategy, “the semantic load of the ST ECR is unchanged” (2005, p. 5). In this case, the target audience is not guided in any particular way, but rather is left to make their own decisions about the unfolding of the events in the film.

Also, it is worth mentioning, that all the poems and songs in the movie were rendered through direct translation. These are the famous Russian song Вечерний Звон [Evening Bell] (written in 1827), the tango Утомленное Солнце [Wearied Sun] (1935), Песня о Встречном [The Song about the Passer-by] (1931), the elegy Массне [Massne] performed by the renowned Feodor Chaliapin in 1907, a poem Жираф [Giraffe] (1907) by Nikolay Gumilyov and a Soviet children’s poem about Stalin by an unknown author. Moreover, the researchers decided to follow the established tradition in the Russian cinema, and subtitled the songs, leaving the audience a chance to listen to the authentic sound which added to the verisimilitude of the atmosphere of the mid 1930’s. Some examples of cultural realia rendered through direct translation are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2. Examples of applying direct translation strategy for rendering cultural heritage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Я совсем не понимаю. Зачем нужно ходить в эту грязную деревенскую баню? [I don’t understand why they have to go to that dirty steam bath].</td>
<td>أنا لا أفهم إطلاقا! لماذا عليهم الذهاب إلى حمام البحار القذر؟ [I don’t understand at all why they have to go to that dirty steam bath].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Утомленное солнце нежно с морем прощалось. В этот час ты призналась, что нет любви. [Wearied sun was gently saying goodbye to the sea, at this moment you confessed that you didn’t love me]. (song)</td>
<td>كانت الشمس الخلاَّبة تُوَدَّع البحر بلطف، وفي هذا الوقت اعترفتِ أنكِ لا تحملين لي أي حب. [Wearied sun was gently saying goodbye to the sea, at this moment you confessed that you didn’t carry love for me]. (song, subtitled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 С днем сталинского дрижаблестроения! [Holiday of Stalin’s balloon builders] (poster)</td>
<td>عيد بناقلي مناطيد (ستالين) السعيد! [Holiday of Stalin’s balloon builders] (poster, subtitled)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that although overall, direct translation strategy prevailed in rendering cultural realia falling under the category of cultural heritage, it was not predominant within each of the subcategories, and in some subcategories was not used at all. For example, while rendering the 14 instances within the subcategory of historic personalia and cultural figures, the authors employed retention ten times, three times substitution and once a combined strategy of specification and retention (Рахманинов [Rachmaninoff] - محلن راخمانينوف - [composer]
but there was no case of direct translation. Examples of different strategies used for transadapting the movie for the Arab audience are presented in table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
<th>Strategy for rendering cultural heritage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Знаю, знаю. И Суворов, и Кутузов, и Пушкин - все они мылись в бане. [I know, I know, Suvorov, Kutuzov and Pushkin used to wash in a steam bath].</td>
<td>عرف، أعرف. (تولستوي) و(دوسوفييسي) و(بوشكين) – كلهم اغسلوا في حمام البخار. [I know, I know. Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Pushkin used to wash in a steam bath.]</td>
<td>Substitution (cultural)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Я-то причём здесь, Ольга Николаевна? Я что, Мичурин? [Why me, Olga Nikolaevna?]</td>
<td>أنا يا (أولغا نيكولايفنا)، هل ترينني جبّار؟ [Do you see me, Olga Nikolaiavna, powerful?]</td>
<td>Substitution (paraphrase with sense transfer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ты же знаешь, Боренька до Революции эти лекарства привозил. [You know that Borenka brought these medicines before the Revolution.]</td>
<td>أنت تعرفين جيداً أنّ (بوريس) أحضر هذه الأدوية قبل الثورة البلشفية. [You know very well that Boris brought this medicine before the Bolshevist Revolution.]</td>
<td>Specification (explicitation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from table 3, in examples 1 and 2, the authors omitted most of the personal names mentioned in the original Russian script. Drawing upon the results from the survey, which suggested that the target audience may have the necessary knowledge to understand the realia of the USSR and Russia, although not the minute details, and following the idea to use the movie to inform Arab audiences about Russian culture, it was decided to keep the names of the Russian names in the dialogue. However, taking into account the fact that commanders Suvorov and Kutuzov (example 1) might be unfamiliar to the Arab viewers, being monocultural references, which are less “identifiable to the majority of the relevant TT audience” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 11), the researchers replaced them for the world-famous Russian writers Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, all of whom, in fact, also liked going to the steam bath.

In example 2, the authors of the paper decided to leave out the name of the person entirely, due to the fact that Michurin, although a very influential scientist in Soviet times, is not very familiar nowadays even to the ST audience, and opted for a situational paraphrase with sense transfer. Therefore, the researchers have chosen to substitute the name of the famous scientist by the quality that he was jokingly famous for – всемогущий [all-powerful] جبّار [jabbaar].
In example 3, the authors decided to explicate the cultural realia by bringing to the surface the details inherent to that revolution. Therefore, they added the word بلشفية [balshafiyya], meaning Bolshevist, to the word revolution to help the target audience establish reference to the event.

In all the above mentioned cases, the constraints of the dubbing and subtitling modes did not play a significant role. The Arabic subtitles for songs and posters were rather short in symbols, so there were not any spatial constraints, and also there was enough time for the subtitle to stay onscreen. As for dubbing constraints, they were not essential, since the characters were mostly speaking not in close up or with their backs to the camera. Therefore, the dubbing constraints mostly concerned cutting the number of repetitions in utterances.

Translating Social and Political Realia

The third category, suggested by Vlakhov and Florin (1980), deals with a wide range of social and political realia. The researchers include into it all social culture phenomena (conventions, beliefs, social organizations) offered by Ku (quoted in Fernández Guerra, 2012), as well as add administrative-territorial units, government bodies, social movements, ranks, forms of addressing, institutions, layers of the society, and military realia. This was the most represented category with 103 instances extracted from the corpus. Within this category the writers singled out 12 instances referring to the layers of society (пролетарии [proletarians], труженики села [workers of the village]), 20 referring to ranks (комдив [division commander]), 39 forms of address (товарищ [comrade]), 16 references to governmental bodies (НКВД [NKVD]), and ten to social movements (марксизм-ленinizm [Marxism - Leninism, Белое движение [White movement]). In addition to the large amount of phenomena the category covers, the movie dealt with a topic loaded with political and social issues, hence the high amount of instances belonging to this category.

The prevailing strategy for rendering social and political realia was direct translation. For example, all the 39 instances referring to the forms of address, as well as all the 12 instances denoting the layers of society were transferred through the direct translation strategy. The authors also resorted to the same strategy while translating 18 out of 20 cases denoting ranks, and six out of ten cases denoting social movements. Table 4 provides examples of the instances denoting social and political realia rendered through direct translation.

Table 4. Examples of applying direct translation strategy for rendering social and political realia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 О, пионеры! Мохова, не плачь. Пионеры не плачут. [Oh, pioneers! Don’t cry, Mokhova. Pioneers don’t cry.]</td>
<td>آه! الروّاد! لا تبكي يا (موخوفا)! الروّاد لا يبكون! [Oh, pioneers! Don’t cry, Mohova. Pioneers don’t cry.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Пролетарии всех стран, соединяйтесь! (poster)</td>
<td>يا عمال العالم انّحدروا! [Proletarians of the world, unite!]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Proletarians of the world, unite!]
In the first two examples, the words пионеры [pioneers], пролетарии [proletarians] were rendered through direct translation strategy (روّاد [roowaad], عمال [ʻummaal]). These Arabic words are frequently used in the Arabic language and are completely understood by the target audience irrespective of their educational background. Although the authoritative Russian-Arabic dictionary by Borisov (1997) in the first place provides such equivalents as - [biyooneer] - (pioneer) and - [brooleetari] - (proletarian) (i.e. retention strategy is employed), these words, provided by the dictionary, albeit an authoritative one, according to the information received in the survey and the opinion of the Arabic native speakers, are not clear to the Arab audience.

It is interesting to note that instances belonging to the category of governmental bodies were in half of the cases rendered through such strategies as substitution or specification, or even through a combination of both with other strategies, predominantly retention and direct translation. This was done in order to explicate the meaning of these organizations, some of which are mostly known in the source text in the form of abbreviations, to the target audience who, naturally, know neither the abbreviation itself, nor the work of the organization. Table 5 gives examples of two of the most important organizations appearing in the movie.

### Table 5. Strategies for rendering government institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - А председатель у вас зачем?</td>
<td>وماذا يصنع الرئيس عندكم؟</td>
<td>Specification (explicitation) + direct translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Председатель на дирижабле.</td>
<td>- الرئيس على المنطاد.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- На дирижабле!</td>
<td>- عنا لمنطاد!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Да, там НКВД приехало. Вот он ахает, охает!</td>
<td>- نعم، وصل رجال الداخلية إلى هناك وهو يتنهد ويتأفف.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Why do you need the president?</td>
<td>[Why do you need the president?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He is in the balloon.</td>
<td>He is in the balloon.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-In the balloon!</td>
<td>-In the balloon!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Yes, the NKVD came, and he is groaning and moaning.]</td>
<td>-Yes, the people from the Interior came, and he is groaning and moaning.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - Что же ты в своей сказочке-то не рассказал...</td>
<td>لماذا لم تذكر في قصتك أنّه منذ سنة 1923 تم تجنيدك في الشرطة السرية...</td>
<td>Substitution (paraphrase with sense transfer)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Чтос 1923 года...

Завербован ОГПУ...

[Why didn’t you tell in your fairy tale that since 1923 you were recruited by the secret police…]

In both cases the characters were speaking with their backs to the camera or very far away from it. Although, the lip synchronization was not the major issue in these cases, the kinetic synchronization and isochrony, or contemporaneity, did not allow the researchers to expand more on the meaning of the abbreviations, therefore they briefly incorporated into their transadaptation the scope of work of those organizations. Moreover, next time when the NKVD was mentioned in the movie, the characters’ lips were in a close-up, and the dialogues was running very fast, which made the writers reduce رجال الداخلية [people from the Interior] to just الداخلية [Interior] in order to overcome the abovementioned constraints.

Translating Linguistic Culture

The fourth category deals with linguistic culture, which includes fixed expressions, idioms, insults, etc (Ku, 2006; Vlakhov&Florin, 1980). Although the category counts a relatively small number of instances, it included puns, curses, abbreviations which required creative skills. This was the only category, where overall direct translation was not the dominating strategy. Out of 28 cases, only five were rendered through direct translation, while 21 through substitution (18 through paraphrase with sense transfer, and two through cultural substitution) and two cases of omission.

According to Delabastita, (1996) puns, or wordplays, are a “textual phenomenon” contrasting “linguistic structures with different meanings on the basis of their formal similarity” (Delabastita, 1996, p. 128). These puns can include many categories, depending on the degree and nature of similarity (Delabastita, 1996). In the film, the researchers found five cases of puns, all of which were rendered through the substitution strategy (paraphrase with sense transfer). Among them, two cases of playing with abbreviations, and three cases of puns based on the consonance of the words inflexions, although overall the expression stood meaningless. Below in table 6 are examples of puns found in the corpus.

Table 6. Examples of applying substitution strategy (paraphrase with sense transfer) for rendering puns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Молодой человек, простите, пожалуйста, скажите, это ХЛАМ?</td>
<td>- أنت يا شاب، قل لي من فضلك؟ هل هذه قمامة؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Хлам, хлам, ещё какой хлам.</td>
<td>- قمامة، قمامة، أكيد قمامة.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Какой ещё хлам?</td>
<td>- أية قمامة؟</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- القرية، نعم، قرية الموسيقيين والأدباء والممثلين التاريخيين. وختصارها (قمامة) يا صديقي.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
-Посёлок, да, художников, литераторов, артистов, музыкантов. Сокращенно, друг мой, ХЛАМ.

[-Young man! Excuse me, is this the TRASH?]

-What trash?

[-The village for musicians, writers, and historic actors. For short, TRASH, my friend.]

-Trash, trash! A real trash!

-What trash?

-The town for artists, writers, actors, and musicians. For short TRASH, my friend.]

-Это кто?

[-Who is this?]

-This is a horse in a coat].

[-Who are you?]

- I am who I am].

As can be seen from example 1 in table 6, the successful transference of puns depended on the apt choice of the words that could make a meaningful abbreviation in the Arabic language. This was a hard task taking into account the fact that Arabic usually does not rely on abbreviations, and that the pun in the target language for that specific instance must also sound funny. According to Díaz-Cintas, “humour… tests translators’ skills forcing them to activate imaginative solutions in order to find equivalence between the humorous intent of the SL and the humorous effect in the target language” (cited in Veiga, 2009, p. 175). In example 1, the humourous effect of the abbreviation was preserved, while in example 2, among possible options the researchers chose the one which has the same communicative intention, although at the expense of the humourous connotation.

In the next example, presented in table 7, and translated through the strategy of cultural substitution, the writers had to reproduce the meaning of the idiom in the target language, since it is central on the micro level, “and carries the local discourse forward… or is a trigger of a joke” (Pedersen, 2005, p. 12). As the Oxford English Dictionary defines it, an idiom is a “group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017). Therefore, the meaning of the idiom cannot be understood from the mere components of it, but requires analyzing the unit as a whole.

Table 7. Examples of applying cultural substitution strategy for rendering idioms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - Приказ, милая моя, надо выполнять. Ох, я им арбуз вставлю! … Между прочим, арбуз и мне могут вставить. И очень правильно сделают.</td>
<td>- لا بد من الالتزام بالأوامر يا عزيزي، أم ساريهم النجوم في عز الظهر، بالنسبة، وهم بإمكانهم فعل هذا أيضا. ولديهم الحق ولديهم الحق وساريهم النجوم في عز الظهر، بالنسبة، وهم بإمكانهم فعل هذا أيضا. ولديهم الحق. ليس هناك أصلاً نجوم إلاّ في الليل.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Orders have to be carried out, my dear. I’ll show them stars during the daylight. In fact, they can show them to me as well. They’d be right to. - The stars are only at night.

- Sergei, there are no watermelons now, they will come later.

It is clear from the example that the reference to the watermelon was replaced by the reference to the stars during the daylight which is a common idiom in the Arabic language and transfers all the connotations of the original Russian idiom.

Other cultural realia found in the text dealt with swearing and insults. Although almost all of the Russian insults and swear words were rendered into Arabic, still many of them were marked by vulgarity, offences of relatives and reference to bodily excreta which cannot be tolerated in the Arab society. Such references are regarded as very offensive to the Arab society, where dirty language and disrespect of women are considered to be sins and cannot be even transmitted through movies (see Al-Adwan, 2015; Yahiaoui, 2014). In such cases, the authors either used the strategy of substitution (paraphrase with sense transfer) rendering the insult in a more neutral way, or in some cases omitted it at all. As mentioned earlier, in order to take into account the restrictions of the Arab society as being conservative, the authors referred to the concept of norms, which from a sociological point of view, tell us about acceptable or unacceptable behavior, including permissible translation choices. This was the only case when the norms of the Arab society influenced the researchers’ decision-making process to a considerable degree. Therefore, in such cases they opted for transferring the meaning of insults and characters’ swearing through more ‘decent’ language, hence the prevalence of the substitution strategy based on paraphrase with sense transfer. Table 8 gives us a few examples of strategies for rendering foul language.

Table 8. Strategies for rendering foul language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The original Russian</th>
<th>Arabic translation</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Ты меня не узнал, твою мать?</td>
<td>ألا تعرف من أكون؟</td>
<td>Omission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Haven’t you recognized me, you motherfucker?]</td>
<td>[Do you know who I am?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Что ты, машин не боишься, а коня бздишь?</td>
<td>لماذا! لا تخاف من المركبات وتخاف من الحصان؟</td>
<td>Substitution (paraphrase with sense transfer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[What, you are not scared of the cars but you farting from the horse?]</td>
<td>[What! You are not scared of the cars but you are scared of the horse?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As we see, the researchers removed the offensive reference to the interlocutor’s mother in the first example and replaced the vulgar word with a less offensive one in the second example, trying to take into consideration the cultural norms of the Arab society.

**Conclusions**

Therefore, in this paper, the authors analyzed the transadaptation strategies of rendering Soviet Russia cultural realia for the Arab audience taking into account the constraints of the audiovisual translation modes (dubbing and subtitling) and the norms operating in the Arab society, i.e. their intolerance of insults and rude language. In order to carry out this research, the writers utilized the classification by Pedersen (2005) and the concept of norms by Toury (1995/2012), as well as carried out a pre-translation survey among Arab students in order to find out what they know about Soviet Russia.

Driven by the desire to preserve the foreign nature of the movie and inform the target audience about the history and culture of Soviet Russia, the writers transadapted the film with the prevalence of SL-oriented strategies. The categories of social and political realia, cultural heritage, and geographical realia were all rendered to the Arab viewer mostly through direct translation and, to a lesser degree, retention, thus allowing the audience to feel the film’s foreign nature. The only category where the authors mostly employed TL-oriented strategies was the category of linguistic culture, specifically foul language. The reason for this is the norms operating in the Arab society where insults of families, references to sexual intercourse and effluvia are considered offensive to the viewers.

The results of the study are valuable in a way that this research has set foundation for analysis of Russian-Arabic transadaptation. It will hopefully stimulate further studies in the area of Russian-Arabic dubbing and subtitling in an array of topics.

**About the Authors:**

**Katsiaryna Panasiuk** holds MA in Audiovisual Translation from Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar. She has previously obtained a Master in Philology and a Bachelor degree in Linguistics and Translation from Minsk State Linguistic University, Belarus.

**Dr. Rashid Yahiaoui** is currently an assistant professor and the coordinator of the MA programs in Audiovisual Translation and Translation Studies at Hamad bin Khalifa University. He has a Ph.D. in Translation Studies from London Metropolitan University, UK, and a Master in Translation and Interpreting from the University of Salford, UK.

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