The Seduction of Translating Film Posters as *imagetexts*

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1. The seduction of film posters’ signs

The present article is a preliminary study that aims at examining cases of translation of French film posters into English and Greek. More precisely, we will consider cases of interlingual translation of film titles that is also followed by translation or adaptation of the visual message of the film poster, in an effort to become localised–adapted to the local community’s perception. The new film poster is harmonised with the new film title, the translated title, so as to become more attractive. It is often the case that in the translation of adverts from French into Greek, the hegemonic language, namely English, and not the French original text, affects the target text (Kourdis, 2011: 67). Bearing this in mind, it is interesting to examine the case of film posters, which constitute an intrinsic type of advertising communication, connecting marketing with the seventh art (cinema).

It is worth noting that film posters often achieve respect as individual works of art (Edgerton, 1988: 89). As such, we will analyse whether instances of interlingual translation are reproduced in visual adaptation. Before presenting our study, it seems appropriate to clarify what the role of film posters is in semiotics and how adaptation is approached by translation scholars and semioticians.

In Greimasian semiotics, seduction is a subtype of manipulation, next to provocation or intimidation (Greimas & Courtés, 1993: 220-221). This position reflects, in our opinion, the course of cinema, through the decades. In its early steps, it was based on the charm of actors in the 40s, 50s and 60s (Garbo¹, Bergman, Monroe, Dean, etc.) to move on to more provocative aspects of everyday life, in the 70s, 80s and 90s (Emmanuelle, Nine 1/2 weeks, Wild Orchid, Striptease, etc.), and fear (The Exorcist, Nightmare on

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¹ It is not coincidental that Greta Garbo, as well as other thematics taken from the cinema, was studied in Barthes’ *Mythologies* (1957).
Elm Street, Child’s Play, Friday the 13th, The Lazarus Effect, etc.). Nonetheless, cinema still remains attractive. Why is this so? Willis (1989: 52) mentions that:

[to analyze cinema as a social machine entails understanding seduction, in general, not as a privatized exchange, but as part of social libidinal channelling and mapping. Seduction here cannot be confined to sexual exchange that is thematized in images of sexual activity, or of the body, or in narrated thematics of desire. Seduction does not just lead towards; it always leads away from something as well.

Who can question the fact that the translation of film posters, which are considered by some people not as marketing products, but as an artistic product of high aesthetics, of collective interest, is itself a challenge for the translator? This is the case because the translator is called upon to translate/transfer into another target language/culture (by using translation strategies and techniques), a culturally embedded product and make it transcultural. Films are deeply culturally charged since they are intended first and foremost for internal consumption. As Ramone (2013: 17) mentions:

[i]n their reflections on translation and in notes and forewords, translators frequently describe translation as a process of desire and seduction. Translation takes place as a result of the translator’s desire for the original, and their desire to possess that original and render it anew in translation.

If the translation of verbal messages is deemed by some as an easy process, the translation-adaptation of visual messages (iconic or plastic) is a challenging one. This is the case because, as Silverstein (2004: 622) observes, “[a] group’s concepts […] are manifested through any and all semiotic arrangements through which members participate in events, not, of course, just through language and language-like ‘codes’”. But what is the nature of film poster? Is it dominated by verbal or nonverbal signs?

2. Film poster: a syncretic text

The fusion of words and images in modern Western culture does not allow us to treat verbal and visual signs separately. Actually, it enables us to consider “composite, synthetic works (or concepts) that combine image and text”, which Mitchell (1994: 89) designates as imagetexts. The history of
advertisement, but also of science and art, comes as evidence. Film posters are viewed as a form of advertising communication that is semiotically significant due to the coexistence of different semiotic systems. What is more, “[film] is deeply entangled with the marketplace and the sphere of commercial-industrial publicity that replaces what Habermas calls the ‘culture-debating’ public with a ‘culture-consuming’ public” (Mitchell, 1994: 381). Film posters are considered part of a marketing strategy that has not been systematically analysed by academics. More precisely, for French (2006: 26-27):

[…] marketing texts such as posters and trailers are […] a neglected media for academic analysis, they demand attention as complex cultural artefacts with a range of unstable and variable meanings dependent on context, audience and the historical moment at which they appear.

From a semiotic point of view, film posters are an advertising text which is the result of the synergy of different semiotic systems. Greimas & Courtés (1986) place advertising in syncretic semiotics, which they consider as connotative semiotics, and note that the vast number of studies in syncretic semiotics focus on the manipulative aspect of syncretic communication. This is due to the fact that, as Bignell (2002: 32) notes:

[…] the signs in ads very rarely just denote something. The signs in ads also have connotations, meanings which come from our culture, some of which we can easily recognise consciously, and others which are unconsciously recognised, and only become clear once we look for them.

Barthes (1964), who was the first to propose a semiotic analysis of advertising, reaches the same conclusion. But what type of syncretic advertising text is film poster? There are several semiotic systems that coexist in a film poster: the verbal sign, iconic visual signs and plastic visual signs (colour, form and texture), as classified by Groupe μ (1992). Groupe μ (1992: 361) defines the relationship between iconic visual and plastic visual signs in the following way: “the plastic, being phenomenologically the

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2 As far as colour is concerned van Leeuwen (2011: 2) notes, “looking at colour as a semiotic resource not only means looking at colour technology, it also means looking at the way colour meanings develop, looking at what people have ‘said’ and done with colour”.
signifying of the iconic signs, enables the identification of the iconic. In turn, the iconic, once identified, enables one to attribute content to the plastic elements which don’t belong to the iconic type”. According to Groupe μ, signifiers of an iconic entity coincide as a rule with signifiers of a plastic entity, and vice versa. Although the visual system contains codified messages, verbal messages are a semiotic system that is more direct in information transfer. Sonesson (2007: 115) states that:

[…] it is not the amount of information that is crucial (the picture may easily care more) but the possibility to organise it: verbal language has fixed means for conveying relative importance, newness, focus, etc. The picture, however, in the prototypical sense of the term, may possess some corresponding mechanisms which are not sufficiently known, but hardly any systematic and content-neutral means for organising such information.

It is thus interesting to examine in what way information is being translated at the verbal level and investigate whether the alteration of the visual semiotic system renders the same amount of information, as the verbal message. We will also try to examine the reasons for the alteration of the visual system in the target language culture.

It is true that visual iconic signs in film posters are intrinsically related to the local community’s perception. The synergy of verbal and of visual messages is used in film posters to create an impact on the audience. Harrison (2003: 47) states that “an image is not the result of a singular, isolated, creative activity, but is itself a social process. As such, its meaning is a negotiation between the producer and the viewer, reflecting their individual social/cultural/political beliefs, values and attitudes”. What happens when the target culture changes and is differentiated at the level of individual/social/cultural/political beliefs, values and attitudes? Do advertisers have specific methods for overcoming this problem?

A comparison can be drawn between adverts and film posters since both aim at having an emotional impact on the audience. Suffice it to say, as Brader (2006: 254) puts it, “[a]ds that don’t achieve an emotional response do not succeed”. The same is valid for film posters since their main goal is to create an emotional response to the audience, thus convincing it to view the film. Price (2011: 19) posits that “[i]mages can reach emotions before a conscious perception is cognitively understood”. The use of imagetexts helps the viewer subconsciously understand the message. For this reason, imagetexts are used in film posters so as to capture the audience’s attention and make the film more attractive.
3. Adaptation as translation type

The term translation is used in semiotics as a broad notion encompassing various ways of rendering-transferring information from one verbal cultural system to another. The divergence point of these cultural systems is characterised as border. Gentzler (2015) mentions that “[t]raditional definitions of translation invariably include a border over or through which translation is ‘carried across’. Yet studies in semiotics suggest that the borders transgressed in translation tend to be more multiple and permeable than traditionally conceived”. Bearing this in mind, we are not perplexed by Gentzler’s position (2015) stating that “[l]ines between translation, adaptation, abridgement, paraphrase, and summary are blurring”. Adaptation can thus be blurring, but it still remains a very seductive means of information transfer, which is quite diffused in cinema.

Adaptation is the most recurrent translation type in the field of advertising (Sager, 1986: 342-343, Tatilon, 1990: 245, Koller, 1995, Guidère, 2000: 123-128, Bastin, 2001: 6). This term, although broadly used in visual communication, evokes skepticism in translation scholars. On the one hand, for Vinay & Darbelnet (2004 [1958]:134-135), adaptation is a method that reaches the extreme limit of translation and can be described as a special kind of equivalence, a situational equivalence that affects not only that syntactic structure, but also the development of ideas. Furthermore, according to Bastin (2001: 5):

adaptation may be understood as a set of translative operations which result in a text that is not accepted as a translation but is nevertheless recognized as representing a source text of about the same length. As such, the term may embrace numerous vague notions such as imitation, rewriting, and so on.

On the other hand, for Perteghella (2008: 51), “the use of the term ‘adaptation’ has become so widespread and denotes such diverse aspects and practices of translation in the theater that this has grown to be problematic for any study in the field of theater translation”. It is evident that adaptation is considered as a particular case of translation, as cultural translation. Eco’s (2001: 125) that we are allowed to speak of adaptation when “the interpretation of a message is mediated by the adapter, and is not left at the mercy of the addressee”, helps the researcher approach the issue. It connects adaptation to visual communication since, when the verbal message is localised in order to be understood, the visual message cannot be parted. As Hermans (1998: 15) remarks, every act of understanding involves an act of translation of one kind or another. When we refer to imagetexts, in what
ways can the bond existing between the visual and the verbal system “break”? When *adaptation* takes place in the target culture, is it a reconstruction of this “bond” or a new *imagetext*?

4. The translation of French film posters into English and Greek

The selected film posters are cases that were traced in slightly more than a decade (1999-2011) and they share the following characteristics: a) the original film poster (source language) is French, b) they belong to the film genre drama-romance-comedy, based on the categorisation proposed by IMDb\(^3\), c) the visual sign is adapted in one or both target languages. The analysis was conducted at two levels: at the level of interlingual translation and at the level of intersemiotic translation-*adaptation*. The study of the synergy of semiotic systems was based on the theory for the analysis of the visual sign proposed by Groupe μ. (1992).

4.1. Interlingual translation

Interlingual translation deals with film titles. Film titles are the verbal message that forms part of the film poster. Film titles often refer to other titles of books or literary work and are cases of verbal-cultural palimpsest, in that they recall in the viewers’ memory a common cultural background. They are a means of attracting the audience. The same is also valid for commercials. Film titles and advertisements have several characteristics in common, notably their length, their grammatical composition and the functions that are common of the language used in commercials (Kourdis, 2014: 2-3). They also portray an intertextual, intersemiotic and palimpsest character (Kourdis, 2014: 3).

We have to underline the commercial character of film titles. Since they are a marketing product, it is important to capture the audience’s attention, thus prompting it to view the film. Aranda (2007: 45) emphasises that film titles are less literary and more commercial or fortuitous. The commercial character is underlined by other authors like Whitman-Linsen (1992: 172) and Martí & Zapater (1993: 83) who name film titles as “commercial traps”.

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\(^3\) The source is the Internet Movie Database (IMD). We deem that mentioning film genre is important because it affects the interlingual translation of film titles (Kourdis, 2014: 15).
In the following table (table 1) we report the rendering of French film titles into English and Greek, and the film genre.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>French title (source language)</th>
<th>English title (target language)</th>
<th>Greek title (target language)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Une liaison pornographique</td>
<td>An Affair of Love</td>
<td>Μια πορνογραφική σχέση</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>À la folie… pas du tout</td>
<td>He Loves Me… He Loves Me Not</td>
<td>Μ’ αγαπά, δεν μ’ αγαπά</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeux d’enfants</td>
<td>Love me if you dare</td>
<td>Αγάπα με αν τολμάς</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris je t’aime</td>
<td>Paris je t’aime</td>
<td>Paris je t’aime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intouchables</td>
<td>Intouchables</td>
<td>Άθικτοι</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Interlingual translations of the title of the French film poster into English and Greek

We will examine the isotopies included in the verbal messages of film posters, namely their titles. *Isotopy* is typical of many semiotic systems. Eco (1985 [1979]: 120), underlying the broadness of this notion, observes that isotopy covers various semiotic phenomena that are generally defined as a coherent reading path at different textual levels. The notion of *isotopy* was first introduced by Greimas in his early work *Sémantique structurale* (1966: 96). For Greimas, isotopy ensures the semantic coherence of a text through the repetition of similar elements, to establish semantic features. Greimas (1988: 167) mentions that “in order for an isotopy to be identified and maintained […] it is necessary that at least one term that is not essential on the original isotopy not be compatible with the linearly arranged terms of the new isotopy”\(^4\). In what follows, we analyse the isotopies of film titles:

- Une liaison pornographique: *isotopy of mentality*
- An Affair of Love: *isotopy of sentiment*
- Μια πορνογραφική σχέση: *isotopy of mentality*
- À la folie… pas du tout: *isotopy of sentiment*
- He Loves Me… He Loves Me Not: *isotopy of sentiment*

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\(^4\) For a more in-depth analysis of semantic isotopies of film titles, see Kourdis (2012: 108-111).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Isotopy of sentiment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Μ’ αγαπά, δεν μ’ αγαπά</td>
<td>Isotopy of sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeux d’enfants</td>
<td>Isotopies of game and of social groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love me if you dare</td>
<td>Isotopy of sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Αγάπα με αν τολμάς</td>
<td>Isotopy of sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris je t’aime</td>
<td>Isotopies of toponyme and of sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris je t’aime</td>
<td>Isotopies of toponyme and of sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris je t’aime</td>
<td>Isotopies of toponyme and of sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intouchables</td>
<td>Isotopy of way of living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intouchables</td>
<td>Isotopy of way of living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Άθικτοι</td>
<td>Isotopy of way of living</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can see that in most cases the isotopies that characterise the film title of the source text (the French film title) are preserved in the English and Greek film titles. This observation could motivate us to argue that, even when the cultural context changes, there is an equivalence in the restoration of the cultural message, an equivalence that allows us to pretend that it is possible to have the same or similar cultural interpretations. It is worth noting that the three cultural systems (French, English and Greek) belong to the same *semiosphere*\(^5\), the European semiosphere, which accounts for the production of same or similar interpretations.

### 4.2. The translation of imagetexts

The first three posters (fig.5-1.2.3.) refer to the French drama/romance “Une liaison pornographique” which was directed by Frédéric Fonteyne in 1999. It is our first example and the reason why we began this inquiry in the first place. The other examples seem to illustrate our point. The film title was rendered into English as “An Affair of Love” and into Greek as “Μια πορνογραφική σχέση” (A pornographic relationship). We note that, at the level of interlingual translation, the Greek title is a literal translation of the French original whereas the English version changes the connotation of the original, from negative to positive. Thus, from the semantic isotopy of pornography, that reproduces a certain mentality of the way a love affair is approached, we are transferred to the isotopy of sentiment, of love.

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\(^5\) According to Lotman (2005 [1984]: 208), “[t]he semiosphere is that same semiotic space, outside of which semiosis itself cannot exist”. 
As far as visual communication is concerned, we observe that the verbal message is placed higher in the French and English posters, whereas in the Greek poster the verbal message is placed lower, at the level of the sheet that covers the nakedness of the woman involved in the sexual act. The French and Greek posters, though projecting the same scene (taken possibly from the film), are differentiated in that the Greek one seems more erotically charged, portraying a close-up in which the hands of the man involved in the act are more evident and are placed at the waist of the woman. In the French poster, the woman has her hands open, whereas in the Greek one she seems to be embracing her partner. The image of a man and a woman lying on a bed and having visual contact is a usual image of a couple. However, choosing to put in a film poster the image of a couple in a particular sex position, with neither face of the protagonists being distinct, wakes in the viewer non romantic thoughts. In this way, the influence of the verbal message in the French and Greek posters is intensified.

As to the graphic design of the verbal message of film posters, French (2006: 57) remarks that “‘graphic conventions’ are […] a significant element in poster art, and both the font, or type design, and the meaning of the text of the tag and copy lines necessitate analysis, as both elements are used to create a certain image of the film being sold”. We notice that the verbal message in the French poster is presented in a white upright font, whereas in the Greek poster it is presented in italics and in black, possibly attempting to emphasise the negative connotation of the act.

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6 Nørgaard (2009: 150-151) mentions that italics may comparably construct a mocking tone or suggest whispering.
Fig. 5-1.2.3. Film posters of the French film *Une liaison pornographique* and its translations into English and Greek

The English poster is completely different. It shows the smiling faces of the couple, in a less provocative and definitely more erotic position. The scene is different, and the man is visually more dominant. This is not the case in the French and Greek posters. The title, referring to a love affair and not to a pornographic relationship, is in red and on a lighter background. In the English poster, the bright colours and the focus is on the interpersonal relationship of the couple after the sexual act, thus projecting a totally different atmosphere for the cinephile public, compared to the French and Greek posters. One could easily argue that the English poster does not reproduce or translate the French original. The influence of the French original on the Greek target text can be detected by the complimentary information included under the film title, namely the film director and a verbal message on the content of the film. These elements are not retained in the English poster.

The second set of posters (fig. 5-4.5.6.) refers to the French romance/thriller “À la folie… pas du tout”, directed by Laetitia Colombani in 2002. The title was translated into English as “He Loves Me… He Loves Me Not” and into Greek as “Μ’ αγαπά, δεν μ’ αγαπά’” (He/She Loves Me, He/She Loves Me Not). As is evident, the Greek title, at the interlingual level, was influenced by the English title and not by the French original. Interestingly enough, the visual message of the French poster is not retained in the other two posters. The French film poster portrays two faces, female and male, which we assume are a couple in love, whereas in the English and Greek ones, there is only a female face. The English poster keeps the division between the higher and lower part, but the male figure is replaced by the heart. This division is not only visual but also verbal, since the utterance “he loves me” is placed at the top whereas the utterance “he loves me not” at the bottom, in an attempt to possibly connote that the other half does not share the feelings of the female character.
It’s not coincidental that, although the utterances in the English poster have the same font, they are placed on a black background. Moreover, the utterance “not” is cut off from the rest of the utterance and is placed in italics in an attempt to give emphasis to the utterance. Eco (1992: 65) mentions that the code of graphics (shapes, special marks, lines, fonts) contributes in the production of meaning, as the graphic conventions acquire a different content according to their environment. Indeed, typography, “the ‘dress’ of a text” (Steckl 2005: 205), should support and highlight its content, as “[t]here is no written document without (typo)-graphic qualities”. It’s not unintentional that the utterance “not” is written in a more personal font, touching the heart. Hence, the strongest intersemiotic translation, namely the utterance “loves” and the heart, is placed at the lower part of the poster, in an effort to connote that this will be the focus of the plot.

The Greek poster shows a close-up of a smiling woman (as the English one, contrary to the French original), and a daisy next to the title. This is an intersemiotic translation of the title, which acts connotatively at the level of the rhetoric of the image. In the Greek poster the heart, the most prevalent connotation of love, was not retained and it was replaced by a daisy, in an attempt to create a stronger bond between the intersemiotic translation and the verbal message. Both choices, especially the second one, are not surprising since the viewpoint that interlingual and intersemiotic translation constitute inseparable practices of everyday communication is diffused. As Petrilli & Ponzio (2014: 115) mention, “verbal signs cannot ignore intersemiotic translation. This is because the meaning of the verbal sign is not engendered inside the boundaries of the system of language. Instead, meaning necessarily develops in interpretative trajectories that transcend the limits of the verbal sign system and connect the verbal to nonverbal”.
Along the same line is a remark by Córmitre Narváez & Valverde Zambrana (2014: 82). The authors, referring to the work of Yuste Frias, comment that:

in any specialised translation of texts including images, translators never isolate verbal content from other semiotic codes, from a language into another, but they translate between languages weaving single words in a ‘intersemiotic and multisemiotic relationship’ within one or more codes. Thus, a translator should not forget that an informative and persuasive effect is also based on visuals.

The next case (fig.5-7.8.9) is the translation of the 2003 French film “Jeux d’enfants”, written and directed by Yann Samuell. The film is a comedy, drama and romance. At the interlingual level, it is evident that the English version has influenced the translation of the Greek title. The film was translated into English as “Love me if you dare”, quite differently from the French original. The Greek film title “Αγάπα με αν Τολμάς” (Love me if you dare) is a literal translation of the English title.

At a visual level there is also a differentiation since in the French poster there are two children kissing and holding in their hands a bouquet whereas in the English and Greek ones, the children are replaced by adults in a similar pose. Although in the French poster a daring scene, the kiss of two children (who are usually connected with innocence), was chosen, in the English version there is a couple of adults holding hands with a bouquet between them. Their foreheads are also touching. On the other hand, in the Greek poster there seems to be no other contact, but the couple holding each other’s hands and the bouquet. The French visual message intersemiotically translates the French title, because the utterance “jeux” connotes childhood, whereas the utterance “enfants” is translated by the image of the two children. The film title is not intersemiotically translated in the English and Greek visual message. We can only accept that the visual message could be a metonymy of the utterances, “love” and “αγάπα” (love).

In all three posters the choice of colours-symmetry is retained. Thus blue dominates half of the poster (where there is the boy and male figure) and different shades of red occupy the other half and can be observed both in the dress of the girl and the woman. It is worth noting that not only colours are

\[\text{Ainsworth (2014: 254) observes that “[…] the association of pale blue with male infants and pale pink with female infants, however obvious and natural it seems to us today, is of relatively recent origin”}.\]
constant, although the figures are different, the rest of the visual message seems intact, as if we were travelling through time. We also observe that in all three posters the verbal message is placed at the lower part and the use of hand-drawn type is chosen, in an attempt to connote the personal character of the story. Ambrose and Harris (2010: 126) note that “[h]and-drawn type offers the opportunity of having something unique and different every time, perhaps laden with the vernacular of the day”.

![Fig. 5-7.8.9. Film posters of the French film Jeux d’enfants and its translations into English and Greek](image)

The next film poster is taken from the 2006 French film “Paris je t’aime”\(^8\), a comedy, drama, romance directed by Olivier Assayas and Frédéric Auburtin. The interlingual translation does not display an interest, since the French utterance, is retained in the English and Greek posters. This is probably due to its renown and to the French connotation attached to it. This particular utterance can be directly recognised by the English-speaking and Greek-speaking public even when it is projected in French (when it is not translated). However, there is a significant differentiation at the visual level: in the French poster, part of the female figure is portrayed wearing a red coat and touching the fence of a French park (for those acquainted with Paris). In the English poster several sites in Paris are displayed, with the most prominent one being the Eiffel Tower. Armstrong (2005: 191) comments that “the translation of metonymy can raise problems of recognition”. This is not valid in this particular case as, this is the most

\(^{8}\) The poster is accessible at: http://www.imdb.com.
prevalent semiotic sign in the poster and constitutes an intersemiotic translation and metonymy of the utterance “Paris”. The red heart placed above it is an intersemiotic translation and metonymy of the utterance “je t’aime”. It is worth noting that the Eiffel Tower in the French poster is a visual replacement of the letter “A” in the utterance “Paris”.

In the Greek poster, the Eiffel Tower appears in the background of an ally in Paris, portraying a couple kissing. This translates, intersemiotically and metonymically, the utterance “je t’aime”. Interestingly enough, the capital letters are retained in the utterance, thus showing a more aggressive way of expression (Charaudeau 1991: 57, Cook 2001: 64), or functioning as to indicate shouting (Nørgaard 2009: 150-151). The capital letters of the utterance use a stronger bold font in the French and English versions than in the Greek one. The red colour of the French poster is partially reproduced in the English version with the use of the heart, although blue dominates the English poster and is totally reproduced in the Greek poster. This choice may indicate a mediated influence of the English poster—this time at the level of colour—on the Greek poster.

The next case under examination is the translation of the French film “Intouchables”10, a biography, comedy, drama directed by Olivier Nakache and Eric Toledano in 2011. The film title is translated literally into English as “The Intouchables” and into Greek as “Άθικτοι” (Intouchables). On the visual plane, the same faces (those of the protagonists) are reproduced in all three posters. As far as information is concerned, we observe that the two target texts portray a white man sitting in a wheelchair. This information does not appear in the French original, where there is only a close-up depicting the faces of the two protagonists. In all three posters there is a pleasant and friendly atmosphere, and a strong bondage between the two men. An interesting feature is that the titles in the French and English posters are placed at the bottom in lowercase letters, whereas in the Greek one the title is placed in the upper part, in red capital letters, taking up more space than in the other two posters. As Walker (2014: 74) marks, capital letters, colour (when it is available), size and emboldening are used interchangeably to draw attention to important pieces of information in many posters.

9 Chaume (2004:17) comments that capital letters are used in subtitling as a paralinguistic sign representing the volume of voice. Diaz Cintas & Remael (2007: 118), on the same issue, note that “[i]n the past, capital letters were used to render shouting. Nowadays, their use is more limited, and their sporadic presence confers them more expressiveness”. We agree with this remark, especially in this particular poster about love.

10 The poster is accessible at: http://www.imdb.com.
5. Conclusions

Kerrigan (2010: 135) mentions that “[a]s a film poster should be able to depict the benefit which consumption of the film will have for the consumer, it is important to communicate something about the mood and tempo of the film through the visual imagery used”. We note that in all instances examined, this is achieved at a satisfactory level, and that translation does not constitute a drawback of the film poster’s functions.

From the study of the interlingual and intersemiotic translation-adaptation of visual signs that accompany the verbal sign (film title), we first observe that the hegemonic language of the era (English) has an impact on the interlingual translation of Greek titles, on the choice of the visual sign in most cases (only in the first example does the Greek film poster reproduce the French one), and on the choice of the dominant colour. Furthermore, in most cases, the interlingual translation of Greek and English film posters remains, at the level of semantic isotopies, faithful to the French original. The verbal message is slightly differentiated in the target texts, but the visual message is consistent. Though partially altered, it does not change the isotopy that is prominent in the French poster. In the first example, the English poster is an exception both at a verbal and visual level, since it disrupts the isotopy between language and image.

We argue that we do not have a new imagetext in the target culture, in terms of constituting signs. The relation between the constituting parts of an imagetext, namely language and image, still remains uneven, and the translation of visual messages seems more problematic, than one would expect. For this reason, we cannot note substantial changes in visual messages. When divergences are present, there is a synergy of signs so as to reconstruct the meaning intended in the original film poster and to help the viewers to evoke it through an intertextual process. This process proves that culture will continue to translate signs in an attempt to explain them, thus proposing to its members an uninterrupted chain of cultural units, without necessarily avoiding the production of new cultural views and interpretations.

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