

Transferring the Humour Load in *Asterix Conquers America* into Sinhala

Asterix Conquers America Çevirisi ve Mizah Unsurların Aktarımı

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Abstract

Humour in animated films presents numerous challenges when they are dubbed into another language. The aim of the study is to examine how humorous elements are rendered from one language to another, in dubbed animated films. The animated film *Asterix conquers America* (1994) and its Sinhala dubbed version are chosen for the present study. The taxonomy proposed by Martínez-Sierra which includes eight elements, is applied to determine the humour load of the examples. Twenty-five humorous instants are selected from the film to be analysed qualitatively. In these examples, the study examines if all the identified humour elements are transferred either completely or partially or the humour elements are eliminated in the Sinhala dubbed version. The results show that a loss of humour is noted mainly because the linguistic element is not reproduced in the target language. Along with the loss of the linguistic element, other elements too can be lost. Though a loss of humour is detected in certain examples, it is compensated in certain others. As a strategy, domestication approach is preferred at times, by the translators to substitute humour elements. Their efforts to recreate humour that can be understood and appreciated by the target audience are highlighted and discussed.

Keywords: Asterix, animated film, domestication, dubbing, humour elements, wordplay

Introduction

The field of audiovisual translation (AVT) is making its presence felt in the domain of translation studies with an increasing number of studies dedicated to its development and expansion. Diaz-Cintas et al. (2012) believe that AVT could “elevate the status of Translation Studies thanks to the polymorphic nature of its research object and the fact that it makes use of knowledge from diverse fields, at the same time as feeding into fields of research that are equally diverse” (cited in Bogucki, 2016, p. 13). Diversity in AVT research is evident by the nature and the number of studies carried out in the field. Researchers’ focus varies from the choice of subtitling or dubbing to translate an audiovisual text, to the role of technology, the translation of humour, the barriers caused by culture, or the language variety, just to mention a few. Observing the scope of AVT, Bogucki remarks that it goes “beyond foreign language versions of feature films” (2016, pp. 12-13). It has expanded into include “sitcoms, animated productions (including cartoons), documentaries, commercial clips, corporate video material and (partially) video game localization” (p. 17). Though scholars have distinguished more than ten different multilingual transfers in the field of audiovisual communication, subtitling, dubbing and voice-over have become the three most common translation modes of AVT (Días-Cintas, 2009, p. 4).¹

Dubbing stands out from most other types of translations as it requires coordination between acoustic as well as visual channels in addition to dealing with the written manuscripts, the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) (Hvelplund, 2018, p. 139).

¹ See Matamala’s (2017) study on mapping audiovisual translation research.

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Watching a dubbed film, the audience does not hear the voice of the actor who plays the role, but rather another,² speaking the target language (TL):

Dubbing involves replacing the original soundtrack containing the actors' dialogue with a target language recording that reproduces the original message, ensuring that the target language sounds and the actors' lip movements are synchronised, in such a way that target viewers are led to believe that the actors on screen are actually speaking their language. (Días-Cintas, 2009, p. 4)

As a result of one voice replacing another, lip-synchronization becomes a challenging aspect with many studies dedicated to it. Bosseaux explains that different types of synchronization, especially their technical constraints have been studied in various subfields of AVT, particularly in Multimodality, Sociolinguistics and Linguistic Variation (2018, p. 4). However, in animation films, low priority is given to speech and articulation movements because these films often feature talking animals. The way they pronounce words or how their mouth is placed is difficult to show with precision. As Bruti (2014) remarks, articulation is, at times "blurred and approximate" (p. 92). It is also noted that dubbing is preferred over subtitling to translate animated films because they are mainly expected to entertain children who still haven't learnt to read well (Tveit cited by Mudriczki, 2014, p. 52).

Transfer of humour in audiovisual texts, including animated films, is a thorny area that attracts the attention of the scholars. Humour can be defined as a "quality that has 'fun' as a consequence" (Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 212). The audience reacts to the "fun" quality usually with an appreciative smile or laughter. As Vandaele (2002) points out humour's "intended perlocutionary effect is to make people laugh" (p. 150).³ Humour in animated films is often characterised by "light-hearted atmosphere where humour, both verbal and non-verbal plays a decisive role" (Bruti, 2014, p. 90). Various verbal, and non-verbal factors such as voice off, facial expressions, neologism and special effects contribute individually or collectively to generate humour on screen. As humour in audio-visual texts is anchored in a graphic system, it becomes more challenging when dubbing or subtitling.⁴

Verbal humour can further be divided as linguistic and lingua-cultural humour (Chiaro, 2005; Bucaria, 2007). The first category is composed of humour generated through verbal communication mainly jokes based on puns and allusions (Chiaro, 2006). References to cultural and verbal elements that include food, drinks, institutions, celebrities, and famous characters are included in the second category. Humour in a pun is created by a play on words. Delabastita (1996) explains that "the pun contrasts linguistic structures with different meanings on the basis of their formal similarity" (p. 128). Further, the puns exploit "homonymy, polysemy, homophony, homography and paronymy and may involve morphemes, words or multi-word units" (Minutella, 2014, p. 69). These similarities and ambiguities in sounds, formation or graphics are exploited creatively and logically in puns. In animated films, they become a valued source of humour such as in the *Asterix* series. Low (2011) claims that if the pun plays a key role in a sentence, the translators should either try to "replicate it or to compensate it" by a similar joke from the TL language (p. 62). He further

² For example, in Italy, Ferruccio Amendola became well known for dubbing the voices of Al Pacino and Robert de Niro (Bogucki, 2016, p. 34).

³ Chiaro & Piferi (2010) note that humour is subjective. Not everyone reacts to it in the same way: "humour may well remain within the eyes, ears and mood of the beholder" (p. 300).

⁴ "As the term itself suggests, audiovisuals contain two overlying structures: a visual and an auditory channel each of which contain a series of both verbal and non-verbal elements which inextricably cross-cut one another" (Chiaro, 2014, p. 19).

adds that if the sense is more important in the pun, priority should be given to transferring the sense than the wit (p. 63).

To understand humour based on cultural references, the target audiences should be familiar with them. Cultural references could be unique and specific to one particular culture. When the TL audience members are not exposed to the knowledge, values or tastes familiar to the source language (SL) audience, they are unable to appreciate the comic element. Therefore, the translators take into consideration the linguistic or encyclopaedic knowledge, the degree of familiarity with certain topics, and types of humour of the TL audience, to ensure that the humour crosses the linguistic and cultural barriers (Manca and Aprile, 2014, p. 157). Chiaro (2006) proposes the following strategies to translate verbally expressed humour (VEH): “the substitution of VEH in the Source Language (SL) with an example of VEH in the Target Language (TL), the replacement of the SL VEH with an idiomatic expression in the TL and the replacement of the SL VEH with an example of compensatory VEH elsewhere in the TL text.”

However, finding replacements or substitutions from the TL demands creativity and expertise. It is also important to note how extremely difficult it is to find two similar languages that have the same homophonous, homonymous, or polysemous elements upon which for examples puns can be produced (Chiaro, 2004). As a result, formal equivalence is almost impossible to achieve in the translation of all types of humorous elements (Manca and Aprile, 2014, p. 157). Bucaria affirms that most scholars prefer the functional approach when translating humour in the audiovisual texts, an approach that privileges dynamic equivalence between SL and TL texts than a formal equivalence (2017, p. 432). Bucaria further claims that “an efficient adaptation of audiovisual humour cannot be expected to necessarily reflect the formal structure of the source language joke, but, instead, to successfully render its intention, which is, presumably, to amuse the audience in the context of what they are watching” (p. 436). It is stressed that humour to be translated successfully in the animated dubbed films, the TL audience should be able to grasp it, and appreciate it. However, occasions of extreme cases of domestication are also documented in studies conducted on the transfer of humour.⁵ In an audiovisual text, a heavily domesticated translation can cause a clash because what is said by the characters may not relate to what is seen on screen. Bogucki (2016) notes that extreme cases of domestication “may only be justifiable in cases where the remaining elements of the filmic message (...) do not contain any cultural references, or ideally in movies set in imaginary worlds: fairy tales, sci-fi or fantasy films, etc. (p. 47).

Given the complex nature of transferring humour from one language to another, the translators have to take into consideration various factors and be conscious of the effects caused by their chosen strategies. Nevertheless, many animated films are screened yearly, dubbed or subtitled, in another language. Certain animated films such as *Toy Story*, *Shrek*, *Rio* have been able to gain popularity worldwide. It can be assumed that the humour in these animated films find ways to travel the world in their translated versions. When humour is constructed, based on various elements, can they all be preserved in the translated text (TT)? How can they be rendered into another language? It becomes the translator’s task to identify these various elements and render the humour accordingly and if possible, comprehensively to the TL. The present study aims to examine, how the humour load is rendered from one language to another in an animated dubbed film. Many animated

⁵ For example, in the Polish version of *Shrek*, the translator makes references to Polish culture to make the film sound closer to the target audience. Thus, the Muffin Man becomes Muchomorek and “awful cheese” is replaced by a type of cheese well known in Poland (Bogucki, 2016, p.46).

films that have become popular internationally, have been adored by the Sri Lankans as well. Among them *Shrek*, *Kung Fu Panda*, *Ice Age*, *Despicable Me* are just a few that were dubbed into Sinhala. However, the animated *Asterix* films are preferred as their dubbed versions became a phenomenal success in the early 2000s in Sri Lanka. These films, dubbed into Sinhala and broadcasted on Sirasa TV as *Soora pappa*, the target language name given to the main character, captivated the local audience. During the years 2002-2003, the animated films of *Asterix* were translated by Chandra Ranatunga, Chaminda Keerthirathna, Rochana Wimaladewa, Gaminda Priyawiraj, and Suneth Chithrananda (Jayawardena & Rodrigo, 2022).

Materials and Methods

The English film *Asterix Conquers America* (1994) of the *Asterix* series, and its Sinhala dubbed version are selected for the study. The study is limited to one film as qualitative analysis is prioritized. In the film, the basic plot revolves around the concept that earth is flat. Julius Caesar who wants to get rid of the druid Getafix, who brews the magic potion that gives the super human strength, orders one of his senators to kidnap the druid and throw him off the edge of the earth to be lost for all eternity. This series is known for the humour, both verbal and non-verbal, but particularly for the word play which is enjoyed by not just children but adults as well. The film contains rich material that can be examined and discussed in detail in the study. In terms of the significance of the study, it is important to note that it focuses on the transfer of humour into Sinhala, a minority language, which is spoken only in Sri Lanka and which is rarely compared to international languages in a similar study. Thus, the findings of this study can contribute to the existing literature in the field. Furthermore, Bogucki (2016) highlights that empirical research in the form of observational or experimental studies (e.g. case studies, corpus studies) are of great value for research in translation studies (p. 61). Zabalbeascoa also notes the importance of case studies in the field. He presents two types of audiovisual translation study. The second one “consists of applying general theories translation to audiovisual transfer, combined with descriptive and case studies, thus studying the specific nature of audiovisual transfer” (cited in Bogucki, 2016, p. 62).

In the present study, the animated film *Asterix conquers America*, and its dubbed Sinhala version are studied to understand how the translators have rendered the humour load. To identify the elements in the humour load, the study refers to the taxonomy presented by Martínez-Sierra (2004 & 2008). As explained by Martínez-Sierra, the taxonomy is originally proposed by Zabalbeascoa (1996), who in turn based it on Raphaelson-West (1989) (2014, p. 312). The taxonomy consists of eight (8) categories of humorous elements. These elements are considered “potentially humorous” because a reception study is needed to confirm whether they actually are humorous (p. 313).

The taxonomy of Martínez-Sierra which is referred to in this study, is given below (2014, p. 314).

1. *Community-and-Institutions Elements* (CIE)- These elements have a specific connection to the SL culture: “the name or title of an ordinary person, an artist, a celebrity, a politician, an organization, a building, a book, a newspaper, a musical, a film, a television show and others of the like”.
2. *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* (CSHE). These elements may “appear to be more popular in certain communities than in others”. They could be explained as a preference than a cultural specificity.
3. *Linguistic Elements* (LE) – These elements are based on various linguistic aspects.
4. *Visual Elements* (VE) – The images seen on the screen produce humour.

5. *Graphic Elements* (GE) – Elements that are derived from “a written message inserted in a given icon”.
6. *Paralinguistic Elements* (PE) - Humour is created on focusing on paralinguistic elements “such as a foreign accent, a tone of voice and the imitation of a celebrity’s way of speaking”.
7. *Sound Elements* (SE) – Elements of sound produced by the soundtrack and special effects create humour.
8. *Non-Marked Elements* (NME) - This category includes all “the potentially humorous elements” that do not belong in the seven categories mentioned above.

As seen in the above categories, both verbal and non-verbal humour are included. Additionally, cultural references and preferences, images seen on the screen, sound and paralinguistic elements that contribute to generate humour are also taken into consideration in this taxonomy.

As known to many, *Asterix* was originally published as a comic book in French by René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo. Though the animated films were produced in French based on the comic books, the Sinhala translators based their dubbing on the English language version making it the relay language (RL). Therefore, the study too, doesn’t make references to the French source text, limiting to the English version and Sinhala version. In the English (RL) version, humorous instances are identified and twenty-five (p. 25) examples are chosen to be analysed in detail for the study. Based these chosen examples, a quantitative value is also provided. The taxonomy is used to determine the humour load of an example or in other words the number of humour elements included in it. Martínez-Sierra explains the use of the taxonomy in this way: “This taxonomy made it possible to classify those potentially humorous elements in the source jokes and then in the target jokes, to later be able to compare them and see what had changed.” (2014, pp. 313-314). When examining the transfer of these humorous instances, the study analyses whether all the classified humour elements in the chosen example are rendered completely, partially or eliminated in the TL. Particular attention is given to the lost humour elements. If the translators have added new humour elements in the TL version, those too, are highlighted in the results. Further, the transfer of the humour load that is closely examined to discover the approaches that the translators adopted. To facilitate the study, only four (4) examples each of complete and partial humour transfers are discussed in detail here. All three (3) examples of humour loss are, however, included and discussed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 reveals how the transfer of humour is carried out in the chosen twenty-five (25) examples. In most examples, at least two (2) humorous elements are detected. In eight (8) of the examples (32%), the complete humour load, which means all the humour elements detected, are transferred to the TL. In fourteen (14) examples (56%), some of the elements are not translated, which means the humour load is partially transferred and in three (3) examples (12%), a complete loss of humour is observed. It can be noted that in a majority of twenty-two (22) examples (88%), some of the humorous elements detected, are translated into the TL.

Table 1 - Summary of the transfer of humour in the examples analysed

Number of humorous examples detected in the English (RL) version	25
Number of examples in the TL with the same humour load	08
Number of examples in the TL with a partial humour load	14

Number of examples in the TL with a loss of humour	03
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Table 2 - Examples in which a loss of humour is detected

In three (3) out of twenty-five (25) examples, a loss of humour can be seen. These examples taken from the English and Sinhala dubbed versions, are listed below. In the TL example, the back translation into English, done by the researcher, is given within brackets.

Example in the RL	Example in the TL	Humour element lost
Voice off: "The brave men and women of the village had only one fear that the sky would fall on their heads tomorrow". Chief: "Yesterday was tomorrow day before yesterday". Voice off: "which roughly translated means tomorrow never comes".	People in the village talking in the background. Chief to Geriatrix: "Ah! Uncle, ude pandarama walk ekek wage. Hondayi ithin enge sanipeta". (Ah! Uncle, it seems that you are going for a walk in the morning. It's good for physical fitness.)	Humour element lost – CSHE, LE CSHE - This particular fear of the Gauls, expressed in the RL, is eliminated in the TL. Instead, a normal conversation of physical fitness is given. The fear unique to the Gaulish community is erased. LE – The chief interprets the word "tomorrow" cleverly to show, it never comes. Therefore, the Gauls never have to face this fear. This wordplay on "tomorrow" is not reproduced in the TL.
Lucullus: "Dog overboard. Full speed ahead".	Lucullus: "Ayyo! chuti kuku". (Oh, poor little dog)	Humour element lost - LE LE – "Man overboard" is an exclamation to indicate a person has fallen into the water and requires immediate assistance. This is modified here, using the term dog to indicate that a dog, not a man, is fallen into the sea. In the TL, this exclamation is eliminated, and is replaced by the interjection "ayyo" to show shock and grief.
Lucullus to Getafix: "End of the world, the end of you and the end of a perfect day".	Lucullus to Getafix: "vedo, penawane api den loke getta ta kittu karala inne. Thawa titakin, oayageyi ballageyi jeewithe dotta". (We have almost reached the edge of the world. In a moment, you and your dog's lives will be over).	Humour element lost - LE The meaning of "End of the world" is to be taken literally in this context. As the earth was believed to be flat at that time, they were able to reach the further most point of land on earth, beyond which there's only space. The phrases rhyme with the use of "end". It's not the just the end of the world, but it's also the end of a perfect day and end of the druid as well. The use of the term "end" referring to the world, the day and the druid, is not reproduced in the TL.

In these three (3) examples, a loss of LE is observed. In the first example, in addition to the LE, the CSHE is also lost. The fear of the sky falling on the heads is considered the CSHE, a fear unique to the Gaulish community. However, this fear is neither reproduced nor preserved in the TL. What the translators propose instead, is a normal conversation about morning fitness, based on the image on screen. It does not produce humour in this context.

Further, a play on the word “tomorrow” is created in the RL which is the LE. The term “tomorrow” is cleverly interpreted as “yesterday was tomorrow, the day before” showing that tomorrow never comes and as a result, the Gauls never have to face their fear. The comic element created by the reference to the fear of the Gauls and the subsequent interpretation of “tomorrow” are both lost in this occasion.

Given the differences between English and Sinhala languages in every aspect, equivalents are not easily found, particularly for exclamations such as “man overboard”. In the exclamation “Dog overboard, full speed ahead”, humour is generated by replacing “man” in the original exclamation by “dog” in the RL version as it’s Dogmatix who is thrown overboard. Further, man overboard is also a request to help save the person thrown overboard. But, in this instance, “full speed ahead” is added, clearly showing that the person is abandoned. This exclamation is eliminated in the TL and is replaced by an ordinary interjection which doesn’t add humour to the situation. The humour is lost as the LE, the modified exclamation is not reproduced or replaced. Similarly, in the next example, all the phrases that are made to rhyme with the word “end” are not reproduced in the TL. Lucullus pronounces these phrases in triumph affirming that the mission is accomplished complementing the on-screen action. In the TL version, the triumph is not stressed referring to a wordplay. The LE that adds humour to the situation is, unfortunately removed, causing a loss of humour.

It can be reasonably assumed that when the humour load is limited to one element, the translators have not made a particular effort to transfer it to the TL. A simple joke consists of one humour element. A joke that is composed on several elements is a compound joke (Martínez-Sierra, 2014, p. 314). In the two previous examples, only one humour element is identified, the LE. It is evident that the humorous impact of a simple joke, which rely on one single element, is less compared to that of a compound joke. A young audience could easily miss the humour generated by a single element. From the translators’ side, it must be noted that their choices are constrained as they must pay attention to the VE and the SE on screen, before adding another element to compensate the lost humour. Therefore, it is possible that less attention is paid to the transfer of humour based on a single element. Further, it can also be assumed that the translators may judge these eliminated elements as atmospheric elements rather than plot carrying elements. Luyken et al. (1995) explains that the translators must first identify the plot carrying elements which should remain while they can decide with more freedom whether to include or exclude the atmospheric elements from the TL (as cited in Mudriczki, 2014, p. 54).

Table 3 - Examples in which the humour load is completely transferred into the TL
In the following examples, the identified humour load in the RL is completely transferred to the TL. Additionally, in the TL, it is noted that the translators integrated more elements to reinforce the humour.

Example in the RL	Example in the TL	Humour elements transferred and added
Voice off: “Everyone believed the earth was flat as a pizza. Right in the middle where the anchovies converge, was Rome”.	Voice off: “Hemoma hithan hitiye eka rotiyak vage theti kiyala. E rotiya medde, pol kellak vage thibuna Rome”. (Everyone believed that the earth was flat like a roti. In the middle of the roti, there was Rome like a piece of coconut.)	LE, CSHE – Flatness of the earth compared to a pizza. Rome is located where anchovies converge. VE – The image of a flat earth similar to a pizza, remains. LE, CSHE – <i>The comparison with pizza and anchovies in RL substituted by roti and coconut in TL.</i>

		<i>PE added in TL – The narrator speaks in an unnatural yet, comical voice adding humour. VE remains unchanged.</i>
Obelix: “When I want to send a message I always use airmail”.	Obelix: “Ekkenek handata eriya. Oyavath handata yavannada?” (I already sent one to the moon. Shall I send you too?)	LE – The use of term “airmail” to send a person. VE – The image of the roman soldier sent up. SE – The sound of Obelix throwing the soldier and his screams. <i>LE in the TL is substituted by sending the soldier to the moon instead of to Rome. The VE and SE remain unchanged.</i>
Senators talking: “Who has taken my towel? Even if you get good odds on the Christians...it’s stupid not to bet on the lions”. Lucullus: “This steam is playing havoc with my laurel leaves. Just look they have lost their natural balance”. Caesar: “Cease your prattling! Steam makes our bodies strong as swords tempered in the fire!”	Senators talking: “Jeewana viyadama ahasata gihilla walakulu wala heppila thiyenne. Ekata apita karanna deyak nene. E madivate me jala baddakuth gahala. Kavuda genawe me welawe. Mama nam ovata kemathi ne”. Lucullus: “Jala baddak nam umbala okkota heater hayi karanna weyi neda?” Caesar: “Kata vaha gannava. Badu gena ahalama mata epa vela thiyenne”. (Cost of living has gone up to the sky, hitting the clouds. There’s nothing we can do about it. On top of it, a water tax is imposed. Don’t know who has brought it. I don’t like those. If there’s a water tax, you all will need to get heaters fixed. Quiet, I heard enough about taxes.)	CSHE – The conversation on the benefits of heat. PE – Caesar disagrees with the opinion of his senators. VE – Caesar and senators soaked in steam. <i>CSHE and PE are reproduced in TL with references to high cost of living and taxes, particularly the new water tax. The VE remains unchanged.</i>
Vitalstatistix: “The stinking fish dealer has gone too far! The last time that fish was fresh was when I was in short trousers”.	Vitalstatistix: “Dennek gaththa thetiya ussan yanna, den ithin matayi ussan yanna vune me thetiya. Ane ammapa mata me nayaka kamath epa vela thiyenne. Velavaka nayaka kama genita dila me thetiya denava poddo danna ara kadeta”. (I got two to lift the shield, but now I have to do it alone. Seriously, I had enough of this leadership. Sometimes, I think of giving the leadership to my wife and giving the shield to the shop to play the game “poddo”.)	VE – The chief carrying the shield on his head instead of the bearers. PE – The chief’s frustration over Unhygenix’s rotten fish and unavailability of it for a long time. NME is added with a reference to village chief in shorts which is to be imagined by the audience. <i>PE, NME are recreated in TL by chief thinking of handing over the leadership to his wife and giving the shield to the shop. VE remains unchanged.</i> <i>CSHE is added in TL by referring to past political situations in the country where the wife of a late politician takes over his portfolio.</i>

In the first example, the audience sees on screen that the world is compared to a pizza and Rome is situated in its middle where the anchovies converge. The LE is the flatness of the world which is compared to a pizza. It also includes the CSHE, the food preference of the Italians, pizzas and anchovies. To transfer these two elements, the translators prefer a domestication approach. In the TL, instead of a pizza, a roti is used to show the flatness of the earth. Anchovies are replaced by a piece of coconut. Coconut is essential to make a roti.

Therefore, for the target audience, it's quite natural to see a piece of coconut in the middle of a roti. The translators have found substitutions to render these two elements into the TL and to preserve the humour. A roti being flat and round like a pizza corresponds well to the VE. Further, in the TL, a third element is added which is a PE. The voice of the narrator is made to sound strange, yet comical, adding more humour to the moment.

In the second example, Obelix sends the Roman Centurion up into sky saying that he prefers airmail. The use of the term "airmail" to send a person, is considered the LE. Obelix in the TL sends the Centurion to the moon, instead. As the audience can only see the Centurion being sent up into the sky, the chosen substitution corresponds to the VE. The SE too is not affected because the noise of Obelix throwing the Centurion is preserved in the TL. However, the fact that the centurion is supposed to deliver a message to Caesar in Rome, is ignored. All the humour elements are preserved in this example allowing the audience to enjoy Obelix's passion for fighting.

It is interesting to note that the local political situations are exploited on several occasions in the TL version, particularly to replace what the Senators, Caesar and the village chief say. In the third example, the conversation that takes place among the senators in the sauna is appropriately domesticated in the TL, referring to the political rhetoric of the local leaders. In this example, several elements are identified. The senators' preference for heat in the sauna is identified as the CSHE, while the corresponding VE shows the senators soaked in steam. The PE is produced by the argument between the senators and Caesar. In the TL, the CSHE, the preference for sauna and heat are replaced by politically charged topics about sky rocketing prices, and taxes. The PE is also reproduced as Caesar disagrees with the senators in the TL as well. A domestication approach is again preferred by the translators as the conversation on prices and taxes are more familiar to the target audience than steam in a sauna. The humour elements CSHE and PE are reinforced by this substitution.

Further, the conversation about a new water tax is logical and appropriate because they are assembled in a sauna. For the ordinary tax payer, the sauna could become a luxury with the implementation of this said tax, but the politicians remain untroubled. The lax attitude of politicians is made fun of while offering amusement to the target audience. The reference to the water tax is taken up again in the TL version when the druid says that he might have to charge money for the magic potion because of this new tax. On this occasion, the humour based on the water tax is used as compensation, later in the film. In the three strategies that Chiaro (2006) proposes, the third is the Replacement of the SL VEH with an example of VEH in the TL elsewhere in the text.

In the fourth example, the village chief is unhappy that his shield bearers have fallen ill after eating Unhygenix's rotten fish. He prepares to confront the fishmonger, telling to himself that things have gone too far this time. The PE which is the frustration of the chief, is multiplied in the TL, making him think of giving up his shield and leadership. When the chief says that he is thinking of giving the leadership to his wife, it's a situation that is already familiar to the local audience. The wives of late politicians have on several occasions accepted the portfolios of their late husbands in Sri Lanka. This is added as a CSHE in the TL. The NME, in the RL, is imagining the chief in his shorts when he was young. In the TL, it

is changed into the target audience imagining how Impedimenta, the chief's wife would rule the village, in his place. It is an efficient decision to add a CSHE by the translators to increase the humour load which additionally reinforces PE, VE and NME. As Mudriczki (2014) notes on her study on the audio-visual humour transfer strategies in *Shrek the Halls*, "the editorial changes that the dubbing script writers make have a decisive influence on the entertaining quality of the audiovisual product in the target language culture" (p. 63).

When the translators add CSHEs from the TL culture, it can be noted that they favour a domestication approach. Food items such as roti and coconut and especially the reference to local politics, are very familiar to the target audience. They can instantly grasp the humour, enjoy the instant created by the translators. De Rosa (2014) points out that "Given the difficulty of translating (lingua)cultural references and/or puns, these strategies justify, in many cases, the tendency to naturalize and domesticate the humorous element, supporting models of functional translation" (p. 110). It is clear that the translators give priority to generate humour and that they look for linguistic and lingua-cultural references familiar to the TL, which could ensure a comic effect on the TL audience.

Table 4 – Examples in which humour load is partially transferred into the TL

Example in the RL	Example in the TL	Humour elements partially transferred and absent
Shield bearer: That's what I call "toppling the monarchy".	Shield bearer: "Lokka thava podden vetena". (Chief almost fell down.)	LE – The use of the expression "toppling of the monarchy" literally to refer to the physical fall of the chief. VE – The fall of the chief from the shield to the ground. PE – The comical sarcasm in the voice of the shield bearer. <i>As the reference to "toppling the monarchy" is eliminated along with it, LE and PE are both lost in TL. Only the VE remains.</i>
Caesar to Centurion: "Now there's an Olympic event that the Greeks never thought of... diving".	Caesar to Centurion: "Mokada miniho? Mahaloku vedar vage roota gena evilla kohatada penne? E kiyamu". (What is the matter man? You come here like a big champion. See where you jumped? Now, speak.)	CIE – The reference to the Olympic Games. CIE – At the time diving was not an Olympic event, not even thought of. VE – The image of Centurion falling into the pool. SE – The sound of Centurion falling into the pool. PE – The ironic yet, comical tone of Caesar's voice. <i>The reference to the Olympic games and diving as an event are eliminated. In the TL, only the VE, and SE are observed.</i>
Getafix: "I did give you a recipe. Unfortunately, it's a recipe for disaster".	Getafix: "Ohoma be malliye, thava gemma aran gahanna ona". (Can't hit like that little brother, you have to hit with more power.)	LE – The play on the word "recipe" with reference to the expression "recipe for disaster". VE – The medicine man unable to hit with super human strength.

		<i>LE is lost in the TL as the expression with "recipe" is not reproduced.</i>
<p>Senator 1: "Things are gonna get really hot under the collar. It'll get hotter for him if the Gauls continue to fan the flames of revolt".</p> <p>Senator 2: "Yes, he's in the hot seat, all right. We'll make sure he sweats it out!"</p> <p>Senator 3: "Where's that shirker, Brutus? He should take care of this sort of a job. He'll stab you in the back".</p>	<p>Senator 1: "Mama danne nedda meya ogollange heti. Den oya balanna boruda kiyanne kiyala. Velava balala oya ganata anith peththata paninava, nedda".</p> <p>Senator 2: "Ane nikan inna oya. Mama ehema salli dunnata lesiyen yana kenek neve".</p> <p>Senator 3: "Me eththatama e peththata enavanam egollo salli denavaluda?</p> <p>Ehenam gaha ganna ona ne, apith e peththata yang ane".</p> <p>(Don't I know your ways. See, if I'm telling lies. You will jump to the other side when the time comes. Won't you?</p> <p>Don't lie. I don't easily jump even though I'm offered money. Is it true that they give money if we jump to their side? There's no point in fighting, let's jump to the other side.)</p>	<p>LE -The use of terms such as "hot", "sweat" while they seat in a sauna, to speak of a conspiracy against Caesar.</p> <p>CIE - The reference to Brutus as the likely person to betray Caesar.</p> <p>PE - They speak in secret, lowering their voices.</p> <p><i>CSHE is added with references to actual local political conspiracy which is to make a calculating and profitable jump to another political party at a crucial moment.</i></p> <p><i>LE is lost as the terms are not repeated to speak of a conspiracy.</i></p> <p><i>CIE is lost as a historical figure is not named in TL.</i></p> <p><i>PE is replaced in the TL with voices that sound comical.</i></p>

The examples in Table 4 show that not all the identified humour elements are transferred into the TL. In most of these examples, it is the LE that is lost. Similar to the examples seen in Table 2, and as seen in these examples too, it's the wordplay that is not reproduced. In the first example, when the village chief falls from the shield, the shield bearer says "this is what I call toppling the monarchy". The expression, the LE, is to be taken literally as it's the village chief who falls down. Additionally, the shield bearer says this expression in a comically sarcastic way, adding a PE. This expression is not reproduced in the TL. When this expression is eliminated, the PE too, is evidently lost. The target audience can only see the VE which the chief is falling down. The other humour elements are eliminated causing a loss in humour in the TL.

CIE is another element that is lost in the humour load as seen in example two and four. These elements are "tied to a specific culture" (Martínez-Sierra, 2005, p. 290). In the second example, the identified CIE is the reference to the Olympic games and to diving as an Olympic event. Caesar sarcastically points out that diving should be an Olympic event, which eventually happens. The CIE is neither preserved nor replaced by a target culture element. In the TL, the audience can see the Centurion falling into the water, and hear the sound made by it but cannot appreciate the humour produced by Caesar's references to the Olympics. Therefore, a loss of humour is detected in this example.

In the third example, a loss of the LE is again observed. In this example, the druid gives a wrong potion to the Indian medicine man. The RL version skilfully makes use of the expression "a recipe for disaster" because the wrong recipe literally causes a disaster. As a result, the druid has to face unpleasant consequences of his actions or to be more precise, his recipe. In the TL, this expression is not recreated and the humour generated by it, is lost. The target audience can only appreciate the VE which is the action on screen but not the humour generated by the LE. Expressions such as "toppling the monarchy" or "a recipe for

disaster” complement the on-screen action and allow the RL translators to play on words that are significant to these specific scenes. In doing so, they are able to add more humour. Unfortunately, as similar expressions are not found in the TL, these LEs are abandoned.

In the fourth and last example in Table 4, the identified LE refers to the use of terms such as “hot seat,” “sweat,” and “flames” in the sauna to speak metaphorically of a conspiracy against Caesar. In the TL, the senators discuss politics using a colloquial language without making reference to the sauna. Therefore, the LE is not reproduced in the TL. Compared to the RL version, the political discussion in the TL appears less sophisticated without the metaphorical allusions to a conspiracy. However, to compensate this loss of humour, the translators, similar to the fourth example in Table 3, adopts again the political rhetoric of the local politicians to replace the conversation among the senators adding a CSHE. In the TL example, the senators plot a calculating and profitable jump from one political party to another, which is a common event in local politics. The PE in the RL refer to the low murmuring of the senators who discuss their conspiracy in secret. In the TL, it is replaced by senators speaking in comical voices. In this occasion too, the translators’ domestication approach is quite visible. A familiar topic is chosen to replace the tricky situation in which Caesar finds himself, unable to conquer the Gaulish village.

Another element identified in this example is the CIE, the reference to Brutus. It is humorous and ironic in this context because the senators look for Brutus to take care of a political situation highlighting his backstabbing nature. Historically speaking, it was a Roman politician called Brutus who became famous for his involvement in the conspiracy to assassinate Caesar. For a young audience, who have not heard of Brutus, or the fate of Caesar in history, which are deeply connected to one specific country, are unable to understand their importance. Therefore, the translators opt to remove the CIE related to the historical figure in this occasion. It is not replaced either by a reference to a local politician.

Conclusion

The study examined how the humour load was transferred in the animated film *Asterix conquers America* from the RL to the TL. The results revealed that out of twenty-five (25) examples that were analysed, in twenty-two (22) of them, the humour load was completely or partially transferred. It shows that the translators make a considerable effort to maintain humour throughout the selected dubbed film. It was only in three (03) examples that the humour elements were completely eliminated. It is notable that in these examples, the humour load was based mainly on one humour element making them simple jokes. It can be argued that the humour effect created by a simple joke is low. Though complex jokes have a more significant effect on the audience, when one element is lost in them, particularly the LE, the humour load is often reduced to the VE or the SE. The LE proves to be almost the most difficult element to reproduce given that the two languages the RL and the TL, are so different. It is also noted that the TL translators have on several instances reproduced or added PEs making the voices comical, colloquial or emotional in an effort to compensate the lost humour.

In the examples where humour has been completely or partially transferred, the translators have relied on domestication approach introducing CSHEs, that are more familiar to the TL culture. The most noticeable substitution is the choice of local politics to replace that of Roman senators and Caesar. It seems an efficient substitution that draws the attention of the TL audience. The sophisticated humour with references to CIEs or LEs are almost absent in the TL version. However, they are compensated to some extent with the added PEs and the CSHEs. Further, the VE, and the SE play a significant role in the dubbed film entertaining

the audience. Even when the LE or the CIE is lost, the audience still has these two elements to keep them entertained.

The study shows that not all the identified humour elements in the RL are transferred to the TL. It may not be possible to do so. But on most occasions, the target audience is able appreciate certain elements including the VE and the SE. The examples of substitutions from the TL to compensate the lost humour elements add familiarity as well as more amusement to the target audience. It can be said that the translators attempted to maintain humour throughout the film and also to present humorous moments understandable to the target audience. By examining more Sinhala dubbed *Asterix* animated films, it is possible to expand the study and gain a better understanding on the transfer of the humour load in them.

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