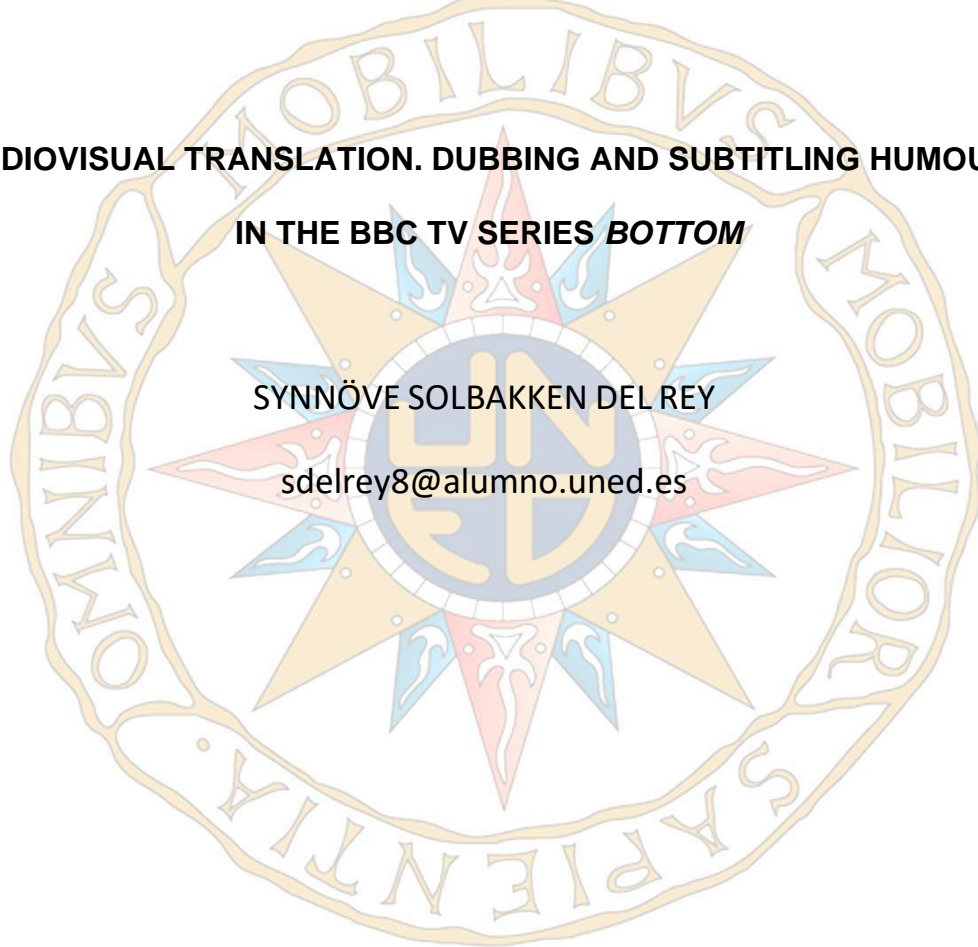**TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO**

GRADO EN ESTUDIOS INGLESES: LENGUA, LITERATURA Y CULTURA

AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION. DUBBING AND SUBTITLING HUMOUR

IN THE BBC TV SERIES *BOTTOM*

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ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to present a descriptive study of the challenges and difficulties that emerge during the translation of humorous quotes, wordplays, and puns in the BBC TV comedy series *Bottom* (Bye, 1991-1995), in which the abundance of sarcasm, irony, and dark and absurd humour makes it a suitable subject for our analysis.

Literal or straight-forward translation is not possible most of the time as the translator needs to work with different registers, swear words and cultural references. Likewise, audiovisual content reaches the audience through two separated channels: aural and visual, particularity that adds another layer of difficulty as translators are restricted by time and the medium and cannot go deeper into detail. Elaborating on nuances that otherwise would have helped the audiences understand is rather limited, leaving the translator with the challenging task of delivering an accurate translation while at the same time being brief and succinct.

The first section will be focused on providing a theoretical background about the history of audiovisual translation, dubbing, and subtitling, along with an introduction to the subject of translating humour.

Then we will proceed with the second part, practical in nature, where will examine examples of the dubbing and subtitles taken directly from the original DVD series and elaborate on how the professionals resolved the predicament of making cultural and linguistic differences present in British humour accessible to foreign audiences.

The analysis of the gathered data will show how dubbing and subtitling differ in their approach to translating puns. We will also see how the number of cases a joke was successfully transferred to the target language varies greatly between dubbing and subtitling.

KEYWORDS: audiovisual translation, humour, dubbing, cultural references, irony.

<u>PART I</u>

1. INTRODUCTION

If there is one characteristic inherently British is their peculiar sense of humour. Their dry wit and sarcasm usually baffle foreigners and language students and even other English-speaking nationalities do not usually understand it.

The differences in the concept of comedy among the English-speaking countries vary greatly due to cultural differences, and when we add to the mix a new language on top of that cultural identity, translators find themselves with a new barrier to overcome that makes their job even more challenging.

Humour relies heavily on culture and pragmatics (Yau, 2012) and very often translators need to fill the gaps in these cultural differences if they want to succeed in their mission of making the contents of any given media fully available to the target group.

The world has never been as connected as it is today. Enjoying audio-visual content from any country imaginable has never been easier. With enough bandwidth, we have available films, series, documentaries, anything we can think of from anywhere in the world. But unless we are fluent in the language of our multimedia content of choice, we need the help of a translation to benefit from all the audio-visual material at our disposal.

But the pure semantics of the media to translate is not the only challenge audiovisual translators face. They are also constricted by the precise characteristics of the medium itself:

> For the translator, the complexity of audiovisual translation resides in creating dialogues that emulate a prefabricated spontaneous mode of discourse […] that are constructed through written and spoken language, but also through other non-verbal codes of meaning, and at the same time must comply with the time and space limitations that the images impose on the translation

(synchronies or fit in the case of dubbing and revoicing modes). Chaume (2013, p. 105)

And here is where we find the importance of an accurate translation that encompasses connected but at the same time different areas of study: the language itself and its technicalities (grammar, syntax, and semantics), pragmatics, history, cultural references, and society (Pérez-González, 2019). Likewise, Guillot (2016, p. 607) conveyed that "subtitles are not in practice processed in a semiotic or pragmatic vacuum", meaning that subtitles are not an isolated entity, confining themselves to provide an aseptic translation that does not consider elements like background, culture, point in time, or situation.

Translating humour can be analysed from a sociolinguistic point of view (Yau, 2012), given the importance of integrating a variety of areas of knowledge (history, linguistics, grammar, syntax, diachrony, semantics, pragmatics, literature, sociology) into the craft of translating and requires from the translator a high level of proficiency on every subject.

1.1. MOTIVATION

There are many ways to get British humour wrong. It relies heavily on satire, banter, innuendos, understatements, *double entendres*, wordplay and self-deprecation, and the British deliver it with a straight face that tends to throw some audiences off a bit or even offend those unfamiliar with the style. Even if it is considered fairly crude sometimes, comedy is still a key element of popular culture in British society (Friedman, 2011).

TV series *Bottom* (Bye, 1991-1995) is a British TV sitcom based on the misadventures of two socially awkward and broke bachelors who share a dilapidated flat in the London Borough of Hammersmith. Both men try desperate to fit in, failing miserably every time. It is considered by the fans and the critics to be the follow-up to the cult classic *The Young Ones* (Jackson and Posner, 1982-1984), also written and starred by Edmonson and Mayall.

Bottom could be a pertinent example of the most bizarre, irreverent, and absurd British humour, thus making it a suitable subject of study for this TFG.

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Extremely hilarious if the viewer has already cracked the code but at the same time plain and dull for the uninitiated.

The translator, however, faces a double challenge and that is what makes the task fascinating: not only s/he has to offer an accurate interpretation of what is being said on screen, but also s/he must navigate the subtleties of the cultural background and adapt the historical and social references to the target audience while at the same time being brief enough. Subtitles must be short enough to adhere to the time constraints specific to the medium (Chaume, 2013) or, in the case of dubbing, the translated speech must fit the actors' mouth movements.

This is where translating crosses the barrier of mere linguistic accuracy and becomes an art, a multidisciplinary subject that not only asks for the translator's theoretical knowledge but also his/her creativity and adaptation skills.

1.2. OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this research work will be a practical proposal as we will analyse the different techniques used by professionals when dealing with the most problematic areas of translating humour such as puns, wordplay and cultural-based jokes and references. This analysis will help us to showcase the problematic of cultural differences in humour translation within audiovisual translation.

These difficulties will be explained in *Part II: Case Study*, through the exposition and comparison of the original version and the translated subtitles of a well-known British classic. In comparing the possible discrepancies between the original version with the dubbing and the translated subtitles we will analyse the challenges faced by the translator, what techniques s/he used to adapt the original pun to the target language and, in case it would be needed, we will proceed to provide suitable alternatives that could also have worked.

For this purpose, we find that BBC series *Bottom* (Bye, 1991-1995) could be a fitting subject of study given it was written by two of the most iconic alternative British comedians: Adrian Edmonson and Rick Mayall. The pair of writers/actors

worked together in numerous projects for British theatre and television since they first met in Manchester University in 1975 until Mayall's unexpected death in 2014. Other projects by the same actors include *The Young Ones* (1982-1984), *Filthy Rich & Catflap* (1987), *The New Statesman* (1987-1994), *Guest House Paradiso* (1999) and *Believe Nothing* (2002).

Bottom does not hold anything back, showing us how deranged, absurd, and crass British humour can be while at the same time being witty and tremendously funny.

This research work will be structured in two main parts:

The first part will include a theoretical background starting with an introduction of what British humour is and what makes it unique along with its cultural and social influences. Then we will revisit the framework and techniques in both the fields of dubbing and subtitling and how the translators deal with the specificities and subtleties of British humour.

The second part will be the practical analysis of both the dubbing and subtitling in the TV series *Bottom* (Bye, 1991-1995) examining the real examples extracted from the original DVD series. We will be discussing whether the translations provided were the best options and provide with alternatives whenever possible. Additionally, we will compare the dubbing with the actual subtitles and analyse the potential discrepancies between them we could encounter.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Translating TV films and series, videogames, documentaries, cinema, or websites differs tremendously with how printed media is adapted and presented to the final user. In this section we will discuss what audiovisual translation (AVT) is, as well as an introduction to the history of AVT. We will also revisit the types of jokes and wordplays the translator may find in audiovisual content and the different strategies at the professional's disposal to deliver the most suitable adaptation possible. Furthermore, we will notice as well that cultural background

plays an important role in understanding puns and jokes, forcing the translator to elaborate on social topics -whenever possible- to aid comprehension.

2.1. AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

What is audiovisual translation and what makes it different to other forms -or better said- more traditional forms of translation?

Chaume (2013, p. 105) describes audiovisual translation as a "mode of translation characterized by the transfer of audiovisual texts either interlingually or intralingually", implicating that AVT can be used not only to make audiovisual content available to foreign audiences in a different target language, but also make this same content accessible -in its original language- to deaf people or hard of hearing.

In AVT the final product and the original material are to be consumed simultaneously and this content is presented to the audience through two separated channels: aural and visual. The content to be translated is much more than interlingual transfer (Desblache, 2019): it is varied in nature and includes music, images, sound, body language, all factors that the translator needs to consider making his/her mission not only translating the linguistic elements but also the cultural message implicit in the source material. The socio-cultural elements and value system are also reflected in the source material and should not be overlooked (Fong & Kenneth, 2009). An added obstacle for the translator will be the need to take into consideration the formal constrains of space and time: the target audience will be watching and reading at the same time in the case of subtitles; thus, an ample amount of information needs to be condensed in the shortest text (subtitle) possible, giving AVT another point of singularity and forcing the translator to use the limited space and time available in the most effective way possible. With dubbing, the translator faces a similar predicament: the delivery is not only constricted by time, but also by the actor's mouth movements and facial expressions.

2.2. HISTORY OF AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

Humans are social creatures and from the beginnings of time have revelled in art as a form of both enjoyment and entertainment: stage plays, performances, operas, musicals, films, series, documentaries.

Historically, plays would have narrators who explained the meaning of what was happening on stage to the audience gathered around. This need to make the audience engage in the narrative evolved through the centuries; there has always been an ongoing need to provide the audience with the means to understand plays, theatre, or musicals.

Chaume (2013) defies subtitling as "incorporating a written text (subtitles) in the target language on the screen where an original version film is shown, such that the subtitles coincide approximately with the screen actors' dialogues" (p. 112)

Consequently, if we adapt this definition loosely enough, we could consider opera *librettos* a very embryonic stage of what subtitles would become centuries later.

We should also consider the definition of subtitles formulated by Díaz Cintas & Remael (2007):

> Subtitling […] 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. (p. 8)

If we travel back in time and go directly where -or better said *when*- the first films where shot (late 1800s, France) we will find that those films were completely silent: no dialogue, no background music to enhance the pictures displayed on screen. But soon enough those film makers of the past devised a plan to help the audience immerse themselves better in the primitive motion pictures.

1898 Robert W. Paul's *Our New General Servant*, 1901 Walter R. Booth's *Scrooge, or, Marley's Ghost* and 1903 Edwin Porter's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were

the first films in history to include a series of *intertitles.* Intertitles were a sequence of hand-written or printed title cards, photographed as still images and inserted between scenes during the film (Rundle, 2022). These cards guided the audience through the narrative, explaining decisive plot points and describing the dialogues.

And just like this, the seed of what would become the subtitles as we know them today, was planted. From this point on, the evolution from intertitles to captions to subtitles was smooth and organic, closely tied with the evolution of cinema itself.

Parallel to these events happening in the West, in Japan appeared the figure of the *Benshi*, a narrator that provided the audience with live interpretation accompanied by gestures and pictures, voicing on-screen characters and explaining details from the plot that may be confusing for the audience. Silent cinema remained the norm in Japan well into the mid-thirties, making the *Benshi* very popular with the public and sometimes becoming as famous as the actors themselves.

Silent films gave way to *talkies* in the 1920s. And with sound in cinema came the need to translate what was being said on screed to make it accessible to foreign audiences (Nowell-Smith, 1996).

Dubbing as we know it today began in the early 30s, with Russian-born Armenian Rouben Mamoulian's musical *Applause* (1929) being the first film where the original audio track would be mixed and substituted by a pre-recorded audio track (Croce, 2016). Mammoulian also introduced the use of three separate tracks, one for dialogue, a second one for music, and the third one for sound effects.

The main difference between subtitling and dubbing is that "dubbing is designed to maintain audio communication" (Fong, 2009, p. 63). The audio track in the original content is replaced by a different audio track, making it easier and more convenient for the audience, which does not need to read any subtites and can focus completely on the action happening on screen.

Nowadays, the dubbing process is performed and recorded in a studio by voice actors who must follow a meticulous casting process just like any other performer.

2.3. DUBBING VERSUS SUBTITLING: A JUXTAPOSITION

Dubbing and subtitling are the most common processes to translate audiovisual content and make it accessible to a broader target audience. Both present their onw unique set of pros and cons and also have their own circle of enthusiasts and critics, making the debate dubbing vs subtitling a recurrent theme when debating what is the best approach to present a translated audiovisual content to the general public.

The gratification derived from the consumption of said media is determined by a combination of variables and it is the final user who eventually chooses one method over the other based on his/her personal preferences and circumstances. We need to take into considerantion that the original content and the final product will be consumed in simultaneously, and while dubbing might be the most convenient method for some, synchronicity plays a predominat role and forces the translator to accommodate to the actor's movements happening on screen. Nevertheless, subtitling is also constricted by the physical limitations of space and time: the information must be condensed in the shortest text possible and the final consumer needs to be able to read at an adequate pace whilst simoultaneously following the action happening on screen.

Through the years, the professionals have tried to refine and improve the way both dubbing and subtitling are made, adapting their techniques to the media to be translated and to the particularities of the public that would be the end user of said media.

This need for specificity has resulted in different types of subtitles and dubbing, each of them intended for different audiences and different media.

2.3.1. TYPES OF SUBTITLES

Whether it is for expanding the target audience (translated subtitles) or to help people with hearing impairments (on screen transcription), subtitles evolved and with them, the need to classify them into categories appeared.

Traditionally, subtitles have been classified based on two different parameters: linguistic and technical.

- <u>Linguistic parameters</u>. Language may be seen as the most obvious feature, and, in the words of Bartoll (2004, p. 57) it means "the relationship that is established between source and target languages, whether it is the same or not". Based on this very definition, Gottlieb (1997, p. 163) and de Linde (1999, p.2) distinguished, years before Bartoll, two types of subtitles, those being:

  1- Intralingual subtitling or subtitling within one cultural language. This category refers to the subtitling between the same language (transcription). Díaz Cintas (2006) and Bartoll (2004) sometimes refer to it as captioning. This type of subtitling is mainly targeted at the deaf or hard of hearing, language students, and in situations where dialects/accents are thick enough to make it difficult for the audience to understand.

  2- Interlingual subtitling or subtitling between two languages. Interlingual subtitling happens "where there is translation" (Bartoll, 2004, p. 57). This type of subtitling is also called "diagonal subtitling" (Gottlieb, 1994, p. 104) because both mode and language are changed, being speech the source and transferring to writing in the target language.

- <u>Technical parameters</u>. Bartoll (2004) uses optionality as a means of organising the different types of subtitles (se also table below).

  1- Open subtitles, or non-optional. Mainly used for interlingual translation. They are part of the original film and cannot be removed (Gottlieb, 1997).

2- Closed subtitles or optional. These kinds of subtitles are also known as captions (O'Connell, 2007) and are mainly used for intralingual translation. Initially intended for the deaf or hard of hearing or students. With closed subtitles the spectator decides if s/he wants the subtitles on screen or not.

Table 1. Different types of subtitles based on the parameters published by E. Bartoll in 2014.

PARAMETERS	TYPES OF SUBTITLES
Placing	Cantered and non-centred subtitles
The filing of subtitles	Inseparable and separable part
Localization	Subtitles, intertitles and surtitles
Mobility	Mobile and fixed subtitles
Optionality	Optional (closed) subtitles or non-optional (open) subtitles
Time	Pre-recorded or simultaneous
Audiovisual product to be	Cinema, TV, video, DVD, computer games, Internet streaming, live.
Channel/means of broadcast	Impression upon the audiovisual product itself, teletext, projected on top or simultaneous broadcasting
Colour	Depending on the interlocutors, colour of the film and the product to be subtitled

(Liu, 2014, p. 1104, based on Edward Bartoll's classification of subtitles, 2014)

As we can see in table 1, Bartoll expanded the parameters we could use to catalogue subtitles, including technical features, time, or even the nature of the final product.

2.3.2. TYPES OF DUBBING

Dubbing is a process that takes place in post-production, where the original audio dialogue track is replaced by a different pre-recorded audio track. For media like films or series, dubbing can make the audience's experience much more immersive than subtitles do and facilitate the access to foreign content to sectors of the public that do not feel confident reading while following the action happening on screen (Chaume, 2020). There are two main types of dubbing, quite different from one another, based on the final result and the type of content they are used for:

- Voice-over: here the voice is recorded with the purpose of narrating the events happening on screen, without any kind of acting or coordination between actors and sound. We could see voice-overs translating interviews or in documentaries. In Eastern Europe (especially Russia and Poland), voice-over was the norm when dubbing films. One single person (male) would narrate all the action and dialogues in a monotone voice devoid of any emotion or acting.

- Revoicing: professional voice actors record in a controlled environment (recording studio) all the dialogues, replicating the acting and synchronising the new script and the original actors' mouth movements. The script needs to be previously translated by a professional, adapting to the best of his/her abilities the target language to the original actors' body language. Here the translator faces a double challenge: not only s/he has to deliver a precise translation that abridges any cultural differences that may arise, but also s/he needs to be aware that synchronicity during revoicing is paramount (Chaume, 2020)

We need to keep in mind that dubbing not always implicates translation into a different language. Dubbing can also be used to enhance the sound or dialogues, re-recording the same tracks in a more controlled environment to replace the original take. This technique is called ADR (Automatic Dialogue Replacement) or *looping*, and it is a common process when recording dialogues in noisy environments or action scenes in exteriors.

2.4. TRANSLATING HUMOUR

Why do some people laugh at some jokes while other people do not? It is determined by factors like social background, education, culture, family or even age. Humour heavily relies on stereotypes (Chiaro, 1992) and plays a role in creating a sense of community because, in the words of Walter Nash, "we share our humour with those who have shared our history"(1985, p. 9).

Translating humour can be quite challenging because it is substantially defined by culture, meaning that translating humour could be tantamount to translating culture, "because translating is radically recontextualizing, actually exorbitant in its creation of another context" (Venuti 2002, p. 7). Also, to translate a joke or pun successfully we need to consider not only its linguistic and cultural content, but also, the subjectivity of humour and that not every receptor may find a specific joke funny.

The following section describes the different categories of puns and wordplays according to Zabalbeascoa, who classifies humour regarding its form (paralinguistic, aural, visual) or its contents (cultural, linguistic, community humour). We will also study the different strategies proposed by Delabastita to translate humour and wordplays, always paying attention to the medium we are working with -the audiovisual one- and how the professionals need to adapt to its boundaries.

2.4.1. PUNS AND WORDPLAYS

Before proceeding to classify jokes and wordplays, it would be pertinent to define what wordplay is. In the words of Delabastita (1996):

> "Wordplay is the general name for the various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two (or more) linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings." (p. 128)

The terms pun and wordplay are used interchangeably in many cases and, again, in the words of Delabastita (1996, p.55) "there is not even a consensus

as to how the term pun should be understood." The complexity and particular nature of translating humour has led many scholars to develop different systematizations regarding strategies for the translation of both the cultural background/references and the humour itself.

Due to space constraints, in this section we will reference the publications of only two researchers: Zabalbeascoa's classification of puns and Delabastita's techniques for translating humour, since we will be relying on their work for our case study in Part II.

Zabalbeascoa (1993, p. 250-254), presented a classification which consists of six types of jokes:

1- International joke (I), shared by several cultures. It is universally known enough to be understood across borders and languages.

2- Community and institutions joke, also defined as cultural joke (C). Referring to culture-specific items, the audience needs a certain level of knowledge of the culture, history, or context of the source country. An adaptation of the references is needed to retain the humorous effect in the target language.

3- Linguistic-formal joke (L). Humour produced by wordplay. It relies on the natural characteristics of the language (e.g., polysemy, homophony) and adaptation to the target language can be difficult.

4- Non-verbal joke or visual joke (V). This joke relies on the non-verbal elements of an interaction: charades, pantomimes, gestures. With visual jokes, the joke is explained by the visuals on the screen with little or no linguistic component.

5- Paralinguistic jokes (P): onomatopoeic sounds or the use of accents or local expressions (or even depictions of other languages in a stereotypical manner) that can be considered humorous to the audience.

6- Aural joke (A). Joke based on acoustics elements. In this particular case, translation may not be needed because the joke is understood by the audiences, except on the case the sound is linked to a cultural reference. In that situation, the joke may need some context to be understood by the audience.

It would be relevant to note that the distinction is not always clear-cut. The same joke can display characteristics of one, two, or more categories at the same time and pose a fluid classification depending on context. This is where the translator's adaptation skills come into play, as s/he would need to consider all the variables and offer the most accurate translation possible within the medium constraints.

Meanwhile, Delabastita (1993, p. 191-221) proposed a range of eight techniques for translating puns and wordplays that we will be using in the practical part of this paper:

1- Pun to pun: The wordplay in the source text is translated into a target text wordplay, which may be different regarding structure, context, or linguistic basis.

> RICHARD: this is a <u>smoking</u> jacket
> EDDIE: but you don't <u>smoke</u>
>
> RICHARD: esto es una <u>americana</u>
> EDDIE: pero tú no eres <u>americano</u>.

In the example above we see that the original wordplay has been replaced by a similar wordplay in the target text that, in this particular case, happens to keep the structure and general meaning.

2- Pun to non-pun: the pun or wordplay is replaced by the literal meaning of the source text that may keep the original meaning of the pun (or not). In the case shown below, the translator resolved not to translate the name where the pun was hidden. Thus, the joke is completely lost for the non-English-speaking audiences.

> RICHARD: Don't know where you're going to end up!
>   Start off in Berk-shire, end up in <u>Twatshire</u>.
>
> RICHARD: No sabes dónde puedes acabar.
>   Empiezas en Berkshire y acabas en <u>Twatshire</u>.

3- Pun to rhetorical device translation: the rhetorical device (repetition, rhyme, alliteration, paradox) aims to maintain the effect of the source text pun.

> NATASHA: À bientôt!
> RICHARD: Bloody hell - *a bien toe!* Saucy bitch!

NATASHA: À bientôt!
RICHARD: Dios mío *"a bien to!"*

4- Pun to zero translation. The pun is simply omitted. In the example below we have Eddie trying to play chess with Richard. The original pun was using *prawns* instead of *pawns,* but the subtitles have completely omitted the joke and go directly for *peones*, leaving the sketch with no joke based on the similarity between *prawn/pawn*.

EDDIE: We need 16 <u>prawns</u>
EDDIE: Veamos, son 16 <u>peones</u>

5- Direct copy. The translator reproduces the wordplay when it has direct equivalence.

LADY: We'll start with a little look at your videos, all right?
        Can you see all right?
EDDIE: <u>No, that's why I wear glasses</u>.

LADY: Comencemos echando un vistazo a sus vídeos,
        ¿de   acuerdo? ¿Puede verlo bien?
EDDIE: <u>No, por eso llevo gafas</u>.

6- No pun to pun: a pun non-existent in the original source is added to compensate for the loss of wordplay elsewhere in the source material. In this case, the translator decided to add a joke in the subtitled version that does not appear in the original version.

EDDIE: <u>Hors d'oeuvre</u>, ma'am?
EDDIE: Unos <u>entre-piernas</u>, ma'am?

7- Zero to pun: totally new material is added to compensate for the loss of wordplay.

8- Editorial techniques. Explanatory notes or metatextual elements. These techniques, such as footnotes or endnotes, cannot be used in AVT.

Even with the detailed categorizing provided by the scholars, the translator as a professional may need to consider that translation is not an exact science -even more in a field as subjective as humour is- and a set of variables as context,

era, cultural background, audience's gender, and age, may have an influence in the outcome of his/her work.

When comparing the dubbing with the subtitling, occasionally we are going to notice the presence of discrepancies. This is due to the nature of the medium itself. In dubbing, synchronicity plays a relevant role and may bias the translation chosen by the professional, in opposition to what happens in subtitling, where the boundaries are imposed by the physical space and limited to the two lines of text on the bottom of the screen.

2.5. STATE OF THE ART

Despite its more than one century of existence, AVT did not have the same consideration –historically- as its more classical counterpart. Even scholars like Fawcett (1996) questioned whether it should be considered a type of translation at all. It has been only in the last couple of decades that AVT has reshaped itself and has finally become a serious field of study within the translation sphere. (Gambier, 2013). From this point on and driven by the new advancements in the area of global communications, AVT is growing exponentially (Díaz Cintas and Anderman, 2009). This phenomenon has been catalysed by the booming rates of foreign media consumption; fact facilitated by the massive access to online content by the general public. Nowadays, every foreign TV series, film, documentary, or videogame is merely one click away no matter where we are in the world and with this accessibility and affordability comes a new rising demand for translated media.

We would like to present here an overview of the works and studies conducted in the field of audiovisual translation, specifically in the area of humour. If we aim our attention at the semantic aspect of humour, its contents and how it is translated, general studies carried out in the fields of translation have resulted in analysis and classification of jokes (e.g., the one proposed by Zabalbeascoa in 1993), proposed techniques of translation (Delabastita, 1993). If we direct our attention to the formal aspect of translation and under what form it is delivered to the target audience, we will learn that audiovisual content can be offered to

the final user either dubbed or subtitled, which in turn can be subdivided in different types or categories as the ones proposed by Bartoll in 2004 and Chaume in 2013.

If instead a general view of the world of ATV as a whole we focus on individual works based on the study of concrete content, we will find TFGs and doctoral thesis that inspect and scrutinize a specific film or TV series, elaborating on the translations provided by the professionals and analysing their methodology and the results obtained. These dissertations deepen into the cultural aspects associated with the audiovisual content, linking the technical aspect of the translation with the cultural and social environment, and thus providing a comprehensive revision of the translator's work.

As a differential contribution to the field of ATV, we would like to present in this study an in-depth comparison of the dubbing and subtitling in the TV series *Bottom,* with and extensive cross-check of the translations provided by the professional, taking into consideration the motives as to why we find discrepancies between the dubbing and subtitling and -whenever possible- trying to elaborate on why these discrepancies occur as well as providing suitable alternatives that either would have kept the humour or would have avoided the divergence amidst the dubbing and subtitles.

Previous works that also addressed the differences between dubbing and subtitling would be for example, Najla Al Owais' master's thesis in 2012 which studied the discrepancies between the Arabic dubbing, subtitling, and the original version of the film *Troy* (Petersen, 2004) and Carole Roudot's master's thesis in 2017 which compared the French dubbing, subtitling, and the original version of the American TV show *South Park* (Parker & Stone,1997-).

PART II

3. METODOLOGY

With the present paper we will intend to offer a descriptive analysis of the difficulties present in the translation of humour, especially when it comes as tightly influenced by society and culture as the British is. For this purpose, we will examine the original version, the Spanish dubbing, and the Spanish subtitling of the BBC TV series *Bottom* (Bye, 1991-1995). We will inspect the three versions of the script (original, dubbed, and subtitled), describe the type of humour, and analyse the strategy applied by the translator. If applicable, we will offer an alternative to the translation provided by the professional, explaining why we consider the alternate version more satisfactory.

Although Bottom run for three seasons, this case study will focus only on the first and second seasons, with a total of twelve episodes of 30 minutes each.

Our first approach to the source material will encompass two phases and will be practical in nature:

> - We will watch the episodes, first in their original version and then once more in their dubbed version. Both times, special attention will be devoted to identifying any pun, joke or idiom that may be of interest to our study.

> - After this first analysis, we will proceed to extract both subtitle tracks (English and Spanish) from the DVDs for their posterior study and comparison. The extracted text files will form the corpus from which we will choose the examples to illustrate the practical application of our case study.

3.1. THE CORPUS; BOTTOM SERIES 1 AND 2.

For those enthusiasts of British comedy that wondered what happened with the eclectic group of university students sharing a decrepit flat in *The Young Ones* (Paul Jackson and Geoff Posner, 1982-1984), director Ed Bye offered his answer in *Bottom* (1991-1995). The two main characters still share a crumbling and neglected flat in London. One of them -Richard- is a frustrated wannabe that has come down in the world but who still thinks that is better than anyone else. The other man -Eddie- is a borderline alcoholic who has already given up and lives life one day at a time, without thinking ahead or worrying about the future. With no job, no money, and no luck with the opposite sex, both men try to find their place in life but every attempt at fitting in backfires spectacularly due to their absolute lack of social awareness.

The corpus for this study comprises twelve episodes from seasons 1 and 2 of the TV series Bottom, of 30 minutes each. The number of episodes per season was rather small compared with other TV series of the same style and characteristics, but it should be enough to offer examples of the different categories of puns and wordplays: linguistic jokes, cultural, aural, non-verbal, and paralinguistic.

After analysing the twelve episodes, we obtained a grand total of 1052 jokes, puns, and wordplays. That makes an average of 87 jokes per episode. It would be important to mention the surprisingly high number of visual jokes (228), that if grouped together with the aural jokes (92) would make the non-verbal jokes the highest-ranking category in the statistic.

As the main focus of this paper is to examine and evaluate the translation of humour, we have deemed judicious to concentrate on the linguistic, international, and cultural aspect of wordplays. Nevertheless, a few examples of aural, paralinguistic, and visual have also been included to showcase the variety of situations the professionals may need to resolve.

The statistical distribution among the different categories is as follows:

Table 2. Total amount of the jokes in series 1 and 2, distributed by categories and illustrating the representative percentage for each type.

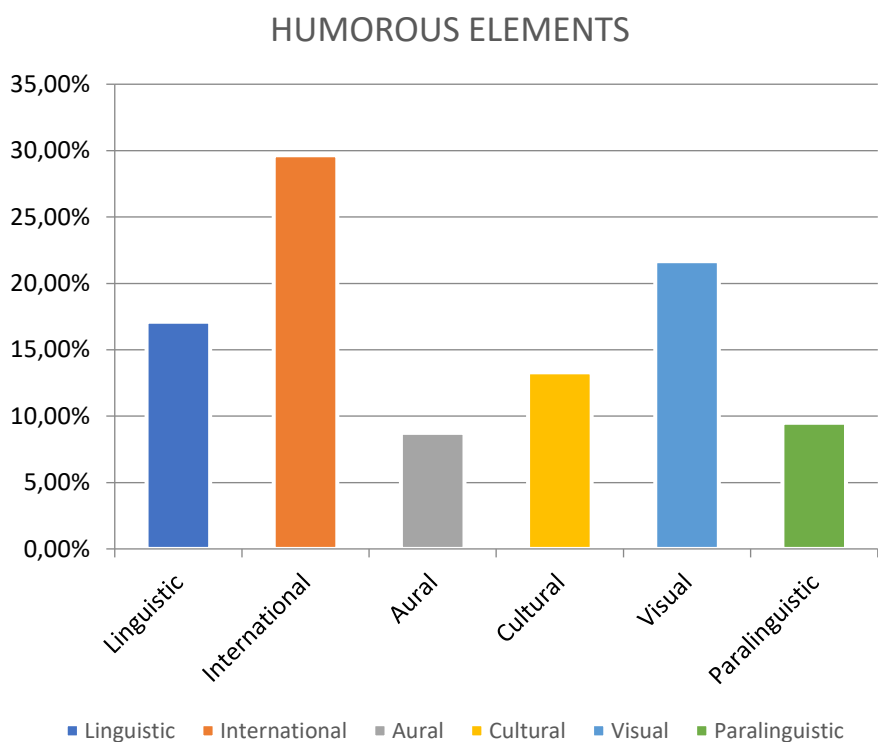| Type	Number of jokes	Percentage
International	312	29.65%
Visual	228	21.67%
Linguistic	180	17.11%
Cultural	140	13.30%
Paralinguistic	100	9.50%
Aural	92	8.74%

Figure 1. Visual interpretation of the percentages pertaining to every category of jokes and wordplays present in seasons 1 and 2.

As we can see in Figure 1, International jokes are the highest-ranking category, which is understandable giving that it is the easiest and most accessible form of humour. Not just from the point of view of the translator, but from the point of view of the audience. A joke that is understood across cultures and languages is a handy and convenient solution when the writer needs to be sure that the humorous content in a particular sketch will be delivered successfully. The same situation happens with the visual jokes. The visual jokes are the second largest value, fact that shows how relevant is the action taking place on screen and to what extent the non-verbal jokes support the written script.

4. CASE STUDY

This part compiles a sample of puns and wordplays that may be suitable to illustrate the difficulties and particularities of translating humour. The examples have been categorized and commented in individual tables. Every table includes the original version and the both the Spanish dubbing and subtitling, episode, and timestamp. Likewise, they include the type of joke according to Zabalbeascoa -international (I), linguistic (L), aural (A), cultural (C), visual (V), paralinguistic (P)- and the strategy chosen by the professional to translate the script.

Additionally, we will offer relevant alternatives whenever possible, elaborating on the reasoning as to why we would have chosen that particular translation over the original.

From all the plethora of jokes and wordplays present in the series, the following examples have been chosen because of the particular challenges they presented to the translator. Those challenges have been varied in nature: cultural references that need a certain background to understand the joke, linguistic wordplays that include a third language, and aural and visual elements that does not translated well or need further explanation -impossible to provide given the medium-. We have included also simple and easy jokes that show that humour can be universal, too, and reach every audience in a straightforward and accessible manner.

Table 3. Example1.

Season 1. Episode 1: <u>Smells</u>
Running time: 0:07:54 – 0:08:00
Context: Richard and Eddie have bought a pheromone spray that supposedly would make them irresistible to women. They are back at their flat, getting ready, dousing themselves with the spray and laughing at their own jokes.
Humorous elements: C
Original version *[Both men are laughing and joking about how irresistible they will be]* RICHARD: *I only got so many ribs, Noël Coward.*
Spanish subtitling RICHARD: *Me duelen las costillas de tanto reírme.*
Spanish dubbing RICHARD: *Por favor, no puedo respirar si te acercas tanto.*
Strategy: Pun to zero
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling NO

Following Delabastita's classification, here we find a community or cultural joke. The audience needs to know who Noël Coward was to understand the full meaning of the joke.

Both Richard and Eddie are dousing themselves with pheromones in hopes to become irresistible to women. The cultural reference is Sir Noël Coward, an English actor, singer, and composer famous for his savoir-faire, flamboyance, and wit, all characteristics that Richard and Eddie hope to develop thanks to the miraculous spray.

We also find a discrepancy in the Spanish dubbing and subtitling, but none of them provide any context or explanatory elaboration on the cultural reference, with the result of the pun being lost in both cases.

Table 4. Example 2.

Season 1. Episode 1: Smells
Running time: 0:14:38 – 0:14:45
Context: both men are having a fistfight at home, but suddenly realise they need to stop and resume getting ready to go to the pub.
Humorous elements: complex joke L + V
Original version RICHARD: *Let's shake and make up!* *[Both men quiver instead of shaking hands and mimic applying lipstick]*
Spanish dubbing RICHARD: *Ahora reconciliémonos.*
Spanish subtitles RICHARD: *Bien, terminemos de arreglarnos.*
Strategy: Pun to zero (dub) – Pun to pun (subs)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling YES

This joke was especially challenging because combine a linguistic aspect, the polysemy of *shake* and *make up* and the visuals attached to it. Interestingly enough, dubbing and subtitling have each opted for different meanings of *make-up.* Evaluating both translations and taking into consideration they go hand in hand with the humorous visual interpretation of applying lipstick, we could say that the subtitling has delivered a satisfactory adaptation of the original joke while in the dubbing the pun is lost.

Table 5. Example 3.

Season 1. Episode 1: Smells
Running time: 0:22:39 – 0:22:50
Context: both men are getting condoms from an automatic vending machine, and they find there are a variety of choices.
Humorous elements: C
Original version

RICHARD: *Banana, strawberry, peanut butter, Marmite, cheese & onion.*
Spanish dubbing
RICHARD: *Plátano, fresa, manteca de cacahuete, mermelada, queso con* 　　　　　*cebolla.*
Spanish subtitling
RICHARD: *Plátano, fresa, manteca de cacahuete, allioli, queso con* 　　　　　*cebolla.*
Strategy: Pun to pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

The humorous element we find in this sketch is the mention of a British staple as one of the options available when the men are buying flavoured condoms. Taking into consideration that the TV series aired in the 90s, the Spanish audience was not familiar with the peculiar brown spread back then and the translator decided to change it to *mermelada* in the dubbing, thus keeping the joke within the topic of the food flavours and at the same time offering something the audience would recognise immediately. The subtitling, however, does a better job and chooses the term *allioli*, which is more in line with the original Marmite and adds the comedic effect lacking in the dubbing.

Table 6. Example 4.

Season 1. Episode 2**:** <u>Gas</u>
Running time: 0:03:20 – 0:03:32
Context: the doorbell rings while the men are playing cards in the dining room. An annoyed Richard goes answer the door.
Humorous elements: I + C
Original version
RICHARD*: I'm not Speedy Gonzalez (1). That's enough of that. That's my* 　　　　　*electricity. I'm not the Aga Khan! (2) Christ, It's the gasman!*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling
RICHARD: *¡Ya voy, ya voy! ¿quién se cree que soy, Speedy González?*

Basta, ya está bien, está gastando mi luz <mark>¡no soy millonario!</mark>
¡Mierda, el señor del gas!

Strategy: Direct copy (1) – Pun to pun (2)

Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

In this excerpt the humour is based on two different cultural references. For the first reference (1), the translator has chosen a direct copy of the pun, it transfers perfectly to target language, although I have chosen to classify it as cultural along with international because it may be linked to a certain era. Nowadays Speedy González, the animated cartoon character famous being the fastest mouse on Earth, may be not as international and well-known as it was in the 70s-90s and thus have evolved to become a cultural reference that needs a certain background or context to be understood.

For the second reference (2) we find ourselves in a similar situation, The Prince Sha Aga Khan, Ismali Imam and business magnate, has always been a synonym of luxury and wealth. As only the older generations may recognise him, the translator here opted for a timeless related pun that explains the context.

Table 7. Example 5.

Season 1. Episode 2**: <u>Gas</u>**
Running time: 0:06:22 – 0:06:36
Context: During a sudden visit of the gasman to check on a suspicious meter reading, Richard and Eddie must divert his attention and prevent him from discovering what is really happening with the gas readings on their flat. They offer him a cup of tea but immediately backtrack because, supposedly, they are not using any gas at home.
Humorous elements: I + L
Original version EDDIE: *I'll <mark>put the kettle on</mark> then.* GASMAN: *Put the kettle on?*

EDDIE: *Put the kettle on the floor, we won't be needing it because we don't use gas.*

Spanish dubbing and subtitling
EDDIE: *Bien, voy a poner la tetera.*
GASMAN: *¿Poner la tetera?*
EDDIE *Sí, poner la tetera en el suelo, no la necesitamos porque no usamos gas.*

Strategy: Direct copy

Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

Here we find a direct copy of a pun that has a direct equivalence in the target language. Both in the source and target languages *put the kettle on* keeps its polysemy: it means causing the device to operate and at the same time, leaving the object on a surface.

Table 8. Example 6.

Season 1. Episode 2**:** Gas
Running time: 0:10:34 – 0:10:43
Context: Eddie and Richard have just realised they have killed the gasman by accident.
Humorous elements: L + I

Original version
RICHARD: *Oh God, what are we going to do?*
EDDIE*: About 25 years, I think*

Spanish dubbing and subtitling
RICHARD*: ¡Dios mío! ¿Qué vamos a hacer?*
EDDIE: *Creo que son 25 años*

Strategy: Direct copy

Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

This excerpt presents a very simple wordplay that allows for a direct copy with no loss of humorous meaning in the target language, giving that the verb *to do*

can be understood and contextualised in a plethora of different situations in both languages. In this particular situation, the writers exploited the meanings of to do as in *what are we going to do with the corpse?* and at the same time, *to do time* [in prison].

Table 9. Example 7.

Season 1. Episode 3**:** Contest
Running time: 0:05:17 – 0:05:25
Context: the men are having an argument at home
Humorous elements: I
Original version EDDIE: *You're talking bollocks!* RICHARD: *Don't you use that language in my house, my lad!* EDDIE: *What? English?*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling **EDDIE:** *¡Solo dices chorradas!* **RICHARD***: ¡No utilices ese lenguaje en mi casa, pequeño!* **EDDIE:** *¿Cuál? ¿El nuestro? (dub) / ¿Cuál? ¿Inglés? (sub)*
Strategy: Pun to non-pun (dub) – Direct copy (sub)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling NO

Here we find another discrepancy between dubbing and subtitling. While in the subtitling we see a direct translation that -even if it is linguistically accurate- does not succeed in delivering the punchline because it just does not fit the context, in the dubbing the professional has opted for a neutral *nuestro [idioma]* that fits the situation better.

Table 10. Example 8.

Season 1. Episode 3**:** Contest
Running time: 0:08:00 – 0:08:16

Context: Richard has scavenged anything he could find to prepare dinner, but Eddie is not impressed by the results.
Humorous elements: L
Original version EDDIE: *What's this?* RICHARD: *Elm tea, the gypsies swear by it.* EDDIE: *I bet they do, they say "what the hell is this?"*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling **EDDIE:** ¿Qué es esto? **RICHARD:** *Té de olmo. A los gitanos (*) les vuelve locos.* **EDDIE:** *Sí, seguro. Hay que estar loco para beberse esto. (subs)*   *Me lo imagino, porque hay que estar loco para bebérselo. (dub)*
Strategy: Pun to pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

(*) The series aired in the early 90s when politically correct terms were not in use. Today the joke would have been worded differently.

Here we see a linguistic joke (L) that was successfully resolved in the target language, delivering an equivalent joke similar in meaning and structure.

Table 11. Example 9.

Season 1. Episode 4**:** <u>Apocalypse</u>
Running time: 0:15:05 – 0:15:22
Context: Richard has been cursed by a fortune teller and must wait until night-time for the curse to be lifted. He asks Eddie to go look outside the window if it the moon is already out, but as the day id dark and rainy, he cannot tell. Then he switches the TV on to check the time.
Humorous elements: A, C, I
Original version RICHARD: *What does it look look like?* EDDIE: *It's hard to tell if it's day or night. […] Shall I switch the telly on and see if it's evening?*

RICHARD: *Yes, go on old sport.*
[Neighbours Series theme on TV]
EDDIE: *It could be any time really.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling
EDDIE: *Es difícil de decir, no se sabe si es de día o de noche […] ¿Quieres que encienda la tele para ver si es de noche?*
RICHARD: *Sí, pero date prisa.*
[Neighbours Series theme on TV]
EDDIE: *Puede ser cualquier hora.*
Strategy: Direct copy
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

We find here an aural (A) pun that could also be classified as international (I) and/or cultural (C) depending on the audience age bracket because it is build on the premise that the audience knows about the TV series *Neighbours* and the fame and amount of re-runs it achieved during the 80s and 90s.

Reproducing the same music as the original version works well with older audiences who may recognise the opening theme, but if *Bottom* would be aired today, the pun would be lost to the younger viewers. A suitable alternative today would be the pun-to-pun approach instead of the direct copy: replacing the Neighbours theme for some reality-TV audio clip would work and deliver the same pun while keeping its aural (A) nature.

Table 12. Example 10.

Season 1. Episode 4**:** <u>Apocalypse</u>
Running time: 0:21:25 – 0:21:36
Context: Death has come to reap Richard's soul and Richard tries to avoid his doom in a very pragmatic and clinical way.
Humorous elements: I
Original version

RICHARD: *Have you come for me? […] Come on, excuse me, this a private patch, if you don't clear the property immediately I'll be forced to call the police.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *¿Has venido a llevarme? […] Disculpe, esto es una casa privada. Si no sale ahora mismo llamaré a la policía.*
Strategy: Direct copy
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

This is another example of an international (I) joke easily resolved by a direct translation. The absurdity of threatening Death with legal actions if He does not vacate the premises is a proper example of sarcastic British humour but at the same time quite understandable by the Spanish audience.

Table 13. Example 11.

Season 1. Episode 4: Apocalypse
Running time: 0:23:19 – 0:23:26
Context: Death reveals secrets and personal details to a bewildered Richard.
Humorous elements: A
Original version RICHARD: *How do you know these things?* DEATH: *I'm Death!* RICHARD: *[Screaming] Sorry, HOW DO YOU KNOW THESE THINGS!* DEATH: *I'm Death, not deaf!*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *¿Cómo sabes esas cosas?* DEATH: *¡Soy La Muerte!* RICHARD: *[Gritando] Perdona, ¿CÓMO SABES ESAS COSAS?* DEATH: *Soy La Muerte, La Muerte!*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *¿Cómo sabes esas cosas?* DEATH: *¡Soy La Sórdida Muerte!*

RICHARD: *Perdona, ¿CÓMO SABES ESAS COSAS?*
DEATH: *Sórdida, no sorda!*

Strategy: Pun to zero (dub) – Pun to pun (sub)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling YES

This sketch depicts an aural (A) joke that was resolved differently in the subtitling and the dubbing. The original pun relies in the homonymy Death/deaf and Richard yelling his lines because he thought the Grimm Reaper was, in fact, deaf.

In the dubbing, the direct translation has caused the loss of the wordplay, while in the subtitling, the addition of the word *sórdida* adds the phonetic similarity needed for the wordplay *sórdida/sorda* that mirrors the pun present in the original version. Giving the fact that we cannot see Death's face and thus in this case synchronicity is not a problem in the dubbing, the word *sórdida* could have been added to the dialogue in order to avoid the loss of the humorous element.

Table 14. Example 12.

Season 2. Episode 4**:** <u>Apocalypse</u>
Running time: 0:23:41 – 0:24:33
Context: Richard tries to avoid being taken to hell by Death by challenging him to a game of *I spy with my little eye* (referencing Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*, the 1957 film where a medieval knight must win a game of chess against Death if he wants to keep his life).
Humorous elements: I
Original version   RICHARD*: Give me one more chance! "I spy".*   DEATH: *Ok.*   RICHARD*: And if I win, I get to live, ok? […] I spy with my little eye something beginning with S.*   DEATH: *Submarine!*   RICHARD: *No! It was scythe! I win! I get to live!*

DEATH: *Hang on, hang on, scythe doesn't begin with an S, it begins with a C.*
RICHARD: *It does! [...] I have a dictionary here.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling
RICHARD*: [...] Al "veo, veo".*
DEATH: *Ok.*
RICHARD*: Y si gano, podré vivir, ¿vale? […] veo veo una cosita que empieza con G.*
DEATH: *¡Guadaña!*
RICHARD: *No, era "geranio", he ganado ¡voy a vivir!*
DEATH: *Espera, espera, geranio no empieza por G, empieza por J.*
RICHARD: *¡Es con G! […] Vamos a mirar en el diccionario.*
Strategy: Pun to pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

This is a situation where even though the translation introduced a small change in the wordplay altering the answers and avoiding the odd and comedic *submarine*, in the end it works as well in the target language as it does in the original version and facilitates the transition to the next scene, where Richard and Death check the dictionary to confirm who is right. I have classified the joke as international (I) because the children's game is well known in different languages and cultures and presents no problem in being understood by any audience.

Table 15. Example 13.

Season 2. Episode 1**:** <u>Digger</u>
Running time: 0:01:24 – 0:01:35
Context: both men are at matrimonial agency and are about to watch their presentation videos.
Humorous elements: I, L
Original version
LADY*: We'll start with a little look at your videos, all right?*

Can you see all right?
EDDIE: *No, that's why I wear glasses*.

Spanish dubbing and subtitling
LADY*: Comencemos echando un vistazo a sus vídeos, ¿de acuerdo?*
¿Puede verlo bien?
EDDIE: *No, por eso llevo gafas*.

Strategy: Direct copy.

Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

Here we find a direct copy of a joke that is built on the absurdity of taking in the literal meaning of a phrase and leaving out the pragmatics of the situation. The humorous elements present are I (international) because it is widely understood among different languages and cultures, and L (linguistic) because it plays with the semantic meaning of words. This first excerpt presents no challenges given that the pun is not lost with the direct translation.

Table 16. Example 14.

Season 2. Episode 1**:** <u>Digger</u>
Running time: 0:07:25 – 0:07:31
Context: both men are back at their flat, plotting a strategy to seduce Natasha, Richard's date.
Humorous elements: I, L
Original version   RICHARD: *Even in the phone there was an immediate sexual tension.*   EDDIE: *What, you mean you felt horny and she felt tense.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling   RICHARD: *En el teléfono ya había tensión sexual.*   EDDIE: *Quieres decir que tú estabas caliente y ella tensa*
Strategy: Direct copy
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

Again, we find here a direct translation that keeps the meaning of the original wordplay. The joke can be classified as L (linguistic) because it plays with the polysemy of the word *tense/tensión*, which occurs in both the source and target languages. It is also I (international) given that it is shared by a number of languages and translates accurately between them.

Table 17. Example 15.

Season 2. Episode 1: Digger
Running time: 0:07:48 – 0:08:21
Context: while waiting for Richard's date, Eddie shares a memory about a past love interest.
Humorous elements: I, C
Original version RICHARD*: You were in love with Harry Belafonte?* EDDIE*: Well, that's what she said her name was […]* RICHARD*: Well, let's just forget it, shall we?* EDDIE: *That's what SHE said!* RICHARD: *Look, let's just drop it!* EDDIE*: She said that as well!* RICHARD: *Edward, I'm really not interested!* EDDIE: *This is uncanny! Were you there?*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *Un momento, ¿estabas enamorado de Harry Belafonte?* EDDIE: *Así me dijo ella que se llamaba […]* RICHARD: *Bueno, vamos a olvidar eso ¿de acuerdo?* EDDIE: *Eso mismo dijo ella!* RICHARD: *No hablemos más de ello (dub) Oye, déjalo ya (sub)* EDDIE: *¡También me dijo eso!* RICHARD: *Edward, ¡no me interesa en absoluto!* EDDIE*: Extraordinario ¿estabas allí?*
Strategy: Direct copy
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

The joke depicted in this sketch is based on the premise that Richard is reacting to Eddie's comments with the same expressions used by Eddie's love interest. The joke is international (I) because after utilising the strategy of literal translation, the target language still keeps the meaning of the joke. The joke adds a cultural element when the girl introduces herself as Harry Belafonte, a Jamaican American singer and actor very popular in the 50s-80s. The reference to Harry Belafonte may be lost to some audiences but even to those who do not know who Belafonte is; the fact that she says her name was *Harry* as she rejects Eddie's advances still accomplishes the objective of showing her discomfort with the situation.

Table 18. Example 16.

Season 2. Episode 1: <u>Digger</u>
Running time: 0:12:32 – 0:12:37
Context: during dinner, Eddie will play the role of a butler to try to trick Richard's date –Natasha- into believing he is nobility. Richard explains to Natasha that Eddie is the butler and not an aristocrat like he is.
Humorous elements: C, L
Original version RICHARD: *This is merely Jives, my batman* *EDDIE: That's right, I'm Bruce Wayne*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *Este sólo es mi criado* *EDDIE: Eso es, soy Bruce Wayne*
Strategy: Pun to zero
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling NO

In this excerpt we find a wordplay that was based on the minor homonymy between *butler* and *batman* along with a cultural reference to Bruce Wayne -the fictional superhero- that may be lost to some audiences.

Richard confuses both terms and introduces Eddie as *batman* (the comic book character) instead of his butler. Eddie realises the mistake and plays along, declaring that he is, in fact, Bruce Wayne (batman's real name).

Comparing the original version with the dubbing and subtitling, we could see that the wordplay was completely gone when translated to the target language. The translator decided to ignore the batman joke and go with the word *criado* but still not altering the subsequent dialogue, which makes Eddie's answer look odd and out of context.

The alternative solution I would suggest here would be finding a word in the target language with enough phonetic similarities to *batman* to try and keep the original joke. A suitable choice would be, for example*, barman*. That would give the pun *batman/butler* the parallel pair   *batman/barman* in the dubbing.

Proposed alternative dubbing/subtitling:

RICHARD: *Este sólo es mi barman*
EDDIE: *Eso es, soy Bruce Wayne*

Table 19. Example 17.

Season 2. Episode 1**:** <u>Digger</u>
Running time: 0:13:43 – 0:13:48
Context: back at the flat, Richard tries to impress his aristocratic date making up a luxurious lifestyle and telling her about his travels to some imaginary properties in the countryside.
Humorous elements: L
Original version RICHARD: *Don't know where you're going to end up!*   *Start off in Berkshire, end up in Twatshire.*
Spanish dubbing RICHARD: *No sabes dónde puedes acabar.*   *Empiezas en Berkshire y acabas en Twatshire.*
Spanish subtitles RICHARD: *No sabes dónde puedes acabar.*

Empiezas en Berkshire y acabas en Pijo-shire.
Strategy: Pun to non-pun (dub) - pun to pun (sub)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling YES

In this excerpt, we find a discrepancy between the dubbing and the subtitles. The difficulty here was keeping the pun hidden in the place's name (Twat-shire) but the dubbing has opted for a direct translation while keeping the place original names. The pun is lost, and the audience does not realise that there was a joke disguised in the name. The subtitles, however, do a better job and decide on translating *twat* as *pijo* to keep the original pun. We see here that *pijo* is not the direct translation of *twat* but given that Richard is trying to pass as an aristocrat, it could be considered an adequate choice.

Table 20. Example 18.

Season 2. Episode 1**:** <u>Digger</u>
Running time: 0:13:52 – 0:13:59
Context: during dinner, Eddie offers Natasha some *canapés*, using a French expression to look sophisticated.
Humorous elements: L, P
Original version *EDDIE: Hors d'oeuvre?*
Spanish dubbing *EDDIE: ¿Quiere unos entremeses?*
Spanish subtitling EDDIE*: ¿Quiere unos entrepiernas?*
Strategy: Pun to non-pun (dub) - pun to pun (sub)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling YES

The dubbing has been kept parallel to the original version, translating the French term into Spanish, and losing the joke in the process. In the original version, the French expression is enunciated with an exaggerated pronunciation (hence the classification as paralinguistic joke) and subtle sexual undertones that may indicate an ulterior motive. The dubbing offers an aseptic and monotone *entremeses* that simply keeps the action flowing without any trace of

the original joke. In the subtitles, however, we find a discrepancy. The translator does not resort to an extravagant enunciation of the French word and opted instead for the risqué term *entrepierna* that is similar enough to *entremeses* and sets, too, the tone for what is happening on screen.

Table 21. Example 19.

Season 2. Episode 1**:** <u>Digger</u>
Running time: 0:21:20 – 0:21:30
Context: After dinner, Richard asks Natasha to go with her to the bedroom and much to his surprise, she accepts. He tells her he will go first to get ready, and she could come upstairs in five minutes. She answers with the French expression *à bientôt!*
Humorous elements: P, L
Original version NATASHA: *À bientôt! (*)* RICHARD: *Bloody hell - a bien toe! Saucy bitch!*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling NATASHA: *À bientôt!* RICHARD: *¡Dios mío, "a bien to!"*
Strategy: Pun to rhetorical device
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

Again, we find ourselves with the challenge of navigating between three different languages, which adds another layer of complexity to the subtleties of translating humour. To expand on context, Richard believes that anything French or of French origin is sexy, and in this particular sketch he tries to emulate Natasha's pronunciation with deplorable results. In the Spanish dubbing and subtitling the joke is resolved solely on the paralinguistic level using a rhetorical device.

After checking the Catalan dubbing and subtitling, I decided to include it even if it is not the aim of this paper because the Catalan translation has been rather

witty combining the delivery of the pun with both the phonetics and the meaning of the French expression:

NATASHA: *À bientôt!*
RICHARD: *Mare meva, "aviat, tu" (madre mía, "pronto, tú")*

(*) À bientôt!: See you soon! *Hasta pronto!*

Table 22. Example 20.

Season 2. Episode 2**:** <u>Culture</u>
Running time: 0:12:10 – 0:12:15
Context: Both men plan to spend the night playing chess, but many of the expensive set pieces are missing because Eddie pawned them to buy alcohol. They decide to use random items in place of the missing pieces.
Humorous elements: L
Original version EDDIE: This time we play with a full deck. RICHARD: We only got 5 pieces. EDDIE: *We can use other things for the missing pieces.* *RICHARD: Great idea!* *EDDIE: Let me see, we need 16 prawns.*
Spanish dubbing EDDIE: *Jugaremos con todas las piezas.* RICHARD: *¡Pero solo tenemos 5!* EDDIE: *Utilizaremos otras cosas en lugar de las que faltan.* RICHARD: *Qué buena idea!* EDDIE: *Veamos, son 16 peones.*
Spanish subtitling EDDIE*: Jugamos con todas las piezas.* RICHARD*: ¡Pero solo tenemos 5!* EDDIE: *Pues usamos otras cosas.* RICHARD: *¡Qué buena idea!* EDDIE: *veamos, son 16 gambas.*
Strategy: Pun to zero (dub) - pun to non-pun (sub)

The original pun was using *prawns* instead of *pawns,* but the same joke does not work in the target language because the homonymy present in the pair *prawns/pawns* does not exist in the translation *gamba/peón*. We could say that neither the dubbing nor the subtitling succeeds in delivering the original joke, but at the same time both versions do in fact accomplish their objective because 1. They need *peones* to complete the set and 2. The men end up using *gambas* to play.

Table 23. Example 21.

Season 2. Episode 2: <u>Culture</u>
Running time: 0:12:20 – 0:12:40
Context: the men talk about a mouldy yoghurt that has been in the fridge for a long time.
Humorous elements C, I
Original version: EDDIE: *What's this* cress *doing in the fridge? (1)* RICHARD: *That's not cress, that's yoghurt you started during the* Gulf War*. (2)*
Spanish dubbing EDDIE*: ¿Qué hace esta* planta *en la nevera?* RICHARD: *Es el yogur que abriste cuando la* Guerra del Golfo*.* **Spanish Subtitling** EDDIE: *¿Qué hace esta* planta *en la nevera?* RICHARD: *Es un yogur que abriste* hace años*.*
Strategy No pun to pun (1) – Pun to pun (2)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

In Eddie's line, the translator has chosen to change *cress* for the more generic *plant* for comedic effect. Cress can be kept in the fridge before consumption, meaning there is nothing humorous in the sentence *per se* until Richard delivers his punchline and we discover what that cress really is. In adding the generic

word *plant*, as in "ornamental plant", the audience is immediately aware that something is off, given the fact that keeping a garden plant in the fridge is not normal.

It is also interesting to notice that in this segment the subtitles have cancelled a cultural reference perfectly understandable by the Spanish audience and have replaced it with another joke similar in meaning. The new joke is more versatile and not restricted to a specific point in time, with the added improvement that the shorter subtitle can be read faster by the audience. Through all the series we have observed, however, the subtitling is usually truer to the original version provided a direct translation is viable, as this case was.

Table 24. Example 22.

Season 2. Episode 2**: Culture
Running time: 0:13:12 – 0:13:25
Context: Richard wants to dress up for his game of chess
Humorous elements: L
Original version EDDIE: *You've got your raincoat inside-out. Are you off? I thought we were playing chess.* RICHARD: *It's a smoking jacket, look, the quilting. All the sophisticated people are wearing them.* EDDIE*: Why do YOU have one on then? Anyway, you don't smoke.* RICHARD: *And nor does my jacket.*
Spanish dubbing EDDIE: *¿Te has puesto la gabardina del revés? […] ¿Vas a salir? ¿Y la partida?* RICHARD: *No, no, no es una chaqueta de smoking, acolchada. Solo la gente elegante tiene una.* EDDIE*: ¿Entonces por qué la tienes tú? Además, tú no fumas.* RICHARD*: Tampoco la chaqueta.*
Spanish subtitling EDDIE: *[…] ¿Vas a salir? ¿Y la partida?* RICHARD: *Es una americana acolchada. Solo para gente elegante.*

EDDIE: *¿Y por qué tienes tú una? Además, no eres* americano.
RICHARD: *Ni la chaqueta tampoco.*

Strategy: Pun to non-pun (dub) - Pun to pun (sub)
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling YES

The wordplay here is based on the polysemy of the word *smoking*, hence the classification as L, and we find that the adaptation to the target language has been resolved differently in the dubbing and the subtitling, with disparate results.

As we can see in this excerpt, the dubbing opted for a direct translation that not only spoils the joke but also makes Eddie's observation absurd and discordant because the audience cannot know why he suddenly talks about smoking (as in *fumar*) when the conversation was about a jacket.

The subtitling, however, does a better job translating the wordplay present in the original text into an equivalent joke in the target language.

Table 25. Example 23.

Season 2. Episode 2**:** Culture
Running time: 0:17:28 – 0:18:00
Context: Eddie and Richard create a new cocktail with the leftovers they have in the kitchen and make a toast with it.
Humorous elements: C, V
Original version
RICHARD: *As this is a special occasion and we've invented a new cocktail for ourselves: Pernod, Ouzo, marmalade, and salt, we should think of a special name for it […]*
EDDIE: *Got it!* The Esther Rantzen.
RICHARD: …*why?*
EDDIE: *It pull your gums back over your teeth.*
[both men drink and force a wide smile while making a hissing sound]
Spanish dubbing

RICHARD: *Por ser una ocasión especial y haber inventado un cocktail a base de Pernod, Tequila, mermelada y sal, creo que deberíamos darle un nombre adecuado […]*

EDDIE: *Ya sé, Esther Rantzen.*

RICHARD: *¿Por qué?*

EDDIE: *Porque hace que se te estire la boca.*

Spanish subtitling

RICHARD: *Por ser una ocasión especial y haber inventado un cocktail a base de Pernod, Ouzo, mermelada y sal, creo que deberíamos bautizarlo […]*

EDDIE: *Ya sé, Esther Rantzen.*

RICHARD: *¿Por qué?*

EDDIE: *Porque da una dentera bestial.*

Strategy: Pun to non-pun

Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling NO

This joke relies on the visual aspect, where the men mock the forced smile and mimic the facial expressions of a well-known BBC British broadcaster.

The direct translation of a cultural reference only the British public is familiar with, makes the Spanish audience oblivious to the joke. Dame Esther Rantzen is an English journalist and BBC television presenter often caricatured in the media by her teeth and forced wide smile. The ideal here would have been resolving the joke with two of the following options:

1- Giving the cocktail a name that refers to the discomfort it causes in the mouth.
2- Changing the person referenced in the sketch for an equivalent public figure with exaggerated dentures or grotesque smile, either Spanish or easily recognized by the Spanish audience.

Proposed alternative dubbing/subtitling 1:

RICHARD: *[...] Creo que deberíamos darle un nombre adecuado.*

EDDIE: *Ya sé, el "sosa cáustica".*

RICHARD: *¿Por qué?*

EDDIE: *Porque hace que se te estire la boca.*

Even though alternative 1 is the easiest and more timeless option, we need to take into consideration the fact that the following line in that dialogue is Eddie parodying one of Rantzen signature phrases. In the name of cohesion and continuity it would be a better option to find a public figure that can be satirized later with that line.

Proposed alternative dubbing/subtitling 2:

RICHARD: *[...] Creo que deberíamos darle un nombre adecuado.*

EDDIE: *Ya sé, el "Concha Velasco".*

RICHARD: *¿Por qué?*

EDDIE: *Porque hace que se te estire la boca.*

As a side note, the translator chose to change Ouzo (a Greek anise-flavoured liquor) for Tequila in the dubbing. Tequila is ubiquitous and well known by its high alcohol content. Ouzo is an equally strong liquor but maybe the audience is not aware of its high alcohol percentage and that may be the reason that caused the change.

Table 26. Example 24.

Running time: 0:21:14 – 0:22:40
Context: Eddie tries to teach Richard how to play chess, but they are getting nowhere.
Humorous elements: L
Original version   RICHARD: *How does the racehorse move again?*   EDDIE: *It's not a racehorse, it's a knight!*   RICHARD: *Where's the knight, then?*   EDDIE: *Well, he must have fallen off […]*   RICHARD: *And that one is called a rook.*   EDDIE: *Yes*   RICHARD: *Why, does it nest in trees?*

EDDIE: *No, it's a castle.*

RICHARD: *But it's called a rook […] And this is also a bishop, you say? And he bends sideways? Well, there's no surprise there. I wonder what the church is coming to these days. Well, let me get this sorted out. The bent vicar stands next to the queen… and the queen goes in every direction… […]*

EDDIE: *That's right.*

RICHARD: *And they let children play this, you say?*

Spanish dubbing

RICHARD: *¿Cómo dijiste que se mueve el corcel?*

EDDIE: *No es el corcel, es el caballo.*

RICHARD: *¿Y dónde está el jinete?*

EDDIE: *Pues debe de (*) haberse caído.*

RICHARD: *No debe ser muy buen jinete ¿verdad?*

¿Y esto es una torre? ¿Donde acostumbra a veranear el jinete?

EDDIE: *No, es un castillo.*

RICHARD: *Pero se llama torre. […] Y esto dices que es un alfil o un obispo. ¿y se mueve en diagonal? No me extraña, la gente hoy en día hace cosas tan raras […] voy a repasarlo otra vez, el alfil torcido está al lado de la reina que se mueve en cualquier dirección…*

EDDIE: *Eso es.*

RICHARD: *¿Y dices que los niños también juegan a esto?*

Spanish subtitling

RICHARD*: ¿Cómo se movía el corcel?*

EDDIE: *No es el corcel, es el caballo.*

RICHARD: *¿Y dónde está el jinete?*

EDDIE: *Pues debe haberse caído.*

RICHARD: *no será muy buen jinete ¿no?*

¿Y esto es una torre? ¿Donde veranea el jinete?

EDDIE: *No, es un castillo.*

RICHARD: *Pero se llama torre. […] Y esto es un alfil. ¿Y se mueve en diagonal? No me extraña, la gente hoy en día hace cosas tan raras […]*

>   *Voy a repasarlo otra vez, el alfil torcido está al lado de la reina que se mueve en cualquier dirección…*

EDDIE: *Eso es.*

RICHARD: *¿Y los niños también juegan a esto?*

Strategy: Pun to pun, pun to zero/non-pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES for the first two jokes. NO/NO for the *alfil* joke.

(*) "de" present in the dubbing

This is a particularly challenging situation because the original script plays with the names of the chess pieces –that not always have a direct equivalent in Spanish- and with the polysemy of the word *rook*. The procedure of coming up with a creative translation to duplicate similar wordplays in the target language is critically limited because the translator needs to use the actual Spanish names for the chess pieces, thus reducing the possibilities of finding a convenient joke.

The whole exchange is full of wordplays that have been resolved with varying degrees of success. The first one is the pair *racehorse/knight* that has been translated to *corcel/caballo*. The pun is lost in the dubbing/subtitling because we should imperatively use the word *caballo*, which is the actual name of the piece. The strategy here has been a combination of pun to non-pun and pun to zero but even if the pun has been completely omitted, the translator has managed to include the figure of a horseman (*jinete*) -present in the source language- that is going to be useful to salvage the *rook/torre* predicament later.

Now we have *rook/torre*. The difficulty here was the methodological approach to the polysemy of the word *rook*, in which is based the wordplay. As there is no equivalent double meaning in Spanish, the translator linked the joke with the word *jinete* present in the previous wordplay and successfully delivered a different pun that works adequately in the target language.

With *bishop/alfil* the strategy has been pun to zero, the pun has been simply omitted because it was impossible to link the word *alfil* with a joke at the expense of the church -or with any other topic at all-.

As a curiosity, the Catalan translation takes advantage of the polysemy of the word *torre*, meaning both *tower* and *detached family house out of dense cities*.

Catalan dubbing/subtitling:
EDDIE*: I aquesta es diu la torre. (Y esta se llama torre/casa)* RICHARD: *Per qué? Perque hi van a l'estiu?* 　　　　　*(¿Por qué? ¿Porque veranean allí?)* EDDIE: *No, és un castell. (No, es un castillo)*

Table 27. Example 25.

Season 2. Episode 3**:** <u>Burglary</u>
Running time: 0:08:08 – 0:08:51
Context: Late at night, the men realise there is someone downstairs
Humorous elements: L
Original version RICHARD: *I think someone's in the drawing room.* EDDIE: *The what room?* RICHARD: *The drawing room.* EDDIE*: I don't think I've been in there.* 　　　*We've got a room just for drawing in?* 　　　*You mean we've got burglars downstairs?* 　　　*In the sketching room?* [a fight ensues, and Eddie ends up knocking out Richard] EDDIE*: Up you get! Into the colouring-in room.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *Creo que hay alguien en la sala de estar.* EDDIE: *¿De Estar?* 　　　*¿Tenemos una sala solo para estar?* 　　　*¿Quieres decir que hay ladrones abajo?* 　　　*¿En la sala de permanecer?* [fight between the two] Eddie: *¡Venga! ¡Entra en la sala de sentarse!*

Strategy: Pun to pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

The wordplay here was especially complex to translate because there is no direct equivalent in the target language and the exchange between the two men rely heavily on the absurd synonyms used to denominate de drawing room. With all, we can consider the translators have successfully managed to transform a linguistic pun in the source language into a pun in the target language. The semantics of the synonyms used may be different, but the idea as a whole has been kept.

Table 28. Example 26.

Season 2. Episode 3**:** <u>Burglary</u>
Running time: 0:25:07 – 0:25:18
Context: The police arrive to the flat where the two men live, and they all have an awkward conversation where Richard tries to be friendly to the police officers (but fails).
Humorous elements: C
Original version RICHARD: *OK! Thanks for popping round. Well done on the Birmingham Six!*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling RICHARD: *Gracias por venir. ¡Y felicidades por lo de Birmingham!*
Strategy: Pun to non-pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling NO

We have here a joke purely based on cultural background and context. The audience either knows the cultural reference about the Birmingham Six[1] and gets the joke or misses it completely and then the exchange between Richard

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[1] The Birmingham Six was an IRA-related police scandal where six Irish men were convicted to life-sentences after false accusations. The six men were later released and awarded financial compensation.

and the Police Officer makes no sense. By replacing the joke with the literal meaning in the target language, the pun is lost.

Given that the joke is political and relies heavily in cultural background, it would have been an adequate choice to replace it by an equivalent scandal more recognizable by the Spanish audience. As the TV series aired in the 90s, a suitable choice for the era would have been, for example, the Luis Roldán case and the Laos scandal.

Table 29. Example 27.

Season 2. Episode 4**:** <u>Parade</u>
Running time: 0:02:20 – 0:02:30
Context: both men volunteer at the police station for an identity parade. There, they chat with other volunteers and the detainees.
Humorous elements: C, I
Original version DETAINEE 1: *A bomb went off 200 miles away and they arrested us.* DETAINEE 2: *I hope we're not IRA.* DETAINEE 1: *It's very secretive. We wouldn't know.*
Spanish dubbing and Subtitling DETAINEE 1: *Explotó una bomba y nos arrestaron.* DETAINEE 2: *No seremos del IRA ¿verdad?* DETAINEE 1: *Es una organización secreta. Si lo fuéramos tampoco lo sabríamos.*
Strategy: Direct copy. Direct translation.
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

Here we find joke based on a culture-specific item. Apart from the obvious humour existing on the absurdity of being part of a group so secretive not even their members know they are part of it, there is a cultural reference that may be lost on some audiences. IRA is well-known in the West but maybe not quite recognizable by the younger audiences unaware of Northern Ireland's recent

history. Direct copy is strategy used by the translator, given that the joke works well in both languages provide the audience is aware of the cultural references.

Table 30. Example 28.

Season 2. Episode 4**:** Parade
Running time: 0:09:06 – 0:09:26
Context: both men chat with a war veteran at a pub.
Humorous elements: I, L
Original version EDDIE: *They dropped me behind enemy lines.* 　　　*Quite a long way behind enemy lines.* 　　　*Guildford, actually.* VETERAN: *What, by parachute?* EDDIE: *No, dropped me from the army. Flat feet.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling EDDIE: *Me echaron tras la línea enemiga.* 　　　*Bastante lejos del enemigo (dub)/Bastante atrás, por cierto (sub).* 　　　*En Guildford, concretamente.* VETERAN: *¿Desde un paracaídas?* EDDIE: *Me echaron del ejército. Por inútil. Pies planos.*
Strategy: Pun to pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

The pun in the source language has been successfully translated into another pun in the target language with minimal semantic change. The translation keeps the joke and the meaning. The challenge here was finding a word in the target language that could mean both *drop* (from /into somewhere) and *fire* (from a job). As the men are talking about an air raid and dropping parachuters from a helicopter, the literal word *dejar caer/saltar* would have kept the full meaning of *drop* but it would not have worked in the punchline. Choosing *echar* was a suitable choice as delivers the joke as flawless as the original version.

Table 31. Example 29.

Season 2. Episode 4: Parade
Running time: 0:09:06 – 0:09:26
Context: Richard chats with a war veteran at a pub and pretends to be a war hero himself.
Humorous elements: I, L
Original version VETERAN: *Did you yomp[2] from Goose Green to Stroud Hill?* RICHARD: *Yeah, we all had to do that. There were no lavs. Just open countryside. Had to watch where you put your feet.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling VETERAN: *¿Tuviste que evacuar desde Goose Green hasta Stroud Hill?* RICHARD: *Claro, tío. Todos tuvimos que hacerlo, no había ni un lavabo. Solo el campo abierto. Si no mirabas dónde ponías los pies…*
Strategy: Pun to pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES

In this example the pun has been successfully translated into the target language with minimal semantic change. The pun was based in Richard's misunderstanding of the slang word *yomp[2]*, thinking it is about a visit to the bathroom and replying accordingly. The translator has kept the meaning of the joke choosing *evacuar* as a substitute for *yomp*, giving that *evacuar* can be read as both the physiological function and abandon/decamp a place.

Table 32. Example 30.

Season 2. Episode 5: Holy
Running time: 0:06:43 – 0:07:05
Context: it is Christmas morning, and the men exchange presents. Richard gives Eddie a clumsy painting of himself.

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[2] YOMP: England's Royal Marines slang for Your Own Marching Pace, a long-distance march where the soldiers carry the full kit.

Humorous elements: C, L
Original version EDDIE*: What is it?* RICHARD: *It's a picture.* EDDIE: *Oh, a picture. What of?* RICHARD: *Of me! A self-portrait. Don't you like it?* EDDIE*: It's bollocks, isn't it, Richie?* RICHARD: *No, it's not, it's one of mine, although he is awfully good.*   *We have a similar style. A lot of people say my work looks like Bollocks'*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling Scene omitted
Strategy: Pun to zero
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling NO

The wordplay we find in this excerpt was quite interesting and particularly challenging. The author plays with the homonymy between the colloquial British expression *bollocks* and the American abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock. Unfortunately, although the scene was present in the original airing of the series, in the DVD version this sketch has been completely removed. The pun has been cut out from the Spanish edition of the DVD. The strategy here has been pun to zero, with the segment completely omitted. The scene, however, can be found in the DVD's deletes scenes.

Table 33. Example 31.

Season 2. Episode 6**:** 'S Out
Running time: 0:01:40 – 0:02:05
Context: After losing a bet, the men must survive a week in the wilderness. They decide to camp in Wimbledon Common, just off the bus stop. Eddie is not happy with the idea of spending a whole week camping and tries to go back to the city.
Humorous elements: L
Original version

RICHARD: *Nature, struggle, destiny!* *Where's your romance?*
EDDIE: *She works in Sketchley's on Saturday.*
[…]
RICHARD: Where's your sense of adventure?
EDDIE: *Now, SHE'S in Chiswick!*
RICHARD: *No, I mean, where's your SPUNK! No, no, no! Let's just avoid that line of questioning, shall we?*

Spanish dubbing
RICHARD: *¡Naturaleza, aventuras! ¿Dónde está tu romance?*
EDDIE: *Trabaja en Sketchley's los sábados por la tarde.* […]
RICHARD: *¿Y tu espíritu de aventura?*
EDDIE: *¡Ahora está en Chiswick!*
RICHARD: *¿Dónde están tus agallas? No, no, no, mejor no me contestes.*

Spanish subtitling
RICHARD: *¡Naturaleza, aventuras! ¿Dónde está tu lado romántico?*
EDDIE: *Trabaja en Sketchley's los sábados por la tarde.* […]
RICHARD: *¿Y tu espíritu de aventura?*
EDDIE: *¡Ahora está en Chiswick!*
RICHARD*: ¿Dónde están tus huevos? No, no, no, mejor no me contestes.*

Strategy: Direct copy + pun to no pun (dubbing)
Direct copy + pun to pun (subtitles)

Humour successfully translated: dubbing YES / subtitling YES for the first exchange. NO (dub) - YES (subs) for the final punchline.

The first part of the sketch follows the same approach we have previously seen in table 15 where the dialogue id based on Richard asking questions and Eddie understanding the semantic meaning too literally. This rhetorical device prepared the audience for the resolution of the pun in the last question, when -if followed the pattern- Eddie's answer would have been the risqué punchline.

Again, we find a discrepancy between dubbing and subtitling, with the subtitles being more faithful to the original version than the dubbing. We see that the language has been toned down in the dubbing, losing the pun in the process. The subtitling, even if *huevos* is not the proper translation for *spunk*, it follows

the same formula and delineate the sexual undertone present in the original version.

Table 34. Example 32.

Season 2. Episode 6**:** <u>'S Out</u>
Running time: 0:08:08 – 0:08:45
Context: After losing a bet, the men must survive a week in the wilderness. They decide to camp in Wimbledon Common, just off the bus stop. Soon enough they realise they have not packed any food, utensils, or proper gear. In their desperation, they resort to fishing and hunting. Or, better said, they try to.
Humorous elements: C
Original version EDDIE: *Hang on, this is Wimbledon Common, isn't it?* RICHARD: *Ye-es.* EDDIE: *Hey... I wonder how much meat you get on a* Womble*.* RICHARD: […] *Eddie,* Wombles don't exist*.* EDDIE: *Well, what's THAT, then?* *[...]* RICHARD: *Eddie, that is a hedgehog.* EDDIE: *No, it's not. That is* Great Uncle Bulgaria*.*
Spanish dubbing and subtitling EDDIE: *Un momento, estamos en el Wimbledon* RICHARD: *Sí.* EDDIE: *¿Qué tal será la carne de* Wimble*?* RICHARD: […] *Los* Wimbles *no existen.* EDDIE: *¿Y qué es eso entonces?* RICHARD: *Es un erizo.* EDDIE: *No es verdad. Es el* Gran Tío Bulgaria*.*
Strategy: Pun to no pun
Humour successfully translated: dubbing NO / subtitling NO

The Wombles (Beresford, 1973-1975) was a British TV series based on a series of children's novels from 1968 by the same author. The Wombles are fictional burrowing creatures that live beneath Wimbledon Common. Great Oncle Bulgaria is the oldest and wisest of the Wimbledon Wombles and their benevolent leader. The Wombles TV series was quite successful and was exported to Germany, Austria, Greece, and Sweden. The show was not aired in Spain and therefore there is no common background or context for the Spanish-speaking audiences, who would not know what a Womble is or who Uncle Bulgaria was.

The translator opted for giving the fictional creatures the name of Wimbles, since they live in Wimbledon Common, but it is not enough to make the audience aware of what a Womble is or what kind of creature are two grown men trying to hunt for food. A suitable option for the Spanish-speaking audiences would have been to replace the Wombles with different fictional characters that also live hidden in the woods and are small in size.

Similar fictional creatures easily recognizable to the Spanish-speaking audiences would be The Smurfs – *Los Pitufos* (Peyo, 1958), with Papa Smurf and Great Uncle Bulgaria being counterparts in leading their respective communities.

Proposed alternative dubbing/subtitling:

EDDIE: *Un momento, estamos en el Wimbledon*
RICHARD: *Sí.*
EDDIE: *¿Qué tal será la carne de pitufo?*
RICHARD: […] *Los pitufos no existen.*
EDDIE: *¿Y qué es eso entonces?*
RICHARD: *Es un erizo.*
EDDIE: *No es verdad. Es el Papá Pitufo.*

5. DISCUSSION

A total of 46 puns were presented in the 32 tables showcasing examples for every category of puns: Linguistic, Cultural, International, Aural, Visual and Paralinguistic.

Although *Bottom* was remarkably prolific in visual and aural puns, we paid special attention to the linguistic aspect of the humour to analyse and chose the examples that could better illustrate the challenges and specificities present in audioivisual translation.

The 46 puns analysed in this survey, distribute as follows:

Table 35. Number of humorous elements present in the examples pertaining to every category.

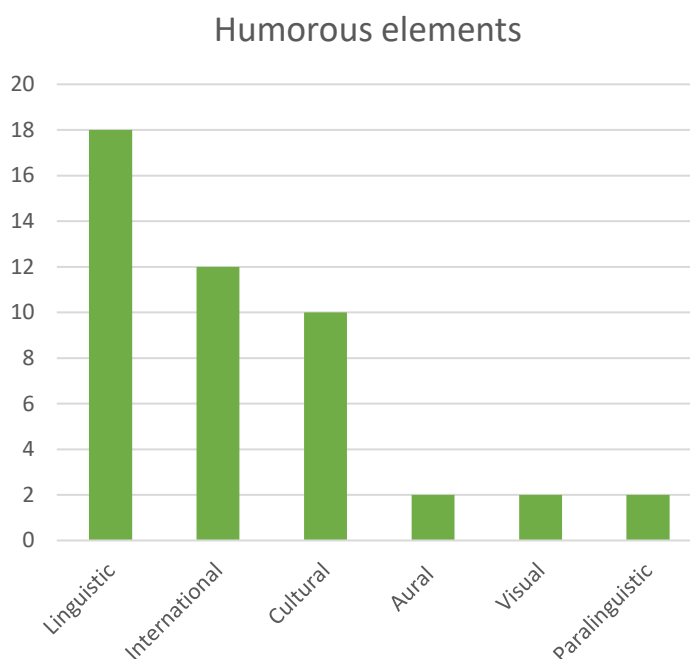| Linguistic:	18
International	12
Cultural	10
Aural	2
Visual	2
Paralinguistic	2

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Figure 2. Visual representation of the number of humorous elements segregated by categories

If we consider how were those puns resolved in both the dubbing and the subtitling, we observe the results summarised in Table 36.

Table 36. Strategies applied to translate the puns and wordplays in every category, presented in absolute numbers and percentages.

Strategy	Dubbing Humorous Elements	Dubbing Percentage	Subtitling Humorous elements	Subtitling Percentage
Direct copy	15	32.60%	16	34.78%
Pun to pun	9	19.56%	17	36.95%
Pun to no pun	12	26.08%	7	15.21%
Pun to zero	8	17.39%	4	8.69%
Pun to rhetorical device	2	4.34%	2	4.34%

As we can see, direct copy has been the most employed strategy, but we need to note that just because it was the most used approach, does not mean that it was always successful in delivering a suitable or equivalent joke. The result of that direct method sometimes culminated in the loss of the humorous element.

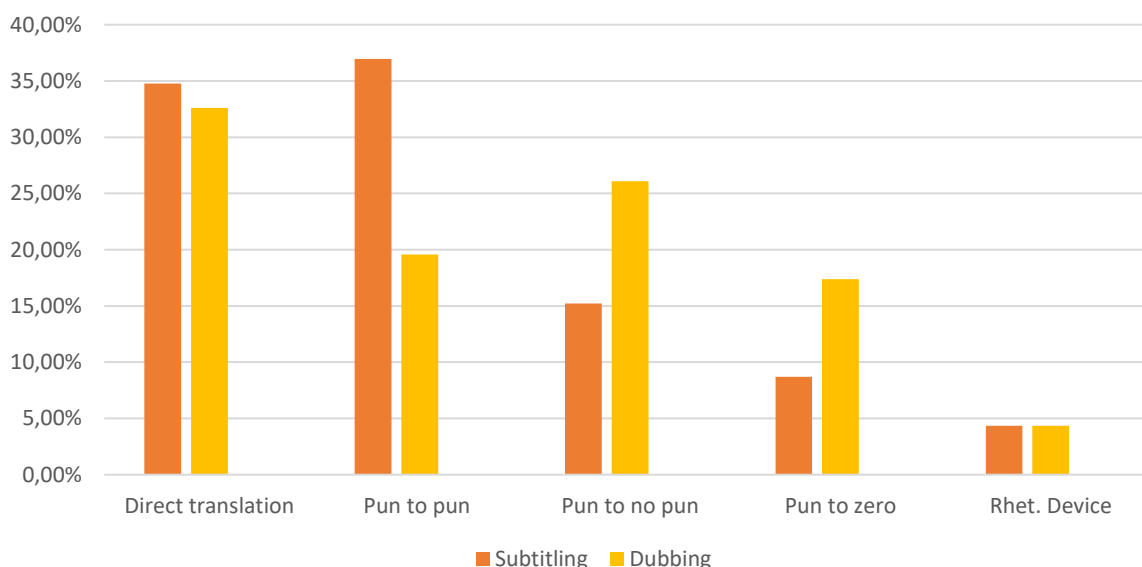We can also compare the results in the chart that follows:

Figure 3. Comparison between the strategies used to translate humour in dubbing and subtitling

The first thing that we notice is the disparity between dubbing and subtitling when it comes to successfully resolve a pun in the target language. The direct copy of a wordplay, however, presented minimal discrepancy between the dubbing and subtitling, which is not a surprise given the fact that the direct copy is the strategy of choice when there is a direct equivalence between the original version and the target language.

While subtitles did a better job in translating linguistic, international, and cultural jokes, we need to acknowledge that synchronicity plays a dominant role in dubbing, thus limiting the translator's framework. Taking all variables into account, subtitles still delivered a better adaptation than the dubbing, especially in areas as *pun-to-pun* where the subtitles' percentage almost doubles that of the dubbing. Likewise, the times that a pun was lost or simply reduced to zero was almost twice the number of times in dubbing than in the subtitles. In table 40 below we can observe the number of cases when the translation was successful in keeping the humorous element and when it resulted in the loss of humour, for both the dubbing and the subtitling.

Table 37: number of cases of preservation and loss of humour for the dubbing and Subtitling in the examples analysed in this paper. The data is presented in absolute numbers and percentages.

	Dubbing		Subtitling	
	Cases	Percentage	Cases	Percentage
Preservation	18	56.25%	23	71.87%
Loss	14	43.75%	9	28.12%
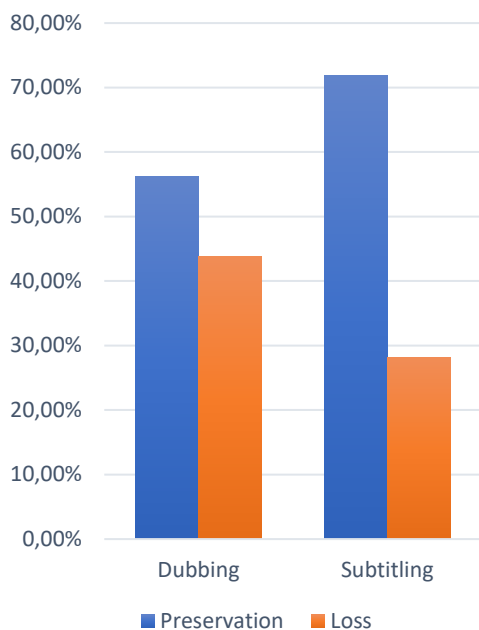
In figure 4 we can compare the difference between subtitles and dubbing when it comes to successfully translating a joke into the target language. In the dubbing we observe that both variables are quite similar, with preservation ranking higher only by a small percentage. In the subtitling however, this difference is quite obvious, with the percentage of successfully translated puns more than doubles the cases when the humour was lost in translation.

Figure 4. Preservation vs loss of humour
in dubbing and subtitling after translation.

I would like to close this discussion by adding that the disparity in percentages depicted in the charts above is just a manifestation of the challenges and difficulties present in translating something so entrenched in the idiosyncrasy of every community as humour is. Humour is so full of nuances and implications that the translator needs to master not only the language, but also the culture, the history, and the soul of what s/he is translating.

6. CONCLUSION

Audiovisual translation requires an extra effort from the translator that other types of translation do not. Humour relies heavily in cultural background and pragmatics and to deliver an accurate translation, the ATV professional needs to fill the gaps in the cultural differences between the source and the target languages. But we have seen this is not the only challenge the translators face. They are also constricted by the precise characteristics of the medium itself, which limits their range of action whether it is because of synchronicity (dubbing) or because of the boundaries set by the physical space (subtitling).

Additionally, it would be important to note that when we talk about discrepancies and loss of humorous elements it is not a critique to the translator's work. A prominent factor we need to consider is that ATV is a race against time. The audience wants their content translated and they want it for yesterday, the age of global communications does not like to wait. Occasionally, certain compromises need to be made in order to deliver the final product on the requested date.

At this point, it would be convenient to review if the aim of this study has been achieved. As stated in point 1.2, our goal was to analyse the different techniques used by professionals when dealing with the more problematic areas of translating humour. We also intended to compare the original version and the translated subtitles of the classic TV series *Bottom* and additionally, to identify the possible discrepancies between the original version, the dubbing, and the translated subtitles.

With this intention, first we have reviewed the historical background and theoretical framework that would later support our analysis. We have gathered, classified, and compared all the data available to us and selected the most suitable examples, that have been later presented in a clear and structured manner in order to facilitate the posterior readings and analysis. Every one of the 46 examples selected for this dissertation had been studied to determine its nature, the type of strategy applied to translate it to the target language and whether the humour had been lost in the process. In the cases where the humour was lost, alternatives that would have kept the humour have been suggested whenever possible.

The analysis of the gathered data show how dubbing and subtitling differ in their approach to translating puns. Furthermore, we have also observed how the number of cases a joke was successfully transferred to the target language varies greatly between dubbing and subtitling, being subtitling more accurate and faithful to the original version.

As we previously manifested in point 2.5., we have aimed to offer a differential contribution to the field of ATV by dedicating special effort on focusing part of the analysis on the possible discrepancies between dubbing and subtitling,

circumstance that we have seen is not uncommon given the nature of the medium. We have explained the motives as to why those divergences have appeared and suggested possible options that would have minimised the disparity.

Due to the fact that not many works focus on the comparative aspect between dubbing and subtitling, we have deemed it appropriate to try and expand this line of investigation. Previously, Al Owais (2012) and Roudot (2017) also addressed the issue of discrepancies between dubbing and subtitling in their respective master's theses. Following their path and focusing on the area of comparative analysis, the prospect of a future bigger project -like a doctoral thesis- looks promising and could contribute to the field of audiovisual translation.

By way of conclusion and after cataloguing and studying all the examples exposed, we can establish that humour is so full of nuances and implications that the translator needs to master the language, the culture, the history, and the soul of what s/he is translating.

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