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## REVIEW of a BA diploma thesis

Author of the work: Dominik Krayzel

Name of work: Translating Wordplay in the *Family Guy* Animated Sitcom

Supervisor: Mgr. Michaela Martinková, Ph.D.

Opponent: Mgr. Markéta Janebová, Ph.D.

Author of this review: Mgr. Markéta Janebová, Ph.D.

### Points /results (for each section & proposed classification)

<i>excellent</i>	5	A
<i>very good</i>	4	B
<i>good</i>	3	C

<i>acceptable</i>	2	D
<i>weak/sufficient</i>	1	E
<i>insufficient</i>	0	F

In the following paragraphs fill in the numeric value. You can also add a short NOTE (comment) - alternatively you write concluding remarks to the summary in the end.

	Points
<p>1. <i>Originality and new contribution to the field, up-to-date presentation of the problem.</i> The topic is interesting and up-to-date (there is a lot of current research on linguistic aspects of humour). The most interesting part of this thesis is the one which presents the examples, but unfortunately, it does not bring much new in terms of the analysis.</p>	1-2
<p>2. <i>Awareness of treatments in the field (literature).</i> The literature part does not show much awareness of the previous research in the sense of providing a detailed literature review. The basic mechanisms of wordplay are only defined vaguely and the connection of linguistic terms with the topic is not dealt with in sufficient detail, if at all (<i>lexical priming, lexicalization, idiom principle, open-choice principle, connector</i> – all these terms should have been discussed more extensively and applied on the examples provided).</p> <p>In some cases I even suspect the author does not understand the terms correctly (e.g. <i>de/relexicalisation</i>, because they are used in a misleading way during the analysis).</p> <p>Overall, the literature review should be more organically connected with the analysis (the rule of thumb is that what is discussed in the literature review should have some bearing on the actual analysis provided).</p> <p>There is no specialized literature mentioned in the review which deals with specific features of audiovisual translation and subtitles (only vague formulations such as “therefore some of the strategies are not ideal when subtitling,” p. 11).</p> <p>p. 15 ‘The humour of the sitcom includes referential humour’ – is this Attardo’s term? If not, what does it mean. If it is, it should have been contrasted with the other type of humour Attardo distinguishes.</p> <p>Other relevant sources could have been included (Baker 2011 deals with the translation of idioms). The terms “effect” and “equivalence” are not discussed in detail and are basically taken for granted (though they are not accepted universally: e.g. House (2001) analyses the term “equivalence” in a critical way).</p>	1
<p>3. <i>Clarity of the topic, research question(s), hypotheses</i> The research questions could have been formulated in a more linguistically informed way than the following: “The main questions are if it is possible to convert polysemiotic puns, which work with verbal and visual channel, into a different language and if not what are the most common strategies to use instead.”</p>	1

<p>(p. 16)</p> <p>It is not explained how the author is going to determine that “converting” (?) is “possible” (is he talking about polysemiotic puns in general, or just one kind?); the role of a “different” language is not mentioned (typologically different?), and it is not clear what is meant by “strategies to use” (is it supposed to serve as a recommendation for translator?)</p> <p>Also, the author focuses on subtitles, which have their own characteristic features and constraints, but this is not mentioned here (e.g. when the author says that the “pun—zero” strategy “is almost impossible to use with audiovisual translation” on p. 12, this may apply to a dubbed version, but in subtitles this may be a plausible strategy since the length and duration of subtitles may be manipulated, for example). Even though a reviewer is supposed to review what has been written and is not supposed to suggest what could have been written instead, still, it would have been interesting to compare the dubbed version and subtitles in terms of the different constraints.</p>	
<p><i>4. Methodology.</i></p> <p>How were the puns selected? What were the criteria of selection? Are we presented with some kind of complete list (or an attempt at one), or a more or less random selection of puns? These questions are not addressed in the thesis.</p>	0-1
<p><i>5. Argumentation, discussion, interpretation of the results, summary.</i></p> <p>The examples are very nice and their presentation is an enjoyable part (it was a good idea to include the pictures), but unfortunately, the discussion and analysis of the English examples and their Czech translations is often linguistically not well-informed as the author uses linguistic terminology somewhat obscurely, cf.</p> <p>“the phrase <i>sociální zabezpečení</i> does not bring any ambiguity as it only has one <b>collocation</b>” (p. 18) or</p> <p>“The phrase <i>to hold something in</i> which means “to not express how you really feel” (OALD) is <b>delexicalised</b> to the literal meaning of holding something (in this instance a fart) in” (p. 36). This is actually the opposite of delexicalisation.</p> <p>The division of the examples into “Examples based on lexical ambiguity” and “Relexicalisation, delexicalisation and reconstruction” is a bit curious, because the section on puns seems to take it for granted that all puns are based on ambiguity: “A pun is a phenomenon that involves two meanings” (p. 6). By the same token, why is the example concerning “crawling” (9) included in the first part? Is it not an example of relexicalization? Still, some kind of division and subcategorization would make sense if there was an attempt at interpreting the translation strategies in light of the structure of the pun.</p> <p>I do not quite follow the claim on p. 30 that “the visual channel in Figure (N) then reveals that Suave is a proper name of the man himself. This is an example of an intersemiotic pun that is impossible to transfer into target language as the verbal visual channel (the sign with the name on it) cannot be altered.” This can be resolved in the subtitles (though not in the dubbed version without a help of subtitles, but this is not the author’s point).</p> <p>Some of the <b>translations suggested by the author</b> are very nice, but it is arguable whether some others are more suitable than the ones provided in the subtitles (21c – would that work? To what extent is the link between bagels and Jewishness known to the Czech audience? Ex. 13 – it is rather the word “kuráž”, not “odvaha”, which triggers the alcohol interpretation of the reference of Jack Daniels. Ex. 23 – I’d suggest a solution with “dupnout”. Exx. 25-27 – I have to admit I prefer the solutions from the subtitle database (I do not know the celebrities suggested by the author, while the Czech names used in the subtitles are creative.) <b>Evaluation</b> of the translations from titulky.com: It is arguable to what extent e.g. the translation in 4b is really “appropriate”, as the author claims: “The Czech translation is appropriate, even though the word <i>pár</i> is usually only used in diminutive form when referring to breasts (<i>pářeček</i>).”</p> <p>Overall, all this is related to the unresolved problem of what “equivalence” and “effect” are, and we could spend a lot of time discussing each individual example.</p> <p>The examples are really interesting, but no real discussion or interpretation of the results follows. Some strategies are said to be more frequent than others, but since it is not mentioned how the examples were</p>	1

selected, we do not learn whether a more general conclusion could be drawn from this.	
<p>6. <i>Formal aspects of the work: format, graphics, bibliography formatting.</i>  No source given for the information about the <i>Family Guy</i> on p. 15.  It should be clearly indicated in the examples which translation is the author's and which is from the subtitles database.  References – italics missing in titles of journals and books. Some entries are incomplete: Pedersen, Jan. 2015. "On the subtitling of visualised metaphors." <i>The Journal of Specialised Translation</i>, Issue 2</p>	3
<p>7. <i>English (language correctness, style)</i>  The thesis reads reasonably well, though there are occasional mistakes: "Narrow (exclusive) one, which refer ... (p. 8), p. 8: "ways how", p. 16: "I will be analysing how the puns were created, how did the translator manage to transfer the form and meaning of the pun and what strategy did he use ...", "modifying them makes them loose their idiomatic meaning" (p. 38).  Note that the term "Native Americans" is used in English, not "Indians".</p>	3
8. <i>For the supervisor (if not applicable, write "Not applicable")</i>	NA

**Summary:** Overall evaluation, other comments: See above.

**Questions:** For the purpose of the defence, can the author clarify the division of examples into cases of ambiguity and "relexicalisation, delexicalisation and reconstruction"? (I would also like to hear some clarification of the terms "relexicalisation" and "delexicalisation").

More on the specific features of audiovisual translation (i.e. the interpretation of results which is missing in the thesis) should also be mentioned.

**I recommend the work for the defence** YES

**Proposed classification:**<sup>1</sup> E

Date: 27.8.2019

Name (and signature): Mgr. Markéta Janebová, Ph.D.

<sup>1</sup> The itemized number evaluations above do **NOT** provide automatically the final evaluation - some weaknesses are more crucial than others and some cannot be compensated at all. The proposed classification is therefore independent on these statistics. It is the complex evaluation of the presented written work and it can be still modified during the defence to become the result of the defence.