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WHEN HUMOUR AND CULTURE CLASH: SUBTITLING IN *SPANISH AFFAIR*¹

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Resumen

La traducción del humor presenta uno de los retos más difíciles y atractivos para el traductor. Esto se debe en gran medida a la diversidad de elementos que pueden llegar a confluir con una única función, conseguir arrancar una sonrisa al espectador. En el caso de los productos audiovisuales, a pesar de que la concurrencia de múltiples códigos puede suponer, a priori, una ayuda, no siempre es así al entrar en juego aspectos ideológicos y culturales. El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo el estudio de la traducción del humor en la película *Ocho apellidos vascos* (Martínez Lázaro 2014), una comedia basada en el choque cultural entre comunidades. A partir del análisis del subtítulo, se procurará contribuir al debate sobre la traducibilidad del humor, prestando especial atención a aquellos casos donde el componente cultural sea determinante o muy significativo.

Abstract

The translation of humour presents one of the most difficult and attractive challenges for translators. This is, in large part, due to the diversity of elements that can converge with a single function, to get a smile from the audience. Regarding audiovisual products, despite the concurrence of multiple codes, which may, in the first instance, be of assistance, this is not always the case when ideological and cultural elements come into play. This work aims to study the translation of humour in the film *Spanish affair* (Martínez Lázaro 2014), a comedy based on the culture clash between communities. From the analysis of the subtitling, we intend to contribute to the debate about the

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translatability of humour, paying special attention to those cases in which the cultural component is determining or, at least, extremely meaningful.

Palabras clave: Humor. Cultura. Traducibilidad. *Ocho apellidos vascos*. Subtitulado.

Keywords: Humour. Culture. Translatability. *Spanish Affair*. Subtitling.

1. Introducción

This study intends to evaluate the translatability of humour in the English subtitled version of a Spanish comedy whose humour lies in the cultural conflicts of different communities. In order to do this, the hypotheses of researchers such as Chiaro (2005), who defends the possibility of translating humour in texts, is taken into account, although she distinguishes it from the impossibility of equivalence; that of Newmark (1988: 107), who states that “*all* jokes are translatable, but they do not always have the same impact”; and others less prone to the defense of translatability at certain times, such as that of Santoyo Mediavilla (1994: 145), who maintains that:

insofar as the humor of a situation or comedy derives from the use of specifically cultural elements, to the same extent its transfer to other languages, or its translation, will be seriously hampered, if not completely limited.

The starting point is a brief review of the approaches from which humour has been dealt with, particular attention being paid to research related to audiovisual translation. Secondly, the film that serves as a corpus for the study, *Ocho Apellidos Vascos* (*Spanish Affair*), is presented, and the criteria followed for the classification of the examples analysed are indicated. Finally, we include the conclusions drawn as well as a proposal for possible future lines of research.

1.1. The theoretical framework of humour

Humour has been a subject of study over the years because of the great complexity involved. In addition to this the approaches from which this has been undertaken have been continuously evolving and being profiled. An example of this evolution can be found in the review of the literature on humour by Santana Lopez (2005), which covers the different perspectives from which humour has been analysed. She groups the investigations according to whether they have been carried out from a linguistic, literary, or cultural point of view or whether they have been carried out within the framework of audiovisual communication.

In the discipline of linguistics, it is necessary to emphasize the investigations carried out by Attardo & Raskin (1991) that lead to the General Theory of Verbal Humour which revolves around the linguistic aspect of jokes. In the same vein, we highlight the studies presented by Chiaro (2000, 2005, 2010), in which she delves into verbal humour within the field of audiovisual translation and the reception of humour. For his part, Delabastita (1996) proposes a study of humour as a stylistic element and part of literary works, focusing on the play of words, which he defines as

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*. (Delabastita 1996: 128)

Delabastita classifies word games into four types: homonymy (two words that sound and are written alike but have different meanings), homophony (two words with identical sound but with different written form), homography (two words that are spelled the same but sound differently) and paronymia (two very similar words but between which there are differences in terms of both pronunciation and spelling). Additionally, Nash (1985: 143) includes the *portmanteau*, “a label for the coinage that packs two meanings into one word”.

With regard to the cultural facet of humour, Vandaele (2002) develops a thorough bibliographical review of the study of humour starting from a linguistic perspective and incorporating sociolinguistics and a metalinguistic approach that leads him to establish a relationship between language and culture in humour. This nexus is also perceived in the studies on humour within audiovisual translation. A sample of this is the classification of jokes proposed by Zabalbeascoa (1996) that serves as the basis for the proposals by Fuentes Luque (2000) and Martínez Sierra (2004) (Table 1).

	<u>Chistes simples</u>			<u>Chistes compuestos</u>
	<i>Zabalbeascoa</i>	<i>Fuentes</i>	<i>Nuestra propuesta</i>	Combinación de dos o más tipos de elementos
<u>Cambios</u>	Chistes binacionales		Elementos no-marcados	
	Chistes sobre la cultura y las instituciones nacionales		Elementos sobre la comunidad e instituciones	
	Chistes de sentido del humor nacional		Elementos de sentido del humor de la comunidad	
	Chistes dependientes de la lengua		Elementos lingüísticos	
	Chistes visuales		Elementos visuales	
		Chistes sonoros	Elementos paralingüísticos	
<u>Adiciones</u>			Elementos gráficos	

Table 1. Typology of the humorous elements of jokes and comparison with the proposals of other authors, according to Martínez Sierra (2004: 222).

Unlike Zabalbeascoa, Martínez Sierra’s classification does not refer to types of jokes but rather to jokes that contain different elements. Thus, in the case of jokes with unmarked elements, he includes those that are the result of a situation and in which neither the language nor the cultural differences are determinant in achieving the comic effect, which is the reason why its translation does not imply great difficulty. The second refers to the specific cultural referents of a community, such as celebrities, television programs, etc., or intertextual references, which have to be adapted to the target culture in order to be humorous. The third, on the other hand, has a more global nuance, not referring to specific referents but to popular topics within a community such as values, beliefs or stereotypes. Linguistic elements are related to the use of language, for example, wordplay, while visual ones differ from graphs in that in the former humour comes from what is seen on the screen and in the latter it is limited to written messages on screen whether titles, didascalia, texts or subtitles. Finally, the paralinguistic elements include accents, tones of voice or imitations of the speech of famous people (Martínez Sierra 2004: 215).

The feasibility of translating humour or not has been brought into question due to the difficulty involved. This is particularly true in the case of subtitling because of the constraints imposed by this modality characterised by being:

- Written (Subtitles are not received via hearing as in the case of dubbing).
- Additive (The translated text provides a supplement to the original).
- Immediate (“As opposed to non-synchronous translations, where the receptor – reading a book, for instance – controls both time and duration for reception” (Gottlieb 1992: 162). With subtitles, however, the audience cannot go back or slow down the material).
- Synchronous (The original and the translated text are received at the same time, contrary to simultaneous interpreting).
- Polymedial (This refers to the coexistence of two or more channels delivering the meaning of the source text). (Gottlieb 1994: 120)

Thus, when we turn to subtitling, the work is even more complicated since the translation of humour in subtitles “is not as straightforward as the translation of written, totally verbal word play, or even of the interpretation of an orally produced pun” (Chiaro 2000: 32). Apart from conveying humour through words and images in audio-visual texts, one must add the implications of the transition from the oral to the written medium, which lead to a reformulation of the text and an editing process where condensation usually predominates. If we also take into account the cultural component, we find that in subtitling we must deal with three limitations: 1) space-time restrictions, 2) the transference from an oral to a written register, and 3) the shift from one culture to another (Gottlieb 1994: 104-106), which have to be evaluated in order to ensure a successful translation.

2. Analysis of humour in *Spanish Affair*

The Spanish film chosen for the study of the translation of humour from Spanish into English in subtitling is *Spanish Affair* (*Ocho Apellidos Vascos*, Martínez-Lázaro 2014). This romantic comedy tells the story of Rafa, a good-old-fashioned Sevillian who, after meeting Amaia one night in Seville, impulsively travels to the north of Spain to try to win the heart of this Basque with a strong character who has been left by her boyfriend on the eve of their wedding. Once in the Basque Country, Rafa has to pretend to be both Basque and Amaia’s boyfriend at the same time as he confronts the prejudices about people and the lifestyle in this community. This cultural clash between North (Basque Country) and South (Andalusia) in which stereotypes and clichés are

concatenated gives rise to numerous comic situations that in turn become a discursive thread to the plot.

After watching the film and identifying the scenes which contain humour, a classification based on the humorous elements as described by Martinez Sierra (2004) is undertaken. In those scenes in which more than one element is present, we have chosen to classify the examples according to the dominant humorous element. In order to simplify the nomenclature of the humorous elements discussed in the examples the following coding will be used (Table 2):

UM	Unmarked elements
CI	Elements about the community and institutions
SHC	Elements about the sense of humour of the community
L	Linguistic elements
V	Visual elements
P	Paralinguistic elements
G	Graphic elements

Table 2. Abbreviations of humorous elements.

2.1. *Unmarked elements*

The film contains humorous situations caused by unmarked elements (UM) and in which the translator does not have to look for complicated solutions to achieve the same humorous effect as the original, as happens in:

(1)

Koldo: Bueno, fenómeno. ¿Dónde vives tú?	Koldo: All right, where do you live?
Rafa: Pues entre las afueras y el centro, en el medio.	Rafa: Between the outskirts and the centre, In the middle.

2.2. *Paralinguistic elements*

However, the original version is characterized by its use of paralinguistic humorous elements (P) that are not always easy to translate. Among other paralinguistic elements, the film highlights Rafa’s forced imitation of the Basque accent and his use of isolated words that try to resemble words in *Euskera* and give rise to disjointed and absurd speeches, as for example when Koldo offers to take him home and he responds:

(2)

VO. Rafa: <i>Eskerrik asko</i> , Koldo. “Osendo”, “perfectoak”. <i>Agur</i> .	VS. Rafa: <i>Eskerrik asko</i> , Koldo. “Osendo”, “perfectoak”. <i>Agur</i> .
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Rafa combines words in Basque like *eskerrik asko* [many thanks] and *agur* [goodbye] with others that imitate *Euskera* by adding typical suffixes of the language like “-oak” in “perfectoak” (*perfecktua* [perfect]) or by using similar sounding words like “osendo” (*oso ondo*, [very well]). Rafa himself uses the paralinguistic element, or the dialectal variety according to Del Corral (1989: 26), intentionally to tell a joke about Basques:

(3)

VO. Rafa: Esto son dos vascos que se encuentran y le dice el uno al otro: “Oye Patxi, qué me <i>enterau</i> que tu hija está en la cama con gonorrhea. Y el otro dice: “A mí qué hostias, mientras sea vasco”.	VS. Rafa: These two Basques meet and one says: “Hey, Patxi, I hear your daughter’s in bed with gonorrhea.” The other says: “I don’t care! as long as he’s Basque...”
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In the joke he imitates the Basque accent and plays with the term “gonorrhea” and its resemblance to what could be the name of someone in *Euskera*, because of the difficulty of its pronunciation. However, the literal translation in the subtitled version causes it to lose the humorous effect. A similar situation happens when Merche misunderstands Koldo in the scene where he proposes a tuna fishing trip and says he is a fisherman. Then, she misunderstands the term *arrantzale* (fisherman) assuming that it is Koldo’s name and replies that she is called Anne, the name she chooses in order to pass for Basque, thus causing an absurd situation. In this case the literal translation allows the humour to be maintained since the audience knows Koldo’s real name and consequently they can intuit that *arrantzale* is not a name but a profession.

(4)

VO. Koldo: Oye, mañana si queréis podemos salir a pescar un bonito [...] soy <i>arrantzale</i> . Merche: Y yo Anne, encantada.	VS. Koldo: Tomorrow we could go fishing for bonito [...] I’m <i>arrantzale</i> . Merche: And I’m Anne. A pleasure.
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The same vein of humour based on the confusion between a term in *Euskara* and a proper name occurs when Rafa, newly arrived from Seville, turns up by surprise at Amaia’s house and she, bewildered, threatens to call the *ertzaintza*. The term that designates the police of the Basque Country is confused by Rafa

with the name of some friend of Amaia's that phonetically resembles the name of Arantxa.

(5)

VO. Amaia: ¿Qué quieres que llame a la Ertzaintza, o qué? Rafa: Hombre, yo había <i>pensao</i> estar un ratito los dos a solas al principio pero si llamas a una amiga tampoco pasa nada.	VS. Amaia: You want me to call the Ertzaintza? Rafa: I thought we'd be on our own for a while, but call your friend if you want.
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The use of *Euskera* as a linguistic element triggering humorous situations is frequent throughout the film as we have been able to observe. In the above examples humour arises from the misunderstandings and absurd situations that are caused by the lack of understanding of *Euskera*, but also the use of *Euskera* combined with Castilian Spanish giving rise to new (*portmanteau*) words is used in humorous situations, as happens in the following examples:

(6)

VO. Amaia: Y deja de hacer la pelota con tanto abrazo y tanta hostia. Para qué das un abrazo, que no estás en Sevilla. Rafa: Cúsame, ¿parezco “aberschándal”? Amaia: <i>Abertzale</i> . Rafa: Sí, ¿no?	VS. Amaia: And stop all the hugging. Why did you do it? You're not in Seville. Rafa: Do I look “uppersally”? Amaia: <i>Abertzale</i> . Rafa: I do, right?
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(7)

VO. Rafa: Pero que yo soy sevillano. Como queréis que os lo diga, que yo no pertenezco a la <i>escalera borroca</i> esa.	VS. Rafa: I'm, Sevillian, don't you understand? I don't belong to that “galleyborroca”.
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In both cases Rafa modifies the Basque producing a new word with allusions to popular themes and clichés about the community (SHC) of the Basque Country with humorous effect. In the first case, “aberschándal”, takes the principle of the word *abertzale* [patriot] and by phonetic similarity replaces “-tzale” with “chandal.” Thus he endorses clichés about the community associated with the Basques' preference to dress informally, for example in tracksuits. In the English subtitled version the humour based on the conjunction of two words, *super* and *chavvy*, alluding to the lack of dress sense, is maintained; however, the fact that it is a stereotype about the community may go unnoticed by the target audience.

In the second case, “escalera borroca” comes from the expression in *Euskera kale Borroka*, with a high significance for the community (SHC) as it refers to the group of young people who defended the independence of the Basque Country by taking the struggle to the street. The humorous effect comes from the phonetic similarity of the original with the nonsense created by Rafa, “baroque staircase”. As happened in the previous example, an invented word was chosen for the subtitled version with the result that the audience is reminded of the words *galley* and *baroque*, but, again, the allusion to cultural aspects of the community may go unnoticed by the target audience.

2.3. Elements about the sense of humour of the community

The paralinguistic element is present on numerous humorous occasions protagonised by Rafa and is sometimes also combined with elements about the sense of humour of the community (SHC), as in the scene in which Rafa, after having eaten and drunk to excess, has to vomit among the bushes. Koldo shows concern for him and Rafa answers:

(8)

VO. Rafa: Estaba mirando a ver si había alguna seta interesante. Pero nada, todo champiñones y boletua. Koldo, <i>eskerrik asko</i> por la cena.	VS. Rafa: I was looking to see if there were any interesting mushrooms. But they're all button mushrooms and “boletua”. Koldo, <i>eskerrik asko</i> for dinner.
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Thus, the humorous situation is more complex because the use of the word in Euskera (*eskerrik asko*) is combined with the creation of “boletua”, a word based on the term “boletus” to which is added the typical Basque ending, *-ua*, and with the hobby of mushroom picking which is associated with the Basques and has served as a motif in several jokes about the community. The use of community sense of humour (SHC) elements that allude to stereotypes about communities is the main driver of humour in the film. Basically, the values and beliefs that revolve around the Basque community, among which the passion for gastronomy, the tendency to exaggerate, the subject of terrorism, the strong character and description of women within the community stand out.

Gastronomy is one of the emblems of the Basque territory, home to many great chefs. Basques are known for their enthusiasm for good food and the size of the portions to which they are accustomed. An example of this is the scene in which the waiter recites the different dishes that are part of the set menu and Rafa thinks that he has to choose because it seems to be far too much for just one person. In the version subtitled in English, the humorous effect based on

exaggeration is obtained thanks to the translation of each one of the numerous plates making up the menu. Although the target audience can appreciate the UM element resulting from the sum of 1) the disproportionate amount of food and 2) Rafa's dramatized stance in "and all the rest too. I hope it's enough", the SHC element may be lost if the target audience ignores the beliefs about the Basque community on gastronomy and its tendency to exaggerate.

(9)

VO. Camarero: Pues hoy tenemos alubias, ensalada mixta, pimientos rellenos de <i>txangurro</i> , croquetas de bacalao, revuelto de hongos, chipirones en su tinta, cogote de merluza y chuletón de buey. Rafa: Yo los chipirones. Camarero: No es a elegir. Eso es lo que viene con el menú. Aquí se come lo que hay. Amaia: No, no, que los chipirones es lo que más ganas tiene Antxon. [...]	VS. Camarero: Tonight we have beans, mixed salad, peppers stuffed with <i>txangurro</i> , cod croquettes, scrambled egg with mushrooms, squid in its own ink, nape of hake and T-bone steak. Rafa: I'll have squid. Camarero: You don't choose. That's the set meal. Here, you eat what there is. Amaia: No, squid is just what Antxon likes most. [...]
Rafa: Pero de lo demás también. A ver si me voy a quedar con hambre.	Rafa: And all the rest too. I hope it's enough.

Another case related to the values on gastronomy is the moment when Koldo questions to what extent Rafa can be considered completely Basque by having the surname Clemente. Having a non-Basque surname implies a sign of not belonging to the community, which Koldo stresses in:

(10)

VO. Amaia: Así que hala, ¿vamos a cenar? Koldo: Bueno, bueno. Pero este igual como es Clemente se pide paella, o algo, eh.	Amaia: So, shall we eat? Koldo: All right. But as he's a Clemente, he might order paella.
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The sense of humour is achieved through the syllogism between Clemente-paella-Spain vs Basque surname-Basque cuisine-Basque Country. In the case of translation, the audience can find a loss of humour if it does not establish the symbolism of paella as a national dish and national emblem in contrast to Basque cuisine, which is very different and with a great reputation that allows the community to use it as a distinctive feature compared to the rest of Spain.

Another feature that characterizes Basques according to the existing stereotypes is the tendency to exaggerate that goes from the abundant portions

served to the way of speaking and express themselves as in the joke that Rafa tells and in which he resorts to this cliché:

(11)

VO. Rafa: Esto son dos de Bilbao que se encuentran y el uno le dice al otro: "Oye, Kepa que me <i>enterau</i> que te han <i>tocao</i> 100 millones en la lotería. Ahí va la hostia." Y dice: "Pues lo que jugaba, ¿no?"	VS. Rafa: These two from Bilbao meet, and one says: "Kepa, I hear you won 100 million on the lottery." The other says: "Just what I bet".
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Even though, in this case, the target audience may not pick up on the cliché, the joke based on the disproportion of the protagonist will not go unnoticed and will achieve the same purpose as the original text, that is, to make the audience laugh.

Among the topics related to the community is terrorism, which serves as a humorous resource as SHC or in combination with other humorous elements as we will see later (cf. linguistic elements). An example of humorous element SHC is the scene in which Amaia bursts onto the bus in which Rafa is travelling to prevent him from returning to Seville, and Rafa rebukes her:

(12)

VO. Rafa: Y ¿qué vas a hacer, me vas a secuestrar? A ver, que he dicho secuestrar en plan manera de hablar. No en plan <i>sulo</i> , que yo sé que si vosotros os ponéis...	VS. Rafa: Are you going to kidnap me? Look, I said "kidnap" as a manner of speech. It's nothing political. I know you can be...
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In the face of Rafa's comment related to kidnapping, the rest of the bus reacts, some defiant, some frightened. The allusion in the original version to this typical practice of the terrorist group ETA is made explicit in the subtitled version in which the expression "it's nothing political" emphasizes the political dimension that it contains.

Finally, among the humorous situations (SHC) are those related to the stereotypes created around the character and physical appearance of the Basques and Andalusians. It is here that the character of Amaia serves as a trigger to personalize and, at the same time, question the stereotypes about Basque women provoking situations such as the following.

The first cliché found is that of the Basque woman as rude, not easily succumbing to men and difficult to win over, as in:

(13)

VO. Joaquín: Dormir con una vasca es como tirarte tres veces a una de Málaga.	VS. Joaquín: Sleeping with a Basque is like screwing a girl from Málaga three times.
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and

(14)

VO. Rafa: Pues esto habrá que prepararlo bien <i>preparau</i> . Amaia: Por ejemplo, ¿cómo nos conocimos? Rafa: Pues yo que sé, vamos a tirar de lo típico, en una discoteca y nos liamos. Amaia: Bueno eso será lo más típico de Ibiza, pero esto es Euskadi. Rafa: Bueno, pues en un frontón o en un caserío de estos de los vuestros. Amaia: No, me refiero que aquí el primer día las parejas no se suelen liar. Rafa: Pero si tú y yo nos liamos la primera noche, ¡mi <i>arma</i> ! [...] Rafa: Que ¿cómo os conocisteis, hostia? Amaia: Nos presentaron unas amigas de su grupo. Rafa: Amaia, eso es muy soso. Eso no tiene ni chicha, ni <i>ná</i> . Eso no se lo va a creer. Bueno ya está, nos presentaron unas amigas tuyas y nos liamos. Amaia: No, nos presentaron y estuvimos tres semanas quedando. Rafa: ¿Tres semanas hasta que os liasteis? Antxon este era un campeón, eh. Amaia: Tres semanas hasta que me pidió el teléfono.	VS. Rafa: We'll have to prepare this really well. Amaia: Like, how did we meet? Rafa: Let's say the typical thing. We got off at a disco. Amaia: That might be typical in Ibiza. We're in Euskadi. Rafa: Well, at a pelota game or in a farmhouse. Amaia: No, I mean couples here don't usually get off on the first day. Rafa: We did on the first night, my love! [...] Rafa: How did we meet, shit? Amaia: Some friends introduced us. Rafa: That's really dull. It's got no kick. He won't believe it. OK, we were introduced and we got off. Amaia: No, we were introduced and dated for three weeks. Rafa: Three weeks before you got off? That Antxon was a champ. Amaia: Three weeks until he asked for my number.
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In both cases the humorous effect is easy to convey. The audience can see that a comparison is being made between two types of girls, northern and southern, and that the customs on the subject of flirting differ according to the geographical area. However, it should be noted that the cultural references to *caseríos*, typical Basque houses, and *frontón* courts of the original are diluted in subtitling by eliminating the expression “of yours” which stresses the differences between the two communities, although this omission could be justified by the space and time restrictions inherent to this modality.

As for the stereotypes about physical appearance, these are questioned by the beauty of Amaia giving rise to humorous situations. When Rafa's partner says that there is no cosmetic product in the girl's bag, the other waiter points out that this is because the girl is Basque, based on the idea that Basque women have no interest in aesthetics and are more concerned with performing hard physical work as part of their role as matriarchs. Although Rafa challenges the cliché arguing that she could be Miss Euskadi, Joaquín ends the discussion asserting that beauty contests do not exist in the Basque community, which may cause a comic reaction in the spectator who understands that this is an exaggeration on the part of Joaquín and that such a statement is false as demonstrated by the intonation of the characters in this context.

(15)

<p>VO. Joaquín: Cuidado, Currito, no vaya a haber un artefacto explosivo, hijo. Currito: ¿Tú estás seguro que este bolso es el de una mujer? Porque aquí no hay ni pintalabios, ni rímel, ni nada. Joaquín: Si las vascas no se maquillan ni ná. Rafa: Joaquín, que tú viste a la muchacha, que podía ser Miss Euskadi. Joaquín: Miss Euskadi, eso allí no hay. No hay.</p>	<p>VS. Joaquín: Careful, there might be a bomb in there. Currito: Are you sure this is a woman's purse? There's no lipstick or mascara or anything. Joaquín: Basque women don't wear make-up. Rafa: Joaquín, you saw her, she could be Miss Euskadi. Joaquín: Miss Euskadi? They don't have that.</p>
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Physical appearance covers the different styles of dressing. Thus, humour arises in the comparisons that Rafa makes to refer to Amaia's look, ranging from her fringe to her clothes:

(16)

<p>VO. Rafa: ¿Qué te ha pasado en el pelo? [...] <i>Pa</i> mí esto no ha sido un aquí te pillo, aquí te mato. Entiéndeme aquí te pillo aquí te mato como una expresión. [...] Además allí te puedes peinar como una persona normal. [...] Aparte, estás <i>mu</i> rara, estás <i>mu</i> rara tía. ¿Qué vienes de la vendimia o algo? Amaia: Bueno, pero tú, ¿tú te has visto? Rafa: Jo macho, si es que se está haciendo la dura. Eso es muy típico de las chicas vascas de aquí. Eso y cortarse el flequillo que parece que le han dado un hachazo.</p>	<p>VS. Rafa: What happened to your hair? [...] It wasn't "Wham, bam, thank you, ma'am". I mean, take that as a manner of speaking. [...] And you can wear your hair like a normal person there. [...] You look very odd. Have you been picking grapes? Amaia: Have you seen yourself? Rafa: She really is acting tough. That's typical of Basque girls. That, and looking like they cut their fringe with an axe, right?</p>
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In the scene, several humorous elements concur, ranging from those typical of the community (SHC) to the visual (V). The first one which refers to the community is Rafa's comment on the encounter they had in Seville. When he says that it was not "*un aquí te pillo, aquí te mato*", and quickly adds that it is just an expression, an allusion is perceived to the subject of terrorism that in a certain way is maintained in the subtitled version thanks to "wham, bam" and the context surrounding the action which allows the viewer to understand what he is referring to. The next element is the combination of the visual, the dress and hairstyle of Amaia, and the comparisons that Rafa establishes. As pointed out by Zabalbeascoa (1997: 336), Fuentes Luque (2001: 43-56) or Martínez Sierra (2009: 141), visual elements are one of the constraints with which the translator has to deal; however, it should be highlighted that, as in this example, the image can contribute to the target audience picking up on the humour. Likewise, one can perceive the allusion to clichés about the community thanks to "that's typical of Basque girls".

Comments on Amaia's fringe and casual style are repeated in the following scene, where humour is the protagonist once again:

(17)

<p>VO. Rafa: <i>Escúsame</i>, eso será para jugar al frontón estará muy bien pero para salir a la calle yo no lo veo.</p> <p>Amaia: Que esta ropa está bien.</p> <p>Rafa: Está bien si vengo de recoger aceitunas en Puente Genil. Pero yo por la noche con un chándal yo no alterno.</p> <p>Amaia: Y el colgante que llevas, fuera también.</p> <p>Rafa: Ah, no. <i>Escúsame</i>, que esto es la Virgen de la Macarena, eh. Que esto es lo más grande que hay.</p> <p>Amaia: [...] El móvil, no te vaya a llamar un amigo tuyo desde la Giralda y la liemos.</p> <p>Rafa: No solo me quitas mis raíces, sino que encima me dejas incomunicado. Eso es muy típico de los radicales vascos.</p> <p>Amaia: Con el pelo hay que hacer algo, eh.</p> <p>Rafa: Pos sí, ahí llevas razón. Porque tienes el flequillo que parece que te ha <i>pegao</i> un <i>bocao</i> un burro.</p> <p>Amaia: Hablo de tu gomina.</p> <p>Rafa: Ah, no, que estás hablando de la gomina. No, no, tú a mí me trastocas la religión si quieres pero la gomina no me la tocas. Que tú no me tocas el pelo.</p>	<p>VS. Rafa: That might do for playing pelota but not for the street.</p> <p>Amaia: These clothes are fine.</p> <p>Rafa: They're fine for picking olives but I don't go out at night in a track suit.</p> <p>Amaia: And get rid of that necklace.</p> <p>Rafa: No! This is the Virgin of the Macarena. It's the greatest.</p> <p>Amaia: [...] Your phone. We don't want a friend calling you from the Giralda.</p> <p>Rafa: You take away my roots, and leave me incomunicado as well. Typical of Basque radicals.</p> <p>Amaia: And a change of hairstyle.</p> <p>Rafa: You're right there, you look like a donkey chewed your hair.</p> <p>Amaia: I mean your hair gel.</p> <p>Rafa: No way. My hair gel? No, you can play around with my religion but you're not touching my hair gel!</p>
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As a whole it is a non-marked humorous situation if you consider the transformation carried out by Amaia on Rafa. However, the scene is dotted with cultural references and elements about the communities. As for the cultural references, the original version has “*Puente Genil*”, “*la Giralda*” and “*la Virgen de la Macarena*”, which are reduced to two in the subtitled version, where the Cordoban locality of Puente Genil is omitted. This omission allows the translator to have a greater number of characters to work with and does not affect the target version by maintaining the comic effect by comparing Amaia’s way of dressing up to go out with the way olive growers dress when working in the field. The other two cultural references have remained intact in the target version; their fame and their strong link with Andalusian culture do not go unnoticed, including by the target audience, but they are not so obscure as to render the text difficult to comprehend. These references are accompanied by references to the Andalusian and Basque communities and the comparison of these leads to humour based on stereotypes. An example of this is the commentary on hairstyles, which apart from being a distinguishing trait also serves a humorous function. On the one hand, the comparison of Amaia’s fringe, typical of the Basque Country, to one made by being bitten by a donkey achieves a humorous effect that works in the same way in both versions, thanks in part to the girl’s image. Rafa’s relationship with hair gel is a little more complex, since the image does not contribute to the creation of the humorous effect and its use is more widespread than Amaia’s hairstyle. Although in both cases styling has the added value of being a representative element of their respective communities, the humour here comes from the importance that Rafa places on hair gel, holding it in greater reverence than religion, which is vital for an Andalusian according to clichés. To these elements about the communities must be added the resource of attributing terrorist behaviour to the Basque community, as in Rafa’s comment “*eso es muy típico de los radicales vascos*” when referring to the fact of restraining freedom. The fact that it is an exaggerated statement for that context and that it is not founded on any criterion, stemming from unfounded clichés instead, is what provides the situation with a humorous backdrop. This exaggeration is also expressed in the subtitled version reinforcing the humorous effect that surrounds the scene.

In the film humour based on stereotypes about the Basque community predominates, but we also find examples in which explicit references are made to stereotypes about Andalusians in which they are portrayed as lazy and uneducated. For example, when Rafa pretends to be Basque and ridicules the Andalusians by making use of the typical stereotypes:

(18)

VO. Rafa: ¡A tomar por culo, ya hombre! No solo tenemos que estar pagándoles las siestas con nuestros impuestos, sino que además vienen aquí a tirarse a nuestras mujeres.	VS. Rafa: To hell with him! Not only do our taxes pay for their siestas but now they come here and screw our women!
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This description is maintained without any modification in the subtitled version, the humour functioning as long as the target audience is aware of these clichés. The problem that can arise is that from outside the image of the Spanish community is based on the idea that they spend the whole day sleeping the siesta and seducing women (stereotype about the Andalusians), without distinguishing between the different communities that make up Spain.

On the contrary, we can see how the humour based on the preconceived idea of the ignorance of Andalusians works without problems in the subtitled version in the following case:

(19)

VO. Joaquín: Que te han <i>lavao</i> la cabeza. Pero no lo digo en sentido literario. Lo digo, bueno en el literario también porque te han <i>quita</i> la gomina y todo eso.	VS. Joaquín: They brainwashed you. I don't mean in the "literary" sense... Well, that too, because they took away your hair gel.
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The Andalusian's ignorance is reflected in the mistake that he makes when using the word "literary" instead of "literal" for the expression "literally". This paronymia works the same in English, which facilitates the work of the translator.

2.4 Linguistic elements

In terms of humour based on linguistic elements, Newmark (1988: 107) states that "all jokes are translatable, but they do not always have the same impact". He suggests that there are three possible methods for translating a word in a joke with two meanings: 1) find a word in the target language that expresses the same two meanings as in the source language, 2) sacrifice one of the meanings or distribute the two meanings over several words, and 3) use a synonym with a similar double meaning. In the film we find the following examples:

(20)

VO. Rafa: Camarero, Gente: ¿Qué? Rafa: Una de trucha. Gente: ¿Una de trucha? Rafa: Trucha policía, poca diversión.	VS. Rafa: Knock, knock! People: Who's there? Rafa: Laura. People: Laura who? Rafa: "Laura Norder", cops at the door!
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In this example the humorous effect relies on a linguistic element that is the play on words based on the phonetic similarity between “*trucha*” and “*mucha*” and in the resulting sense of the new expression where it becomes a term to refer to a large number of police characterizing them as homosexuals in a contemptuous way by means of the homonymy of the term *trucha*. In the subtitled version in English the paronymy is maintained by using “Laura Norder” and “law and order” and also ridiculing the police. This joke based on a question and a response that produces humour is known in both cultures. In the subtitled version, when it is asked why Laura is at the door, the answer is Laura Norder, which sounds just like law and order, an expression used by police when they are about to force entry somewhere. The translator’s proposal is doubly right because besides being able to maintain the humorous effect, using the same type of humoristic elements, it is adequate to the context in which it occurs, Rafa leading a demonstration and facing the police.

Another example is:

(21)

VO. Currito: Los vascos no pueden vernos a los andaluces ni en pintura. Eso se lo enseñan allí en primero de sus <i>escayolas</i> . Eso y hacer cócteles Molotov.	VS. Currito: The Basques can't stand the sight of Andalusians. They're taught that in baby Basque school. That and making Molotov cocktails.
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In it, the cultural referent, *ikastola*, becomes a linguistic element with a humorous function. The referent, taken from Euskera and meaning “school”, is confused by the Andalusian with the term *escayola* (“plaster”) resulting in a paronymia. This pun is lost in the subtitled version, but humour is compensated by retaining the absurdity (NM humour) of associating schools with the teaching of terrorist practices like making Molotov cocktails. Although Fuentes Luque (2001: 78), after studying the reception of humour in subtitling, concluded that “los juegos de palabras quedan sin resolver y la transferencia literaria de las referencias culturales hace que resulten incomprensibles al receptor, que queda desorientado, extrañado o, en el mejor de los casos, no recibe efecto humorístico alguno”, we must recognize the mastery of the

translator at certain times like the following, in which despite some loss they seek to preserve the same humour concatenation:

(22)

<p>VO. Joaquín: Que puede ser de la ETA o de algún comando. Rafa: Cómo va a ser de un comando de la ETA. Pero ¿tú estás <i>chalo</i> o qué? No has visto que iba vestida de faralaes? Joaquín: Y ¿cómo quieres que venga a Sevilla? Con un pasamontañas y una <i>quiscurriña</i>? Además te digo una cosa, eh. Esa tía está buscando piso piloto en Sevilla, te lo digo yo. Rafa: ¿No será piso franco? Joaquín: No hables de Franco que se enervan. Eh, eh, eh, no le des botellas porque esta gente con esto hacen cócteles molotov en cero coma dos.</p>	<p>VS. Joaquín: She could be an ETA terrorist! Rafa: An ETA terrorist? Are you nuts? Wasn't she wearing flounces? Joaquín: How else would she come here? With a balaclava and a Basque flag? I'll tell you something, I bet she's looking for a "show house" in Seville. Rafa: Don't you mean a "safe house"? Joaquín: Not with her in it! Don't give her any bottles. That lot make Molotov cocktails in a nanosecond.</p>
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This example includes cultural references to *ikurriña* (the Basque flag) and Franco. In the first case, the Basque term *ikurriña* is erroneously pronounced by the Andalusian giving rise to a new word with a certain phonetic similarity (*quiscurriña*). This confusion disappears, and therefore also its humorous touch, in the subtitled version where it is translated by means of the hyponym "Basque flag". In the second case, humour is the result of the misunderstanding that arises when using the expression "*piso piloto*" instead of "*piso franco*" and the wordplay that is established between the adjective "*franco*" and the surname of the Spanish dictator. No matter how complicated it may be to maintain this correlation in which each link amplifies the humour, the translator succeeds in reproducing this relationship. To do so, they resorted to the creation of the same confusion by means of the use of the expression "show house" instead of "safe house" as in the original version. While in the original version the allusion to Franco (CI) implies a provocation to the pro-independence community, in the subtitled version the CI is sacrificed along with its political value in favour of the humorous function that is conveyed in the relation between the adjective of "safe" house and the fact that it is not safe to have a Basque in the flat in accordance with the clichés about Basques and terrorism.

2.5 Elements about the community and institutions

As can be seen in the previous example, the translation of cultural references (CI) can be complicated, especially if the target culture does not share them. As happens in:

(23)

VO. Compañero de celda: Oye ¿y tú estás en algún comando o...? Rafa: Bueno, pues, pues puede ser. Vamos que sí. Compañero de celda: ¿Cuál? Rafa: El comando G. “Guipúzcoa”	VS. Cellmate: Are you in a terrorist cell or...? Rafa: Well, I could be. I mean, yes, I am. Cellmate: Which one? Rafa: G cell. “Guipúzcoa”.
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In this scene Rafa does not know how to respond when asked about his belonging to a commando group, and he responds with the name of the 80’s television series “Gatchaman” that was shown in Spain with the title “*Comando G*”. The popularity of this show arose through the song of the same name by the group Parchís, which was made up of children and teenagers. The association of the name Rafa proposes for a terrorist group based on the name of this group provokes humour among the target audience due to its incongruence with terrorism. Hence also the perplexity of the cellmate that makes Rafa react and relate the G with the initial of the Basque region Guipúzcoa. In the subtitled version the original CI has been translated literally causing the allusion to the anime in the target text to disappear. Nevertheless, the option of the translator could allude to the children’s film *G-Force* (2009), which would maintain the humour based on the naivety of Rafa for resorting to a program from his childhood via an intertextual reference.

The difficulty of translating CI is also demonstrated in the scene that gives the film its title in its original version:

(24)

VO. Koldo: Oye, me recuerda muchísimo al chaval aquel con el que saliste, uno que era del sur. Rafa: ¿Con uno del sur saliste? Koldo: Sí, de Vitoria; pero ojo, que para ser alavés tenía sus ocho apellidos vascos, como tiene que ser. Rafa: Hombre, qué mínimo que ocho. [...]	VS. Koldo: He reminds me a lot of that kid you dated, the one from the south. Rafa: From the south? Koldo: Yes, from Vitoria. But he did have his eight Basque surnames. Rafa: As it should be. Eight at the least. [...]
Amaia: Sí, Antxon también tiene muchos. Rafa: Y muy largos, con <i>kas</i> , muchas. Koldo: ¿Cuáles son pues? [...] Rafa: Pues... Gabilondo, Urdangarin, Zubizarreta, Arguiñano... Koldo: Cuatro. Rafa: Y luego ya por parte de ama, Igartiburu, Erentxun... Koldo: Seis. ¿Qué pasa se te han olvidao los demás, o...? Rafa: Es que me acuerdo de mis antepasaos y... el tío Zubi, acuérdate, qué figura. Y me he emocionao, barkatu. Otegi... Koldo: ¡Coño! Rafa: ...y Clemente. Koldo: Clemente no es vasco. [...] Rafa: ¿No es vasco? Qué disgusto se van a llevar en la familia cuando se enteren.	Amaia: Yes, Antxon has a lot. Rafa: And, very long, with lots of “k”s. Koldo: What are they? [...] Rafa: Well... Gabilondo, Urdangarin, Zubizarreta, Arguiñano... Koldo: Four. Rafa: And on my <i>ama</i> ’s side, Igartiburu, Erentxun... Koldo: Six. Have you forgotten the others? Rafa: No, when I remember my ancestors I... Uncle Zubi, remember? What a man. I get emotional. Otegi... Koldo: Jesus! Rafa: ...and Clemente. Koldo: Clemente isn’t Basque. [...] Rafa: He’s not? The family will be so upset when they hear.

The first problem that arises is that the action and the humour that is triggered in it is based on a concept of the community (SHC). The practice of bearing the paternal and maternal surname has been rooted in Spanish society since the 14th century (Herzog 2007: 10) and the result of having eight Basque surnames is proof that a person has at least two generations of purely Basque origin in their bloodline. This Spanish concept of recognizing and bearing in mind the surnames of both branches of the family may be unknown to a foreigner. If to this we add that the surnames provided in the film correspond in turn to well-known figures of the source culture (CI) with connections to the Basque community, translation is complicated further. The humour lies in the bringing together of personalities ranging from journalists, athletes and chefs to members of the royal family and terrorists. So if the target audience does not recognize that the surname Otegui is that of a terrorist, Koldo’s

exclamation will be meaningless. A humorous effect will not be achieved either if the target audience does not recognize the visual reference in the photo of Athletic’s football coach Javier Clemente, an emblem of the Bilbao team, and whose surname Rafa uses when he cannot remember more popular referents among the Basque community.

In the same vein of conflicting CI elements for the target audience is:

(25)

VO. Rafa: Koldo, te presento a Anne, mi ama. [...] Koldo: Anne...Igartiburu? ¡Ay va, la hostia, casualidad también! [...] Koldo: <i>Bai. Agur.</i> Merche: Hasta mañana, corazones.	VS. Rafa: Koldo, this is Anne, my <i>ama</i> . [...] Koldo: Anne...Igartiburu? Hell, there’s a coincidence! Yes, like the girl on TV. [...] Koldo: <i>Bai. Agur.</i> Merche: See you tomorrow, my dears.
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Here, the name that Merche chooses to pass herself off as Basque along with the surname that Rafa had chosen in his Basque persona corresponds to that of a presenter of a celebrity gossip show. The humour arises when Merche mimics the way of speaking and the formula that this presenter uses to say goodbye (P). The target audience, unless they are knowledgeable about this show, will only pick up on the CI thanks to the hyperonym “the girl on TV”, but will not establish any relation between the formula that Merche uses to say goodbye and the imitation of the presenter, thereby losing part of the humorous load (P).

On the other hand, if the referent is shared, the work of the translator is facilitated and the humour is transferred smoothly, as in the scene in which Rafa uses a catch phrase of a children’s film as a call to arms for pro-independence street fighters:

(26)

VO. Rafa: Hay que esconderse y esperar órdenes de arriba. [...] ¡Hasta la independencia y más allá! Chico: Oye, ¿pero eso no es de “Toy Story”?	VS. Rafa: Hide and wait for orders from above. [...] To independence and beyond! Youth: Isn’t that from “Toy Story”?
--	---

2.5. Visual elements

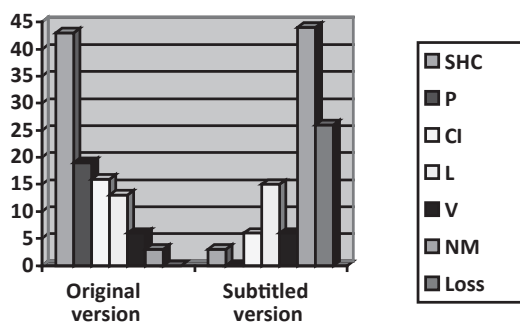
The film, which uses cultural humour as a trigger for the plot from its first sequence, resorts to the same kind of humour in order to close the story of

the characters. In the last scenes, Martínez Sierra's (2009: 147) assertion is confirmed that although the visual component can often contribute to a better understanding of the target text and to facilitating humour, when the cultural component is added to it the translator encounters restrictions that can barely be overcome. This is the case (twenty-seventh example) of the scene in which Koldo, after spending the night with Merche, discovers in the bedroom numerous objects highly representative of Spain and its institutions such as a figurine of a civil guard on the table, a Spanish flag next to a picture of the king, a plate with the Spanish flag or a cushion on which Spain is written along with an image of an Andalusian and a Sevillian dancing. References to Spain are visible elsewhere in the house. So, just outside the bedroom Koldo is met with a box that reads "Forever Cáceres", a plaque of the civil guard and, finally, a photo of Merche with her husband dressed in the uniform of a civil guard next to a picture with the Spanish flag and the Osborne bull. The humorous situation unfolds before Koldo's perplexed eyes (V) as he discovers all these emblems representative of the Spanish community and its institutions (CI). These also have the additional effect of being related to values and beliefs of the community (SHC) associated with the exaltation of Spain as a nation that collide with his pro-independence ideology. However, the viewer who does not know the significance attributed to the civil guard as defenders of the unity of Spain may not understand why Koldo is surprised to discover that Merche was married to a civil guard and is now in love with an independentist like him.

3. Conclusion

As has been demonstrated throughout the analysis, the complexity of the translation of humour and, in particular, the high cultural content that converges in *Spanish affair* are added to the restrictions typical of subtitling. The key role played by humour in the film along with the heavy cultural load complicates the already arduous task of the translator and at times questions our initial hypothesis on the translatability of humour. Despite this, the research shows that, in terms of a global assessment, it is possible to reflect humour in subtitling, showing the professionalism and creativity of the translator, with the minimal difference in humoristic elements found between the original version (37 elements) and the subtitled version (34 elements).

In terms of a partial evaluation focused on the translation of humorous elements in the subtitled version, a change of the types of humorous elements is shown in Graph 1:



Graph 1. Percentage of humorous elements in the original and subtitled versions.

In the original version, the number of cases in which the humour lies in SHC elements is 16 out of the 27 examples analyzed (examples: 6-19, 24 and 27), followed by the P elements with 7 cases (examples: 2-7 and 25), CI with 6 cases (examples: 21-26), L with 5 cases (examples: 6-7 and 20-22), V with 2 cases (examples: 16 and 27) and UM with 1 case (example: 1). The preference for the use of SHC elements as a humorous resource in the original version is notable and, as pointed out by Fuentes Luque (2001: 78), there is a loss of the humorous effect due to possible ignorance of the values attributed to the community and on which the stereotypes are based. Hence the importance of taking into account the audience when it comes to cultural humour as the one that presents the most challenges (Eleni 2004). Also, the humour in the film comes from the reflected stereotypes and the clash between them. These stereotypes are not limited to the way of dressing or grooming, but go further and concern ideologies that are reflected many times in the use of language. Deacon's thesis (1997: 419), supported by Vandaele (2010), on the social role of humour as a way of maintaining group cohesion and identity is verified by the analysis. It is proven that the members of the respective communities share the same sense of humour and frequently choose to resort to the same types of humorous elements. That clash between cultures and traditions that maintains the tension throughout the film culminates with the reconciliation of cultures that symbolizes the union of the protagonists. Also, if we pay attention to the elements of humour in the subtitled version we find that the number of UM elements increases significantly to the detriment of SHC; This is because in many of these cases the impossibility of translating part of the speech triggers an absurd situation that leads to humour, as in examples 2, 4, 5, 6 or 7.

In addition to the SHC cultural humour elements, the P elements, particularly those related to accent and speech, are numerous and play a key role in

the production of humour in the original version which is difficult to translate in subtitling. Here, there is a loss of humoristic load which is partially remedied when these elements are combined with others pursuing the same end, such as L in examples 6 and 7. Although humour based on L elements can be transferred by means of equivalents to the target language (examples 20 and 22), this transfer is affected at the moments when the L elements are linked to cultural aspects, as happens in example 21. In this way they corroborate Vandaele (2010: 149), who points to the cultural and linguistic aspects as triggers of this impossibility.

Regarding CI elements, it is evident that humour transference is feasible in those cases where the referent type finds an equivalent in the target culture (example 23) or is common to both cultures (example 26). Whereas, on the other hand, if humour resides only in this element and the referent cannot be modified (example 24), there is a loss of humour as it becomes obscure to the target audience, who fail to understand its final meaning in the scene.

In the case of V elements, they can only be confusing in scenes where the symbolic value of these elements is linked to aspects or figures specific to the source culture which are unknown to the target audience. However, if it is a combination of these that gives rise to a comic situation, ignorance of some of them is compensated by the rest and, consequently, their transfer is feasible, as in example 27.

Thus we can conclude that, contrary to what might seem a priori, both on account of the marked cultural nature of the film and an analysis based on isolated examples, humour is translatable, although that translatability is due to a change in the type of humour used in those cases where the preservation of the same humorous element of the original is not feasible.

Finally, we would like to point out that although humour has been an object of study on numerous occasions, not many articles have focused on its translatability in films which have cultural differences as their narrative thread and whose humour comes precisely from these, and even fewer have focused on subtitling. Therefore, this article has tried to contribute to the study of the translation of humour in this type of films and in particular in their subtitled version, on the assumption that these films are shown in other countries with different languages in which a greater diffusion of both the audiovisual product and source culture is sought. However, we are aware that there is still a long way to go and from here we would like to encourage more research on the reception of humour to complement this study; that would be essential to be able to affirm that humour is translatable in this type of films and in which the effects on the viewer could be evaluated when some specific reference is lost.

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