

**Localizing English Cartoons: Common Difficulties Regarding Culture Specific  
References in Audiovisual Translation.**

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May 7, 2025

Word count: 15 577

## **Abstract**

In the modern era, audiovisual translation has become increasingly relevant, particularly in relation to the spread of language through films and animated content. Recently, there has been a growing trend of translating foreign films directly into Kazakh. However, the quality of such localizations requires careful analysis. Research in the field of audiovisual translation into Kazakh remains limited. This study aims to examine the localization of the animated film *Cars 2*, with a specific focus on the translation of culture-specific references. A qualitative content analysis is employed to identify the strategies used in the translation process. The findings indicate that cultural substitution is relatively rare in Kazakh localization. However, this is compensated by frequent use of transcreation and the inclusion of local expressions, which help make the content more relatable to the target audience. The research highlights the importance of striking a balance between fidelity to the source and cultural adaptation. The conclusions drawn from this study may be particularly useful for beginner audiovisual translators, who work with the Kazakh language.

*Key words: audiovisual translation, localization, dubbing, culture, cartoon, transcreation.*

## Аңдатпа

Қазіргі заманда аудиовизуалды аударманың өзектілігі арта түсті, әсіресе фильмдер мен анимациялық контент арқылы тілдің таралуы басты назарда. Соңғы кездері шетел фильмдерін тікелей қазақ тіліне аудару үрдісі белең алуда; дегенмен, мұндай локализациялаудың сапасы мұқият талдауды қажет етеді. Қазақ тіліне аудиовизуалды аударма саласындағы зерттеулер әлі де жоқтың қасы. Бұл зерттеу жұмысы мәдениетке байланысты сілтемелерді аударуға ерекше назар аударып, Көліктер 2 анимациялық фильмнің локализациялауын зерттеуге бағытталған. Аударма процесінде қолданылатын әдістерді анықтау үшін сапалы мазмұнды талдау қолданылған. Табылған деректер мәдени алмастырудың қазақша локализациялынған нұсқасында салыстырмалы түрде сирек кездесетінін көрсетеді. Дегенмен, бұл мазмұнды мақсатты аудиторияға жақынырақ етуге көмектесетін транскреацияны жиі пайдалану және жергілікті сөз тіркестерін қосу арқылы сәтті аударылған. Зерттеу бастапқы мағынаны сақтау мен жергілікті көрермендер үшін әзіл мен мәдени ерекшеліктерді бейімдеу арасындағы тепе-теңдікті сақтаудың маңыздылығын көрсетеді. Бұл зерттеуден алынған қорытындылар қазақ тілімен жұмыс істеуді бастаған аудиовизуалды аудармашылар үшін пайдалы болып табылады.

**Түйінді сөздер:** аудиовизуалды аударма, локализация, дубляж, мәдениет, мультфильм, креативті аудару тәсілі.

### Аннотация

В современную эпоху аудиовизуальный перевод становится всё более актуальным, особенно в контексте распространения языка через фильмы и мультфильмы. В последние годы наблюдается тенденция перевода иностранных фильмов напрямую на казахский язык, однако качество таких локализаций требует тщательного анализа. На сегодняшний день количество исследований в области аудиовизуального перевода на казахский язык остается ограниченным. Цель настоящего исследования — проанализировать особенности локализации анимационного фильма Тачки 2, с акцентом на передачу культурно-специфических элементов. В качестве метода исследования применяется качественный контент-анализ переведенного продукта для определения используемых переводческих стратегий. Результаты анализа показывают, что при локализации редко используется стратегия культурной замены, однако это компенсируется активным применением креативных адаптаций и внедрением локальных фраз. Такие решения делают продукт более близким и понятным для целевой аудитории. Исследование подчеркивает важность нахождения баланса между сохранением оригинального смысла и адаптацией юмора и реалий для местного зрителя. Полученные выводы могут быть полезны начинающим переводчикам, работающим в сфере аудиовизуального перевода на казахский язык.

**Ключевые слова:** аудиовизуальный перевод, локализация, дубляж, культура, мультфильм, транскреация.

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## **Introduction**

The rapid widespread of audio-visual content in the 21st century has significantly increased their demand to fit different audiences through localization, necessitating a reevaluation of traditional translation strategies used. Audiovisual translation (AVT) provides the opportunity to enjoy a vast array of educational and entertaining programs, films and channels worldwide burning language and cultural barriers. As a result, this has fostered greater international communication across diverse cultures and languages, while simultaneously giving rise to new challenges in the translation studies. Researchers in the organization named “Nimdzi insights” identified the top most requested services in the linguistic field. They analyzed the best one hundred company providers in 25 countries. The results confirmed that localization is the most requested service, following with post-editing after machine translation and subtitling (Nimdzi Insights, 2021).

Scholars found culture specific references to be the main challenge on the way to produce high quality localized audio-visual products. These references also concern other areas, such as translation of literature and drama. We also gave attention to the focus on creative collaboration between translators and dubbing adaptors. This chapter opens with an exploration of how culture and language intersect, providing context for the study. It then delves into the background of film translation, emphasizing its cultural influence. Additionally, the chapter outlines the research problem, defines its objectives and questions, and highlights the overall significance of the study.

## **Background Information**

“A nation’s culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people” (M. Gandhi, 1998). These profound words emphasizes how deeply culture shapes identity and

underscores the importance of preserving cultural elements. Good knowledge of culture helps translators to produce equivalents, which can touch people deeply to their hearts and soul. There are debates in translation studies regarding these two aspects as localization and translation, whether it is interrelated aspects or different processes. According to Malenova (2023) translation and localization exist in a state of natural integration, as localization is unthinkable without translation, but it implies a more complex process of linguistic and technological processing of the source material for its subsequent immersion in the host culture. As Redersen (2005) mentioned, one of the common translation crisis points is having some reference to the source culture without the same equivalent. What to do in cases when there is no direct equivalent? Swedish scientist Redersen states (2005) that cultural reference requires many norms, like domestication, foreignization and skopos knowledge. In my opinion, localization is an upgraded type of translation. Because the primary function of translation is finding the nearest words of the original message to deliver meaning and emotions (Nida & Taber, 1969). However, functions of localization are more sophisticated. Functions of localization include informational, aesthetic and communication. First means to translate spoken dialogue and non-verbal cues, in order to allow viewers to comprehend and engage with the content fully. Second is about tone, style and emotional resonance, which need adopting to create needed mood or atmosphere in the movie. Last function facilitates understanding the main message of creators that requests deep analytical work by overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers. Therefore, we see that localization is a multifaceted process focused on cross-cultural communication.

Over the last 15-20 years, audiovisual translation has become an integral part of modern digital life. The advancement of the Internet, easy access to varying media at any time from any gadget, the development of trans-media universes – all this makes it

fundamental to ponder the phenomenon of audiovisual translation (AVT). Whitman-Linsen (1992) noted that today film translation is probably influencing international communication largely than translation of books. First research on problems regarding AVT started in 1976 with the development of cinema and TV (Fodor, 1976). The interest in the field has increased after the first conference dedicated to problems of dubbing and subtitling, which the European Union organized in 1987 in Stockholm (Ranzato, 2015). There are three main solutions to get over the language barrier between film producers and audiences, who speak different languages. They are subtitling, dubbing and voice-over. In addition, other two types appeared recently to provide access for people with disabilities such as audio description and subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing. This research deals with localization of cartoons to Kazakh audiences through dubbing. How to find appropriate strategy and tools to produce adequate and high quality cartoon translation? There are still gaps and many questions without answers in AVT, to which I would like to contribute and spark a renewed interest in dubbing.

### **Problem Statement**

This study addresses the challenges faced by children when watching cartoons localized into the Kazakh language. A significant issue is the limited availability of globally popular animated content in Kazakh, which restricts the promotion and usage of the state language (Tengrinews, 2023). In cases where cartoons are translated without proper localization, the intended meaning may be lost, reducing emotional engagement and viewer satisfaction. This often results in decreased popularity and commercial success of the content (Hickey, 2022). Conversely, high-quality localization can enhance cultural resonance, emotional impact, and contribute to the visibility and use of the Kazakh language.

Given that audiovisual translation (AVT) into Kazakh is still an emerging field, there is a clear need for academic research to address existing gaps. It is important to examine when and how localization should be applied to effectively bridge cultural differences. By analyzing real examples of localizing strategies, this research aims to explore how to maintain a balance between preserving the source text's intent and adapting content to the expectations and cultural context of the Kazakh-speaking audience.

### **Research Purpose and Questions**

Through a comparative analysis of the original and localized dialogue scripts, this study seeks to identify the predominant translation techniques employed, evaluate their effectiveness in preserving or altering cultural meaning. The primary aim is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the adaptation of culture-specific references (CSRs) in the Kazakh-language localization of *Cars 2*, examining the extent to which linguistic and cultural modifications align with established audiovisual translation strategies.

### **The following questions have been set in order to achieve this purpose:**

1. What translation strategies were predominantly used in the localization of *Cars 2*, and how did they influence the cultural and linguistic adaptation of the cartoon for Kazakh-speaking audiences?
2. How were culture-specific references (CSRs) adapted in the Kazakh-language localization of *Cars 2*, and what patterns can be identified in their translation?

### **Significance**

The paper will analyze how texts changed regarding culture specific references in the localization process. The findings will contribute to better understanding of culture

specific references in the translation. Diaz Cintaz (2004: 28), “compared to the literary world, audiovisual products are a lot exposed to commercial forces, which opens up additional opportunities for avenues of research”. The findings of this study will give good guidance to novice audio-visual translators and localization teams working in pairs of English-Kazakh languages. Providers of language service in AVT can use insights from updated guidance. Consequently, high quality localization products will make cartoons recognizable and sensible, and promote national language for end users, particularly kids. Guidelines will help for better understanding the strategies to use for accurately conveying spoken language and cultural nuances.

## Literature review

Commenting on the translation of Karl Marx's *Capital*, Friedrich Engels once remarked in a translation journal that the process resulted in "the transformation of German ideas into English nonsense" (Engels, n.d.). This comment highlights the critical importance of linguistic and cultural adaptation in translation. Avoiding such distortions requires translators to possess a deep understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as their historical and cultural nuances. An inaccurate or incomplete transmission of meaning compromises the fundamental purpose of translation: to make the author's thoughts accessible to a new audience (Komissarov, 1980).

Translation studies have evolved significantly, shifting the focus from individual words to entire texts as units of meaning (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990). Contextual awareness is therefore fundamental to the translation process, as difficulties often arise from the interaction between language and culture. Snell-Hornby further emphasized this shift, highlighting that translation has moved beyond text-based considerations to encompass broader cultural dimensions (Snell-Hornby, 1990). Nevertheless, the context is created not only through words, but also through sound, music, intonation, tone, and visual elements, making it a **multimodal** text. The growing prevalence of multimodal texts are increasing due to annual generation of a large volume of audiovisual content such as TV shows, videos, films, presentations, slide shows and interactive content. However, practice was far ahead of theory, as it mostly occurs. Despite the rising importance of AVT, this field remains theoretically underexplored, particularly in emerging language pairs such as English-Kazakh. While foreign scholars have examined film translation by comparing original scripts with localized versions, research on English-Kazakh dubbing is notably scarce. Existing foreign studies indicate that the primary challenges in AVT stem from

**technical constraints** and **cultural references**. Thus, this study aims to analyze how cultural references are adapted in the Kazakh-language dubbing of *Cars 2*, using a comparative analysis of the original script and its localized version. In this literature review, I will examine and synthesize existing studies on AVT, localization, and dubbing, drawing on insights from previous scholars. This literature review contains an overview of about 30 previous papers published in this field both theoretical and empirical research. Spanish researchers are the most referred, others are from Italy, England, Poland, Arab countries, Russia and Kazakhstan. Additionally, I will utilize a concept map to structure and compare key findings, highlighting the gaps in English-Kazakh AVT research and the need for further study in this area.

### **Audiovisual translation**

Before analyzing the cultural aspects of cartoon localization, there is a necessity to define audiovisual translation (AVT) and its modes. AVT deals with sound and image to get a full understanding of context, materials such as films, games, videos and TV shows. According to Malenova (2020), AVT is an umbrella term uniting all concepts involved in media production and postproduction (Orero P. 2004), such as constrained translation, film and TV translation (Delabastita, 1989), multimedia translation (Gambier & Gottlieb, 2001).

Interest in this field started with demand for film translation, due to the high cost of producing the same film in another language. As film industries sought cost-effective solutions to reach wider audiences, subtitling and dubbing emerged as the two dominant approaches. After the 1960-70s, the wide spread of television broadcasting, raising the popularity of satellite TV led to an active growth for researching AVT. In 1987, the first

organized Conference on Dubbing and Subtitling, held under the auspices of the European Broadcasting Union in Stockholm, marked a turning point in AVT research (Cintas, 2009). The impact of that event raised awareness of the complexities of audiovisual translation and catalyzed a surge in academic publications addressing the challenges of translating audiovisual content. Over time, AVT became an established discipline within translation studies, with scholars such as Yves Gambier, Diaz Cintas, Aline Remael, Ranzato and Henrik Gottlieb making significant contributions to its theoretical development.

AVT is classified into two primary categories: subtitling and re-voicing. **Subtitling** involves displaying a written translation of the dialogue at the bottom of the screen while the original audio is preserved. It tries to accurately show what the speakers are saying and give information on things that we can see in the picture like letters, graffiti, signs, and the things we can hear in the audio like music and voices (Diaz-Cintas & Remael, 2014). **Re-voicing**, on the other hand, encompasses multiple forms of audio replacement, including narration, voice-over, audio description, free commentary, simultaneous interpreting, and lip-synchronized dubbing (Luyken, 1991; Baker & Hochel, 1998). Despite its common use, dubbing has a small amount of research yet in comparison to subtitling.

This research is concentrated on **lip-synchronized dubbing**. Re-recording the voice track in target version using actors' voices is a definition of dubbing given by Lyuken and he emphasized the main aim of dubbing is to recreate the dynamics of the original (Lyuken, 1991). However, the scholar from Dublin University O'Connell reported its drawbacks: "dubbing is a more time-consuming process than subtitling; also it attracts more people in the process, as a consequence requires more finance. Writers, translators, actors, directors, and technicians work together as a team to accomplish task" (O'Connell, 2000). The Eurobarometer survey conducted in December 2005 (public opinion in the

European Union) proved that the use of subtitles could encourage and facilitate foreign language learning. Nevertheless, on average, only 10% of European Union (EU) citizens said they watched the original movie to learn the language. However, the majority of Europeans (56%) prefer to watch dubbed foreign movies and shows rather than listen to the original with subtitles (Gambier, 2006). Nevertheless having the chance to compare the source material with the translated result is a benefit appreciated by target audiences that choose subtitling. Dubbing, on the other hand, fails to offer access to the original text because the original sound track is completely replaced (Cintas, 1999). However, dubbing remains the preferred choice for children's content, as it provides a seamless viewing experience without requiring reading skills. The main idea of dubbing is to create the illusion that characters are speaking in the target language, which requires precise synchronization of lip movements and naturalness. The scholar from Spain Frederic Chaume gave a systematic overview of the dubbing process in his book "Audiovisual Translation: Dubbing" in 2012. First, a television channel or film studio acquires the rights to the film. Second, these organizations delegate the tasks of translating the film to the dubbing studio. The dubbing studio actively collaborates with professional translators and directors to establish the proper translation of the film. Third, the director develops a dubbing plan, identifies voices and actors to create a dubbed film (Chaume, 2012). This data gives us good understanding into AVT process and key factors influencing the final localized product. As noted by Frattini (2007), audience enjoyment reduces in the case of incompetently translated jokes, idiomatic expressions or cultural references (Frattini, 2007). Therefore, high-quality dubbing requires careful consideration of meanings hidden in the dialogues.

## **Localization, adaptation and transcreation**

Translating children's cartoons into various languages can be contentious, as the content must be carefully adapted to suit children's cognitive and cultural perceptions. Within translation studies, there are emergence of specialized terms such as localization, adaptation and transcreation. Localization involves adjusting language to be more in line with the customs and traditions of a particular area (Malenova, 2022). Adaptation is a form of translation that requires deliberate modifications to ensure that the target text aligns with the essence of the original text (Malenova, 2022). Transcreation, a term frequently used in marketing and media translation, involves a more creative approach where linguistic elements are modified to evoke the same emotions and intent as the source text (Bashir, 2021). Transcreation prioritizes cultural engagement and mostly is used in advertisement videos, website ads or TV commercials (Bashir, 2021). While these three terms—localization, adaptation, and transcreation—are distinct, they are interconnected in practice. I compared definitions of “adaptation” by many experts, such as Gambier, Vazquez-Ayora, Jean Desisle, Marc Charron, Bastin and came to a conclusion. Gambier asserted that translation is always more than word-by-word transfer, nevertheless deeper perception of a target text is a result of right adaptations (Gambier, 1992). Vazquez-Ayora notes that adaptation is not always necessary, particularly in cases where preserving foreign elements enhances authenticity (Vazquez Ayora, 1977). Russian linguist Lev Latyshev (2000) believed that localization is a translation type achieved using pragmatic adaptation, reinforcing the idea that adaptation functions as a key technique within the broader process of localization.

Recent studies view localization as adapting texts across different discourses, offering a new linguistic analysis perspective. Multimedia localization, defined as

translating and adapting content for a foreign audience (MICE & MORE), is highly demanded. This process involves script creation, translation, and transcreation of dialogues, subtitles, and other verbal elements within the audiovisual context (MICE & MORE). Modern film translation follows localization standards and requires a creative linguistic and cultural adaptation approach. Given these perspectives, this study adopts the term **localization** as the most appropriate framework for analyzing the cultural adaptation of children's cartoons.

### **Culture-Specific References (CSRs)**

Ranzato (2013) notes that, despite the widespread presence of culture-specific references (CSRs) in translation, their definitions remain relatively limited in scholarly discourse. Researchers use varieties of terms in previous research to describe these elements, including culture-bound references, culture-specific items, expressions, allusions, and realia. One of the primary difficulties in defining culture-specific references (CSRs) stems from the fact that language is inherently tied to culture. Every language reflects the values, beliefs, and experiences of the culture in which it is spoken, making it deeply culture-specific (Ranzato, 2015). Consequently, what may be easily understood in one language may not have the same meaning, relevance, or impact in another language or cultural context. This makes the identification and translation of CSRs particularly complex, as it involves navigating the cultural nuances embedded within the language itself. Leemets (1992) describes CSRs as words representing concepts that do not exist in the consciousness or daily life of other nations, as cultural differences stem from variations in traditions, beliefs, and historical developments. Similarly, Leppihalme (1997) identifies the difficulties posed by CSRs, referring to them as "allusions" in translation. She argues that translating such allusions involves "creating new worlds from the old one". Moreover,

Leppihalme emphasizes the increasing focus on audience reception, suggesting that allusions rendered with deeper cultural understanding enhance the audience's sense of engagement and fulfillment. Diaz Cintaz and Remael (2007) defined CSRs as “extralinguistic references to items that are tied up with a country's culture, history, or geography, and tend therefore to pose serious translation challenges”. In a similar vein, Pedersen (2011) coined the term "extralinguistic cultural references" (ECRs). He defined an ECR as a reference made through a culture-specific linguistic expression that points to an external entity or process, and is assumed to be identifiable by the audience based on their shared encyclopedic knowledge. Commenting on this definition, it pertains to entities or processes that exist beyond the language itself, relating to a specific culture's understanding of the world. In this context, Pedersen differentiates between language and culture, highlighting that proficiency in the former does not inherently provide insight into the ECRs of that culture. For instance, a non-native English speaker may excel in the language yet lack the necessary cultural awareness to grasp its references to "locations, individuals, institutions, traditions, cuisine," and so forth. Chiaro also researched the dubbing and subtitling processes and identified ten categories of what he terms “lingua-cultural drops”—cultural elements that often pose difficulties for translators. They are: institutions, the school grading system, place names, unit of measurement, currency, national sport, food and drink, holidays and festivities, books and well-known personalities (Chiaro, 2009). The definitions suggested by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) and Pedersen (2011) provide a clear understanding of CSRs that is relevant for the discussion and analysis in this study. The explanations offered by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) along with Pedersen (2011) offer valuable insights into culture-specific references, making them highly applicable to the analysis presented in this study.

## Strategies to translate CSRs

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) developed a classification of translation strategies for handling culture-specific references (CSRs), categorizing them into two broad approaches:

1. Direct translation, which includes three strategies: borrowing, calque, and literal translation.
2. Oblique translation, which consists of four strategies: transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation.

Among these, borrowing is the simplest method, involving the direct transfer of a term without modification. Calque refers to translating each element of an expression individually, while literal translation applies the same principle, but to longer phrases. Transposition entails changing the grammatical category of a word while preserving its meaning. Modulation, on the other hand, involves rephrasing a concept using different expressions while maintaining the original meaning. Equivalence is employed when the same message is conveyed using entirely different structural and stylistic means. Researchers note that this strategy often functions at a syntagmatic level, shaping the overall message and frequently appearing in fixed expressions such as idioms, clichés, and proverbs. Adaptation, considered the most radical translation strategy, is employed when a concept from the source language lacks an equivalent or is entirely unfamiliar within the target culture. In such cases, translators create a new situation that conveys an equivalent meaning, making adaptation a form of situational equivalence. In these situations, translators create a new context that delivers the same meaning, which makes adaptation a way of ensuring the message fits the specific situation.

The concept of adaptation takes on various meanings within AVT, as well as in film, television, and theater studies (Hutcheon, 2006). It frequently entails a comprehensive reworking and reinterpretation of a text, driven by either technical or artistic considerations, lip-sync. For instance, in dubbing, adaptation is necessary to align with technical constraints such as timing limitations. In theater, plays may be modified to fit a different historical or geographical setting for artistic purposes. Similarly, novels undergo adaptation when transformed into films, requiring changes in structure, dialogue, and visual storytelling to suit the cinematic medium.

Ivir did another classification in 1987. He offered seven strategies to deal with CSRs such as:

1. Borrowing
2. Definition
3. Literal translation
4. Substitution
5. Lexical creation
6. Addition
7. Omission

Borrowing and literal translation are already discussed above. Definition means adding explanatory notes to make references understandable. Substitution means replacements of source elements with target oriented elements which have similar impact on viewers. Lexical creation means creating new terms for the target audience. Addition is adding words and omission, on the other hand, deleting references.

Gottlieb worked with localisms, compared all the common strategies, and created one classification in 2009, using Leppihalme (1997) and Pedersen (2005) taxonomies. Gottlieb did analysis using these six strategies for his analysis, and states that for relatively small corpus, the six strategies is justified and enough. The strategies as following:

1. Retention
2. Literal translation
3. Specification
4. Generalisation
5. Substitution
6. Omission

Pedersen (2005) offers a taxonomy to apply for AVT and lists six strategies to transfer CSRs. His classification is highly adaptable and can be effectively utilized in various corpora and case studies, as it provides a valuable framework for analyzing the localization process. This approach proves to be an efficient tool for examining how cultural and linguistic elements are transferred or modified during the localization of content:

1. Retention
2. Addition
3. Direct translation
4. Generalization
5. Cultural substitution
6. Omission

Recent researches analyzing differences between dubbed versions of films have underscored the significance of localization in AVT. **Volkova and Mitiagina (2023)** conducted an empirical study at Volgograd State University, comparing dubbed versions against subtitling versions of the film *Cruella*. Subtitles tried to translate semantically equivalent to original and dubbing versions attempt to use localized phrases. Their study, which included a comparative table of 20 examples, demonstrated the advantages of localization in enhancing audience comprehension and cultural relevance. **Leonova, Lysova, and their professor Chistyakova (2022)** in Moscow, focusing on two animated films translated from English to Russian, carried out a similar study. However, their research aimed to evaluate common localization errors and their impact on translation quality. Based on their findings, the authors proposed six key recommendations for translators to improve localization practices (Chistyakova et al., 2022). Moreover, many other researchers from Indonesian universities searched for this topic in 2022, including **Supana, Nababan and Santosa**. They examined adaptation strategies in the Indonesian dubbing of the American TV series *Walker, Texas Ranger*. Their study utilized the four adaptation types proposed by Assaqaf and Ali (2016)—collocation adaptation, ideological adaptation, literary adaptation, and cultural adaptation—to assess which approach was most frequently employed. The results indicated that **cultural adaptation** accounted for 52% of all instances, supporting Kuleli's (2019) argument that language and culture are inseparable in translation. Translators must be mindful of both fundamental and marginal translation procedures when translating cultural items into another society (Sukmaningrum et al., 2022).

## **Kazakh localization: research landscape and key studios**

Research on **Kazakh dubbing practices** remains limited. **Makhpirov and Arstanova (2021)** conducted their research on the Kazakh-language dubbing of the animated series *Dora the Explorer*, produced by the national TV channel “Kazakhstan”. Whereas it was a very short article with only 10 examples included and offered 4 solutions given to the translator in dealing with children’s content: to consider age, to not overwhelm the text, to use words by their meanings and to pay attention to frequency of using the similar word. A more recent study by **Koigeldiyeva (2023), a student at MNU**, explored obstacles of AVT, when translating from English to Kazakh, focusing on the cartoons *Coco* and *Frozen*. Her analysis addressed several key issues such character names, idiomatic expressions, song localization, and slangstra. Despite these valuable contributions, there is a noticeable gap in research regarding common challenges faced by translators in localizing animated films for Kazakh audiences. Identifying these gaps has motivated my study, which aims to expand upon existing research by analyzing localization practices in Kazakh-language dubbing.

One of the biggest names in media localization is SDI Media, which specializes in dubbing and subtitling foreign content into multiple languages. Studios from both Kazakhstan and Russia are mostly responsible for localizing foreign films into the Kazakh language. When a nationwide debate over the necessity of dubbing foreign films in the state language arose in 2012, the question of dubbing films into Kazakh gained significant attention. The Kazakh Parliament responded by passing a law requesting foreign films to be dubbed into Kazakh before release in theaters and cinemas. Even after this regulation was formally adopted, in the years that followed, only 38 films were dubbed into Kazakh. In 2019, a compromise was reached that required the mandatory use of Kazakh subtitles in

cinemas, while Russian-dubbed versions of films continued to be produced by Russian studios. However, this balance was disrupted by the Russia-Ukraine war, which had a major repercussions on the international film industry. American film studios, including major players such as Disney and Warner Brothers, began to announce the suspension of film premieres in Russian theaters, prompting them to seek alternative solutions for maintaining their audiences in the post-Soviet space following Russia's exclusion from the global entertainment market. In response to these challenges, the solution was found in expanding the dubbing of films into other former Soviet republics. Kazakhstan and Georgia were chosen as key locations for film dubbing for the post-Soviet audience. Kazakhstan, with its established infrastructure and technical expertise, rose to meet this demand, providing high-quality dubbing services. This shift not only strengthened Kazakhstan's position as a hub for media localization but also contributed to the growth and recognition of Kazakh-language dubbing, from both global studios and local audiences.

Today, several key localization studios in Kazakhstan play a central role in dubbing films into Kazakh, including Aray Media Group, Cinema Tone Production, Lucky Production, and Movie Distribution. Additionally, The Kitchen Russia, a prominent Russian studio, also contributes to the localization of films into both Kazakh and Uzbek. The increasing prominence of Kazakh dubbing underscores the evolving role of Kazakhstan in the global media localization industry and reflects the growing demand for high-quality content in local languages.

## **Summary**

The field of AVT has been evaluated from basic text translation to a more complex process focusing on cultural differences. This literature review has attempted to examine the evaluation in both theoretical and practical studies. While there is plenty of theoretical research, the emerging language pairs like English-Kazakh should be analyzed and continue to gain new insights and establish norms. Existing studies have laid the groundwork, and this research seeks to address the noticeable gap in literature by examining how cultural specific references are localized in Kazakh-language dubbing.

This field acquires more attention hence it has a huge impact on children's behavior formation and morality. This exploration contributes to a broader understanding of translation strategies applied in practice and underscores the need for continued scholarly attention to Kazakh AVT practices.

## **Methodology**

This chapter outlines the research design, including the sampling methods, data collection procedures, and the analytical framework used to systematically interpret and categorize the data. It also presents ethical considerations and potential study limitations. This study explores how culture-specific references (CSRs) are adapted during the localization of an English-language animated film. The primary objective of this research is to analyze the modifications made to CSRs during localization and identify the strategies employed in localizing *Cars 2* for Kazakh-speaking audiences.

To achieve this, the research uses a product-oriented qualitative approach within the framework of descriptive translation studies. As Creswell (2014) notes, qualitative research seeks to explore and interpret meanings within a specific context; the researcher interprets the meaning of the found data. I understand my research as being product-oriented, because it focuses on the final translated text as the main object of investigation (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2013). A product-oriented approach is particularly effective for examining the interplay between language, culture, and translation. By prioritizing the translated text as the outcome, it highlights its accuracy, effectiveness, and overall quality. Through this analysis, scholars gain insights into translation strategies and their role in facilitating intercultural exchange, making product-focused research an essential component of translation studies.

### **Research design**

First, I identified the research problem and formulated a clear research purpose to address it. Based on this purpose, I developed specific research questions designed to

guide the study. To ensure alignment with these questions, I then created data collection instruments tailored to gather relevant and meaningful data for analysis.

According to Gideon Toury (2012), translation is an activity governed by norms, making it essential for researchers to uncover the different types of norms that influence the translation process (Alfano, n.d.). Therefore, establishing norms in localization necessitates a comprehensive examination of the strategies applied in translation practices. As mentioned by Toury, norms emerge from repeated patterns observed in final products. Chesterman (1997) states that translation norms are not static, but evolve over time based on cultural and societal factors. A structured empirical research underlie principles and guiding localization strategies to adopt the content. Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), also known as the descriptive paradigm, examines translation as a socially and historically situated activity, focusing on the norms and behaviors that shape translation practices within specific language pairs. There are two key concepts in DTS, such as adequacy and acceptability. According to Toury (1995), adequacy refers to how well a translation aligns with the cultural and contextual norms of the original text, whereas acceptability reflects how well it conforms to the linguistic and cultural expectations of the target audience. Since no translation can be entirely adequate or acceptable, the main task of the researcher is to clarify the connections between the source text and the context in which it is used.

Specifically, it adopts a product-based research design, as the product of this research is the cartoon named *Cars 2* by Walt Disney Pictures and its dubbed Kazakh versions. I will use content analysis and contractive analysis (James, 1980) for identifying localization strategies used in localization. Through a structured comparison of the original and Kazakh-dubbed scripts, this study seeks to analyze the translation process and identify the localization strategies used to adapt the cartoon for Kazakh-speaking viewers.

## **Sample**

The method of sample was purposive. As my research is centered on cultural turns, the material should be full of references to places, people, customs, names, jokes and events. Another thing is accessibility of materials; there are a small number of cartoons with dubbing to Kazakh language. Third criteria was the popularity of cartoons. I decided to focus on cartoons, since they play a pivotal role in the formation of kids' cultural identity. I have chosen a cartoon named "Cars 2", because it was the first dubbed cartoon for cinema release in Kazakh language in 2011. Localization played a crucial role in its commercial success and widespread popularity. As one of the first and most successful Kazakh-language dubbing projects, it serves as an ideal example for developing localization guidelines. We plan to investigate in detail all texts, images and sounds appeared in the original version and the same for dubbed versions. It will clarify strategies used for localization and give an image of changes occurring between original and dubbing versions because of cultural turn.

As a sequel to the widely acclaimed Disney-Pixar animated film *Cars*, it follows the main characters on an international journey as they compete in the World Grand Prix, with race locations spanning Japan, Italy, and the United Kingdom. The film blends fast-paced racing sequences with elements of espionage and humor, resulting in a more dynamic and adventurous narrative.

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

This study analyzes audiovisual content, particularly films, by comparing their original versions with the localized ones. The use of audiovisual data allows for a detailed examination of linguistic, cultural, and contextual adaptations made during the localization

process (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007). By analyzing both versions, researchers can identify translation strategies, shifts in meaning, and the ways in which cultural references are modified to align with the target audience's expectations.

Data analysis is an ongoing process that involves multiple stages. Creswell (2014) emphasizes that qualitative data analysis is a continuous and reflective process rather than a linear sequence of steps. In this study, the analysis includes systematically collecting film scripts, transcribing and coding translated segments, and identifying recurring patterns in localization strategies. The analysis begins with gathering audiovisual materials, so it is primary data. Followed by coding key translation shifts, conducting an in-depth examination of localization strategies, and progressively deepening the understanding of the film. Then we structured the data, represented them in the google table, and interpreted them within the framework of translation studies, ensuring a coherent and comprehensive evaluation of the localization process. Comparative analysis is a common tool for checking used strategies and provides a profound understanding of solutions in order to make it better.

To conduct the analysis, we planned following series of stages:

- 1) to create the table with columns for original script, Kazakh version, Russian version, presence of CSR, type of reference, strategy used for localization, formal/dynamic equivalence and comments.
- 2) to compile a multilingual script in an Excel table;

I found the original English script and copied it from the official site of Disney, with permission to use it for research. The Russian script was written by fans and found on the website. The Kazakh script was requested from the studio, however I

was rejected because they deleted all the documents connected with the project after 3 years. Because Cars 2 was localized in 2011, it was already deleted. Therefore, I decided to transcribe the whole script by myself.

- 3) to analyze through multiple viewings both versions and ensure accurate identification of Culture-Specific References (CSRs) and creative translation strategies.
- 4) to find cultural-specific references using Chiaro's categorization; [Appendix A].
- 5) to create frequency list of references found;
- 6) content analysis: categorizing by strategies using Pederson's classification of six strategies (retention, direct translation, cultural substitution, generalization, omission, addition) and discuss the meaning of phrases;
- 7) to create frequency tables and diagrams that will illustrate all the data for clear comprehension;
- 8) to conduct analysis by lenses of Venuti's domestication and foreignization framework;
- 9) to provide findings in a descriptive way and write the results report.

The animated film, with a total duration of 98 minutes, was divided into 33 segments to facilitate structured analysis. This division allowed for a more manageable approach to examining the dialogues across different scenes. Approximately 1,300 utterances were collected in three languages: English (original version), Kazakh (dubbed

version), and Russian (dubbed version). The detailed table containing all utterances and their translations can be accessed via the link provided in Appendix B.

### **Limitations and challenges**

The primary weakness is its interpretation, which is explained only by one translator. To minimize this I use peer-review, and ask my peers to comment on some moments of perception of the translation. Another challenge is to find one suitable classification; I guess I will add some points and comments for the chosen classification. Another limitation is that I will focus on the ready product, not the process of localizing it. Many translation decisions were made by request of other participants (editors, actors and other stakeholders). Audiovisual translators always work in a team, as chain by chain they are all interconnected. As a result, it means the decision of the translator could be affected by other factors.

### **Ethical considerations**

The present research does not involve interviews, surveys, or any direct participation from individuals. Instead, it is founded on the analysis of publicly available film scripts and their translated versions. As such, formal ethical approval was not required. Still, ethical principles were taken seriously throughout the project. Following the Belmont Report (1978), the study respects the three core values of research ethics: respect for others, beneficence, and justice. Respect for the intellectual property of the content creators has been maintained throughout. The original film was produced by Disney, and the translation was carried out by the localization studio *Cinema Tone Production*. Both parties have been notified about the intent to analyze their product for

academic purposes. Prior to the submission of this thesis, the final results of the research will be shared with them.

I have made an effort to stay objective and honest in my analysis. To avoid personal bias, I relied on a structured content analysis method, which helped me stay focused on patterns and translation strategies rather than personal opinions. The aim of this work is to contribute to academic understanding, not to criticize or misrepresent anyone's work.

### **Summary**

To conclude, this section of methodology allows readers to have an understanding and have full picture of used research methods and reasons to choose that way to succeed in research. This study adopts a qualitative, product-based approach within the scope of descriptive translation studies. A purposive sample was selected based on cultural references, accessibility, and the cartoon's societal impact. The research involved manual transcription, structuring of multilingual tables, and systematic categorization of translation strategies using Pedersen's classification. Additionally, Venuti's concepts of domestication and foreignization guided the interpretative analysis. While no participants were involved, ethical standards were respected — the studios behind the film were informed, and the analysis was done objectively and transparently. Peer feedback was also used to reduce possible bias.

## Findings

In 2011, Walt Disney released the animated film *Cars 2*, which was dubbed into Kazakh that same year. Originally produced in the United States, the film was localized for audiences in over fifty countries. It received a nomination for Best Animated Feature at the Golden Globe Awards in 2012. Dauren Qasenov and Saltanat Dungenbaeva localized the Kazakh-language adaptation directly from English. Director Aijan Jamsitova, with Yulia Biserova guiding as the assistant director, oversaw the dubbing process.

The following sections will analyze the localization strategies employed in the Kazakh dubbing, using the classification framework outlined in the literature review. Additionally, this chapter will explore key aspects of culture-specific references (CSRs) in the adaptation process.

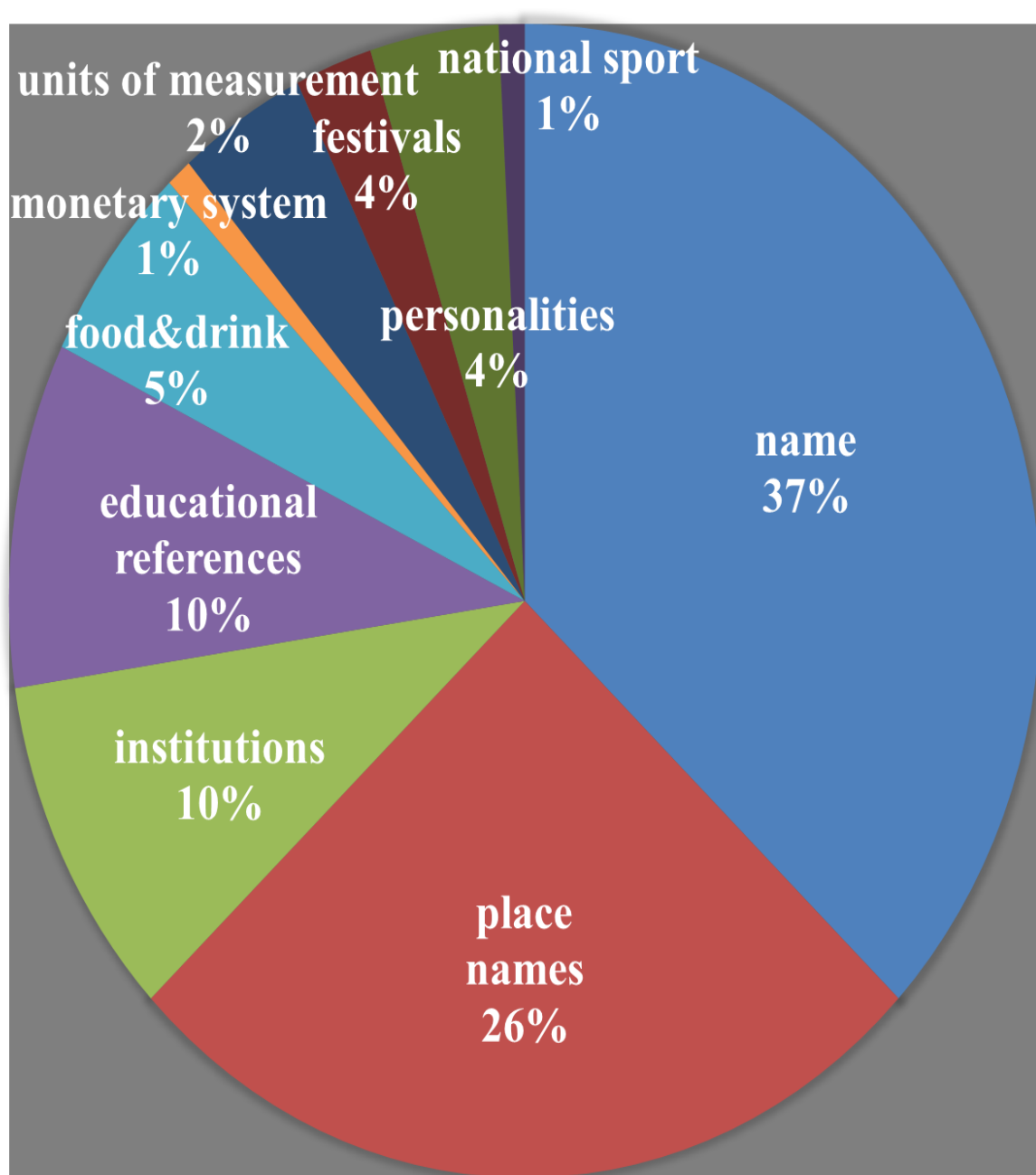
### **Culture Specific References (CSRs) in the Original Version**

“Cars 2” includes 131 CSRs out of 1 300 total utterances in the script, it makes up 10% of the script. The pie chart in Figure 1 provides visual information of the most frequently occurring types of CSRs, with names and place names being the most dominant categories.

Among the CSRs found in the script are both real references and fictional characters, such as: Tow Mater, lemon, Popemobile, Miles Axlerod, Volkswagen Karmann Ghia, Doc Hudson, Trunkovs, Shiftwell, Darrell, Tomber, Gearsley, Shu, Zundapp, Ramone. Further analysis of these names in translation is presented in the following sections, with attention given to the strategies used and their effects on the target audience.

Place names is the second dominant category with a total number of 32 identified in the script. For instance, Baltimore, Radiator Springs, Tokyo, London, Paris, Moroccan, Porto Corsa, Italy, Germany, Czech Republic, Detroit, England. Most of these names are well known internationally, which reduces the need for transcreation.

Figure 1. Classification CSRs in the Cars 2



## Cars' Names

Table 1. Example

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i><b>Mater — Tow Mater,</b> that's who — is here to help you. Hey, Otis!</i>	<b>Мэтр. Эвакуатор.</b> Көмектесуге қашанда дайын. Ей, Отис!	<b>Мэтр - тягач Мэтр,</b> вот, кто здесь, чтобы помочь вам. Привет, Отис!

Here name was adapted using specification, where a more specific term “Эвакуатор” replaced “Tow”, which translates as “Буксир”. Moreover, “*Tow Mater*” is a wordplay on *tomato* — was translated as “*Мэтр. Эвакуатор*” focusing on the character’s function rather than preserving the original pun.

Table 2. Example

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Hey, Mater! I... Oh, gosh. I'm so sorry. I... I thought I could make it this time, but... Smooth like pudding, huh? Who am I kidding? I'll always be a <b>lemon</b>.</i>	Ей, Мэтр. Мен тағы да сынып қалдым. Бұл жолы сына қоймаспын деп ем, бірақ... Қалшыдадым да қалдым. Қайтесін енді, салдырлақтың аты <b>салдырлақ.</b>	Привет, Мэтр. Я... Боже. Мне так жаль. Я думал, что на этот раз у меня получится... Вот и вся музыка. Кого я обманываю? Я всегда был <b>ведром.</b>
<i>You're the only one that's nice to <b>lemons</b> like me, Mater.</i>	<b>Біздің</b> жағдайымызды сенен басқа кім түсінеді, Мэтр	Ты единственный, кто заботится о <b>корытах</b> , вроде меня, Мэтр.
<i>Yeah, you know. Cars that don't ever work right. <b>Lemons</b> is a tow truck's bread and butter. Like 'em Gremlins and Pacers we run into at the party and the race and the airport.</i>	Иә, үнемі сына беретін машинелер ғой. Бірақ мені асырап отырған <b>осылар</b> . Өткенде тойда бірге болып едік, әуежайда жарысқан Гремлин мен Пэйсер сияқтылар.	Да, постоянно ломающиеся тачки. <b>Ведро</b> и тягачи нераздельны, как хлеб с маслом. Вроде тех Гремлина и Пэйсера с вечеринки, и тех в аэропорту.

<i>Of course! They must be the heads of the <b>lemon</b> families.</i>	Әлбетте, <b>салдырлақтардың</b> серкесі болса керек өздері.	Конечно же! Должно быть, глава одного из семейств.
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In the cases provided above, we have the same word “lemon”, this word appears many times in the plot, and you can see examples in the cases above. When direct translation was not feasible, cultural substitution was used to find equivalent terms in Kazakh. For example, *lemon*, which in English refers to a defective car, was replaced with “*салдырлақ*”, a term that conveys a similar meaning in Kazakh. In the second sentence, translators used omission. In the third case, we observe addition of definition “*үнемі сына беретін машиналар*”, which directly translated as “cars, which broke every time”. Then we observe generalization strategy using “*осылар*”. Only in the fifth case, they repeatedly used “*сылдырлақ*”, making connections between dialogues.

Table 3. Example

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Is the <b>Popemobile</b> Catholic?</i>	Түріне қарасаң, солай сияқты.	А Папомобиль - католик?

Transcreation was also observed in the next sentence, particularly when references were deemed unnecessary for the target audience. Popemobile is the reference to Pope’s vehicle, but in this cartoon, it is Pope. The religious reference was removed in favor of a more neutral translation. Instead of that phrase, translators created another version for this dialogue lines.

Table 4. Example

*English version (original)*    *Kazakh version (dubbed)*    *Russian version (dubbed)*

<p><i>[on TV] Tonight on The Mel Dorado Show... His story gripped the world. Oil billionaire <b>Miles Axlerod</b>, in an attempt to become the first car to circumnavigate the globe without GPS, ironically ran out of gas, and found himself trapped in the wild.</i></p>	<p>ТВ: Бүгінгі менің шоуымның кейіпкері: дүйім жұртты таң қалдырған <b>Майлс Карданвал</b>. Бұдан біраз уақыт бұрын жер шарын бірінші болып GPSсыз айналып шығуға әрекет жасайды. Қызық шалғанда жаңармайы таусылып, кең далада жалғыз қалған</p>	<p>Сегодня в передаче Мел Дорадо... Его история привлекла внимание всего мира. Нефтяной магнат - <b>Майлс Карданвал</b> решил стать первой машиной, обогнувший земной шар без GPS.</p>
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Transcreation was used when direct retention was insufficient to convey meaning.

A notable example is the surname *Axlerod*, which was localized as *Карданвал*—a name adapted to suit Kazakh phonetics while maintaining an automotive reference. The word means a node in the transmission of a car that transmits rotation from the gearbox or transfer case to the gearbox of the drive wheels.

Table 5. Example

*English version (original)*    *Kazakh version (dubbed)*    *Russian version (dubbed)*

<p><i>Professor Zündapp?</i></p>	<p><b>Профессор Зюндап?</b></p>	<p>Профессор Цундапп?</p>
<p><i>A Volkswagen Karmann Ghia has no radiator.</i></p>	<p><b>Фольксваген Карман</b> Гиада радиатор жоқ.</p>	<p>У <b>Фольксвагена Карманн Гиа</b> отсутствует радиатор.</p>
<p><i>Wow! I can't believe they renamed the <b>Piston Cup</b> after our very own <b>Doc Hudson!</b></i></p>	<p>Мәссаған! Бұлар сонда <b>Поршен кубогына</b> біздің <b>Док Хадсонның</b> атын берген бе?</p>	<p>Ух ты. Не могу поверить, что <b>Кубок Поршня</b> переименовали в честь нашего <b>Дока Хадсона</b>.</p>

Retention was the most frequently used strategy for character names, appearing in 22 instances. Some examples are given in table 5. This method was applied to preserve the original identity of the characters, ensuring consistency with the source material. For example, names such as Doc Hudson and Volkswagen Karmann Ghia remained unchanged, maintaining familiarity for audiences already acquainted with the franchise.

Table 6. Example

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Right. Let's see. Um... There were Hugos and Trunkovs.</i>	Қарап жіберейін, эммм... Мында Хьюго мен <b>запорождар</b> бар.	Хочу узнать, какие еще модели машин там были. Так, посмотрим... Хьюго и <b>Джалта</b> .
<i>Gremlin, Pacer, Hugo and Trunkov never get together, but they are having a secret meeting in two days.</i>	Өмірі басы қосылмаған Гремлин, Пейсер, Хьюго мен <b>Транков</b> кездесуге жиналды.	Гремлины, Пейсеры, Хьюго, и <b>Джалты</b> никогда не ладили,

Vladimir Trankov is a name of greenish Zaporozhets, He is a gray market smuggler. In the cases above translators used different strategies, making it confusing whether it is one character or two characters. In the first case, the name was adopted according to the car's model, making it more recognizable for the audience. Nevertheless, in the second we see retention, because “Trankov” remains unchanged.

Table 7. Example

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>'Course, Karmann Ghias weren't the only ones. Besides the Beetles, you</i>	Тек қана КарменГиада ғана емес, одан басқа Фольксваген, бен	Конечно, Карманн Гиa не единственные. По мимо "Жуков", есть Тип 3 со

<i>had your Type 3 Squarebacks with the Pancake motors.</i>	<b>заморожецте</b> ауамен салқындайды.	специфическими двигателями.
<i>Oh, yes, sorry. It's Shiftwell. Holley Shiftwell.</i>	Оу, кешіресің. <b>Делюкс,</b> Холли Делюкс	Да, прости. <b>Шифтвелл.</b> Холли Шифтвелл.
<i>Right. And Miss Shiftwell's is designing iPhone apps.</i>	Дұрыс, <b>ал біздің Холли</b> Айфондардың дизайнымен айналысады.	Ну да. А мисс Шифтвелл пишет для iPhone'ов программы.

Trancreation was used in the cases above, as “Squareback” was rendered to “Zaporozhets”. The Holley’s surname “Shiftwell” was changed to “Deluxe”. The original name “Shiftwell” was replaced with the phrase “our Holley” in the Kazakh version. This change adds a sense of familiarity and warmth, aligning with the Kazakh cultural tendency to use possessive forms (e.g., “my” or “our”) when referring to someone affectionately. Such personalization helps the target audience connect more emotionally with the characters and reflects local communicative norms, though it shifts the tone of the original dialogue.

Table 8. Example

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Oh! Miguel Camino has blown an engine!</i>	Ох! <b>Мигельдің</b> қозғалтқышы жаңып кетті.	<b>Мигель Камило</b> спалил свой двигатель!
<i>Very unusual, Darrell. He's been so consistent all year.</i>	Оқыс жағдай. Ол тәуелкел етуден бұрын бәрін есептеп алушы еді.	Очень странно, <b>Даррелл.</b> Он всю жизнь был очень расчетливым.
<i>They've called us terrible names: jalopy, rust bucket, heap, clunker, junker, beater, wreck, rattletrap, lemon.</i>	Бізге тағылмаған ат жоқ. Біреу <b>шапқыш</b> десе, біреу <b>сопырлақ</b> дейді. Біреу <b>кесек</b> , енді біреулер <b>темір</b> <b>терсек</b> дейді.	Они давали нам постыдные имена: <b>драндулет,</b> <b>корыто, гряда</b> <b>металлолома, рыдван,</b> <b>тарантас, колымага,</b>

	<b>развалюха, гроб на колесах, Ведро!</b>	
<i>Hey! A Gremlin and a Pacer! No offense to your makes and models, but you guys break down harder than <b>my cousin Betsy</b> after she got left at the...</i>	Гремлер мен Пейсер. Көңілдеріне алмаңдар! Бірақ сендер қал құлт етіп жүрген шартқысыңдар. Сынып салдырлап қалдыңдар.	Гремлин и Пэйсер! Не в обиду вам сказано, но ломаетесь вы чаще, чем <b>моя кузина Бетси</b> после того, как ее бросили у алтаря!
<i>They're coming, <b>Shiftwell!</b> Get him out of there!</i>	Аналар келіп қалды, шығарып ал оны!	Они приближаются. Вытаскивай его!

One of the notable patterns observed in the Kazakh localization is the omission of personal names in several dialogues. In the first case the surname “Camino” was omitted due to length limitation. In the second case, “Darrell” was omitted. It is a reference for personality. Darrell is a famous race commentator in the USA. In the next case there are plenty of words such as “jalopy, rust bucket, heap, clunker, junker, beater, wreck, rattletrap, lemon”, only 4 of them were transferred, others are omitted. In the next line “cousin Betsy” was omitted using creative approach, when utterance was changed fully. In some cases, characters no longer address each other by name, such as “Shiftwell.” This shift may be explained by a tendency to streamline dialogues, enhance naturalness, or adjust to the norms of conversational Kazakh. However, such omissions can also reduce the clarity of interpersonal dynamics and diminish character identity in certain scenes.

### **Place names**

In the Kazakh localization of *Cars 2*, place names were mostly unchanged. This choice aligns with the international nature of the film’s setting, as the World Grand Prix takes place in globally recognizable locations. Changing place names were unnecessary,

since these places are well known to Kazakh audiences. However, there were lesser-known locations; it is plausible that they could have been adapted to familiar Kazakh equivalents.

The main strategies observed in translating place names were:

Retention (24 cases) – Most names, such as *Tokyo*, *London*, *Paris*, *Porto Corsa*, *Radiator Springs*, and *Baltimore*, remained unchanged. This preserved geographical accuracy and audience recognition.

Table 9. Example of retention

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<b>Baltimore, Maryland,</b> you're on the air.	<b>Балтимор, Мэрилэнд.</b> Айта беріңіздер.	<b>Балтимор, Мэриленд,</b> вы в эфире.
I know of a black-market parts dealer in <b>Paris</b> .	<b>Парижде</b> кара базарда бөлшектер сататын бір тұрғынды білуші едім.	Я знаю одного торговца с черного рынка в <b>Париже</b> .
Listen, this isn't <b>Radiator Springs</b> .	Бер кара. Бұл саған <b>Радиатор Спрингс</b> емес.	Слушай, это ведь не <b>Радиатор Спрингс</b> .

In the first, the city “Maryland” and state “Baltimore” remain unchanged. “Paris” remains unchanged to maintain familiarity. “Radiator Springs” is a fictional but well-established place for this cartoon, its name was kept as is.

Omission (4 cases) – In some instances, references to locations were omitted, likely to streamline dialogue.

Table 10. Examples of omission

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
Well, I remotely reprogrammed <b>Porto Corsa's</b> red light cameras to do recognition scans.	Мен қаладағы барлық бейнекамераларға сканер қызметін қосып қойдым. Оларды анықтайды.	Я перепрограммировала камеры светофоров, настроив их на поиск и опознание.
Listen, this isn't <b>Radiator Springs</b> . This is exactly why I don't bring you along to these things! ...you have to get a hold of yourself! You're making a scene!	Мен сені жарыстарға қалай алып жүремін? Айтшы, өзің. Масқара қылдың ғой әбден.	Слушай, это ведь не <b>Радиатор Спрингс</b> . Вот, почему я тебя раньше не брал на соревнования!

Transcreation (1 case) – The name *Big Ben* was adapted as *Биг Бэнтли*, a creative play on words referencing Bentley cars, aligning with the film's automotive theme.

Table 11. Example of transcreation

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>We're in London, Mater, inside <b>Big Bentley</b>.</i>	<i>Лондонда, Мэтр, ішінде <b>Биг Бэнтли</b>.</i>	<i>В Лондоне, Мэтр, внутри <b>Биг Бэнтли</b>.</i>

Transcreation: *Big Bentley* is a creative reference of *Big Ben* in the car-centric world of *Cars*. The adaptation is retained in the Kazakh version, aligning with the film's style.

### Institutions (Judiciary, police, military)

Table 12. Example of direct translation

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Welcome home, <b>soldier</b>.</i>	Қош келдің, <b>сарбаз!</b>	Добро пожаловать домой, <b>солдат</b> .

The term “Soldier” is a reference meaning someone is a brave and skilled fighter. In this case, translators applied a direct translation. In Kazakh, we call “сарбаз” people who are serving in the army. However, in this context, it is used metaphorically to describe Lightning McQueen, as his racing career and frequent travels resemble the disciplined and regimented life of a soldier.

Table 13. Example of direct translation

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>They've been scrambling everyone's satellites. The Americans actually discovered it just before you did. They placed an <b>agent</b> on that platform under deep cover. He was able to get a photo of the car who's running the entire operation.</i>	Платформадағылар жер серіктерінен жасырынған. Мұны Американдықтар сіздің алдыңызда ғана білген. Сөйтіп, платформаға мықты <b>тыңшы</b> жіберген. Операцияны ұйымдастырып жүрген көлікті суретке тек сол түсіруі мүмкін.	Они исказали данные со спутников. Американцы узнали это не намного раньше нас. Они заслали на платформу <b>агента</b> под прикрытием. Он сфотографировал тачку, стоящую во главе преступной банды.
<i>No, no, I'm technical. You see, I'm in diagnostics. I'm... I'm not a <b>field agent</b>.</i>	Жо-жоқ. Мен техникпін. Менің жұмысым диагностика емес пе? Мен <b>тыңшы емеспін</b> , мен...	Нет, я - техник из отдела диагностики. Я... Я ведь не <b>оперативный агент</b> .

<i>It's the American spy!</i>	Мынау Америка <b>тыңшысы.</b>	Это американский <b>шпион!</b>
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The word *agent* usually means someone who gathers secret information, and in Kazakh, the word “*тыңшы*” has the same meaning. Because of this, the translators went with a direct translation, making sure the original idea stayed clear and easy to understand for the audience. However, there is a small issue when it comes to the phrase *field agent*. It was also translated as “*тыңшы*”, which might be confusing. The problem is that Holley is supposed to be a spy car, but in the translation, she actually says, “I’m not a spy,” which could make the audience confused.

Table 14. Example of transcreation

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>I never properly introduced myself. Finn McMissile. <b>British intelligence.</b></i>	Өзімді таныстырмаппын ғой. ФинМакмислл. <b>Британ барлау қызметі.</b>	Финн МакМислл. <b>Британская разведка.</b>
<i>Tow Mater. <b>Average intelligence.</b></i>	Мен Мэтрмін. <b>Тасымалдау қызметі.</b>	Тягач Мэтр <b>среднего ума.</b>

Here in the original dialogue included a wordplay on repeating the word “intelligence” with two different meanings. This was perfectly adapted to Kazakh, as the word “қызмет” can be used in both contexts, preserving the original play on words. However, as you see, in the Russian version this wordplay is lost. Therefore, the audience missed the intended linguistic humor.

Table 15. Example of retention

*English version (original)*    *Kazakh version (dubbed)*    *Russian version (dubbed)*

<b><i>Who are you with? FBI? CIA?</i></b>	<b>Қайсысы? ФБР? ЦРУ?</b>	<b>На кого работаете? ФБР? ЦРУ?</b>
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In this case, we face with retention strategy. The abbreviation "ФБР" does not technically exist in Kazakh, as the correct equivalent would be "ФТБ" (*Федералдық тергеу бюросы*). The same applies to "ЦРУ," which should be "ОББ" (*Орталық Барлау Басқармасы*) in Kazakh. However, the translators chose to keep the Russian abbreviations instead. This decision likely stems from the fact that "ФБР" and "ЦРУ" are widely recognized by the Kazakh audience, whereas the Kazakh equivalents, "ФТБ" and "ОББ," are less common in daily life context.

Table 16. Example of direct translation

*English version (original)*    *Kazakh version (dubbed)*    *Russian version (dubbed)*

<b><i>Your Majesties, may I present for the investiture of honorary knighthood of the British Realm, Tow Mater of Radiator Springs!</i></b>	<b>Жоғарғы мәртебелім, Британ Корольдігінің құрмет рыцері атағын алуға ұсынылған Мэтр Эвакуатор. Радиатор Спрингс.</b>	<b>Ваше Величество, позвольте представить к почетному посвящению в рыцари Британского Королевства... Мэтра Радиатор-Спрингского.</b>
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The phrase “Your Majesties” is a widely recognized way to address royalty, which is accepted for the Queen too. In Kazakh, the equivalent “Жоғары мәртебелім” is used to address highly honored people. Since both expressions serve the same purpose and convey the same level of respect, the translators opted for a direct translation, ensuring that the meaning remains clear and culturally appropriate.

## Educational references

Table 17. Example of direct translation

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Whatever you say, <b>Professor</b>.</i>	Айтсаңыз болды, <b>профессор</b> .	Как скажите, <b>Профессор</b> .
<i>He's dead, <b>Professor</b>.</i>	Ха ха . Шаруасы бітті. <b>Профессор</b>	Он мертв, <b>Профессор</b> .
<i>Hey, <b>Professor Z!</b> This is one of those <b>British spies</b> we told you about.</i>	<b>Профессор</b> түсіндік. Бұны өзіңізге айтқан <b>британ тілшісі</b> .	Это один из тех <b>британских шпионов</b> , о которых мы вам говорили.

In this case, the only educational reference encountered in the film is the term *Professor*, which is used to describe a character studying Allinol’s chemical properties. This term was directly translated into Kazakh as “*Профессор*”, as the word remains the same in both languages. The choice to retain the original term ensures clarity and maintains the familiar academic title, making it easily recognizable for the audience.

## Food and drink

Table 18. Example of specification

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Now, can I start you two lovebirds off with a couple of <b>drinks</b>?</i>	Олай болса, жастарға <b>ішімдік</b> әкел беруге болатын шығар.	Ну что, могу ли я обслужить вашу сладкую парочку парой <b>напитков</b> ?

The reference “drinks” has multiple meanings, as it can refer to both beverages and alcohol drinks. In the Kazakh, it was adapted as “ішімдік”, which denotes alcohol. This example demonstrates specification, narrowing the general meaning of the word.

Table 19. Example of retention

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Not here. You must try the <b>canapés on the mezzanine.</b></i>	Қазір емес. Жоғары қабаттағы <b>канаппеден</b> дәм тат.	Не здесь. Что это за прелестное <b>канапе на мезанинне.</b>

The term canape is a reference to the French appetizer, which looks like a small, open-faced sandwich served on a skewer. Although this concept may not be immediately recognizable to all audiences, the translators chose to retain the original term. This strategy helps maintain the cultural authenticity of the setting, reinforcing the fact that the scene takes place in France.

Table 20. Example of generalization

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>I'll take one of them. Thank you. Never know which one McQueen will have a hankering for. Hey. What you got here that's free? How about that <b>pistachio ice cream?</b></i>	Мен біреуін алайын. Рахмет, Маккуин нені қалайтынын кім білсің. Хэй, мыналардың қайсы тегін? <b>Жасыл балмұздақтар</b> тегін шығар.	И это прихвачу. Спасибо. А то, леший его знает, чем МакКуину хочется фары залить. Что тут у тебя бесплатно? Как насчет этого <b>фисташкового мороженого?</b>
<i>Whatever you do, do not eat the <b>pistachio ice cream!</b> It has turned!</i>	Не жесеңдер, соны жеңдер. Тек тегін <b>жасыл балмұздақты</b> жемендер. Әбден бұзылып кетіпті.	Чтобы вы не делали, не ешьте бесплатное <b>фисташковое мороженое.</b> Просроченное.

In this case, pistachio ice cream was translated as “жасыл балмұздақтар”, which literally means green ice cream. The translators altered the word to more general, rather than specifying the flavor. This adaptation was likely made for better align with the visual context.

## Other references

Table 21. References to holidays and festivities

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>He must be crazy excited about winning his fourth <b>Piston Cup!</b> Four! Wow!</i>	<b>Поршен жүлдесін</b> төрт рет алу деген қарай керемет! Төрт рет! Уау!	Он, наверное, страшно горд тем, что выиграл четвертый <b>Кубок Поршня</b> . Четвертый!
<i>[on TV] Lightning McQueen loses in the last lap to Francesco Bernoulli in the first race of the <b>World Grand Prix</b>. And three - count 'em - three cars flamed out leaving some to suggest that their fuel, Allinol, might be to blame.</i>	<b>Әлемдік гран придің</b> алғашқы жарыс күнінде Найзағай Маккуин Франческо Бернуллидан соңғы айналымда ұтылып қалды. Ал отқа оранған үш бірдей көлік аллинолдан жанып кетуі мүмкін деген сөз шығып жатыр.	Молния МакКуин проиграл в первом заезде <b>Всемирного Гран-при</b> Франческо Бернулли. А три - считай - три гонщика спалили двигатели. Эксперты считают, что Алинол мог стать причиной возгорания.

The term "Piston Cup" refers to the championship trophy awarded to race winners in *Cars 2*. The name is specific to the film's universe and derives from the word "piston," a key engine component, reinforcing the movie's automotive theme. In the Kazakh localization, translators applied a direct translation strategy, preserving both the form and meaning of the original term. According to Venuti (1995), direct translation is often employed when a term is either self-explanatory. This approach maintains the connection to the film's racing context while avoiding unnecessary adaptation.

World Grand Prix is translated directly. “Әлемдік гран при” is word by word translation in Kazakh.

Table 22. References to monetary system

*English version (original)*    *Kazakh version (dubbed)*    *Russian version (dubbed)*

<i>I'll go get you one. Hey, do you mind if I borrow <b>a few bucks</b> for one of them drinks?</i>	Мен алып келе қояйн. Маған <b>тиын-тебен</b> бере тұра аласың ба қарызға?	Я те притащу. Не против, если я заберу у тебя <b>пару баксов</b> на это дело?
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The word “bucks” is a casual way to refer to money in the U.S., and the translators made a smart choice by adapting it as “тиын-тебен.” This phrase, meaning small change, fits naturally into the dialogue and makes sense for Kazakh-speaking audiences. By using cultural substitution, the localization keeps the essence of the original while making it more relatable.

Table 23. References to personalities

*English version (original)*    *Kazakh version (dubbed)*    *Russian version (dubbed)*

<i>Lewis!</i>	Люис!	Сюда!
<i>Jeff!</i>	Джеф!	Джефф!
<i>French rally car <b>Raoul CaRoule</b> is counting on a big boost headed through there.</i>	Француз жүйрігі <b>Раул Кароул</b> кара жолда үлкен нәтижеге қол жеткіземін деп отыр.	Участник ралли - француз <b>Рауль ЗаРуль</b> рассчитывает сильно выиграть на нем.

In one scene, Lightning McQueen attends a party where he encounters characters named Lewis and Jeff. These names are subtle references to real-life professional racecar drivers Lewis Hamilton and Jeff Gordon, both well-known figures in the American motorsport world. For English-speaking audiences, these references will be immediately recognized, adding an extra layer of cultural relevance and humor to the scene. However, in the Kazakh dubbed version, this reference is lost. The names are retained without any

contextual clues, and since Lewis and Jeff are common names, the local audience may not connect them to their real-world counterparts. This is an example where retention as a strategy preserves the original form, but fails to convey the deeper cultural significance. As a result, the localized version loses part of the cultural richness and intertextuality intended by the original creators. This case highlights the challenge of translating proper names that carry cultural meaning. While keeping the names ensures fidelity to the source, it can reduce the impact of the reference for audiences unfamiliar with the background.

Table 24. References to personalities

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<p><i>Japan, land of the rising sun, where ancient tradition meets modern technology. Welcome to the inaugural running of the World Grand Prix. I'm <b>Brent Mustangburger</b> here with racing legends <b>Darrell Cartrip</b> and <b>David Hobbscap</b>. There's never been a competition like this before. First, Allinol, making its debut tonight as the required fuel for all these great champions. Second, the course itself.</i></p>	<p>Жапония. Күн шығыс елі. Дәстүр мен заманауи технология біте қайнасқан мекен. Гран при додасының беташар жарысына қош келдіңіздер! Мен <b>Брент Мустанбургер</b>, әйгілі <b>Даррэл Картрип мен Дэвид Хопкистің</b> қасында тұрмын. Бұл жарысты көрген де арманда, көрмеген де арманда. Себебі, жүйріктерге ұсынылып отырған алинол отыны бүгін тұңғыш рет бәске түсіп, көрермендер жаңа жарыс жолын тамашаламақ.</p>	<p>Япония - страна восходящего солнца, где древние традиции соседствуют с современными технологиями. Добро пожаловать на гонки, открывающие Всемирное Гран-при. Я - <b>Брент Мустанбургер</b>, а рядом легенды автоспорта: <b>Даррелл Картрип и Дэвид Хоббскэп</b>. Это первое в своем роде подобное соревнование. Во-первых, Алинол, дебютирующий, как обязательное топливо для все наших именитых участников. Во-вторых, трасса.</p>

Brent Mustangburger is direct reference to a real person, who is a famous American sport commentator. His real name is Brent Woody Musburger. Translators used retention here, leaving the name unchanged. While this approach preserves the original

cultural reference, an alternative strategy, such as cultural substitution—replacing the name with that of a well-known Kazakh sports commentator—could have enhanced audience engagement by making the character more relatable to local viewers.

Table 25. References to national sport

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>Wow! A live <b>karate demonstration!</b></i>	Мә, <b>каратенің</b> көрсетілімін қара.	Демонстрация <b>карате!</b>

Since the race is set in Japan, the dialogue includes a reference to karate, a national sport closely associated with Japanese culture. In the Kazakh localization, the translators opted for retention, preserving the original term to maintain the cultural setting. This decision is justified not only by the need to reinforce the Japanese context, but also by the fact that "karate" is a widely recognized and easily understood term across different languages.

Table 26. References to units of measurement

<i>English version (original)</i>	<i>Kazakh version (dubbed)</i>	<i>Russian version (dubbed)</i>
<i>[on TV] I can go over <b>300 kilometers an hour. I-In miles, that is like, uh... way faster than McQueen.</b></i>	Мен <b>300 шақырымды</b> бір сағатта толық өтіп шығамын. Маккуин ... Ол... Ол менің жаньыма ілесе алмайды.	Я делаю более 300 км/ч. В <b>милях</b> это... (178.5) Гораздо быстрее МакКуино.
<i>And remember, it's in <b>Celsius, not Fahrenheit.</b></i>	Ескеретін жайт, <b>фаренгейт емес, цельсий</b>	А она в <b>Цельсиях, а не Фаренгейтах.</b>
<i>Well, that's one of the worst engines ever made. It's an old aluminium V8 with a Lucas electrical system and</i>	Бұл моторлардың ішіндегі ең сорлысы. Ескі алюминий, сегіз цилиндрлі, Лукастікі, болттары	Один из самых дрянных когда-либо построенных двигателей. Старый алюминиевый 8-

<i>Whitworth bolts. Shoot, them Whitworth bolts is a pain, tell you what. Them ain't metric, they ain't inches.</i>	Уинфорттікі. Құрып қалған болттар бұл. Бұрыла алмай ит боласын.	цилиндровик с электроникой Лукаса и болтами Уинфорта. Черт, эти болты Уинфорта - сущий ад, скажу я вам. Они и не метрические и не дюймовые.
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In the original version, Francesco, an Italian character, refers to his speed in kilometers but attempts to convert it into miles, aligning with the U.S. setting of the film. However, in the Kazakh localization, a generalization strategy is applied by using the term “шақырым” (kilometer), resulting in the omission of the joke about miles.

Similarly, references to Celsius and Fahrenheit remain unchanged, as these temperature units are widely recognized and easily understood. In another instance, involving metric and imperial measurements such as inches, transcreation is employed to ensure clarity and cultural relevance.

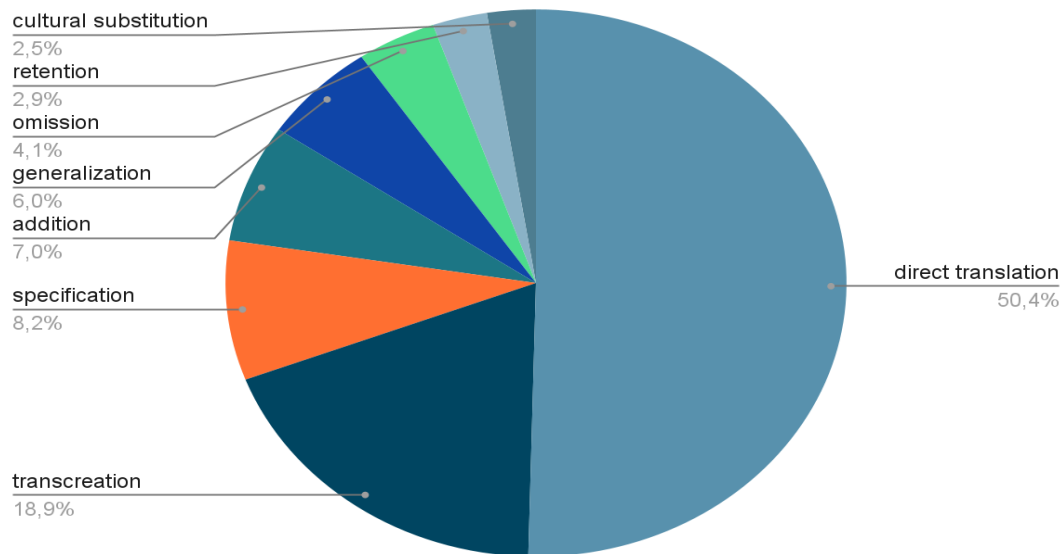
In the original, Francesco, being Italian, talks about his speed in kilometers but tries to convert it into miles to fit the U.S. setting. However, in the Kazakh version, this is simplified by just saying “шақырым” (kilometer), so the joke about miles is omitted. The same happens with Celsius and Fahrenheit—these units stay the same since they are widely understood. But when it comes to “metric” and “inches”, the translators use transcreation to make the dialogue sound more natural. Instead of focusing on the types of units, translators just conveyed the general idea, that these bolts are difficult to use: “Бұрыла алмай ит боласын (You’ll struggle as the dog to turn them)”.

### **Localization strategies**

We analyzed all of 1300 utterances from the script to identify translation strategies applied. The visual result is illustrated in pie chart 2. The most used strategy is direct

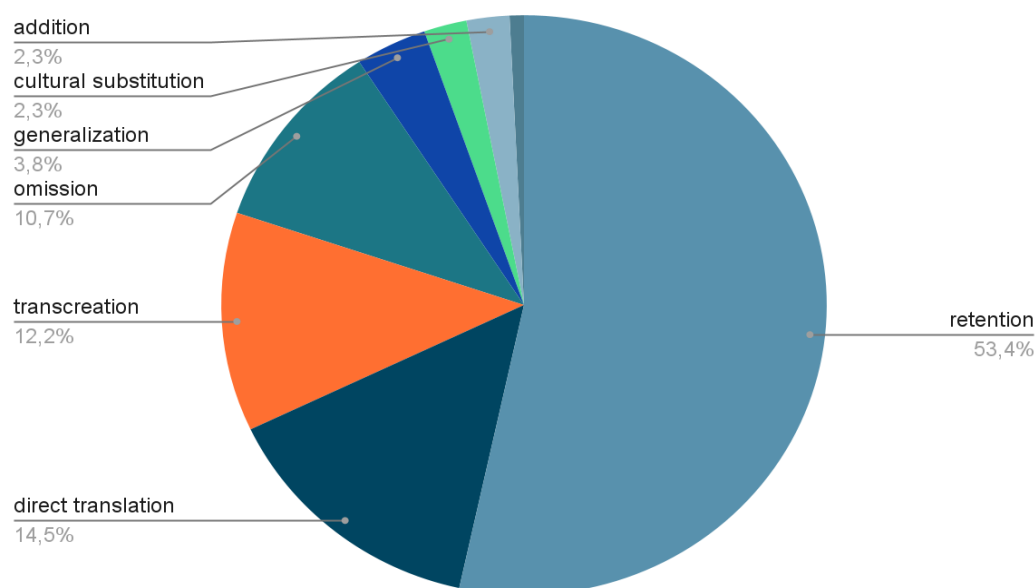
translation accounting for 50,4 % , following with transcreation 19%, specification with 8%, addition with 7%, generalization with 6%, omission with 4%, retention and cultural substitution with 3% each.

Figure 2.



Further analysis focused specifically on the 131 utterances that contain CSRs, which is presented in figure 3. Retention is the most common with 53,4%, following with direct translation 14,5%, transcreation 12,2%, omission 10,7%, generalization 3,8%, cultural substitution 2,3% and addition 2,3%. This suggests a strong preference for preserving original cultural elements when they are explicitly present in the text.

Figure 3.



These results indicate a more cautious and preserving approach when dealing with culture-specific content, likely to maintain the authenticity or recognizability of the references. However, a mix of creative and adaptive strategies is still present, reflecting the need to balance fidelity with audience accessibility.

Creative techniques were applied by incorporating locally familiar phrases. These additions, absent in the original script, were intentionally introduced during translation to align the dialogue with the cultural and linguistic expectations of the target audience. Such additions helped enhance the local flavor and relatability of the characters' speech. Examples include expressions like “Эй, сен”, “спагетти”, “миымды ашытпа”, “ұят”, “мақұл”, “атаңа нәлет”, “бәле”, and “сұмдық” shown in tables 26 and 27. These terms carry emotional, cultural, or humorous undertones that resonate more strongly with the local viewers. While these additions slightly depart from the literal content of the original, they serve a compensatory, making the translated dialogue more engaging and contextually appropriate for the target culture.

Table 27. Addition of phrasal expressions

English version (original)	Kazakh version (dubbed)	Russian version (dubbed)
What are you doing out here?!	<b>Эй сен!</b> Мұнда не істеп жүрсін?	Что ты здесь делаешь?
He is so getting beat tomorrow!	Бұл <b>спагеттиге</b> ертең көрсетемін.	Он завтра так получит!
Well, turn around and go back where you came from!	<b>Миымды ашытпа.</b> Тез бұрыл да кет бұл жерден.	Тогда поворачивай и убирайся туда, откуда приплыл.
Oh, yeah. How ridiculous would that be?	Оның не? Олай ойлаудың өзі <b>ұят</b> қой.	Да, это было бы просто невероятно.
What is happening?! It's a bad dream!	О, <b>сұмдық!</b> Мындайды кім көрген!	Что происходит? Похоже на кошмар!

The phrase “**Эй, сен**” (Hey, you) was inserted to intensify the tone of a character’s speech, making the interaction sound more direct and emotionally charged—thus aligning with the mood of the original scene.

The word “**спагетти**” (spaghetti) was added in reference to Francesco’s Italian background. Spaghetti, being a well-known symbol of Italian cuisine, not only enhances the humor, but also reinforces the character’s national identity in a playful and culturally recognizable way.

The expression “**миымды ашытпа**”, which roughly translates as “don’t bother me” or “don’t get on my nerves,” was used to make the character’s speech more relatable to a Kazakh-speaking audience. It adds a local conversational flavor that helps viewers connect more naturally with the character.

Another example is “**ұят**” (shame), a culturally loaded term in Kazakh society. The use of this word evokes a strong emotional response, as the concept of shame carries deep moral and social significance. Its inclusion in the translated dialogue subtly assigns McQueen a Kazakh cultural identity, making his character more familiar and culturally grounded.

The word “**сұмдық**” (disaster, catastrophe) was added to intensify the emotional expression of the character Bernoulli. It amplifies the dramatic effect of the scene and aligns the character’s reaction with local linguistic norms.

These examples demonstrate how addition as a translation strategy can be used not just for clarity, but also to enrich the cultural relevance and emotional impact of the dialogue.

Table 28. Transcreation

<b>English version (original)</b>	<b>Kazakh version (dubbed)</b>	<b>Russian version (dubbed)</b>
Time is of the essence, Shiftwell!	Салғыласып тұруға уақыт жоқ.	Теряем время, Шифтвелл.
Ah, doggone it. This is about my hook, ain't it? I know I should have checked it, but I can't, really. Look. It's attached to me.	Ту, атаңа әлет. Бәріде осы кесірі. Білем, декларацияға жазылмаған. Міне мұны сваркелеп берген.	Взгляните, он приделан ко мне!
Well, sure thing.	Базар жоқ.	Без проблем.
OK	Мақұл	Ну ладно.
Uh... Right. Your usual.	Мақұл, түсіндім.	Да. Как обычно.

Well, believe it. My new girlfriend just said so. Hey, there she is. Hey! Hey, lady! See you tomorrow!	Нан ұрсын. Жана ғана қызым өзі айтты маған. Әне, ана қыз. Хэй! Эй, қарындас. Ертең көріскенше...	Поверь, моя новая подружка так и сказала. Вон она! Леди! Увидимся завтра!
Don't be a fool, Mater.	Қайдағын айтпа, Мэтр	Не будь глупым, Мэтр.
Okay. It's him!	Мақұл, бар бәле мынада!	Лады, это он.
What in the...? Ew!	Не бәле?	Что это?
McQueen, you don't get it! I'm the bomb!	Маккуин! Сен түсіңбедің! Мен жарыламын!	МакКуин не надо! Я – бомба!
Let us have a toast.	Алып қояйық.	Предлагаю тост.

In addition to direct translation and additions, a number of creative adaptation, referred to as transcreation, were found in the Kazakh version of *Cars 2*. This strategy focuses on rewriting the dialogue to align with the cultural and emotional context of the target audience, rather than word-for-word translating.

One striking example is the line “Time is of the essence, Shiftwell!”, which was translated as “Салғыласып тұруға уақыт жоқ” (back translation: “*We don't have time to argue*”). While this version differs significantly in wording, it preserves the urgency and function of the intended message, making it more comprehensible and natural for the Kazakh context. This is a clear example, where the line was rewritten to prioritize clarity and cultural relevance.

The phrase “Атаңа нәлет” roughly translates to “*May your grandfather be cursed*”, a strong curse in Kazakh. Although emotionally powerful, such expressions are

considered inappropriate for children's content, especially in the context of an animated film. This highlights the tension between staying true to cultural expressions and maintaining appropriateness for the target audience.

Conversely, the phrase “Базар жоқ”, which is a colloquial way of expressing agreement or approval, was used appropriately in the dialogue. It fits the conversational tone and feels authentic and natural in a localized setting.

The word “Мақұл”, commonly used in northern Kazakhstan to mean “yes” or “okay,” was another regional adaptation. Its inclusion adds linguistic depth and realism, subtly anchoring the dialogue in a specific dialect without alienating the broader audience.

Another creative example is “Нан ұрсын”, a culturally rich expression meaning “*may misfortune strike me*”, usually said when someone is caught lying or exaggerating. It's a phrase loaded with cultural nuance and was used in a self-referential way by a character, reinforcing the localized tone and emotional color of the moment.

In a clever turn of transcreation, the English line “I'm the bomb” was reinterpreted as a verb meaning “to explode” in the Kazakh version. This is especially effective, as in Kazakh slang, anger is often expressed by saying something like “*I'm going to explode*”. The shift retains the emotion and tone of the original line while adapting it to local expressions.

The word “Бәле”, meaning *trouble* or *disaster*, was used to highlight the cause of the chaos in the scene, further aligning the dialogue with the emotional intensity of the moment.

The phrase “Алып қояйық”, typically said after a toast at Kazakh gatherings, was added to a party scene. This phrase plays on cultural norms, where people make a wish or say something heartfelt and then propose a toast. Its use in the film added humor and local flavor, making the scene more relatable and entertaining for Kazakh audiences.

These examples illustrate how transcreation not only transfers meaning, but also injects cultural identity, humor, and emotional tone into the localized version. It demonstrates the translators’ sensitivity to the linguistic and social norms of the target audience, while ensuring the narrative remains engaging and clear.

Table 29. Proverbs

English version (original)	Kazakh version (dubbed)	Russian version (dubbed)
It's good to be home, everybody.	Өз үйім - өлең төсегім.	Отлично вернуться домой.
Whoever find a friend, find a treasure.	Жүз тенген болғанша, жүз досың болсын.	Кто находит друга, находит клад.
Thank you, Mel. It is very, very good to be here. Now, listen to me. Big oil. <b>It costs a fortune.</b> Pollution is getting worse.	Рахмет, Мел. Көргенімен өте құаныштымын. Тыңда, мұнай ол <b>қып-қызыл ақша</b> , ауа болса ластанып жатыр.	Спасибо, Мел. Рад присутствовать здесь. Слушай, Мел, топливо, оно стоит целое состояние, а экология страдает все больше и больше.

Proverbs often carry deep meanings and cultural values, so their equivalent transfer requires both linguistic sensitivity and cultural awareness.

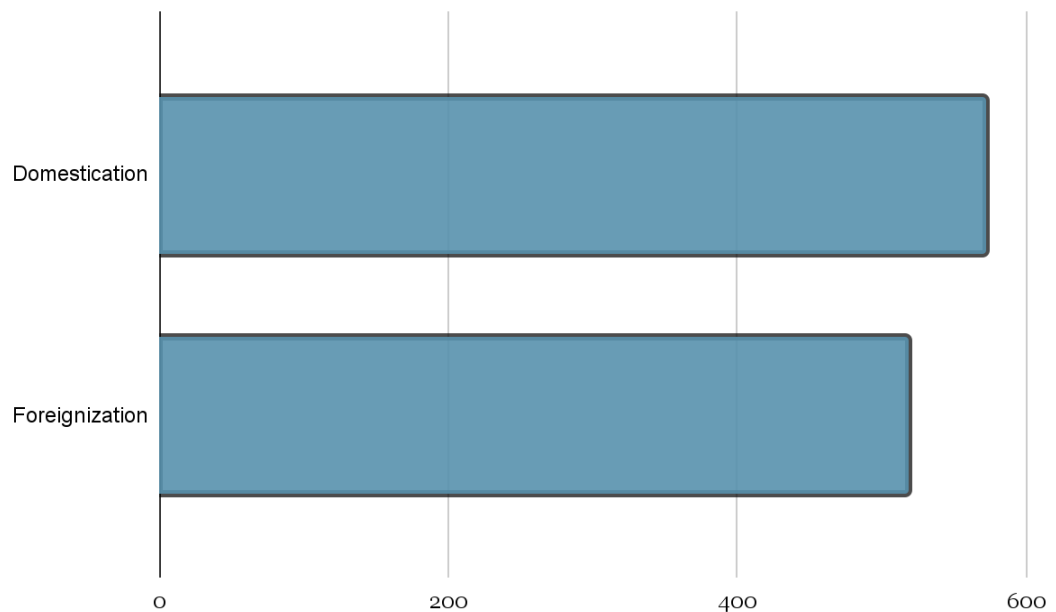
The first example is the proverb “Өз үйім — өлең төсегім”, which can be roughly translated as “My own home is where I can truly rest”. This expression emphasizes the

idea that only at home can one fully relax and be oneself, which was used to enhance the emotional and cultural connection to the character's situation.

Another proverb conveys the idea that true friendships and strong relationships are more valuable than material wealth. Although not stated word-for-word in the original, this concept was embedded in a localized line to reflect a cultural mindset common in Kazakh society—that friends provide emotional support, advice, and even financial help in times of need. While money can come and go, meaningful relationships offer long-term emotional security. This kind of adaptation not only preserves the intent of the scene but also aligns with local cultural values about community and solidarity.

Additionally, the English phrase “It costs a fortune” was translated using the Kazakh expression “қып-қызыл ақша” (red money), which refers to something being very expensive. This indicates how the translator applied an idiomatic equivalent to retain the intended meaning while making the expression immediately recognizable and emotionally resonant for the target audience. These examples demonstrate that when proverbs or culturally loaded phrases are present, their equivalent translation—rather than a literal one—is essential for preserving both the semantic value and the emotional influence of the original.

Figure 4.



The final layer of analysis applies Lawrence Venuti's framework of translation strategies—domestication and foreignization—to evaluate the overall approach taken in the Kazakh translation of *Cars 2*.

Domestication involves minimizing the foreignness of the source text by making the translation fluent, natural, and culturally familiar for the target audience. It often includes adaptation, simplification, or the replacement of culture-specific references with local equivalents. This strategy is intended to ensure ease of comprehension and emotional relatability. In contrast, foreignization seeks to preserve the original cultural context of the source text, even if it results in some degree of strangeness or unfamiliarity in the target language. It may involve word-for-word translation, retention of original names, or the inclusion of not adapted cultural references, thereby exposing the audience to the foreign nature of the original.

The general analysis of the full script reveals a slight dominance of domestication, which exceeds foreignization by approximately 5%. This suggests that the translation prioritizes clarity, accessibility, and cultural proximity, while still allowing room for foreign elements when they serve a narrative or stylistic purpose.

The prevalence of domestication can be seen in the use of local expressions, idiomatic translations, and regionally appropriate humor, which help make the film more engaging and relatable for a Kazakh-speaking audience. However, instances of foreignization—such as retained place names, car brands, and certain character names—help maintain the film's original identity and global setting. This balanced application of both strategies reflects a hybrid translation approach, aimed at maintaining cultural fidelity without sacrificing viewer engagement. Overall, the approach are target-oriented, as domestication prevails.

## Discussion

This study targeted to analyze the adaptation of CSRs in the Kazakh-language localization of *Cars 2*, examining to what extent linguistic and cultural modifications align with localization strategies. The research findings explain and give answers to research questions by identifying the common translation strategies employed and evaluating their effectiveness.

One of the key findings is that approximately 130 CSRs were identified in the *Cars 2* script. You can find examples in the chapter above. They account for 10% of the total dialogue. The dominant translation strategy observed in the Kazakh localization was retention, where CSRs left unchanged. This finding is somewhat unexpected, as it contradicts my initial thoughts that cultural substitution would be the prevailing strategy in high-quality localization. Cultural substitution, which involves replacing a culturally specific term with a more familiar equivalent in the target language, is often recommended for achieving greater audience engagement and accessibility (Pedersen, 2011). However, in this case, the heavy reliance on retention did not hinder the localization's overall success.

The success of the Kazakh localization can be attributed to the strategic use of other translation techniques throughout the remaining 90% of the script. Specifically, the frequent application of transcreation played a crucial role in making the dialogue more culturally resonant. Transcreation, which involves rewriting segments of the script to better suit the target audience's cultural and linguistic expectations (Chiaro, 2009), was effectively used to introduce local expressions, adapt humor, and enhance viewer relatability. Additionally, specification and addition strategies were employed to provide further contextual clarity, compensating for the rigid use of retention in translating CSRs.

These findings align with previous research on audiovisual translation, which suggests that a successful localization does not rely solely on one dominant strategy appears rather on a combination of approaches tailored to different aspects of the script (Gottlieb, 2005; Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007). In this case, while retention was used extensively for CSRs, the overall translation success was ensured through transcreation and other adaptive strategies applied elsewhere in the script.

To answer the research question regarding the most frequently used translation strategies in the Kazakh localization of *Cars 2*, the findings illustrates that direct translation and transcreation are the most dominant, followed by specification and addition. Direct translation was used in many cases where equivalent expressions exist in Kazakh, allowing for a faithful transfer of meaning. This suggests that much of the script could be translated straightforwardly without significant cultural or contextual adjustments. However, transcreation was widely applied. This strategy focused on modifying the original meaning of a phrase or expression to better align with the cultural context of the target audience, frequently resulting in significant deviation from the source material. It was particularly useful in conveying humor, emotional tone, or culturally unfamiliar ideas in a more relatable form. Specification appeared in moments where general words from the original were replaced with more concrete or specific terms in Kazakh. This helped make the content clearer and more accessible, especially for younger viewers. Similarly, the addition strategy was used to introduce brief explanations or elaborations not found in the original. These additions served to "spell out" meaning, guiding the audience and ensuring that key ideas were easily understood.

Interestingly, the original English script often assumes that children will infer meanings from context, whereas the Kazakh version tends to simplify and clarify these

moments. This reflects a localization strategy aimed at making the film more accessible, engaging, and entertaining for the local audience. The use of familiar phrases and culturally relevant expressions helped create a version that feels more natural and enjoyable for Kazakh-speaking viewers.

In summary, the localization team succeeded in making the translated version easy to follow, fun, and culturally resonant, largely through a thoughtful mix of direct translation, transcreation, and additions. The research demonstrates that translators employ creative solutions, such as incorporating idiomatic expressions and elements of the southern Kazakh dialect, to ensure successful adaptation. The interesting finding during the research was the particular focus on conveying character accents and stylistic features.

Answering the second research question about CSRs and its patterns, the analysis of the Kazakh-language localization of *Cars 2* reveals that the most frequently occurring CSRs were character names (37%) and place names (26%). In both cases, retention was the dominant translation strategy. The limited adaptation of character names suggests a preference for preserving the original identity of the film's characters. Place names also remained unchanged, likely due to the international setting of the story, which includes races in Japan, Italy, and Radiator Springs. Given the global context, modifying these names might have disrupted the intended setting and confused the audience. For educational references and institutions, direct translation was the primary strategy. This approach maintained clarity and ensured that the audience could easily grasp the meaning of these references. A particularly effective use of cultural substitution was observed in the adaptation of monetary terms. For instance, "bucks" was replaced with "теңге," making the reference more relatable to the Kazakh audience. This demonstrates an effort to enhance cultural accessibility while preserving the original intent.

However, a notable shortcoming of the localization is the handling of references to famous sports personalities. Unlike the monetary system, which was localized, the names of well-known American sports commentators and athletes remained unchanged. As a result, these references did not carry meaningful associations for Kazakh viewers, diminishing their potential impact and engagement. Replacing them with recognizable Kazakh sports figures could have enhanced the localization's effectiveness by maintaining the original function of these references.

Overall, the localization predominantly used retention to preserve character name recognition, while occasionally incorporating transcreation and cultural substitution to adopt certain aspects for the target audience. While direct translation and omission played a minor role, they were not the primary strategies for name adaptation. The approach struck a balance between preserving the film's original identity and making certain aspects more accessible to the target audience. However, in some cases—particularly regarding cultural figures—the lack of adaptation may have limited the effectiveness of the localization in fully engaging Kazakh-speaking viewers. This aligns with Koigeldiyeva's (2023) findings on the challenges of Kazakh localization, where she highlighted the importance of adaptation in maintaining audience engagement.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the success of the Kazakh localization of *Cars 2* lies not in the dominant use of retention for culture-specific references (CSRs), but in the strategic and balanced application of transcreation, specification, and addition. These techniques worked in tandem to create culturally and linguistically coherent content that resonated with the target audience. For instance, the deliberate inclusion of Kazakh idiomatic expressions and culturally familiar phrases—absent in the original English script—brought the dialogue closer to local norms and enhanced relatability.

The findings also reveal the importance of accurate lip-syncing and rhythmically adapted speech patterns, which contributed to the natural feel of the dubbed version. This illustrates that successful audiovisual localization demands creative decisions that go beyond direct translation, with each line assessed individually to preserve meaning, style, and humor within the constraints of dubbing. The addition of local phrases such as “нан ұрсын”, “мақұл”, “ұят”, “миымды ашытпа”, “базар жоқ” illustrates how cultural adaptation was achieved.

Furthermore, this research highlights the multifaceted nature of audiovisual localization, especially when adapting content for minority languages like Kazakh. It underscores that a flexible, context-sensitive approach—where different translation strategies complement each other—is more effective than strict adherence to a single method. This insight is especially relevant for practitioners in dubbing studios, as it suggests that combining techniques such as cultural substitution, addition, and transcreation can significantly enhance audience engagement.

Limitations of the study include its narrow scope: the analysis focused solely on one animated film and primarily considered linguistic aspects of localization. This may not fully represent trends in Kazakh localization. Elements like musical adaptation or visual cultural references were not covered and may offer valuable insights in future research.

Practical recommendations involve encouraging Kazakh dubbing teams to adopt more collaborative workflows involving translators, cultural consultants, and voice directors. Establishing stylistic guidelines based on cultural nuance could further improve localization quality.

For future research, it would be beneficial to examine whether similar strategies are applied across other animated films localized into Kazakh. Expanding the dataset could help validate the conclusions and offer a broader understanding of translation trends. Overall, this study contributes meaningfully to the limited but growing body of literature on Kazakh audiovisual translation, and offers both theoretical and practical insights into how localized animated films can effectively preserve cultural depth while appealing to local audiences.

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**Appendix A (Classification of CSRs)**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Examples</i>
<b>Institutions</b> (Judiciary, police, military)	Legal formulae ("This court is now in session," "All rise"), courtroom forms of address ("Your Honour," "My Lord"), legal bodies (Supreme Court, Grand Jury), legal and military roles (lawyers, attorneys, barristers, consultants, paramedics)
<b>Educational references</b>	"High school" culture – tests, grading systems, sororities, cheer leaders, etc.
<b>Place names</b>	The District of Columbia, The Country Club, 42nd Street, etc.
<b>Units of measurement</b>	Two ounces of meat, 150 pounds, twenty yards, etc.
<b>Monetary systems</b>	Dollars, soles, pounds, etc.
<b>National sports and pastimes</b>	American football, baseball, basketball, teams (The Knicks, Boston, Brooklyn Dodgers), etc.
<b>Food and drink</b>	Mississippi Mud Pie, pancakes, BLT, etc.
<b>Holidays and festivities</b>	Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, July 4th, Thanksgiving, Bar Mitzvah, Chinese New Year, The Festival of Light, etc.
<b>Books, films, and TV programs</b>	"Did you watch <i>The Brady Bunch?</i> ", "Welcome to the road, Dorothy"
<b>Celebrities and personalities</b>	Ringo Starr, Topsy, The Cookie Monster, etc.

**Appendix B (the link for script)**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tTlont4ZoKXR4fcmNdCpj1Om\\_HH1HvXd?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tTlont4ZoKXR4fcmNdCpj1Om_HH1HvXd?usp=drive_link)