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*Humour in television series:
an audiovisual analysis*

Relatrice
Prof.ssa Fiona Clare Dalziel

Laureanda
Chiara Maggiolo
n° matr. 1228651 / LTLLM

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Introduction

A translation process is the passage of written and spoken material from source to target text. For many years the area has been studied, improved to fully achieve the main aim of the aforementioned process, conveying and engaging every segment of a language into a new linguistic perspective, with the purpose of recreating the same effect as that achieved in the source language. Different variations occur whenever translating, one of them is the presence of a humorous side within the text or discourse. Humour is a double-edged sword, interacting with different disciplines, subtly touching them under various facets to reach more people and therefore, risking stepping too far.

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute to raising the awareness about the challenges that come when translating humour, with an inside look into the television series of the late 20th century. Sitcoms such as Modern Family, The Big Bang Theory, Two Broke Girls, Friends and How I Met Your Mother contain humoristic features in their dialogues; therefore, their translation is a complex issue, as will be observed during the development of this work, carried out with the inclusion of examples and observations.

The first chapter is made up of a description of each category in which humour is most likely to be found; sounds and words rightly combined can bring about a high level of laughter elicitation, as with the representation of humour based on phonetics. Homophones, homonyms or polysemes are the standard phonetic humour categories which will be analysed in 1.1, illustrated through the choice of lines from different television shows.

As mentioned above, humour touches on several dimensions, one of which is constituted by the cultural setting in which it may occur: the society's background knowledge, the attitude and behaviour towards certain topics, followed by their acceptance or rejection, all interferes with the many differences in humour perception. The second chapter is the heart of the work, as it will deal with the translation process needed to touch various social environments; starting from defining priorities and restrictions in translation which may awaken a translator's attention on the lack of need or the importance of certain source material elements. At the end of the second chapter

controversies and issues coming from translation will be examined, by referring to phenomena such as fossilization, cultural ethnocentrism, and dynamism.

The third and last chapter of the thesis is a practical study based on new examples and others proposed before, recalling the exploration in the first and second chapter of phonetic and cultural humour. The many lines from various television series will be related to the translation strategies mentioned in the theorical part of the work. An analysis of the different translations that managed to convey the same aim as the source text aim will be compared to the translations that did not achieve the fluidity presented in the source language in the target language.

Chapter One: The Roots of Humour

Humour accompanies our lives, gathers together cultures, people and different realities: it is undeniably present and vivid and yet still much unknown: the purpose of my work in this chapter is to provide an in-depth view of studies and research about the features of modern humour and picture them in a complete and inclusive frame.

1.1 Words and sounds: lexical and phonetic features of humour

As I am going to analyse the issue of the translation of humour, it is worth noting that very often the joy of reading is ensured thanks to translators all around the world. However, what might be seen as the closest interaction with translation in everyday life is certainly linked to the multidimensional issues of audio-visual texts, distributed by means of public television, cinema, and also online streaming. This section will concern the phonetic and lexical aspects of humour, as they make up a large part of the translation itself, and represent a crucial point that needs to be treated carefully, as it can cause the failure of the whole joke or lead to misunderstanding or even controversial situations.

First, it is necessary to remember that translation itself it is not detached from a linguistic point of view, and therefore from phonetics and lexis: two different approaches are defined in Baker's work (2001: 120), and they describe the variety of linguistic methodologies used in the job of translation. In fact, some may define translation by applying linguistic rules to the translation process; and yet translation can have its own rules and theories that might be found in linguistics. In the first case, every single part of the translation occurs according to specific linguistic guidelines, in terms of just transferring a source language (SL) element into the target language (TL) element that simply corresponds to it, without any variation. This may lead to some problematic situations when it comes to dialects or dialogues characterized by a different social approach from SL to TL, since the TL may not have what it needs to really convey the message: in terms of a sociolinguistic approach for example, the TL is more likely to miss some shades of SL features. In humour translation the SL may present some features untraceable from the TL linguistic point of view. On the other hand, the linguistic competence of the translator is not enough, as it only takes him/her

as far as a certain point: in this situation, translation is the main focus, and it is enough to follow linguistics' rules, as variations can occur, depending on the purpose of translation, or TL, as an exemplification of a "rewriting process" (Shveitser, 1987).

This leads to the main aim of the chapter: as Catford (1965) describes in his linguistic theory of translation, what a translator should ensure is the completeness of the translation itself. A translation can consequently become the "full" translated version of the SL (including the sociolinguistic features) or a "partial" one, as it may be possible that translators leave some words or sayings not translated. The second classification is represented by a total translation as it concerns the translation of phonetic, grammatical, lexical and graphic elements (different from the "full" presented above in terms of excluding the sociolinguistic features). On the other hand, a restricted version happens whenever only grammatical and graphological features are translated into the TL. Lastly, rank bound translation (Catford, 1965) is present when equivalences are searched for through TL possibilities in order to maintain the closest possible meaning between the two morphemes, words, clauses and sentences. The other option is then an unbounded translation, with a variation on the meaning' scale, from a slightest to a more considerable change. Considering this variety of choices, English presents a crucial translation issue as its sentences and lexes focus on different word stress and tones. Ross (1998:7) speaks about "the structural ambiguity": the "structure" derives from a blending of phonological, grammatical, graphological, morphological, lexical and syntactical elements. It may happen therefore, a mistranslation of one, two or more elements. The author for example, observes the issues coming from the English tendency to reduce the vowels sound; it will thus become a /ə/. What will be interesting to analyse is how Italian translators dealt with these issues.

1.2 Inside phonetic: homophones, homonyms and polysemes

However, before reaching that doubt, it is necessary to first define what makes people laugh, with particular reference to British and American humour. Starting from the most basic (and its easiest and most common solution) a joke is better if said in front of an interlocutor, in our case the recipient. Whenever the vocal system is used by creating words and sounds, it is relevant to talk about phonology. Phonology indeed is used to

recreate some aspect of humour based on the possibility to create uncertainty in the speaker's words and intentions: in a written text in fact, they are clear, unquestionable. While talking this condition is unfulfilled, as many variations may occur, such as stresses and tones that may affect the speaker's words. The recipient is willing to find his own version of the joke, conscious that it might not be right, and that is when word boundaries permit the delivery of the pun. A simple classification found in phonology and lexis can define three main categories of sound association (phonology) in words (lexis), defined as homophones, homonyms and polysemes (Ross 1998: 9). There is an example of homophone:

"Act like a parent, talk like a peer. I call it peer-renting"
Modern Family S01EP01

This example is taken from Modern Family, a popular television show aired in 2009, where many different characters are introduced and we find Phil, husband and father, who is comfortable with "dad" jokes and provides a huge variety of examples, useful to easily identify the main models listed above. The joke is based on the different stresses taking place thanks to the phonetical similarities between the words "parent" and "peer". Supported by the IPA chart in fact, we can observe the differences:

/pɪr/ *peer*

/ˈper.ənt/ *parent*

(Cambridge Online Dictionary, American pronunciation)

The linguistic explanation comes from phonology, where a homophone (Chiaro 1992: 38) is a word with the same sound as another, but a completely different meaning (and spelling): many jokes or puns start from a slight misunderstanding created by the joker leading the recipient to a first association between sound and meaning, which proves to be wrong.

Another example is represented by a famous shop in the suburbs of London called "Cereal killer" which gained its popularity thanks to the huge variety of cereals sold in

it. Wordplay here is reached thanks again to phonetical reasons: similarities between the two words are clear, even from a linguistic point of view.

/ˈsɪə·r·iəl/ *cereal*

/ˈsɪə·ri·əl/ *serial*

(Cambridge Online Dictionary, British pronunciation)

However simple the utterance, humour's elicitation is satisfied even though common sense indicates that the two terms do not collide in any kind of form, except from the vowel sounds' dimension.

In addition, as already presented, stress is fundamental in English, mostly because unlike other languages such as Italian, all the unstressed vowels tend to reduce their space and importance in the whole word and become a schwa sound for example (Ross, 1998: 10). This leads to the creation of a good amount of confusion, and therefore help to generate jokes and puns: a good example of incorrect stress is a scene in Modern Family when Phil greets Gloria, his father-in-law's wife from Colombia and compliments her on her dress. She replies by thanking him but Gloria's difficulties with the English language and its pronunciation are quite significant and they lead Phil to a very uncomfortable situation with Clare, his wife, after she finds him touching Gloria's dress. vowel sounds here are misused, as the simple prolongation of a single sound (/i:/ for the verb "to feel") led to the delivery of the humour. Phil in fact, interprets Gloria's words in the wrong way, because of mispronunciation:

P: "Hey Gloria. Oh beautiful dress!"

G: "Thank you Phil"

P: "Oh…ok"

C: "She said Phil, not feel!"

S:01EP:01

Lexis also presents opportunities for word manipulation examples such as homonyms. Homonyms are words with an identical form (in terms of graphology and phonology) but a completely different meaning. The trick here is how the recipient will focus on one field or another, since the two words are identical and yet so different. (Ross 1998:

10). For instance, in Modern Family, Phil provides a good example of this pattern: he is building a duck nest with his nephew, Lily: suddenly he cannot find the "Duckingham palace" project:

"I think I'll find a way to wing it"
S.07EP:04

Here, a type of homonym is constituted by the double meaning of "wing": the first circumstance is represented by the phrasal verb "to wing something", to find a solution in a crucial situation. The second one, is a simple reference to ducks.

The last example of linguistic tools conveyed in humour are polyseme: as we talked before about homonyms, in which the recipient will need to choose the right path in order to obtain the right interpretation (or not) polysemy shifts to a new different level. Polysemy is the fact of having more than one meaning: is the consequence of an execution operation that keeps bounded all the different meanings. (Graffi & Scalise 2007: 213). Nonetheless, what differs from a homonym is given by a single word that encloses different meanings related in-between in terms of semantic field. For instance, the word "bow" and the verb "to bow" are bound together thanks to the ideological concept of bended object, or the action of bending. Thus, the whole humour attempt reaches a new concept of interpretation since four out of five linguistic fields are fulfilled (phonology, morphology, graphology and syntax). For example in figure 1, polysemy is satisfied: the verb "to fire" concerns the act of expulse something (a bullet from a weapon) or someone (from a job's position).
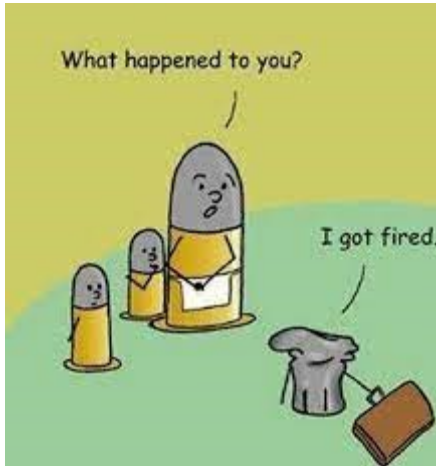
Figure 1: Example of polysemy

In television series, an infinite variety of puns coming from a phonological or lexical approach appear and may be one of the best ways to create laughs and present a very challenging path when translated.

1.3 Humour and culture

Growing up during the first years of a new century led a whole generation to develop an intrinsic sense of humour, made up of subtle jokes and ambiguous puns, creating a fine and intrigued sense of humour in the latest generations, most of the time hardly reached by a more mature audience. In this regard, television series such as Friends, Sex and the City or My Wife and Kids, paved the way (in terms of humour) for newer series that push words to the limit (Penati 2016: 56), thus everyone is already used to it and ready to comprehend and enjoy the slightest joke. Frequently politically incorrect, if seen with 2022' eye, those jokes might have been a little bit too harsh because of this issue, but it is certain that some others were enjoyable.

A pun or a joke, as I already highlighted, is delivered whenever there is an audience, but that audience (recipient) is not likely to have the exact same reaction as many dynamics may intervene, mainly represented by the cultural background. As we think about humour changes through the years, it is important to give brief acknowledgement to Freud, who first described what happens when we laugh and the psychological structure of the joke. In "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious" (1905) an association between joke and dream happens as we consider a joke as a dream: our most hidden

thoughts about a topic are set free when a pun is made (or in comparison when we dream). Reduction of inhibition and mind relaxation are observed whenever humour is used to comment a situation, as it may regard the recipient's intimate passions, social class, gender or mind-set. Thus, the recipient's engagement in the joke is strictly bound to his/her background knowledge and his/her willingness to open up to his unconscious and weaknesses.

On the other hand, Freud's work presents a useful tool to understand people's attitude in facing humour, and why we developed a strong criticism towards some jokes: if dreams are seen as a personal and intimate release of personal thoughts, humour is shared, collectively commented, ignored, enjoyed, or even repudiated. In fact, audience is not suitable anymore as before, and the answer to this is globalization: it overturned our lifestyle and each one of use can count on various connections between cultures or genres. As people begun to create concrete relations with other realities, a pun about gays or trans-people appeared as an empty attempt to provoke a laughter, since it could perhaps concern a family member, a colleague or simply us. Moreover, the internet gave a voice to people who did not have one, and thus a hypothetical complaint or critique to a punchline wrong is more likely to happen.

1.4 Elements of humour

Indeed, humour can be found even in the most particular circumstances, as long as three main elements are present: the agent, an object and an audience (Nash 1985: 4). The agent is whoever tells the joke, the source of humour creating the right situation who needs to be conscious about the topic and aim of it. In other words, he/she must know what the joke is about, who are the parts involved and the most effective way to create laughter. I would say that he/she is placed on a superior level because of the already developed knowledge, which permits the delivery of the pun. The audience is whoever receives the joke; it could be at the same level as the agent, in order to appear clever and to assure that the joke has been received in the right way, or as Walter Nash suggests in "The language of humour", "one must be broadly informed not with the stuff of scholarship but with things that one ought to know" (1905: 4). Lastly, the object is

pun's main target, purposely designated as the person, or group, "receiving" the joke. Occasionally, these two elements may collapse, in terms of agent becoming the object.

1.5 The "butt of the joke" analysis

As already explained, humour has changed through the years and what is most interesting is the "butt of the joke" analysis: the butt of the joke comes from an old French saying, and concerns the main target of the joker regarding a certain social category (the object), conjointly with a mocking action (Ross 1998:54). It is perceptible what the main object of the joke is just by listening or observing the agent, and it could be pointing at a particular social class or status. The second classification after the linguistic one is helpful to fully integrate the main purpose of this chapter and is represented by social or cultural based humour. To help me describe this typology I will consider the classification made by Gulas and Weinberger (2010: 20).

Ethnic boundaries regard every group or class that happens to be an easy target: one can perceive the existence of classes who are deliberately mocked, because of their weak position. They are defined as weak because of the ambiguity created by the differences perceived by the joke teller: those classes are the object of the other's power and therefore, an easy prey. It is not complex to point out that race, sexuality, political address, nationality and so on happen to be the typical target of the joke. As we compare newer television series to older ones, we might encounter in the last ones many puns or jokes which could be fairly criticized. "Friends" was such an emblematic television series and yet problematic: thousands of socially incorrect puns happen to be found in it, not only talking about racism, but even fat-shaming or sexually related humour. It was the epicentre of the laughter, and society accepted the fact that a fat person such as Monica, back in her high school years, deserved to be mocked and could succeed in life only after a diet.

As concerns gender boundaries it has been established that whatever makes laugh a man may not receive the same response in a woman. A man seems to better enjoy humour made by a man and vice versa (Chiaro 2010: 21): let us take as examples two stand-up comedians, Amy Schumer and Rick Gervais. YouTube offers a relevant quantity of

sketches from their shows and what is interesting is their approach towards the audience, likely to be the typical slice of society. The first one talks about a one-night stand with some random people and calls the women in the theatre "*whores*". Gervais on the other hand is talking about man's masturbation and other sexual practices. By switching the agent with the object, the result would be certainly embarrassing: this to indicate, as Chiaro explains (2010), that gender plays a fundamental role in humour, and it may not be perceived equally. Indeed, a different humour perception created by gender is real: the joke may receive a different result if the audience's genre is different from the one of the joke-teller; therefore, we observe that what makes someone laugh is not only given by the joke's effectiveness.

Regarding cultural boundaries: everyday people interact with such a variety of cultures, and they do it in the most subtle manner; as said before in Chapter One, the closest interaction with other dimensions is related to the audio-visual sphere which exposes a great number of new perspectives and builds different dimensions of social identities (Vine, Kell, Marra & Holmes 2009: 136). By contrast, such identities are way too "massive" to be translated in other languages, mostly because of their distance from TL in terms of linguistic, or in this case cultural boundaries. For instance, by analysing the first episode of the series "The Big Bang Theory" a non-English speaker may encounter a passage in the last minutes of the show that seems missing a linking between the rest of the dialogue. During the Italian dubbed first episode in fact, the four scientists (most specifically Leonard, who has a crush on Penny) combine a night out with their new neighbour (Penny) and Howard does not miss the opportunity to flirt with her. Sheldon, a very peculiar character of the series, will comment sarcastically Howard's singing (and flirting) capacities by just observing Leonard's unrequested willing to open up to new relations. If we search for the English version of the first episode, Sheldon will instead simply call Leonard a *"mac daddy"*: an English speaker and most specifically anyone aware of the American slang, will easily grasp this joke. Everything is about knowing what a mac daddy is, which is indeed a real magician in terms of women and savoir fair. The term comes from an old Louisiana creole dialect "*maquerau*" as a women procurer, becoming "mac" (Collins's dictionary definition). This brief example shows the enormous translation work coming from just the cultural aspect: the

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boundaries become clear when translating humour. Everything is done not just after a literal transposition work but also for an adaptation suitable for different audiences.

Culture reflects society and therefore the history of society: an English audience will certainly laugh whenever a sexual themed joke is done but a south-Korean citizen will not fully understand it, or probably will be embarrassed. As Yau Wai-ping states (2010: 112) a large part of humour's effectiveness comes from the cultures' ability to recognize it: however, "problems can arise if the target audience has no access to such cultural knowledge". Furthermore, is important to really comprehend the target audience knowledge about other cultures, unless the aim of the joke will not receive a positive response: indeed, a more analytical investigation will be conducted in the second chapter, relatively to cultural translation.

1.6 Verbal and non-verbal humour

Everyone knows that humans communicate with words and either with their body: everyday an individual speaks and complete his thought with different non-verbal communicative tools such as hand gestures and body's actions as Norrick states "narrative jokes may be built entirely around gestures." (Norrick 2004: 403) This happens also in television series: an angry arm widening, a nervous walk or an eye movement finishes an actor's line, permitting to often base the whole the laughter just on what is shown on screen (Gerhardt 2009: 89). Comedy series allows different examples of non-verbal humour, this because the genre permit to emphasize the character's attitude in a certain sense and making them exaggerated (and sometimes ridiculous) in the emotions or reaction (thinking about drama series, in which, except for a limited amount of scenes, actors should provide deep meaning and tense performances and cannot exaggerate their movements in order to appear serious and dramatic).

Non-verbal humour collects actions such as facial expressions or eye contact: for example, in "Friends", Joey's eyes' widening whenever he is trying to convince someone or investigate. Alternatively, the disappointment face of Claire in "Modern Family" while looking at his husband after the iconic line:

"Merry someone who looks sexy while disappointed"

(S:04EP:02)

Globally, eyes shutting, side looking and mouth's tightening is the consequential representation of an upset person. Non-verbal actions in comedy series can also be seen in physical appearance, the actor new haircut or dress habit to indicate changes in the character itself. The space behaviour like the scenario's use and misuse (moving away from something or someone to indicate fear of it, angriness) the posture or the scene object employment, all aim to achieve non-verbal humour. In his Ted Talk Joe Navarro, an ex-FBI detective, explains how non-verbal communication is done of choices: whatever we choose to do (or act if we speak about television) concerns some cultural or environmental attitude creating the person (or the character itself). This leads to transmit and let intend information about it: fears, love, disgust, doubt and therefore the authenticity; thinking about an actor providing an emotion's weak performance: he or she will not receive empathy by the audience because his non-verbal communication was not received since it is missing. What is worst would be a comedy actor who does not offer humour with his or her body, because comedy is also represented as we said, by non-verbal actions. Lastly, movements complete the whole scenario and the lines' success, however can sometimes cause misunderstanding in terms of translation: it is important for the dubbed version from the source language to target one, to hit the main purpose of whole scene and not manoeuvre in terms of meaning, unless non-verbal actions will be pointless. As Chiaro reminds (2009: 214) jokes and puns verbally expressed do not withstanding alone in the humorous scenario: non-verbal humour can be found in a huge variety of languages, sharing the same movement's meaning and at the same time triggering translators, since a different hand gesture can be seen in different ways from language to language.

1.7 Humour in television series

The developing of new technologies, as long as the mutual changes ascribed to society's mentality, certainly shaped what concerns the nowadays programs we love and follow. From 1950, tele-dramas started a slow regression, leaving space to a new type of entertainment, which was destined to improve until now; before, shows were

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transmitted directly on television while being produced, but with the advent of magnetic filmstrip series could have been registered before publicly showing them, allowing an evident costs' reduction. Episodic shows paved the history all the way up to the most famous and emblematic television series; from the United Kingdom series such as "Pinwright's Progress" and the American "I Love Lucy", moving on to "The Addams family" a more ironical dark humour-based television series, arriving until "Happy days" one of the most representative sitcoms of the '70 American vibes. (Penati 2016: 42), finally reaching shows like "Friends", "How I met your mother", "Scrubs", "Modern family", "The big bang theory" and so much more.

The lightweight of the topics and the popularity of the list above is surely given by a variety of elements, which creates an archetype repeatedly reproduced. Starting with the "sit-com" term or "situation comedy" (Penati 2016 :46), this kind of television series propose an established cast of actors, suddenly accompanied in some episodes by random appearances and guests. Audience get to know each of the main actors and sympathize with them, bound with their favourite and emphasize by grading their closeness in comparison with themselves. The episode's formula is a winning action for the success of these series: there will be introduction episodes, the "exploration" phase in which actors are presented and we get know the different dynamics. The "climax" phase where episodes become more and more intriguing by creating relationships in between, different scenarios, and short-term conflicts which in our case, tend to evolve quickly and without drama. Lastly, the "departure" phase, with closing episodes giving the audience the freedom of predicting the character's future and a sense of nostalgia (Grasso 2016: 13). Clapping audios and laughs are often heard in the background and systematic settings such as character's houses or work's spaces are the preferred choices of environment. All these time sections condense in a massive structure similar among a huge variety of sit-coms, however what differs is the substance forming the real success of a show; supposed to base a whole sit-com on puns and jokes without comply to the actual time and place context. The result would be a complete disaster, certainly accompanied by tons of critiques and complaints. Authors must stick to society's fluidity in terms of topics and characters.

1.8 Variety in humour

Observed the complexity of maintain the pace of with modern times, an analytical look at humour in television series observes the diversity in terms of typology of humour offered. Demential humour grow its roots in a straightforward approach: the joker seems to be the butt of the joke itself (see paragraph 1.3), as puns and jokes perhaps appear inconsistent because of their easiness; it is important to spot that the joker's ability is proportional higher compared to the joke's success; similar to the parody, in terms of convention's criticism, however should not be confused with it.

"The psychic release theory of humour explains the triggering of laughter by the sense of release from a threat being overcome, such as reduction of fears about death and sex" (Ross, 1998: 63): a sentence used to introduce to world's taboo in terms of humour, exposed as the sexual dimension (here instead denoted as comedy components of humour). In this case, sex is a crucial point since its capacity to be a topic that should be avoided, and yet is so firmly discussed and provided.

"Am I too competitive? I mean, she does often say –Phil, do you always have to finish first?"

Modern family, S09EP18

This line by Phil Dunphy, in Modern Family talks about Phil's poor sex abilities and yet is quite funny as it creates a logical doubt in terms of double meaning, seeing competitiveness in whatsoever daily task compared to his wife's complaint. This to indicate that sexual related humour can be hilarious, not because of the topic itself, but for how it is treated, in order to permit the delivery of the joke without being annoying, embarrassing or even offensive. Innuendos (Ross: 66) are suitable to permit the acceptance of the joke, as they partially replace the sexual related word with some others concepts or images commonly associated to the sex sphere. For example, typical phallic objects are the butt of the joke and a popular starting point for a pun, useful in some cultures and societies where sex is still taboo.

Along with that, religion and death claim to be taboos in more than one culture, likewise the ones with Muslim based religion (remembering episodes such as Charlie Hebdo's

attack). Although, it is important to recognize humour's limit in order to avoid scandals or worst consequences: the subtle line is often vague when it comes to talk in fact about dark humour. As Nash states (1985: 3), a mocking parody such as black humour comes from a hypothetical dissociation attitude, where the teller seems to dissociate and reneging emotions. His definition of dissociation accredits the fact that the mocked subject seems already "prepared" to receive mocking content. He explains for instance, that jokes about the high rate of deaths among children during Victorian times, are acceptable now, because infant death proportions are lower and the threat is gone thanks to vaccines. This rationalization could be acceptable just while talking about defined circumstances; I would say that nowadays jokes and black humour about LGBTQ+ community are getting more "appreciated" also by the members themselves, because the whole situation has become (thankfully) stable and accepted. However, as long as violence and prejudice exist, it would better weight every word we say, overall, when it comes to humour.

Chapter Two

Challenges of translating humour

As we delve into television humour, it is certain that no single classification can be observed when talking about its global spreading. Knowing the differences between puns, jokes, phonetic and lexical, cultural and social humour will lead us to research the hundreds of possible translations occurring to suit the source text. At the same time, a translation cannot exist without accepting that a relevant number of factors provide different and interchangeable versions of the same source; along with that, the variety of humour represents a crucial issue while thinking about translation.

2.1 Developing the right translation

As already described, humour touches on several linguistic and cultural spheres, leading to effective translations and yet controversial ones: translators could be helped by being aware of the six factors described by Viaggio Sergio in his contribution to the book "Wordplay & Translation" (1996: 183). What Viaggio confirms is the presence of influential parameters, causing a stylistically or lexical variation of what needs to be translated. The first one is the scale of spontaneity of speech, or in our case of a scene: this happens mostly if talking about political speeches or interviews, but it is recognized as an important factor since the equivalence of the spontaneity needs to be respected also in television series. This factor includes the same level of spontaneity that the source text proposes; in other words, a line needs to be translated with the same "quantity" of naturalness (for instance, avoiding solemn terms or sentences).

Secondly, shared cultural knowledge seems the most accessible way for a translator to permit the delivery of humour: when two or more cultures happen to have a very similar background (for instance Spanish and Portuguese) the work may be simpler. The situational relevance of form (the third factor) is defined as the sense of censorship that a translator can face during his work. The next factor is represented by knowledge of the source language cultures and literatures that an interpreter or translator must show while working on translation. As already highlighted, humour is also created by the cultural background of the source language: history, general thoughts about a certain

topic, trends, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, geographical area are all bound together and work to create the perfect joke. A translation should follow these suggestions in order to demonstrate the translator's ability to recognize a pun and her/his effort to transpose it in the clearest and most efficient way.

In order for a translation to be representative of reality, I would argue that it should respect the Gricean rules (1975: 45). Herbert Paul Grice was an English philosopher who explored conversation, in other words, the appropriate structure of a conversation and the speakers' cooperation. As in a conversation, wordplay translation should I believe also follow four guidelines: the first one is the maxim of quantity, which suggests not adding other information in addition to that already given and required (as a translator should do). The second maxim regards manner: a dialogue should avoid being vague or unclear. Thus, a translation should help the audience, not hinder it, and it needs to be relevant (as the third maxim states, avoiding digressions on other topics). The last rule regards quality, or the responsibility of being truthful towards the hearer (in our case to the original source pun). Overall, I would argue that by mirroring these rules of conversation presented by Grice, translations may avoid appearing mechanical and unnatural.

2.2 Priorities and restrictions

As happens with an essay or an interview, some parts of a translation are undoubtedly defined as essential for the success of the work in its totality. What Zabalbeascoa (1996: 243) proposes is the need for a translator to recognize priorities and restrictions. A priority is a concept, a situation or line needed for the completeness of a translation, limited by restrictions, concerning all the difficulties and obstacles that one may encounter while translating. Defining a priority could be seen as an intense work, but the whole process is less onerous than most may think; first of all, it is imperative to recognize the important elements in a text: these represent the priorities which therefore cannot be deleted or obscured. For example, by following Zabalbeascoa (1996: 244), a simple outline could be helpful, comparing a comedy series with a drama series:

Table 1 (based on Zabalbeascoa 1996: 244)

Top	Joke-stories, ridiculous situation, one-liners	High-drama, murder, conflicts
Middle	Love-stories	A pedagogical/life lesson
Marginal	A pedagogical/life lesson	Love-stories
Prohibited	High-drama, murder, conflicts	Joke-stories, ridiculous situation, one-liners

Referring to Table 1, the priority of a comedy series is to deliver humorous situations with jokes and puns. It is not expected indeed to completely exclude dramatic elements (in the same way as a drama series is not constrained to reject the involving of light-weighted topics). The establishment of these parameters is therefore given by the global (totality) approach. A high-tension global situation in sit-coms is rarely found since the global concept is not to create drama but to realize a laughter. Translation needs to accept the main rule of not hampering the distinctive features and not blurring the global aim of a series (to make people laugh for instance). Indeed, a translator is expected to know the scale of priorities based on the global purpose of the text, in this case a series.

2.3 Searching for priorities

Another hint that comes when defining the scale of priorities could be given by searching for the three main components (mostly regarding humorous situations): popularity, funniness and equivalence (Zabalbeascoa 1996: 245) The concept of popularity represents the selections of puns and words useful to the series, leading for it to be known for a certain line pronounced by an actor, possibly repeated through the episodes. Some of the most emblematic ones are found in the television series such as *"Friends"* and the iconic line "How you doin'?" translated in Italian with *"Come va?"* by Joey Tribbiani, one of the main characters of the series. In addition, funniness could be explained as the answer to "Is the audience likely to laugh at the situation presented

on screen?". The key is to recognize the target attitudes towards certain aspects of humour, and therefore modify them consequently.

The last priority is equivalence: it is the most variable feature due to the different purposes that a translation may have. Three degrees are observed, starting from maintaining the completeness of the text: indeed, the equality is respected from source text to target text thanks to their overall resemblance. Non-equivalence occurs whenever the main priority is to not show resemblances between sources, in terms of not referring at all to the ST (it may be the case of certain taboos that need to be deleted before arriving at the audience or the client's request to eliminate the comic effect for whatever reason). The last variation of priority is given by the equivalence not being regarded; it is the most neutral translation as the main aim is only acceptability for the target text regarding a certain topic or situation. In this sense equivalence is not rightly respected, as some arguments may be altered or evenly completely transformed (Zabalbeascoa 1996: 247). A truly debated example was offered by the modern television series "How I met your mother": the examined case considers a line uttered by Jason Segel, Marshall Eriksen in the series, who explicitly talks about Italian politician, Silvio Berlusconi:

"Italy doesn't need something that is wrinkled, red and leaky and smells like bust and alcoholics. They've already got former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi"

Translated for Mediaset, one of the main Italian public televisions, with:

"L'Italia non ha certo bisogno di una cosa raggrinzita, rossa e logora macchiata di alcool e droghe varie. Ha già abbastanza problemi con chi governa il paese."
S:08EP:23

As shown, equivalence not regarded is aimed as a priority; it has in fact been deemed better to make the content acceptable for the target source: it was a necessary priority to modify the translated version, perhaps because the owner of the television-network was Silvio Berlusconi.

2.4 Restrictions in Humour

There are not only priorities but also restrictions when it comes to translating; as claimed before, a restriction is an issue for the correct realization of a translation and it may concern influential points such as the audience's weak background knowledge, which may determine the failure of a pun. Moreover, what may be seen as obvious but nonetheless important to highlight, such as different cultural and moral values, costumes, ideology, and joke-telling techniques, should not be underestimated. In addition, in the case of dubbing, lip-synchronization and visual context represent an important slice of restrictions, mostly because translation cannot be spontaneously modified to support the translator's necessities, as mouth movements or scene objects may interfere with it. Lastly, the translator herself/himself is seen as a restriction: personality, different approaches to humour, personal preparation and requests from the broadcaster, may all hamper an effective translation.

To help deal with this issue, Zabalbeascoa (1996) suggests four solutions. The first one is to be specialized: as happens for every type of work, a translator should also be chosen for his or her specialization in certain typology of translation (humoristic, dramatic, sportive, informative). Secondly, there is recognition: the work of a translator is certainly not attractive as the dubber, the sound technician or many other figures present in the television series' world. What Zabalbeascoa (1996: 249) states is "translators are usually among the poorest paid and least kindly regarded, with unrealistic deadlines and economic necessity forcing them to work under extreme time pressure and to compromise the quality of their work": therefore, their translation will probably approach the minimalistic style by simply transposing the ST to the TT. To avoid criticism in fact, what is more likely to be chosen is a neutral approach, which therefore provides a modest translation from the source text, leading to a fragile and pale achievement (Zabalbeascoa 1996: 249). By giving more recognition and not openly criticise the translator's choices, they will be more inclined to select a vibrant (thus a risky) translation as the best solution.

Zabalbeascoa (1996) also mentions teamwork, which I would personally link to the last point of the work, adequate tools. Concerning the translator's personal knowledge, teamwork is necessary when different personalities gather in order to assure the best result: these include native speakers' resources, colleagues specialized in different

translation typologies (see above), cartoon script writers in the case of animated series and so on. Adequate tools, on the other hand, are essential to fully support and integrate the initial contribution: these include references in books, descriptions of situations and characters, databases and so much more. To summarize, translation is not just only shifting in terms of language: it is shaping a voice or a discourse into something familiar for the audience, to create a connection between two languages, cultures and society.

2.5 Framing

A helpful tool, giving concrete support to detaching significant cultural priorities useful in translation, is the recognition of the structure itself, built in small bricks denoted as frames. A frame is "a combination of words that is more or less fixed conventionally in the minds of a group of language users" (Leppihalme 1996: 200); in other words, frames could be idioms, sayings, catchphrases, references and allusions typical of a certain culture and language. They could be represented as wordplay (antonym, homophone, patronym) or culture based. Furthermore, Chiaro (1992) mentions the manifestation of other types of frames: specifically occurring when mentioning humour is the "play frame". Firstly proposed by Bateson (1972), it regards a cognitive process in which serious and non-serious elements cooperate in the reader's mind to create the laugh. As the writer claims, emotional frames provide laughs and a positive response.

As concerns translation, a frame is a double-faced coin, as it could be the key or the misleading element for a translator. In fact, a frame is helpful during translation if the translator himself/herself distinguishes the frames involved in the situation: competence in the source language is mandatory to recognize them (this was already mentioned in 2.1); therefore, a translation can be more fluid and connected. On the other hand, not spotting a frame can cause misreading, and obviously, will not permit the fluidity of the translation process. However, the translator is required to be aware of their presence by not only demonstrating linguistic competence in the source text, but also in cultural knowledge and recognition of the play frame, by gaining awareness of the true intention of the text, whether regarding humour itself or a humorous intent.

2.6 Language and Culture

This chapter focuses on translating culture-based humour and wordplay: it is first important to describe how and why it is necessary to talk about culture, to fully explain and contextualize humour. Humans are for sure distinct from animals by one behaviour and characteristic: language. Despite this aspect, it remains a complex issue to be studied in order to analyse the human mind; our manner of speaking, hearing, achieving knowledge derives in fact from the social behaviour which shapes ourselves (Enfield 2009:6); thus, culture helps to fully understand a language and the cultural context in which is used. To support this concept, House (2009: 11) states that language (and consequently its translation) is not detached from a cultural and social perspective because language shapes and defines culture. The intent of this brief analysis is that of permitting me to fully reach the chapter's heart: translation is not detached from culture (as observed in chapter one). Translation supports the creation of a bond between two languages, and thus two cultures; in this sense House proposes the "intercultural communication" term (House 2009: 12). However, the insertion of cultural signs in television series, seen as the characteristics of a certain culture is effective whenever two cultures share a great amount of knowledge (Yau Wai-Ping 2010: 110). If this does not happen a cultural sign is more likely to become a "culture bump" (Archer 1986).

2.7 Cultural Translation in Modern Family

After describing cultural framing and translation, it is appropriate to introduce a concrete example of the topic. In the television series Modern Family, Gloria Delgado is a Colombian woman, who moves to America in search for a better life. During the whole series the audience witnesses to a great language development: at the beginning, her English is weak, and she often mixes the two languages (Colombian and English), creating a good number of hilarious situations. By the end of the series, she finally masters the English language and its proper use; however, she always finds a way to refer to some Spanish sayings *("abuela/ mija/ dios mios etc…)*. Tace Hedrick (1996: 145) provides some interesting considerations. Bilingual wordplay and punning certainly differ from the basic one as it concerns a sort of fluidity: the interconnection between two languages permits one to reach simultaneously two linguistic and cultural dimensions. *Interlingualism* (term firstly introduced by Juan Bruce-Novoa 1982), is the

concrete result of a fulfilled tension between the two languages: when both are stretched and simultaneously inverted, a new third language appears as the combination of the two languages (this may be the case of "*pochismos*", English words pushed to reach a more Spanish resemblance). Sofia Vergara, the actress playing Gloria, is a Colombian native speaker who built Gloria's character on a scale of interlingual tendencies and performed an all-rounded personification of a Latina woman, both from a linguistic and appearance point of view. The character needed to fit into the audience's image of that culture. Thus, Gloria is required to speak Spanish (*pochismos*) be loud, cheerful, passionate to recall the Colombian culture in the collective imaginary.

As concerns translation, Katan and Taibi's studies provide an overview of the topic. A culture is not a detached world, separated from the outside: it is functional thanks to the people belonging to that specific contest (1999: 248). Nonetheless, as Kramsch highlights in the following figure, a culture exists even in the other's perception of it, which may be distorted or untrue.

Figure 1: Kramsch's perception rings (source)

To go back to Katan and Taibi's statements over translation (1999): dubbing and subtitling a television series in which a cast member's origin is other than that of the host culture deserve a particular and meticulous approach. The character needs to fit into the audience's image of that culture, consequently even his/her dubbing will follow those collective thoughts over that culture. This would explain what the audience wants to see on television: a character suitable to the main idea over that nation or culture. House (2009: 21) states that "there is no reality independent of how human beings perceive it through their culturally tinted glass". Indeed, a text can be modified to accomplish the collective imaginary without being constrained by the original text

authority (House 2009: 21): the translator "is licensed to manipulate the original for purposes of experimenting with norms and usage" (House 2009: 21).

The translated lines of a specific culture need a detailed work in translating sayings, idiolects and tones, which will remind the audience of that. Schneider (1976: 203) briefly resumes the main point of this final part by stating the importance of culture over norms when it comes to translating: "Where norms tell the actor how to play the scene, culture tells the actor how the scene is set and what it all means": in this sense, culture overlaps norms and let the translator free to modify the original (House: 21).

2.8 Translating language-based humour

Corresponding to the issue of cultural humour transability aspect, language-based issues also need to be contextualized. First of all, a translator operates with a wide range of instruments to defy linguistic ambiguity in puns and jokes: ambiguity is that facet of language translation in which a string of words or statements provide a doubt in its transposition to another language (Delabastita 1996: 133). A variety of strategies may be adopted whenever ambiguity hinders a translator's work. On can adopt a pun-to-pun solution, resulting in the transferring of a SL pun onto the TL semantic structure, by maintaining the textual function. A pun onto rhetorical device, instead, occurs with an association from a SL pun becoming an alliteration, a rhyme, a paradox in the TL text. A non-pun to pun strategy, or zero to pun, means the addition of new material to the original SL pun (Delabastita 1996: 134). All of these establish a useful shortcut to avoid ambiguity between the two languages.

Concerning wordplay translation, scholars have identified a number of steps, helping to facilitate the intricate path of transposing puns and jokes and maintaining their memorability and success. Delabastita (1996) also provides different hints on the topic.

- Translating related languages: a fruitful translation happens to be easier when root-related languages are compared. The similarity in terms of sounds, lexis, tones, stresses, text and speech structure provides an advantage whether translating, indeed different roots provide different approaches and different results.
- Polysemy is an expressive language trick, useful whenever two unrelated languages are compared.

- Borrowing language material from one to another may facilitate the work of translation.

As Cintas (2009: 209) concludes in his reflections on translating, most specifically from English to Italian, many factors are present while translating spoken dialogue; a corpus study concerning the analysis of an English ST and an Italian TT, points at the relevant differences between the two languages. For instance, Italian pronoun choice as regards formality appears to highlight emotions and empathy, which does not happen in English. Dubbed versions of a television series or a film seem to deal with the formal/informal ambivalence in English by respecting the Italian conversation characteristics; very often translation reflects the spontaneity of spoken language thanks to recurring features, mostly regarding the usage of connectors such as "*che*" "*comunque*" "*benchè*".

All things considered, it seems necessary to redefine translation not only as a mere transfer operation, but as a representative cognitive process, regarding the most subtle details that may encourage (or discourage) the production of an effective translation.

2.9 Other Translation Issues

Considering the main translation traits often occurring and described in Chapter 2, it is worth establishing the risks regarding an inappropriate interpretation of a text. Translators have identified different threats when transforming a dialogue (or a text) into subtitles and dialogues; they mostly regard the intentions and aims of the translation and its realization, in terms of what is the purpose to achieve, what effect is wanted for the target audience and what response is expected.

A "scandal" in translation is defined as the creation of different values or practises (both from a domestication point of view and a foreignization perspective aa later explained), in terms of providing a disagreeable vision of the internal or external culture and mind setting (Venuti 1998). As concerns domestication, it could be helpful to highlight the tendency of ethnocentrism discovered in translation. The translation in this case is based on TL attitudes and ideologies: concepts will purposely be changed in order to mirror the target culture (Venuti 1998: 77), based on a dominating attitude towards the SL culture and language. Often even the most marginal aspect of a language is modified to

promote TL authority. It is no longer a copy of the text transposed into another language but reveals the translator's desire to correct and domesticate the text; this could perhaps disrupt the ST originality and therefore, the ownership itself, creating scandals and serious copyright issues (Venuti 1998).

In opposition to domestication, there could be the presence of the foreign identity of the ST: in this case the foreign (SL or other external cultures) is indorsed. Translation thus appears as an instrument leading to the fostering (foreignization) or suppression (domestication) of differences between cultures. However, the domestication of the ST is not always seen with as a negative slant, as it could be representative, for example, of historical readaptation, this creating closeness and correspondences in between two cultures. Luque provides a more moderate approach to the adjustment of a source text (Luque 2010:190). The term "fossilization" (first introduced by Rowe 1960) defines a tendency opposite to that of ethnocentrism, one which represents too much loyalty towards the source text. A simple transposition from SL to TL, uncaring of the meaning, intentions or comic effect of the original text, could be inappropriate and not pay respect to the original authors' creativity.

Luque (2010) provides a brief list of reasons and variables causing fossilization:
- The "image": this leads to a meticulous and careful choice of words to follow what is shown on screen.
- The "noise": seen as the evident background noise during a dialogue, but also as the cultural one, meaning the audience's views on stereotypes and cultural markers of a certain society or group of people.
- Diachrony: the context of translation depending on the time and space variables (translating a 1900 dialogue maintaining certain old-fashioned terms or expressions).
- The translation of film titles: for example. the translation of film titles such as "Grease" readapted for the Argentinian audience as "Vaseline", as an example of pure fossilization giving a simple transposition of an English word.

The lack of success that is likely to happen with fossilization is certain: as Chiaro (1992: 95) highlights, the most effective trick to avoid the phenomenon is related to developing the dynamism approach; a translation can be moulded and adapted to the demands of the target culture. In this way it can comply better and be more effective. Clearly one has to be scrupulous so as avoid the massive manipulation of a source text. Dynamism is made up of a four issues, in terms of ideal translation shortcuts, again provided by Luque (2010: 186).

1. Creating confusion and perplexity in the target receiver: the purposely missed delivery of a joke in the ST means that an effective translation is not required.
2. A clear explanation of the joke is the quickest technique to transfer content, although humour is more likely to be lost in the TL.
3. Rethinking the whole text, providing the explanation of the pun before or after the crucial line: giving hints of the upcoming pun could help its delivery.
4. A complete reframing of the joke, denoted as a functional translation. It is similar to text omission, but nonetheless close to target culture references.

As concerns the final thoughts of this chapter, what is clear are the countless attempts as humour translation made in films and television series in years of translation-based studies: people notice the apparent mistake that may interfere with their idea of translation, without knowing the backstory that comes with a specific choice. For instance, Italian audiences complained after the translation of the film "The eternal sunshine of the spotless mind" (2004) as *"Se mi lasci ti cancello"* (If you leave me, I delete you). The childish and neutral version adapted the original title which recaptured an 18th century poem, written by Alexander Pope, a well-known English poet: the film tells of the relationship between a student and her teacher, older than her. In the film, Mary, a character played by Kirsten Dunst, is in love with her boss, an old professor in charge her office. Of course, Italy was not prepared to catch the reference, because of the cultural differences and knowledge. In fact, Mary cites the poem in the film, but translators opted for more immediate version by sacrificing the poetic function. After analysing the issues and solutions of translation in the whole chapter, this short example sums up the real problems that raise questions in translation.

Chapter Three: Inside Joke Translation

For the final chapter of this dissertation, I will sum up the concepts and theories covered in chapters one and two and apply them so as to achieve the main aim of my work: an inside look of humour translation in television series. Theory will be linked to practical examples from different series such as Modern Family, The Big Bang Theory, Friends, Two Broke Girls, How I Met Your Mother, varying them to put translation theories into practice.

3.1 Attributing qualities to translation

Before starting the practical work, I would first like to consider the classification by Schröter (2010: 147) in terms of defining what an effective translation needs to achieve: the first point presented includes the relevance that a joke takes on in discourse, a narrative, a dialogue. This is vital to later understand the translation choices and techniques adopted: if the pun for example, only occupies a minor line, translators do not need to create a build-up to it. Closely related to the first quality is the consequent "space" left to the pun; it should answer the question "Was it noticeable or hidden as in the source text?" and related to the second option "Did translators leave it too hidden?". This could be representative of a censorship tendency from translators, or as examined in Chapter Two, of the influence of ethnocentrism. As defined in 3.2, a wide variety of strategies are employed to achieve a high-quality translation, and any approach can include a mix of them, the repetition of the same strategy or even a single use of one. Then, the obviousness scale determines how obvious the joke is, in terms of understanding it with effort or not after the translation process. In Chapter One, non-verbal and verbal humour were analysed; a good translation should find a compromise between image and dialogue, not upsetting the balance. The last two quality pointers of quality rely on the effect of the translated pun or joke, demonstrating the actual effect obtained as a reflection of the one desired, and the artificialness or naturalness of it.

3.2 The instruments of translation

In addition to Luque's examination, (observed in 2.9), offering different shortcuts to unleash a translation from fossilization, Schröter (2010: 142) also suggests a four-based solution scheme to face the translation of wordplay. The first option simply transfers the

SL material onto SL; this operation is seen as the easiest and safest path. However, what has to be noted is the unfulfilled effectiveness of this type of choice; many times, translators limit wordplay by only transferring from SL to TL defined parts of the dialogue, and therefore the completeness of the joke is not achieved: "the result is incoherence and thus an intuitively poor solution" (Schröter 2010: 145). Exemplificative of this is one line in the television series "Two Broke Girls" (S:01EP:05)

	ST	TT
Caroline	I'm a brilliant event planner. My sweet sixteen birthday was off the chain: penthouse party, pink and black theme. Alanis Morissette sang songs from "Jagged Little Pill	Sono un'ottima organizzatrice di eventi. La mia festa per i sedici anni era da perdere la testa. Super attico, tema nero e fucsia, Alanis Morissette cantava brani da 'Jagged Little Pill'.
Max	On my sixteenth birthday my mom took too many jagged little pills, and I had to drive her to the E.R to get her stomach pumped.	Per il mio sedicesimo compleanno mia madre ha preso così tante piccole pillole che ho dovuto portarla al pronto soccorso per farle la lavanda gastrica.
Caroline	Was your childhood based on the novel Push by Sapphire?	La tua infanzia ha ispirato il film 'Trainspotting'?

By taking into consideration the example above, the Italian translators translated the ST by barely modifying it: the joke is about the repetition of Alanis Morissette's album

"Jagged Little Pills" repeated by Max to remember her mother's addiction to pills ("my mom took too many jagged little pills"). However, in the Italian version the lack of translation of the album title disrupts the completeness of the joke. A point of interest is created thanks to the last line of Caroline, leading to the second translation option proposed by Schröter; the creation of a target language wordplay by giving it an effect similar to the one of the original source (Was your childhood based on the novel Push by Sapphire?). In the Italian version she instead cites the "Trainspotting" movie in order to connect back to drugs and pills mentioned before by Max. The film is about addiction to drugs and achieved enormous success in Italian cinemas. Nevertheless, the ST line mentions a book by an American writer, Sapphire (the pseudonym for Ramona Lofton). In the dubbed version a similar effect to the original joke mentioned above is satisfied, as the connection between drugs and the film Trainspotting is immediate in the minds of the audience. The novel by Sapphire is in fact less known in Italy, perhaps because the film inspired by the book is known to Italian audiences as "Precious" and not "Push". Yet despite the good pun substitution, which certainly related to the main point of the dialogue on drugs, the original version still claims more humour satisfaction: Caroline is an elite girl, who grew in a high-class environment and studied, read and knows books. By mirroring the character, it is more likely for her to know a book, instead of a movie about drugs.

Another adoptable translation strategy is represented by the simple omission of the challenging pun or joke: many translations opt for this solution, mostly limiting the humorous intent and the meaning of the entire sentence. An exemplificative pun is the one reported in 2.3; the complete omission of the subject in the Italian version (in this case Silvio Berlusconi) hindered the effectiveness of the joke. In fact, the answer of Lily in the dubbed dialogue provides confusion and does not permit the delivery of the pun; this strategy can easily be related to Luque's contrastive solutions against fossilization (2010: 186), creating confusion, perplexity in the target receiver. The last option is defined as the creation of other language play conditions in other parts of the text: the variation of wordplay in the textual space ensures at least the humorous effect in different parts of the text, in other words "moving" the humorous effect to another point of the text, in order to compensate for the one providing translation issues. In her study based on the sitcom Friends, Fusco (2012: 53) provides a practical example of this

technique: the "refilling" of humorous material, providing distraction from a problematic joke. Taking into consideration an example from the above cited sitcom, the characters are driving to Rachel's chalet, when suddenly the car breaks down and Ross comes to rescue them. Rachel and Ross start fighting, and Joey does not seem to be enjoying the situation. Chandler is the sarcastic, prankster and ironical character who always contributes to the show's comic side with his jokes, this time by creating a pun directly based on his name:

	ST	TT
Joey	I-I can't handle this, you guys	Io… non ce la faccio ragazzi.
Chandler	Y'know what, I can handle it, handle's my middle name. Actually it's the ah, middle part of my first name	Io ce la faccio. Ho un'energia speciale: ce l'hanno tutti. Tutti i figli dei divorziati. A-ah

EP:17S:03

The whole joke revolves around the presence of the English verb "to handle" inside his own first name. The comic effect given by this coincidence however did not reach the Italian audience, since it was drastically changed. This strategy is also known as the compensation solution, better explained by Rollo (2014: 147):

> "introdurre elementi umoristici in un punto diverso rispetto all'originale al fine di colmare eventuali vuoti traduttivi in altre scene e ovviare alla perdita totale o parziale della carica umoristica. Le compensazioni possono toccare sia il piano linguistico (aggiunta di forma colloquiali, rime, giochi di parole inesistenti nell'originale) sia il piano culturale"

In this case the compensation functions so as to fix the word playing found in "to handle" and "Chandler": thus, the Italian version opts to fill the emptiness by joking

around Chandler's satirical attitude triggered in certain situations which in his opinion, comes from the divorce of his parents, a topic mentioned during the entire episode.

3.3 About translation of phonetic humour

The practical side of this dissertation will now move to where the whole study started: the phonetic features of humour and its consequent translation. As will be observed, many different strategies are involved to convey the most appropriate solution; despite the effort, some are better than others, leading one to think that the choice of the strategy for translating the source text to target one needs to take account of many influential factors.

As defined in 1.1, homophones are one of the instruments used to reveal the humoristic side of a character or a situation: they may or may not be easily recognizable, but however they certainly cause laughter when well formulated. This may be the case of the many puns used by Phil Dunphy, in Modern Family. To begin with, I would like to propose an example already examined, with the addition of the translated text.

	ST	TT
Phil	Act like a parent. Talk like a peer. I call it peer-renting.	Ti comporti da genitore ma parli come un suo pari. Fai il paritore.

As concerns the explanation of the joke one can refer to 1.2. To contextualize, Phil likes to define himself as a friend of his own son and daughters: the joke revolves around the distortion of the word "parent" merging it with the word "peer". In the dubbed version adopted in Italy, the translators tried to envisage a possible similarity between two words that may keep the same humorous effect given in the original version. The strategy adopted here is the one also described by Schröter (2010), creating new language wordplay in the target language. Nonetheless, it was not fully achieved. As Manca (2014: 159) states, this occurrence is the consequence of a new wordplay creation, leading to the loss of the original references; despite the resemblance between the two lexical categories the joke did not ensure the same result as the English version. In addition, the Italian word "*paritore*" (born from the simple mix of "*genitore*" and

"*pari*") does not exist, and therefore, some confusion arises in the Italian audience. The pun, classified by audiences as one of the best jokes ever made by Phil Dunphy in the television series, did not achieve the same results in the dubbed version.

Another example of wordplay creation in the target language regarding a homophone is also represented by a line, found again in the television series Modern Family. This time the scene is set at Mitchell and Cameron's house; for the entire episode they try to find a person near to the family that could take care of their daughter, Lily, as they will no longer able to do so. To better understand which is the best option among the family members they get each one of them to spend time with Lily. Once they convinced themselves that Gloria is the best option, they soon find out that she pierced Lily's ears after the day spent together. Surprised and outraged, Mitch and Cam attack Gloria, who quickly defends herself by stating that she had told the couple about her intentions.

	ST	TT
Mitch	What did you do?	Che cosa hai fatto?
Gloria	What I told you.	Quello che ho detto
Cam	Your pierced her ears?!	Le hai bucato le orecchie?!
Gloria	What I said. I was going to make her pretty with earrings.	Io ve l'ho detto. La volevo più *hermosa* con gli orecchini.
Mitch	Earrings? I thought you said hair rings!	Avevo capito cerchiettini
Gloria	I didn't say hair rings I said earrings!	Che sono i cerchiettini?

S02EP20

The miscomprehension here is caused again by Gloria's pronunciation difficulties; the two words sound very similar, creating muddle in the hearers' mind, in this case

Mitchell and Cameron. The translation solution is chosen the couple is the same as the one before, resulting in the creation of wordplay material in the target language. As before "*cerchiettini*" is Italian word sounding like the word "*orecchini*" and resembling another one "*cerchietti*" which are accessories for hair, often used to embellish girls' hair. The strategy here is also combined with a mix of languages: in Gloria's line she introduces a Spanish term, "*hermosa*": this was probably the best solution that Italian translator found to remind the audience about Gloria's origins; in this way the audience remembers about the woman's mispronunciation mistakes and therefore this justifies Cam and Mitch's misunderstanding also in the Italian version.

A very fruitful use of various strategies is adopted to translate VEH (verbal expressed humour) from a language to another. To continue with translation of phonetic jokes and puns, it would be worth to citing "Friends", the sitcom. In the following circumstance the characters Joey and Chandler are discussing Joey's relations with women. Chandler suggests that it is time for his friend to make some choices about his love affairs, and to settle down.

	ST	TT
Chandler	It's time to settle down. Pick a lane.	È arrivato il momento di sistemarsi dopo aver visto tutte le opzioni.
Joey	Who's Elaine?	Che cosa sono?

S04EP07

The joke here is about Joey's poor abilities to interpret a sentence, since he is always portrayed as the dumb friend in the group; thus it is very common through the series to joke around this aspect. The phonetic trick is here found in the misinterpretation of the phrase "Pick a lane" used by Chandler to encourage his friend. Joey immediately asks about Elaine, since the friend's line could be interpreted as a name. In the dubbed version the whole joke is missed out: the omission strategy is here combined with Luque's solution "creating confusion, perplexity" (2010: 186). Translators opted for a completely bland answer by Joey, which do not relate at all to the previous one from

Chandler. The audience will be likely to simply attribute the nonsensical line uttered by Joey to his stupidity and immaturity, missing the real humorous intent of the original version.

To continue with the translation of phonetic wordplay it is worth citing another device used to deliver humour (as already observed in 1.1): homonyms. I will be examining the line found in Modern Family, again spoken by Phil Dunphy. Phil buys three duck eggs, and wants the best home for them (he feels very guilty about taking them away from their mother). He then starts to build a unique nest called "Duckingham palace" with his nephew's help, Lily. During the construction works however, he loses the project and papers of Duckingham Palace. Chatting with Lily he says the following.

	ST	TT
Phil	I guess we'll just have to wing it.	Credo che dovremmo improvvisare.

The solution applied to this type of homonym refers to a simple transferring operation from SL to TL: the phrasal verb "to wing something" refers to the action of resolving a problematic situation without much practice or preparation, translated in the Italian version as "*improvvisare*". The meaning of Phil's sentence is clear in the dubbed version, although the humour is completely lost since there is no mention of ducks. Instead, it would have been better to insert a reference to animals at least; in this way the meaning of the dialogue would still be clear while providing a humorous effect, as in the following suggestion.

	ST	TT
Phil	I drew up plans for Duckingham Palace, but I can't find them. I guess we'll just have two wing it.	Ho disegnato il Progetto di Duckingham Palace ma non lo trovo. Forse qualcuno ci ha messo il becco.

To conclude, translating a pun or a joke based on sounds and their manipulation is clearly not as simple as it may appear: many crucial factors imply the awakening of translator's attention, starting from respect for the Gricean rules (examined in 2.1) which for instance, should be followed in terms of not creating subsequent confusion in the audience's mind (third Gricean maxim): this did not happen for example after Phil's line in Modern Family, in which a brilliant and iconic joke such as "peer-renting" was translated to "*paritore*", a word that does not clarify the real intent of the joke.

3.4 On cultural translation

In addition to the translation of the phonetic features of humour, culture based humour also raises many questions: Manca (2014: 167) concludes her essay on wordplay adaptation between cultures by reflecting on the perpetual presence of a cultural background in each viewer, adding many more shades to comprehension such as the social background, group belonging, the background knowledge of an individual, the visual recognition of certain elements. Viaggio (1996: 183) also examines the case of interpenetration between cultures, as a fact that offers the audience a more open view on the topic portrayed. Thus, the translation of such features could represent an obstacle to the whole work if cultures do not share any of these requirements. As already presented, The Big Bang Theory and Friends provide many different cultural approaches from the American background, and consequently their translation should be grounded firstly on the frame recognition of such cultural references (Leppihalme 1996, Chiaro 1992, Bateson 1972) as it may help the process. Therefore, a joke based on a culture specific knowledge may appear as easier to handle after its frame recognition process. In the following example, the Italian translators opted for an upheaval in the translation, creating a whole new concept on the character's dialogue. The scene opens on Leonard and Sheldon: they are in Penny's home with one intention, to clean her house. Penny is in fact a messy girl, and Sheldon cannot stand her dirty habits. However Leonard did not agree on this decision, as most of the time happens, he gets dragged in by Sheldon; he is nervous and asks Sheldon for a reasonable cause for their entrance into the girl's house:

	ST	TT
Leonard	Do you realise that if Penny wakes up, there is no reasonable explanation as to why we're here?	Se Penny dovesse svegliarsi quale spiegazione vorresti addurre per giustificare che le siamo entrati in casa in piena notte?
Sheldon	I just gave you a reasonable explanation.	Che sono un tossicodipendente
Leonard	No, no. You gave me an explanation, it's reasonableness will be determined by a jury of your peers.	No. Tu concorderai adesso col sottoscritto una spiegazione che abbia un barlume di plausibilità.
Sheldon	Don't be ridiculous. I have no peers.	Non essere ridicolo. E piega i calzini.

S01EP02

The work done here to reshape the whole dialogue is very clear: a single reference to American culture constrained the whole point of the original dialogue. It starts from defining what a jury of peers is: in American law, a jury of peer is a group of equals, called to judge the condemned. Justified by the reference to American law, the translators opted for a total omission of the entire dialogue and the creation of new TL material by changing totally, instead of creating a new joke based on the target language frames. For example, a reference to the Italian law system might have been more suitable, as in the following proposal:

	ST	TT
Leonard	Do you realise that if Penny wakes up, there is no reasonable explanation as to why we're here?	Se Penny dovesse svegliarsi quale spiegazione vorresti addurre per giustificare che le siamo entrati in casa in piena notte?
Sheldon	I just gave you a reasonable explanation.	Ti ho appena dato una giustificazione ragionevole.
Leonard	No, no. You gave me an explanation, it's reasonableness will be determined by a jury of your peers.	No. Tu mi hai dato solo una giustificazione. Che sia ragionevole lo dovrai spiegare alla corte della giuria popolare.
Sheldon	Don't be ridiculous. I have no peers.	Non essere ridicolo. Io non sono popolare.

3.5 Domestication of humour

Translation cannot always render the humorous side of a dialogue since many factors are involved. On the other hand, in fact, the changing of a line or a joke by a character could be result of a domestication approach on the part of the translators. I will illustrate this by taking an example from Friends: the group is talking about Phoebe's new relationship with a man called Vicrum. (S04EP04)

	ST	TT
Ross	Well Phoebe, I think you'll feel better when you know a little bit about Vicrum, he's a kite designer (He makes a wow face) . . . and he used to date	Ascolta Phoebe, penso che ti sentiresti meglio se sapessi qualcosa di più di Vicrum. Lui progetta aquiloni e. . . gli piace l' Opera!

	with Oprah! (He makes another wow face)	

The cultural reference is even more rooted in the above sentence: Oprah Winfrey is a show-business woman that reached a huge popularity in the United States, as the host of a well-known show. The strong cultural link and the emphasis given by Ross while pronouncing the /o/ in Oprah, did not guarantee the perfect translation. It might have been more appropriate just to cite Oprah even in the Italian version; the domestication of the dialogue is therefore linked to the drastic changes from the original text (Venuti 1998: 77). This led the translator to omit the introduction of a personality such as Oprah Winfrey, who may already be known to the Italian audience, but on the other hand to insert an already known and particularly famous Italian element such as Opera.

Even sexual related humour is connected to the cultural sphere: some sexually oriented jokes are maintained in the translation process while others are omitted. The probable reason for the latter is the target audience's attitude towards certain topics, such as sex (as already explained in 1.6) which could be seen as a taboo in certain cultures. Italy is certainly not one of them, but however many sex related jokes in Friends were omitted by the Italian broadcasters. The explanation derives from the time and space of the sitcom's airing. In the 1990s there was no online streaming, and every television series had to be transmitted on public television; of course, it could not include certain references (especially for the sexual related ones), and translators frequently opted for a softer version. In the following case from Friends the equivalence not regarded was a priority (Delabastita 1996: 243) and the joke was fully repressed.

	Original version	Italian version
Monica	How are you?	Tutto bene?
Rachel	If it's not a headboard it's not worth it.	Sì, ma potresti dirmi chi fa girare la stanza?

S03EP08

In this scene the two girls are taking care of Ross' son, Ben. While playing with him, Monica accidentally bumps the baby's head against the wall: Ben is still an infant and cannot speak, but suddenly emits some sounds which remind her of the "Monica bang". Monica is terrified that Ben will tell his father what happened and starts to bump her head against the wall too, inviting Rachel to do so, to communicate to Ben that what happened was totally normal. After a few bumps Monica asks Rachel if everything is ok, and Rachel replies with "If it's not a headboard it's not worth it.". The joke is about Rachel's preference to bump her head against a bed board (with a sexual reference. The translation here may be the result of censorship but also of a missed frame recognition on the part of translators (the joke was subtle even for the English audience), leading to the consequent creation of new TL humorous material.

3.6 Visual oriented humour

Fossilization is an attitude typical of translators who are strictly bound to the original version provided, and therefore do not compensate the source material with a target oriented one. In 2.9 different issues and variables were listed, one of them was the image, which can cause a dynamic of fossilization. The image in this case constrains the word to follow what is shown on screen, often leading translators to provide a very marginal solution. In the following example from Friends, t headboard he translator however managed to provide a domestication orientation to the text, by searching for alternatives in the target language references. The group is making fun of Rachel because of her eye, which is covered with a bandage after an accident:

	ST	TT
Monica	Hey Rach, remember that great song, Me, Myself, and I? (And on the "I" part she mimics poking her eye).	Rachel hai presente quella canzone "Occhi di ragazza"?
Rachel	Ah! Monica! Come on!	Ah! Molto divertente!
Ross	Hey, does anybody want to get	Hey, chi vuole mangiare? Quelli a

	some lunch? All those in favor say I? (Pokes his eye).	favore facciano l'occhiolino.
Rachel	Ross! Stop it. Come on.	Ross! Adesso smettila!
Chandler	How much did I love The King and I?	Ragazzi! Sapeste quanto mi è piaciuto "Gli occhi della notte"!

S05EP22

The work here denotes an accurate filling of the original frame, rich in SL references: Italian audience will not find discrepancies between image and sounds, as many culturally close references were accurately searched for and chosen. The operation of domestication is the most appropriate choice in this occasion, for otherwise the main concept of the dialogue (and therefore, of the entire episode since it is built around Rachel's eye problem) would be meaningless; thus, priorities were unquestionable in terms of providing jokes base on eyes in the best and clearest way.

The scholar Di Pietro (2014: 355) made some reflections at the end of her essay, by pointing out the juxtaposition of some humorous elements that very often translators place in the text. Hasty requests may impede the production of a good translation, and furthermore, many jokes are partially or completely untranslatable (Vandaele 2002: 165). In this chapter many jokes missed the opportunity to create humour, caused by the misinterpretation of a frame, the inappropriate translation strategy and many other reasons listed above. To summarize the purpose of this chapter, the process of translating material from one language to another is linked not only to linguistic competence, but, as Wai Ping comments (2010: 112), a significant amount of cultural knowledge needs to be placed at the heart of the translation process.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this dissertation is to understand why so often the original text of a television series is partially or completely modified: much criticism, in fact, is made of the choices of translators, but it seems that the reasons for these decisions are not considered relevant. A large number of people are not aware of the many factors that influence the final translation. As observed through the dissertation, the concrete results of translation first depend on the linguistic and cultural background: the analysis made in Chapter One clarifies the real differences between the features of humour and provides an overview on the topic. The chapter presents the multitude of varieties of humour appearing in just one language; the number of different facets of humour based on phonetic features, such as homophones, homonyms or polysemes is just a minimum representation of the dimension of humour. Another significant part is represented by the cultural aspect, leading the translation process to a new level of meticulous work: culture is the emblem of the society's knowledge and collective ownings, and the translation of such elements should not be underestimated. The strategies developed to face such issues are constantly evolving, in order to maintain the closest connection between cultures; the result is a continual discovery of other realities. As observed, whenever a target text is moved only in one direction what may happen is the complete distortion of one culture's representation, or the incorrect delivery of the humoristic features leading to the creation of confusion in the target audience. Knowing the amount of preparation needed on the part of translators or the huge number of strategies employed certainly provides an overview on the effort applied to the translation process: this, and the knowledge of the varieties of humour concerning language and culture, may give explanations for those translations criticized over the years. In conclusion, translation is not only a mere process of transferring material between languages; it implies many features that may collide with each other; thus the work of a translator needs to balance such factors in order to provide the best solution in terms of quality for the transmission of humour.

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Riassunto

Con lo sviluppo delle piattaforme di streaming online quali Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+ e molte altre, la popolarità di innumerevoli serie televisive si è fatta sempre più ingente: il facile accesso previo abbonamento, le innumerevoli opzioni per quanto riguarda lingue di preferenza e sottotitoli e persino il download di puntate ed intere serie ne hanno favorito l'espansione. Svariati generi si alternano nei gusti personali di ciascun individuo, in particolare la preferenza al genere umoristico, poichè si stabilizza come un "comfort genre" in grado di soddisfare anche l'audience più esigente quando ben eseguito. La sitcom si è fatta strada all'interno dello scenario televisivo come una categoria di intrattenimento con determinate caratteristiche che giocano con l'interesse dello spettatore, stimolandolo con strategie vincenti; per esempio un cast saldo che presenta al suo interno un ampio ventaglio di personaggi, ognuno con caratteristiche che lo rendono unico, scenari comuni in tutte le puntate, per creare un senso di quotidianità ed appartenenza, la presentazione di situazioni e problematiche della vita di tutti i giorni che si risolvono con facilità. Tutte queste componenti armonizzano grazie ad un elemento che sostiene la suddetta leggerezza e smorza l'eventuale pesantezza: lo humour. Da sempre presente nella vita di tutti i giorni, si trova sotto svariate forme ed il più delle volte viene dimenticato che nonostante il bisogno collettivo di ridere e di stare bene, esso coinvolge al suo interno un'infinità di sfaccettature che lo rendono una materia alquanto problematica nell'ambito della traduzione. All'interno della mia tesi è stato quindi ricreato un percorso che è puntato dapprima ad introdurre sotto quali forme si può trovare lo humour, con assoluta attenzione alla lingua inglese; il primo aspetto, forse più evidente, è delineato dalle particolarità fonetiche proprie della lingua, utilizzate per ricercare un effetto positivo nello spettatore. Si è cercato di definire tre sviluppi linguistici principali, particolarmente ricorrenti all'interno della creazione dello humour inglese: omofonia, omonimia e polisemia. L'omofonia definisce il fenomeno nel quale il suono di due parole risulta decisamente affine ma che nella dimensione scritta ritrae due termini completamente dissimilari. L'omonimia è ciò che riguarda la completa somiglianza in ambito grafologico e fonologico di due parole ma che elude ed inganna l'ascoltatore a livello di significato. La polisemia è vista come forse una delle forme più labirintiche per creare umorismo: partendo dalle caratteristiche proprie dell'omonimia, si conviene

che la polisemia è quella dinamica che intercorre fra due termini che si rispecchiano anche nell'ambito semantico ma che precludono un significato diverso. Giocano un ulteriore rilevanza anche la tensione applicata a determinati suoni e la loro pronuncia. Tutto ciò ha creato nello spettatore un bisogno sempre più impellente di richiedere una trasposizione sempre più accurata da lingua a lingua: è da qui che nasce l'applicazione della traduzione come disciplina anche all'interno dell'ambito televisivo. Continuando così con il secondo capitolo, ci si inoltra nel cuore della traduzione vera e propria, analizzando come primo punto i parametri essenziali definiti inizialmente da Viaggio, e attraverso il quale è possibile raggiungere la perfetta traduzione. Si andranno quindi ad osservare fenomeni quali la spontaneità percepita dal testo di arrivo, che riflette la stessa del testo di partenza: si continua con le similitudini fonetiche, lessicali e semantiche fra le due lingue, che porteranno il traduttore ad eseguire un lavoro ben più rassomigliante. Si prosegue con la definizione della rilevanza testuale a seconda della situazione, brevemente descritta attraverso gli enunciati di Grice; in breve, un testo trasposto nella lingua ricevente deve essere uguale all'originale nei termini di importanza decisa dalla fonte per ciascun argomento. Evitare poi l'aggiunta nel testo tradotto di elementi non essenziali e superflui ed infine la traduzione non deve in alcun modo offuscare o creare confusione rispetto al significato e l'obiettivo del testo di partenza. Si definisce poi la scala delle priorità: con riferimenti esclusivi alla dimensione della televisione e delle serie televisive, verrà analizzata l'importanza che determinati elementi occupano all'interno di una presunta traduzione. Se per esempio si prende in considerazione una sit-com rispetto ad una serie drammatica sarà naturale favorire la traduzione di componenti umoristici, dando loro maggiore attenzione e ricercando meticolosamente la traduzione più adatta. Per aiutare la ricerca delle priorità vi sono tre elementi che all'interno delle sit-com non possono mancare: la popolarità, la comicità e l'equivalenza non rispettata. La popolarità riguarda l'obiettivo di mantenere anche nella lingua target determinate frasi o situazioni che possano creare iconicità, e contribuiscano ad aumentare la crescita della serie grazie al loro essere indimenticabili (si ricorda la frase emblematica di Joey Tribbiani nella serie Friends "*How you doin'?*" tradotta in "Come va?"). La "*funniness*" o comicità, è l'interessamento che l'audience potrebbe avere rispetto ad una determinata situazione che preclude un aspetto umoristico. Tale recezione, che sia positiva o negativa, viene rilevata anche dall'atteggiamento che una

determinata fetta di società ha nei confronti di un certo elemento umoristico. Infine, l'ultima priorità è descritta come il non rispetto dell'equivalenza; in numerosi casi come quelli descritti nel primo capitolo, l'audience proveniente da un determinato paese o con un background culturale differente, sarà propenso alla critica e al distacco da certi argomenti trattati in una serie, perché riguardanti per esempio certi *taboo*. L'equivalenza non rispettata diventa quindi una priorità per creare un prodotto adattabile anche a culture diverse. Non solo priorità ma anche restrizioni quando si parla di traduzione: un testo ricevente può essere limitato da svariate problematiche che interferiscono con la perfetta traduzione; a partire dai movimenti labiali dell'attore, il contesto visivo, ma anche le diverse percezioni dello humour in una determinata cultura e i conseguenti valori morali, ed infine il traduttore stesso, visto come una restrizione dal momento in cui potrebbe influenzare il lavoro a causa di un diverso approccio allo humour, la personalità dello stesso e le tecniche traduttive. Zabalbeascoa propone così espedienti come un teamwork fra traduttori, per ovviare alle restrizioni date dal singolo traduttore o la scelta di quest'ultimo basata sulla specializzazione che ha in un determinato segmento (vi sono infatti numerose differenze rispetto ad un esperto in traduzione di video games, per esempio, da uno specializzato in documentari e serie criminali). Si passa dunque all'aspetto della traduzione basata sulla cultura ricevente: una cultura porta al suo interno innumerevoli caratteristiche che la distinguono da un'altra e che la rendono unica, a partire dai dialetti per arrivare agli idioletti, ovvero il bagaglio personale linguistico di ciascun individuo. Tutto ciò permette di riconoscere le cornici o "*frames*" di una cultura, definite come l'insieme dei modi di dire, delle preferenze linguistiche, i riferimenti, le allusioni e persino dei proverbi di una cultura; le cornici e il loro riconoscimento da parte del traduttore sono dunque molto utili per la loro successiva traduzione: la mancata individuazione delle "*frames*" porta ad una traduzione latente e slegata al contesto e all'opposto la loro identificazione andrà a creare un testo fluido ed omogeneo. Il capitolo prosegue con l'individuazione e l'analisi di certe dinamiche di traduzione culturale, prendendo come esempio il caso del personaggio di Gloria all'interno della serie televisiva Modern Family: si osserva che il personaggio intreccia la cultura americana con quella colombiana di appartenenza, creando così una terza lingua, frutto dell'unione di due realtà diverse e caratterizzata dalla mescolanza di strutture grammaticali e di parole di una o dell'altra lingua, creando

cornici uniche e rare. La traduzione delle stesse si basa comunque sulle teorie di Kramsch, che definiscono determinate classi culturali ai quali la traduzione deve fare riferimento per riflettere l'immagine che hanno nella mente collettiva delle altre culture; questo atteggiamento può d'altro canto creare controversie e problematiche fra culture, come verrà analizzato in 2.9. Conseguentemente alla traduzione culturale si passa alla traduzione delle tendenze linguistiche: vi è bisogno di strumenti per realizzare al meglio la battuta eseguita nel testo di partenza anche nel ricevente, come per esempio la traduzione di un gioco di parole in uno appartenente alla target audience o l'utilizzo di figure retoriche proprie della lingua ricevente per sopperire alla mancanza di riferimenti all'interno della fonte testuale. Altre scorciatoie si rivelano utili alla traduzione di componenti linguistiche come l'utilizzo di parole o termini stranieri trasferite anche nel testo tradotto o la traduzione fra due lingue correlate fra loro come, per esempio, quelle provenienti da radice latina. Si è infine osservato grazie ad uno studio Corpora come la traduzione dei dialoghi in italiano dalle serie americane ed inglesi sia particolarmente accurata, notando l'inserimento di connettori tipici all'interno di una normale conversazione fra madrelingua. Nell'ultima parte relativa alla traduzione si è infine dedicato spazio alle controversie che potrebbero nascere come conseguenza di una traduzione errata o manipolata; una fra queste è la tendenza all'etnocentrismo, come fenomeno nel quale la traduzione viene parzialmente stravolta proprio per centralizzare la cultura ricevente, creando una sorta di narcisismo culturale. Ogni elemento viene quindi tradotto promuovendone i pregi del target ed oscurando completamente le caratteristiche linguistiche o riferimenti culturali del testo d'origine, proprio per evitare che il ricevente percepisca il testo o il dialogo come troppo staccato dai suoi parametri. Per altri sensi l'etnocentrismo è necessario qualora si ricerchi un adattamento del testo puntiglioso e come definisce Luque, necessario per evitare la fossilizzazione. Questa manifestazione linguistica accade quando oppositamente all'etnocentrismo, la traduzione ricevente è fin troppo ancorata a quella donatrice, causata per esempio dall'immagine mostrata sullo schermo, i suoni percepiti, dalla traduzione (o non) di argomenti taboo, per arrivare alla semplice noncuranza del significato vero e proprio del testo originale, tradotto semplicemente e senza ulteriori ragionamenti. Per contrastare questa problematica si è sviluppata la tendenza al dinamismo, contestualizzato dall'adozione di "vie di fuga" rispetto alla fossilizzazione: per non rischiare di tradurre

basicamente un testo da una lingua all'altra infatti si cita ad esempio, la creazione di un eventuale stato di confusione o perplessità nell'interlocutore nella risposta rispettiva alla battuta del testo originale che potrebbe creare problemi con la fossilizzazione, una spiegazione chiara della battuta o gioco di parole (questo metodo potrebbe altresì portare ad una perdita della carica umoristica) o persino l'omissione completa del punto critico della traduzione, per evitare quindi di bloccare il flusso del testo. Il terzo ed ultimo capitolo della tesi riguarderà principalmente esempi pratici tratti dalle serie televisive sopramenzionate; nella prima parte, infatti, si osserveranno le principali qualità che una traduzione dovrebbe presentare a partire dal fattore rilevanza ovvero la posizione che occupa una battuta umoristica nel dialogo, e strettamente correlato a quest'ultimo, la facilità o l'impegno applicato per individuare la battuta. Successivamente una traduzione sarà valutata positivamente a seconda della rapidità coinvolta nel recepire lo humour immesso, trovando comunque un equilibrio fra suono e immagine, che come già accennato, gioca un ruolo fondamentale nel contesto. Inoltre, una buona traduzione si dimostra analizzando la naturalezza o l'artificiosità che trasmette al ricevente e la comparazione ottenuta fra effetto voluto ed effetto ottenuto di conseguenza ad essa. L'ultimo punto espressione di qualità è correlato alla scelta della strategia adatta: la prima è la semplice trasposizione dal materiale linguistico originale a quello ricevente che, come già osservato, può rappresentare l'espediente più semplice e contemporaneamente quello più rischioso. La seconda strategia utilizzabile è la creazione il materiale umoristico vicino a quello della cultura di destinazione ma che allo stesso tempo mantenga le caratteristiche della battuta d'origine: può essere eseguita ad esempio con la sostituzione di nomi propri di persona o luoghi conosciuti nella cultura d'origine con altri appartenenti al background culturale o linguistico del ricevente. La terza opzione è l'omissione di elementi; una strategia già accennata precedentemente da utilizzare nei casi più delicati e che comporterà sicuramente conseguenze nella fluidità del testo a seguire se non ben rimpiazzata. L'ultima alternativa di traduzione è rappresentata dallo spostamento di materiale umoristico in altri parti del testo qualora nella sezione originale non vi sia la possibilità di fornire lo stesso effetto. A seguito si variano le diverse strategie con battute e dialoghi realmente esistenti in varie sit-com e tradotti dall'inglese all'italiano, a partire dalla traduzione dello humour basato sul suono. Si alternano dunque le strutture fonetiche

precedentemente descritte con la rispettiva traduzione ed eventuale proposta personale di traduzione, commentando le difficoltà e gli eventuali errori commessi nel processo traduttivo. Questo pattern viene proposto anche per la traduzione di dialoghi con riferimenti culturali tipici dei paesi delle serie televisive menzionate, nel caso del presente elaborato, gli Stati Uniti. La tesi si conclude dunque riflettendo sulle potenzialità che una buona traduzione può portare all'interno del contesto di recezione, e allo stesso tempo sulle minacce di un fallimento che potrebbe comportare il mancato successo di dialoghi umoristici trasposti erroneamente.