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DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF SOCIO-HUMANITIES

DOCTORAL THESIS

ASPECTS OF HUMOUR TRANSLATION. CASE STUDY: *THREE MEN IN A BOAT (TO SAY NOTHING OF THE DOG)* AND *THREE MEN ON THE BUMMEL*

Abstract

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Introduction

Humour has often been subject to investigation, since its versatile, obscure and complex nature has offered sufficient ground for deciphering, analysis, and debate. In spite of its being many scholars' favoured research subject, there are still issues to be clarified, revisited and improved. Combining all the features and aspects of humour into a consistent definition through the centuries has turned out to be too difficult a task to accomplish, although many attempts have been made across time. Many classifications of humour have been advanced, but scholars have not successfully circumscribed it into one theory, being convinced that this is impossible because of its controversial and relative character. Yet, the gradual development of the humorous approaches has broadened the concept of humour to the status of "umbrella term" (Dynel, 2009: 1284) encompassing diverse forms, mechanisms, and perspectives.

If one is to consider Virginia Woolf's (2002) judgment that "humour is the first of the gifts to perish in a foreign tongue", the idea is shared that it is only the genuinely talented translator who is able to convey the brightest shades of this multifaceted and multicoloured phenomenon. Given the complex nature of humour that is definitely culture-bound, socially determined, blurred, figuratively and expressively coloured, it becomes obvious how easily these elements may be lost or semantically distorted but for the translators' skilful language manoeuvring. While in the past the complexity of humour was taken as an excuse for its untranslatability, now Translation Studies regards humour translation as an ambitious but attainable undertaking on condition that the translator will adjust the tenor of the translated discourse to the author's which will later result in humour literary rebirth.

Yet, style adjustment is not sufficient when rendering the original cultural, social, semantic and pragmatic features of the humorous literary text, hence the translator must be aware of the intercultural connection he creates by means of transferring the ethnically and socially valuable concepts from the source to the target text without losing the original textual identity. Equally

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important is to preserve the humour pragmatic value when implicitly conveying comical messages, the intentionally created comic surprise, suspense, and the puzzle effect which requires a sense of humour, a philosophical attitude towards humour in general and towards its theories in particular. Though inconsistent and debatable, humour theories disclose various comic modalities which reflect humour intensity, communicative importance, and linguistic value – features which assure its resistance when being translated. Reshaping these aspects of humour either verbally or circumstantially means to stylistically repaint the world picture which is read between the humorous text lines, the characters' caricatured portraits, the figurative and expressive means that build ironic and witty remarks, jokes, wordplay, and other humorous devices.

Embracing the existing theoretical considerations on laughter and comic as well as asserting that combinations of superiority and incongruity, script opposition, and the general theory of verbal humour (GTVH) are possible, frame the elements to be highlighted and given hypothetical value in the present research. Further steps consist in disclosing the functions and impact of the comic modalities on the humorous literary text translation and comparatively examining the Romanian translated variants which frame the analytical and practical chapters of the thesis. Moreover, the critical evaluation of the translation strategies and techniques applied reveals the degree of humour (un)translatability, the difficulties of recreating the humorous effect, and leave room for possible solutions and more faithful translation versions than those under criticism.

As regards the narrative humour "survival" through literary translation, this research attempts to contribute to the recent studies, which focus on humour translation quality improvement, with a renewed and critical examination of Jerome's humour interpretation and with an optimistic outlook on the Romanian translators' skilful language manipulation.

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State of the Art

The first reference works about humour theories and laughter date back to antiquity and can be found in Aristotle's (335 B.C.) *Poetics* qt. in Butcher's (1902: 22) and in Plato's (380 B.C./ 2002) *Republic;* later on, it was Descartes (1649) and Thomas Hobbes (1651) who studied aspects of humour superiority in *Passions of the Soul* and *Leviathan,* respectively, Kant (1790) viewed humorous incongruity as a product of morality contrasts in *Critique of the Power of Judgment* which would proceed afterwards in critical regards held by Hutcheson (1728) in the **Illustrations on the Moral Sense** and by Alexander Bain in (1861) *On the Study of Character, Including an Estimate on Phrenology.* Complimentary to the previous considerations on humour are the studies of Spencer (1860), *'The Physiology of Laughter'*, Monro (1988*) 'Theories of Humor. Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum'* and Ritchie (2009) *'Variants of Incongruity Resolution'* encouraged broader outlooks of humour theories the most remarkable being illustrated in Raskin's (1979) *Semantic Mechanisms of Humour* and Vandaele's (1999/2002/2012) *'Humor Mechanisms in Film Comedy: Incongruity and Superiority'* and *Narrative Humour (II): Exit Perspective'.* Not less important are the current studies on humour such as Berger's (1997) *Redeeming Laughter: The comic dimension of human experience.* Dynel's (2009) *Beyond a Joke: Types of Conversational Humour*, Marszalek's (2012) *A Cognitive Stylistic Approach to the Creation of Humour in Comic Narratives.*

The most representative works on humour from the sociolinguistic perspective are Crystal's (1998) *Language Play,* Davies' (2009) *Reflections on Translating Dialect in Jokes and Humour*; Hay's (1995) *Gender and Humour: Beyond a Joke*, since their authors provide detailed and comprehensive overviews on use and user humorous language variations. From the linguistic and cultural perspectives, outstanding research was conducted by Nicholson (1946) in *The English Sense of Humour,* Even-Zohar's (1990) in *Polysystem Studies,* Attardo (1994) in *Linguistic Theories of Humor,* Ross (1998) in *The Language of Humour*, Easthope (1999) in *Englishness and National Culture,* Fox (2004) in *Watching the English,* and Partington (2006) in

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The Linguistics of Laughter: A Corpus-Assisted Study of *Laughter Talk' Functions of Language.* As regards the pragmatic perspective of humour, scholars carried out extensive research in this area. Significant empirical studies have been made by Ferrar (1993) in *The Logic of the Ludicrous*, Curco-Cobos (1997) in *The Pragmatics of Humorous Interpretations: A Relevance-Theoretic Approach,* by Attardo (2001) in *'Humor and Irony in Interaction: From Mode Adoption to Failure of Detection'*, Norrick and Chiaro (2009) in *Humour in Interaction,* Gurillo (2013) *Irony and Humor-From Pragmatics to Discourse*, Dynel, M. (2011) in *The Pragmatics of Humour across Discourse Domains,* and Goatly (2015) in *Meaning and Humour.* Studies of humour translation referred to in this dissertation, are nevertheless of the greatest value since such a broad, unploughed and tricky field still requires in-depth exploration. Despite being in the process of development, humour translation studies have been given strong points of departure with Mateo (1995) 'The Translation of Irony', Vandaele (1999) *Each Time We Laugh Translated Humour in Screen Comedy*, Chiaro (2004) *'The Effect of translation on Humour Response: The Case of Dubbed Comedy in Italy'*, Attardo (2004) *'Translation and Humour: An Approach Based on General Theory of Verbal Humour'*, Chiaro (2010) *Translation, Humour and Literature: Translation and Humour,* Veaaneanen (2007) *The Pragmatic Aspect of Satire and Humour Translation: The Case of M. Bulgakov's Narrative "Dog's Heart".*

Some of the translation strategies explored in the above mentioned works and in the ones of more general approaches such as Baker's (1992), Bassnett and Lefevere's (1992), Aixelá's (1996) Cronin's (2006), Venuti's (2000), Kuhiwczak and Littau's (2007) have been considered in the present paper.

Mention should be made that among the numerous corpus-based investigations examined during research, not so many address comparative studies involving Romanian translated variants and even fewer illustrate diachronic timelines in terms of translation strategies employed by different translators in different periods of time and in different circumstances. Neagu's (2008), Steidlova's (2010), Croitoru's (2015), Dimitriu's (2016), Tănase's (2017) research papers are attempts to illustrate that the translation of humour is a process which involves great cognitive effort, cross-cultural awareness until the TL product is born.

Objectives

This dissertation aims at presenting a new perspective of humour in translation by means of examining the existing theories in this field and by means of matching or challenging them against the new corpus. Likewise, it is intended to form new judgments on various aspects of humour translation as well as on translation strategies in literary texts which act as channels for connecting source and target text cultures, writer's and translators' outlooks. The first objective involves reviewing but not radically departing from the existing humour theories proposed by ancient and modern scholars, as well as our attempts to integrate features of humour superiority into incongruous aspects of it such as degraded expectation, contrast between what is said, intended and meant, to leave out any matter irrelevant for the corpus and to apply the appropriate instances to humour translation. The second objective deals with humour within literary contexts, namely travelogue novels with the aim to elicit its features, functions, and difficulties which occur in the translation process.

From a narrower perspective, comparative analysis of source literary texts and their translated variants proposed in different periods of time will focus on such issues as (a) disclosing similarities and differences of different aspects of humour and the employed or recommended strategies that will transfer it across linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic dimensions; (b) determining the reasons why translation difficulties occur, exploring the possible ways to overcome them and to minimize translation loss; (c) performing translation strategies analysis along a diachronic line with the aim to identify historical, ideological or other deliberate reasons which led to the translator's or temporal circumstances presence in the translated text.

During research, such factors as type of humour, functions, literary genre of the corpus, cultural, linguistic, and pragmatic factors which interfere in humour translation were taken into account, since they may ensure as well as hinder its successful travel from English into Romanian.

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Despite the ambitious idea of framing such an extremely complex phenomenon as humour into a research paper which seems to be a hazardous undertaking, the investigated areas of humour will be limited to: a) identifying and assessing the ways of literary works translation where it is found; b) acknowledging the role of the target language culture interference in the translation process; c) examining the relation between the translation strategies applied and the humorous effect since "a humorous source text should have similarly humorous translation" (Morton Gledhill, 2001:1). To sum up, the types of humour and their translated variants which build up the corpus of this doctoral dissertation will be investigated from the humorous effect preserved in translation viewpoint.

Data and Methodology

This thesis is a corpus-based research focused on two novels written by a well-known British writer, J.K. Jerome, and on their translated variants performed by five Romanian translators and one Moldovan in different periods of time. The novels' humorous value, the abundance, and diversity of instances are worth researching in terms of comparative analysis and comply with the requirements of a generous and adequate corpus.

Our choice of these literary works was determined by the following criteria: 1) they include different types of humour; 2) they were translated by different translators 3) in different periods of time: Leviţchi (1957), Corduneanu (1959), Duţescu (1972), Bătrânu (1985), Decei (2006), Niţescu (2009). More detailed presentation of the methods employed by the mentioned above translators will be further provided.

Among the methods employed during research, those of *qualitative, quantitative, inductive, deductive,* and *comparative* analysis type can be listed, since they lead to major goal achievement.

This study involves careful examination of the primary and secondary sources which may be carried out by means of documentary qualitative analysis. In order to explore the primary sources with the purpose of corpus building, the *deductive* method will be applied; it will be

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useful for humorous instances detection in both: source and target texts which will be further compared, correlated and explained in order to result in concrete data concerning humour in translation.

Likewise, the *deductive* method will be applied to forms of critical thinking and analysis such as active reading of the literature on humour, deep reflection on mechanisms of humour, critical studies on the translation of humour. Thus, analytical examination of secondary sources will serve as the theoretical core to be further applied to the primary sources analysis. The results of the analysis will be compared with the previously formulated hypotheses in order to determine the extent of their agreement or nonconformity if the case may be. The *inductive* method, on the other hand, will be helpful to elicit general features and conceptual frameworks after close analysis of instances. This kind of inferences will therefore develop in judgments used to support or refute the current theories.

In addition to the general research methodology, the role of the methods applicable to the translation studies domain is worthwhile acknowledging. Before conducting a comparative study of source and target humour translation instances, a list of characteristics to be considered was made, the most important being the successful conveyance of the humorous effect from source to target text.

Hence, the role of the *comparative* method is indisputable as it is employed in corpus analysis, namely in referring to and recognizing humour as a form of discourse in the source text as well as in comparing it with the translated variants performed from English into Romanian, as well as in further comparisons of the translated variants. The same method is applied when comparing the translated variants with the one performed by the translator Corduneanu from the Republic of Moldova which was part of the Soviet Union in the period of his activity, a historical dimension which had a strong impact on his translation version .

Major consideration bust be given to sample *qualitative analysis* which is valuable in terms of feature identification and description, strategy recognition and estimation. Despite being mostly subjective this kind of analysis contributes to rationale development and to further

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judgment reinforcement.

Quantitative analysis will be complemented by *statistical analysis* which is meant to determine the (least) prevalent humour translation strategies applied by the translators and to measure them in percentage figures which will show a clearer picture of the data analysis and serve to prove the reliability and the validity of the thesis premises. This form of analysis will be carried out considering translators' principles referring to the translated type of humour, the cultural factors which influenced the types of applied strategies, and their potential to convey the original author's intentions.

This methodology is definitely useful in building the theoretical framework of the research in terms of the essential concepts formulation, their theoretical development, and application to the corpus of humorous texts. Findings of the research will be illustrated in the general conclusions of the dissertation.

Structure

The dissertation consists of four chapters starting from theoretical concerns on humour and gradually developing into a practical analysis of a more specific character. The first chapter begins with general considerations on humour revealing the most relevant and adequate definitions to further illustrate its evolution in time. It reflects the exploration of the earliest writings on humour and laughter done by ancient Greek philosophers, then by Middle Ages thinkers who gave it partial support in terms of placing the emphasis on incongruity, and finally considerations of modern and contemporary scholars who offer a broader conceptualization of humour. Moreover, this chapter discusses humour taxonomies joined under this umbrella term in an attempt to reveal specific features and functions which build the criteria of these classifications. Moreover, types of humour, their features, and functions will be considered to be important parameters in their translated variants' analysis.

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In the second chapter, humour is analysed from sociolinguistic, cultural, and pragmatic perspectives. Besides presenting some early and current approaches to language variations from the perspective of use and user-based dichotomy, it examines the regional, social and stylistic language variations, as well as the linguistic features which distinguish the Standard English, Standard Scottish and the Norfolk dialects, the upper, middle and lower classes sociolects, gender and register based discourse. Moreover, we attempt to build connections between sociolinguistic variations and theories of humour with the purpose of revealing their functions in humour and establishing dialect, sociolect, gender and register-based humour linguistic features which will be further analysed from the point of view of their translatability.

The concept of Britishness as a cultural identity in humour is examined from a cultural perspective. Such cultural forms of humour as *dry humour*, *ethnically targeted remarks*, and *satire* are explored in terms of structure, cultural universality and specificity. To take matters deeper, the concept of culture-specific items will be examined in terms of its componential extent and the criteria of their identification in humorous texts which will subsequently be used in their translation analysis. Despite the linguistic aspects of humour being widely acknowledged, investigating them all is not the focus of this dissertation. Linguistic patterns of a stylistic type such as metaphor, simile, personification, allusion as well as lexico-semantic patterns such as pun, idioms, and proverbs are explored and revealed within different types of English humour. Semantic and pragmatic patterns of humour are analysed according to Grice's Cooperative Principle and Relevance theory, as well as according to the notion of humorous implicature which is the result of the contrast between what is said and what is implied. Factors of implicature analysis will be taken into account while selecting the instances of humorous irony since they make it more efficient. The first and second chapters are theoretical in form, and are aimed at directing the practical part of the research and shape the principles of instances analysis.

The third chapter deals with various approaches to defining the concepts of translation strategy, method, procedure, and technique in order to draw the distinctions between them. From this perspective, such linguistic strategies as lexical, semantic, syntactic, and textual are explored in terms of structure, cultural universality and specificity. The analysis of the above-mentioned

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types of transformations can diachronically determine the extent of humour translation quality in terms of humour conservation, cultural, linguistic and pragmatic equivalence. Thus, linguistic, cultural and pragmatic aspects of humour translation reside in considering the criteria of linguistic, culture-specific elements analysis based on translation strategies, methods, and procedures.

Chapter four is corpus-based. It represents a comparative-contrastive analysis of Jerome K. Jerome's humorous novels *Three Men in a Boat (To say nothing of the Dog)* (1889) and its five translated variants provided by Leon Levițchi (1957), Corduneanu (1959), Nicolae Bătrânu (1985), Lia Decei (2006) and Maria Nițescu (2009) and *Three Men on the Bummel* (1901) and two translated versions of the Romanian translators Dan Duțescu (1972) and Lia Decei (2006). Hence, dialect, sociolect, gender and register-based humour translated versions are analysed from the perspective of sociolinguistic variations standardization or conservation into the target language. As regards the instances of English culture-bound humour translated versions, they are analysed from the linguistic and cultural perspectives. Pragmatic translation strategies are applied to irony, metaphor, pun, and allusion in terms of the original author's intention and humorous effect conveyance. The effort of professional translators will be analysed in terms of their skill to preserve the humorous effect of the original text, to find solutions for hardly translatable or untranslatable instances as well as their mistakes and cases of distortion of meaning and translation loss.

The general conclusions illustrate the results of our research achieved by means of assumption of the qualitative and quantitative analysis carried out throughout the investigation. The premises backing the research theoretical and practical backgrounds regarding humour translation will be either confirmed or refuted. These findings aim at revealing the difficulties faced by the translators and at offering optimal solutions which will be further applicable to humour translation and will encourage prospects in this field of study.

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Estimated contribution

Humour has been subject to many investigations addressed to its various aspects. Yet, studies of humour translation conducted by Eastern, Western and Romanian scholars are so inconsistent and diverse that new attempts aiming to straighten the existing concepts are given great encouragement. This dissertation is an effort to theoretically and practically contribute to the humour translation studies. Hence, it views humour from the reflective perspective in terms of concept historical development, from linguistic and cultural perspectives as a tool of realia and other specific items transfer from source to target culture. Additionally, from a pragmatic perspective, humour is considered to be a communicative mechanism in writer-audience interaction and a mechanism of revealing the author's covert intentions. Thus, the many aspects of humour reflected in translation, define beyond any doubt the major concern of this research – humour translation. This part of the research is paid special attention in terms of translated humorous texts description, difficulties and reasons of their appearance analysis as well as recommended solutions.

Our contribution to the field lies in the critical examination and in the theoretical reconsideration of the current definitions, theories, and taxonomies of humour and in the further synthesis of many of its manifestations in the literary texts and in their translated variants. Moreover, the comparative analysis of the source and translated literary text features, the detection of the contrastive elements, and the in-depth reflection on the factors which complicate the humour translation from English into Romanian frame a significant part of our research effort. No less attention is paid to the translation strategies in attempts to organize and classify them in a meaningful framework as well as to identify them within various types of translated humorous texts and to trace their application by different translators along the timeline between 1957 and 2009. The parallel corpora used in this dissertation have been organized with the intention of illustrating English and Romanian linguistic, sociolinguistic, cultural, and pragmatic similarities and differences which are reflected in humour translation.

Finally, this dissertation will be of significant value to the field of humour translation studies from the viewpoint of its theoretical, critical and practical content which includes

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brilliantly translated instances of humorous literary texts and strategies analysis, problematic instances with difficulties analysis and recommendations to overcome them in this considerable undertaking.

General Conclusions

Various dimensions of humour translation have been unfolded in this thesis in a way that brought the existing theories into function and, what is more, contributed to a wider perception of the humour conveyance across languages, cultures, and intentionality. To make the research applicable in all its predetermined aspects, our commitment was to provide a balanced relation between the theoretical approaches to humour, mechanisms of humour, and humour translation as well as between the source and translated instances which build the corpora of this paper. To ensure this symmetry, theories were carefully examined and further matched against the content.

The versatility of humour could be traced along with the extension of the concept of laughter into branches which developed along centuries into a broad verbally, situationally-related and culture-specific phenomena. The analysis of the evolution of humour from the very primary to the most sophisticated manifestations of it and rethinking considerations, classifications and functions of it proved its revolving around superiority, incongruity, and relief theories. Throughout the research, it became clear that the humorous devices, which simultaneously combine superiority and incongruity, are mostly ironic, anecdotal, and satirical. Moreover, incongruity is possible either at the linguistic, situational and cultural levels, the former having more priority. Still communicative incongruity, self- enhancing, and affiliative forms of humour gain prominence in both novels and act as implying superiority which is present in most of the selected humorous devices.

Attempts were made to relate the sociolinguistic variations with humour theories in order to disclose their functions in terms of comic effect achievement. Thus, regional variations were employed in humour to deride the stereotypes of the particular region inhabitants, to underline the setting of the joke, revealing class, education and rusticity of the joke characters and to create a

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nonsensical effect by making the joke incomprehensible to the outsiders. The social classes-bound humour reflects the function of superiority on the part of the upper-classes which tend to prefer highly sophisticated humour creating thus a comprehensional barrier for the lower classes that enjoy observational humour about daily issues. In addition, class-based humour reveals the characters' level of education and regional affiliation which is reflected in the linguistic items of the joke, mockery, anecdote or other humorous devices. Gender humour performs several functions: disclosing the differences between men and women at the cultural, social and linguistic levels, emphasizing male power and domination and showing the evolving feministic tendencies on the gender role reversal background. The register-based humour is built around creating incongruities by means of juxtapositions at the level of the dimensions of the field, tenor, and mode. Hence, situation and language appropriateness may be contradictory; contrasts of formal and informal linguistic patterns occur within the same context. Moreover, these contradictions may be of a decreasing character in register variation from complex to prosaic; therefore the degraded expectation effect is produced. Along these lines, it becomes clear that the roles of sociolinguistic variations in humorous contexts are performed at the implicational level which is crucial in "catching" the bottom line of the joke.

As regards the examination of Britishness in J. K. Jerome's humour, it was conducted at the level of structure, the way of delivery, cultural specificity and universality aiming at revealing the role of incongruity productive a humorous effect. Dry (British) humour analysis proved that incongruity is reflected mainly in the contradicting tone and humorous content, in the double carelessness on the part of the narrator and indifference on the part of the characters and in the deadpan violence which contradicts the unexpected reaction to it. The jokes targeting various ethnic groups such as Englishmen, Scots, Irishmen, German proved to revolve around script oppositions between norms and extremes which determine, generate and reduce social integrity, disparity, and arbitrary prejudice. In this way, our study of ethnic jokes in Jerome's novels identified script oppositions between characters' ethnic affiliation and stereotypes as well as the potential reasons behind their being chosen as targets. The results demonstrate that Davies's (2002) hypotheses of stupidity and canniness, drunkenness, militarism, cowardice are applicable to Jerome's jokes targeting various British and non-British ethnic groups with an ultimate

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prevalence of Scots, English, and German being frequent targets of jokes deriding various stereotypes and weaknesses. The study of satire, which is a cultural form of derision in itself, was based on disclosing the target, its structure and the script opposition between set up, and degraded expectation. It proved that the favoured derided weaknesses are laziness, male awkwardness, and drunkenness. The investigation of cultural patterns of lexico-semantic and lexico-syntactic type within humorous contexts was conducted with the purpose of revealing the humorous value of incongruity which occurs at the semantic, lexical and stylistic levels.

As for pragmatic manifestations in humour, the results of the investigation demonstrated that humourous devices such as irony, pun, humorous metaphor and allusion offer favourable condition for codifying implicature, for mental processing development, and for (i)relevance identification. The results of the investigation confirmed that irony implies the contrast or inappropriateness of what is said and meant. This opposition was identified by my means of some conversational or cognitive processes known as maxim infringement recognition and inference. The core of pragmatic analysis within ironic utterances decoding was conducted aiming to identify such features as intention, attitude, and detachment so valuable in further irony interpretation and translation. The pragmatic analysis of pun instances provides insights for the elements which stand for duality at the lexical, syntactical or phonic levels. Our findings prove that the comic intention of pun is revealed when the existence of another existing interpretation different from the prior assumption is determined. This results from breaking or flouting one or more cooperative maxims during communication which built the ambiguity of the utterance making it irrelevant for the receptor. A strong relation between relevance and implicature could be traced in humorous metaphors analysis. Our findings suggest that on the one hand implicature decoding becomes complicated because of the insufficient context or the lack of it which therefore decrease the relevance of the message. On the other hand, its broadness and specificity contribute to the overall intended effect and increase the message congruity. Likewise, implicature decoding in case of humorous allusion proved to be enframed in a script opposition which counterposes the general context of the joke and the denotation of the allusion. The research data confirmed that implicature may be revealed only if the reader is acknowledged with the source or whether there is a footnote explaining what has been alluded to and its amusement

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effect may be achieved when it (the implicature) is matched against the general meaning of the joke.

The comparative analysis conducted between J.K.Jerome's novels and their corresponding translations into Romanian builds the corpus of this thesis. The complexity of the translated process and the final product resides in a series of factors the translators had to consider in order to transfer humorous instances of various types across languages, cultures, and intentionality. Hence, the translated variants reflect linguistic, extralinguistic, source culture-specific factors as well as target cultural specificity and ideologies which impact the translator's decisions during the translation process. All these factors proved that the translation of humour is more than a mere transfer of linguistic patterns but a series of mindful steps towards the recreation of the humorous situation, cultural environment, and the author's intention.

The careful analysis of the translated variants shed some light on the difficulties encountered in the translation process as well as on the reasons why they occur ranging from clashes between cultures and ideological reasons which result from the impact of dominant culture. Our thesis provides a framework of (socio) linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic translation strategies which where applied to humour translation and our findings could be used to help coping with problematic areas of humour translation as well as with instances of untranslatability.

The research data demonstrate that some culture-specific elements, some region-bound variations, puns and some instances of allusion caused difficulties in the translation process because of the clashes between languages, cultures, the mode of intention conveyance. Yet, attempts were made to preserve the cultural features and the pragmatic implicature; some translators employed intra and extratextual gloss to explain to draw attention to the cultural reference within humorous allusion, pun, irony, while the others preferred to stay on the safe side and omitted the device altogether.

However, there are instances of humour which could be translated by means equivalence due to a certain correspondence between source and target languages and cultures. For instance, such types of humour as anecdotes, caricature, satire, gender-bound jokes turned to be easily

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discernible and well translatable in the target language and culture.

Given Jerome's subtle manner of mockery and the refinement of illustrating the commonplace, grasping his implicature and conveying it to the target reader was more than a mere endeavour for the translators who dealt with it; it is constant interpretation and rethinking of what was intended.

According to the analysis, different types of humour have been translated by means of different translation strategies relevant to the aspects which the translators found worth considering. Most instances of dialect humour have been translated by dialect conservation strategy in *Three Men in a Boat* whereas those selected from *Three Men on the Bummel* equally share the ratio between dialect conservation and standardization. Social class related humour was translated rather by means of sociolect conservation with several instances of sociolect transfer in both novels. As for gender humour translation strategies, it must be noted that the tendency towards gender target conservation is present throughout both novels. Likewise, while considering register in humour translation, the results illustrate the prevalence of register preservation over the register shift. To sum up: regarded from sociolinguistic perspective, the humorous instances examined during this research are inclined to preserve their original sociolinguistic elements during translation.

The analysis of humour translation strategies from the cultural perspective broadened the range of applied strategies vis-à-vis the linguistic ones. Such translation strategies as foreignization and domestication have been examined when applied to culture specific items in various humorous contexts. The research data confirm a dichotomy of translators' decisions to foreignize or to domesticate culture-specific elements. Some translators' indubitable talent of drawing the target text closer to the readers and of achieving equivalent effect often contrasts but also justifies the need to reveal the translator's visibility when transferring cultures despite its linguistic unnaturalness and sometimes puzzling effect on the reader. On the other hand, foreignization adds novelty and foreignness to the translated literature. However, the domesticated instances detected in the translated variants under focus are interesting and challenging when being investigated in terms of equivalence and cultural adaptation methods as

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well as the rationale of omitting the culture-specific item.

From the pragmatic perspective, the humorous instances based on pragmatic implicature have been analyzed in terms of pragmatic effect achievement and pragmatic adaptation as well as from strategies advanced by scholars such as Mateo (1995) and Chesterman (1997). According to the findings, ironic instances have been translated mainly by means of *pragmatic equivalence, literal translation,* and *enhancing TT* in *Three Men in a Boat* whereas the translators of *Three Men on the Bummel* employed *literal translation, synonymy, cultural filtering*. Less applicable strategies turned to be *explication* and *no ST irony TT irony* in the first novel and *illocutionary force* and *ironic ambiguity meaning* in the second. Pun translation strategies employed in both novels range between pragmatic equivalence (42,2% in the first novel and 40% in the second) and pragmatic adaptation (26,66% in the first novel and 50% in the second) which are indicative of the translator's tremendous efforts to preserve the effect of the ludicrous. However, the pragmatic equivalent effect could not be achieved in all the instances. 31,11% of the pun instances were translated by means of Pun → non-pun and Pun → Zero strategies which proves the fact that puns are not always translatable across languages and cultures. Fluctuations between pragmatic equivalence and pragmatic adaptation (in a ratio of 56, 84% to 43,15% in the first novel and in a ratio of 45% to 55% in the second) can be noticed in the translation of metaphor. Similarly, the pragmatic analysis of allusion translation shows a prevalence of pragmatic equivalent effect (38,75%) over pragmatic adaptation (36,25%) in the first novel and pragmatic adaptation (55%) prevailing over pragmatic equivalence (32,5%) in the second novel. This state of affairs proves but a relative existence of some common features in British and Romanian cultures and mindset.

The overall analysis of the translation strategies applied to the sociolinguistic, linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic aspects of humour showed different results. The equivalent effect was measured in accordance with the research data obtained from sociolinguistic translation strategies (dialect conservation, sociolect conservation, gender humour target preservation, register preservation), cultural equivalence data, and pragmatic equivalence data. Sociolinguistic equivalence could be achieved to the extent of 36, 99 % level in *Three Men in a Boat* and to the

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extent of 63,1 % in *Three Men on the Bummel*. As for the cultural equivalent effect, the translators of both novels could attain it in half of the instances (50, 11% and 53, 98%). The pragmatic equivalent effect was produced in 41,08% of the *Three Men in a Boat* instances and in 32,05% of the *Three Men on the Bummel* instances. Thus, we can conclude that stronger equivalent effect was achieved in *Three Men on the Bummel*.

Adaptation has also been examined in various aspects of humour. Adapted culture-specific instances constitute 19,07 % of the *Three Men in a Boat* and 21,23% in *Three Men on the Bummel*. Pragmatic adaptation is achieved to the extent of 29, 34% in the first novel and to the extent of 41,53% in the second novel. All in all, more instances translated by means of adaptation were detected in *Three Men on the Bummel*.

Aspects of translation non-equivalence have been measured by means of examining such methods as standardization, substitution, and omission in different aspects of humour. At the sociolinguistic level, the research data show that 42, 16% have been standardized in *Three Men in a Boat* and 42,35% in *Three Men on the Bummel*. 30,83% of the cultural-bound items have been omitted in the translation of the first novel and 24, 76% in the second. From the pragmatic perspective, 57% of the instances a have been omitted in translation of the first novel and 21,83% of the instances in the second novel. These results confirm that most instances translated by means of non-equivalent methods have been identified in *Three Men in a Boat*.

Foreignization and domestication strategies detected in both novels have been analyzed according to their component procedures advanced by (1882), Venuti (1992), Schuttleworth and Cowie (1997). The data analysis shows a prevalence of domestication (52,47%) over foreignization (47,52%) in *Three Men in a Boat* and vice-versa, a prevalence of foreignization (55,31%) over foreignization (44,68%) in *Three Men on the Bummel*. It can, therefore, be concluded that the translators of "Three Men in a Boat" found more reasons and means to make the humour more familiar to the Romanian readers whereas those of *Three Men on the Bummel* chose to increase translation visibility and bring elements of source language culture to the target audience.

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The analysis of the humour translation strategies undertaken in J. K. Jerome 's has extended our knowledge of the various ways to translate various types of humour and of the solutions the translators found while translating difficult humorous devices. Likewise, some of our attempts were made to translate the problematic items aiming to contribute even just a bit to the efforts made by some of the greatest translators.

The generalisability of these results is subject to certain limitations. For instance, the novel *Three Men on the Bummel* has only two translated variants which provide insufficient ground for a diachronic analysis of strategies development. An additional factor which limits the accuracy of the research data is the striking similarity of the translated variants advanced by the translators Leviţschi (1957) and Niţescu (2009) which is indicative of copyright infringement. Because of the time constraints and the assumption that linguistic translation strategies applied to humour translation must be considered only when splitting the humorous texts into isolated lexical and grammatical units, we lack quantitative analysis of the linguistic translation strategies. The humorous translated units range from short sentences to a paragraph-long or even longer excerpts; that is why the analysis of every linguistic unit will be time-consuming and will lead to overall meaning and humorous effect fragmentation which we find unwise.

More broadly, research is also needed to determine the translation strategies employed to humorous devices other than the ones examined in this thesis or in other Jerome's humorous novels since it would broaden the spectrum of humour translation analysis and will provide more solutions for the problematic instances. It would also be interesting to compare the existent translated variants performed by Romanian translators with current variants performed by translators from the Republic of Moldova in order to trace the existence of differences of ideological or sociolinguistic character and to develop strategies for translation efficiency improvement.

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