

# Translating Culture-Bound Humorous Content from English into Croatian in the British Television Show "Only Fools and Horses"

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UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA  
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**TRANSLATING CULTURE-BOUND HUMOROUS CONTENT FROM  
ENGLISH INTO CROATIAN IN THE BRITISH TELEVISION SHOW  
'ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES'**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the M.A. in English Language and  
Literature and German Language and Literature at the University of Rijeka

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## **Abstract**

The present thesis challenges the methods provided by Jan Pedersen for translating culture-bound humorous content in the television show „Only Fools and Horses“ from English into Croatian language. The first part of the thesis refers to the theoretical background concerning translation, humour and subtitling. The second part of the thesis focuses on the analysis of the examples of culture-bound humorous content from the five pre-selected episodes of the aforementioned television show. The analysis tries to answer two research questions: will the methods by Pedersen be applicable in this particular television show and which method will be used the most. The examples analysed proved that every method is present. The substitution method was the most used method in the 43 examples that were analysed. Specific limitations of the study leave room for more research in this field.

**Keywords:** humour, methods, translation, subtitling, culture, television

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# 1 Introduction

A variety of sitcoms and television shows that originated in the English speaking countries are broadcasted daily on various television programs in the Republic of Croatia. As opposed to many other countries of the European Union, for instance Germany, Spain or Italy, Croatian networks do not change the actors' voices to their mother tongue (officially called 'dubbing'). Television shows broadcasted in Croatia retain their original sound and the translation is done by subtitling. The official definition of a subtitle, according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, is "a printed statement or fragment of dialogue appearing on the screen between the scenes of a silent motion picture or appearing as a translation at the bottom of the screen during the scenes of a motion picture or television show in a foreign language" (*Merriam-webster.com*, "subtitle"). Even though the definition sounds very straightforward, the process of subtitling demands hard work. The translator has a stressful job when subtitling. According to CAAT, 'Croatian Association of Audiovisual Translators', there are three key elements one needs to control while subtitling: time, space and content. Text needs to follow the rhythm of speech, it needs to be shorter than the original so that the audience can have enough time to read it, but it still needs to "reproduce the message conveyed in the original work" (*dhap.hr*, "Criteria for quality subtitling") In addition to this, there are certain words, phrases and sentences that are not so easily translated, either because of their form or because of their meaning. The problem with these forms and meanings is that they are culturally bound to the source country and the source language (SL). These references may refer to "people, history, events, and customs of a particular culture" (Chiaro, *Translation, Humour and Literature* 1). In these cases the translators have to rely on their creativity to meet the criteria for quality subtitling. This paper will focus on the translation of humorous content connected to a specific culture while subtitling, as it attracts considerable interest due to the special form of creativity required by the translator, as well as some world knowledge. It is targeted toward all current and future translators who still struggle when choosing the right method while translating. This topic was chosen partly because of personal interest for the television show in question ('Only Fools and Horses') and the humorous content it contains. In her book about humour, Alison Ross mentions that "humour becomes outdated as quickly as fashion, and is often dependent on particular cultures and attitudes."(2) A remarkable feature of the show in question is that it remains funny even though it was made in the 1980's. Furthermore, it was

chosen because it is interesting for all the translators who are having issues while translating culture specific references.

There are many different pieces of research dealing with the translation of culture-bound humorous content. That is primarily because there are two main types of humorous content, referential and verbal humour, “the latter depending at least in part on phonological”. (Sherzer 134) Some other definitions point out that both verbal and referential jokes are jokes that are communicated through a linguistic system (Attardo 96). Puns are an obvious part of verbal humour. Their distinction lies in the fact that the referential humour can be literally translated into another language, while verbal cannot. It is then up to the translator to decide whether to preserve the meaning or the comic content or not. When preserving comic content, some might argue that the translation becomes incorrect. In an example quoted by Pedersen, “the subtitle might be seen as ‘incorrect’, as relaying the ‘wrong’ information, even as being an ‘error.’”(Gottlieb *Subtitles, Translation & Idioms* 93, qtd. in “Cultural Interchangeability” 33) This is why some translators opt to preserve the cultural elements of the reference while ignoring and ultimately sacrificing comic content. On the other hand, when translating a sitcom, the main goal should be to get the audience to laugh, especially when taking into consideration Kerbrat-Orecchioni's pragmatic definition of humour as a text whose perlocutionary, e.g. intended, effect is laughter, to be a more fruitful approach. (Attardo 13, qtd. in Spanakaki “Translating Humour for Subtitling”) This is why, according to Chiaro, the translator needs to understand the importance of the language of the target audience and their expectations. She continues by saying that if the recipient wants to understand the joke, the recipient needs to understand the cultural and linguistic aspects of the joke. If that cannot be accomplished in the TL, it then becomes the translator’s job to find an appropriate joke in the target language “that run[s] smoothly through the text without jarring.” (*The language of jokes* 95, qtd. in Alharthi 32)

The aim of the current research will be to challenge the existing methods used when translating humour in general and from English into Croatian in particular, made by Jan Pedersen, Head of department at the Institute for Interpreting and Translation Studies, Department of Swedish Language and Multilingualism at Stockholm University. The methods were chosen from an array of different methods because of their assumed applicability to the greater part of the humorous content and their promising results. The methods will be challenged while analysing a translation of the aforementioned television show from English into Croatian language, made by a skilled translator, Tomislav Pisk, for the purposes of the

Croatian National Television, HRT. The thesis is organized as follows: The first section gives a theoretical background and focuses on the process of translating and subtitling itself, on various types of humour and gives a quick overview of the aforementioned methods we will try to challenge. Pedersen's use of methods is very plausible and seems to cover all the key issues when translating extralinguistic culture-bound humorous content, on which we will be focusing. However, his research has tended to focus on Swedish language. This raises some questions as to whether the methods could be used with other television shows and in other languages. One question, important for the current study, is: in what way (if at all) will the methods be applicable to Croatian translation and to this particular television show and in what percentage? Another research question is: which method will be used the most in the selected episodes?

The questions will hopefully be answered after analysing each one of the culturally bound humorous references from the five pre-selected episodes of the aforementioned television show and after dividing them according to the methods in question. In this section, the methods will be described in detail and discussed through the examples given. A discussion will be made based on the choices the translator made and the results in percentages. Conclusions will be drawn in the final section, along with the limitations of the study and the suggested areas for further research.

## 2 Theoretical background

### 2.1 Translation in general

The quality of translation has always depended on the translator. With the growing use of the Internet and its many possibilities, even people who are part of the audience have nowadays become translators. “Technology has turned citizens into netizens, and readers of texts and translated texts into producers of texts and translated text.” (Remael et al. 2) With emergence of the Internet and social media, the quality of translations seems to falter. Even though this topic can easily be a research on its own, the current thesis will focus on translations made by experienced translators. However, sometimes even the best translators have problems while translating certain texts. Ambiguities of the text, idioms and fixed phrases, puns, cultural references etc. are only a few of these problems the translators have to deal with on a daily basis. This is why a proper translator has to have some creativity in order to deliver quality content. According to Loffredo and Perteghella

Creativity is still regarded as a spontaneous process readily associated with a special individual and a sort of freedom, which is sustained by an individualistic conception of authorship...According to this conception, the author freely expresses his thought and feelings in writing. (9)

In addition to this, there are some individual differences in the translation process itself. This is why not one translation can ever be the same, even if it was made twice by the same person. In his work, Diaz-Pérez refers to Hatim and Mason who say that “translation involves a process, a decision-making procedure and an act of communication between language users.” (3, qtd. in “Relevance Theory and Translation” 109) A translator speaking Croatian cannot take into consideration only words being translated from e.g. Croatian into German, he/she also has to think about sentence structure and if native Germans would ever use it. Some translated sentences may be grammatically correct, however, their translated outcome is not something a native speaker would use. This, in turn, makes the whole translation sound “translated”. Gutt explains that when complete interpretive resemblance is not achieved, due to e.g. linguistic differences between the two languages, “strategies for preventing communicative failure may be resorted to.” (Gutt 96, qtd. in “From the Other Side of the Looking Glass” 184) There are types of translation where the amount of creativity is rather



limited, but on the other hand, some texts require a large amount of creativity from the translator, even going so far as to write an entire new text. Here we can compare two examples of translations with different levels of freedom at hand. When translating legal terms, there is little to no freedom left to the translator. In her research, Susan Šarčević mentions that, when translating legal terms, some translators are not even satisfied with the general translation theory. They claim that it needs to use more special methods and techniques to achieve a correctly translated legal document. (1) On the other hand, sometimes the translator has no other choice but to rely solely on his creativity. An example can be used from research by Diaz-Pérez where movie titles had to be translated from English into Spanish. In his research, he mentions a situation involving movie titles, where the semantic meaning is often overshadowed by the attractiveness and memorability of the form of the title. Its main purpose is then to attract and to provide special meaning to the target audience (“Relevance Theory and Translation” 109). Because of these cross-linguistic differences, translation problems occur very often. These problems force the translator to make a conscious decision to apply a “motivated translation strategy, procedure and solution from amongst a range of options” (“Relevance Theory and Translation” 111), but most importantly a choice about which parts of the source language he must preserve. The translator should try to „adopt different strategies to try to recreate the cognitive effects intended by the original communicator with the lowest possible processing effort on the part of the TT receptor.” (“Relevance Theory and Translation” 111) Because of that, there are different translating methods available to the translator. However, as pointed out by Wilss, “the teaching of translation methods in most cases points out only that one has to evaluate and weigh, but not how to do it.” (97, qtd. in Gutt 9) This is mostly the case with books, especially poetry. One cannot translate poetry literally and have it be as meaningful as in its original language. Humour is another aspect in translation business that inspires numerous pieces of research. The following chapter will share a few details about humour in general.

## **2.2 Humour in general**

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, humour is defined as “the mental faculty of discovering, expressing, or appreciating the ludicrous or absurdly incongruous: the ability to be funny or to be amused by things that are funny”. (*Merriam-webster.com*, “humour”) This definition can be described as very straightforward, but “there are [still] numerous theories of

humour which attempt to define humour and explain why we laugh.” (Alharthi 8) Humour is a part of both human psyche and personality. There are also different types of humour, and understanding humour requires shared knowledge between the agents “which does not normally exist in case of translation between the source and target cultures.” (Rossato and Chiaro 123, qtd. in Alharthi 31) An important part of this shared cultural knowledge is what is appropriate and inappropriate in specific cultures. What seems funny to the members of one culture can offend the others.

There are various classifications of the types of humour. One of the oldest and simplest divisions splits humour into verbal and referential humour. According to Attardo, it was Cicero who first divided humour into two main forms. (27) Freud called these two types of humour ‘Wortwitz’ and ‘Gedankenwitz’ (Dyner 118), where the latter is

based exclusively on the meaning of the text and do not make any reference to the phonological realization of the lexical items (or of other units in the text), while the (former), in addition to being based on the meaning of the elements of the text, make reference to the phonological realization of the text. (Attardo 95)

Cicero defined it as follows: “What, said in whatever words, is nevertheless funny, it is contained in the thing, what loses its saltiness if the words are changed, has all the funniness in the words.” (Cicero qtd. in Attardo 28) But even Cicero’s division is not without fault, because it is often possible to translate puns from one language to another. Both verbal and referential types of humour are further divided into specific subcategories. Cicero elaborated his taxonomy and wrote that referential humour includes anecdotes and caricature. Verbal humour, on the other hand, includes ambiguity, paronomasia, false etymologies, proverbs, literal interpretation of figurative expressions allegory, metaphors and irony. (Attardo 27). Martha Dyner calls verbal humour ‘conversational humour’, a type of humour that can be used in daily communication. She lists jokes, stylistic figures such as hyperbole, paradox, simile, irony, puns, allusions, distortions, quotations, register clashes, retorts, teasing banter etc. as types of conversational humour. (11)

Another important division was made by Raphaelson-West “who divided jokes into three main categories: linguistic jokes (e.g. puns), cultural jokes (e.g. the ethnic jokes), and universal jokes (the unexpected)”. (130, qtd. in Spanakaki “Translating Humour for Subtitling”) Linguistic jokes are known as wordplay in which a character uses his vocabulary to create a joke. Puns are a well-known example of this kind of jokes.

“I wasn't originally going to get a brain transplant, but then I changed my mind. „  
(*punoftheday.com*)

In his research, Alharthi quotes Freud on how wordplay functions in a joke. To be more specific, he implies that it relies heavily on the double meaning of a certain word, “which refers to its literal and metaphorical meanings, and this playing of meanings forms the fertile source of humour” (39, qtd.in Alharthi 18). The second type concerns cultural jokes, which can, in terms of pragmatics and culture, become somewhat untranslatable. (Raphaelson-West 132, qtd. in Spanakaki “Translating Humour for Subtitling”) Cultural jokes rely both on world knowledge and on the level of obscurity of a certain reference. Translation of cultural references in jokes will be discussed in detail later in the thesis. The translator has to be acquainted with both the SL and TL cultures in order to correctly translate such references. The third are universal jokes, which are the easiest to translate because they are either easily understandable or are known to the majority of cultures.

Barber: How would you like to get your hair cut?

Customer: In silence.(Pollack 26)

The main point in the joke does not involve information specific to any culture in particular. In fact, it is probably known to most cultures that barber shops or hair salons are places where the employees enjoy gossiping or chatting with their customers. The unexpectedness of the answer made by the customer provided the humorous content in this particular example.

In addition to world knowledge, understanding jokes and comic situations has often been connected to the level of intelligence; rating the level of intelligence based of the complexity of certain comic content. This conclusion was based on the fact that understanding comic content often corresponds to problem solving techniques. Many pieces of research have proved that there is a connection between the two. This was examined while conducting studies on more gifted students, or when contrasting students with and without learning difficulties. There are even studies that show how the level of intelligence and its connection to the sense of humour are “one of the most important traits for humans seeking mates.” (Greengross and Miller 191) Be that as it may, the level of intelligence is not the only aspect one must possess to have a developed sense of humour. In a historical review that deals with different approaches to explaining the sense of humour, Eysneck said that there are three possible meanings of someone possessing a sense of humour. First is that the person is laughing because others are laughing, which would be the conformist meaning. The second

meaning is called quantitative meaning and concerns people who laugh often and are easily amused. The third one concerns the person telling the jokes and hence constitutes productive meaning. (Martin 15-16) This research was later expanded to types of people delivering the humorous content. According to Ruch, there are three types of people regarding understanding and appreciating humour. Type one are the humourless and serious people who do not enjoy listening to jokes, type two are semi-serious or semi-humorous people who tend to appreciate the comic content which has a truth factor in it, and the type three consists of humorous people who appreciate a joke whether it conveys a serious message or not (222). Research was also conducted to explore how cheerfulness, seriousness and bad mood influence the appreciation of humorous content, and the findings were important for the study of humour because each of the personality traits or moods showed an impact on understanding, appreciating or even creating humorous content. (Ruch, 227). There is a difference between humour and a sense of humour, seeing that the latter is more of a personality trait or individual difference variable (qtd.in Ruch, 17). According to the research by Martin et al. there are 4 types of humour. Two of them are directed towards others and the other two towards the person telling the joke. The former are affiliated humour, a positive type of humour intended to tighten the bonds with others, and the aggressive humour, used to tease the other person, hence making the person telling the joke somehow superior to others. The latter are directed towards the person telling the joke. The first of these two is a self-enhancing joke, which can be helpful to a certain individual in order to cope with some stressful situations by re-telling them as funny anecdotes. The second is self-defeating humour, where the one telling the joke makes fun of oneself to entertain the others (qtd. in Cann and Matson, 177) Findings of the research conducted by Martin et.al show us that even though the maladaptive types of humour were not appreciated by everybody, they still proved to be relevant. Different comedy genres suggest also that there are different ways to produce them. Using a sarcastic remark often fails when introduced in print because the main point of sarcasm is in the use of intonation. Taking that into consideration, one can refer to the research of Adel Alharthi who mentions that

Humour occurs on various levels of a language, including the semantic level (meanings of words), the phonological level (sound similarities), and the syntactic level (ambiguity of sentence structure), register (inappropriate style). (90)

Various pieces of research have been conducted to discover if genes were responsible for an individual's sense of humour. Some pieces of research did not focus only on the use of humour in the mother tongue; they extended their research to the second language use. As Deneire puts it, "understanding of jokes in a foreign language reflects a fairly high level of proficiency." (291) An article on the internet site Matador Network mentions that one of the seven signs one made it in a foreign language is the capability to make jokes in this particular language. The capability extends even further if one is able to make cultural references (Jones "7 signs you've made it in a foreign language"). In view of this, having a good sense of humour is deemed crucial for a person to be a good translator. One additional personality trait that tends to be helpful is being communicative. Derks et. al. mentioned that to be humorous, one needs to have creativity, ideational fluency and originality of thought. (qtd. in Ruch 79) As mentioned before, translating humour is a fascinating subject for many researchers. Many have developed various methods and ways to make translating humour easier. Some of these methods are mentioned in the following section.

### **2.3 Translating humour**

In his research about translating humour in the sitcom "Seinfeld", Adel Alharthi mentions the complexity of translating humour, because humour is often bound to the culture it is made in, which is why the "humorous instance may rely on the linguistic and semantic aspects of the ST, which normally do not exist in the TT." (192) If translated literally, humorous content is unlikely to remain funny in the TL. According to the aforementioned division by Raphaelson-West, there are three types of humour: linguistic jokes, cultural jokes and universal jokes (132, qtd. in Spanakaki "Translating Humour for Subtitling"). Each of the three has a very specific problem that occurs while translating them. There is a considerable amount of literature dealing with each of the problems. This comes as no surprise, since translating jokes can become the most problematic part of a translator's job. Not only does the translator have to decide whether the humour is understandable to the TL reader, but he also has to provide the same effect given in the source text, that urges the audience in the SL to laugh. Culturally bound elements and language-specific devices are true tests to discover whether a certain translator has enough creativity or not. (Gall, 1). Among others, Gutt points out that it is better to translate humorous content based on its interpretive resemblance, than on equivalence (qtd.in Diaz-Pérez, "Relevance Theory and Translation" 108). In other words, neither form

nor meaning should stay the same, as long as there is still humorous content with the same message existent in the translated version.

Gottlieb's view is significant because he points out that "the informative aspect [is] secondary in the comedy genre." (51, qtd. in Pedersen, *Subtitling Norms for Television*) Although this may be true, there are some situations when the context is more important for the message than the joke. In those cases "the translator will have to decide whether it is preferable to sacrifice content to the effect produced by a pun or whether, on the contrary, meaning would prevail over the effect of wordplay." (Diaz-Pérez, "Relevance Theory and Translation" 115) One thing that a translator should avoid is explaining the humorous content to the target audience, considering the fact that this action tends to annihilate humour in the TL. The problem concerning the translation of cultural references was already mentioned in this thesis. Accordingly, the problem becomes even greater when these cultural references are in close connection to the humorous content. In other words, to translate a specific cultural reference inaccurately would lead to the loss of the humorous content. The kind of cultural references that pose a problem to translators are called "Extralinguistic Culture-bound References" (Pedersen, "How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?" 1) or 'ECR-s'. Therefore, the translator must find a right method to use in order to translate the humorous content correctly so that it remains funny in the TL. As an example of a problem one could use the nonexistence of an official equivalent. (Pedersen, "How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?" 1) At this point, the translator has to either know or thoroughly research any connections he or she may find to a certain reference in order to connect it to the reference in the TL. Some humorous elements are also quite hard to spot, unless the translator has extensive knowledge of the show and the culture behind it. When all the facts are taken into consideration,

translator's most important task is to preserve those inferential strategies that make the derivation of humorous effects possible in the source language (SL), even if the semantic content of the joke has to be changed completely. (Diaz-Pérez, "Relevance Theory and Translation" 112)

According to Pedersen, this can be done by using a number of methods. Those methods are: Retention, Specification, Direct Translation, Generalization, Substitution, Omission or the use of an Official Equivalent. ("How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?" 1) In this part of the thesis the methods will be only briefly described, as the discussion holds examples and further explanation of each method.

Official equivalents are solutions to the problem that are already invented. For example, official names of characters like: 'Donald Duck' ('Paško Patak'). Similar to the official equivalent is the direct translation method, which contains literal translation which has not been officially confirmed. Next is retention, which is oriented toward the source language and means leaving the word or phrase as it is. Generalization involves hyponymy in a way that it uses only a general explanation, if a detailed explanation would not be clear to the target audience, for instance 'ball' instead of the 'Spalding ball', which stands for a brand of basketball. Specification also means leaving the word in its original form but adding information to explain the word to the target audience. This can be done in two ways, either by explicitation or addition. The only difference is that addition is adding new words to the translation in order to explain the cultural reference while the explicitation means only expanding the already given text. Addition can also be explained as the combination of generalization and retention. Some translators do not use this strategy as it can be seen as patronizing. Substitution means removing the reference in the source language and replacing it with a different one or a paraphrase. Paraphrasing means completely removing the reference in the source language with something suitable to the target audience, so that it does not have to have any connection in meaning. The last one is omission, which means to ignore the reference mentioned in the source language and simply remove it from the translation. There are many reasons why omission is used, especially when subtitling. (Pedersen, "How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?" 3-9)

When translating, translators often use one method in a combination with another. Even though most of the translators have their favourites when it comes to choosing strategies, sometimes they have to make a decision which strategy would be the most suitable one. In this next part we will refer to the factors that influence these decisions, also distinguished by Pedersen. Those are: Transculturality, Extratextuality, Centrality of Reference, Intersemiotic Redundancy, Co-text, Media-specific Constraints and Paratextual Considerations (Pedersen, "How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?" 1).

Transculturality means that the reference was first familiar to only one culture but due to the globalization it is now known all over the world. There are three types of references that can influence one's decision. A transcultural reference does not need to be connected to the source reference, but is known from the common knowledge of both audiences. Monocultural reference is known only to the source audience and the last one is the microcultural reference which is also bound to the source culture but is not known to the

majority of source culture as well. Extratextuality means that a certain reference is invented for a certain text in which it is going to be used and then it is called 'Text Internal'. But it can later on become known in other texts too, which does not have any connection to the original text (characters in the sitcom 'The Big Bang Theory' mentioning the television show 'Game of Thrones') and then it becomes 'Text External'. Centrality of reference shows how central the reference is to the overall theme in the macro level or the centre of the joke in the micro level. Co-text can help the translator because it may already involve explanation of the reference. (Pedersen, "How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?" 10-13)

Media-specific constraints are the factors that should concern us most when it comes to this research, since we will be dealing with the subtitling of a television show. Here we have certain restrictions like the number of characters per second or timed laughter. On one hand, having a limited amount of seconds makes it harder to use strategies like addition, but on the other hand if omission is used on a humorous content in a scene with a pre-recorded laughter, it can leave the target audience quite confused. The most difficult to translate is the humorous content that plays

"on both linguistic and cultural levels, making the task of a translator even more complicated as s/he has to explain the cultural context and then find a linguistic resemblance (e.g., Phonemic resemblance) between the two languages involved." (Popa 157, qtd. in Alharthi, 32)

There is a difference between translating and subtitling in that the subtitling process has more restrictions and rules that need to be taken into consideration. It has become the topic of various pieces of research and has gained a lot of attention lately.

## **2.4 Subtitling in general**

Translation and subtitles should not be treated equally, even though both require a certain amount of creativity from the translator. Subtitling is seen as more demanding because of its restrictions. Díaz-Cintas and Remael present subtitles not as translation, but rather as

a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavours to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters,



inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like,) and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off). (8)

It has even been called 'adaptation' rather than translation by some in the past, which started a debate about its true definition. This is probably why the subject was ignored by the scholars concerned with translation until very recently. (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 9) In his research, Gottlieb described subtitling as “rendering in a different language” of words spoken either in some dialogue or as a part of narration, which are being “in sync with the original written message.” (87, qtd. in Chiaro, “Issues in Audiovisual Translation” 148) This both defines subtitles and explains the main goal of the process of subtitling. Furthermore, Gottlieb describes subtitling as a “diasemiotic” or “intermodal” form of audio-visual translation (*Subtitles, Translation & Idioms* 95, qtd.in Pérez-González 16), because of its transition from oral to written.

Subtitles can be classified based on their form, purpose etc. Its most common classifications concentrate on the linguistic dimension. There are three types of subtitles, according to Corrizato: intralingual subtitles, interlingual subtitles and bilingual subtitles. (42) Intralingual subtitles are not really translations, because the shift that occurs from written to oral language happens within the same language. One of their main purposes is to help deaf and those hard of hearing to better understand the movie. These subtitles help in more than one way; different colours of the subtitles may refer to different characters speaking, they are used for the creation of atmosphere (e.g. telephone ringing) etc. Their second purpose is to serve as a tool for language learning, especially for foreign language learners. One of the more recent purposes has emerged with the arrival of musicals, where the subtitles served as an instrument for the karaoke effect. Subtitles proved to be helpful when it comes to areas with the same language but different dialects. Lastly, they can be used for announcements in public areas which would otherwise be understood by few its vocal presence would alert many. The second type of subtitle is interlingual subtitle, both for deaf and those with hearing. This type of translation translates the text from the SL to TL. It is referred to as diagonal subtitling whose form also changes from written to oral. The third type of subtitle is the bilingual subtitle, which is used in geographic areas where two official languages are spoken. (Corrizato 42)

When examining the subtitles based on the methods they are written in, there are open and closed subtitles. Open subtitles are attached to the image and cannot be changed or

removed. An example of this could be the subtitle used on a VHS cassette. On the other hand, closed subtitles can be changed or removed by the user. The latter is more common nowadays, because of the use of Internet. ([www.washington.edu](http://www.washington.edu)) For a television show like 'Only Fools and Horses' it is better to have a closed subtitling system, because it enables the translator to update the translation when it is required. This is because the show was made in the eighties and the language keeps on changing. The translator of this show mentioned that the first version of the translation was made between the year 1985 and 1988. The translation was then adapted between 1999 and 2000, but more in the technical sense ('preslagivanje titlova'). (*my translation of the answer provided by the translator*) Each time the translator changes something in a subtitle, he or she must take into consideration all the restrictions that come with subtitling.

The first and most obvious restriction in the process is connected to the amount of text in the subtitle. A definition of a subtitle provided by Antonini says that it is "a form of linguistic transfer characterized by the fact that only two lines of text can appear on the screen" (213). In other words, there is a limited number of characters allowed per line. Because of that, the original dialogue in the programme can be reduced from forty to the surprising seventy-five percent. (Antonini 213) When asked, the translator of 'Only Fools and Horses' for Croatia (whose translation will be analysed later) mentioned that it is hard to pinpoint how much is omitted or reduced, because it depends on the overall meaning as well as 'words' in general. He continues by saying that approximately 20 to 30 percent of the original text remains when the process is done, but the reduction seems to be inevitable. (Pisk, *my translation of the answer*) The inevitability stems from different but valid reasons. One of the most important reasons why reduction is used is because it gives the reader enough time to grasp what is being said without missing the action on the screen. Subtitle has to be in synchrony with the rhythm of the images in the show. Another important aspect is the time available for display. According to Leonardo Jordão Coelh, it goes from from ½ to 1 ½ seconds and "depends mainly on the speed at which the material is spoken" (Coelh, [translationdirectory.com](http://translationdirectory.com)) which links to the quantity and complexity of the text, the speed of the dialogue, the average viewer's reading speed (150 to 180 words per minute), and the necessary intervals between subtitles. "The ideal in subtitling is to translate each utterance in full, and display it synchronically with the spoken words on the screen." (qtd. in Rupniewska 27)

When subtitling, the translator also has to take into account both audio and visual codes along with the subtitles and the ability of the audience to simultaneously and quickly take in the images and the provided text. Sometimes the translator and the subtitler are not the same person, because to be a subtitler, one must know how to operate programmes which are made for subtitling. It is then highly advised for the translators to become subtitlers, as there are many problems that can arise otherwise. The translator should first watch the programme that needs to be translated, because there are some areas that need to be taken into account. Not watching the programme prior to translating is not recommended. There are five different areas the translator should take into consideration when watching a programme for the first time. The first three areas were revised by Torregrosa, the last two by Diaz-Cintas and Remael. First, the proper meaning of certain polysemous words or phrases that appear has to be deduced from the image, because there are words that bear the same form but different meaning in specific contexts or intonations (e.g. sarcastic tone of voice). Second, special regard has to be given when translating into languages that have marked gender and number of certain nouns, pronouns and adjectives, as opposed to the English language, where the aforementioned types of words remain unmarked. For example, translating 'you' from English into a language with a marked pronoun can refer to either male or female, and that can be deduced from the image. Third, the translator should be aware of the connections and relationships between the characters in order to decide what the proper degree of familiarity is. In other words, whether the formal or informal pronoun has to be used. Fourth, there are some deictic units that already appear on the image and sometimes unnecessarily appear in the translated version. And finally, certain exclamations that are strictly bound to the context because they have no fixed meaning should be revised properly. (Diaz-Cintas and Remael 31)

## **2.5 Subtitling humour**

Additional care needs to be taken when subtitling humour. It was already described as one of the most demanding tasks in the field of audiovisual translation,

... where the translator's choice is reduced by the visual and audial aspect of the medium. So, since the visual and audial aspect of the medium reduces the translator's choice, subtitling it further obliges translators' discernment and

resourcefulness, as well as their prioritizing skills. (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 215)

In audio-visual productions, the translator's task is more complex, especially "if the verbal joke is bound to a visual stimulus." (Kostovčík 175, qtd. in Alharthi 37) Restrictions play an even bigger role in subtitling humour than in subtitling generally. Temporal restrictions, for instance, are important when there is audience laughter present in the show. The joke in the subtitle has to be synchronized with the laughter. Spatial restrictions cannot be overlooked when a joke needs to be translated because dividing the joke into two different frames automatically loses the essence of the joke. There are other factors that need to be revised, like context for instance. According to Diaz Cintas and Remael, humour cannot function in isolation, it has to have both socio-cultural and linguistic context. (214) In other words, translators need to be wary about which part of the context needs to be translated and which omitted. This audio-visual context humour is transferred both visually and verbally, i.e. it depends both on words and images to achieve the main goal – laughter. ( Antonini 212)

### **3 Data and methodology**

This study draws on research conducted by Pedersen and his translating methods and will try to divide the culture-based humorous content from the British television show ‘Only Fools And Horses’ according to them.

‘Only Fools and Horses’ is a British television sitcom created and written by an awarded British writer John Sullivan. The seven series of the show were originally broadcast from 1981 to 1991. The show is set in Peckham, a part of South- East London. The two main characters are the Trotter brothers, an ambitious market trader Derek ‘Del-Boy’ Trotter and his younger brother Rodney Trotter. During the first four seasons they are accompanied by their elderly Grandad. After the actor passed away, the character was replaced by his fictional brother, Uncle Albert.

The method chosen for the analysis of the humour in the TV series ‘Only Fools and Horses’ is the direct comparison of the English transcripts from the web page containing all the transcripts from the aforementioned TV show, and Croatian translation transcripts made for the National Croatian Television, HRT, by the translator Tomislav Pisk. The humorous content chosen contains extra-linguistic culture-bound references inside a certain joke. Even though more than one researcher has dealt with the translation of humorous content using their specific methods or taxonomies, this thesis will be based on a list of methods designed by Pedersen. Most of his methods are often used in combination. The division made in this thesis was based on the dominant method used.

The aim of this thesis is to challenge the methods by Pedersen, to see if they indeed are suitable for subtitling a television show. The shows were chosen based on the viewer's reviews found online as well as on our personal opinion about the quality of the humorous content inside of a certain episode. The episodes chosen are ‘The Yellow Peril’ and ‘A Touch Of Glass’ from the Season 2, ‘Friday The 14th’ from the Season 3, and ‘Video Nasty’ and ‘Tea For Three’ from the Season 5 of the series.

What follows is a classification of the comic content according to the methods used when translating them into Croatian language, as well as a thorough analysis of the choices made by the translator.

## 4 Analysis

### 4.1 Official equivalent

The method described by Pedersen as “more bureaucratic than linguistic”, („How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles” 3) in that the translation for a certain character, item etc. has already been thought up by a specific person in charge of the extra-linguistic culture-bound references that appear in many countries. This can be applied mostly to names of characters, objects, institutions etc. that are worldly famous, but have a name tied to their original language. Considering the fact that a name wouldn't mean anything to the target audience speaking some other language, the solution has been provided, that a character should receive a name suitable for its country. To give an illustration of what is meant, let us take the Walt Disney character ‘Donald Duck’ as an example. Donald is a typical American name and cannot be found not only in Croatia but in neighbouring countries either. Because the ‘Duck’ part of the name had to be translated into the Croatian language, a suitable Croatian name had to be found instead of the American one. Seeing that some Disney characters have the same first letter of both name and surname, this was preserved while translating, hence the Croatian version ‘Paško Patak’. Another notable example could be the name for the White House, which has its name in every language, so the Croatian standard name for it would be ‘*Bijela kuća*’. In the researched episodes of the show, the most references translated with the help of the official equivalent method are those to a certain character, person, or a movie or book title.

**(1) Rodney: If you added fiberglass models of Snow White and the seven dwarfs you couldn't alter the effect of that!**

*Rodney: Ne bi promijenio opći dojam ni da dodaš Snjeguljicu!*

*(You couldn't fix the general impression even if you added Snow White!)*

**(2) Del: Alright then, who have you seen Hawkeye?**

*Del: I koga si vidio, Oko Sokolovo?*

*(And, Who have you seen, Hawkeye?)*

Examples (1) and (2) are the names of the characters from cartoons and comic books. Even though the names originate from an English speaking country, these characters are known in many different countries. The first thing to remember is the list of factors that may influence certain decisions in translating. Since these books and cartoons have been released worldwide, it could be stated with certainty that the reference in question is indeed transcultural. The

references were at one point 'Text Internal' but are now 'Text External', because they exist outside the source text. When examining the centrality of the reference, one might say that the character of Snow White is the centre of the joke in question. The Co-text does not help in explaining the joke, which is why 'Snow White' cannot be omitted as easily as seven dwarfs can. Another reason for omitting the seven dwarfs could be the media-specific constraints. The same can be applied to the following examples which contain book and movie titles and which were translated by the means of official equivalents, seeing that the book i.e. the movie has also been published in Croatia.

**(3) Rodney: (...) impact as, say, 'Cathy come home'.**

**Del: Social impact as 'Lassie, come home'.**

*Rodney: (...) nije odjeknuo ko <Vrati se, Cathy.>*

*Del: Nije odjeknuo ni ko' <Lassie se vraća kući!>*

Very similar to the official equivalent is the method of direct translation. To determine the difference between the direct translation and the official equivalent can be rather difficult. The difference between the two methods is one of the examples how many ECR renderings may "end up in grey areas between two strategies." (Pedersen, "Cultural Interchangeability" 34)

## 4.2 Direct translation

Direct translation is a method similar to the official equivalent. In this method nothing is added, or removed. There are two subtypes of the direct translation, calque and shifted. Calque translates the word from the SL literally into the TL as a word that may seem exotic to the native speakers of TL. (Pedersen, „How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?“ 5) Shifted translation "reflects the grammatical change that occurs in the translation from SL to TL." (*translationdirectory.com*) According to Newmark, literal translation is a type of translation which occurs when "the SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context" (Ordudari, *translationjournal.net*). This can be seen from the example (4) where a part of the British army is mentioned. The full name of the army is the 'Army Reserve' and consists mostly of volunteers. Since there is no official equivalent for this army in the Croatian language, the translator opted for the direct translation method. Judging by the name, the TL audience can deduce that some kind of army is in question, which is the central point of the joke.

**(4) Marlene: It means he's been firing more blanks than the Territorials!**

Marlene: To znači da je ispalio više ćoraka nego teritorijalci!

Calque is also used in the following example in combination with the generalization method. The phrase 'kužnom' may at first sound exotic to the TL viewer and it is because the translator assimilated the Croatian word to the English adjective in the original version. Generalization is used because 'Bubonic' comes from the Bubonic plague and in the Croatian version only the plague is mentioned, without further explanation. As the plague is the central part of the joke, it is not really important which type of plague it is. Furthermore, not everyone knows that 'bubonic' refers to a plague, which made the generalized translation more easily understandable than the original version.

**(5) Rodney: So what period are we going to decorate it in Del? Early bubonic perhaps?**

Rodney: *U kojem da je stilu obojimo? U ranom kužnom?*

(Rodney: *In what period should we decorate it in? In early plagued?*)

An example of a shifted direct translation occurs in the example (6) because the Michelin Guide (consisting of two nouns) had been shifted in Croatian to an adjective and noun to explain to the audience what it means.

**(6) Del: Your gaff's never going to get into the Michelin Guide is it?**

Del: *Budimo iskreni, taj ti neće ući u Michelinov vodič, ne?*

(Del: *let's be honest, this one is never going to get into the Guide by Michelin.*)

Sometimes the phrases are known globally, so that there is no need to even translate them. Leaving them in their original form may, in fact, make the joke even funnier. This can be achieved with the method of retention.

### **4.3 Retention**

Available evidence seems to suggest that a certain amount of references are used in more than one culture or have been introduced and adopted to other cultures throughout the years. Because they are familiar to diverse audiences, there is no need to translate them or to come up with an official equivalent for them. They are usually only distinguished with some sort of marking in the text, for instance quotes and italics. According to Pedersen, the difference in the type of marking seems to be "whether the ECR is a proper noun (unmarked or in quotes) or not, in which case the ECR may be marked by italics." (Pedersen, „How is Culture



Rendered in Subtitles? “ 4) Notable examples of these references are comparisons with famous people which often have an ironic message. In the examined episodes, the retention method was used primarily for this type of humorous content. Because of the transculturality factor, but also extratextuality of these references, no further translation is needed. The first example provides a viewer with the name ‘Mickey Mouse’, the most famous Disney character. This particular character does not have an official equivalent for its name in Croatian like the Snow White character. For this reason, the retention method was used.

**(7) Boycie: I have heard rumours Mickey Mouse wears a Rodney Trotter wristwatch**

*Boycie: Čuo sam da Mickey Mouse nosi sat s likom Rodneyja Trottera.*

*(I heard that Mickey Mouse wears a Rodney Trotter wristwatch.)*

Reference in the example (8) stems from an episode where movies, actors and movie scripts were main topics. In the light of that, the surrounding Co-Text was crucial in understanding the reference that was made.

**(8) Del: Ey' up there, here you are Oscar, mind out, quick – I've got you a present.**

*Del: Mjesta, Oscare! Donio sam ti dar!*

*(Make room, Oscar! I brought you a present!)*

In this particular episode Rodney is trying to become a writer and is writing a movie script. One can either apply this joke to Oscar Wilde, a famous writer, or the renowned Academy award for movies, ‘the Oscar’. Even though it is not perfectly clear which reference is the right one the transcultural factor still exists and the joke still has its effect on the viewer. An unambiguous reference to a specific person can be seen in the following examples.

**(9) Rodney: I bet Tom Stoppard don't have to put up with all this.**

*Rodney: Tom Stoppard sigurno nema ovakve muke.*

*(Tom Stoppard doesn't have this kind of trouble.)*

**(10) Del: He's like Elliot bleedin' Ness at times ain't he, eh?**

*Del: Pravi je Elliot Ness, ne?*

*(He's a real Elliot Ness, isn't he?)*

Along with the given examples, some other famous people were mentioned throughout the episodes connected to the humorous content, for instance Roy Orbison, Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire, and the names were left in their original form. In the majority of these examples, the names have a central role in the joke, which is why the retention method was chosen as the most suitable one. Retention does not have to be used only when people are in question.

The next example is connected to a specific type of fruit which is known in many countries, because it is a type of orange, but on the other hand, it can have some microcultural features.

**(11) Del: What about that then? Old Boycie's a Jaffa.**

*Del: Tko bi reko' da je Boycie <Jaffa!>*

*(Who would've known that Boyce is a <Jaffa!>)*

Jaffa orange could be microcultural because many British viewers may not be familiar with its type. To that end, the writers of the show added a disambiguation to explain the meaning of the word through the conversation. Considering the fact that it is an official name for a type of orange, nevertheless crucial to the comic content, the translator decided that the retention method would be the most suitable method to use.

**(11a) Rodney: A Jaffa?**

**Del: Yeah, you know, seedless!**

*Rodney: Jaffa?*

*Del: Jalov. Nema koštica.*

*(Barren. Seedless.)*

The last type of humorous content where the translator decided to use retention is the use of French language by the character 'Del Boy' from the television show. Del Boy uses French phrases quite a lot in various episodes but he never seems to use a phrase that is grammatically and semantically correct. This makes his use of the 'garbled' version of French even funnier for both SL and TL audiences. It can be assumed that the reason why the translator decided to leave the French expressions and not translate them lies in the fact that the expressions are not grammatically correct and are thus not understandable even to the English speaking audience, or, in fact, to the other characters included in the conversation. This, in turn, makes the original and untranslated script in French funnier than any translation could ever do.

**(12) Del: You've no...tres bien ensembles, as the French say.**

*Del: Nemaš <tres bien ensemble,> kak' bi rekli Francuzi.*

According to BBC, this expression is used by Del and it is "French for possessing a sense of occasion." (Clemens, *bbc.co.uk*) However, it could be assumed that Del-Boy heard the phrase in the song 'Michelle' by the British band The Beatles and has been misusing it ever since. The use of French sayings is seen as Del's attempt to express his knowledge and how educated he is, when in fact, it manages to show the viewer the opposite. After analysing the

five episodes, another nine French sayings were found, and they were all retained in their original form. French sayings used in a wrong way are used with an ironic purpose and could characterize Del-Boy's entire character as someone who strives at being classy and sounding rich, but is, in fact, uneducated. French is not the only language Del has tried to speak. In the following example, he uses his knowledge of Chinese to say goodbye.

**(13) Del: Well, come on now, we must now say chow mein and let our men get on with their work., Mr Chin?**

*Del: Moramo reći <chow mein> i pustiti dečke da rade.*

*(Del: We have to say 'chow mein' and let the boys get to work.)*

All of the examples mentioned so far contained cultural references which are known globally. Because of this, all of the references either already have their equivalents in the TL, or are understandable in their original form. However, there are certain references that have to be described in more detail. This can be done by the following methods of generalization and specification.

#### **4.4 Generalization**

Seemingly the most common method in the translation of TV shows in general, generalization is used when there are specific brands characteristic to a specific area mentioned in the original text. These references are translated mostly by using their hyperonym, as they are probably unknown to the target audience. When using generalization, the translator simplifies the translation process to avoid confusing the target audience. The following comic situations from the episodes contain examples of generalization.

**(14) Del: with her rum and pep in one hand, 20 Senior Service in the other.**

*Del: držeći rum s <Colom> u jednoj i kutiju cigareta u drugoj ruci.*

*(Holding a rum and Coke in one, and a pack of cigarettes in another hand)*

**(15) Del: If it was left up to you the poor little cow'd have been down for Welsh rabbit.**

*Del: Ti bi jadnici dao topljeni sir na kruhu!*

*(You would give melted cheese on a bread to the poor girl.)*

The 'Senior Service' cigarettes are a pack of cigarettes sold exclusively in Great Britain and are one of the most expensive brands of cigarettes available for purchase there. Both of the supplies mentioned in the original text suggest that a person who has gained a substantial amount of money would buy them as an act of luxury. This is somewhat lost in the translation

because the notion of ‘the pack of cigarettes’ does not imply luxury, as it could be various packs, even the cheaper ones. This translation contains both the generalization and the substitution method. The substitution method is used for the reference ‘rum and pep’, because ‘pep’ refers to a specific drink with a peppermint flavour which is most likely unknown to the target audience, and is hence exchanged for a drink more common in Croatia. Example 15 contains a dish familiar to all those who either lived in or who have tried it while visiting Britain. Unable to find a similar dish in Croatian, the translator used generalization to simply explain how this dish is made. This sentence also provides a good example how the translated version becomes shorter due to the media constraints one has to take into account when subtitling.

The next example shows how sometimes a whole new translation has to be made, because the phrase apparently does not have a suitable equivalent in the Croatian language. However, the key word in example 16 is a brand of candy from the UK.

**(16) Rodney: You'd nick the hole out of me last polo if I didn't keep my mouth shut.**

*Rodney: Molim?! Da se ne pazim,ukrao bi mi bombon iz usta!*

*(What? If I weren't paying attention, you would steal a candy right out of my mouth)*

To fully grasp the meaning of the comic content in the original text, one must be familiar with the Polo Mints, a brand of mints whose main feature is the hole in the centre. (*Wikipedia.com, polo*) When exploring the transculturality of this reference, one might even say that this reference is known on a microcultural level, which means that not even all the viewers from the SL know what it stands for. By mentioning it, Rodney suggests that Del would steal even the insignificant details from him if he were not paying attention. There are no brands of mints in Croatia which would serve as a perfect substitution. Seeing that leaving the brand intact would confuse the target audience, the translator opted for the generalization method, thus leaving the essence of the comic content intact. The same can be applied to the following few examples, where certain locations are connected to Britain and London in particular. The generalization method served as a simplification of the translation but focused on retaining the humorous content.

**(17) Del: What, that Saturday morning job at the photographic counter at Boots?**

*Del: Tako što je subotom prodavao filmove u robnoj kući?*

*(By selling film in the department store on Saturdays?)*

'Boots' is the name of a pharmacy store chain in the UK, which is very likely an unknown piece of information for the target audience. Seeing that the name of the store is not central to the joke, but the job in question is, the translator opted for the generalization method to give the joke the same context as in its original version. Another similar example can be seen in a phrase used in the English speaking area to explain some kind of novel, movie etc.

**(18) Del: You see what it is Rodney, it is not only a love story! It's a whodunit!**

**Rodney: A whodunit? What do you mean an whodunit? We know who-dun-it! The rhino done it!**

*Del: To nije samo romantika, to je i krimić!*

*Rodney: Kakav krimić?! Znamo tko je ubojica! Nosorog je ubojica!*

*(Del: It is not just a romantic story, it is a crime story. Rodney: What crime story? We know who the murder is! The rhino is the murder!)*

A 'whodunit' is an English expression for crime mysteries made from a combination of words 'who', [has] 'done' and 'it', signifying that it is a "detective story in which the audience is given the opportunity to engage in the same process of deduction as the protagonist throughout the investigation of a crime" (*wikipedia.com, whodunit*), and that the perpetrator is usually revealed at the very end. Although rather self-explanatory, this expression is something unknown to the target audience because of the narrow usage of the term in question. This is why the translator opted for the generalization method. Further examples of particular cultural references are:

**(19) Del: You been sniffing the bostik or something?**

*Del: Što vam je? Snifali ste ljepilo?*

*(What is wrong with you? Have you been sniffing glue?)*

**(20) Mike: I'll have you know my beer has just won second prize in the breweries contest!**

**Del: Yes that's right; he was narrowly beaten by the Metropolitan Water Board!**

*Mike: Moje je pivo dobilo drugu nagradu!*

*Del: Tako je! Za dlaku ga je pobijedio Gradski vodovod!*

*(Mike: My beer got second prize! Del: That's right! It was narrowly beaten by the Waterworks.)*

**(21) Del: I wouldn't stand about in that suit too long if I were you, not with your head!**

**Lisa: Why not?**

**Del: Well, he looks like a Swan Vesta!**

*Del: Nemoj predugo stajati u tom odijelu.*

*Lisa: Zašto ne?*

*Del: Izgleda k'o šibica.*

*(Del: Don't stay in that suit too long. Lisa: Why not? Del: He looks like a match.)*

The example (19) contains a specific company which produces glue, a fact probably known to the majority of the British audience. Because some kind of equivalent is lacking in the TL, simply generalizing the type of glue to just 'glue' in the translated version was the most suitable solution. In the example (20) both the English and the Croatian version imply that the beer tastes like water. The original version mentions a specific Waterworks connected to the city of London, however, translating this with the means of generalization did not affect the comic content. On the other hand, specifying which waterworks would take too much space and maybe even confuse the audience. The example (21) provides the viewer with an image of Rodney looking like a match, because his face was red and he was wearing a beige suit. 'Swan Vesta' is a brand of matches that couldn't be substituted with a Croatian product, which is why the translator found it fitting to use the generalization method. The Co-Text is extremely important in this example, because it holds the majority of the humorous content. The reference itself would not be funny without the image of Rodney in the beige suit with a red face. This also serves as a perfect example for why the translator should watch the show before translating it.

The provided examples required the generalization method because they were specifically targeted toward the British audience. The target language audiences would not understand the meaning of specific words if they were not translated or generalized. Having said that, there are some examples where retention method would have also been good, if not better for the context.

**(22) Del: I mean, I've got a pair of them desert boots but you don't catch me in the Sahara.**

*Del: Imam par terenskih čizama, al' to ne znači da tražim blato!*

*(I have a pair of field boots, but it does not mean I am seeking for mud!)*

Sahara is translated with the means of generalization, even though it is a world-known desert. Even if the translator was sceptic about keeping the original name, the method of specification would have been a perfectly adequate solution ('Sahara pustinji'). Since the boots in the reference have been translated using a mixture of generalization and substitution, this can be overlooked. The same can be applied in this example:

**(23) Del: We live 'alf a mile up in the sky in this lego set built by the council.**

*Del: Živimo na nebu u općinskoj zgradi od kockica.*

*(We live up in the sky in this building built by the council and made from blocks.)*

Due to its first airing during the eighties, it could be understood why the translator opted for the generalization method and wrote '*blocks*' (kockice) instead of leaving 'legos', even though the majority of the world's population today is familiar with the original term.

In contrast to other examples of generalization, there was one finding that was quite unexpected. In example (24) the substitution and generalization were used, where only the generalization method was enough for the target audience to grasp the meaning.

**(24) Del: If a North Korean came to live in London he'd think that Battersea Dog's Home was a take-away.**

*Del: Korejac u Londonu pomislio bi da je živodernica restoran.*

*(Del: A Korean in London would think that the pound was a restaurant.)*

Battersea Dog's Home is well-known animal shelter in the UK, but instead of referring to just some animal shelter when using the generalization method, the translator opted for 'živodernica', which would mean 'dog pound' (translated from hr.glosbe.com) in the literal translation into the English language. Seeing that the Croatian language has a suitable word for an animal shelter ('sklonište'), the chosen word can only be attributed to the fact that the translator wanted the humour to be darker than it originally was.

The following method tries to explain the word in the original by adding a short definition of the word next to the original phrase, or by adding some explanation that fits in the general context. It is the method of specification.

#### **4.5 Specification**

The analysis of humorous elements from five specific episodes shows that the specification method is not widely used in the subtitling business. This could be due to the fact that specification, be it through addition or explicitation, uses up a lot of space. According to Henrik Gottlieb from the University of Copenhagen, the translator has to be ready to sacrifice a certain amount of the original text for it to fit into the limit of 12 characters per second. ("Subtitles and International Anglification" 219) He continues by saying that "especially with up-tempo speech, the translator may choose to sacrifice close to 50 % of the dialogue - measured in quantitative terms - in order not to exceed the normal television 'speed limit'" (20). We come to the conclusion, made by Gottlieb, that what viewers read in the subtitles is on average about a third shorter than what people say (*Subtitles, Translation & Idioms* 73).

Tomislav Pisk, the Croatian translator of ‘Only Fools and Horses’, whose translations are being analysed in this paper, agrees with Gottlieb. He says that it is really hard for the translator to take a certain amount of text away from the original text, but it has to be done. He continues by saying that it is not easy to say exactly how much is being left out, since not only words are being translated, but also attitudes, phrases etc., . He concludes by saying that approximately 20-30% of the original text seems to be missing in the subtitles (my translation of his answer from Croatian). The specification method could be described as adding a generalized term for the reference being translated, but keeping the original reference as well. In other words, specification is the result of a combination of the generalization and retention methods. This can be seen in the following example.

**(25) Del: Like a sort of Charlton Heston type geezer to try and solve this crime.**

*Del: Pozovu detektiva, ko Charltona Hestona, da riješi zločine.*

*(Del: They call a detective, someone like Charlton Heston, to solve the crimes.)*

Charlton Heston was an American actor, but in this case he is probably mentioned because of his role as a detective in the movie ‘Soylent Green’. (*Wikipedia.com, Charlton Heston*) The context of the sentence suggests that Charlton Heston was some kind of a detective and the writers of the original script assumed no further explanation was needed for the source audience. However, the target audience may not be so familiar either with the actor or with his role, which is why the translator found it fitting to specify why this specific person was used as an example. On the other hand, there are some (albeit rare) examples where specification is used without any obvious reason. This can be seen from the following example:

**(26) Marlene: He's got what the doctors call a low count.**

**Rodney: Don't want to buy a calculator do you Boyce?**

*Marlene: Vele da ima premaleni zbroj sjemena.*

*Rodney: Hoćeš kupit' digitron?*

*(Marlene; They say he's got a low sperm count. Rodney: Do you want to buy a 'Digitron' calculator?)*

The chosen method does not affect the humorous content in any way, and the overall translation seems to keep the general message of the joke intact. Both English and Croatian versions have the same main point, which is a combination of the words ‘count’ and ‘calculator’. The difference here is that by using specification, the translator used a specific brand of calculators (‘digitron’) instead of simply writing ‘kalkulator’. It probably that ‘digitron’ was used more commonly than ‘kalkulator’ in informal speech, so the informal



version suits better. This is why the translator opted to specify a brand of calculator instead of just using the standardized version. When the translator is faced with a reference he or she cannot so easily explain, he/she is left with the two remaining methods. Those are the substitution and the omission method

#### 4.6 Substitution

The method of substitution is a more difficult method to use when translating in that it requires a certain amount of creativity and a cultural knowledge of both the source and target language countries. Its aim is to translate a phrase in a way that it preserves its meaning through a suitable phrase in the target language. When subtitling, the translator has to take a wide range of factors into consideration. One of these factors is the “significance of the specific lexical items constituting the idiom in question” (Pozderac, 11) which can determine how or even if the term will be translated. When choosing phrases that are suitable in the target language, the translator must also focus on the level of appropriateness “of using idiomatic language in a given register in the target language” (Baker, 76, qtd. in Pozderac 11) The majority of the humorous context analysed (that falls into the category of substitution) contains a completely different phrase in the target language. These phrases; although notably different in their form, carry the same meaning. Pedersen claims that “this is because the primary aspect is that of humour, and this leaves more room for cultural interchangeability in comedy than in other genres, where the information aspect is primary.” (*Subtitling Norms for Television* 39) In other words, some information about the characters and their surroundings may change in the translated version. Although it could confuse the viewer somewhat, the change is not so grave that it could make an entire TV show less understandable. The priority is given to the preservation of the humorous content.

The next sentence provides an example of the substitution method used instead of the official equivalent.

**(27) Rodney: They are china cats that play How Much is that Doggy in the window.**

**Del: Well what'd you want for one pound and twenty-five pence – 'okla-bleedin-home'?**

*Rodney: To su porculanske mačke koje sviraju: <Tata, kupi mi psića!>*

*Del: Što ćeš više za 1,25 funta? Guslača na krovu?!*

*(Rodney: Those are china cats that play 'Daddy, buy me a doggy.' Del: What do you want more for one pound and twenty-five pence? The 'Fiddler on the Roof'?)*

An official equivalent doesn't exist for the song 'How much is that doggy in the window', so the translator opted for a fictional name that resembles a real song in Croatian called 'Tata kupi mi auto' and which has the same theme. It can be assumed that "Okla-bleedin-home" refers to the Broadway musical 'Oklahoma!', since it was replaced with another musical, the 'Fiddler on the Roof' ('Guslač na Krovu'). The translator opted for a well-known musical in order to avoid any misunderstandings that can occur, for instance, the target audience not recognizing that 'Oklahoma' is a musical. Musical here is central to the joke, because it is implied that a toy so cheap can only play some low-quality music. In view of this centrality, the translator opted for a more transcultural translation.

The next set of examples contains references that exist in every country, but differ in some way, making them unique to a specific culture.

**(28) Del: You can't pull the wool over this boy's eyes can you, eh Grandad? Yes I am in Rodney...Seven out of ten for observation.**

*Del: Dečko se ne da prevariti. Jest, doma sam. Dajem ti četvorku iz zapažanja.*

*(Del: You can't fool this boy. Yes, I am at home. I give you a four in observation.)*

**(29) Del: I nicknamed her Miss 999 you know 'cos I only phoned her in an emergency!**

*Del: Dao sam joj nadimak 91 jer sam ju zvao samo u frci!*

*(Del: I nicknamed her 91 because I only called her in an emergency.)*

A grading system is present in every culture and in every country. Taking that into consideration, many countries have different grading systems. Germany, for instance, has a grading system from one to six, one being the best grade and six the worst, and USA has letters instead of numerical grades. In Croatia, the grading system is most commonly limited up to the number 5, it being the highest grade one can get. Since the target audience is more accustomed to receiving grades up to five, the translator opted to substitute the original grading system and give Rodney a four. However, the original reference contains a grading system in which the highest grade can be 'ten'. Countries like the Netherlands and Latvia have a grading system up to 10, but the UK does not. This could lead to the conclusion that Del used some other method. The method is most likely awarding points for Rodney's observation, which can go up to ten. Seeing that this kind of method would be too challenging to translate, the translator substituted it for another method, but did not lose the centrality of the joke. Likewise, the next example has a reference in emergency numbers. The '999' is the emergency telephone number in the UK and was changed to '91', which was the Croatian number for emergencies back when the show was translated for the first time. This reference

may also serve as an example of how the translation should constantly be changed, because the cultural references can change together with the language. This particular example can be overlooked, because the people from Croatia still know what the number in the translation refers to. These changes are not something that is perceived as a difficult job for the translator, as they have their equivalent in the target culture, i.e. they can be replaced without giving the whole situation much thought. However, lack of transculturality of specific brands in the original text is presumably the reason why the substitution method requires more creativity from the translator. There are some culturally specific brands mentioned throughout the episodes which would make little sense to the target audience if translated directly.

**(30) Del: Do I know anything about cars? I used to drive for the John Player Special team!**

**Lady: Oh, the Grand Prix circuit?**

**Grandad: No, delivering fags round Lewisham.**

*Del: Vozio sam za <Marlboro!>*

*Lady: Formule jedan?*

*Djed: Ne. Dostavljao je cigarete u Lewishamu.*

*(Del: I used to drive for 'Marlboro'! Lady: For Formula One? Grandad: No, delivering cigarettes in Lewisham.)*

**(31) Del: Oh yeah, and where do you think they get them from then, eh? Out of a Christmas cracker?**

*Del: Da? Otkud im oni auti? Iz kinderjaja?*

*(Del: Oh yeah? Where do they get them from? The Kinder Surprise?)*

The example (30) shows some kind of a race where a specific cigarette brand is also a sponsor for a racing team. This example combines the substitution and the generalization method. The generalization method is used to translate the type of the race. Both the race mentioned in the original and the one in the translated version refer to the same race, the 'Formula One World Championship'. The difference is that the 'Grand Prix' actually stands for a series of races which are within the Formula One championship. (*wikipedia.com, Formula One*) Since the Croatian audience is more familiar with the term 'Formula One', the translator opted for a more generalized version. The substitution method is then used for the second part of the cultural reference that mentions the 'John Player' brand of cigarettes which originate from Nottingham, UK, and are not sold in Croatia. This makes them monocultural. When it comes to the Croatian audience, the most famous cigarette brand associated with the race is the Marlboro brand, which makes the substitution method in this example a logical choice. Substitution is also used in the example (31). In many different English speaking countries around the world, for instance UK, Ireland and Australia, there are Christmas crackers

available for purchase. The main purpose of this cracker is that it contains a prize and is mostly made for children. In Croatia, the best well-known sweets for children with a prize inside are the 'Kinderjaje' chocolate eggs. As the prize inside of the candy is the centrality of this joke, the translator opted for the substitution method in order to replace the brand in the original text with the one more familiar to the target audience. A similar reference is made in the example (32).

**(32) Del: But see asking a Trotter if he knows anything about chandeliers is like asking Mr Kipling if he knows about cakes!**

*Del: Trotterima su lusteri isto k'o dr. Oetkeru kolači!*

*(Del: The chandeliers are to the Trotters what cakes are to dr. Oetker.)*

Mr. Kipling is a brand of baked goods in Britain. Considering that this brand is not sold in Croatia and is hence monocultural, the substitution method had to be used in order to avoid the obscure reference. The original brand was central to the joke, which is why the translator had to find a proper substitution. On the other hand, there are some references which may be obscure even to the source language viewers and are thus microcultural. Some can be seen in the following examples.

**(33) Rodney: I remember Lisa – scruffy little mare weren't she. She had more candlesticks than Liberace.**

*Rodney: Lisa je bila ona ružna mala! Nosila je aparatić.*

*(Rodney: Lisa was that ugly girl. She used to wear braces.)*

**(34) Del: No, you're alright. (A quick thought) It's Barratts!!**

*Del: Nije. Zaprastuju komarce.*

*(Del: No. They are fighting mosquitos.)*

This comic content is unique in its way because there are a few key factors in understanding it. First, one must know who Liberace was and what he looked like. Second, one must be familiar with the fact that Liberace had many candlesticks on his set and on his piano. Last, one has to make a connection between Liberace and a specific feature of a person. To translate and explain all the combined elements involved in this example would be too complicated, therefore the translator chose the substitution method and changed the entire meaning of the sentence. Some may be against this technique as it changes the entire meaning of the original phrase. Others support the change, due to the final result this television show strives to achieve, which is laughter. Another example required an identical course of action. In the scene, Del Boy is in a shack with a deranged patient who has escaped from a mental

institution. The quote in the example (34) happens when they both hear a helicopter passing over. The patient asks Del if that was the police. In the original text, Del has a quick thought and tells the patient that it is just ‘Barrats’. ‘Barrat’ is a residential property development company from the UK. Their line of work includes advertising houses, and the advertisements are made with the help of helicopters. Therefore, this statement sounds plausible to both the patient and the source audience. In Croatia however, a similar reference to this one does not exist. To make the translation more convincing to the target audience, the translator probably had to do some research. He found a plausible alternative that sends the same message (Del lying about the police) and that is still funny.

An alternative had to be found for a song Rodney was singing in the following example.

**(35) Rodney: \*Singing\* Gone poaching, ba ba ba ba, left a sign upon the door. Gone poaching, ba ba.**

*Rodney: \*pjevujući\* Kad sam bio mladan krivolovac ja...*

*(Rodney: \*singing\* When I was a young poacher...)*

This particular example is interesting because both the original and the translated version contain real songs but with different lyrics. The song in the original version is actually a song by Bing Crosby and Louis Armstrong from 1951 called “Gone fishin’”, where the ‘fishin’ lyrics were conveniently replaced by ‘poaching’. The same method was used in the translated version. The translator used a song by Zvonko Bogdan called ‘Kad sam bio mladan lovac’ (When I was a young hunter) and in this case, ‘lovac’ was replaced with “krivolovac”(‘poacher’). By accomplishing this, the translator turned one monocultural reference into another one. However, some songs and phrases are not translated using only the method of substitution. Numerous reasons could be behind the choices the translator made in the following examples, where he used substitution in combination with generalization.

**(36) Grandad: All day long I was whistling 'This is the Age of the Train' and I couldn't think why!**

*Djed: Sad mi je jasno zašto sam pjevušio u ritmu lokomotive!*

*(Grandad: Now I understand why I was humming the noises that the train makes.)*

**(37) Del: Gordon Benett!**

*Del: kvragu sve!*

*(Damn it all!)*

In the example (36), the translator opted for the substitution method rather than retention or pure generalization. It can be assumed that the translator found the song monocultural and too

obscure for the target audience, which is why he decided to use a combination of generalization and substitution to translate the reference. One could argue that a simple substitution method would be fitting, because there are a number of Croatian songs involving trains that could fit into the context. However, one has to take into consideration many factors in choosing the song, for instance, the popularity of a certain song, the time when it was recorded etc. This probably seemed too complicated when put together with all the media constraints, which is why the translator simplified the translation. The general idea was retained in the translated sentence, thus preserving the original comic content. Example (37) provides a phrase that is most probably microcultural, as it contains a name of a specific person but has a somewhat unexpected meaning. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the name is actually used to “express great surprise or anger”. (*dictionary.cambridge.org - gordon-bennett*) This is not the only example where a person’s name is used to make a statement. Some notable examples are ‘Peeping Tom’ or ‘Achille’s Heel’. Bennett was famous for his outrageous lifestyle and newsworthy stunts. He did not care about what others thought and his lifestyle was reproached by many. The perfect reaction to his way of life would have been ‘God blind me’, which today serves as a synonym for the phrase that is his name. (*phrases.org.uk, Gordon Bennett*) With the combination of substitution and generalization the translator found a fitting reference, although it is not an equivalent to the phrase in the original. Since the centrality of the joke was not in this phrase, the substitution method was successful. On the other hand, there are some examples when the combination of substitution and generalization can lead to the change of comic content from its original version.

**(38) Del: I reckon, in a few years tie, young married couples wanting to start a family, they won't go to the doctors, they'll nip down the road to Bejams!**

*Del: Parovi uskoro neće ići doktoru, nego u samoposluživanje.*

*(Del: In a few years, couples won't go to the doctors, they'll go to the self-service.)*

The original version of the joke from the example mentioned ‘Bejams’, a frozen food retailer in the UK. It can be assumed that leaving the original name of the store would be obscure to the target audience, but instead of choosing a similar substitution for the target audience, for instance ‘Ledo’, the translator opted for the generalization method in the form of a self-service store. The joke can still be understood, but the original idea of it might have been lost in this case. In comparison to that, there are some humorous sayings which don’t refer to a specific cultural reference, but are still translated both in form and meaning. One can assume

that these changes were made because translating these sentences literally would not be as funny as it is in the original text and Co-text. Another assumption is that it would take up too much space to literally translate a certain reference, which is why the translator had to find or invent humorous content which contains the same message but is shorter in the target language. The following example shows in both languages that the bars they visit have cheap and poor quality wine in their offer.

**(39) Del: We drink in wine bars where the only thing's got a vintage is the guvnor's wife!**

*Del Pijemo vino koje ima grožđa samo na etiketi.*

*(Del: We drink wine which has grapes only on the bottle.)*

The fact that the Croatian version is shorter in this last example shows us that there is another method present here, the omission method.

#### **4.7 Omission**

The method of omission is something every translator tends to use, especially when subtitling. Omission means leaving out a portion of the text in the translated version. The choice to use omission may arise for various reasons, one of them being laziness. In his research, Pedersen quotes Leppihalme when he says that "a translator may choose omission responsibly, after rejecting all alternative strategies, or irresponsibly, to save him/herself the trouble of looking up something s/he does not know" (qtd.in Pedersen, „How is Culture Rendered in Subtitles?“ 9). The use of omission is especially frequent when subtitling. As mentioned before, the subtitling restrictions force the translators to use omission even if they have some better solution. This occurs because the first solution was too long for a specific line in the subtitles. Example (40) offers a decent view of this kind of a situation.

**(40) Rodney: Two pina coladas then you'll put on your Eric Clapton LP and you'll be up jiving won't ya?**

*Rodney: Popit ćeš dvije Pina Colade i bit ćeš spreman za ples.*

*(Rodney: You will drink two Pina Coladas and you will be ready to dance.)*

The phrases in the original text convey the same message. The sentence could have been translated as "Nakon dvije Pina Colade pustit ćeš ploču Erica Claptona i zaplesati". In this translated version nothing is omitted but the text as a whole takes up too much space. The translator analysed the sentence and concluded that the 'Eric Clapton LP' is not central to the joke. He may have also used the Co-text of the situation on the screen and decided that the

omission method is the best method offered. Similarly, the omission method was used in the following example.

**(41) Del: Shadows? Well until they start singing Summer Holiday we'll expect the worst.**

*Del: Glavno da ne počnu pjevati.*

*(Del: As long as they don't start singing.)*

The translator translated only the first part of the sentence. One could assume that the song “Summer Holiday” didoes not add meaning to the joke and is not the central part of it. Instead of researching the proper substitution for the song mentioned in the original, the translator decided to omit the song and save some space in the subtitles. This did not alter the humorous effect, but has provided additional space. The next example is a reference we already used as an example of an official equivalent. However, the official equivalent was used only for the character ‘Snow White’ while the rest of the sentence was omitted in the translated version. In this case, some aspects of humour might have been lost in translation, since the original version motions both the seven dwarfs and the fact that the statues were made from fiberglass. All of this was mentioned to exaggerate the image of the tombstone which is already tacky and full of unnecessary details.

**(42) Rodney: If you added fiberglass models of Snow White and the seven dwarfs you couldn't alter the effect of that!**

*Rodney: Ne bi promijenio opći dojam ni da dodaš Snjeguljicu!*

*(You couldn't fix the general impression even if you added Snow White!)*

In example (43), omission was used because ‘cockney expression’ has no significance to the Croatian audience. Since the name ‘John’ is connected to the cockney expressions, the translator had to use a word from the Croatian ‘šatrovački’ slang as a proper substitution. With the term ‘šatrovački’ omission could have been avoided. However, it is not central to the joke so it can be overlooked.

**(43) Del: John, yeah - John. John, you know, John, it's the expression, cockney expression.**

*Del: Da, rista. Rista kao stari. Tak' se govori, ne?*

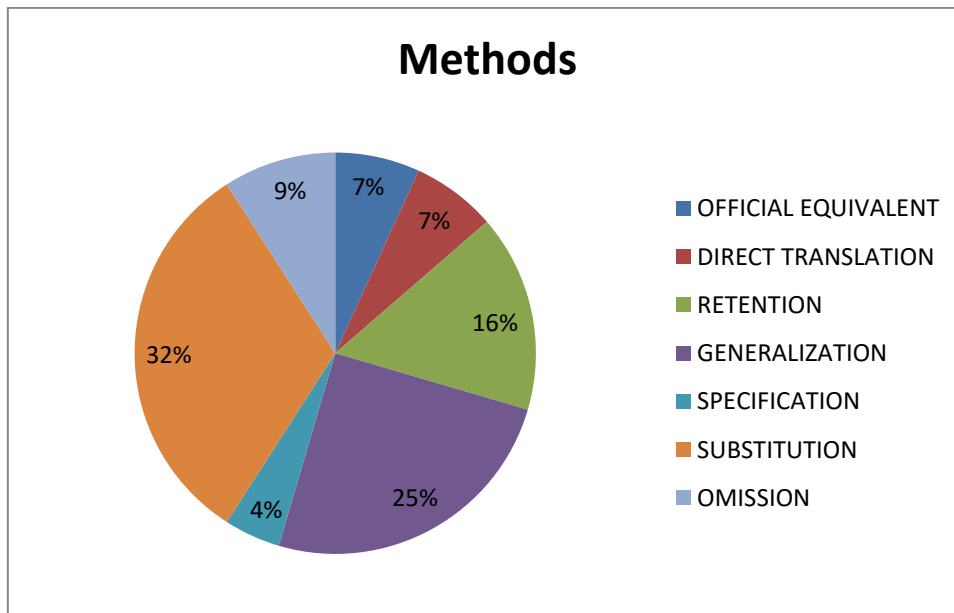
*(Del: Yes, old chap. That's how they say it 'round here, don't they?)*

This analysis showed us that there is a certain preference of methods when it comes to subtitling humour, but also that the methods can be applied to every ECR found throughout the episodes. In the next section the results will be displayed based on this analysis.



## 5 Results

The findings in the results will try to provide answers to the research questions asked in the introductory part of the thesis. The first question was in what way (if at all) will the methods be applicable to Croatian translation and to this particular TV show and in what percentage? The second research question asked which method will be used the most in the selected episodes. The analysis of the 43 references found in the five pre-selected episodes was used to answer the research questions.



*Table 1*

Table 1 shows the percentage of each method used in the 43 references which were analysed. The analysis showed that every one of the methods was used when translating the television show 'Only Fools and Horses' but with different consistency. It is interesting to note that the substitution method was the most used method in the translation of extralinguistic culture-based humorous elements in the show. As expected, the least used method is the specification method. This is consistent with the fact that it takes up too much space in the subtitles.

However, given that our findings are based on a limited number of examples, the results from such analyses should therefore be treated with considerable caution. There are several causes of possible error in the division of the methods. The division was made by determining the dominant method in the translation. The majority of the examples had more than one method involved in the process of translation. As anticipated, there were some

problems due to the fact that the omission method is present in the majority of the examples as an additional method. It was hence harder to find the references where the omission method was also the dominant method. The following section will describe and analyse results in greater detail.

## 6 Discussion

The main aims of the analysis were to provide an overview of methods translators have at their disposal when approaching the subtitling of humour, then to explain each of the methods and last to connect the methods with examples from the episodes. When analysing the choices the translator made in the selected references, we come to the conclusion that he chose to retain humorous content rather than the information conveyed in the original sentence. The single most marked observation to emerge from the data comparison was the similar percentage in the use of the generalization and substitution method. The correlation between the methods of official equivalent and direct translation is worth mentioning because these two similar methods are represented equally in the examples. These results offer powerful evidence for the translator's preference in methods while subtitling.

Along with the cultural references in the examples, another important choice was noticed. One interesting part when it comes to the translation of specific cultural references in this TV show, but also in the translation of humorous elements in Croatia in general, is the translation to the Kajkavian dialect. The Kajkavian dialect is mostly used in cartoons for comic relief, so as to translate slang or to depict a person with low educational background. It has been the subject of various pieces of research concerning both translation and culture. In Croatia, many have a somewhat negative attitude towards this kind of translation, as it diminishes the other dialects. There are many different reasons why a certain translator opts for the Kajkavian dialect. One that seems to be the most frequent is the fact that most translators in the business of translation in Croatia either come from or live in its capital, the city of Zagreb, i.e. they speak Kajkavian. Since the standard language in Croatia is based on the Shtokavian dialect, the translator opted for a different dialect to portray this difference that is also apparent in the English, i.e. original version. This may also be because the standard Croatian language is "not perceived as humorous and that people generally do not have any specific feelings towards standard Croatian." (Perić, 50) Standard Croatian is also mostly connected to educated people, along with the people from Eastern Croatia whose dialect mostly resembles the standard language. The choice of this specific dialect triggered a response and brought many negative reactions inside the Republic of Croatia. This negative attitude was shown not only by speakers of other dialects, but those of Kajkavian as well. In his research, Žanić says that when

[...] animated films began to be dubbed using regional dialects, speakers of Čakavian and Kajkavian dialects started expressing their disagreement with the way in which their dialects seemed to be represented in animated films. Čakavian speakers thus complain that characters which exhibit negative character traits are consistently and deliberately being dubbed in such a way that they speak Čakavian dialects, more specifically those dialects inherent to Dalmatia and the city of Split. They feel that the so called Zagreb dialect, a variety of Kajkavian used in the Croatian capital, is being promoted as the new standard, which they see as a means of Zagreb spreading its influence at the cost of indigenous regional dialects. (qtd.in Perić, 44)

Robert Pauletić, Croatian travel memoirist, is from Dalmatia and uses a Dalmatian dialect. He was particularly offended at the use of the Kajkavian dialect in almost every Disney cartoon movie. In his book ‘Led i druge priče...’ he mentions that in all Disney movies there is a heavy Kajkavian influence present, and the Dalmatians are more often than not presented as evil or idiotic characters. (Pauletić, 52) He continues by saying that this influence eventually affects children across Croatia, who are nowadays almost addicted to television. After hearing so much Kajkavian dialect every day, they might even forget their own dialect and replace it with the one that is imposed on them. (Pauletić, 52). Pauletić finishes his chapter about the issue with the message “Bolje ‘why’ nego ‘Kaj’(Better ‘why’ than ‘kaj’)!” (54)

On the other hand, the speakers of the Kajkavian dialect found it humiliating that their dialect was used to portray people without an educational background. This may stem from the stereotype about people who speak the Kajkavian dialect who were portrayed “as simple-minded people who are easily tricked and who are always looking only after their own well-being.” (qtd.in Perić 52) This stereotype became widespread with ‘Gruntovčani’, a television series set in Podravina, where Kajkavian is spoken. ( qtd. in Perić 52)

Kajkavian is also present in the show ‘Only Fools and Horses’. In this show, it is used to replace the cockney accent in the original version. Some of the notable examples from the examined episodes are:

Del: Nemaš <tres bien ensemble,> **kak'** bi rekli Francuzi.

*Del: You've no...tres bien ensembles, as the French say.*

Del:Ili viski **ak'** joj je dobro išlo.

*Del: Or whiskey if she was flush.*

Mr. Chin: Sredi kuhinju,**rista**, il' će bit' frke.

*Mr. Chin: Get you kitchen painted or you be in big trouble. John.'*

Brzi: **Fakat** je potišten.

*Trigger: He's really in the dumps ain't he?*

Mickey: Dobro je **imat'** komad sa strane.

*Mickey: You know how it is Mike, every so often a person fancies a bit of rough!*

Mickey: Boycie **lifra** videokasete na vel'ko.

*Mickey: He's in the video game in a big way.*

Some of the examples do not have an equivalent in the original version, i.e. there are no specific cockney expressions that had to be replaced with the Kajkavian dialect. However, the general tone of the cockney dialect along with the specific cockney phrases in the original had to be transferred in a way that it sends the same message to the viewer. It is interesting to note that the phrase “Sredi kuhinju,rista, il' će bit' frke” has ‘šatrovački’ slang in it, often connected with the Kajkavian dialect. The quote continues with “John, you know, John, it's the expression, cockney expression”. Here, cockney expression is used to describe the use of ‘John’, which is translated to ‘rista’, thus specifying a step away from the standard language in both versions. A tone full of dialects and slang words is present throughout all the episodes in this television show. A show where the characters speak in a non-standard language, dialect etc. can cause problems for the Croatian translator. The translator of ‘Only Fools and Horses’ had the same problems. When asked why and how he chose the dialect, he said the following:

Because I found everything else inappropriate and because I am not an expert in all Croatian dialects. The question of deviation from the standard language is a very sensitive issue. There was not much time left for contemplating, since the material arrived at the last moment. I perceived the material as a comedy set in a part of London, a comedy that deviated from English standard language, with a recognizable “feel” (‘štih’). In my opinion, there must be a very good reason for the deviation from the standard language; in this case I thought that the adaptation was most important, so it could lead to something comparable, something that viewers can refer to. It was about the question of style. The dialect used in the city of Zagreb is somewhat familiar to me, certainly more than the other dialects. The goal of this deviation was not to make a parody but to immerse the viewer in an atmosphere closer to the original one. Any other dialect would surely offend somebody (first, because of my ignorance about other dialects, and second, because of the questions that would arise: why this dialect and not another one - whether or not I am mocking someone etc.). In

comedy, spirit is everything. If the spirit does not exist, then it does lead to the desired reaction. (My translation of an answer from the translator Tomislav Pisk)

*Zato što sam bilo što drugo smatrao neprimjerenim i nisam majstor svih hrvatskih narječja. Pitanje otklona od standarda veoma je osjetljivo pitanje. Moj je pristup u ovom slučaju bio takav da sam u dogovoru s urednicom Programa plus gđom Mignon Mihaljević razgovarao općenito o pristupu. Nije bilo vremena jer materijal je stizao u zadnji čas pa ni prilike za prevelika filozofiranja. Ja sam materijal shvatio kao komediju smještenu u dijelu Londona, komediju koja je pomaknuta od engleskih jezičnih standarda, s definitivnim "štihom". U mom shvaćanju mora postojati jako dobar razlog za otklon od standarda, u ovom slučaju smatrao sam da je najbitnija prilagodba koja barem malo dočarava nešto usporedivo, nešto na što se gledatelji mogu referirati. Dakle, pitanje stila. Zagrebački govor donekle poznajem, a svakako više negoli ostala narječja. Cilj nije bio parodija nego približavanje atmosfere gledateljima. Bilo koje drugo narječje sigurno bi nekog uvrijedilo (prvo, zbog mog neznanja, a kao drugo, zbog pitanja koja bi se nametala: zašto to narječje a ne neko drugo - ismijavam li ja to nekog ili...). U komediji je "duh" sve. Ako nije u duhu, onda ne izaziva korespondentnu reakciju. Prijevod je mogao ići u čistom ili samo malo blago ublaženom standardu, ali pitanje je kako bi to ispalo i biste li vi danas pisali diplomski rad o toj seriji. (Pisk)*

The subject of dialects will always be considered a sensitive topic in Croatia. However, when an original version requires a step back from the standard language, a certain choice in portrayal has to be made.

This research may have some limitations. The first is that the examples from the episodes were picked and classified by only one person. A person with a different sense of humour would perhaps not find all of the examples funny. The second limitation is that a method is never used in complete isolation from other methods, which may cause some problems in the classification of the examples. These limitations highlight the difficulty of collecting data when it comes to a sensitive subject like humour. It is plausible that a number of limitations could have influenced the results obtained and there is certainly room for improvement. Despite this, we can still state that the analysis has given satisfactory answers to both research questions.

## 7 Conclusion

Every translator struggles with the translation of humour, especially when it is connected to culture-bound references. Many methods for translation of humorous elements have been tested in various languages. Our work has led us to the conclusion that all of the methods provided by Jan Pedersen can be used in the translation of a television show with humorous elements from English into Croatian language. The introductory part dealt with the examinations of humour, translation and subtitling in general, as well as with the specific situation when translating and subtitling humour. The analysis that followed contained 43 examples from five pre-selected episodes of the show which were classified according to the methods used to translate them. After the division of the examples, each example was examined and explained. The methods were chosen because of their previous success in other pieces of research when it comes to translation of cultural references. The analysis helped us find the answers to the two main research questions. The first question concerned the application of selected methods when it comes to a specific language and a specific television show. The analysis showed that all methods were used in the translation of the episodes, but in different frequency. The most used was the substitution method with 32% and the least used method was specification method with only 4%. Another important aspect within the topic of translating culture-bound humorous references was the use of the Kajkavian dialect in the translated version. The main reason for the use of this particular dialect was explained, along with the opinions of the viewers across Croatia.

Because of certain limitations to the study, such as the subjective division of examples and the fact that some examples had no dominant method, suggest that more research should be done.

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