

FILM TRANSLATION PROCESS: FORMS, PECULIARITIES AND PERIODIC CHARACTERISTICS

Akerke Bolatbekkyzy Abagan* and Bayan Nursultanovna Jubatova*

Abstract: The paper outlines the importance of film translations and studies their role in social, economic, mental, scientific and cultural relations between nations. Along with the development of various translation spheres, the film translation shows the necessity for studies using a scientific approach. Therefore, this paper indicates the need to study the film translations which have their own role in social processes from a scientific point of view, and also discusses the development of the film translation sphere in Kazakhstan. The researchers of film translation distinguish several forms of film translation: dubbing, subtitle, and simultaneous translation. The paper describes each of these forms and reveals their peculiarities and disadvantages. The translation methods practiced in Kazakhstan were also considered. Unlike the literary translation, film translation mainly uses the “vivid” spoken language, idioms, archaisms, slangs, dialecticisms in discourse lexis since it shows the common life of the people. A translator’s thesaurus and knowledge profile play a great role in conveying the vivid expressions, especially phraseologies in film text. So, some fixed phrases from Korean TV series were given as examples and their translations were analyzed within this scientific work.

Keywords: TV channel, translator, film, film translation, dubbing, subtitle, simultaneous translation, etc.

INTRODUCTION

While the globalization process features the intensive development of international social, economic, mental, scientific, and cultural relations as well as information exchange through films, the film translation sphere takes an active part in communication of social and cultural relations. Since the film translation that represents the content through sound (audio) and image (video) has frequent technical errors along with the linguistic ones, it can be considered to be insufficiently explored. Nevertheless, English speaking translation studiers have been investigating the film translation topic from the middle of the 20th century. For example, the Spanish scientist Pilar Orero refers the film translation to the audio visual translations (Orero, 2004), and the English scientist Carol O’Sullivan says that we can establish the film translations by dividing them into thematic groups (O’Sullivan 2011). The thesis by the Russian film translation studier Matasov which analyzes the theory of film translation and gives the methods of teaching it (Matasov 2009) and the thesis by Gorshkova that investigates the film translation topic from lexicological, semiotic and linguistic cultural points of view are found to be significant works in the field of film translation. Unfortunately, we can say that the investigation of film translation in Kazakhstan still lacks scientific approach. Similar works are restricted to Adaeva’s “Film Translation Forms: Subtitling and

* Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Republic of Kazakhstan, 050040, Almaty, al-Farabi Ave., 71

Dubbing” devoted to the subtitling and dubbing that are the film translation forms and Kabyzbekova’s “Film Translation at the Interface Of Audio Visual Art and Multimedia” about the goals and objects, and the peculiarities of forms. So, as we see, the scientific and theoretical problems of film translations are somehow ignored in Kazakhstan.

METHOD

Nowadays, Kazakhstan TV channels buy foreign film products and then represent the translated ones to the viewers. These even play a definite role in the conceptual life of Kazakhstan people. That’s why we decided to review this phenomenon which took place in social processes. Especially we emphasized the technical group work in introducing the film translation to the viewers while pointing the role of Korean TV series in Kazakhstan, specifying the film translation forms and peculiarities, describing the film translation process and its technical challenges. When we talk about film translation usually the creative team of dubbing actors comes to the mind, but film translators and film translation work is ignored. Now we should initiate the describing of film translation process and make it a study object.

The more the international cultural relations develop, the more realizing tools are needed. And one of them is film translation. This need somehow contributes to the formation and development of film translations sphere. Today, a great majority of film products shown by Kazakhstan TV channels are foreign movies, including the ones from the West and Northern American films which lead among them. TV channels buy the products themselves and cooperate with foreign channels in terms of contracts.

The ratings based on the TV channel audience rates should be defined in order to outline the role of American, Korean, Indian, Turkish and Russian TV series in cultural and social life. To this effect, the author of the paper conducted a survey among 250 people of 18-30, 30-50 and 50-70 age groups from December 2015 till March 2016 (Figure 1).

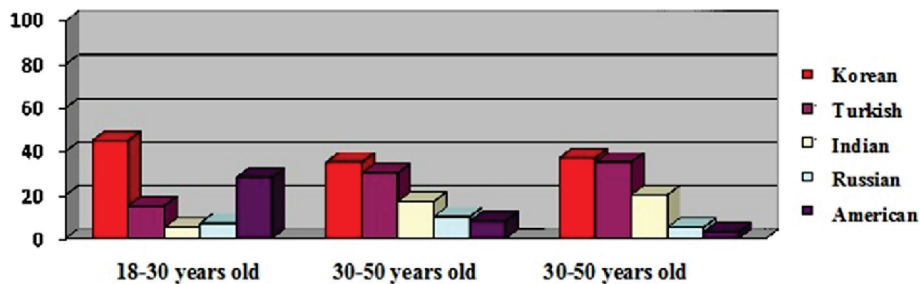


Figure 1: The survey of TV channels audience’s interests

The survey showed that the Kazakhstan youth of 18-30 age group prefer first of all Korean, then American products, and are not interested in Turkish, Indian and Russian film products. 30-50 years group choose rather Korean and Turkish products followed by Indian, Russian, American film products. As for the audience of 50-70 age group, they also showed strong interests in Korean and Turkish TV products, and partially in Indian products, but less in Russian and American films products. From the survey results, it was concluded that all age groups give preference to Korean TV products and Korean films which lead by the viewership. This survey was arranged among 33 students of the Oriental Studies Department at Kazakh National Al-Farabi University. 21 students replied “Yes” to the question “Did watching Korean TV series influence your choice of the Korean language?” Below, the answers to the question “why do you like watching Korean TV series?” were grouped by their frequency:

1. They interestingly show the Korean history, traditions;
2. TV series attract by their adventure story;
3. Handsome Korean guys and well-mannered Korean girls;
4. The absence of violence scenes;
5. The absence of sexual scenes;
6. Fashionable clothes of girls and boys.

The above specific data on Korean TV series demonstrate the main problems of various aspects of translation sphere, especially the film translation field.

Feature film translation is the specific form of the literary translation that creates the interlinguistic and esthetical communication through making new content that was interpreted from one language to another (Kuzmichev 2012). The film translations main goal is to convey the original meaning content, ideas, feeling, and artistic peculiarities through translations. It is obvious that film translator should fluently speak at least two languages. Otherwise, the translation quality will suffer, and original films national features and own characteristic will not be kept. Film translators should strictly obey all the rules of word using, fully convey the meaning of the idea, keep the literacy and try not to undervalue the importance. Such kind of translations intends that the films must not be translated from beginning to end, but conveying the words meaning, literal power and effect is the must.

Film translations studiers divide it into several forms: *dubbing*, *subtitles* and *simultaneous translation* (Rais1978).

Simultaneous translations are made for chronicles, documentaries, scientific and cultural films and performed by commenting the scenes in original languages out-of-shot. Simultaneous translations are considered to be the most important among other ones, because they require the special and rare skills, knowledge and wide experience of translator. The main *peculiarities* of simultaneous translations:

- the translator combines the editor’s job with his own duties;
- keeps in mind long lasting highlights (segments) of the original;
- makes translations that truly convey the emphasis in the original speech.

And the impossibility to retranslate and correct mistakes can be considered as a disadvantage.

Subtitle is the form of translation where the translated content is given at the bottom side of the screen. Subtitles are given as a written text at the bottom of the screen during the film casting. This kind of translations pays more attention to the situational meaning than to the original actions. Subtitles translation *peculiarities*:

- consumes less time and money;
- can be used for educational purposes as a language learning tool.

Disadvantages

- Subtitle reading requires the viewers to be very patient. They miss some part of the given information as they have to watch the film and read subtitles simultaneously.
- During the subtitle translations, it is impossible to fully convey the discourse meaning due to the visual content presentation and film character speaking speed. This is because the subtitles row is limited to 30-40 characters.

The method of using subtitles at the bottom of film frame for original films is widely used abroad in TV series and movies translations.

The most popular and difficult film translation form is dubbing. “Dubbing” (“doublage”) means “doubling” in French. A translator using this method tries to embrace not only the character’s articulation, but also his/her actions by paying attention to the idea, style, and nature of the film character (Adeeva, 2014). The *peculiarities* of dubbing methods:

- the original artistic content is kept;
- viewers fully understand the film.

Its disadvantage is that this is very time and money consuming.

Dubbing starts from the translation. If the translated content language is common and high quality, then the dubbing will give good results (Denisova 2006). Every film has its own positions, language and style. It will have speeches of various characters such as a doctor, an official or a criminal. Translator will try to keep the patterns and singularities of this discourse, and actor must understand it and synchronize. Today, Kazakhstan’s TV channels are using the dubbing method and this practice has been started in our country since 1940. While reviewing this fact we recall some outstanding members of Kazakh art like Abuseitov, Abuseitova, Akhmetova,

Karsakbayev, and Muhamedzhanov. In fact, they were the dubbing masters, and their followers Baktygereyev, Baktygereyev, Kenzhekov, Ismailov, Kulanbayev, Kenzheyev, Zhanturin, Segizbayev, Zhamankulov, Kalmyrzayev, Meiramov, Sharipova, Rimova, Sharipova, Abdinabieva, Myshpayeva, Belbayeva, Kadenova, Tasybekova, etc. made a great contribution to the formation and development of film translations. These names are known as art representatives who took part in translation dubbing, improvement of its artistic part. Translators are the ones who stays off-screen and whose names are mostly not mentioned. However, we cannot say about lack of film translations specialist in Kazakhstan, but their work was not appropriately mentioned yet. Since the 1960s, “Kazakhfilm” studio has translated over one thousand foreign and CIS countries’ films into Kazakh. Abuseitova was the initiator of Kazakh film translations who took part in the dubbing of “Othello”, “A Legend about Siavush”, “Red Guelder Rose”, “Crime and Punishment”, “Story of a Real Man”, etc. In the history of “Kazakhfilm” studio, she translated over 500 films into Kazakh and introduced to viewers. Also it is known that the films discourse was translated not by translating specialists, but members like Muratbekov, Abdikhalykov, Abdeshev, Tashenov, Mukhamedkhanov who fluently speak two languages and were close to art translations. Last decade faced great changes – now professional translators deal with this work. We can name among them Begenbayeva, Sauketayev, Sarbazova, and Berikkazhyuly.

But we should admit that translating practice experience is not being systemized, specialist training is not developing properly. There is practically no theoretic work on film translation process, its problems and way of resolving. And nowadays specialists involved by Kazakhstan TV channels in translation of foreign film products into Kazakh are the foreign languages specialists who graduated from Kazakh National Al-Farabi University and Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages. Since the film translation quality wholly depends on the translator, it is necessary to train on the special “Translating Practice” course, to pay attention to the improvement of the artistic translations skills, and to conduct professional trainings. Similar unsolved problems occur among professional actors that dub the translation for Kazakhstan TV channels. There is no department for dubbing specialists at local universities. Stage speech specialists who graduated from Kazakh National T. Zhurgenov Art Academy are considered to be dubbing professionals, but it is obvious that they are the ones who work with ready translated content, that is they should be involved in post translation period.

Dubbing translation can be divided into several periods. Translation processes consist of creative and technical parts. We must note that high quality dubbing translation is reached by the teamwork of translators, actors and technical specialists. For example, “Kazakhstan” national TV channel’s translation department’s working process consists of several periods: (1) translators translate the original content into Kazakh; (2) the translated discourse is transferred to editors; (3) the editor

reviews the translated content and after making his/her corrections, gives it back to the translator for approving; (4) the film text approved by translator and editor is handed over to the director and actors; (5) then the creative group of voice actors and directors deal with dubbing works by observing the lip moving and emotional features of the film. Technical aspects are also important in translation making process. There are internoises like natural voices, wind sounds, grass rustling, mooing cows, steps; all of them must be matched (Denisova 2006). Then in order to make the Kazakh TV series understandable for Russian speaking viewers the subtitle translators interpret Kazakh text into Russian and the montage department puts the subtitle into the film. Every step in this process is measured, and when all these were properly arranged and matched with each other it gives good quality film.

The actual problem of the modern translation theory is the translation process definition that is performing the translating steps from the original language to the target language. This also refers to film translations. Film translation is a complicated process and the success of the creative and technical group depends on translators by 70-80%, and it is noticeable based on the above example of “Kazakhstan” TV channel’s translation group. The translator also liable for conveying the original meaning clear and as it is. Language natural rules also must be obeyed in film translations. Language area in film translations is improved by free and literal translations, fully matching translation processes. According to this, the authors would like to add the following steps into the film translating process

1. Text reviewing;
2. Text analyzing;
3. Text translating (Zareskaya 2010);
4. Checking the conformity of the text with film plot;
5. Checking lip-synch of dubbing.

The Main Results of the Study

Korean TV series take a great place among other suggested TV series that similarly involve so much work. Translators should pay attention to the video scene, word stress, characters’ action along with the text, and make literal or equivalent translations or try to convey the right meaning. The ability to keep the film text artistic feature, dialogs quality, words peculiarities, style, to convey the author’s ideas accurately, to provide simple translation for the viewers depends on the translator’s skills and qualification. Unlike the literary translation, film translation mainly uses the “vivid” spoken language, idioms, archaisms, slangs, dialecticisms in discourse lexis since it shows the common life of the people. The translator’s thesaurus and knowledge profile play a great role in conveying the vivid expressions, especially phraseologies in film text. For example, the 16th episode of the Korean TV series “My Sons” has the following moment:

1. 옥희: 언제는 떡두꺼비 같은 아들을 넷이나 낳았다고 **열녀문 세워 주신다고 하셨습니다** [onjenin toktukkebi katin adiril naattago yolnomun seyuo jushindago hashiotjanaio]. *Literal translation:* Ok Hyi: You said that if I gave a birth to a boy like a frog as big as a rice pie, you would build up a **women gate**. *Film translation:* Ok Hyi: Sizge kelin bop tuskende aristanday tört nemere tuyp bersem, meni kökke köterip jüremi dep aytip ediñiz ğoy (“When I married to your son, you said that if I gave a birth to four grandsons you would praise me”).

시열 자식을 잘 가르쳐야 **열녀문을 세워주지!!** [jashikil jal garochoia yuolnyomunil seyuojuji]. *Literal translation:* If you brought you up well, I would **build up a woman gate**. *Film translation:* Shi Yoel: Jaqsı tärbie berseñ ğana **kökke köterip** jürer edim (“Shi Yoel: If you brought you up well then I would praise you”) 떡두꺼비 같은 [toktukkebi katin] (literal translation: like a frog as big as a rice pie).

DISCUSSION

If we make a literal translation of “build up a **women gate**” this will be unclear for Kazakh viewers and audience. The fixed phrase 열녀문 세우다 [yolnomun seuda] (literal translation: “build up a women gate”) has an old history. In the period of 1392-1897, in the Choseon Empire there was a tradition of building a gate for brave women and their names were written from the both sides of the cill. For example, in 1855 a woman named Chong Ju Han proved the innocence of her husband who was hanged and she took vengeance on slanderers, a gate with her name is still kept in Chung Chon province. Such a historical phrase is now used to mean “praise, glorify”; that’s why the translator applied Kazakh fixed phrase “kökke köteru” (“praise”). “To give a birth to a boy like a frog as big as a rice pie” (“küriş bälisi siyaqtı ülken qurbaqaday ul tauyip beru” in Kazakh) is also unclear and the frog is not associated with a positive meaning in Kazakh. But the frog is the symbol of wealth in the culture of Far East countries, and as for the rice pie, it is the one of the main respectable foods. The larger pie is, the wealthier you become, so its size is also considered; and the pie symbolizes the reach life, too. Korean people associate the baby boy as big as frog and pie with a wealthy man, so it has a positive meaning (Chon So Eng 2007). Usually, this term refers to the boys. The translation used the equivalence as “aristanday” (“like a lion”) (Kenesbayev 1977). Through these examples we see that such kind of fixed phrases indicating the way of life and world outlook of the certain nation is closely related to their culture and common life. The positive image of rice and frog among Korean people (mainly settled farmers) differs from the Kazakh culture. As for the Kazakhs, the bravery and courage comes first, and this is explained by hunting for food, wars periods and nomadic way of life, and epithet like “aristanday” (“like a lion”) acts as an example. The phrase “kökke köteru” (“to raise to heaven”) implies the cultural

code based on the worshipping “Kok tangir” (“Heaven God”) by ancient turkiks, and especially Kazakh people mythological conception about the acts of natures, world construction.

In 2010, “Kazakhstan” national TV channel broadcasted the Korean TV series “Palace Governor” where original two word sentence “마마, 큰일났습니다” [mama, kin il nassimnida] translated as “Märtebelim, q̄in jağdayğa tap boldıq” (“Your Highness, we are facing a serious problem”) (Kim Chung Shil & Do So Chil 2006), the two Korean words are equal to five Kazakh words. But in order to match the dubbing time and lip-synchronizing while making the pause after address, the translator decided to shorten the sentence to 4 words and chose “Märtebelim, endi ne isteymiz?” (“Your Highness, what should we do?”). 큰 일이 나다 [kin iri nada] *literal translation: A great challenge arose; the meaning is “We are facing a serious problem”, final translation “What should we do?”* (according to the film plot)

Translation text and video must be strictly bound; verbal and nonverbal tools should match each other and keep interaction. However, the original word comes together with allusions it can be difficult to find equivalence; sometimes it is even hard to convey the meaning because hints used by various cultural groups may differ. Fixed phrases in original video materials of Korean TV series are combined with hints. For example, the following phrase from the 10th episode of the Korean TV series “My Sons”: 대풍 아무래도 쫓아 내야 할 것 같아. **밥값도 못하고** 말야... 엄마 [amuredo choja nuieia hal kot katta, papkapdo mothago maliyia, omma] has a literal meaning “*We should drive away her, she cannot even earn for rice*” 밥값을 하다 [pap kapsil hada], (*literal translation: earn for rice* (So Dok II & Do So Chulpan 2013)) and can be interpreted as “pick up a livelihood”, but at this moment the film character points to the rice, and this fact makes hard to convey the original meaning within given words and time limit. That’s why the translator’s final version was “Bunı üyden qwıp şıǵw kerek sıyaqtı. Üy şarwasına da kömektespeydi” (We should drive away her, she even does not do housework). But it would be easy to understand the hint to if to say “We should drive away her, she even does not earn for the rice eaten”. This shows the importance of the hints in film translation that should not be ignored.

Also, there may be some fragments in the translated video that were not used in the original film. For some episodes of complicated dialogs that are difficult to hear, rushes, argues, whispers and other moments, translator has to show his/her own improvisation skills and add the corresponding content to the video material. In such cases, the translator must directly feel the original atmosphere, enter into the actor’s role, and perceive the things as a hero. For example, the following episode (Korean TV series “My Sons” broadcasted by “Kazakhstan” national channel) 시열 이런 속 없는.... [iron sok opnin], *literal translation: “He has no inside one”*. Here, the phrase 속이 없다 [sogi opta] “no inside one” (So Dok II & Do So Chulpan 2013)

usually refers to unpleasant person and is used when elder person scolds younger one. In order to express the mother's emotions, translator interpreted it as "ey, jügirmek neme" ("hey, bad-lot") according to the situation.

From this perspective, the translator must have an in-depth knowledge of languages, as well as cultural specificities of both languages to make an adequate translation. Furthermore, a film translator has to take into account the syntactical aspects of both languages to communicate to the receivers by giving a corresponding syntactic structure in the target language.

There is another problem for consideration: each language has its own tempo, intonation and grammatical structure. Not only actors are responsible for making texts roughly of the same duration as the original and preserving sense-feelings to make a right dubbing. Instead, in order to make dubbing easier translators should always consider the length of words in the target language without losing the original meaning. From this perspective, if we take the translation of Korean TV series as an example, the grammatical similarities between the Kazakh and Korean languages in terms of vowel harmony make dubbing process less challenging, but fitting the words length is still hard. For example, when translator comes across with short words in Korean language, he has to replace them with short words in Kazakh language to achieve lip synchronization and respective dubbing. Thus, we decided to point out the main criteria of dubbing. They are as following:

- *pause* (saying a sentence after making an intonation pause);
- *lip synchronization* (to synchronize translated text with lip movements, as of an actor in a film);
- *preserving the length of the word* (to preserve the syllable of the source word, i.e. a word with five syllables may not be replaced by a word with more syllables in translation);
- *source text attractiveness* should be preserved as much as possible (Denisova 2006).

These days, there are a lot of Korean TV series showing the everyday life of common people in Korea, but Korea has enough TV series about historical figures as well. In such cases, the translator is expected to get to know the history described in the original text before starting translation. Accurate translation using necessary chronology requires knowledge and competency of a translator. As it was said before by Gorshkova – "In the Age of Globalization there are more watchers than listeners. Our Age is the time of visualization when communication is managed by conversation as well as by gestures and intonation" (Gorshkova 2006).

CONCLUSION

Film translation process is the tool that builds a bridge between languages and cultures. Today, we can see how much our culture is integrating with Korean

culture by analyzing the specificities of translating Korean TV series dialogs which is being carried out in Kazakhstan. Film translation is the verbal type of translation which is studied by the point of polylinguism and creates a new text as the result that preserves all characteristic features of the source text. It consists of two side actions and issues like “translation process”, “visual translation”.

In conclusion, film translation, that is considered to be a part of international communication, can be fulfilled in three ways: *simultaneous*, *subtitling* and *dubbing*. But today film translation in Kazakhstan is carried out only by dubbing. As it was described above, dubbing is the most challenging type of translation that includes text observation, text analyzing (in case of historic film, pre-reviewing), and translation process. When translation process is finished, the translator must be skillful enough to be able to examine the compliance of the translated text with the film and lip synchronization. Here and now, the issues regarding the film translation theory and practice are especially topical, as the process of translation of foreign movies into Kazakh language lively develops. It is high time to establish the theoretical base of film translation relying on the gained experience. Researches, in their turn, should develop inquisitive methodology of film translation discourse. If in the strict sense film translation means the translation of work in one language into another, then in a broad meaning it is a value carrying social, cultural and cognitive character that is to be scientifically reviewed.

References

- Adaeva, E.S. (2014). Kinoaudarmanyn tyrleri: subtitr zhәне dublyazh [The Forms of Film Translation: Subtitle and Dubbing]. *Қарағанды Университетінің хабаршысы, FILOLOGIYA seriyasy*, 4(76), 101-108.
- Chon So Eng. (2007). *Hanguk munhyua, Uri mari munhyua chatki*. Hanguk Munhwasa, p. 206.
- Denisova, G. (2006). Chuzhoi sredi svoikh: k voprosu o perevode khudozhestvennykh fil'mov i ikh vospriyatii v ramkakh inoyazychnogo kul'turnogo prostranstva [Stranger among His Own: The Matter of Feature Films Translation and Their Perception within the Foreign-Language Cultural Space]. In *University Translation Studies* (Issue 7). Saint Petersburg, pp. 149-165.
- Gorshkova, V.E. (2006). Kontsepsiya kul'turnoi distantsii i perevod kinodialoga [The Concept of Cultural Distance and Translation of Movie Dialogues]. *Vestnik Sibirskogo gosudarstvennogo aerokosmicheskogo universiteta im. akademika M.F. Reshetneva*, 2, 178-181.
- Kenesbayev, I. (1977). *Қазақ тілінің frazeologiyalyқ sөzdigi* [Kazakh Fixed Phrases Dictionary]. Almaty: Gylym.
- Kim Chung Shil, & Do So Chil. (2006). *Kyuanonoro peunin hangugo*. Korean Drama.
- Kuzmichev, S.A. (2012). Perevod kinofil'mov kak otdel'nyi vid perevoda [Film Translation as a Separate Type of Translation]. *Vestnik Moskovskogo gosudarstvennogo lingvisticheskogo universiteta*, 9(642), 140-149.
- Matasov, R.A. (2009). *Perevod kino/video materialov: lingvokul'turologicheskie i didakticheskie aspekty: avtoreferat dis. ... kandidata filologicheskikh nauk* [Translation of Film/Video

- Materials: Linguistic Cultural and Didactic Aspects (Ph.D. Thesis Abstract)]. Moscow, p. 22.
- Orero, P. (Ed.). (2004). *Topics in Audiovisual Translation*. Amsterdam; Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins Pub.
- O'Sullivan, C. (2011). *Translating Popular Film*. Palgrave Macmillan, p. 243.
- Rais, K. (1978). Klassifikatsiya tekstov i metody perevoda [Classification of Texts and Translation Methods]. In *Voprosy teorii perevoda v zarubezhnoi lingvistike* [Problems of Translation Theory in Foreign Linguistics]. Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya publ., pp. 202-228.
- So Dok II, & Do So Chulpan. (2013). *Hangugo Kyuanenho sajon*. Cyrano.
- Zareskaya, A.N. (2010). *Osobennosti realizatsii podteksta v kinodiskurse: avtoreferat diss. ... kand. filol. nauk* [Features of Subtext Realization in Film Discourse Dissertation (Ph.D. Thesis Abstract)]. Chelyabinck, p. 22.

