Irony in Translation

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Sveučilište u Zadru

Odjel za anglistiku

Preddiplomski sveučilišni studij engleskog jezika i književnosti (dvopredmetni)

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Zadar,2018.



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1. Introduction

"That is so ironic" is one of the frequently heard phrases in everyday communication which can not only be misused but confounded with other verbal tools such as sarcasm, cynicism or satire. The reason behind this could be found in blurriness of the definition of irony or multitudes of classes in which irony can be divided. Besides being present in human interactions, irony can also be perceived in various aspects of print media, cinematography or networks. However, the focus of this paper will be on the irony as a device in the world of literature from the translators' point of view.

In order to provide a valuable translation of the text, it is essential for the translator to integrate the roles of being a reader, an interpreter and consequently a conveyer of a narrator's message through different language. When it comes to the translation of irony, even interpretation of narrator's ironical thoughts may be quite challenging and sometimes even fruitless task. The cause of this issue could be enrooted in the simple ignorance of some cultural differences and lack of vocabulary extent. To avert possible misinterpretations and inaccurate transmission of irony, there have been proposed strategies and methods to surpass that issue.

Thus, the following chapters of this thesis will present a development of irony through historical periods and a broad classification which that development resulted in. Therefore, that background of irony will contribute to the demonstration of the case of translating irony, either through showing plausible problems that could appear through translation or through suggested additions and strategies which could alleviate these problems.

2. Analysis of Irony

The notion of irony can be defined in several different ways. All of them include the main idea of irony which refers to the discrepancy between what is being said and the real truth. To put it simply, the speaker says the opposite of what he or she is actually thinking. However, the oppositeness should not be based on a lie or factual error, but it should be accurately recognized by the readers. Therefore, the comprehension and usage of irony shouldn't be seen as frivolous. Approaching to the topic of irony, there were provided several linguistic theories which could be seen as helpful for analysing ironic utterances. However, before scrutinizing these theories, it is of great importance to analyze what are the origins of irony and how it gradually acquired its function.

2.1 Historical Overview

In his book, "A Glossary of Literary Terms", Meyer Howard Abrams states how in Greek comedy there was a character called the *eiron* who was a dissembler and who characteristically spoke in understatement and deliberately pretended to be less intelligent, yet triumphed over the *alazon* – the self-deceiving and stupid braggart (Abrams 134). Having this theory in mind, it can be observed that it partially corresponds with the modern role of irony. While the *eiron*'s intention was to deceive the *alazon,* modern irony dissembles or conceals the real sense of the idea in order to stimulate some artistic effects. The character of *eiron* was later adopted in Platonic dialogues by apparently ignorant Socrates who was using simple questions to demonstrate how illogical are the interlocutor's thoughts, therefore persuading him to reveal and accept the truth. This kind of deceiving behaviour is today known as *socratic irony.* The subject of socratic irony was also examined by Claire Colebrook in her

book *Irony*. She provided a logical comparison of Socrates' use of irony with the political situation in the Ancient Greece at that particular time: "Socrates used irony to challenge received knowledge and wisdom at a historical moment when the comfort and security of small communities were being threatened by political expansion and the inclusion of other cultures" (Colebrook 2). Therefore, in this transition from a closed community to a polis of competing viewpoints the concept of irony was formed. The word *eironeia,* which was firstly referring to lying and concealing the truth, now acquired the role of a complex rhetorical practice where one can say one thing – as Socrates' claim to be ignorant – but mean quite another, as when Socrates' exposes the supposedly wise as lacking in all insights (Colebrook 2).

2.2 Theories of Irony

In their book *Irony in Language and Thought: A Cognitive Science Reader*, Herbert L. Colston and Raymond W. Gibbs Jr. offer three theories which are closely observing a correlation between ironical and literal meaning. The main focus is the use of pretense in irony, which expands into two more theories.

According to Colston and Gibbs, the first is the pretense theory. Considering previously mentioned historical development of irony, it can be concluded that, from the beginning, there was a connection between irony and pretense. Their view of this theory can be simply put like this: "Suppose S is speaking to A, the primary addressee, and to A, who may be present or absent, real or imaginary. In speaking ironically, S is pretending to be S speaking to A. A in ignorance, is intended to miss this pretense, to take S as speaking sincerely" (26). Furthermore, three important features of irony can be explained by the pretense theory. The first refers to *Asymmetry of Affect* which holds that it is better to make positive pretenses, such as "What a clever idea!" for a bad idea, than negative ones, as "What

a stupid idea!" for a good idea. The second feature is *Victims of Irony* stating that there are always two victims involved in irony. The first is S, injudicious person, who is sometimes made a victim for their misjudgements, and the second is A, the uncomprehending audience, whose uncritical acceptance of S could make them also the victim. And the last feature includes *Ironic Tone of Voice*. While pretending, people generally replace their voice with the new ones, which needs to be appropriate for the role of the ironist (Colston and Gibbs 27).

The second theory is the mention theory. As its name states, it is a theory that points out a difference between the use and mention of an expression. "The mention theory is forced to say that many ironies are merely implicit echoes – echoic mentions of popular wisdom or received opinion – but it does not describe any criteria for deciding what is possible implicit echo and what is not (Colston and Gibbs 29). To make it more clear, Colston and Gibbs provide an example "when the speaker utters *see what lovely weather it is* with irony, he or she is mentioning some weather forecaster's words or sentiments in order to express contempt toward them" (28).

The third theory, according to Colston and Gibbs, is the psychology of the irony. There are two psychological models of language use – saying and understanding. However, they can be of two sorts: "some specify the functions an aspect of language plays in saying and understanding, and others specify the mental processes by which those functions are realized" (Colston and Gibbs 29). They further explain that speakers are not just ironic; they are ironic only to certain listeners. These thoughts are being supported by the idea from the book *Attention and Performance* by Herbert H. Clark and Thomas B. Carlson who claim that a listener's understanding of an ironic utterance depends crucially on the common ground he or she believes is shared by the ironist and the audience – their mutual beliefs, mutual knowledge, and mutual suppositions (314).

3. Types of Irony

When discussing types of irony, it has to be emphasized that there is no a unique division. A simple explanation for the previous fact was offered by Lars Elleström in his book *Divine Madness: On Interpreting Literature, Music, and The Visual Arts* who states that the irony has been subjected to classifications performed on hermeneutical premises and that various distinctions overlap and interfere with each other, therefore, according to him, it is impossible to collect all the subcategories of irony in a united system (50). However, Elleström managed to extract and describe various types.

3.1 Verbal Irony

If a student exclaims "Oh great!" after failing the exam, he or she is therefore using a verbal irony. As a synonym for rhetorical irony, verbal irony is, according to Elleström, defined as a sharp opposition between what is said or written and what is meant (50). In addition to this, Abrams in his *Glossary* claims that "the meaning and evaluations may be subtly qualified rather than simply reversed, and the clues to the ironic counter-meanings under the literal statement may be oblique and unobtrusive" (Abrams 135). Here lies the explanation for misunderstanding many literary authors and their works, which sometimes led to their dispute with authorities. They are more unconstrained to convey their resentful ideas, what makes their work more provoking for readers to analyze. Furthermore, some definitions of sarcasm partially include verbal irony. Kelley Griffith in her book *Writing Essays about Literature* explained it in the most explicit way by saying: "Verbal irony in its most bitter and destructive form becomes sarcasm, in which the speaker condemns people by pretending to praise them" (73). In addition, she introduces two forms of verbal irony: understatement and overstatement. While understatement minimizes the nature of something, overstatement

depicts it in an exaggerated manner (Griffith, 73). The subject of verbal irony was also discussed in Deirdre Wilson's research paper "The Pragmatics of Verbal Irony: Echo or Pretense?" in which she observes treating verbal irony in two different attempts: "The first treats irony as an echoic use of language in which the speaker tacitly dissociates herself from an attributed utterance or thought. The second treats irony as a type of pretense in which the speaker "makes as if" to perform a certain speech act, expecting her audience to see through the pretence and recognise the mocking or critical attitude behind it" (Wilson 1). In reference to this, Wilson notes that both attempts treat ironical utterances as intended to draw attention to discrepancy between a description of the world that the speaker is demonstrating and the way things actually are (4).

3.2 Situational Irony

To continue on Ellestrom's classification of irony, the other type he mentions is the situational theory. Sometimes named irony of events or practical irony, Ellestrom defines it as "a situation where the outcome is incongruous with what was expected, but it is also more generally understood as a situation that includes contradictions or sharp contrast" (51). To understand it better, Ellestrom provides an example of a man who takes a step aside in order to avoid getting sprinkled by a wet dog, and falls into a swimming pool (51). Moreover, while studying the situational irony, Ellestrom offered few of its subcategories.

3.2.1 Cosmic Irony

According to Ellestrom, the first subcategory of situational irony is cosmic irony. This type of irony is formed through the influence of God or Fate, or as Abrams depicts it in his *Glossary*: "Cosmic irony is attributed to literary works in which a deity, or else fate, is

represented as though deliberately manipulating events so as to lead the protagonist to false hopes, only to frustrate and mock them" (Abrams 137). Due to this, cosmic irony can be found under the name "irony of God" or even "irony of Fate", since the fate can also infiltrate in the drama of human life or can be the part of a literary character. To illustrate this, Abrams singles out the name of Thomas Hardy whose favourite structural device is cosmic irony. In his work *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* the main protagonist has lost her virtue because of her innocence, after that she loses her happiness because of her honesty, consequently finds it again by murder, and having been briefly happy, is hanged (Abrams 137). In reference to the example of situational irony, cosmic irony can be explained by involving God, whose power was the factor placing the dog in front of the man so he could fall into the pool.

3.2.2 Romantic Irony

Another type of irony which appeared in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century is named romantic irony. Introduced by Friedrich Schlegel and other German writers, it is a type of irony which is used, as Abrams states "to designate a mode of dramatic or narrative writing in which the author builds up the allusion of representing reality, only to shatter it by revealing that the author, as artist, is the creator and arbitrary manipulator of the characters and their actions" (137). According to Ellestrom, Schlegel was the one who was ascribed the role of forming new ideas of irony. However, the concept of irony appeared just a few times in his early works and it consequently disappeared. Nevertheless, Schlegel's ideas were always quite historical and when writing about irony, he would frequently mention Socrates (Ellestrom 18). With this in mind, Ellestrom concludes that "One might say that Romantic irony is the Socratic mode of thinking carried to extremes and transformed into literary praxis, and one might even find the seeds of Romantic irony in Quintilian's

description of Socrates" (18). Furthermore, what Schlegel also states is that the world is considered paradoxical, therefore its contradicting entirety could be comprehended only by having ambivalent attitude. This is the reason why Ellestrom points out that Romantic irony cannot be seen only as an artistic element, but also as "philosophical conception of the world" (18). To scrutinize the notion of romantic irony more closely, Ellestrom involves conjunctions of opposites in its definition, by stating: "both/and is the formula for Romantic irony rather than either/or" (18). This is being illustrated by the fact that our communication is entirely being based on paradox; real communication is found impossible, but in the same time necessary, therefore paradox is the key for achieving understanding, or as Ellestrom exemplifies "to combine chaos and order in systematized confusion; to mix sincerity and jesting in a symmetry of contradictions" (19). The subject of romantic irony was also examined by Mary A. Cicora in her book *Mythology as Metaphor: Romantic Irony, Critical Theory and Wagner's Ring* and she broadened the subject by objectivity and subjectivity. She notices that the element of romantic irony is the notion of 'self' which is being postulated in objective world: "there is a dialectic of subject and object, which is in turn shown by reflection to be a dialectic of the self with itself" (Cicora 23).

3.2.3 Dramatic/Tragic Irony

Ellestrom states that, the term dramatic irony is considered by many writers as synonymous to the term of tragic irony; however, there are still some attempts to distinguish between the two. To corroborate his claim, he reflects that "it is sometimes suggested that tragic irony is dramatic irony in tragedies" (Ellestrom 52). The beginnings of this type of irony are to be found in Connop Thirlwall's essay "On the Irony of Sophocles" in which

Thirlwall's main idea was to analyse different kinds of irony. However, what he uses in his work is "tragic" irony, without any direct mentioning of dramatic irony (Thirlwall qtd in Ellestrom 52). It was so until the 20th century when there appeared the first definition of dramatic irony. Thus, Abrams' *Glossary* provides a clear description: "Dramatic irony involves a situation in a play or a narrative in which the audience or reader shares with the author knowledge of present or future circumstances of which a character is ignorant" (136). To elaborate, Abrams adds that the behaviour and expectation of the character is recognized to be contrastive to the actual outcome of fate (136). This type of irony was widely used by Greek tragedy writers, such as in Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex*. The protagonist Oedipus is searching for the murderer of the former king of Thebes, Laius, and puts a curse on him due to the plague he inflicted, when it consequently turns out that the object of the search is Oedipus himself. Moreover, there are various examples of utterances which do not present any importance for Oedipus as they do for the reader to perceive his ignorance as well as the torture of his fate (Ellestrom 53). Since it was previously stated that dramatic irony does not have to strictly involve tragic irony, there are thus some examples of the use of dramatic irony in comedy. A comic example noted by Abrams is Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in which Malvolio boasts around when expecting a good fortune, while the audience is well aware that the fortune is nothing much than a fake letter (Abrams 137).

3.2.4 Socratic Irony

Already mentioned as a part of the origins of irony, Socratic irony is listed as a type of irony as well. Deriving from Plato's dialogues, Socratic irony is, as Ellestrom depicts it "pretended ignorance or naïveté on the part of an interlocutor in a text, a pretense that results in a sharp contrast between the ignorance of the person who at first seems to be wise and the

gradually revealed wisdom of the person who pretends to be ignorant" (52). This subject is also being discussed in one of the chapters in Glenn Stanfield Hollands' book *Divine Irony* in which he introduces another aspect of Socratic irony and that is divine irony. He observes Socrates' disdain as a part of his "self-mastery", but at the same time as a value distinct from some common values. This kind of value carries true and clear-sighted qualities, which puts it in relation with God. Therefore, his adoption of divine perspective equalizes Socratic irony with divine irony (Hollands 95). To analyse the divine aspect more closely, Hollands adds that "this divine revelation is both ironic and true: ironic, because it confounds human expectations by identifying the highest wisdom as knowledge of one's ignorance; true, because it represents the divine perspective of the all-knowing god" (97). Once again Ellestrom makes a reference to Thirlwall's essay, in which Thirlwall creates distinction between three types of irony: verbal, dialectic and practical. Thirlwall identifies this "dialectic irony" with Socratic irony (Thirlwall qtd in Ellestrom 21). In order to make intelligible the points of similarity between the ironic and dialectic interpretation, Ellestrom states:

> To perform a dialectic interpretation (in Hegel's sense) of a (textual) situation, one must perceive a tension between opposites and argue that the "result" of this opposition is a third state that is in some sense "higher" than the two initial ones. To perform an ironic interpretation (in Schlegel's sense) of a (textual) situation, however, one must perceive a tension between opposites and maintain that the "result" of this opposition is a third state that does not transcend the two opposites but instead lets them operate in a creative conflict. (93)

3.3 Structural Irony

The last type of irony that Ellestrom mentions is structural irony. As he sees it, structural irony is just a situational irony with a shape (51). However, Abrams elaborates it

more clearly by saying that structural irony is applied when "the author, instead of using an occasional verbal irony, introduces a structural feature that serves to sustain a duplex meaning and evaluation throughout the work" (135).

What Abrams also emphasizes as being a componential part of structural irony is the existence of the so-called *naive hero*, also called naive spokesman or narrator "whose invincible simplicity or obtuseness leads him to persist in putting an interpretation on affairs which the knowing reader... just as persistently is called on to alter and correct" (135). The most utilized example of structural irony is the character of a reasonable economist in Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* who is offering a "reasonable" and economical solution – slaughter of children – for poverty-stricken Ireland. Therefore, this unusual point of view by the protagonist contradicts the readers' norms (Abrams 136).

Beside the literary device of naive hero, Abrams introduces *fallible narrator,* who also becomes a participant in the story. That kind of narrator is inclined to make an insight error by being mostly focused on his motives, as well as the motives of other characters, what may create "distorting perspective of the narrator's prejudices and private interests" (Abrams 136).

3.4 Stable/Unstable Irony

While discussing various types of irony, Abrams found it relevant to emphasize the existence of stable and unstable irony, which were recognized by Wayne Booth in his work *A Rhetoric of Irony.* Abrams defines stable irony as the one "in which the speaker or author makes available to the reader an assertion or position which, whether explicit or implied, serves as a firm ground for ironically qualifying or subverting the surface meaning" (136). What Abrams does not provide in his book, but is important to mention are the four characteristics of stable irony. These characteristics are interpreted with clarity through Biblical examples in the book *The Complete Literature Guide to the Bible* by Leland Ryken

and Tremper Longman III. The first characteristic of stable irony is that it is "*intended* by the author" (77). According to Ryken and Longman, there could exist unstated intention of the author, but "Booth points out that stable ironies are almost always easily recognized" (77). Secondly, stable irony is seen as *covert*, which alludes to narrator's or author's silence about the existence of irony in a statement. Furthermore, as its name shows, stable irony is also considered *stable* or *fixed*: "there is a limit to how deeply they displace the surface meaning of the text" (Ryken, Longman 78). The last characteristic of stable irony is being *local*, which implies that those kinds of ironies can only cover a limited part of the text. On the other hand, unstable irony, from the Abrams' point of view, "offers no fixed standpoint which is not itself undercut by further ironies" (136). There is more creative portrayal of unstable irony in Holland's *Divine Irony,* in which he compares unstable irony to shifting sands under the foundation of stable irony. Those sands do not permit further building, but "the interpreter must either despair or build what shelter he or she can from the debris left in the wake of the havoc wreaked by irony" (Holland 25).

4. Irony in Translation

As it has been previously demonstrated, the concept of irony has gradually evolved through history and turned into one very broad issue to discuss. Its development led to forming of various types and subtypes. However, when analysing irony within translation, we need to ask what strategies are used to present something as ironic or if every type of irony could be translated. This relationship between irony and translation has been minutely elaborated in the book *Translating Irony* by Katrien Lievois and Pierre Schoentjes through a series of articles by different scholars.

In “The Analysis of Translated Literary Irony: Some Methodological Issues”, July De Wilde examined several reasons why the translation of literary irony has not been so frequently discussed. While specifying reasons, she simultaneously attempts to underline a notable role that a translator has.

According to De Wilde, the study of translation of irony cannot be described as explicit. What is more, this study is closely connected with the research on “translation of humour, parody, or intertextuality” (25). To prove that the issue of translating irony is not so renowned among researchers, De Wilde offers two reasons: “(a) the lack of consensus regarding the definition and conceptual scope of literary irony and (b) the fact that investigating irony within a product-oriented methodology entails a number of thorny questions regarding the procedures of comparative microtextual analysis” (25).

Starting with the lack of consensus regarding the definition and conceptual scope of literary irony, De Wilde states that the scholars could easily solve this problem by claiming that the definition of irony is not a part of translation studies. On this note, she adds: “They could then adopt an existing definition from literary analysis and remodel it for purposeful use in TS research” (De Wilde 26). However, this solution is not quite practical and simple because of “incompatible philosophical background underlying different definitions of literary irony”, therefore De Wilde offers to analyse “the status given to both the ironist’s intention and the interpreter” (26). In order to present the issue, De Wilde restricts herself to the studies by Wayne C. Booth and his book *A Rhetoric of Irony* and Linda Hutcheon and her *Irony’s Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony*. When it comes to Booth, instead of a straightforward definition, he offers traditional rhetorical definition while introducing the first step in reconstructing irony: “the reader is invited to reject the literal or surface meaning” (Booth qtd in De Wilde 26). Nevertheless, after rejecting the meaning, the interpreter consequently recreates “a covert, real, superior meaning” (De Wilde 27). On the other side, Hutcheon

observes how ironist, text and interpreter interact in a more dynamic way, therefore claiming that the matter of intentionality needs to be observed from both the ironist's and the interpreter's point of view (Hutcheon qtd in De Wilde 27). To corroborate this reflection, De Wilde adds: "Irony is not necessarily something deposited in the message by an intentional author but happens by the ironic attributions made by an active interpreter" (27). To conclude these deliberations, it is crucial to point out that the main difference between Booth and Hutcheon is the essence of intention, and therefore interpretation and meaning; while Booth is inclined to essentialist view of intentionality, Hutcheon observes it through pragmatic dynamics (De Wilde 27).

Furthermore, according to De Wilde, Hutcheon's theory is closer to the general idea of irony and is "epistemologically superior for TS applications" (28), therefore acknowledging three orientations in research: 1) target-side functional investigations, 2) historical – descriptive oriented analyses and 3) translational interpretative oriented analysis (De Wilde 28). This third orientation can have different consequences if observed firstly through Booth's and then through Hutcheon's theory. If the meaning is placed in the text, as Booth states, then "meaning is stable and unchanging, encoded in the text and awaiting decoding from the reader" (De Wilde 28). Taking into consideration Hutcheon's theory, if irony, influenced both by ironist's intention and interpreter, occurs in the text, then the translator is being given a much bigger role: "S/he is an active agent and might infer an ironic meaning or define the particularities of the ironic meaning according to the discursive community from where s/he acts" (De Wilde 28). Even though this last type of research, the translational interpretive oriented analysis, is in the focus of interest, the first two types should not be regarded. As De Wilde explains, target-side functional investigations "investigate how the skopos of the text affects the translation product", while descriptive-historical oriented investigations "focus on geographical and historical TT features in the *manipulation* of ironic texts within new

political and ideological environments" (29). The fact that these types of research are interesting is unquestionable; however what they lack is the insight into translator himself: "Translators interpret texts according to previous readings, the target reader's horizon of expectations, their own ideological constructs and their own explicit and/or implicit views on translation" (De Wilde 29).

Secondly, De Wilde believes that the other reason for irony not being that popular research topic is the fact that investigating irony entails a number of thorny questions regarding ST-TT comparative procedures. De Wilde asserts that the problem for the lack of proper comparisons is "uneasy consequences of the unilateral focus on the cultural and social function of translation that has dominated TS research over the last three decades" (30). When discussing comparative procedures, three main problematic features which every comparative procedure should determine were proposed: "1) the terms between which the comparison will be realized, i.e. the unit of comparison, 2) the nature and the degree of the differences and similarities that will be identified and 3) the criteria according to which the comparison will be carried out" (Halverson qtd in De Wilde 30). However, these features of comparison carry out various problems. For example, the problem with the first feature, the unit of comparison, may be that sometimes it is not clear whether the unit refers to the text or on some smaller units, such as morphemes, words, and phrases. Another possible question regards directionality of the procedure; whether there should be first done ST analysis or TT analysis. And the last possible question addresses comparative systematicity; to utilize "repertory or distinctive feature method" (De Wilde 30).

4.1 Strategies for Translating Irony

When it comes to discussing correlation between irony and translation, despite a number of available studies and insights, two names should be distinguished as the most

relevant for the study of strategies for translating irony; Marta Mateo and her article "The Translation of Irony" and Raymond Chakhachiro with his article "Translating Irony in Political Commentary Texts from English into Arabic".

After providing a short insight in the study of irony, Mateo starts her analysis by linking irony and humour: "Humour based on irony or on reversal of situation or tone will be more widely translatable" (174). The first problem which could arise in translation, either of humour or irony, is the linguistic aspect. Mateo finds the text more untranslatable if it mostly relies on linguistic aspect. She illustrates this with the example of translating cultural jokes claiming that the closer the connection between the linguistic and the cultural component is, the more difficult translation of the joke. Another potential problem in translation of irony may be presented by context. According to Mateo, recognition of irony is widely influenced by "background knowledge of a socio-cultural type", with the highlight on satire and allusion (174). Furthermore, the notion of "sense" is observed by Mateo as a part of translation which is seen as more complex when it comes to humour and irony. The reason for this is the presence of "speaker's intentions, the background knowledge of speaker and listener, the assumptions and presuppositions implicit in the text, the connotations of each word, etc" (Mateo 174). However, beside the sense, the form also represents an essential element of humorous or ironic statement: "Irony and humour may simply spring from an alteration in the usual syntactic order of a sentence, from the choice of an unusual collocation or, indeed, from the very use of a certain word" (Mateo 174). Additionally, Mateo focuses on the critics' view of the translation or irony stating that there should not be any alterations in translation if something is completely translatable:

> The translator should adapt to TL culture when there is an equivalent; one should not explain the irony (or the joke) since explanation destroys humour; one should

> concentrate on the essence of the joke and then keep that essence adapting it to TL conventions even if one changes the specific meaning or facts. (174)

Nevertheless, what Mateo notices is that these critics seem to be concentrated on the core of the source text and not so much on translating humour, which brings her to the conclusion that these methods may not be entirely adequate for explanation of the translation of irony (174). Therefore, she decides to introduce a new approach which could broaden other approaches. Her approach includes strategies which translators used when dealing with irony, " whether they have been trying to be faithful to the source text at the expense of humour or they have managed to keep the irony introducing some significant changes" (Mateo 175). She grounded her research on different examples from comedies, without giving any further explanations to the strategies. There are 13 of them and she listed them in this specific order:

1. ST irony becomes TT irony with literal translation
2. ST irony becomes TT irony with "equivalent effect" translation
3. ST irony becomes TT irony through means different from those used in ST (e.g. verbal irony becomes kinetic irony, the use of intonation is replaced by lexical or grammatical units, etc.)
4. ST irony is enhanced in TT with some word/expression
5. ST ironic innuendo becomes more restricted and explicit in TT
6. ST irony becomes TT sarcasm (criticism is overt now, no feeling of contradiction at all)
7. The hidden meaning of ST irony comes to the surface in TT. No irony in TT therefore
8. ST ironic ambiguity has only one of the two meanings translated in TT. No double-entendre or ambiguity in TT therefore
9. ST irony replaced by a "synonym" in TT with no two possible interpretations

10. ST irony explained in footnote in TT
11. ST irony has literal translation with no irony in TT
12. Ironic ST completely deleted in TT
13. No irony in ST becomes irony in TT (Mateo 175)

Mateo concludes her study by saying that irony is a part of pragmatics; some translators would represent "semantic content of ironic statement or situation, rather than its overall meaning, namely its irony" (177), some would concentrate on pragmatic aspect, rather than semantic one, or some would even represent both (Mateo 177).

On the other side, Chakhachiro's study is based on the comparison of Arabic and English language. Although he introduces some strategies for translation of irony, he states that "these strategies are not prescriptive by any means, given the fact that irony, once correctly interpreted, is strictly not amenable to one translation" (Chakhachiro 17). What he finds of great importance for the proper translation of irony are linguistic and cultural gaps; linguistic gaps include "lexical, grammatical and graphological devices", while cultural gaps are based on "rhetorical devices and texts development strategies" (Chakhachiro 17). The strategies which he introduces are:

1. Translating by using different form with similar function.
2. Translating by substitution, addition and/or omission. (17)

Chakhachiro's view about translating ironic statements says that one should not be restrictive, but creative. In addition to this, he claims that the translator needs to be "a native speaker who possesses a solid literary background in the target language" (21). He does not only see the irony as a rich writing tool but also the instrument for shaping discourse: " Both the way the message is written and conveyed are interdependent and must be accounted for in translation" (Chakhachiro 21). Finally, what Chakhachiro notices as being crucial elements when it comes

to successfully translating irony is creativity, risk-taking, cultural and linguistic competence (21).

4.2 Issues in Translating Irony

Another article included in Lievois and Schoenthjes' book is "Translating Irony in Popular Fiction: Dashiell Hammett's The Maltese Falcon" by Daniel Linder. In this study, Linder tried to analyse various functions of irony observed through the characters in *The Maltese Falcon*, and consequently to examine the potential problem of readers' comprehension and therefore translation of irony.

Before focusing on the issue of irony, Linder introduces basic information about Hammett's book, simultaneously finding a reason behind his decision to use irony. As Linder notices, Hammett attempted to make this detective novel quite different for that time: "Taking the reins of his privileged position, he sought to infuse the detective genre with greater literary depiction, whether explicit or encoded, of the moral societal realities encompassing him" (Linder 119). By "explicit or encoded" it was meant that Hammett introduced the topic of homosexuality, turning his novel into a hard-boiled detective fiction (Layman qtd in Linder 119).

Linder commences his study of translation by referring to Sperber and Wilson and therefore reflecting on how problematic understanding irony can be for the readers, native and non-native alike (Linder 126). He illustrates this by the example from Allison Beeby Lonsdale who endeavoured to find out the number of non-native readers who could recognize the irony through one journalistic source text. A source text written in Spanish was given first to Spanish-speaking students and then to a group whose native language was English. By using the questionnaire, he came to a conclusion that speakers of English did not notice the irony, while on the other hand, half of the Spanish speakers did (Lonsdale qtd in Linder 126). What Linder found interesting in this research is that "even among the native speakers there were

readers who proved to be incapable of decoding the ironic meaning" (126). Furthermore, when discussing translation of irony, Linder highlights that irony can sometimes be tricky to present in a target text. By making the reference to Hatim and Mason, Linder states:

> They show how important it is for translators to reproduce the propositional content of the source text but also the clues meant to trigger an ironic interpretation on the part of the target text reader. However, in the recoding phase translators may be faced with linguistic and cultural constraints. (Hatim and Mason qtd in Linder 127)

Moreover, Linder proposes that the readers should be given some kind of help through additional parts provided by translator: "Prioritizing the crucial need for target text readers to be given overt cues triggering irony, the authors hint that translators may maintain equivalence while adding small portions of text as long as they serve the purpose of helping the target text readers to identify irony" (127).

The issue of including additional parts for understanding and translating irony is also analysed by Seija Haapakoski in her article "Translating Children's Literature: Additions as an Aid to Understanding Irony". Her aim is to approach the problem of understanding irony from the perspective of children and therefore provide strategic additions for translators to convey irony in target text. However, Haapakoski does not observe irony as a device to be only comprehended but she also perceives it as a case of learning for children, therefore she considers translators as essential mediators in that same learning process: "Translators as experts in both cultures can, with the right textual choices, strengthen the irony recognition process of the target readers and familiarize them with this literary device" (Haapakoski 135).

Irony cannot be understood without the employment of metalinguistic awareness: "the ability to think about and reflect upon the nature and functions of language" (Kümmerling-Meibauer qtd in Haapakoski 137). Although, according to Kümmerling-Meibauer, metalinguistic awareness can be noticed before a child is four or five years old, irony is still

seen as challenging linguistic process for a child: that happens in the first place because a child has to realize that a person can sometimes say the opposite of what he or she thinks and that the meaning which that same person is trying to convey does not have to be the same as the literal one (Kümmerling-Meibauer qtd in Haapakoski 137). On the other hand, adolescents can also have difficulties understanding irony, even if they already applied metalinguistic awareness. The reason behind this is a change of discursive community: "young people often lack contextual information needed to interpret irony" (Hutcheon qtd in Haapakoski 137).

According to Haapakoski, translators and their methods are always influenced by the audience, adding that "if we think that irony is a matter of learning we are more eager to make it easier for the young reader to understand it" (Haapakoski 138). When speaking of literary irony, it is important to notice that it is intended for a source-culture audience. However, when we attempt to translate that irony, there comes a change in audience. Thus, to compensate for the difference in the amount of knowledge between source and target audience, some additional information is needed, or to put it simply: "the understanding of irony requires shared background knowledge" (Haapakoski 138).

Haapakoski proceeds by introducing practical additions for translating irony: "Additions are included in pragmatic adaptations as translation strategies that are target-reader oriented" (Haapakoski 138). She presents three methods by which additions could be analysed. The first method implies that additions can serve as some kind of irony indicators or supplementary clues which can make it easier for target audience to recognize irony. These irony indicators can be "traditional" type of indicators such as "understatements, alliterations, typographic markers" (Haapakoski 138). For instance, involving adverbs like "rather" or "a bit" can contribute to formation of understatement which reveals ironic attitude of the author and it can additionally "increase the ironic intensity of the given episode in the target text" (Haapakoski 139). Furthermore, the second method refers to additions which included a tone

of what has been said and "speaker's attitude to the message, situation or persons involved in it" (Haapakoski 138). Those additions were conveyed through particular epistemic adverbs, discourse markers or other phrases like "heaven knows" or "I must say" (Haapakoski 139). The common use of discourse markers is to show attitudes towards the other communicator or their message. However, they can be essential for translating irony since they can "negotiate background assumptions" (Haapakoski 141). Besides this, translation of irony can be improved also through use of alliteration or typographic markers like italics which makes the recognition of irony clearer. Finally, when including additions in translation of irony, they can supply the audience with necessary encyclopedic knowledge or just broaden ironic context by not focusing only on "textual elements that create irony but also on larger textual units" (Haapakoski 139). When making these textual choices, a translator needs to be aware of associations evoked by the source audience and the way they are conveyed to the target audience (Haapakoski 144).

5. Conclusion

Taking everything into consideration, it can be concluded that translation of irony is a quite intricate issue which requires a certain amount of groundwork about the mere concept of irony as well as strategies employed in the attempt to transfer it into another linguistic or cultural context. The fact that the phenomenon of irony has its roots in the classical period of Aristotle and Socrates creates the space for even broader analysis. Division of irony in various types provides thorough insight in its development which highlights its complexity and therefore can create problems when translating. For example, verbal irony expressed in an offensive and bitter way can be blended in the definition of sarcasm, or romantic irony which understanding involves paradox. Furthermore, subclassification of situational irony demonstrates that irony can also be expressed through events or can be influenced by implication of other factors such as fate or God.

However, translation of irony does not only focus on the way irony is conveyed to the audience, it entails ironist's intention, translator's interpretation and consequently reader's accurate comprehension. By drawing attention to works of Mateo, Chakhachiro, Linder and Haapakoski, it can be perceived that studying irony stimulates great amounts of inventiveness in translators, either by providing strategies to cope with translation of irony or by offering additions in linguistical or contextual form.

Undoubtedly, the issue of irony is subjected to an ongoing expansion. Its frequent appearance in everyday life unfolds novel ways of using it, therefore potentially inducing further divisions of irony. Thus, it enables translators to broaden their techniques while taking into account having a sufficient amount of cultural knowledge of both source and target text, a great dose of inspiration as well as courage to grapple with presenting something as ironic.

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7. Irony in Translation: Summary and Key Words

The main subject of this thesis is translation of irony. To provide a clear insight into this issue, the beginning of analysis introduces the term of irony through its basic definition. To proceed, there have been exposed the ways in which irony was initially conceived as a literary device. Furthermore, the theories to make a distinction between ironical and literal meaning have been presented. Due to the fact that irony is not manifested in a unique form, various types of irony have been listed following the division of Lars Ellestrom. Presented theoretical background of irony provides a basis for further study of translating irony. Thus, in the first place the problematics of lack of irony studies have been analysed with the aim of introducing difficulties with which translators confront. Secondly, numerous strategies for irony translation have been offered based on the studies of Marta Mateo and Raymond Chakhachiro. Finally, a focus has been put on the potential issues of irony in popular fiction, taking into consideration the various groups of readers and the methods for their easiest comprehension of irony.

Key words: irony, translating irony, translating strategies, popular fiction

8. Ironija u prevođenju: Sažetak i ključne riječi

Tema ovog završnog rada je ironija u prevođenju. Kako bi se pružio jasniji uvid u problematiku, početak rada predstavlja pojam ironije kroz njezinu osnovnu definiciju. U nastavku, izložene su metode pomoću kojih se začela ideja ironije kao književnog sredstva. Zatim su prikazane teorije razlikovanja ironičnog značenja od doslovnog. Obzirom da se ironija ne manifestira u jednom jedinstvenom oblik, nabrojane su različite vrste ironije po uzoru na podjelu ironije Larsa Ellestroma. Prikazana teorijska podloga ironije pruža osnovu za daljnje proučavanje prevođenja ironije. Sukladno tome, prvo je analizirana problematika nedostatka istraživanja ironije, s ciljem da se iznesu poteškoće s kojima se prevoditelji suočavaju. Nadalje, ponuđene su brojne strategije za prevođenje ironije, temeljene na istraživanjima Marte Mateo i Raymonda Chakhachira. Naposljetku, fokus je stavljen na moguće probleme vezane za ironiju u popularnoj fikciji, uzimajući u obzir raznolike skupine čitatelja i metode za njihovo najlakše razumijevanje ironije.

Ključne riječi: ironija, prevođenje ironije, strategije u prevođenju, popularna fikcija