

Knock, knock! Who's there?: Issues in Translating Humor in Sitcoms

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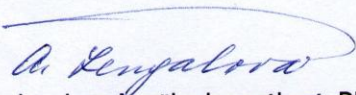
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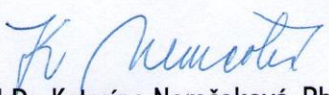
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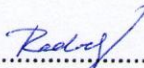
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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá audiovizuálním překladem, přesněji titulkováním, které je jednou z metod audiovizuálního překladu. Druhá část teorie se zaměřuje na humor a jeho překlad. Praktická část rozebírá humor amerického sitcomu How I Met Your Mother (HIMYM). Humor v původním anglickém znění je porovnáván s jeho českým překladem v titulcích.

Klíčová slova: audiovizuální překlad, mediální překlad, titulkování, humor, audiovizuální humor, překlad humoru, americká kultura, česká kultura, intertextualita.

ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with audiovisual translation (AVT), in particular with subtitling, which is one of the methods of AVT. The second part of the theory focuses on humor and its translation. The practical part analyzes humor from the American sitcom How I Met Your Mother (HIMYM). The original humor in English is compared with its Czech translation in subtitles.

Keywords: audiovisual translation, media translation, subtitling, humor, audiovisual humor, translation of humor, American culture, Czech culture, intertextuality.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis will be dealing with the audiovisual translation (AVT) and humor primarily. These two phenomena are connected with some other issues, which will be briefly discussed too. Here belongs for example the introduction of the source and the target culture, intertextuality, etc. AVT is a rather new discipline in comparison with other disciplines of translation therefore the aim of this thesis is to clarify some of the issues connected with this field. Firstly, there will be provided a brief overview of all methods which belong to the AVT and then it will only be focused on one method of AVT which is subtitling.

Since subtitling is due to the various constraints a really interesting method of AVT, approximately half of the theoretical part will be devoted to it. Firstly, the short history of subtitling will be discussed and subsequently, the thesis will go through the particular constraints. The biggest restrictions are the ones of the technical character. These are the time and spatial constraints, which are followed by the textual constraint afterwards. On the grounds of all these limitations the linguistics of the translation is necessary to be adjusted. And it will also be the last but not least chapter concerning subtitling.

The second part of the theoretical part will be related to humor. There will be argued what this phenomenon actually means and what it is determined by. Furthermore, the thesis will be focused on the cultural context, which is an integral part of humor comprehension. The following chapter will be taking into consideration humor from the point of view of the translator. And to conclude the theoretical part, the intertextuality will be mentioned since it is an element of people's everyday life even though they do not sometimes know about it which means that it is also sometimes included in audiovisual programs such as sitcoms which will be analyzed in the practical part of this thesis.

The practical part will be analyzing humor of American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* (HIMYM) and will be critically evaluating one of its Czech translations in subtitles. HIMYM is assumed to be full of jokes dependent on language therefore it will be interesting to compare their Czech translation with the American original. Subtitled's mistakes will be pointed out and suggestions for better solution of the translation will be made in some cases.

Since fansubs will be analyzed, many mistakes and shifts in the original meaning are expected to be found. Humor is not easy to translate but it can be achieved in many cases.

I.

THEORY

1 AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION

Many discussions have been led among scholars about the audiovisual translation not only because of its special nature, which is given by the constraint of need to be in accordance also with other communication channels (visual and vocal channel and the timing of the audiovisual program), but also about the term audiovisual translation itself.

The main reasons why many scholars did not want to accept the audiovisual translation as a part of translation studies are the constraints mentioned above together with the space constraint and the shift from oral to written form of communication regarding subtitling which results for example in the omission of lexical items of the source text. That is why some consider or considered audiovisual translation only an adaptation and not a translation. It might be sure that the AVT is not the usual field of translation but the term adaptation sounds rather offensive. As if the AVT was something low-grade in comparison with other fields of translation (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 9-11).

Concerning the term AVT, it took time unless it began to be used. It was common to use the term *constrained translation*, just to name few scholars, Titford or Mayoral et al. (Munday 2008, 183) or subordinate translation in 1980's for instance. Nowadays, this discipline can be found under the label of film translation, cinema translation, screen translation or multimedia translation. The terms film and cinema translation are not quite accurate because they only refer to a certain type of media or audiovisual programs therefore it would not be proper to use it as general terms. On the other hand, the term "AVT was used to encapsulate different translation practices used in the audiovisual media – cinema, television, VHS – in which there is a transfer from a source to a target language, which involves some form of interaction with sound and images" (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 12). The term audiovisual translation will be used in this thesis as well because it may seem to be the most proper one from all the expressions already mentioned above (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 11-12).

1.1 Methods of AVT

This thesis will only be dealing with one of the methods of the AVT, which is subtitling, to be more precise, interlingual subtitling. But firstly, there will be mentioned all the methods of translation which are involved in the AVT. The categorization of practices which AVT includes slightly differs among specialists. Still, dubbing and subtitling definitely

predominate the other ones, that is something what most of the scholars have agreed on. Munday (2008, 184-185) proposes this division:

- 1) **interlingual subtitling** – as the prefix inter implies, this kind of translation is between two languages, from a source to a target language (Diaz Cintas 2004, 17). This type of subtitles includes two different subtypes of subtitles. There are closed and open subtitles. Open subtitles are part of the film and cannot be switched off for example. Whereas closed subtitles can be turned on or off by the viewer according to his wish. It is also possible to choose the language of these subtitles (Munday 2008, 184).
- 2) **bilingual subtitling** – it is used mainly in countries where two languages are spoken, for instance Belgium and Israel (Munday 2008, 185). But also at international film festivals to be accessible to more people. One language is usually English and the second one is the national language of the country where the festival is held (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 18-19). In this case, subtitles in the two specific languages are projected on the screen at the same time (Munday 2008, 185). Use of two-liners is a standard in the case of bilingual subtitling but there exist also four-liners. However, there is too much text on the screen in the latter instance (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 18).
- 3) **intralingual subtitling** – these subtitles are especially meant for deaf and those with the hearing impairment (Munday 2008, 185), but Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 14) rank among this group also subtitles for language learning purposes, karaoke effect, dialects of the same language and for notices and announcements in the public places.
- 4) **dubbing** – it is a substitution of the voice of the source language by the voice of the target language, so it is a verbal transfer (as in the voice-over method) (Munday 2008, 185). There is a good definition which is borrowed by Mona Baker and Braňo Hochel (2002, 74 - 75) from Luyken at al. (1991, 31): Dubbing is “the replacement of the original speech by a voice track which attempts to follow as closely as possible the timing, phrasing and lip movements of the original dialogue”.

- 5) **voice-over** – it can be seen mainly in documentaries and interviews. Lip-synchronization is not as important here as in the case of dubbing (Munday 2008, 185).
- 6) **surtitling** – these subtitles were originally used in operas and in theatres and other shows later too. Surtitles are displayed above the stage or can be placed at the back of seats in the auditorium (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 25).
- 7) **audio description** – it is usually an intralingual commentary about what is going on the stage which helps people with impaired vision to understand the audiovisual program (Munday 2008, 185).

Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 14) suggest a little bit different classification of methods but it is very similar in general. The biggest difference is that they consider subtitling to be one group which can be further divided into interlingual, intralingual and bilingual subtitling. And these categories can be subdivided too.

1.2 Subtitling

Firstly, there should be provided the definition of the term subtitling and to be more specific of interlingual subtitling. Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 8) define it “as a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that strives to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like, and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off).”

To this exhaustive definition must be added that subtitles have to be in accordance with the image and the original source text dialogue and must be presenting the same semantic meaning of what is said in the audiovisual program. It is also important that viewers have enough time to read them and also to understand what the whole action is about. But this thesis will be dealing with these constraints later (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 8). To offer more perspectives on subtitling, there is a definition by Henrik Gottlieb (2004) who claims that subtitling is a “diasemiotic translation in polysemiotic media (including films, TV, video and DVD), in the form of one or more lines of written text presented on the screen in sync with the original dialogue”. To sum up, both definitions provide similar explanation of this term in general. Subtitling is a translation which includes the transfer from the spoken to the written form where the subtitles are part of the multimedia.

1.2.1 The beginnings of subtitling

The whole issue of AVT and thus, also of subtitling goes back to the end of the nineteenth century, to the year 1895 in France. There was a man, Luis Lumière, who devised a cinematographe. It seemed that there was finally something universal, something what could be comprehended by all people in the whole world thanks to the image in motion. Those movies were without a sound of course. Movie has its own integral pictorial and audio system therefore it was considered as a totally new field. But this did not last for a long time on account of the rapid technical development (Diaz Cintas 2008, 1). Though, there were attempts to express what the characters talk about. There was created something what is called intertitles today. As Ivarsson (2004) states, intertitles are: “texts, drawn or printed on paper, filmed and placed between sequences of the film.” These intertitles were used in 1903 in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* directed by Edwin S. Porter for the first time. And they became known as sub-titles because of their similar function with subtitles used in media. There were even cases of application of subtitles in the pictures in motion at those times, as in the *College Chums* from Porter in 1907. And in 1909, M. N. Topp invented a so called: “device for the rapid showing of titles for moving pictures other than those on the film strip” (Ivarsson 2004). This technique may have been the first one most similar to current methods because it is sometimes used to this day too, not only at the beginnings (Ivarsson 2004).

There were also another ways how they tried to make up for the lack of the sound in the movies besides the intertitles. There was for example an orchestra playing during the projection to evoke the right atmosphere or a man, a so called “explicator” who described or narrated what was happening in the movie and he was also responsible for the reciting of the intertitles (Diaz Cintas 2008, 2).

In 1927, when the audio part of the movie was contrived, not only as some kind of added part, but as an integral part of the movie, there was a need of the translation again. There occurred another possibility how to do this besides the subtitling and it was the second most popular method of transfer of AVT, dubbing. Though, it was not acceptable for some directors or distributors of movies mainly due to the price of this translation method (dubbing is approximately twenty times more expensive than subtitling). The major difficulty about subtitling was the way of placing them into the moving images. Not only because the techniques were not entirely developed or invented, but also because the

movie itself was hard to obtain as it was usually retained in the state of the producer. It was the Scandinavian states and the Netherlands who began to use this way of AVT the most. It means countries whose language is not very spread around the world. Those countries together with Hungary and France were the ones who started being the best in this field. Ivarsson (2004) says that Gottlieb mentioned: “the first attested showing of a sound film with subtitles was when *The Jazz Singer* (originally released in the US in October 1927) opened in Paris, on January 26, 1929, with subtitles in French [...]” and Italy ensued right after the USA with the movie “The Singing Fool” which was subtitled in Danish.

There were developed several techniques of subtitling throughout the twentieth century. From the optical method invented in 1909, over the mechanical one from Norway and the thermal one from the Hungary, both of which date back to the 1930’s or the enhanced chemical methods from the Hungarian and Norwegian originators again from the 1930’s, up to the laser technique, which is of course the newest one. The laser method was devised by Denis Auboyer in Paris and by the company Titra-Film in Paris and Brussels. It costs even less money than the chemical one and does not require much manpower. On the other hand, much has to be much invested in the necessary appliance (Ivarsson 2004).

1.2.2 Specific features of subtitling

As it has been hinted before, subtitling is connected with many certain constraints which other branches of translation do not have to deal with. Technical and textual constraints are the most specific ones and the resulting linguistics must be considered as much.

1.2.2.1 Technical constraints

This category can also be divided into two subgroups. The first one deals with time and the duration of subtitles on the screen and the second one with space taken up by subtitles and their position.

1.2.2.1.1 Time constraints

The most important thing while subtitling is the right time of placing subtitles on the screen and their duration. This can be called timing or cueing. Subtitles should definitely follow the speech of the actors with respect to all the aspects of the speech. The best way of cueing according to Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 88) is that subtitles should emerge on the screen at the exact time of the beginning of the utterance of the actor and should vanish with the end of his speech since there is a great possibility that when subtitles stay

longer on the screen than it is necessary, viewers are inclined to read them once more. They should not stay longer than two seconds after the close of the speech according to Karamitroglou (1997). But they must not vanish too quickly on the other hand. “No matter how perfect a subtitle is in terms of format and content, it will always fail to be successful if viewers do not have enough time to read it,” states Georgakopoulou (2009, 22). Although, Karamitroglou (1997) claims, that subtitles should not appear on the screen at the very same time as the person begins to speak but with the delay of 0.25 second. Since human brain needs time to deal with the start of the speech and to slide with eyes down to the subtitles. Parallel subtitles will addle the viewer for 0.5 second and he will not know whether to concentrate on the speech of the actors or on the subtitles which surprises him.

There is a kind of a rule which suggests the utmost time of display of subtitles on the screen to be six seconds, when talking about two-line subtitles with the maximum number of characters. On the contrary, there is also a minimal time of showing subtitles which should be adhered to and it is one second. Shorter subtitles could look like a twinkle (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 89-90).

1.2.2.1.2 Spatial constraints

Taking restricted space into consideration, it is obvious that there is not enough room for rich explications, long sentences, etc. in subtitling. The most important matter is that subtitles must be easily read by viewers (Georgakopoulou 2009, 22). Another significant suggestion is that good subtitles are “invisible” on the screen that viewer should not even notice them while watching the audiovisual program. Therefore, there is this “unwritten” rule which suggests that interlingual subtitling should be reduced only to two lines. To compare it with other kinds of subtitling, subtitling for deaf and hard of hearing takes often three or even four lines up for instance.

Most of the scholars have agreed on the number of characters per line in subtitling, at least approximately. This maximum number should be around thirty-five. This involves blank spaces and typographical signs. For the readability of the text but without the necessity of shortening and simplifying it too much, this is an appropriate number of characters (Karamitroglou 1997). Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 84) claim that the number of the characters can also vary a bit with the type of the medium presenting the audiovisual program, with the computer program creating subtitles and last but not least with a request

of the customer. For projection of movies in the cinema and DVDs, subtitles can be sometimes allowed to have forty symbols and movies at the festivals can sometimes have even up to forty-three symbols. But it is really a rare situation. As for the smallest number of the symbols for a line, it is not set anywhere but it is also not very usual for subtitle to have less than five symbols. And as it has been mentioned above, such a short subtitle should stay displayed minimally one second on the screen otherwise the spectator might not even notice it. To avoid showing such a short subtitle, there is an option to add the word to the previous or the next subtitle (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 84-85).

As for the location of subtitles, the most usual one is to insert them in the lower part of the screen and horizontally and in the centre for one main reason. It does not intrude into the image that much and nothing major usually takes place in this part of the screen, anyway. As Karamitroglou states (1997): “[...] the lowest line of the subtitles should appear at least 1/12 of the total screen height above the bottom of the screen [...]” and “[...] space of at least 1/12 of the total screen width should be provided to the left of the first character and at least 1/12 of the total screen width to the right of the last character, for each subtitle line.” All this is because otherwise it would be demanding for the viewer to move his eyes from the picture to the subtitles if they would be too far from each other. Although there is an exception in the position of subtitles and it is that the Japanese are used to put subtitles to the right side and vertically (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 82). And there is also another exception if taking the position of subtitles into consideration and it is their moving to the left side of the picture while transferring a conversation which is presented by dashes and goes over both lines which are showed at the same time. This is given by the principle of the press which this complies with (Karamitroglou 1997).

However, there are certain cases in which it is somehow allowed to remove subtitles from the standard bottom part of the screen and they are these:

- 1) they cannot be read because of the pale color of the picture behind the subtitles (subtitles are most commonly yellow or white)
- 2) there is something relevant going on in the lower part of the screen
- 3) there is another important information inserted in the lower part of the screen while actors are still speaking (for example data about the spokesperson, etc.)

The most usual place where subtitles are moved is the upper part. They can also be put in the centre of the screen but it is not very frequent. There is also a possibility of moving

subtitles to the right or the left side of the screen. In simple terms, when it is really inevitable to move them somewhere, it should be done in a most nonviolent and unobtrusive way and each such a case must be considered carefully (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 82-83).

1.2.2.1.3 Textual constraints

Subtitling deals with a shift of the mode from the spoken to the written form and this may cause subtiter other problems which he must deal with. Each, spoken and written language, has its own specific characteristics. Spoken language is impromptu and therefore there can appear aspects as “[...] slips of the tongue, pauses, false starts, unfinished sentences, ungrammatical constructions, etc.” There can also appear “[...] dialectal, idiolectal and pronunciation features [...]” (Georgakopoulou 2009, 26) which again must be considered how to be expressed in the subtitles. It is not possible to follow actor’s speech with all the features typical for the oral communication in subtitling because it could make the subtitles less understandable and legible (Georgakopoulou 2009, 22-23). But this issue will be discussed later on.

There is another issue which subtitler must consider. The audience has to focus on two things, what is happening in the visual communicative channel and what is written in the subtitles, thus, subtitler should try to make it easier for them. When there is a bigger importance of what is going on on the screen, subtitler should only provide the audience with the most essential facts. On the other hand, if it is more significant what the actors are talking about, subtitler should give the viewers as much linguistic information as he is permitted by the spatial and temporal constraints. Subtitlers can also simplify the legibility and clarity of the subtitles by a word order and the arrangement of both lines, which leads the thesis to the linguistics of the subtitling because this is connected with grammatical issues (Georgakopoulou 2009, 22-23).

1.2.2.2 *Linguistics of subtitling*

1.2.2.2.1 Text reduction

As it has been mentioned above, subtitling is connected with many special factors which other fields of translation studies do not have to deal with. Taking this fact into consideration, it is not possible that subtitles will ever be an unabridged form of the source spoken text. Thus, the shortening of the text is one of the most significant and necessary

features (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 145). There are several reasons for reducing the text according to Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 146). Firstly, persons who watch the audiovisual program need to comprehend what they see in subtitles, so the subtitle should be as simple and short as possible, on condition that the meaning is preserved, of course. Secondly, they need to link the data acquired from the subtitles with the other communication channels, i.e. the visual and the acoustical one. And the third reason is again connected with the already suggested temporal and spatial constraints. Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 146) distinguish two kinds of the text reduction and that is a total and a partial reduction. Both kinds of reduction can be reached by different strategies. The total reduction, as the name indicates, is done by the complete “omission” of words, which means that the words are excluded, and the partial reduction is accomplished by the condensation. Both these strategies can be used simultaneously and the consequence is a reformulation of the source text, which is one of the most distinctive characteristics of subtitling.

There is an interesting classification of parts of the text by Kovačič (Georgakopoulou 2009, 26). He distinguishes three kinds of the text:

- 1) There are the essential lexical items which are necessary to translate because they contain vital information needed for the comprehension of the audiovisual program (Georgakopoulou 2009, 26-27).
- 2) There are the fractionally essential lexical items which only are possible to be condensed.
- 3) And there are such lexical items which do not have to be necessarily translated and thus can be deleted (Georgakopoulou 2009, 27-28). The omissions will be discussed in detail later.

But as Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 147) state subtitler ought not to shorten the source text if there is no urgent need of it. And it must really be taken into consideration, what should be translated what not and what should be omitted or condensed in each given case according to “[...] genre, context, speed of delivery, etc. [...]” as Georgapoulou suggests (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 149). Although Karamitroglou (1997) mentions that even though the technical constraints allow it, subtitlers ought not to insert everything into subtitles. They should find the appropriate amount of the original text which is necessary to be translated because of the indispensable information contained in it to let the viewers have enough time to process the pictures and the soundtrack of the movie.

It is proposed that the best way of dealing with this issue is to forget the original and to translate it exactly according to what the target audience demands. Subtitlers should know at least approximately the target audience according to the nature of the audiovisual program they deal with. Thus, their decision what to translate and how may also be influenced by the knowledge of the viewers which they take use of while watching the program so that there is no need for explanations in subtitles, etc. (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 148-150).

The strategies of condensation and omission will be discussed closer now. Condensation and rewriting are possible to apply to the lexical items, whole sentences or clauses. Condensation of words can be achieved according to Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 150-154) by several strategies:

- 1) **usage of a shorter form of a verb** – *I should really be going actually.* => *I have to leave.*
- 2) **generalization of enumerations** – *You lied to us, son. Your own mother and father.* => *You lied to us, to us, your parents.*
- 3) **use of a shorter synonym** – *He's got a lot of money.* => *He is rich.*
Although while applying this strategy, subtitlers must consider if there is no change in the register of the speaker or if the synonym is not only a near-synonym because there could be a change in the semantic meaning
- 4) **preferring to use simple tenses to compound ones** – *Her father had thrown her out!* => *Her father threw her out.* But these shifts are only possible when grammatical rules of the target language allow it.
- 5) **shift of word classes** – *I started working!* => *I found a job.*
- 6) **usage of shorter forms or abbreviations** – *What, is there something that is a problem?* => *What's up? What's the problem?* This is very common in English but in Czech for example, usage of similar shortenings is not considered to be a standard Czech as *Byl jsi.* => *Byls.*

Strategies of condensation of sentences or clauses (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 154 - 161):

- 1) **shift in the mode of the sentence** – negative to affirmative sentence, indirect to direct question as *Ok, we did not live in a palace...* => *Ok, the place was small...*

- 2) **reduction or omission of modal verbs** – *Can you see the light up there in the window? => You see the light, up there?* But again, the omission or a change of modal verbs can lead to an impoliteness or to a shift in a certainty of the sentence, etc.
- 3) **direct into indirect speech** – *I often tell myself: “Good thing she went, we’re more at ease like this”.* => *Sometimes I’m glad she went. It makes things easier.*
- 4) **shift of the subject** – for example from object to subject. *Eczema, well, that can happen to anyone.* => *Eczema, anyone can get eczema.*
- 5) **change of theme and rheme** – the usual position of theme (known information) and rheme (new information) is that the rheme is placed at the end of the sentence and the theme at the beginning. If this order is changed, it is because of the emphasizing of the new information. Although this can lead to the neutralization of the style of the speaker. When this occurs in the audiovisual program, the usual strategy is to shift it back to the typical word order to facilitate the reading to viewers. The text, which is reduced this way, can be filled in by pictures and by soundtrack of the program. *The laundry, the ironing, your grandmother did all that!* => *Your grandmother did all the chores.*
- 6) **shortening of long sentences or dividing compound sentences into several ones** – simple sentences are easier to read, but yet, subtitlers must be careful not to make the subtitles too short and not to split them in the way that they would lose the links with other sentences. Is it not very convenient to omit the linking words either.
- 7) **shift from the passive to the active voice and vice versa** – there is a little change in this shift because in one case there is the agent in the position of theme and then in the position of rheme but still this kind of alteration is in most cases acceptable. *We knew that was where our heroes were kept.* => *We knew that our heroes were there.*
- 8) **usage of pronouns and deictics to replace nouns or noun phrases** – to use these words is a clever solution from the point of view of reducing the text because pronouns and deictics are usually short words. However, they are

only possible to be used in the context to make sense therefore there should not be too much of them in subtitles. On the other hand, there is a visual support in the audiovisual program, which enables to use more pronouns and deictics. *There is no food in this high mountain. => There's nothing to eat here.*

- 9) **joining more phrases or sentences to create one** – this opposite strategy opposite to the strategy of dividing sentences relies on the logic of the speech. The fusion can preserve the links between sentences well so it facilitates the understanding to the audience. By implication, there can be omitted some lexical items of this so it leads to the shortening of the subtitle. *Where did you find this woman? She's a genius. => Where did you find this genius* (Diaz Cintas and Remael 2004, 150-161)¹.

There are going to be discussed the ways of the complete omission of words or even sentences or clauses. According to Karamitroglou (1997)², there are three groups of words that can be deleted. These are:

- 1) **so called padding words** – such as *well, you know, as I say, etc.*, these words do not carry any semantic meaning and their function is to keep the fluency of the utterance
- 2) **tautological cumulative adverbs or adjectives** – such as *great big, super extra, teeny weeny, etc.*, these expressions can be simply replaced by one word as *huge, extremely, tiny*.
- 3) **utterances of responses** – such as *no, yes, ok, thank you, sorry, please* because they are generally understandable (for Europeans) when they are pronounced distinctly. But on the other hand, if these expressions are not articulated well, are formulated in the slang or little known collocation, they ought to be transferred and inserted in the subtitle.

Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 163 - 165)³ add to this list of cases when there is possible to omit the lexical items also these categories of words:

¹ The example sentences are taken from Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 150 - 161).

² The example expressions are taken from Karamitroglou (1997).

³ The example sentences are taken from Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 163 – 165).

- 1) **question-tags** – this typical linguistic feature of English does not sometimes have to be translated or cannot be because there are no linguistic means to do it in the target language. But if there are, it can be of course expressed that way. As in *Close the door, will you?* => *Will you close the door, please?*
- 2) **adjectives and adverbs as modifiers** – if they are not necessary for understanding of the plot or can be compensated by the visual channel they can be deleted. As in *No, No. I get nervous when brightly-colored fish are staring at me face-to-face, you know.* => *No, I get nervous when the fish keep staring at me.*
- 3) **interpersonal components** – as interjections, vocatives, false starts, etc. *You know, why don't you get some plates.* => *Get some plates.*

It is not really recommended to omit whole sentences or clauses according to Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 166-170)⁴ although it is possible in certain situations. For instance when there are a lot of people in the scene and it is just for the purpose of creating the effect or there are more people speaking at once. In these cases it is inevitable to choose the person who is necessary to be translated according to the scene.

Utterances which convey a personal opinion are also likely to be deleted when it is unavoidable. *I was struck during the apartheid years that you always managed to keep your sense of humor.* => *Throughout the apartheid years you kept your sense of humor.*

⁴ The following example sentence is taken from Diaz Cintas and Remael (2004, 167 - 168).

2 HUMOR

To start this chapter, there should be provided a certain definition of what humor is. As it was found out, it is not very easy to find one. According to Attardo (1994, 1) there are several approaches that have tried to explain what the humor is and how it operates. And those are the essentialist, teleological and substantialist approaches. The essentialists try to “[...] provide the necessary and sufficient conditions for a phenomenon to occur, and these conditions are taken to define the "essence" of the phenomenon, i.e., what makes this phenomenon what it is” (Attardo 1994, 1). On the other hand, teleological approach is to “[...] describe what the goals of a phenomenon are, and how its mechanisms are shaped and determined by its goals.” (Attardo 1994, 1). And substantialists “[...] find the unifying factor for the explanation of the phenomenon in the concrete "contents" of the phenomena” (Attardo 1994, 1).

But this simple and clear definition by Walker (1998, 3) that humor is “[...] ability to smile and laugh and to make others do so [...]” really truthfully describes what humor is. It only can be expressed in many ways such as jokes, puns, etc. These are the techniques whose main object is to entertain the target audience. But there are also forms of humor as a political satire or some novels which may be humorous too but their main aim is to point out a more serious issue and whereas the humor only fulfils the function of attracting the reader (Walker 1998, 3).

What is sure, laughter is one of the most important elements while taking humor into consideration. Although according to Olbrechts and Tyteca (Attardo 1994, 11) laughter can be expression of something else and not of the humor only. For example the ritual laughter in Africa or, as Auboin states, the laughter major function of which is to convey a politeness. And there is no continual proportion between how much something is funny and the rate of the laughter (Attardo 1994, 11). Therefore, laughter does not indicate unambiguously the presence of humor or does not measure the power of humor.

However, as Alison Ross states, what really matters to a laughter is a “social context”. It means, for instance, the people who you are in the “funny” situation with. If they laugh, you are more likely to find the certain stimulus (movie, joke, etc.) funny too and vice versa. She mentions the so called canned laughter which is inserted into movies (sitcoms are well known for this) to tell the viewers somehow that they are supposed to laugh at that

time. To sum up, the production and the way of how people apprehend the humor depend on the social context. Two other significant factors concerning humor are the factor of time and the cultural context. What could have been perceived funny fifty years ago does not have to be necessarily funny nowadays (1998, 1 - 2). As for the cultural context, the following chapter will be dealing with this issue.

2.1 Cultural context

As it has been mentioned before, cultural context is one of the essentials when trying to understand humor. Since there will be analyzed American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*, American and Czech culture will be introduced firstly. This should explain at least slightly the differences or the causes of the differences in translation of humor in the following practical part.

2.1.1 American culture

It is really not very simple task to define any culture therefore it is quite difficult in the case of the USA too. Not only on account of the large area, which the USA occupy, and the variety of all the regions and states which the USA consist of but also regarding the mass immigration which the USA registered throughout their history. It can be supposed that all these factors influence the way they live, how they perceive distinct values and just how the Americans think. Thus, there is a big diversity in the USA considering the population (12.5% of the population is formed by Hispanics, 12% by African Americans, 4% by Asians, 1% by Native Americans), the religion, which is also very large-scale, or the political creed. According to Althen (2003, XXV) American manners and approach to things result to large extent from the family background and values right from the American culture diversity, for instance coping with daily situations. He also claims that Americans consider their country to be the best in the world, in many aspects (as their education, politics, etc.), they believe that the USA are something more than other countries of the world since this is the way how they are brought up and educated.

There are several characteristics which could possibly define an average American. Firstly, the individuality will be discussed. Again, many Americans are raised and taught to be responsible for their own actions, make their own decisions by themselves and not to be dependent on anybody else. They also think that the others should have the same attitude otherwise they perceive them not adult or capable of making decisions. This value is

connected with another one which is freedom. If you rely just on yourself and you are not limited by anybody, you “[...] will feel liberated from constraints arising from the outside and be grateful for the opportunity to do their own thing [...]” (Althen 2003, XXV). Privacy is another important value of Americans. Their approach is that each person should have his own privacy. It means the separate rooms for children for example, to be aware of things, which belong them, etc. They trust that everybody has a right to have their own secrets which nobody is supposed to know about them. Other values which could define many Americans are informality, change, progress, goodness of humanity, achievement, work, materialism, directness and their perception of time. The well-known saying, “Time is money”, holds for the USA twice more than for other countries. They take it as a limited entity which we must take advantage of in the best way we can. They are fond of doing things effectively and being punctual because people should not waste their time or other people’s time (Althen 2003, 3 – 27). To at least mention American humor, since this thesis deals with it Raphaelson-West (1989) claims that Americans are allowed to tell any kind of joke, and according to university professor Parish Sprowl (Raphaelson-West 1989), Americans use humor to deal with the daily situations and problems. According to Simon Pegg (2007)⁵ it is still argued that Americans do not incline to use irony so much. And if they do use it, they subsequently comment it by their typical “just kidding”.

2.1.2 Czech culture

In comparison with the USA, Bohemia was inhabited by the Czech people since the Slavs came in the area of today’s Czech Republic. It could be suggested that the Czech Republic is not as diverse country as the USA considering the population. But since the thirteenth century even the Czechs had to deal with various minorities such as Jews, Germans, Italians, Poles, Slovaks, Gypsies, etc. (Pánek 2008, 228). The manners and behavior of Czechs have also been influenced by the communist regime.

Many of the Czech people are raised to be realistic, to be diligent, etc. The maternity and parental leave together are paid for several years in contrast to the USA where it is only twelve weeks and even without the certainty that parents will receive any money, this only

⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2007/feb/10/comedy.television>

depends on the employer. It could be claimed that this fact collides with the importance of the value of the family in the USA (Hall and Spurlock 2013)⁶. The formality is one of the issues which these two cultures are not consistent. It may also be given by the languages because the Czech language has two forms of the second-person singular personal pronoun, which English does not distinguish. It usually takes time to start using the informal form in the Czech Republic and to address people by their first names which is on the other hand quite common in the USA (Salzmann)⁷. The informality of the Americans may result from their perception of equality. Americans regard everybody to be “a friend” or better they consider him as a “normal, equal person” (Althen 2003, 16 - 18). When considering the relationship of Czechs to foreign people, it is quite open and friendly, but of course there can be a few exceptions. They will be fond of hearing about a foreigner’s country but Czechs will also talk about their country with ardor. Still, American patriotism is much stronger than the Czech one. One of the few common features of the two countries is that people try to avoid discussing the politics. Czechs are quite disgusted by political issues and do not want to be involved in it and involved with the people from this field (Czech Tourism Great Britain)⁸. Americans are willing to talk about this topic only while in the presence of well-known friends (Althen 2003, 35).

2.2 Typology of jokes in audiovisual programs and their translation

Zabalbeascoa (1996, 17) distinguishes, from the point of view of the translator, six types of jokes:

- 1) **international (binational) jokes** – these jokes are not based on “[...]either language-specific wordplay or familiarity with unknown specific aspects of the source culture.” Zabalbeascoa (1996, 17). Therefore they should be understandable by all the cultures. But as Zabalbeascoa (1996, 17) states, binational jokes is a more accurate term because if the translation into one target language is without complications, it is not possible into another target language at all for instance. So two concrete languages must be taken into consideration. Raphaelson-West (1989) mostly agree with Zabalbeascoa that it is more appropriate to use the term

⁶ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/04/maternity-leave-paid-parental-leave-_n_2617284.html

⁷ <http://www.everyculture.com/Cr-Ga/Czech-Republic.html>

⁸ <http://www.prague-guide.co.uk/articles/the-czech-identity.html>

binational jokes (she uses the term bicultural) because perhaps nobody has analyzed humor of all the cultures or nations in the world. However she suggests several topics which more nations might consider funny, for instance a child who is trying to act and speak like an adult, etc.

- 2) **national-culture-and-institution jokes** – as the name of these jokes suggests, the target audience needs to know, to comprehend them, the institutions, the culture and other national elements of the source culture which can appear in the audiovisual program (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 18). Raphaelson-West (1998) demonstrates this type of jokes by this one: *There were paratroopers showing the Californian around their native city of New York. They decided that he could do best see it and avoid traffic by jumping out of a plane, so they took him up and all prepared to parachute. They told the Californian, "After you jump, count to ten and then pull the cord." Well, he jumped but fell to the ground before pulling the cord. When the paratroopers landed, they heard, emitting from beneath a haystack "six...seven...eight..."* If the target audience does not know the cultural context (it is that the New Yorkers speak quickly in comparison with the Californians), they might not consider this joke humorous.
- 3) **national-sense-of-humor jokes** – Zabalbeascoa (1996, 18) explains that this is the kind of jokes or the topics which people make fun of, which may be more favorite and therefore used more in one nation than in the other, thus they "[...] constitute a kind of tradition or intertextual frame of understanding." And that they can "[...] depend on culture, religion or historical and political connections with neighbouring nations." (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 18).
- 4) **language-dependent jokes** – these jokes are grounded in the specific characteristics of the language because of their implications. This group encompasses linguistic phenomena as polysemy, homophones, homographs, zeugma, homonyms, paronyms, etc. They can sometimes be also international and are possible to be translated word for word but usually the expressions need to be completely replaced by some other ones. (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 19) According to Raphaelson-West (1989) this type of jokes is the most difficult to translate because it is conditioned not only by the specificity of the joke but also by the affinity of the source and the target language. She demonstrates the strategies of translation on the

Russian joke and its transfer to English by literal translation and the translation which tries to copy the nature of the original joke and then compares their functionality.

- 5) **visual jokes** – there are two types of visual jokes, the first one is when the humor is represented only by the action on the screen itself, and the second one which can look like an completely visual at the first sight but in fact it is “[...] visually coded version of a linguistic joke, as in a rebus [...]” (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 19 - 20). This category also involves jokes which are created by the combination of verbal and nonverbal features. While translating these jokes, the subtitler has to attempt to replace the verbal feature by the most appropriate one in the target language to be in synchronization with the nonverbal features (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 19 – 20).
- 6) **complex jokes** – these jokes occur when two or more types of the jokes discussed before are being used at the same time, for example language and culture dependent jokes, etc. (Zabalbeascoa 1996, 20).

And Diaz Cintas (2003, 264) appended one more group of audiovisual jokes and he named them **aural jokes**. These jokes are dependent neither on the action on the screen nor on the meaning which the words carry, if there is some, like in the case of the visual jokes. Accents or intonation belong to this category, for instance. And they usually do not have to be transferred.

2.3 Intertextuality

Another important feature of any written text is intertextuality. Saussure gave weight to the links of signs in texts to each other however he did not realize the significance of the connections of texts to other texts which already exist. And this is exactly what the intertextuality means (Chandler 1994). Chandler (1994) states that “texts owe more to other texts than to their own makers”. He also quotes Barth who claims that no text is an own work of its author but it is a mixture of what has already been written. Chandler (1994) declares that “texts provide contexts within which other texts may be created and interpreted.” He also states that intertextuality is not always appreciated or obvious except for the academic writing and some other exceptions as the Tv cartoon The Simpsons where producers made the intertextuality intentionally apparent to let the viewer notice it and realize it. “It appeals to the pleasures of critical detachment [...]” of the viewer (Chandler 1994).

Gerard Genette (1997, 1 – 5) subdivided the intertextuality, for which he suggested the term transtextuality, into five categories:

- 1) intertextuality – it is the most exact form and what belongs here is quoting, plagiarism and allusion
- 2) paratextuality – the texts are not so closely related and what belongs here is elements which are not a text itself but are attached to it somehow as titles, notes, book covers, etc.
- 3) metatextuality – it is a critical commentary and it is not always cited
- 4) architextuality – it is an identification of a text among the genres, the most indistinct form of intertextuality
- 5) hypertextuality – it is a connection between the hypertext and the hypotext, the hypertext cannot exist without the original text hypotext

To conclude, intertextuality is everywhere around us as in the television programs, pictures in newspapers, magazines, books, etc. It is difficult to define where one text ends and the other one begins (Chandler 1994). As Chandler (1994) states: “Intertextuality blurs the boundaries not only between texts but between texts and the world of lived experience.”

II. ANALYSIS

3 ANALYSIS

This thesis will be analyzing humor and its translation in subtitles in sitcoms, more specifically, the sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* (HIMYM). There are two main reasons why this sitcom has been chosen for the analysis. Firstly, HIMYM is a contemporary piece of work thus also the language spoken there and the topics being talked about there should be up-to-date. And secondly, the author is well acquainted with this sitcom therefore knowledge of the context and the main characters could be helpful for analysis of its humor and its translation.

3.1 Corpus material

As it has been mentioned before, the sitcom HIMYM and Czech subtitles will be the corpus material. Specifically, a second series of this sitcom (which has right now eight series) will be discussed and even more specifically three episodes from this series chosen at random. HIMYM as an example of a typical American sitcom is really replete with humor therefore only the most representative examples of the jokes will be possible to include in the analysis.

Target group of this sitcom are young people approximately of the age from twenty to thirty five because this is how old the main characters are in the process of time. The story of HIMYM covers the years from 2005 to 2030 when Ted begins to tell his story. Therefore, the language spoken there is also informal and contemporary, adjusted to the target audience. The subtitles were written informally as well.

HIMYM has been broadcasted by the American TV CBS every Monday and was broadcasted by Prima Cool in the Czech Republic, in dubbed version as well in the English version with Czech subtitles. On the basis of the translation which was created (for the second series) by Petr Anderle were produced Czech subtitles (Potužáková Olga, March 27, 2013). Originally, it was intended to base the analysis on the grounds of the official Czech subtitles which was made for Prima Cool TV. However, due to their unwillingness to provide them to the author of the thesis analysis is going to deal with so called fansubs (subtitles made by the fans of the sitcom). Although, the fansubs are not always of a good quality, it is assumed that they will be sufficient for this thesis because the advantage will be taken of mistakes, which subtitler did, to demonstrate how the translation could have been done better or what functioned well in subtitles. Episode 02 Brunch, 09 Slap Bet and 14 Monday Night Football (all from the second series) will be analyzed.

3.1.1 Brief introduction of the story and the main characters

It is important for the reader of this thesis to know roughly what the sitcom is about and to be familiar with the main characters a bit because of the comprehension of the following analysis.

The story begins in the year 2030 when an architect Ted Mosby, one of the five main characters, is telling his children the whole story how he met their mother. It begins in the year 2005 when Marshall, Ted's best friend from the college, proposes his fiancé Lily who knew them also from the college. Marshall is currently studying to become a lawyer (which he accomplishes during the story later on) and Lily works as a teacher in the kindergarten but she has always had a dream to be a painter. On behalf of this event, Ted decides to start looking for his own true love and Marshall and Lily have been somehow trying to help Ted with searching of his future wife. On the other hand, the fourth character Barney Stinson whose job is, as a matter of fact, unknown during the whole story and who is the representative of the bachelor whose life is devoted to picking up and tricking women. The last member of this group is Robin Cherbatsky who used to be a pop-star in Canada and now is trying to succeed as a TV newscaster while working as a reporter. When Ted meets her he is convinced that she is the right woman, the one, but after endless separations and returns back together it indicates that Ted was wrong. Thereby he talks about her as about their Aunt Robin. The whole eight series narrates the viewers a story of everything what lead to the moment when he met his present wife and of course the mother of his children. The presence of Aunt Lily, Uncle Marshall, Uncle Barney and Aunt Robin who contributed to Ted's story by their own interesting experiences is important as well (CBS Corporation)⁹.

3.2 Methodology

The corpus will be divided according to the categorization of jokes by Zabelbeascoa which was discussed earlier in the theoretical part. Subsequently, the strategies and the function of translation of these jokes will be analyzed and commented on. There will also be given suggestions for better translation of the weakest points of the translation in subtitles. Only the main parts of the jokes will be possible to be transcribed due to the length of dialogues.

⁹ http://www.cbs.com/shows/how_i_met_your_mother/about/

4 ANALYSIS

4.1 International (binational) jokes

(1a) Context: Marshall is mad at Lily (they are broken up in this episode) because she provokes him with her feminine charms and Marshall wants to get even.

(1b) Original: Marshall: There's a part of my body, that she's got a weakness for, too.

Barney: Dude, you can't whip that out at brunch.

Marshall: No, not that. I'm going to unleash my calves.

(1c) Subtitles: Marshall: Jo. Existuje část mého těla pro kterou má slabost i ona.

Barney: Přece ho nevystřčíš u večeře.

Marshall: Ne, to ne. Vypustím do akce moje lýtka.

This joke is based on the ambiguity of the statement of Marshall, who talks about the part of his body (he means his calves), and Barney made right away the association with men's penis. This may be caused by the Barney's character (he is skirt chaser who only thinks about women and sex). The subtitler did not have to substitute the source text by the corresponding expression or the word group of the target language for understanding the humor since it is comprehensible in this way. Although there are some other shifts in translation. For example, the word "brunch", which is a blending of words breakfast and lunch, was translated as "dinner" and brunches are served usually sometimes between the lunch and breakfast, which is suggested also by its name. To avoid this expression, because it does not exist in Czech, it can be suggested to use "v restauraci" because the important information here is that it will be in public. Subtitler omitted the addressing "Dude", which is acceptable, since it is obvious who is talking to whom and since it helps to shorten the text (space constraint is one of the main issues in subtitling). The structures of sentences are not always corresponding, as in "There's a part of my body, that she's got a weakness for, too." => "Existuje část mého těla pro kterou má slabost i ona.". It is proposed to translate it this way for instance "Taky mám něco, pro co má ona slabost."

(2a) Context: This joke follows up a scene where Ted's father chats up girls with Barney in the bar.

(2b) Original: Ted: My dad was your wingman?

This is really messing with my head. Barney, is my dad cool?

(2c) Subtitles: Ted: Můj táta byl tvůj wingman?

Tohle je na mě vážně moc.

Je můj táta dobrej?

This Ted's statement together with his intonation demonstrates the peculiarity of this situation. It is that Ted's father flirts with girls with Ted's friend Barney at the bar. Bizarreness of this situation seems to be understandable for Czech culture also therefore the joke as a whole does not have to be changed. But subtitler relied on the knowledge of the word "wingman" of the Czech audience although it is not most likely generally known English word among Czech population. Wingman is somebody who helps to attract women to his friend. It could be suggested to use a word "parták" for instance. He also translated loosely the sentence "This is really messing with my head" which is acceptable. The addressing "Barney" was omitted by subtitler, which is acceptable for the same reason as in the previous joke. Although, the translation of the word "cool" is not the most corresponding one. It is suggested to use expressions "v pohodě" or "v klidu" for example.

(3a) Context: Barney explains Robin why he, as a best friend of Ted, needs to have a good relationship with Ted's parents.

(3b) Original: Barney: Girlfriend is like a bad flu, out of your system after a couple of weeks in bed.

(3c) Subtitles: Přítelkyně, to je jako chřipka.

Pár týdnů v posteli a zbavíš se jí.

This joke is a comparison of two unrelated things, which Barney connected in such an unusual way. Thus it can be considered to be a simile. This joke can be translated almost literally (which it was not in this case but it could be) therefore it is possible to classify it as a binational joke. The clause "out of your system after a couple of weeks in bed", which was translated simply as "zbavíš se jí" is not the most corresponding translation, but it seems to be acceptable taking the space constraint into consideration. Subtitler also omitted the word "bad", which helped to shorten the subtitle but it softened Barney's simile.

(4a) Context: Ted is warning Robin against his mother and her questions about marriage and children and adds that she can expect it when she starts talking about his cousin.

(4b) Original: Ted: And you'll know it's coming when she mentions my cousin Stacy. Six kids in five years. The woman's basically a ride at a water park.

(4c) Subtitles: Ted: A víš že se to blíží když zmíní sestřenicí Stracy [sic]--
šest dětí za pět let.
Ta ženská je jak tobogán.

This joke which is based on the methaphor was transferred well. Although the translation is not literal it still preserves the meaning, the tropes and its humorous aspect which is the most major thing while translating humor. The length of the text was also reduced this way, thereby it seems to be a good translation solution.

(5a) Context: After the dinner with Ted's parents when Robin found out that his mother did not want to exert pressure on her with the children and marriage.

(5b) Original: Ted: You lucked out with my mom last night, huh? What a relief, right?

Robin: Oh absolutely, uh, what a relief it is to know I'm the one girlfriend your mom doesn't want you to have kids with.

Ted: Huray?

(5c) Subtitles: Ted: Včera si s mojí mámou měla štěstí.

Úleva, co?

Robin: Absolutně.

Jaká úleva že jsem jediná holka
se kterou tvoje máma nechce abys měl děti.

Ted: Hurá?..!

This binational joke is grounded in the irony in Robin's statement. But the whole conversation is translated more literally than it could be suggested. To point out, the word "absolutely" translated as "absolutně". This is not a word, which is used commonly in this context in Czech, therefore it should have been substituted with some other Czech expression, for example "No, jasně!". This might be one of typical mistakes of translators,

to use the similar word in the source language in the translation into the target language without consideration if it is actually correct or not. The phrase verb “luck out” which is a colloquial expression could have been translated also in a more corresponding way it could be suggested for instance “mít kliku”. In spite of the fact that the subtitler translated the particular expressions literally, it did not have a major negative effect on the comprehension of the joke as a whole.

(6a) Context: Robin is trying to convince Ted’s mother Virginia that she is the one who Ted should have children with.

(6b) Original: Robin: It’s just...I want you to want me to wanna have your grandkids. And you should. I am a genetic goldmine. No family history of diabetes or heart disease. Everyone has nonporous teeth and perfect eyesight.

(6c) Subtitles: Robin: Jenom...Jenom chci abyste chtěla

abych chtěla mít vaše vnoučata.

A měla byste. Jsem genetický zlatý důl.

Rodina bez historie cukrovky a srdečních onemocnění.

Všichni mají zuby jako perličky a perfektní zrak.

Robin’s statement “I am a genetic goldmine” is a metonymy. As well as a gold mine is rich for gold, she is “rich in health”. The subtitler translated the source text literally and the humor is obvious. The translation of the expression “nonporous teeth” could be appreciated. It was achieved by the substitution for the Czech phrase “zuby jako perličky” which clearly describes its original meaning. It could be also proposed to replace the “heart disease” with the word “infarkt” because it seems to be the most well known disease of heart. It is not a corresponding expression but it would shorten the long line of characters and it would still be well understandable without changing the meaning substantially. The expression “no family history” was not translated in the most corresponding way. It is suggested for example “V rodině nemáme....” The comic sentence “I want you to want me to wanna...” sounds better in English than in Czech translation but thanks to the hearing Robin’s utterance in original, Czech viewers can find this sentence humorous, too.

(7a) Context: The whole group is at the funeral of the bartender of their favorite bar and Barney and Lily stand by the casket.

(7b) Original: Barney: Such a waste.

Lily: I know. He was so young.

Barney: Hand-stitched, cashmere, double-breasted Dolce and Gabana. It must be so frightened.

(7c) Subtitles: Barney: -Jaká škoda.

Lily: -Já vím.

Byl tak mladý.

Barney: Ručně šitý, kašmírový, dvojitě překládaný Dolce & Gabana.

Musí být tak vystrašený.

This joke is based on the ambiguity of the statement. Barney talks about the suit, which the deceased is wearing, and Lily talks about the deceased. While being at the funeral, it is supposed to say the words of regret on behalf of the deceased. Although taking the Barney's character into consideration (his love to quality suits) one can suppose that there is a bit different intent which there really was. As for the transfer of this joke, it is not needed to change it substantially for the comprehension of its humorousness. However, there is an incongruity in translation of the particular words such as "double-breasted". It can be suggested to use the expression "dvouřadý" which is a Czech collocation. As for the trade mark Dolce & Gabana what was mentioned and preserved without substitution in Czech subtitles, it is the truth that this mark is famous in the Czech Republic to such extent that there it is not necessary to substitute it or explain it for the audience.

(8a) Context: Marshall is hidden in Lily's kindergarten not to find out the results of Super Bowl. But there is a cunning child who blackmails him. If he does not do what the child wants him to, he will tell him the results of the match. And Marshall has a not very adult idea to spill the juice on the boy's trousers.

(8b) Original: Marshall: Oh no, somebody wet their pants.

The boy: No, I didn't.

Marshall: Oh, really? Who's everyone gonna believe? I'm a grownup third-year law student at Columbian and you're just a little pants wetter.

(8c) Subtitles: Marshall: Ale ne...

Někdo se počůral.

The boy: -Nepočůral.

Marshall: -Oh, opravdu?

Komu asi budou všichni věřit?

Jsem dospělý, třetím rokem studující,

student práva na Columbijský

a ty máš mokré gatě.

This humorous situation works on the basis of the context of the whole situation. However, the expression pants wetter suggests the usage of the Czech word “počůránek” which could operate a bit better. And the part “Jsem dospělý, třetím rokem studující...” was not transferred very well into Czech and efficiently for the purposes of subtitles. The information about the studying is there twice. Better formulation might be for instance: “Jsem dospělý student třetího ročníku práva na Columbijský...” The interjection “Oh” could have been translated by more Czech interjection “Ou”, but there are more and more English expressions in Czech nowadays, therefore this would be understandable for the Czech viewer. There is also a different style used in subtitles. “třetím rokem studující” is in comparison with “na Columbijský” more formal.

(9a) Context: Ted comes back for the dipping sauce to the chicken wings to the same restaurant as previously (with his Sensory Deprivator 5000).

(9b) Original: Ted: Hello! It's me again!

The waiter: Oh, I didn't recognize you!

(9c) Subtitles: Ted: Ahoj!! To jsem zase já!

The waiter: !!Ah! Nepoznal jsem tě!!

This joke is grounded in the irony of the utterance of the waiter. It is not possible not to recognize a person who wears such modified glasses and headphones. The greeting “hello” should be translated more formally, as “Dobrej.” “Dobrej” is not very polite either, but it

seems to fit in this context. It is not possible to say in Czech Republic “Ahoj” to a stranger and to address the stranger by the second person singular, it is not polite.

(10a) Context: This conversation follows Ted’s guesses why Robin does not like to go to malls. And one of his previous questions was, if she was not stuck under a fake boulder at the mall.

(10b) Original: Robin: And who gets trapped under a fake boulder at the mall?

Ted: Not me in Ohio when I was nine, that’s for sure.

(10c) Subtitles: Robin: Kdo by se moh uvěznit pod umělým balvanem v obchod’áku?

Ted: Ne já v Ohio když mi bylo 9, to je jistý.

This joke falls under the category of binational jokes as well. For that reason it is comprehensible in its literal translation, which was applied here although it could be changed in the last utterance mainly. “To je jistý” can be changed into “Určitě ne já v Ohio, když mi bylo 9.” This sounds more naturally in Czech, than to translate literally English collocation “That’s for sure”. This joke is based on the irony of Ted’s response. This ironic answer provides the audience with another, not very laudable information from Ted’s history. The translation “Kdo by se moh uvěznit pod umělým balvanem v obchod’áku?” does not sound “very Czech” too. More corresponding translation would be: “Kdo uvízne pod umělým balvanem v obchod’áku?” the omission of the conditional mood of the translation in subtitles and usage of more corresponding verb help to sound more naturally.

(11a) Context: The whole group (without Robin) is sitting at bar and is still speculating about Robin’s secret and Barney suggests that Robin did pornography in Canada.

(11b) Original: Lily: I don’t know. He could be right. She does have the fake orgasm noises down.

Ted: Hey!

Lily: What? The walls are thin!

Ted: That’s not what I’m “hey”ing you about.

(11c) Subtitles: Lily: Já nevím.

Možná má pravdu.

Zvuky při falešném orgasmu zvládá výborně.

Ted: Hej!

Lily: Co? Tenký zdi.

Ted: To není proč tě

“hej”uju.

There are two humorous parts in this conversation. The first one is when Lily associates pornography with pretended orgasms and wants to support Barney's statement but her claim also reveals disgraceful information about Ted's sexual life and that is why he admonished Lily. And the second joke is based on ambiguity. Lily thinks that Ted admonished her because she heard them during their sex but Ted did it because of the revelation of the fake orgasms. It was translated literally and it is understandable for Czech audience since it is a binational joke. But more corresponding translation of “fake orgasm noises” would be for instance “sténání při předstíraném orgasmu”. The last made-up word “hej”uju” is not well translated as well. It could be replaced by the sentence “Kvůli tomu určitě nebylo to hej.”

(12a) Context: Marshall slapped Barney because Ted told them that Robin revealed him her secret which is that she is married (even though it is not true). And it was Marshall's suggestion in their Slap Bet with Barney, so he has a right to slap him.

(12b) Original: Barney: Dude, your hand is monstrous.

Marshall: Yeah, well, what'd you expect, you've seen my penis.

(12c) Subtitles: Barney: Chlape, tvoje ruka je obrovská.

Marshall: Jasně, cos čekal? Viděl jsi muj [sic] penis.

This joke can be classified as binational since it is based on the presumption of the knowledge that the size of the men's penis can be estimated according to the size of the hand. At least, this let's say opinion is quite well-known in the Czech Republic also, therefore it is comprehensible for the Czech audience. Although in this case the estimation should have worked reversely. Only the addressing could be changed here according to the context. Instead of “Chlape” could be more corresponding Czech expression “Ty vole.”

4.2 National-culture-and-institution jokes

(1a) Context: The whole group is watching Super Bowl and Lily states during the halftime.

(1b) Original: Lily: Uhh, so lame. Nobody even pays attention. I mean, Janet Jackson, who cares?

(1c) Subtitles: Lily: Trapný.

Tohle nikoho nezajímá.

Janet Jackson, a co jako?

This joke is based on the mentioning of the American singer Janet Jackson and on the intertextuality of Lily's utterance. Her comment is related to a "scandalous" moment when Janet Jackson exposed her breast by mistake during the Super Bowl (Bowes)¹⁰. Therefore, this joke does not have to be comprehensible for some of the Czech people if they do not know the singer and the accident. Considering the reduction of the text, subtitler omitted well the padding expression "I mean", which is not important for the understanding the conversation.

(2a) Context: Barney is desperate to find out the results of the match and while walking on the street he met Emmitt Smith.

(2b) Original: Barney: Emmitt Smith! Oh, Thank God!

Emmitt: Yeah, I get that a lot.

Barney: You've got to tell me, who won the Super Bowl?

Emmitt: The game was last night? You know, once you win two or three of those things, it's kind of like, eh...

Barney: But you're Emmitt Smith. You're a football player it's a Super Bowl Sunday. What could possibly be more important than football?

Emmitt: Dance, my friend. Dance.

(2c) Subtitles: Barney: Emmitt Smith!

Oh, díky Bohu.

Emmitt: To mi říkaj často.

¹⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/3456497.stm>

Barney: Musíš mi říct, kdo vyhrál Super Bowl.

Emmitt: Hrál se včera večer?

Víš, když vyhraješ tak

dvakrát, třikrát,

je to takový...jéé.

Barney: Ale ty jsi Emmitt Smith. Hraješ fotbal

na Super Bowlovou neděli.

Co může být důležitější

než fotbal?

Emmitt: Tanec, příteli, tanec.

This humorous conversation is based on the cultural context (mentioning the famous football player Emmitt Smith) (The Biography Channel)¹¹. There is no obstacle which must have been overcome in translation of this joke, since Barney himself explained in this dialogue who Emmitt Smith is. Although, there is a sentence “I get that a lot” of which might be more suitable translation “Tohle slýchám často.” There is also a mistake in the translation of their addressing of each other. It was translated by the second person singular which as it was mentioned earlier is not polite for two strangers in the Czech Republic.

4.3 National-sense-of-humor jokes

(1a) Context: Ted is trying to find out why Robin does not want to go to malls and guesses.

The following guess is one of the several.

(1b) Original: Ted: Found out you were Canadian at the mall?

Robin: Let it go.

(1c) Subtitles: Ted: Zjistila jsi že jsi kanad'anka [sic] v obchod'áku?

Robin: Nech to bejt.

Humorousness of this joke consists in the American constant tendency to make fun of Canadians. At least it is obvious in this sitcom. Everything what comes from Canada is so

¹¹ <http://www.biography.com/people/emmitt-smith-204313>

to say menial (KnowsWhy)¹². The whole group takes advantage of the fact that Robin is Canadian and makes fun of her, as in this case exactly. Not knowing this information somebody does not have to understand this joke at all. This problem was not solved in subtitles and the translation of the conversation is literal but there is no shift in meaning and it works well.

(2a) Context: The whole groups is sitting at bar and remembering all the times when Robin talked about her friend from Canada because this is the only thing which Robin talks about from her life in Canada.

(2b) Original: Robin: My friend in Canada who got married weigh too young, they had to do their vows twice, once in French.

Barney: They speak French there too? God, that place is a mess.

(2c) Subtitles: Robin: Moje přítelkyně z Kanady,

ta jak se vdávala příliš mladá

musela říct slib dvakrát,

jednou ve francouzštině.

Barney: Oni tam mluví taky francouzsky?

Bože to je ale díra.

This joke belongs to the group of jokes which are based on the relationships Americans to Canadians (or to Canada) (KnowsWhy)¹³. This is another case of that when somebody thoughtlessly insults their neighboring country. If there is somebody who does not know about American's opinion of Canada they might not find it funny at all. As for the translation of particular expressions, subtitler changed a person from the third plural to third singular (they had to do their vows twice – musela říct slib dvakrát). Barney's statement could be reduced in this way: "Tam se mluví i francouzsky?" which is shorter and fulfils the same function. Also the word "friend" could have been translated more informally, for instance "kámoška".

¹² <http://www.knowswwhy.com/why-do-americans-make-fun-of-canadians/>

¹³ <http://www.knowswwhy.com/why-do-americans-make-fun-of-canadians/>

(3a) Context: They are still speculating about Robin's secret at the bar. The option that Robin is married is being discussed now.

(3b) Original: Ted: What am I gonna do? My girlfriend's married. Do I ask her to get a divorce?

Lily: Ted, even if she is married, it's a Canadian marriage. It's like their money or army. Nobody takes it seriously.

(3c) Subtitles: Ted: Co s tím budu dělat?

Moje přítelkyně je vdaná.

Mám jí požádat ať se rozvede?

Lily: Tede, pokud opravdu je vdaná, je to kanadská svatba.

Je to jako jejich peníze nebo armáda

Nikdo to nebere vážně.

This joke, as the previous two, falls under the category of jokes about Canada. It demonstrates their object of ridicule. "Kanadská svatba" could be also comprehended by Czech audience in the way of association to "Kanadská noc", which means also something funny and not taken seriously in the Czech Republic. This conversation as a whole was translated literally however it can meet with incomprehension of the foreign audience. The first Ted's utterance could have been translated as "Co mám dělat?". It is shorter and more corresponding.

4.4 Language-dependent jokes

(1a) Context: Ted's parents came to visit him and it is the first time they meet Robin (his girlfriend at that time) but Barney fawns over them because he wants to make a good impression as Ted's best friend (which he is not).

(1b) Original: Barney: That needlepoint "Bless this Mess" pillow you made for Ted...What a stitch! Stitch! Did that just happen?

(1c) Subtitles: Ten polštářek co jste vyrobila pro Teda...

Pěkně vyšitej.

Vyšitej! Vážně jsem to řek?

Subtitler reduced the source text by omitting the information that the pillow is embroidered with a sign "Bless this Mess" which is quite important for the following

exclamation “What a stitch!” which refers to the embroidery which was not mentioned before in the Czech subtitles. But “What a stitch!” was transferred into Czech functionally. Subtitler changed the last sentence (Did that just happen => Vážně jsem to řekl?) but it sounds better than the literal translation would.

(2a) Context: Barney fawns over Ted’s mother Virginia again at the restaurant by playing her favorite sonata on the piano.

(2b) Original: Virginia: Barney, you are just delightful.

Barney: No, Virginia, you’re delightful, I’m delighted. And he’s just Ted.

(2c) Subtitles: Virginia: Barney ty jsi okouzlující.

Barney: Ne, Virginie, ty jsi okouzlující, já jsem okouzle-ný.

A on je Ted.

This word play is grounded in the change of the derivational suffix –ful and –ed and in the homophony of the end of the word delighted with the name Ted. The translation functions quite well in the first case, delightful – okouzlující, delighted – okouzlený, but the part with Ted was not solved well. It seems to be taken out of the context, as if it was not related to the previous conversation at all. Therefore, the whole joke misses the point by this. Barney also addresses Virginia with the second person singular, although while considering their relationship, it would be better if he addresses her with the second person plural.

(3a) Context: Everybody is at the restaurant and the waitress by the fault of Virginia drops the tray and Ted’s father goes right away to help her.

(3b) Original: Ted’s father: Oh, Gosh, let me help you pick those up, sweetheart.

Ted: Sweetheart? Sweetheart? The only sweetheart in your life should be the woman you married thirty years ago, not the waitress at the bar last night and not this clumsy floozy.

(3c) Subtitles: Ted’s father: Bože zlatíčko pomůžu ti to sebrat.

Ted: Zlatíčko? Zlatíčko?

Jediné zlatíčko tady by měla být žena

se kterou jste už 30 let svoji, ne servírka ze včerejší noci

a ne tadyta nešikovná flůza.

The rhyme “clumsy floozy” is the funny feature in this conversation together with that that Ted had no right to address the waitress this way. Not only that the subtitler did not preserve the esthetical word pun which is really not an easy task to do on the premise of keeping the original meaning but he did not translate one of the two words (floozy) at all. He only made it sound Czech but there is no such a word in Czech therefore it would be more convenient to translate this word for example “neohrabaná coura”. From the point of view of the number of characters, the last but one line in (3c) would be better to be divided.

(4a) Context: Barney explains what his funeral is going to be like and that he is going to be naked because suits are only for the living.

(4b) Original: Barney: That’s why when it’s my time to R. I. P. I’m going out of this world the same way I came into it – buck naked. Yeah. Open bar for the guys, open casket for the ladies. What up?

(4c) Subtitles: Barney: Proto já, až přijde můj čas,
odejdu z tohoto světa stejně,
jako jsem na něj přišel –
úplně nahý, jo!
Otevřenej bar pro chlapy,
otevřená urna pro dámy.
Co je?

Barney’s statement “Open bar..., open casket...” could be considered as an alliteration which was preserved in the Czech translation. The substitution of the collocation “open bar” for another quite outrageous and not usual collocation “open casket” could be the humorous aspect here. However, English collocation “open bar” is not used in Czech and still it was translated literally. And there is a shift in the meaning of the word casket which was translated as urn into Czech. Therefore, this translation makes the previous statement confusing (there is no point being naked when there is no corpse any more). The abbreviation R.I.P. is of a latin origin (requiesca in pace) and is being written on a tombstone. Czech translation “až přijde můj čas” is not literal but functions well.

(5a) Context: Ted is trying to find out what is Robin's big secret (she does not want to go to malls and does not want to tell the group and not even Ted why). And he guesses what could happen at the mall.

(5b) Original: Ted: Mauled at the mall?

Robin: Let it go.

(5c) Subtitles: Ted: Zmlátili tě v obchod'áku?

Robin: Nech to bejt.

The humorousness of this joke consists in the whole situation when Ted's guesses are not always meaningful and in the homophony of two words "maul" and "mall" in this particular case. This homophony was not preserved by the subtitler in the target language, only the meaning was. It is understandable though not funny in the way of original.

(6a) Context: Barney and Marshall betted slaps about what is Robin's secret. Barney claims that she did pornography and Marshall that she was married. According to a beginning of a video which Barney got somewhere Barney thinks it was a pornography and slaps unfairly Marshall, because it was a video (of song).

(6b) Original: Marshall: I can't help but notice that this isn't porn.

Lily: And yet a slap occurred without the permission of a Slap Bet Commissioner.

Marshall: Looks like somebody suffered from premature slapulation.

(6c) Subtitles: Marshall: Nemohl jsem si nevšimnout že tohle není porno.

Lily: A přesto se objevila facka bez povolení
fackovacího rozhočího [sic].

Marshall: Vypadá to, že někdo utrpěl
z předčasného fackování.

The humorous aspect here is the English blending "slapulation" which was created by the words ejaculation and slap. This suggests also the preceding word premature which creates a collocation with the word ejaculation. However, subtitler did not preserve this pun at all. It could be suggested to use for instance a created word "fackulace". In fact, the whole clause should be reformulated as "někdo utrpěl předčasnou fackulací" for instance. There are also exceeded characters per line in this conversation. The translation of the expression

“Slap Bet Commissioner” into “Fackovací rozhočí” does not include the information about the bet therefore it could be suggested for instance “Sudí sázky o facku.”

4.5 Visual jokes

(1a) Context: Ted wants to talk to his father about the last night and scold him.

(1b) Original: Ted: So you went out with Barney last night?

His father: Yeah.

Ted: Did you have a good time?

His father: Yes, yes. Sorry, you couldn't join us.

Ted: Yeah.

(1c) Subtitles: Ted: Včera jste si s Barneyem vyšli jo?

His father: Jo.

Ted: Bavit ses dobře?

His father: Jo, jo. Škoda žeš nešel s náma.

Ted: Jo.

Ted's last answer is preceded by his flashback to the photo of his father kissing the waitress. Which is the humorous part and it is the example of the typical visual joke which does not have to be transferred. Important thing is to watch the action on the screen. There are no major shifts in meaning in the translation of this conversation. It only might be suggested to use a second person plural instead of second person singular in (1c).

4.6 Complex jokes

(1a) Context: Ted is giving out the tasks which must be done for the preparation of Super Bowl and Barney is the only one who did not get any task to do.

(1b) Original: Ted: And Barney, I'm giving you nothing to do so you can just focus on controlling your gambling problem.

Barney: Ts, problem. Oh, poor Superman, he should really do something about his flying problem. It's not a problem if you're awesome at it.

(1c) Subtitles: Ted: a Barny [sic], tobě nedávám za úkol nic

takže se můžeš soustředit na kontrolování

tvého problému s gamblerstvím.

Barney: “Problém.”

Oh, chudák superman [sic],
něco by měl fakt udělat
s jeho létajícím problémem.
Není to problém,
pokud jsi v tom skvělejší.

Barney compared his personal problem (which really is a problem unlike the case of Superman) to the superpower of Superman. His statement also carries a lot of irony in it. It is substantial to know the American hero Superman for understanding this joke. Although, considering the worldwide fame of this movie character it is not a significant difficulty. It could be suggested to reformulate the sentence in (1c) “takže se můžeš soustředit na kontrolování tvého problému s gamblerstvím” for “takže se můžeš soustředit na svůj problém s gamblerstvím”. The word “controlling” can be omitted without causing any problem moreover it would help to reduce the text. There is a mistake in the translation of the pronoun “with his” to “s jeho”. Czech has its own pronoun which is used in cases like this. The proper translation would be “se svým”. English and many other languages do not have this pronoun.

(2a) Context: During the conversation of Robin and Virginia, Lily and Marshall are coming out from the bathroom together (in the restaurant).

(2b) Original: Marshall: Sorry, we didn't know there is a line.

Lily: Marshall, your zip.

(2c) Subtitles: Marshall: Promiňte, nevěděl jsem že je tu fronta.

Lily: Marshalle, tvůj zip.

And Marshall zipped up the zip which makes his trousers shorter on his calves and not his fly which was indicated by the situation (they were together in the bathroom). This joke belongs to the category of complex jokes since there is a mixture of visual features and from the point of view of translation it could be also classified as a binational joke because there is no need to transfer it in a different way. This humor is understandable for Czech people. The most essential thing is the comprehension of the situation as a whole. The translation is literal except for using first person singular instead of first person plural in which should be changed.

(3a) Context: The whole group is trying to convince Robin to go with them to the mall and each member of the group argues differently.

(3b) Original: Lily: We can split a cinnabon.

Robin: No, I'm really not going to go.

(3c) Subtitles: Lily: Rozdělíme se o zákusky.

Robin: Ne, opravdu tam nejdu.

This joke might be based on the weakness and enthusiasm of Lily's argument among the arguments of others. Therefore it could be classified as a binational joke but because of the mentioning of the word cinnabon which is not well known it was categorized as a complex joke. Cinnabon is an American pastry which is typical to be sold for example in malls (Find The Best)¹⁴. Subtitler did well that he substituted this word by more general one (cinnabon => zákusky) because the Czech audience is not usually familiar with this pastry therefore they would not understand what they are talking about. There is a little shift in the meaning but not essential. The subtitler omitted the verb "can" which is one of the strategies of reduction of the text therefore it could be considered acceptable.

(4a) Context: Ted is still trying to find out Robin's secret (why she does not like malls) and now he has a suspicion that Robin got married in the mall. They are playing scrabble.

(4b) Original: Ted: Husband.

Robin: There's no "P" in husband.

Ted: Wow, you seem to know a lot about husbands.

(4c) Subtitles: Ted: Manžel.

Robin: Ve slově manžel není žádný "P".

Ted: Wow, zdá se že toho víš

docela dost o manželech.

¹⁴ <http://franchises.findthebest.com/q/338/2301/What-is-Cinnabon>

This joke is a combination of language-dependent and binational joke. The language-dependent part is the mentioning that in word “husband” is no “P” in English. It is only a coincidence that in the Czech word “manžel” is no “P” neither which made the work of subtitler easier. And Ted’s absurd deduction (or it might be called generalization) is the binational part which is possible to be translated literally. The interjection “wow” was not translated into Czech but it should have been. There is a well corresponding interjection “Ty jo” in Czech.

(5a) Context: They are sitting at the bar (except for Robin) and are still speculating about Robin’s secret. The pornography is now being discussed.

(5b) Original: Lily: Oh, right, like you need an excuse to watch porn.

Barney: Canadian porn. Trust me when I tell you their universal health care system doesn’t cover breast implants. If I have to sit through one more flat-chested Nova Scotian riding a Mountie on the back of a Zamboni, I’ll go out of my mind.

(5c) Subtitles: Lily: Jasně, prostě jenom potřebuješ
důvod aby ses mohl dívat na porno.

Barney: Kanadský porno.

Stačí když ti řeknu,

že jejich zdravotní systém

neproplácí prsní implantáty.

Jestli ještě jednou budu muset

protrpět plochou Nova Scotian

jezdící na sněžný rolbě

tak se asi zblázním.

This is a mixture of aural joke and national-sense-of-humor joke because because the last Barney’s utterance was pronounced [out] of my mind. Which indicates the Canadian pronunciation of the word “out” therefore it is one of many jokes on account of Canada. And it is an aural joke because the funny element there is the pronunciation which cannot be expressed in subtitles. The subtitler omitted entirely “riding a Mountie” which changed

the meaning. Mountie is a Canadian policeman on the horse (The Free Dictionary)¹⁵. Humor of this conversation was not preserved. Subtitler omitted quite important information which was related to previously mentioned porn. Suggested translation could be for example: “Jestli ještě jednou budu muset propřít plochou holku z Novýho Skotska rajtující důstojníka jízdni policie na koníčka na rolbě...”. And a word “Zamboni” was substituted in subtitles, which is a trade mark of resurfacers and it is not well-known among Czech population, therefore it was a good step.

4.7 Aural jokes

(1a) Context: The whole group is at the funeral of the deceased bartender. And when they take a look into the casket they say in one voice “oooo” with the intonation which clearly means that they finally recognized him and when they looked around and realized that it was not really a suitable tone for the funeral they repeated the “oooo” but with the intonation expressing sadness and grief.

(1b) Original: Everybody: Ooooo.

(1c) Subtitles: Not subtitled.

As it was stated in the theoretical part, purely aural jokes do not require translation because all needed information are provided by the context and by the melodic aspects of voices, in this case it is the intonation which serves as the key factor.

Source:

The original was transcribed from the DVD (Thomas and Bays 2007) and subtitles were downloaded from the page How I Met Your Mother¹⁶.

¹⁵ <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Mountie>

¹⁶ <http://himym.cz/?page=titulky>

CONCLUSION

This thesis dealt with the issues concerning AVT and more specifically AVT of humor in the American sitcom HIMYM. Firstly, matters concerning AVT together with all the methods which belong there were introduced. Secondly, it focused only on one of the methods of AVT which is subtitling. Constraints connected with the subtitling were progressively discussed in the theoretical part. These are the technical and the textual constraints. Subsequently, linguistics of the subtitling was described. The strategies of reducing the text were presented in the last chapter related to subtitling.

Second part of the theoretical part was devoted to humor. Humor is an inherent part of people's lives, yet it is so difficult to define. It is also something on which sitcom is based. An essential thing for understanding humor of the foreign country is knowledge of the particular culture itself. Even though it is translated, humor is not sometimes comprehensible for the target audience. This may happen when both cultures are substantially diverse. And the language dependent jokes are not an easy task to translate correspondingly to the target language and to preserve the humorousness, they are sometimes even untranslatable.

Afterwards, the division of jokes appearing in audiovisual programs according to Zabalbeascoa (1996) was discussed. He divided them from the point of view of translator, which means whether they are translatable or not or do not need to be translated, etc.

The analysis dealt with comparing jokes in HIMYM with their translation into Czech subtitles. Three episodes of this sitcom were analyzed consecutively and were divided according to Zabalbeascoa. Finally, it was proved that HIMYM is not grounded in the language dependent jokes to such extent as it was supposed and international jokes unequivocally predominated. Indeed, mistakes in subtitles were frequent, however there could also be found cases of a good translation. As it was mentioned before, humor is sometimes a complicated issue to translate but in most cases it is not impossible.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AVT – Audiovisual Translation

etc. – et cetera

HIMYM – How I Met Your Mother

i.e. – id est

VHS – Video Home System