



## Studying the Method of Preserving Practical and Stylistic Aspects in the Translation of Humorous Texts in English

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### Abstract

The goal of the study is to translate humorous passages from fiction texts while maintaining the humor's stylistic and pragmatic elements. Research on humor translation is still among the most challenging from a linguistic, psychological, and cultural perspective. The pragmatic aspect of this issue presents challenges for working translators and is still important for theoretical scholars. Humor in fiction translation necessitates the translator having a thorough comprehension of the comedic effect that the author intended to achieve. The study provides an overview through a comparative analysis of three translations, each by a professional translator, of Douglas Adams' novels, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," "Restaurant at the End of the Universe," and "Life, the Universe, and Everything." Linguistic and extralinguistic elements, such as context, are included in the pragmatic aspect of language. The reader to whom the text is addressed as well as the character's knowledge and beliefs make up the situational context. When an utterance is intended to make the reader laugh, the translator should provide equivalents of units in each language level, though this equivalency may not matter if the source text lacks a pragmatic effect.

**Keywords:** Translation; English Text; English Language.

### 1. Introduction

There are several ways to study the pragmatic side of translation theory. The pragmatic criterion of translation adequacy, as demonstrated by E. Nida and C. Taber, is the correspondence of responses to the initial and final messages. The English author Douglas Adams's novels, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy," "Restaurant at the End of the Universe," and "Life, the Universe and Everything," which were published by Pan Books between 1979 and 1982, are the basis for the conducted study's pragmatic translator analysis. We discovered in the study the challenges in transferring humor's pragmatic effect. Irony, wordplay, and absurdism serve as the stylistic and practical foundations of English humor, which reflects the unique national and cultural characteristics of the populace.

Numerous academics have noted the significance of humor and how unique it is to the English. When translating humorous episodes from English texts, translators face significant challenges because of this fact: in order to translate a humorous episode, it must first be accurately identified and evaluated, and then it must be adequately conveyed to an audience that is not familiar with the nuances of English jokes. According to Adams (1980), "Giving students literary texts in a foreign language within the framework of individual reading" is one level at which this pragmatic aspect of education might be covered. Furthermore, since "it has been established that violations of the norm of the literary language occur at all levels of the language system," contemporary media also has an impact on linguistic conventions and skews perceptions of humor.

### 2. Literature Review

According to Huang (2011), when translating literary works, it is crucial to take into account both the typical characteristics of the original literary work and the significant aspects from the target readership's point of view, such as

linguistic and cultural differences. It is expected that a literary translation will preserve the rhetorical and aesthetic qualities that define literary texts. Replicating the rhetorical and aesthetic qualities of the source text is one of the major responsibilities of a literary translator. Whereas the content in a non-literary translation might be seen as detached from the form or structure, the form and content are linked in a literary translation. Similar to poetry, certain linguistic elements can serve a specific textual purpose in prose as well. Hemingway, for instance, uses repetition in "In Another Country" as a linguistic device to convey the character's boring existence. According to Rener (1989), a "rhetorical" sentence is one that has been expertly put together. According to Venuti (2000), form and content have an impact on one another. According to him, a message's form and content are inextricably linked, and the former cannot be fully separated from the latter.

However, the linguistic disparities make literary translation extremely difficult. The linguistic variations in prose should also be carefully taken into account. One wordplay that heavily depends on language is the pun. It can be challenging and complex to translate. When translating these kinds of works, a translator must give it enough thought. The translator needs to ensure that the intended audience finds the text humorous (Venuti, 2000). It is imperative for a translator to ensure that the purpose of humor in the target text aligns with its original meaning. Humor's identification may be the first issue in translation. Most humor is conveyed subtly, making it difficult for the translator to pick it up. Another issue with translating humor is the lack of socio-cultural equivalency between the source and target languages. According to Lei (2010), humor unites people from all walks of life. Nonetheless, humor varies greatly among nations and is strongly associated with religion, ideology, politics, society, and culture. Consequently, even though humor has been studied for a very long time, the majority of these studies have come from the viewpoints of linguistics, literature, art, sociology, psychology, or pragmatics. Several academics question whether humor can be accurately translated into another language due to its cultural and linguistic specificity.

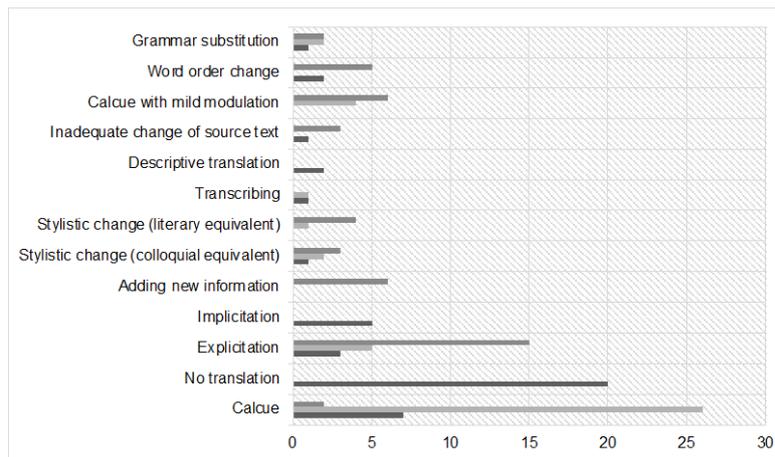
According to Attardo (1994), jokes can be classified into two categories: verbal jokes and referential jokes. The former is predicated on the text's meaning and does not mention the phonological realization of the lexical items or any other textual units, whereas the latter may mention the text's phonological realization in addition to the text's meaning and its constituent elements. Pragmatic humor is the subject of referential jokes. These are language-playing comedies. However, humor that plays on language and is linguistically focused is referred to as verbal jokes. Gledhill (2001), taking a linguistic approach to humor, makes the assumption that the translation of humor and paronomasia constitutes another significant but underappreciated area in literary translation theory. Delabastita (1996) views this field as challenging.

### **3. Methodology**

Cultural (extralinguistic) translation challenges can be categorized into two categories because humor is a strong cultural reflection. The distinctions between the English national characters are referred to by Lanina (2010) as explicit and implicit, respectively (Solovyev et al. 2020); self-humiliation and self-irony, on the other hand, are not as typical of English culture, according to Gerts. The translation of humor is thought to be less significant than the pragmatic consideration. Even if the message itself changes, the translator's job is to maintain the pragmatic relationships as expressed in the original text. That is, the humor in the translation ought to match that of the source.

### **4. Results**

We have looked at three professional translators' translations of seventy amusing units. We observed that a great deal of literal translation was used, which we acknowledge is appropriate and useful for translating the humorous context and parodies. Though over half of the units in the official translation have been removed, overall, the official translation does the best job of maintaining the original's pragmatics.



The data gathered from the analysis of the author's texts is displayed in the diagram. The diagram shows that literal translation is the most common method of expressing humorous elements. Adams (1980) uses this translation technique. 48% of the humorous elements are missing from the official translation due to translator error. The translations by M. Spivak frequently add new elements, change out old lexical ones, and create new meanings. In eight percent of transfers, there is insufficient replacement. According to translation theory, the pragmatic component is one of the most crucial for communicating the message's original code. This is reflected in practice in the choice of lexical and grammatical tools. We came across a great deal of metaphorical substitutions and the choice of equivalents that can convey a humorous element for the bearers of other culture and mentality while examining the various translation options. One factor that could heighten the humorous effect is the selection of the right synonym; in this instance, a translator could make use of contemporary quantitative linguistics tools, as noted by "the demand for WordNet resources in natural language processing tasks" (Danilevskaya et al. 2021).

To establish the necessary mocking tone for the entire story, the author begins the book with a parody of the popular science genre. After examining Adams's writings, we have determined the following stylistic and practical ways to express humor: Irony is a kind of subtly expressed, covert mockery. The encoding of this form's complexity (Kulinich, 1999). "Share and Enjoy" is the company motto of the wildly successful Sirius Cybernetics Corporation Complaints division, which now covers the major land masses of three medium-sized planets and is the only part of the Corporation to have shown a consistent profit in recent years. Adams's irony in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* frequently targets the qualities of human nature. The irony in this instance is that, despite the vast volume of complaints, the only department within a massive cybernetic corporation that produces devices for the entire galaxy makes a steady profit—that is, the complaints department. "Life forms descended from apes are so incredibly primitive that they find digital watches to be a pretty neat idea even today." The literal positive connotation of the term "a pretty neat idea" is mocked in this context, as it belittles human ideas about science.

Sarcasm is an extremely acerbic satire that purposefully highlights the discrepancy between the intended and expressed meanings. Observe, are you busy? "Well, other than that, no, not particularly, why? I just have all these bulldozers and things to lie in front of because they'll knock my house down if I don't." The hero's negative and blatantly false response conceals a subtle jab at his friend's ignorance. "On the sub-ether radio report, I recently heard." It claimed you had passed away. Zaphod replied, "Yeah, that's correct. I haven't stopped moving yet." The character in this instance employs sarcasm to highlight how ridiculous the interlocutor's theories about his death are. A purposeful divergence between an art form's stylistic and thematic blueprints is called parody. "The universe was created at the beginning. This has been viewed as a poor decision and has infuriated a great deal of people." To establish the necessary mocking tone for the entire story, the author begins the book with a parody of the popular science genre.

First, significant information from the history of the galaxy: (Taken from the popular Galactic History book *Siderial Daily Mentioner's Book*.) The least interesting sight in the entire universe is the night sky over the planet Krikkit. The author continues to describe the exposition in the third book of the cycle by heavily using popular science style and a parody of a guidebook. The emphasized lack of causal relationships is absurdity; it is a grotesque illustration of absurdity. "A Hoolooovoo is an exceptionally bright shade of blue." An absurd comedy is produced by the illogical combination of the words "a super-intelligent shade." "Vogon's brain was originally a severely malformed, misplaced,

and dyspeptic liver, according to anatomical analysis." The use of absurdity highlights the ignorance of a made-up race whose acrimoniousness and lack of intelligence stem from their physical makeup. The following is a presentation of the work on distinct humor elements: The original text was included in the table along with translations by M. Spivak, Gibbs (1994), and the official translation (AST). Subsequently, we looked at the translation processes, translation transformations, and statistical data compilation.

Later, we asked 100 students studying language specializations to participate in an experimental study we were conducting on the pragmatic adequacy of translations. They were asked to select the most humorous and successful translation of the phrase "Great Green Arkleseizure." The first two terms of the fictional deity's name are easily translated and appear in all three translations in the same way. For the sake of translation analysis, the word "seizure" should be analyzed at the morphemic level. The author created the onomatopoeic neologism "arkle," and the part "seizure" literally translates as "a seizure, apoplexy." Because morphemes have varying degrees of equivalency, it is challenging to convey the original pragmatics. The official translation of the second part thus conveys onomatopoeia through the other equivalent interjection, "back!" The literal translation of "seizure," which literally translates to "bout," was replaced with an allusion to the phrase "Be healthy," which makes sense in response to the first part of the word. The first part of the word is left out in favor of focusing on the second in Gibbs' (1994) translation. The term "seizure" is translated using an antiquated and colloquial synonym for the combination "apoplexy," which eliminates the original's pragmatics. The translation by M. Spivak uses a neologism that combines the words "apoplexy" and "apocalypse" to translate the word into another language while taking into account its association with mythological terminology. It should be noted that the original text refers specifically to sneezing and not to apoplexy due to the context (Great White Hadkerchief is the antagonist of Great Green Arkleseizure, leaving no room for free translation). Therefore, the official translation comes the closest to transferring pragmatics.

## **5. Discussion**

The most common method used by translators was literal translation, which works well for translating humorous scenarios and parodies. In general, the official translation does a better job of maintaining the original pragmatics than the unofficial one, though about half of the units have been removed. Comedy is a complicated category with a vague definition, according to the study. Three theories regarding the structure of humor are presented in the work's text, along with multiple interpretations of the term "comic." The theory that humor is based on contradiction (inconsistency) is used in this paper. We also looked at practical interpretations of irony that were put forth by international humorists. Many and unavoidably, metaphors are used in everyday language (Gibbs, 1994). As a result, it leaves room for many interpretations and reinterpretations, which can result in the development of comic scenarios. The direct access model refutes the standard pragmatic model's implication that speakers must first ascertain the literal meaning of the statement. Instead, speakers can directly access the ironic meaning of a statement. The standard pragmatic model defines irony as the disregard of any of the communication maxims within the framework of the principle of cooperation. According to the graded salience theory, speakers access the most important meaning first, followed by the less important. All three theories emphasize a critique or negation relationship between meaning statements. Mention theory defines irony as a reference to a prior utterance, while pretense theory concentrates attention on the speaker.

## **6. Conclusion**

Our research sought to understand the comic's expression in the work's text as well as how the translator translated it into a different language. We examined the theoretical underpinnings of the comic's creation in great detail before comparing and contrasting the source text with its translations. In our work, we began with the idea that the translator should translate the text's pragmatic elements into the target language while taking the reader's response into account. We knew that translating a humorous work by a British author into another language would be challenging due to cultural and historical differences. Due to the humorous image's constant connection to native speakers' conceptual systems, which exist outside of language and only find expression in it, the perception of irony, satire, and parody is not always comparable in multilingual readerships. The primary contradiction in our instance resulted from the disparity in English cultures. The benefit of translators as linguistic personalities is the accuracy with which they have been able to unite two disparate languages and cultures.

## Acknowledgements

This paper is performed as a part of the implementation of the Kazan Federal University Strategic Academic Leadership Program.

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