

TRANSLATING GRAPHIC JOKES

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This essay shows how the pragmatic analysis of humor in graphic jokes can provide the translator with more widely applicable criteria and tools for rendering different humorous situations. Considering the translator as an intercultural mediator, our reflections about how graphic humor operates can help improve some aspects of the translation of humor. These reflections are organized around a specific case: the translation from Spanish into Italian of a graphic joke by the Spanish artist Pepe Farruqo that features the Spanish Prime Minister, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. We will show different results obtained in the target text (the Italian translation) which depend on whether or not the translator followed a pragmatic approach to rendering humor.

The translation of humor could be defined as a necessary challenge, as humor is present in a variety of texts, ranging from those whose purpose is obviously humorous to “serious” genres like novels, essays, or newspaper columns. Humor is not only linked to jokes and puns, but also to cultural stereotypes that inform, for good or ill, the manner in which different cultures perceive one another. As such, translators often encounter humor in their professional endeavors, and some degree of reflection on what humor is and how it works is therefore an inevitable task for them.

As Mayoral (1998) points out, drawing on Newmark (1988), there are two main types of humor translation: source-oriented, which is a representation of the original culture with loss of humorous effect in the target culture; and target-oriented, representing the creation of equivalent humor with loss of faithfulness to the original culture. Selecting one solution or the other will depend on the translator’s choice and cri-

teria. The characteristics of the text itself, moreover, can tilt the balance towards either side.

In order to explain how humor works in graphic jokes, we will use the results of a previous study which analyzed a corpus of 100 such jokes (Padilla 2010). Our analysis is framed within the research on irony and humor carried out by the *Grupo de Investigación para la Pragmática y la Ironía del Español* [GRIALE, Research Group on Spanish Pragmatics and Irony].¹ GRIALE applies pragmatic theories to various disciplines, such as teaching Spanish as a foreign language and, as in this case, translation studies.

Graphic jokes are often strongly linked to the original culture and to a concrete situation that has an expiration date. However, in spite of their special characteristics, translating graphic jokes can be an interesting and useful task, both as a didactic exercise for translation students and as valuable practice in the foreign language classroom. Translating graphic jokes allows students of translation to confront specific problems that go beyond a simple language transfer. For example, establishing the function of the image versus the words, choosing the typography, or deciding how to insert the text within the frame of the joke all represent additional considerations. For teaching Spanish as a foreign language, exercises which engage comprehension skills and the capacity to produce humorous texts help to improve students' linguistic competence and teach new strategies. As Muñoz-Basols (2005, 1) points out, "humor helps to develop visual memory and improves the capacity to solve linguistic problems."

WHAT IS A GRAPHIC JOKE? TYPES AND ELEMENTS

A graphic joke is a specific subset within the humorous genre, whose components are a written text and a comic image (usually a car-

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1. See Ruiz y Padilla (2009), Rodríguez Rosique (2009), and Padilla (2011). The present study has been made possible thanks to the following funded research projects: "Aplicaciones a la clase de español como lengua extranjera de la ironía y el humor" (FFI2008-00179), financed by the Spanish Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación (<http://www.griale.es>); "GITE-Grupo Pronuncia Bien. Ref.: GITE-09015-UA," financed by the University of Alicante (<http://blogs.ua.es/xose>); and a Research Scholarship from the Juan Gil-Albert Cultural Institute of Alicante.
 2. A graphic joke, a comic strip, or a humorous vignette are all terms used to define a specific comedic genre, which shares the intention to provoke laughter with numer-

icature).² It is often published in newspapers and magazines, and depending on the aim of the author, both of the joke's components may assume the role of Gestalt background or figure.³ In other words, either the text or the image can be the dominant component within the total communicated meaning. By way of illustration, in some jokes the image is more important than the words, the latter having a secondary function, as in the image below:



Image 1. Expo 2015, Forattini 2008

We also encounter graphic jokes in which the written text is more important than the image, as in Image 2:

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- ous other genres, such as TV monologues, parodies, and satires, but at the same time has its own specific features that enable us clearly to differentiate it from other humorous genres (Padilla 2010). It is possible for graphic jokes to consist only of text or only of images, but such forms are rare.
3. Within the frame of discourse analysis theories, the distinction between *background* and *foreground* derives from the Gestalt psychology concepts of *background* and *figure*. The *figure* is often considered as the most relevant portion of the text (Östman and Virtanen 1995).



Image 2. Iberia, Pepe Farruqo 2009

Alternatively, both the image and the text can be equally important in graphic jokes, as in Image 3:



Image 3. Zeus & Europe, El Xoco

Because of its mixed nature, the graphic joke is a communication tool that is at once both static and dynamic. On the one hand, it shares with

some written texts, such as satirical poems, the quality of being closed and finished; on the other hand, as is the case in some oral genres, such as TV comic monologues, it transmits information by means of movement (caricatured gestures, the lines of movement of the characters, interjections, etc.). Besides text and image, which are physically visible in the joke, a third component must be added: the cultural component or socio-cultural premise. Since a graphic joke exists within a particular culture it will therefore contain one or more references to certain aspects or events pertaining to that culture, which in turn influence its format as well as its content.

Translating a graphic joke is also a clear example of *subordinated translation*. This concept refers to translations that are determined by extralinguistic elements such as lip movement, or the space within the vignette or the speech bubble (Titford 1982; Mayoral 1986). According to this view, graphic jokes also share some elements with other audiovisual genres such as dubbed movies, computer games and, above all, comic books (Castillo 1997).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are many different elements involved in the creation of a graphic joke, which contribute to the recognition and comprehension of the comic effect by the addressee. In order to interpret and analyze this process, we have made use of elements deriving from different theories: the study of the cognitive processes underlying reading comprehension (Shank and Abelson 1977; Rumelhart 1980; Carrell 1983); linguistic studies of humor (Raskin 1985; Attardo and Raskin 1991, Attardo 1994); and neo-Gricean pragmatics (Levinson 2000; GRIALE 2009).

The Cognitive Perspective

Within the framework of the connectionist approach of cognitive psychology, Rumelhart (1986) describes the cognitive architecture of the human mind as a wide net of elementary units that influence each other by means of inhibition or activation processes. Information from the external world is stored in our memory in different formats, one of which is termed the *script* (Shank and Abelson 1977); it is this format which interests us here. A script is defined as the simultaneous activation of a se-

ries of elementary units of content, and it can refer to the format (*formal script*) or to the content (*content script*) of a text.⁴

According to this model, when we read a text certain scripts are activated, and they in turn activate or inhibit others depending on relevance, distance, and resemblance criteria. For example, if we find the word “Zapatero” in a text, some elementary units and scripts might be activated (Spain, Prime Minister, politics, crisis, government, elections, etc.), while other units and scripts will be inhibited (washing machine, Finland, Picasso, etc.) because of their distance from the keyword. Scripts are always culturally determined, so the elementary units they comprise, as well as the elements in the text that activate them (*triggers*), can vary according to their culture of reference.

The Semantic-Linguistic Perspective

In the 1980s, semantic theories of humor developed in close relationship with the concept of *script*. Notable among these theoretical studies are the works of Raskin (1985), and Attardo and Raskin (1991), whose principal aim was to identify the linguistic conditions necessary for a text to be recognized as humorous. Within this semantic framework, Attardo (1997) proposed the *Set-up-Incongruity-Resolution* model for analyzing jokes (SIR). His main contribution is that of having described the humor comprehension process as structured in three phases: a first phase, in which the situation and the characters are introduced (*Set-up*); a second phase, in which an incongruity is produced between two incompatible scenarios that coexist at the same time and in the same space, the space of the joke (*Incongruity*); and a final phase, in

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4. Yule states that “our ability to arrive automatically at interpretations of the unwritten and the unsaid must be based on pre-existing knowledge structures. These structures function like familiar patterns from previous experience that we use to interpret new experiences. The most general term for a pattern of this type is *schema*” (1996, 85). When a *schema* becomes a recurrent and static pattern—that is, a prototypical version shared by all the members of a determined social group—it is then called a *frame*. On the other hand, more dynamic schemas are called *scripts*. Scripts are very useful because of their predictive capacity. The elementary units that are not activated by the context (*input*) can acquire a *default value*. For example, in the “going-to-the-restaurant” *macroscript*, it is not necessary for us to read or hear that the customer read the menu before ordering (no *input* is necessary), but this unit—reading the menu—will be activated anyway. As Attardo points out: “most definitions of scripts agree that it contains information which is *prototypical* (2001, 343).”

which the incongruity is resolved in a funny and playful way (*Resolution*). As Attardo points out, it is not important if the resolution of the joke's incongruity is partial or total, but it must be playful and funny. This resolution determines whether a joke, or in our case a graphic joke, achieves the desired humorous effect.

The Pragmatic Perspective

When looking at how people understand a humorous text from a pragmatic perspective, Levinson's (2000) proposal and its application to the study of irony by GRIALE (Rodríguez Rosique 2009) constitutes an interesting approach. Levinson reuses the concepts proposed by Grice (1975) and reinterprets his maxims as heuristics, or default ways of reasoning. According to Levinson, the maxim of Quality will have a superior status compared to the others, and he therefore considers it as a prerequisite of any communicative act. The Gricean maxims (Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner) are then reduced to three communicative principles, each one of them accompanied by its respective corollary for the listener: (1) the Informative principle; (2) the Manner principle; and (3) the Quantity principle. Levinson holds that these principles must be hierarchically organized, so that $I > M > Q$.

According to Levinson (2000), both semantics and pragmatics participate in the comprehension process, and they constantly interact to create meaning. The comprehension process of meaning is not linear, but circular and articulated in four phases:

1. Semantic representation	→	Semantics
2. Conventional Implicatures	→	Pragmatics
3. Type of utterance meaning (GCI)	→	Semantics
4. Utterance meaning (PCI)	→	Pragmatics

Image 4. Comprehension process of meaning

During these four phases the reader or listener carries out a series of inferential processes, respecting or violating the conversational principles and the pre-requisite of Quality, and thus generates Generalized Con-

versational Implicatures (GCI)⁵ or Particularized Conversational Implicatures (PCI).⁶ As Rodríguez Rosique asserts (2009), humor usually resorts to double meanings, inverting the Informative Principle and multiplying the possible referents, or uses marked expressions to refer to unmarked situations, inverting the Manner Principle.⁷ We will look at the role of double meanings in several graphic jokes below.

A DIDACTIC EXERCISE TO REFLECT UPON HOW HUMOR AND ITS TRANSLATION WORK

As outlined above in the introduction, the aim of our study is mainly didactic. The present essay offers reflections on didactic exercises conducted with our students of translation. One such exercise presents the possibility of translating from Spanish to Italian a graphic joke by the artist Pepe Farruqo about Prime Minister Rodríguez Zapatero, published in the Spanish press in 2008. Taking the cultural criterion as our starting point, and drawing on another graphic joke, we transform the Spanish joke into an Italian one, and once we obtain a new caricature (in this case that of Prime Minister Berlusconi), we propose two different translations: one that does not follow a pragmatic criterion (the a-translation), and one that does follow a pragmatic criterion (the b-translation). The comparison of these two translations will show to what extent it is necessary to take both the original culture and the target culture into account, and

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5. According to the neo-Gricean proposal, readers of a humorous text will first generate a CGI, coherent with the conversational principles, the prerequisite of Quality, and the semantic and pragmatic presuppositions. Afterwards they will notice the incongruity, and, thanks to the new information received, will change their first interpretation (CGI) and generate a CPI. Semantic presuppositions are a kind of conventional inference linked to the linguistic form of the words used in the text (Rodríguez Rosique 2009, 32), whereas pragmatic presuppositions are a kind of inference linked with the shared knowledge and the socio-cultural suppositions (Horn 2000; Abbott 2006; Padilla 2010). Derks (1997) has demonstrated, by studying electro-encephalic activity, that there is a negative ongoing cortical activity (N400) linked with what has been called “humorous incongruity.”
 6. We can say that the CGIs are in a certain way “semanticized,” since they still exist independently from the context of use of the utterance, while the CPIs are “pragmatized,” because their existence depends on the context of use of the utterance.
 7. Prototypical irony is associated with the violation of the Quantity principle, as by saying too much we produce a meaning that is the opposite of what we really want to say (Rodríguez Rosique 2009).

how useful a pragmatic analysis is in the explanation of different communicative situations as a translation tool.

Levels of Interpretation

The original graphic joke can be analyzed according to different levels of interpretation in order to show its pragmatic nature.⁸ The joke is given below:



Image 5. Con salsa y picante, Pepe Farruqo 2009
[I have a question for you: what 'p' describes someone who finds himself out of work? Pass?] In Spanish, the word for *unemployment* is *paro*.

From a cognitive point of view, the original graphic joke (example 5) contains at least three different levels of reading that correspond to the activation of different mental scripts. The activation of each one of them increases the level of humor of the graphic joke itself. These levels are as follows:

Level 1: At the most superficial level, the reader recognizes the character. The humorous effect is provoked by the recognition of the caricatured figure, the Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero, represented in an

8. For a more detailed explanation of the system and methodology used, see Padilla (2010).

unusual situation, in this case participating in a very popular television quiz show called *Pasapalabra* [*Next Word*].

Level 2: The reader recognizes the contrast and the partial incompatibility between the titles of two television shows (two different scenarios): *Tengo una pregunta para usted* [*I Have a Question for You*] and *Pasapalabra*. The first is a televised debate program considered a serious and high-level broadcast, while the second is a popular show for the general public. Moreover, the reader is supposed to recognize the play on words “con la P” > *paro* / *pasapalabra*. The multiplication of possible referents, as the neo-Gricean perspective pointed out, produces humor.

Level 3: At this final level, the reader identifies the reference to the current Spanish political situation, namely the criticism of Zapatero for not facing up to the economic crisis in time and allowing levels of unemployment (*paro*) to rise. In fact, the character in the graphic joke does not even dare to answer the question for fear of pronouncing the word *paro*.

The average Spanish reader should be able to access all these levels of interpretation, according to his or her socio-cultural background and knowledge of the current political situation (cultural component). In fact, this graphic joke can produce a laugh or smile only if the reader is able to access at least the first interpretation level (recognizing the character in an anomalous situation). The complete effect can only be achieved if the reader is able to access all the other levels of interpretation (the concurrence of distinct scenarios/television programs and the political criticism).

The Italian Version: Reduction of Interpretation Levels

Image 6 shows the Italian version (a-translation, a literal translation of the original joke) and is only able to maintain the first level of interpretation of the original Spanish joke.

The average Italian reader will be able to recognize the caricature of Prime Minister Berlusconi in an unusual situation, and that will produce a certain amount of humor, as in the original joke. Nevertheless, the direct translation of the text will not allow the reader to access the other two interpretation levels and, consequently, part of the joke's message will be lost.

The first loss in the a-translation affects the phonetic pun that involved the letter *p* in the original joke: *paro* and *pasapalabra*. The Italian for *paro* is *disoccupazione*, and so since this word starts with a different letter, the phonetic pun no longer exists. There is thus no



Image 6. Berlusconi a Passaparola, El Xoco 2010

multiplication of referents. The second loss affects the concurrence of two distinct and partly incompatible scenarios (the program titles *Tengo una pregunta para usted* and *Pasapalabra* in the original). If the scripts associated with the two television programs are not activated, the reader not being familiar with them, then the two scenarios cannot be recognized and, no humorous effect for the reader will be produced, since the second level of interpretation is not triggered. Finally, the third loss affects the political criticism with respect to the Spanish Prime Minister and his insistence on denying the existence of an economic crisis that caused an increase in unemployment in Spain (the third level of interpretation is damaged). Even if the Italian reader is also suffering the consequences of the economic crisis, as the Spanish reader is, and could make new inferences still linked with the economic crisis (unemployment, political disappointment, social troubles, etc.), the loss of the specific cultural references, and the framework of the joke within that very concrete cultural context, will have a considerable effect on the humorous effect. In the end, this principal aim of the joke will be severely compromised.

The foregoing analysis shows that a literal translation (a-translation) is relatively possible. The change of character still produces a certain amount of humor (at the first level of interpretation), but the inferences involved in the original joke at the second and third level have been lost.

Overall, there has been a general reduction in the humorous effect, especially in what relates to the third level of interpretation. As an alternative to the a-translation, and a possible solution to the problems raised by translating specific humorous content, we will now show the advantages of a pragmatic analysis of the joke and how the data provided by this analysis can constitute a guideline for achieving a more satisfactory translation (b-translation).

PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS: THE COMPREHENSION PROCESS

This section will analyze which elements constitute the graphic joke (Image 5), what their main features are at the linguistic and pragmatic level, and how we can apply this information to its translation. The analysis has been structured in two different sections, one referring to the text, and the other to the image.

The Text

We will start by analyzing the information provided by the written text. There are six elements that deserve special attention:

- a) The title of the section in which the joke is included: “Con salsa y picante” [With Spicy Sauce]
- b) The name of the author: Pepe Farruqo
- c) The question: “Tengo una pregunta para usted: con la ‘p,’ situación de quien se encuentra privado de trabajo”
- d) The answer: “¿Pasapalabra?”
- e) The author’s signature

The first kind of information to consider when analyzing graphic jokes is that provided by what are termed the *external signs of the joke*, i.e., the signs that frame the joke but are not included in it (Padilla 2010). The first words of the text, which are the title of the section in which the graphic joke is included (“Con salsa y picante”) and the name of the author (Pepe Farruqo)⁹ are examples of external signs and generate certain expectations in the reader. The function is something like an

9. “Pepe” is a very common name in Spanish; *farruco* is an adjective meaning “brave.” The humorist, exercising poetic license, spells *farruqo* with a *q*.

introductory sentence such as, “Now I’m going to relate a humorous joke.” As a consequence of the presence of these signs, the reader will be able to activate the formal scripts linked with humorous texts, in this case, those of the graphic joke.

The second class of information comes from what are termed *internal signs*, referring to the information present in the joke that leads the reader to a certain interpretation of it. The first of these signs is the expression “Tengo una pregunta para usted”, which, besides its literal and referential meaning (the person saying it really wants to ask a question), also constitutes the title of a well-known, serious, and formal televised debate show.¹⁰ At a cognitive level, the use of this expression makes the reader activate the content script linked with this kind of television program and, more specifically, with the topics typically discussed in such scenarios.

The elements that follow the introductory question provide us with new data. The average Spanish reader will easily recognize the question as not belonging to the anticipated television program frame, but as typical of another television program (*Pasapalabra*),¹¹ whose format is very different from that of the first show. This will lead the reader to activate another mental script, linked with *Pasapalabra*, an entertaining show for the general public which does not usually concern itself with serious matters.

Finally, Zapatero’s answer, “¿Pasapalabra?” is another allusion to the latter television program, but it also contains additional information. The need to answer rapidly is one of the key elements of the program, which is reflected in the joke through the use of question marks.¹² In this case, the question marks also lend the reply a tone of doubt or insecurity, as if Zapatero were not sure of his answer or not comfortable with it.

10. The tenth episode of this program was broadcast on January 26, 2009, when the Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero participated. He answered questions from the audience, and the central topics were unemployment and the economic crisis. For more information about this program see the following links: http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tengo_una_pregunta_para_usted, and <http://www.rtve.es/votaciones/zapatero>.

11. *Pasapalabra* is a televised game show in which two contestants try to accumulate time through different tests, all based on words. They can then use this time to answer questions in the final test, which involves an alphabet wheel called “el roscó.” For more information, see <http://www.telecincio.es/pasapalabra>.

12. In fact, this expression has gained currency in colloquial Spanish, and is used with the meaning of “I don’t know” or “I don’t want to answer.”

As mentioned earlier, the concurrence in the same space (the graphic joke) and at the same time (the date of its publication) of these two realities or scenarios, referring, on a cognitive level, to two different mental scripts, produces what Attardo (1994) calls *incongruity* (the second phase in the joke comprehension process): two different worlds, coexisting at the same time, that are incompatible with each other. This incongruity contributes to the humorous effect. From a pragmatic point of view, we would say that the referents have been multiplied to generate a misunderstanding.

To summarize, the analysis of the written text highlights the pragmatic and linguistic resources, such as double meanings and the use of two mental scripts, deployed by the author of the graphic joke in order to increase the contrast between the information provided by the semantic means (logical or semantic presuppositions), and that provided by the shared possession of certain social or cultural information (pragmatic presuppositions).

The Image

The image, another internal sign of the graphic joke, conveys additional information and contributes to the creation of the incongruity that triggers the humor.

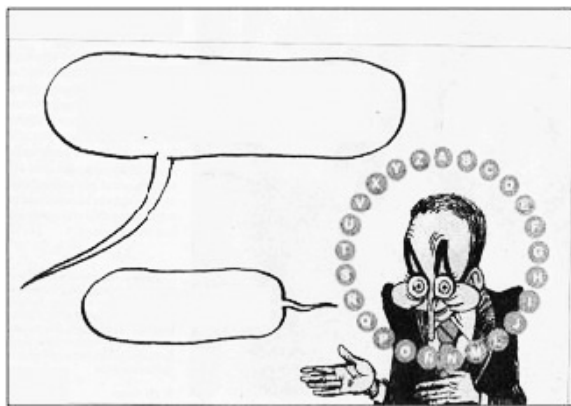


Image 7. Con salsa y picante, the image

Spanish readers would easily recognize the caricature representing José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero. As a caricature, kinetic information provided by gestures, expressions, posture, and general physical comportment has been exaggerated to enhance what the author is seeking to communicate about the character.¹³



Image 8. Caricature of Zapatero

The recognition of the character will activate different mental content schemas linked with this person, from his political ideology and the actions of his administration to official ceremonies in which he often participates.

By also drawing on the information provided by the other images of the graphic joke, the reader will be able to identify other clues that will activate the script related with the television program *Pasapalabra*: in this case, the pictorial representation of the “Rosco final,” a wheel that contains the letters of the Spanish alphabet. The alert reader will also observe that Zapatero has not been able to answer the majority of the questions correctly, as the wheel’s red letters, which represent mistakes, predominate over the green ones which mark correct answers. All these data, provided by the joke frame, and added to the already-analyzed data given at the textual level (Zapatero does not answer the question), strengthen the criticism of the Prime Minister and his political actions, which is, ultimately, the primary message that the author wants to transmit to his readers.

13. The humorist in question usually represents Zapatero smiling, with wide, staring eyes and thick, arching eyebrows.

A PRAGMATIC TRANSLATION

Having examined what happens, from a pragmatic point of view, when one reads a graphic joke, we are prepared to consider how all this information can be of use in translating graphic humor. We propose an alternative translation (b-translation) to the first one (a-translation) that takes into account the cultural perspective and the guidelines provided by the pragmatic analysis.

Reading and Interpretation Levels

In order to improve the first translation, the translator will have to consider the different readings or interpretation levels and their involvement in the text and images of the joke.

In the case of the example we proposed, it is important for the translated joke to offer all the following elements to the reader:

- a. the caricature of a prominent political figure, represented in an unusual situation.
- b. the activation of two mental scripts, linked with the context, which trigger contrasting ideas of seriousness and frivolity (in the example, the serious and entertaining television programs) and are partly incompatible.
- c. a clear reference to a topical event in the socio-cultural affairs of the specific TC which remains similar to that in the OC, as in the example of Spain's economic crisis, with the caricatured figure as protagonist.
- d. a pun linked with the same contrast of seriousness and frivolity.

A Translation into Italian According to Pragmatic and Cultural Criteria

In light of the foregoing discussion, an alternative translation might take the form of Image 9.

As in the first translation, the joke in b-translation also involves a change of prime ministers (Zapatero becomes Berlusconi). The caricature of the political figure situates itself at the first level of interpretation and produces the first degree of humor.



Image 9. Il Verdetto Finale, El Xoco 2010



Image 10. Caricature of Berlusconi

Following the steps of the first translation, the b-translation confronts two incompatible scenarios that coexist at the same time and in the same space (the second level of interpretation). As the television program *Pasapalabra* has an Italian counterpart,¹⁴ we have kept the same scenario, activated by the alphabet wheel. On the other hand, since the television

14. For more information, see [http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passaparola_\(programma_televisivo\)](http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passaparola_(programma_televisivo)).

program *Tengo una pregunta para usted* does not exist in Italy, we have substituted it for a similar one with a similarly serious style. In this case, we have used *Verdetto finale* (Final Verdict), an Italian TV program that deals with unclear judicial cases.¹⁵

In order to maintain the phonetic pun with the letter *p*, but above all to maintain the criticism of the original joke (the third level of interpretation), we have decided to use an event that affected the Italian Prime Minister and became an international topic in newspapers and news programs, because of its hilarious and sensational nature: the photographs of Berlusconi's private parties involving young women.

The initial question, which gives rise to all subsequent interpretations and in the end produces the joke and the humorous criticism, has been changed to refer to the Italian television program *Verdetto finale* (see Table 1): *e ora il Verdetto finale... con la P: ragazza che partecipa a feste private a cambio di denaro...* [and now the Final Verdict: beginning with P, a girl who participates in private parties for money...]. The *p* in the text, which in the original joke referred to the word *paro* [unemployment], refers now to *prostituta* [prostitute].

All the elements that have been translated from the original joke to the b-translation appear in the table below:

15. For more information, see <http://www.rai.it/dl/raiuno/programmi/ContentItem-94b25ea6-213c-44e6-8ab7-c29f92ace09d.html>.

	ELEMENTS OF THE OC/OL	TRANSLATION TO THE TC/TL
TEXT*	<i>Tengo una pregunta para usted</i> reference to the serious Spanish television program <i>Tengo una pregunta para usted</i>	<i>E ora il “Verdetto Finale”</i> reference to the serious Italian television program <i>Verdetto finale</i>
	<i>Con la ‘P’: situación de quien se encuentra privado de trabajo.</i> reference, by means of the familiar question-structure, to the entertaining Spanish television program <i>Pasapalabra</i> .	<i>Con la ‘P’: ragazza che partecipa a feste private a cambio di denaro.</i> reference, by means of the familiar question-structure, to the entertaining Italian television program <i>Passaparola</i> .
	“Pasapalabra”	“Passaparola”
	author’s signature “Pepe Farruqo”	author’s signature “El Xoco”
IMAGE	caricature of Zapatero, the Spanish Prime Minister	caricature of Berlusconi, the Italian Prime Minister
	graphic representation of the “roscó final” of the television quiz show <i>Pasapalabra</i>	graphic representation of the “ruota finale” of the television quiz show <i>Passaparola</i>
SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT	reference to the Spanish socio-cultural context: Zapatero does not want to admit that an economic crisis and rising unemployment are taking place	reference to the Italian socio-cultural context: the scandal of Berlusconi’s private parties

Table 1. Original graphic joke and target translation

This second translation focuses on producing the same effect in the TC as that created in the OC. We have kept the same mechanisms used by the original humorist in the OL to create the humorous effect, but adapted them so that the final result could produce the same effect in the TC.

The b-translation, in contrast with the a-translation, has been made after due consideration of the results of the pragmatic analysis. This analysis not only allows us to explain how humor works in a graphic joke, but also enables us to make a more accurate translation, in accordance with the intentions and sense of humor of the original author. The final result, the b-translation, keeps all the scripts active, preserving incongruity, criticism, and levels of interpretation present in the original joke.

By exploring graphic jokes we can begin to identify the pragmatic features of humor and their usefulness in making target-oriented translations. Such a pragmatic analysis can clarify possible options and justify translators' decisions. As Attardo (1994) points out, the humor produced while reading or hearing a joke is the result of an incongruity consisting of two diverse situations or scripts colliding and coexisting. Bearing in mind what these scripts represent and how they function within the joke is fundamental for achieving a good translation. As the pragmatic analysis shows, the description of a humorous text in terms of its different levels of interpretation allows translators to identify which elements to prioritize in their translation and why.

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