

Film Remake as a form of Intersemiotic Translation

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Abstract

The article approaches Hollywood remakes of foreign films as intersemiotic translation. Analysing one selected film pair—Seven Samurai (1954) / The Magnificent Seven (2016), the study employed a two-phase methodology consisting of Description-Comparison (phase 1) and Interpretation (phase 2). The first phase identifies shifts in plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting, while the second phase interprets those identified shifts through three main lenses: economic motivations (market-driven localisation), creative reinterpretations (auteurist vision), and socio-cultural negotiations (recontextualising identity). The findings of this study reveal that plot structure represented the most common transformation category, followed by narrative technique, characterisation, and setting; thus, the remakes reflect the proliferation of strategic recalibrations by Hollywood filmmakers in pursuit of commercial and cultural resonance within American audiences. The study also indicates that remakes function not merely as adaptations but as forms of intersemiotic translation shaped by market logics, auteurial choices, and socio-cultural repositioning. It contributes to Translation Studies by illuminating the role of remakes in cultural negotiation, originality, repetition, and transnational cinematic exchange.

Keywords: Film remake, intersemiotic translation, plot structure, narrative techniques

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Introduction

Cinema acts as a medium for globalization and provides a site for cultural exchange as it allows for the passage of narratives across language, culture, and time. One example of globalization and cultural exchange between Anglophone and international audiences is Hollywood's remake of foreign films into English-speaking versions of a film. The remake is not merely a replication of the original film; it encompasses all the adaptation processes that allow for the expansion of our understanding of creativity, cultural authority, and engagement with global audiences. This article positions film remakes as acts of intersemiotic translation, with reference to Jakobson's (1959) framework, wherein narrative, visual, and cultural signs are transposed across semiotic systems to align with new socio-cultural and industrial contexts. This reframing is indicative of how remakes negotiate new industrial imperatives and audience expectations rather than simply reproducing source narratives. Remakes are commonly dismissed as derivative works in today's public discourse, and the translational dimension of the adaptation processes of remakes has not been studied in-depth in the field of Translation Studies, which has historically focused on the linguistic transfer of texts rather than on the multimodal adaptations (Gambier, 2003; Chiaro, 2009).

This study tries to address this gap by analysing one purposefully selected Hollywood remake of a foreign film, selected for its culturally significant transformation and its illustrative value for intersemiotic translation. While prior research has examined remakes' broader cultural and economic implications (Forrest & Koos, 2002; Mandiberg, 2008), few studies systematically dissect the interplay of creative, economic, and socio-cultural forces shaping specific adaptation shifts in plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting. Adapting Perdikaki's (2016) two-phase methodology—descriptive-comparative and interpretive—this article maps these shifts and their motivations, revealing how remakes negotiate power asymmetries, often domesticating foreign narratives while revitalising stories for contemporary contexts and audiences. Despite being developed for literary-to-film adaptation, Perdikaki's framework is suitable because it focuses on functional shifts rather than medium-specific codes. By theorizing remakes as intersemiotic translations, it also contributes to the field of Translation Studies by shedding light on their role in global narrative circulation, cultural negotiation, and the politics of representation.

Literature Review

The idea that remakes of films can also be seen as a type of translation is becoming increasingly popular in Film and Media Studies, with scholars such as Aufderheide (1998), Wills (1998), Grindstaff (2001), Forrest and Koos (2002), and Mandiberg (2008) paving the way for considering remakes as translational acts. However, within Translation Studies, remakes remain underexplored, often shadowed by conventional audiovisual translation topics like dubbing and subtitling (Gambier, 2003; Gambier, 2004; Chiaro, 2009; Baker & Saldanha, 2008; Nemati Lafmejani & Parham, 2016). Film remakes, then, have received little attention in Translation Studies because the discipline of Translation Studies has traditionally focused on the transfer of meaning based on language (Ehteshami, 2022; Arjmandi & Ehteshami, 2025), and film adaptations have often been overlooked due to their multimedia nature. To this end, the current study contends that remakes are indeed a distinct subset of translation, defined by multimodality, corporate authorship, and adaptation norms. The film remake is a practice that dates back to the early years of filmmaking and is indicative of changing social norms, evolving technologies, and changing audience demands (Cuelenaere, 2020), serving as both cultural reinterpretations and economic strategies to capitalise on familiar narratives while minimising production risks.

Cinematic Adaptation and Translation

To understand remakes of films as adaptations requires a much closer examination of how adaptation relates to translation in cinema. Adaptation and translation are conceptually similar, yet they differ in some aspects. Cahir (2006), for example, pointed out that an adaptation is a way to modify a work so that it retains its core characteristics but is presented in a different cultural context, while the act of translation creates an autonomous yet interconnected entity. Applied to remakes, this framing further highlights how filmmakers translate foreign films' narrative, visual, and cultural elements into Hollywood's cinematic signification, balancing fidelity with creative autonomy.

According to Cahir (2006), with support from ideas offered by Jean-Luc Godard, all film adaptations will have an element of originality due to how each filmmaker has interpreted what they are recreating from a specific point of view. Approaching translation in this way challenges, as Cahir (2006) pointed out, the prevailing notion that source texts invariably surpass their adaptations. This perspective can be seen in film remakes because how an audience *accepts* a new film will depend on how familiar they are with the original. This resonates with the remake process, where directors prioritise specific elements (narrative coherence, aesthetic style, or emotional resonance) that stand independently while remaining tethered to their sources. For instance, when remaking foreign films, successful remakes take advantage of the visual/auditory elements inherent in a film in order to create a cohesive narrative on an aesthetic level as well as from a cultural standpoint, translating the meaning of the original film across borders (Cahir, 2006). This entire process can be viewed as a hierarchical series of creative decisions in which filmmakers balance content from the original work along with the level of accessibility for their audience and their own artistic direction, reminding us that filmmaking is an art form in and of itself. Seen in this light, the current study attempts to show how Hollywood transforms foreign films into something more than just an imitation and instead introduces a form of cultural and semiotic Translation that has taken place.

The interplay between adaptation and translation, furthermore, provides a critical framework for understanding film remakes as intersemiotic translations. In doing so, it is worth discussing how these films interact with multiple cultural, semiotic, and contextual systems. Rooted in polysystem theories (Even-Zohar, 1978), Catrysse (as cited in Sungur & Süverdem, 2023) identifies the characteristics that both adaptation/translations share, highlighting their context-dependent, intertextual nature and goal-oriented processes. Building on this, both adaptation and translation operate within intricate systems, where the final product diverges from its source (Sungur & Süverdem, 2023).

Khutorna (2023) extends this by framing cinematic adaptations as intersemiotic translations, a fusion of word and image that renews the meanings of sources. Since this procedure is inherently innovative, it gives filmmakers an opportunity to emphasize certain narrative aspects over others and reframe them according to their own inspiration. This framework, when applied to remakes, demonstrates their potentiality of transformation in which shifts in narrative or in aesthetics are an outcome of conscious choices aiming at engaging target audiences, hence urging scholars to investigate such dynamics further.

Perdikaki (2017) further situates adaptation and translation within cultural poly-systems, influenced by patronage (Lefevere, 1982) and socio-political contexts. Remakes, like translations, are shaped by creative, industrial, and cultural forces, functioning as inter-system processes that connect cinematic traditions across borders (Hutcheon, 2012). This view positions remakes as dynamic cultural practices, negotiating narrative exchanges and external influences to produce contextually relevant texts.

Intertextuality of Film Remake

The varied forms that film remakes take indicate that they are not simply copies or reproductions of a previously made film, but rather a continuum within the socio-cultural framework of cinema that reflects and creates multiple meanings through the semiotic system of film. Verevis (2006) defines remakes as films derived from prior screenplays, new iterations of existing films, or works that explicitly acknowledge their source through citational practices (Horton & McDougal, 1998; Mazdon, 2000; Grindstaff, 2001). This introduces an intertextual approach that, as Stam (2000, p. 202) suggests, frames remakes as “open-ended possibilities” within cinematic discourse, where repetition is institutionalized through iterative structures (Wills, 1998). Such structures are shaped by industrial factors like copyright and canon formation, ensuring remakes’ persistence as distinct entities (Altman, 1999). Verevis (2006) further posits remakes as intertextual structures stabilised by their acknowledged connection to a source, while their commercial function as *pre-sold* commodities leverages audience familiarity to mitigate financial risk (Altman, 1999; Druxman, 1975). Greenberg’s (1998) typology—close, transformed, and disguised remakes—illustrates varying degrees of fidelity and acknowledgment, from faithful reproductions to uncredited reinterpretations.

Loock (2024) highlights the role of remakes in reshaping cultural memory, intertwining nostalgia with contemporary relevance, while Cuelenaere et al. (2019) highlight remakes’ hybridity, speaking about how recontextualisation may omit original subtexts or reinforce stereotypes, shaping cultural identities through appropriation. Representations of gender and disability, for instance, reflect both universal and context-specific meanings, with remakes challenging or perpetuating outdated portrayals (Cuelenaere et al., 2019). Sutton’s (2004) application of Freudian *Nachträglichkeit* further enriches this, framing audience reception as a transformative process where memories of the source reshape the remake’s meaning, aligning with intermodal translation’s emphasis on reconfiguration over direct transfer.

Film Remake as Translation

Approaching film remakes as a form of translation extends beyond linguistic transfer and embraces broader multimodal and cultural reinterpretations. This view resonates with earlier critiques of linear fidelity-based models in Translation Studies (Mousavi Razavi & Tahmasbi Boveiri, 2019). To this end, the scholarly oversight within Translation Studies marginalizes remakes, as Evans (2014) highlights, in favour of dominant audiovisual topics such as dubbing and subtitling, due to an emphasis on verbal elements over films’ multifaceted nature (Forrest & Koos, 2002; Mandiberg, 2008). This ambivalence, as Braudy (1998) notes, stems from a reluctance to fully classify remakes as translations, often framing them as adaptations instead, which obscures their intersemiotic dynamics. Wehn’s (2001) analysis of *Three Men and a Baby* (1987) as a transformation of *Trois hommes et un couffin* (1985) exemplifies this and advocates for a broader translation theory that integrates visual and narrative codes. Reflecting a tension in defining their translational scope, such perspectives yet hesitate to label remakes as translations outright.

Building on Pedersen’s (2014) transcreation, the term can be used here to provide inspiration for a new way of looking at remaking films. This idea integrates elements of translation and adaptation, placing more importance on creating a culturally and emotionally resonant piece of work rather than simply creating a product that faithfully reproduces its source. While localization is focused on making technical changes to a film, transcreation allows the film to be remade into something that speaks to the target audience’s cultural/emotional context and resonates with that audience (Pedersen, 2014). This approach is further relevant to remakes, where filmmakers balance the source’s intent and innovation to suit new cultural frameworks, ensuring both communicative accuracy and emotional impact. By framing remakes in this way, the current study is indicative of

remakes' role in cross-cultural storytelling, reconfiguring narratives to bridge global audiences while maintaining a dialogue with the original text.

Methodology

By viewing the remake of a movie as an intersemiotic translation, the reinterpretation of foreign movies made by Hollywood, here, is accomplished through the cinematic language. This study, then, is conducted based on a two-phase methodology, adapting Perdikaki's (2016) framework for analysing literary-to-film adaptations to systematically investigate Hollywood remakes as intersemiotic translations. The study examines one chosen film pair—*Seven Samurai* (Akira Kurosawa, 1954) / *The Magnificent Seven* (Antoine Fuqua, 2016), selected for its cross-cultural relevance, reflecting Hollywood's dominance in global remaking practices.

The corpus of films consists of 1 source film and 1 remake, for a total of approximately 340 minutes of screen time. Each film was viewed multiple times, with scene-by-scene coding of shifts. All shifts were manually coded using a predetermined coding scheme based on Perdikaki (2016). To ensure coding reliability, the researchers repeatedly viewed and double-checked the films.

Phase 1: Descriptive-Comparative Analysis

The first phase involves a close comparative viewing of each film pair to identify adaptation shifts across four categories (Perdikaki, 2016): plot structure (the events that comprise the fictional story), narrative techniques (concerns with ordering, duration of story events and the modes through which the narrative is communicated), characterisation (depiction of characters within the narrative of a fictional story), and setting (temporal and spatial context within which the narrative of a fictional story takes place). Plot structure shifts encompass modulation (amplifying or simplifying events), modification (altering events), and mutation (adding or excising events). Narrative techniques include temporal sequence shifts (modulating duration, modifying order via analepses/prolepses, or mutating through event additions/omissions) and presentation shifts (modulating verbal/visual modes, modifying narrative delivery, or mutating stylistic devices). Characterisation shifts involve modulation (amplifying/simplifying traits), modification (dramatising, objectifying, or sensualising characters), and mutation (adding/omitting characters). Setting shifts cover modulation (amplifying/simplifying temporal/spatial elements), modification (altering ideological contexts), and mutation (introducing/eliminating locations or periods). This phase quantifies shifts to map transformation patterns, ensuring a granular analysis of how the source film is reconfigured. Table 1 provides an overview of the descriptive categories and the associated types of shifts.

Table 9. Descriptive-Comparative Categories and Shift Types

Shift Types	Descriptive-Comparative Categories					
	Plot Structure	Narrative techniques		Characterisation	Setting	
		Temporal Sequence	Presentation		Temporal	Spatial
Modulation	Amplification Simplification	Duration	Narration→ Narration	Amplification Simplification	Amplification Simplification	
Modification	Alteration	Order	Narration→ Demonstration	Dramatisation Objectification Sensualisation	Alteration	
Mutation	Addition Excision	Addition Excision		Addition Excision	Addition Excision	

Phase 2: Interpretive Analysis

In the second phase of this research, the analysis examines the reasons behind the shifts that have been identified and categorizes them as creative (e.g., auteurist reinterpretation of genre conventions), economic (e.g., market-driven localisation for commercial appeal), or socio-cultural (e.g., recontextualising identity or social issues). Taking into account the literature from both Translation Studies and Film Studies (Hutcheon, 2012; Verevis, 2006; Cuelenaere et al., 2019), this phase contextualises shifts according to industry practice, audience expectations and cultural negotiation, and examines how remakes attempt to find a compromise between fidelity and innovation in order to appeal to American audiences. By utilising a combination of quantitative and qualitative information, the methodology reveals the interaction of artistic, commercial and cultural influences in relation to intersemiotic translation and consequently provides further understanding of remakes as evolving cultural artefacts.

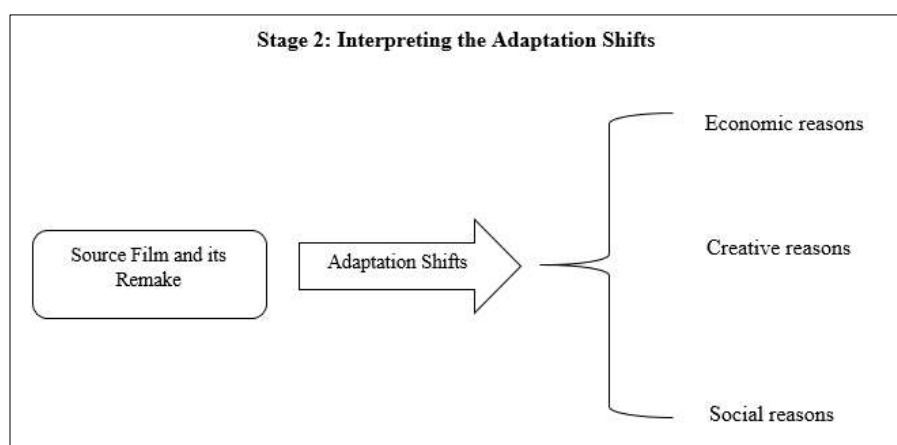


Figure 1. Second Stage of Identifying Adaptation Shifts

Results

The analysis of *Seven Samurai* (1954) and its Hollywood remake *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) is indicative of multiple types of adaptation shifts (Figure 1) that exemplify the multilayered dynamics of intersemiotic translation. Employing Perdikaki's (2016) two-phase methodology, this section presents findings from a descriptive-comparative analysis, identifying shifts in plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting, followed by an interpretive exploration of the creative, economic, and socio-cultural motivations behind these shifts. The results further indicate how the remake recontextualises the original's narrative so it resonates with new audiences.

Phase 1: Descriptive-Comparative Analysis of Shifts

1. Plot Structure Shifts

The examination of *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) begins with transformations in plot structure, defined as the ordered sequence of narrative events. Three key types of shifts are identified: *modulation*, where events are intensified or diminished to alter their narrative significance; *modification*, entailing substantial alterations to events that redirect the story's arc; and *mutation*, involving the introduction or removal of events, fundamentally reshaping the narrative's framework. A total of 15 plot structure shifts were identified (five modulations, six modifications, four mutations) and examples of each shift are provided in this section.

Mutation: In *Seven Samurai*, there are bandits watching over the village as they prepare to attack the village later, which creates tension due to the fear the villagers have. *The Magnificent Seven*, on the other hand, starts off with Bartholomew Bogue attacking Rose Creek immediately, burning down the church and killing the people living there. This change of focus turns the story from a fight against an unknown problem to a fight against a particular enemy and changes the story from being about farmers to being about fighting against capitalism. Moreover, *Seven Samurai* concludes with Kambei's reflection on the futility of their victory, as farmers prevail. *The Magnificent Seven* ends with Emma's eulogy, valorising sacrifice with heroic redemption, shifting from existential ambiguity to affirmative resolution.

Modification: *Seven Samurai* features the village elder advising the hiring of samurai, driving the recruitment journey. In *The Magnificent Seven*, Emma Cullen, a grieving woman, persuades Chisolm, shifting the motivation from collective wisdom to individual moral agency, aligning with modern sensibilities. In *Seven Samurai*, furthermore, an early bandit probe highlights the grim stakes, with losses reinforcing futility. *The Magnificent Seven* transforms this into a decisive victory, boosting the townsfolk's confidence and aligning with action-hero conventions.

Modulation (Simplification): The prolonged, arduous training in *Seven Samurai* underscores the villagers' reliance on samurai. *The Magnificent Seven* condenses this into a stylised montage, focusing on solidarity and empowerment, reflecting contemporary cinematic pacing and populist themes.

2. Narrative Techniques shifts

The analysis of narrative techniques in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) focuses on two dimensions: *temporal sequence shifts*, concerning the order and duration of events, and *presentation shifts*, examining the interplay between visual and verbal narration. Representative examples of each are listed, with additional shifts identified but not detailed.

A. Temporal Sequence Shifts

Total Temporal Sequence Shifts identified were seven (four modulations, two modifications, one mutation).

Mutation (Chronological Expansion): In *Seven Samurai*, the narrative delays the bandits' attack, building tension through the farmers' despair before the hiring quest. *The Magnificent Seven* opens with Bogue's immediate assault on Rose Creek, dramatising villainy upfront. This reorders the timeline to prioritise instant conflict, aligning with Hollywood's emphasis on early stakes (Cuelenaere et al., 2019).

Modulation (Ellipsis): *Seven Samurai* allocates extensive runtime to episodic samurai recruitment, emphasising individual philosophies. *The Magnificent Seven* compresses this into rapid introductions, using concise scenes to assemble the team, reflecting contemporary action film pacing.

Modification (Reordering/Prolepsis): In *Seven Samurai*, villagers' combat contributions emerge late, post-samurai losses. *The Magnificent Seven* introduces their role earlier during preparation, foregrounding empowerment to reflect democratic values through proleptic structuring.

B. Presentation Shifts

Total Presentation Shifts, which were identified, are seven (one modulation, five modifications, one mutation).

Modification (Verbal to Visual Narration): *Seven Samurai* conveys villagers' mistrust of samurai through dialogue (e.g., "They are all bandits at heart"). *The Magnificent Seven* expresses this via

visual cues like hesitant glances, with Emma as the primary voice, aligning with modern visual storytelling preferences.

Modulation (Verbal Rephrasing): The coda in *Seven Samurai* uses extended dialogue to reflect on battle costs, ending with Kambei's sombre line. *The Magnificent Seven* employs a briefer eulogy by Emma, paired with uplifting music, modulating tone for optimistic closure.

Mutation (Introduction of Verbal-Visual Narration): *Seven Samurai* implies Kambei's authority without a backstory. *The Magnificent Seven* introduces Chisolm's traumatic past through a verbal monologue with close-up visuals, a new presentational element tied to narrative mutation.

Therefore, by combining the two shift types under narrative technique, it is revealed that 14 major shifts have been occurred during the remake of *Seven Samurai* (1954) into its 2016 American version.

3. Characterisation Shifts

The examination of characterisation shifts in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) is indicative of how individual characters are depicted, along with their relationship with each other, in three ways: modulation (amplifying or simplifying traits), modification (substantial changes like dramatisation or objectification), and mutation (adding or removing characters). Here representative examples illustrate these shifts, with additional shifts identified but not detailed, as summarised in Table 1. In total, the analysis found that there were 11 characterisation shifts (four modulations, four modifications and three mutations).

Modulation

Amplification of Chisolm's Leadership: In *Seven Samurai*, Kambei's leadership is understated, defined by pragmatic calm and humility. *The Magnificent Seven* amplifies Chisolm into a morally driven Western lawman, his tactical prowess and personal vendetta against Bogue enhancing his narrative prominence.

Simplification of Group Dynamics: *Seven Samurai* features complex samurai interactions, with distinct tensions and personal arcs (e.g., Kikuchiyo's identity struggle). *The Magnificent Seven* streamlines these into archetypal camaraderie, reducing nuanced frictions for accessible banter.

Modification

Dramatisation of Goodnight Robicheaux: Kyūzō in *Seven Samurai* is a stoic swordsman with minimal dialogue, defined by discipline. In *The Magnificent Seven*, Goodnight is reimagined as a PTSD-afflicted sharpshooter, his psychological depth explicitly dramatised to align with modern character complexity.

Objectification of Red Harvest: In *Seven Samurai*, all samurai possess narrative agency tied to social roles. *The Magnificent Seven* portrays Red Harvest as a stereotypical Native warrior, his role reduced to functional skills with limited inner life.

Mutation

Omission of Distinct Villagers: *Seven Samurai* individualises farmers like Rikichi and Manzo, enriching emotional stakes. *The Magnificent Seven* consolidates villagers into a homogenous group, with Emma Cullen as the sole prominent voice.

Addition of Diverse Ensemble: *Seven Samurai* features a uniform Japanese samurai team. *The Magnificent Seven* introduces a multicultural ensemble (e.g., Vasquez, Red Harvest, Billy Rocks, Chisolm), reconfiguring the group to reflect contemporary diversity.

4. Setting Shifts

The analysis of setting shifts in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) focuses on the temporal and spatial frameworks, including their socio-political and ideological contexts. Three types of shifts are identified: modulation (amplifying or simplifying temporal/spatial elements), modification (substantially altering the environment or era), and mutation (adding or removing time periods/locations). Below, representative examples illustrate these shifts, with additional shifts identified but not detailed. Total Setting Shifts verified in this remake were nine (three modulations, two modifications, four mutations).

Modulation

Amplification of Capitalist Context: In *Seven Samurai*, the 16th-century Japanese village setting subtly reflects social upheaval. *The Magnificent Seven* amplifies the late-19th-century American frontier's socio-economic context, foregrounding capitalist exploitation and land disputes through Bogue's industrialist role, making it a central ideological driver.

Simplification of Historical Context: *Seven Samurai* embeds a rich historical backdrop of civil wars and feudal hierarchies. *The Magnificent Seven* simplifies post-Civil War America's context, with references to westward expansion as peripheral texture rather than a core narrative element.

Modification

Transposition to American West: *Seven Samurai*'s feudal Japanese setting, with rice paddies and villages, is relocated to the mythic Rose Creek, marked by saloons and deserts, reorienting the narrative within a Western framework.

Ideological Shift to Corporate Oppression: *Seven Samurai* centres on peasant-bandit class conflict within feudal codes. *The Magnificent Seven* reframes this as townsfolk opposing capitalist tyranny, aligning with critiques of economic exploitation.

Mutation

Omission of Agrarian Economy: *Seven Samurai* ties the narrative to rice farming, central to the peasants' survival. *The Magnificent Seven* removes this, presenting a generic town-based livelihood without agricultural specificity.

Addition of Mining Economy: *The Magnificent Seven* introduces mining as a new economic driver, symbolising capitalist greed and motivating Bogue's aggression, absent in *Seven Samurai*.

All identified macro-level shifts across the four defined categories—plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting—for *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) are consolidated in Table 2 and Figure 2 to provide a comprehensive overview of the adaptation dynamics.

Table 10. All Identified Shifts Across Original Film and its Remake

Shifts	Modulation		Modification	Mutation		Total
	Amplification	Simplification	Alteration	Addition	Excision	
Plot Structure	5		6	4		15
Narrative Techniques	5		7	2		14
Characterisation	2	2	4	2	1	11
Setting	2	1	2	2	2	9
Total	17		19	13		49

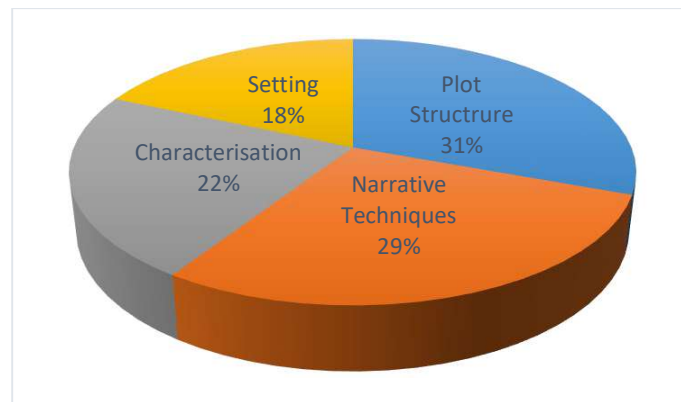


Figure 2. Shift Occurrences Across Original Film and its Remake

Phase 2: Interpretive Analysis

This phase interprets the motivations behind the identified shifts in *Seven Samurai* (1954) and *The Magnificent Seven* (2016), categorising them as creative, economic, and socio-cultural. Drawing on Perdiki's (2016) framework, the analysis elucidates how these shifts reflect deliberate strategies to recontextualise the original narrative for contemporary audiences, balancing fidelity with innovation (Hutcheon, 2012).

Creative Motivations: Antoine Fuqua's remake should be considered as an attempt to preserve the ethical essence of *Seven Samurai* (centred on service and sacrifice) while reinterpreting it through a modern cinematic lens. Fuqua, revering Kurosawa's storytelling as a *masterpiece of universal resonance* (Erkara, 2016), made an effort to retain the same moral basis, yet adapting the samurai ethos into a Western framework with heightened action aesthetics. His admiration for Kurosawa's storyboard-like visual compositions inspired a blend of classical gravitas and contemporary dynamism, ensuring the remake's stylistic relevance while honouring its source (Fuqua, 2018).

Economic Motivations: By remaking *Seven Samurai*, a well-known film worldwide, it reduced commercial risk (Verevis, 2006). This film is marketed with actors such as Denzel Washington and Chris Pratt, which helps to attract different types of customers through these stars (Butler, 2016). The film's story is a familiar one, but told in an updated format and using visual effects creates an appealing combination that allows Hollywood studios to take advantage of their pre-existing fan bases, ensuring that the film reaches a wide audience, although critics have had mixed feelings about it (Suderman, 2016).

Socio-Cultural Motivations: Fuqua's casting of a multiracial ensemble—Black, Asian, Native American, Mexican, and female—against the homogeneous cast of actors that predominantly characterized the Western genre challenged the traditional homogeneity of that genre and better reflected contemporary inclusivity and historical diversity in the American frontier (Erkara, 2016). By framing the conflict as resistance against corporate exploitation, the remake transforms Kurosawa's feudal struggle into a modern allegory of justice, resonating with current socio-political concerns (Wynne, 2016). This recontextualisation aligns with evolving cultural consciousness, broadening the narrative's relevance (Cuelenaere et al., 2019).

The Magnificent Seven emerges as a trans-creative reinterpretation, preserving *Seven Samurai*'s moral core while adapting its form to suit modern audiences. Economically, it capitalises on star power and narrative familiarity, while socio-culturally, it redefines genre conventions through diversity and contemporary metaphors, exemplifying intersemiotic translation's dynamic interplay.

Discussion and Conclusion

Analyzing shifts of adaptation between the original work *Seven Samurai* (1954) and its remake *The Magnificent Seven* (2016) has provided insights into the complex process of intersemiotic translation, reconfiguring a Japanese epic into a Hollywood Western to align with new cultural, ideological, and industrial contexts. In categorising the different shifts across plot structure, narrative techniques, characterisation, and setting, this study demonstrates how the remake takes the original narrative by Kurosawa and reinterprets it in a way that appeals to modern viewers' tastes, creating a balance between maintaining elements of fidelity while also permitting room for innovation.

Plot Structure Dynamics: The 15 identified plot structure shifts, predominantly modifications and mutations, reflect a strategic reorientation from *Seven Samurai's* episodic defence narrative to *The Magnificent Seven's* spectacle-driven structure. For instance, the mutation of the opening from a delayed bandit threat to Bogue's immediate assault reframes the conflict as a moral battle against capitalist oppression, aligning with Hollywood's action-centric ethos (Verevis, 2006). Modifications, such as reordering events for dramatic effect, and modulations, like amplifying climactic battles, cater to audience expectations for heightened suspense and visual impact, underscoring the remake's commercial recalibration.

Narrative Technique Transformations: With 14 shifts, narrative techniques shift from Kurosawa's contemplative pacing to Fuqua's accelerated rhythm. Modulations, such as condensed training montages, and modifications, like reordered revelations, on the other hand, enhance suspense and align with Western genre conventions (Hutcheon, 2006). The mutation introducing action-heavy sequences reflects a shift towards visceral engagement, prioritising modern audience preferences over introspective depth, thus facilitating a trans-creative adaptation that bridges cultural temporalities.

Characterisation Reconfigurations: The 11 characterisation shifts amplify psychological complexity in the remake's heroes, such as mutating Kikuchiyo's tragic arc into Chisolm's vengeful narrative, while simplifying villagers into archetypal figures. These changes embed Western tropes of individualism, mitigating cultural dissonance by aligning characters with American ideals of heroism. The diverse ensemble's introduction further reflects a deliberate recontextualisation to address contemporary inclusivity.

Setting Recontextualisation: The 9 setting shifts, though fewer, carry significant ideological weight. The modulation of the Japanese village into a frontier mining town, alongside mutations like the addition of a mining economy, repositions the narrative from feudal class struggles to a critique of corporate exploitation. This geographical and ideological shift embeds frontier iconography, aligning with Hollywood's narrative traditions while reflecting Fuqua's vision for diversity-inflected storytelling.

The remake of *Seven Samurai* into *The Magnificent Seven* exemplifies intersemiotic translation, rearticulating cultural narratives through a Hollywood lens. Dominated by plot and narrative shifts, the adaptation prioritises commercial viability, leveraging the original's brand recognition while introducing multicultural elements to resonate globally (Loock, 2024). Fuqua's trans-creative approach preserves Kurosawa's moral core—service and sacrifice—while reconfiguring masculinity and ideology to reflect modern sensibilities, albeit with limited innovation in gender roles. Economically, the remake's star-driven strategy and action-oriented spectacle align with Hollywood's lower-risk model, though its moderate success highlights constraints in creative divergence (Bohnenkamp et al., 2014). Socio-culturally, it negotiates globalised cultural flows, transforming Eastern stoicism into Western individualism, affirming remakes as dynamic vehicles for cultural reinterpretation (Evans, 2014).

This study also sheds light on how remakes function as critical sites of cultural negotiation, mirroring processes of domestication and recontextualization (See also Hosseini & Mousavi Razavi, 2024) central to Translation Studies. Similar to interlingual translation, remakes selectively retain, transform, or omit elements to align with the priorities of the target audience and cultural context. In *The Magnificent Seven*, narrative shifts amplify action-oriented spectacle, characterisation reconfigures samurai into diverse Western heroes, and setting transformations recast feudal struggles as critiques of capitalist oppression, resonating with American socio-political discourses while attenuating Japanese cultural nuances. Concurrently, these adaptations adhere to Hollywood's commercial logic, balancing familiarity with innovation to ensure market appeal, akin to strategies in commercial publishing.

The remake of a film should be seen as a dynamic intersemiotic translation rather than an imitation of the source material and a continuation of its legacy. Remakes illustrate the generative potential of translation to transform meaning and provide access to audiences globally by overcoming temporal, cultural, and geographic barriers. This research extends Translation Studies by positioning remakes as a vital lens for understanding cinema's ongoing reinvention within a globalised media landscape, highlighting their role in negotiating cultural identities and industrial demands.

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