

# Sherlock Holmes - A Man out of Time. Translating Culture-Bound Terms in Subtitling: A Case of Sherlock

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kulturnospecifičnih pojmova u podslavljanju. Slučaj Sherlock**

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Mentor: doc. dr. sc. Goran Schmidt  
Sumentor: Romana Čačija, viša lektorica  
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## SUMMARY

Translation is not simply translating words from one language into another. Every translation, directly or indirectly, contains cultural references of both the source and the target language. In order to produce an acceptable translation, the translator must be aware of that fact and do his/her best to transfer the references from the source to the target language. Translating these cultural references can be difficult because cultures differ from one another and equivalents cannot always be found. The act of translating cultural references becomes even more difficult when it comes to subtitling a TV show, a movie, or a documentary. Subtitles have many constraints that have to be respected and that is why translators use a number of strategies to overcome this problem. This will be shown on the example of Croatian subtitles for the BBC TV series *Sherlock*. *Sherlock* provides many references connected to the British culture which do not exist in the Croatian culture, so the translator must put in some extra work in order to provide the Croatian audience with a good and meaningful translation. Since *Sherlock* is a modern adaptation of the 19th century detective novels, there are also modern words and phrases nowadays used in the English language but also borrowed from the English language and used in other languages as loanwords which may be familiar to the younger audience but not so much to the older audience. Also, subtitles in general provide an insight into another language and culture, so they are quite valuable to students, children and non-native speakers of the source language.

Key words: translation, cultural elements, subtitles, Sherlock

## 1. Introduction

Every translation, directly or indirectly, contains cultural references of both the source and the target language. In order to produce an acceptable translation, the translators must be aware of that and do their best to transfer the references from the source to the target language. This is never an easy task because every language has its own ways of expressing certain ideas and not all cultural references of the source language have their equivalents in the target language. The act of translating cultural references becomes even more difficult when trying to make subtitles for a TV show, a movie or a documentary. Subtitles have many constraints that have to be respected and strategies for translating cultural references have to be modified. That is why translators use a number of strategies to overcome the said problem. These strategies were proposed by Vladimir Ivir in his article *Procedures and Strategies for the Translation of Cultural Categories* (Ivir 2003) and will be shown on the example of the BBC TV series *Sherlock*, which revolves around the most famous detective in Britain and possibly in the world. *Sherlock* provides many references to the British culture which do not exist in the Croatian culture, so the translator must put in some extra work in order to provide the Croatian audience with a good and meaningful translation. Furthermore, since *Sherlock* is a modern adaptation of the 19th century detective novels, there are also modern words and phrases used in the contemporary English language but also borrowed from the English language and used in other languages as loanwords, which may be familiar to the younger audience but not so much to the older.

The first chapter of this paper deals with translation in general and the definition of culture. The second chapter presents strategies for the translation of culture proposed by Vladimir Ivir (2003). The third chapter gives general information about subtitling. The fourth chapter discusses problems with translating cultural references in subtitles. The fifth chapter gives general information about Arthur Conan Doyle, his most famous creation Sherlock Holmes and the way it won over the readers all over the world. The sixth chapter deals with the modern adaptation of Sherlock Holmes, the BBC TV series *Sherlock*.

In the analytical part of this paper examples of phrases containing cultural references taken from all four seasons of *Sherlock* will be provided. These phrases will be accompanied by their translation as subtitles and strategies which were used in that translation process will be discussed.



## **2. Theoretical Overview**

### **2.1. Translating and problems with translation of culture**

Translating is one of the oldest professions in the world. It started as soon as humans mastered the skill of writing and reading. However, it took a long time for it to become a field of scientific research. This happened in 1950s, so translation studies is a relatively new field in which there is much more research to be done.

One of the major issues with translation is that translators not only translate words but also ideas, entire cultures and personal experiences. As Susan Bassnett (2007: 23) says in her article *Culture and Translation*: “of course translation scholars must focus on language, for translation is, after all, about transferring a text from one language to another. But separating language from culture is like the old debate about which came first – the chicken or the egg. Language is embedded in culture, linguistic acts take place in a context and texts are created in a continuum not in a vacuum”. This means that a translator has to take into account the time and circumstances in which the original text was created. It will enable him/her to better understand the text and provide a more accurate translation, especially when it comes to cultural or social or political references. On the other hand, when reading a translation, the reader has to keep in mind when the translation was created and who translated it because translators are also under the influence of their own cultures, political systems, personal experiences, and sometimes even personal attitudes towards a certain subject.

### **2.2. Strategies for resolving problems when translating cultural references**

Culture is a very broad term that is used to describe anything that is common to a certain group of people. The definition that will be used for this paper is “A culture is a way of life of a group of people — the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.” (<https://www.tamu.edu/faculty/choudhury/culture.html>) So, it refers to all the things that make one group of people different from another and that are specific for one group of people, in this case, things that are specific for the British, but not for the Croatian culture.

To properly translate such cultural differences and provide the audience with an accurate and meaningful translation, the translator must be familiar with the culture of the source and target language, or at least be ready to properly research any confusing or unknown

components. Also, the translator must be sure that he/she understands the message that should be conveyed in order to produce proper translation.

In his article *Translation of Culture and Culture of Translation* (2003), Vladimir Ivir discusses this problem and provides a list of strategies used when translating cultural references which makes the translator's work a little bit easier. These strategies are (a) borrowing, (b) definition or paraphrase, (c) literal translation, (d) substitution, (e) lexical creation, (f) addition, (g) omission (Ivir, 2003: 118). In order to choose the correct strategy, the translator must understand the communicative function of cultural elements in the text. Only if the translator knows what message should be delivered can he/she think about the possible translation and use one of the strategies listed above. Also, the translator should have the knowledge and respect for the source and target culture in order to produce the most accurate translation.

Ivir (2003: 122) states that the strategy of borrowing occurs more often with simple words than with compound words, especially because phonetic, phonemic and graphemic rules of Croatian are different than in English. Also, seemingly same words in both languages can have a slight difference in meaning but this difference can change the meaning of the entire sentence. Ivir shows this on the example of the word *block* (number of buildings on each side of the block) – *blok* (*stambeni blok* is a single building) (Ivir, 2003: 122). The strategy of definition or paraphrase is used when the translator decides that it would make the cultural reference clearer for the reader. For example, the term *white-tie parties* can be paraphrased as *elegant evening receptions/parties* and translated as *otmjena večernja primanja* (Ivir, 2003: 121). The reference can be paraphrased in the text and the definition can be added in the footnote. Literal translation can be a good strategy in some cases, but the translator should be very careful about it because it can render a completely different meaning. Ivir gives an example of *high school* (*visoka škola* is not the same thing as *srednja škola*) (Ivir, 2003: 123). Substitution would imply that the cultural reference of the source language is not as important for understanding the context, so the translator decides to focus only on the necessary meaning without holding on to the cultural meaning. One example of substitution taken from Ivir's article would be that the sentence "Disguised as a Western Union messenger, he entered the bank and..." was translated as "Prerušen u dostavljača brzojava ušao je u banku i...". In this case the reader is not even aware that there was a cultural reference involved in this process because if the translator wanted to keep the cultural reference, the sentence could be translated as "Prerušen u dostavljača brzojava privatnog poduzeća za prijem i slanje brzojava Western Union, ušao je u banku i..." (Ivir, 2003: 120). Lexical creation appears when the

translator concludes that it is necessary to create a new word or a phrase in order to translate a certain cultural reference. For example, *selfie* was translated into Croatian as *sebić*, a word that is completely new and has no other meaning. Addition refers to adding an explanation to the cultural reference in order to make it clearer for the reader. Like in the example where the sentence “Would she be able to take a little girl to Macy’s parade?” was translated as “Bi li mogla povesti malu djevojčicu na godišnju paradu robne kuće Macy?” (Ivir, 2003: 119) Finally, omission occurs when the cultural reference is not important at all for the context and the text does not lose its meaning without it. For example, the sentence from Ivir’s article (2003: 120) “Disguised as a Western Union messenger, he entered the bank and...” could also be translated as “Prerušen, ušao je u banku i...”. This strategy is also used if the translator is having difficulties with translating certain cultural reference.

The strategies listed above can be seen and practiced especially in literary translation, but also in screen translation. However, when it comes to screen translation, there are certain constraints that make translation of cultural references even harder, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

### **2.3. Subtitling**

Subtitles are “words shown at the bottom of a film or television picture to explain what is being said“ (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/subtitle>). They are a part of screen translation, which is a relatively new field of translation studies. As O’Connell (2007: 122), explains in her article *Screen Translation* when the first sound movies arrived, the language barrier had to be overcome, so the studios first started dubbing the movies (revoicing the original soundtrack with the soundtrack in the target language), but soon realized that subtitles were much cheaper and faster to make. Today, subtitles are a preferred method of screen translation. Dubbing is preferred if the aim is to reach a wider audience, especially children or blind people.

Subtitles can be interlingual and intralingual. Interlingual subtitles translate soundtracks from the source to the target language (i.e. from English to Croatian), while intralingual subtitles provide written forms of the spoken words (i.e. English movies with English subtitles). These intralingual subtitles serve mostly those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, non-native speakers of the language, children, students or minorities who are learning a language (O’Connell, 2007: 125)

O’Connell (2007: 126) lists two more types of subtitles: open and closed subtitles. Closed subtitles are linked to television and *Teletext* technology, where they can be selected

by the viewers. These are usually made for the deaf and such subtitles contain more information and explanation of what is happening on the screen (primarily sounds and background noises). Open subtitles cannot be removed from the screen and this is the type of subtitles used for interlingual translation. They can also be adapted for the deaf.

The advantages of subtitling are that it is cheaper and faster to make than dubbing. Furthermore, with subtitles the source language is preserved and the insight into a foreign language and culture is offered. Both interlingual and intralingual subtitles can be good for learning new languages and creating interest in new cultures. Also, those viewers who know both languages can check for themselves the accuracy of subtitles.

#### **2.4. Problems with translating subtitles**

As convenient as subtitles are, there are still some problems which every translator faces. People read at a much slower pace than they talk, so subtitles have to summarize what is being said without losing the intended meaning of the sentence and still carry the right message across. Summarizing becomes even harder due to the time and space constraints. In order for subtitles not to interfere much with the picture, there is room for only 40 characters per line and a maximum of two lines of text across the bottom of the screen (O'Connell, 2007: 129). Furthermore, the time length of a single subtitle is 2 to 7 seconds. Because of these constraints, subtitles can sometimes be inaccurate or divert the viewer's attention from what is happening on the screen.

Also, when it comes to minority languages, dubbing is preferred. "Research conducted in Belgium has shown that it is impossible to avoid reading subtitles on screen and, since reading is a more complex cognitive activity than listening, the involuntary reading of English language subtitles while listening to the minority language has the effect of reinforcing the major language rather than vice versa." (O'Connell, 2007: 131)

As far as technical constraints are concerned, translating cultural references in subtitles is very demanding. Sometimes the equivalent can be found in the target culture and this would be the easiest and safest way to do it. However, sometimes the reference cannot be translated by a more or less direct equivalent or one word only, but it has to be described in the target language. This, on the one hand, takes extra space and time to accomplish. On the other hand, the reference sometimes needs additional explanation, which again takes space and time. That is why most of the time those who make subtitles completely omit such references if they are not important for the context and understanding of what is happening on the screen, or they

translate them in such a way that they lose their cultural meaning. This very often happens with the translation of idioms or other play on words.

The strategies proposed by Ivir (2003) and the problems arising when subtling cultural references will be exemplified in the analytical part of this paper.

## **2.5. A.C. Doyle and Sherlock Holmes**

“I have had a life which, for variety and romance, could, I think, hardly be exceeded. I have known what it was to be a poor man and I have known what it was to be fairly affluent. I have sampled every kind of human experience. I have known many of the most remarkable men of my time. I have had a long literary career after a medical training which gave me the M.D. of Edinburgh. I have tried my hand at very many sports, including boxing, cricket, billiards, motoring, football, aeronautics and skiing, having been the first to introduce the latter for long journeys into Switzerland. I have travelled as Doctor to a whaler for seven months in the Arctic and afterwards in the West Coast of Africa. I have seen something of three wars, the Soudanese, the South African and the German. My life has been dotted with adventures of all kinds. Finally I have been constrained to devote my latter years to telling the world the final result of thirty-six years' study of the occult, and in endeavoring to make it realize the overwhelming importance of the question. In this mission I have already travelled more than 50,000 miles and addressed 300,000 people, besides writing seven books upon the subject. Such is the life which I have told in some detail in my *Memories and Adventures*. “

Arthur Conan Doyle.

Crowborough,

*June*, 1924.

This is how Arthur Conan Doyle, most famous for his stories about the detective Sherlock Holmes, described his life in his autobiography *Memories and Adventures*. Doyle was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on May 22, 1859. Although raised as Catholic, he declared himself agnostic by the time he started studying medicine at Edinburgh University in 1876 and later on developed an interest in spiritualism, becoming fascinated by beliefs in supernatural phenomena.

Doyle started his professional life as ship's doctor on a voyage around the coast of West Africa. After that he established his own medical practice, but found the business slow, so he worked on his writing. He enjoyed writing from an early age and his mother, Mary, “had a passion for books and was a master storyteller“. It is said that his detective stories had a

profound influence on real-life criminal investigation procedures and they are among the most often read and best loved in the history of the genre.

Doyle married twice and fathered five children. He died of a heart attack in 1930 at the age of 71. Doyle wrote many fictional, scientific and historical books but Sherlock Holmes became such an iconic character that his other works were overshadowed. Conan Doyle used science to underpin his literature, although it is fair to say that he allowed pseudoscience to also appear towards the end of his life.

However, it must be said that Doyle was not as fascinated with Sherlock Holmes as the rest of the world. “Doyle was quite open about how much he disliked and resented his creation – or at least affected to dislike and resent him. He claimed to regard Holmes as an inconsequential part of his literary output hoping to be remembered more for his historical and romantic fiction, his poetry, his histories, even an operetta” (Tribe, 2014: 16). This is why he decided to kill Holmes but he did it in a way that it was still possible for Holmes to return one day. And so he did, after an eight-year absence. Doyle was even paid by Americans to write more stories, and even though he said he resented the character, he still agreed to write more stories because, as Steven Moffat said, “it’s just the writer in him – the storyteller in him – knows how good it is, and he can’t let go of it” (Tribe, 2014: 17).

### 2.5.1. *Sherlock Holmes*

As stated in the preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, between 1887 and 1927 Doyle published nine Sherlock Holmes books: four novels and five collections of short stories. He originally invented the character of Holmes to fill his time during his period as a general practitioner. The first novel, published in 1887 in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, was *A Study in Scarlet*. However, Holmes and Watson were introduced to a wide audience in the story *A Scandal in Bohemia*, which was published in *The Strand Magazine* in 1891. From then on, the stories became a hit; the audience demanded more stories and even behaved like the Holmes was a real person. The building society then occupying the site that might have been 221B Baker Street actually employed somebody to reply to all the letters written to Sherlock Holmes (Tribe, 2014: 13-14). Because of this, there was a public outcry when Doyle killed Holmes in a short story called *The Final Problem*, so he was forced to bring him back to life in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.

Doyle does not hide the influences which inspired him to create the character of Holmes. Taking the lead from the stories of Edgar Allan Poe and his character of C. Auguste Dupin, he

“developed the detective who is a combination of ascetic and sportsman; scientist and artist; misogynist and courtly knight; moral arbiter and drug-user; agent of law and a law unto himself“ (Whitley, 2008: 6). Also, he based the character on Holmes on his professor, surgeon Joseph Bell, who had an astonishing ability to diagnose what was wrong with his patients just by watching them walk into the room and Bell was indeed involved in a number of police investigations in Edinburgh. Furthermore, the unnamed narrator of Poe's Dupin stories is turned into Watson, whose relationship with Holmes “adds great humor, social observation and even tenderness to the work“ (Whitley, 2008: 6). Doyle invented the detective mystery novel, which was considered a new genre at the time.

Doyle also made Sherlock Holmes a contemporary man, that is, contemporary for his time, the Victorian era. The private detective Sherlock Holmes was a combination of the Victorian gentleman scientist and police detective. “The Victorian era marked a historical point where science came into its own as a distinct discipline based on empirical experimentation. Before then, science had been rather more ambiguous in its definition. Physicians, chemists and biologists had shown that the world always operates according to strict scientific rules and laws. It was this new phenomenon of scientific certainty that allowed Sherlock Holmes to confidently solve crimes in an age when police investigation was generally understood to be largely a matter of hit and miss, a mix of luck and judgement” (Preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, 2016: 7). In the introduction to *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, John S. Whitley (2008) states that “Doyle was only too aware of how close humans of his time were to the jungle, but Holmes is a tribute to the late-nineteenth-century determination to codify, calculate, graph and render statistical all human endeavors”. In fact, in the preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (2016) it is said that “Sherlock Holmes was Doyle's expression of his recognition that the application of empirical science and acute intellect were the things that members of the British Empire saw as the reason for their success.”

Moreover, Holmes brought novelty into the ways of identifying and collecting evidence from crime scenes, discovering motives and courses of events and pinpointing suspects. Even though he was just a fictional character, this shows his influence not just on the literary world but also on the real world.

Making Holmes a private detective was a logical idea as he was evidently an intellectual genius who, so often, is accompanied by eccentricities which make him less than suitable for the routine and regulations of conventional employment. “To make Holmes believable as a character with an exceptional mind, he also needed to be flawed in certain ways, so the author made him something of a loner, with obsessive, fanatical and addictive traits. The result was

well-rounded character that the reader could understand, if not identify with, because he too had vulnerabilities and weaknesses common to us all.” (Preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, 2016: 8).

A constant companion to Sherlock Holmes is Dr John Watson. He is the one who narrates all the stories and is not just there as a comic-relief and a complete opposite to Holmes but he is “an injection of genuine sympathy, accompanied by bewilderment, anger and rather rigid “common sense”, into a narrative which might otherwise be simply a wish-fulfilment of late-Victorian desires for scientific, aristocratic, patriotic superman who imposes a dream of order on potentially chaotic society” (Whitley, 2008: 10). Watson is also intelligent in his own way but still admires Holmes for his abilities. Their relationship is one that is completely unexpected but very fulfilling as Watson keeps Holmes from completely detaching himself from the real world and people in it.

Holmes also has a special kind of relationship with Scotland Yard, the police headquarters in London, and its employees. He considers most of them stupid and incapable of successfully tackling cases, but still regards Inspector Lestrade as the best detective on the force. Lestrade is the only one who tolerates Holmes and comes to him for help. Also, Holmes considers Lestrade useful when it is time to make arrests or call for back-up.

Another useful characteristic of Holmes is that Doyle made him a master of disguise. It is very useful for him to be able to access situations and gather information without anybody’s help. This may be considered the forerunner to undercover police work (Preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, 2016: 9).

### **2.5.2. Illustrations by Sidney Paget**

The short stories that were published in *The Strand Magazine* were accompanied by illustrations. The author of those illustrations was Sidney Paget who, supposedly, based the appearance of Holmes on his brother Walter. Paget’s drawings “did much to popularize the Sherlock Holmes stories. Holmes is portrayed as tall and sophisticated type, well-presented and sartorially elegant. Watson is more ordinary and without distinction, resembling the common man more closely” (Preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, 2016: 9). However, Doyle himself said that he had a completely different image of Holmes in his mind and he did not particularly like the images that were immediately adopted and used ever since.

“Sherlock Holmes' deerstalker hat and Inverness cape were both introduced by Paget to give the character a more distinctive look, so that it was immediately obvious to the reader which figure was Holmes” (Preface to *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, 2016: 10). The



novelty which Paget introduced was a deerstalker hat. The deerstalker is actually never mentioned in the stories, but the illustrations made it one of the most famous symbols of Sherlock Holmes.

### 2.5.3. *Adaptations of Sherlock Holmes*

The adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson have been a huge hit from the very start. Readers were eager to read new stories, they wrote letters to Sherlock Holmes, to Doyle as well, tried to imitate Holmes' line of reasoning and deduction, they heavily protested when Doyle killed Holmes and were generally very enthusiastic about the matter. This is why they are considered to be the first *fandom*. Fandom is a modern word which, according to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, means "the state of being a fan of someone or something, especially a very enthusiastic one". When something is so successful and long-lasting as Sherlock Holmes, it is only natural that there should be many adaptations and variations of the original stories. These adaptations include theatre, film, TV shows, books, comic books, board games, video games and even music.

One of the first actors who portrayed Holmes on stage was American actor William Gillette. He wrote the script for the play but first he asked Doyle for permission to marry Holmes in the play. Doyle responded: "You may marry or murder or do what you like with him." (Conan Doyle, 1924: 97). Gillette appeared on the stage with a deerstalker hat and he was the one who introduced the Meerschaum pipe which also became one of the symbols of Sherlock Holmes. He was also responsible for the phrase "Oh this is elementary, my dear fellow", which cannot be found in the original stories (Tribe, 2014: 20). The Gillette stage play was made into a silent film in 1916, but there were dozens of screen adaptations between 1900 and 1939 (Tribe, 2014: 20). Some of the more famous adaptations were 14-film series with Basil Rathbone as Holmes and Nigel Bruce as Watson, film *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* with Robert Stephens and Colin Blakely, series with Jeremy Brett as Holmes, Guy Ritchie's movies with Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law, and eventually a modern take on Sherlock by BBC series *Sherlock* with Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman. Shortly after the BBC series, the Americans made their own modern version named *Elementary* with Jonny Lee Miller and Lucy Liu.

([http://bakerstreet.wikia.com/wiki/Sherlock\\_Holmes\\_Adaptations](http://bakerstreet.wikia.com/wiki/Sherlock_Holmes_Adaptations))

## 2.6. BBC TV series *Sherlock*

The series was created by Mark Gatiss and Steven Moffat. It is a series of three 90-minute episodes. There have been four seasons so far and the first episode *A Study in Pink* aired in 2010. The series has instantly become a huge success, making its two lead actors, Benedict Cumberbatch as Holmes and Martin Freeman as Watson, very famous. Both Gatiss and Moffat are huge fans of Arthur Conan Doyle and the original Sherlock Holmes stories. In addition, they are both acclaimed screen writers and television producers, while Gatiss is also an actor and appears in the series.

“We were talking about how much we loved these heretical, incredibly exciting and fun Sherlock Holmes films which had been modernized in 1940s,’ confirms Mark, ‘and I said it was odd that in the very first Doyle story Dr Watson is invalided home from war service in Afghanistan – a war which has been happening again, the same unwinnable war. That was sort of light-bulb moment: we just thought *of course* it should be modernized” (Tribe, 2014: 12). So, they started working on creating a modern day Sherlock Holmes, a Holmes for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One of the biggest influences on their *Sherlock* was a film made by Billy Wilder and Izzy Diamond in 1970 called *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*. The film is filled with humor, it jokes with gay relationships amongst other things, it has a case about a female spy and develops the character of Mycroft, Sherlock’s brother, who in the original stories and adaptations is not mentioned very often (Tribe, 2014: 20).

Gatiss and Moffat say that *Sherlock* “is not a detective series, it’s a series about a detective. It’s about his life and the things that happen to him, his relationships with people”. They stay true to this definition because the series focuses more on the relationship between Holmes and Watson. Watson is not just some silly sidekick who follows Holmes around and writes down everything that happens, but he becomes an equally important and three-dimensional character.

Also, the series pays more attention to Mrs Hudson (played by Una Stubbs). In the original stories, she is just an elderly landlady who provides accommodation for Holmes and Watson and occasionally brings food, tea or biscuits. In the series, Mrs Hudson is given a back story and represented as a warm, maternal figure who is always there for Holmes and Watson. Furthermore, the series also brings out the character of Mycroft Holmes (played by Mark Gatiss), Sherlock’s older brother. Mycroft shares Sherlock’s mental abilities, even considers himself smarter than Sherlock, and their relationship is a relationship of two brothers who constantly fight and try to outsmart each other but in their own way care for one another. The series also indicates that the *Diogenes club*, of which Mycroft is a member, usually shown as

a club for elderly English gentlemen, is actually the British Secret Service and Mycroft is a much more powerful and a much more dangerous character than shown in the original stories and later adaptations.

Another character that appears in the original stories is Inspector Lestrade (played by Rupert Graves). His role and relationship with Holmes in the series is the same as in the original stories. Lestrade is the only policeman who tolerates and wants to work with Holmes, while also the only policeman Holmes would listen to and ask for help.

The character of Mary Morstan (played by Amanda Abbington), Watson's wife, is also more developed in the second and third season of the series. In the original stories she is briefly mentioned and dies soon, but in the series she is given an extensive back story while her influence on Watson and Holmes, as well as on their relationship, is much more significant.

One more character worth mentioning is Sherlock's arch nemesis, Professor James Moriarty (played by Andrew Scott). In the original stories, he is more often mentioned than he actually appears. Doyle used him as a way to kill Holmes, but Holmes mentions Moriarty on several occasions and refers to him as "Napoleon of crime" or "criminal mastermind". He considers Moriarty the only criminal who is smart enough to defeat him and realizes that most cases he solves have Moriarty as a common denominator. In the series, Moriarty does not have the title of professor, he is known as Jim Moriarty or simply Moriarty. Also, his appearance in the series is brief but always leaves the greatest mark on Holmes and people around him.

The series, however, introduces some new characters: police officer Sally Donovan (played by Vinette Robinson), forensic Philip Anderson (played by Jonathan Aris), and coroner Molly Hooper (played by Louise Brealey). Donovan and Anderson represent those others employed in Scotland Yard who are not so open and sympathetic to Sherlock's methods, while Molly Hooper is an excellent scientist who is in love with Sherlock and always helps him, even when she knows he is using her affection to get what he needs to solve the case.

Because Gatiss and Moffat decided to make a modern take on Sherlock, many things had to be changed, added, or cut out. Some of the modifications they made are the following:

- Holmes' drug addiction is maintained and he uses it to "stimulate his mind" when there are no interesting cases to be solved. However, instead of smoking a pipe, Holmes is trying to give up smoking cigarettes and wears nicotine patches on his arm. Also, in one of the original stories Holmes smoked three pipes because the mystery he

was solving was demanding, so he called it a “three-pipe problem”. In the series he refers to a case as “three-patch problem”.

- Watson’s stories, which in the original stories were published in a magazine, now became a blog that Watson writes himself, people read it and come to Holmes with their problems. Holmes became famous because of Watson’s blog. Sherlock also has his web page called *The Science of Deduction*, on which he publishes information that helped him solve a certain case and where people can leave their questions and requests if they need his help. In the episode *The Great Game* he even communicates with Moriarty through his web page.

The blog and newspaper headlines, which can often be seen on the screen, are a good presentation of the language of the media. Newspapers attract readers with their bombastic headlines such as “Super-sleuth”, “Suicide of fake genius”, “Fraudulent detective”, “Shag-a-lot Holmes”, “Blogger Detective”, “Boffin Sherlock Solves Another”, or “Hat Detective Alive”.

- In the original stories, news was sent by telegrams. In the series, the modern version of telegrams is a text message. Sherlock and others use them to communicate with everyone around them. Very often these text messages appear on the screen, so the use of abbreviations (*Lauriston Gdns* for Lauriston Gardens, *Northumberland St* for Northumberland Street), emoticons and modern language (writing *x x x* to send kisses to someone) can be seen.

Another modern way of sending messages seen in the show is the use of graffiti. In the episode *The Blind Banker* the Chinese criminal society uses graffiti to communicate and in the episode *The Reichenbach Fall* Moriarty writes the graffiti *IOU* (I owe you) everywhere to scare Sherlock.

- The use of social networks, primarily Twitter, is also very common. Sherlock says to Mycroft that he can follow Irene Adler on Twitter and her username is *TheWhipHand*. When Sherlock comes back from the dead at the beginning of the third series, Internet is filled with hashtags *#SherlockLives*, *#SherlockAlive* etc. Also, in the episode *The Six Thatchers* Sherlock announces his return by tweeting *Back on terra firma. Free as a bird #OhWhatABeautifulMorning*.

In the episode *The Sign of Three* the use of chat rooms and on-line chat is also present. Through an on-line chat Sherlock gathers information about the murderer he is looking for.

- Even the way two main characters call each other was changed. As Steven Moffat said, “In Doyle’s stories, they’re always Holmes and Watson to each other, as would not be untypical in that era, it’d be normal. But if two young men in modern London called each other Holmes and Watson, they’d be public schoolboys, and we didn’t want both of them to be. We spent a lot of time worrying about how they would talk” (Tribe, 2014: 26). The creators made John and Sherlock talk normally for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to bring them even closer to the audience. This is especially obvious in the episode *The Hounds of Baskerville*, when Sherlock takes the case just because his client used an archaic word *hound* instead of the word *dog*.
- The series also toys with the issue of homosexuality. Some characters tease Holmes and Watson that they are secretly gay. This especially bothers Watson who is constantly seen with a different girlfriend and always vehemently states that Sherlock is not his boyfriend. Also, in the episode *A Scandal in Belgravia* Sherlock refers to Mycroft as *queen*, which is a derogatory term for a homosexual man.
- Mycroft, Mrs. Hudson and Watson become more three-dimensional characters with a back story. Mycroft’s diet problems, powerful position and influence, but also genuine love and care for Sherlock are revealed. Mrs. Hudson was once an exotic dancer, a wife of a drug-dealer and actually very cunning and resourceful old lady. Also, Watson’s wife Mary and their married life is given more attention and significance. Mary is actually a former secret agent, who is running from her past and wants to lead a peaceful, normal life with Watson. However, her past eventually catches up with her.
- All the gadgets and accessories of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are also present: cars, computers, mobile phones, internet and modern weapons. A play on words was created with the code for unlocking Irene Adler’s mobile phone. *I AM \_ \_ \_ \_ LOCKED* was written on the screen of the phone and Sherlock thought he needed a four digit number to unlock it. However, the solution was *I AM SHERLOCKED*, which combined the words *Sherlock* and *locked* while at the same time revealed Irene Adler’s affection for Sherlock.

When reading the original stories and comparing them to the series, the reader can clearly see the changes that have been made. It is truly remarkable to see how these old stories, written almost 130 years ago are still so fresh and contemporary today. Holmes’ methods of work, story plots, crimes and characters have been kept in the series, but done in such a way that it seems as if this is something new and completely different. Last but not least, all the

elements which make Holmes so familiar and recognizable, besides his deduction skills, were kept in the series. Sherlock is still tall, lean, a master of disguise, a good sportsman, a gentleman but also a drug addict, sometimes annoying and impossible to handle. His famous deerstalker hat makes an appearance, as does his famous saying: “When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth”.

### 3. Analytical Part – Translating Examples From “Sherlock”

The examples that will be provided here are taken from all four seasons of *Sherlock*. Subtitles shown were downloaded from <http://titlovi.com/> and made by unknown translators. The aim of this research is to analyze the translation of culture-bound terms in the English and Croatian subtitles made by unknown translators, discuss their accuracy and offer different or better solutions in the comments below. The translation of subtitles respects the rules of subtitling, which means the translation does not exceed 40 characters per single line. This constraint exists because people read slower than they speak and the time length of each subtitle is 2 to 7 seconds. More than 40 characters per line would be too long for a human eye to read in such a short time and cause people to tire very quickly or miss certain information.

The research questions to be answered are:

1. What are the strategies used for translating culture-bound terms in subtitling?
2. Are there any observable tendencies for particular classes of culture-bound terms?
3. Is the original meaning of a culture-bound term lost when translated into Croatian?

#### 3.1. Analysis Table

*Table 1: Overview of most used translation strategies*

Subgroup	Translation strategy	Number of examples
<b>Names of people, cities and brands</b>	Literal translation, substitution, paraphrase	7
<b>Names of parts of London</b>	Literal translation, paraphrase	3
<b>Typical British expressions</b>	Literal translation, paraphrase, addition, definition	10
<b>Literature references</b>	Literal translation, paraphrase	2
<b>Miscellaneous phrases</b>	Literal translation, paraphrase, addition	11
<b>Total</b>		33

### 3.2. Subgroup – Names of people, cities and brands

(1) (In the restaurant)

HOLMES: What are you thinking:  
pork or the pasta?

MOLLY: Oh, it's you!

HOLMES: I suppose it's never going  
to trouble **Egon Ronay**, is it?

I'd stick with the pasta. Don't want  
to be doing roast pork.

Not if you're slicing up cadavers.

MOLLY: What are you having?

HOLMES: Don't eat when I'm working.

Digesting slows me down.

(U restoranu)

HOLMES: Što misliš? Svinjetina ili tjestenina?

MOLLY: Oh, to si ti!

HOLMES: Izgleda da dano neće smetati

**Egonu Ronayu**, zar ne?

Držao bih se tjestenine. Ne preporučam  
svinjetinu ako kao ti radim s leševima.

MOLLY: Što ćeš ti uzeti?

HOLMES: Ne jedem kad radim.

Probavljanje me usporava.

The name Egon Ronay refers to a Hungarian-born food critic who wrote and published a famous series of guides to British and Irish restaurants and hotels in the 1950s and 1960s ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egon\\_Ronay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egon_Ronay)). The translator kept the name of the food critic, which is the strategy of borrowing according to Ivir (2003), but the majority of the Croatian audience most probably does not know who he is. So, when reading that subtitle, the viewer will probably be confused as to the meaning of this. The strategy of substitution could be used here as well and Egon Ronay could simply be translated as *gastro kritičar*. His name is not important for understanding the scene or for any further context. However, it could also be



translated as *gastro kritičaru Egonu Ronayu*, which would in a way educate the audience and match Ivir's (2003) strategy of addition.

(2) SHERLOCK: Can I have a box of matches?

Or your cigarette lighter,  
either will do.

EQUERRY: I don't smoke.

SHERLOCK: No, I know you don't,  
but your employer does.

EQUERRY: We have kept a lot of people  
successfully in the dark  
about this little fact, Mr. Holmes.

SHERLOCK: I'm not **the Commonwealth**.

JOHN: And that's as modest as he gets.  
Pleasure to meet you.

SHERLOCK: Mogu li dobiti kutiju šibica?  
Ili upaljač, oboje će biti u redu.

KRALJEVSKI PREDSTAVNIK: Ja ne pušim.

SHERLOCK: Da, znam da vi ne,  
ali vaš poslodavac puši.

KRALJEVSKI PREDSTAVNIK: Držali smo puno ljudi uspješno u mraku  
u vezi te male činjenice, g. Holmes.

SHERLOCK: Ja nisam **Commonwealth**.

JOHN: Skromniji ne može biti.  
Bilo mi je drago.

By saying this, Sherlock means that he is not in charge and he does not care if a member of the Royal family smokes or not. The Commonwealth is an intergovernmental organization of 52 member states that are mostly former territories of the British Empire ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commonwealth\\_of\\_Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Nations)). It is a well-known political term, even to those who are in no way connected to the British or English-speaking culture. That is why there is no reason to translate it in any other way and it is acceptable to leave the original term.

(3) WOMAN: He's always losing things down the  
back of the sofa, aren't you, dear?

MAN: Afraid so.

WOMAN: Keys, small change, sweeties.  
Especially his glasses.

MAN: Glasses.

WOMAN: Blooming things. I said,  
“Why don't you get a chain,  
wear 'em round your neck?”

And he says, “What,  
like **Larry Grayson**?”

MAN: **Larry Grayson.**

ŽENA: Stalno gubi stvari  
iza sofe, je li tako, dušo?

MUŠKARAC: Bojim se da je tako.

ŽENA: Ključeve, sitniš, slatkiše.  
Osobito naočale.

MUŠKARAC: Naočale.

ŽENA: Vražja stvar. Pitala sam, „Zašto si  
ne nabaviš lančić pa ih nosiš oko vrata?  
A on će meni, „Što, kao **Larry Grayson**?”

MUŠKARAC: **Larry Grayson.**

Larry Grayson was an English comedian and television presenter who was best known in the 1970s and early '80s ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larry\\_Grayson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larry_Grayson)). The translator kept the name, but the Croatian audience is (most probably) not familiar with this person. It would be good to add an explanation, *komičar Larry Grayson* or *stari komičar Larry Grayson*.

(4) SHERLOCK: What would you do, Vivian?

VIVIAN: Pardon?

SHERLOCK: Well, it's a lovely day. Go for a stroll?  
Make a paper aeroplane? Have an ice lolly?

VIVIAN: Ice lolly, I suppose.

SHERLOCK: Ice lolly it is!

What's your favourite?

VIVIAN: Well, really, I shouldn't ...

SHERLOCK: Go on.

VIVIAN: Do they still do **Mivvies**?

SHERLOCK: Što biste vi radili, Vivian?

VIVIAN: Molim?

SHERLOCK: Lijep je dan. Želite u šetnju?

Napraviti papirni avion?

Sladoled na štapiću?

VIVIAN: Sladoled, vjerujem.

SHERLOCK: Može sladoled!

Koji vam je najdraži?

VIVIAN: Zaista, ne bih smjela...

SHERLOCK: Dajte.

VIVIAN: Imaju li još uvijek **Mivvies**?

*Mivvi* was an ice-cream centre with a fruit ice outer shell. (<https://www.doyouremember.co.uk/memory/mivvi-ice-creams>). In this case the original is kept in the translated subtitles and it is clear from the conversation that they are talking about ice-cream. However, it would be possible, but definitely not necessary, to replace *Mivvies* with some famous Croatian brands of ice cream like *Snjeguljica* or *Njofra* which are also some old and very popular ice-creams although they are not of fruit flavour.

(5) JOHN: Got them, don't worry. Pampers,  
the cream you can't get from **Boots**.

MARY: Yeah, never mind about that.

Where are you now?

At the dead boy's house?

JOHN: Imam ih, ne brini.

Pampers, kremu koju ne možeš

kupiti u **Bootsu**.

MARY: Da, pusti sad to. Gdje si?

Kod kuće mrtvog dečka?

*Boots* is the UK's leading pharmacy-led health and beauty retailer (<http://www.boots-uk.com/>). The translator kept the original name and the audience could assume it is the kind of a store where one can buy things for personal hygiene. However, there are such stores in Croatia and everybody knows them, so their names can be used here. One possible solution would be *krema koje nema u **dm-u***.

(6) SHERLOCK: Trust me, though,

she's not right for you.

LESTRADE: What?

SHERLOCK: She's not the one.

LESTRADE: Well, thank you, **Mystic Meg!**

SHERLOCK: Vjeruj mi, ona nije prava za tebe.

LESTRADE: Molim?

SHERLOCK: Ona nije prava.

LESTRADE: Pa, hvala ti **Marijana Batinić**.

*Mystic Meg* is a British astrologer and psychic, who has appeared in regular astrology columns in UK newspapers *The Sun*, the *News of the World* ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mystic\\_Meg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mystic_Meg)). The translator used the name *Marijana Batinić* as the replacement. She is a TV-host most known for the show *Ljubav je na selu* (the original British show: *Farmer Wants a Wife*) in which people who live in the country try to find the love of their life. It is a clever translation, however, it is not a name wider Croatian audience would instantly recognize. There was a man who was also an astrologer with his own famous TV-show and his name was *Vidoviti Milan* (Milan the psychic), so this could be a better solution ([https://sh.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan\\_Radonji%C4%87](https://sh.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milan_Radonji%C4%87)).

(7) JOHN: I mean, how does it work?

SHERLOCK: How does what work?

JOHN: You and the Woman.

D'you go to a discreet

**Harvester** sometimes?

Is there a night of passion

in **High Wycombe**?

JOHN: Kako to funkcionira?

SHERLOCK: Kako što funkcionira?

JOHN: To između tebe i Žene.

Idete li ponekad na

**diskreciju u Harvester?**

Je li bilo strastvenih noći

u **High Wycombeu**?

*Harvester* is a restaurant in the UK, so it implies that Sherlock and the Woman go for a dinner to the restaurant (<http://www.harvester.co.uk/>). The translator obviously did not understand well the meaning of this phrase. John asks Sherlock if they go on secret dinners and this line should be translated as *tajnu večeru u Harvester*, or just *na večeru*. High Wycombe is a city in the South of England, so the original name should stay. It is possible to add an explanation in brackets to say that it is a city in the south of England. The subtitle would look like this:

Je li bilo strastvenih noći u High  
Wycombeu? (Grad na jugu Engleske.)

### 3.3. Subgroup – Names of parts of London

(8) WATSON: You think he lost a lot of money?

Suicide is common among **City boys**.

HOLMES: We don't know that it was suicide.

WATSON: Misliš da je izgubio puno novca?

Samoubojstva su česta

među **dečkima iz Cityja**.

HOLMES: Ne znamo da je stvarno

bilo samoubojstvo.

*The City boys* are people who work in the part of London known as the City, which is where the United Kingdom's trading and financial services industries are ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City\\_of\\_London](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_of_London)). The unknown translator of subtitles translated this as *dečki iz Cityja*. This is a literal translation and it is good if the audience knows what the City is. However, the more suitable translation here could be *brokeri* or *brokeri iz Cityja*. This word exists both in English and in Croatian language and is more familiar. The strategy used here would then be substitution.

(9) SHAN: Ladies and gentlemen. From the distant  
moonlit shores of **NW1**, we present for  
your pleasure, Sherlock Holmes' pretty  
companion in a death-defying act.

SHAN: Dame i gospodo, s dalekih mjesečinom  
okupanih obala **NW1**, samo za vas,  
prelijepa pratilja Sherlocka Holmesa  
u smrtonosnoj točki.

*NW1* is the NW (North Western) postcode area, also known as the London NW postcode area, a group of postcode districts covering part of northwest London, England. It is the successor of the NW sector, originally created as part of the London postal district ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NW\\_postcode\\_area](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NW_postcode_area)). The translator left it as NW1, but this means little to the viewer who is not familiar with London's postcode areas. This NW1, even though it can be distinctly heard, could be paraphrased as *centralni London*. The viewers notice if what is said and what is written does not match and it is recommended that such mismatching is avoided, but in this case it is necessary to do so in order to provide more sense and understanding.

(10) VOICE ALERT: *You have one new message.*  
(*Beeping sound of five Greenwich time signal pips*)

WATSON: Is that it?

HOLMES: No. That's not it.

(Phone beeps)

LESTRADE: What the hell are we supposed to make of that? An estate agent's photo and the bloody **Greenwich pips!**

HOLMES: It's a warning.

WATSON: A warning?

HOLMES: Some secret societies used to send dried melon seeds, orange pips, things like that. Five pips. They're warning us it's gonna happen again.

*GLASOVNO UPOZORENJE: „Imate jednu novu poruku.“  
(pet zvukovnih signala)*

WATSON: To je to?

HOLMES: Ne, to nije to.

LESTRADE: Što bi to trebalo biti? Fotografija stana i **zvučni signali za puni sat.**

HOLMES: To je upozorenje.

WATSON: Upozorenje?

HOLMES: Neka tajna društva su slala osušene sjemenke lubenice, koštice naranče, takve stvari. Pet koštica (pip=koštica, otkučaj) Upozoravaju nas da će se ponoviti.

*The Greenwich Time Signal*, popularly known as the pips, is a series of six short tones broadcast at one-second intervals by many BBC Radio stations. The pips were introduced in 1924 and have been generated by the BBC since 1990 to mark the precise start of each hour ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenwich\\_Time\\_Signal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenwich_Time_Signal)). The translator used correct translation here for Greenwich pips. However, Holmes then uses the word *pips* in the context of fruit seeds. Adding an explanation in brackets that the word *pip* can mean both *koštica* and *otkučaj* may be good to make it even clearer for the viewers, but the scene is nevertheless understandable without it.

### 3.4. Subgroup – Typical British expressions

(11) HOLMES: I've disappointed you.

WATSON: That's good, that's a  
good deduction, yeah.

HOLMES: Don't make people into heroes, John.

Heroes don't exist, and if they did,  
I wouldn't be one of them.

(Mobile phone beeps)

Excellent! View of the Thames. South  
Bank – somewhere between  
Southwark Bridge and Waterloo.

You check the papers; I'll look online.

Oh, you're angry with me, so you won't  
help. **Not much cop, this caring lark.**

HOLMES: Razočario sam te.

WATSON: To je dobar zaključak, da.

HOLMES: Ne pretvaraj ljude u  
junake, oni ne postoje. I da postoje,  
ja ne bi bio jedan od njih.

Izvršno! Pogled na Temzu. Južna obala,  
negdje između mostova Southwark  
i Waterloo. Ti provjeri novine,  
ja ću na internetu. Ljut si na mene  
pa mi nećeš pomoći. **Osjećajni tip  
nije neki detektiv.**

*Not much cop* is British informal expression which means not very good ([https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/not\\_much\\_cop](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/not_much_cop)). Lark is a type of bird with a beautiful singing voice. In this context, the translator understood the word *cop* as *policeman*, and word *lark* was translated with *osjećajni tip*. Though this is an understandable and functional translation, there is a way to maintain a piece of cultural reference. *Caring lark* could be translated as *dobri Samaritanac* which is a phrase from the Bible, but it is known



and used in the Croatian culture. Possible translation for this phrase could then be *Nije nam baš brižan / ovaj dobri Samaritanac*.

(12) HOLMES: You check the papers; I'll look online.

Oh, you're angry with me,  
so you won't help.

Not much cop, this caring lark.

WATSON (checking the newspapers): Archway suicide.

HOLMES: **Ten a penny.**

HOLMES: Ti provjeri novine,  
ja ću na internetu.

Ljut si na mene pa mi nećeš pomoći.

Nije nam baš brižan  
ovaj dobri Samaritanac.

WATSON: Samoubojstvo u Archwayu.

HOLMES: **Nebitno.**

*Ten a penny* is an idiomatic British expression which means that something is so common as to be practically worthless (<http://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/be+ten+a+penny>). Translator here translated it correctly as *nebitno*.

(13) JOHN: At Buckingham Palace, right.

Oh, I'm seriously fighting an  
impulse to steal an ashtray.

What are we doing here, Sherlock?

Seriously, what?

SHERLOCK: I don't know.

JOHN: Here to see **the Queen**?

*(At that moment Mycroft walks in from the next room.)*

SHERLOCK: Oh, apparently yes.

JOHN: Buckinghamška palača. Dobro...

Ozbiljno se suzdržavam

da ne ukradem pepeljaru.

Što radimo ovdje, Sherlock?

Ozbiljno, što?

SHERLOCK: Nemam pojma.

JOHN: Došli smo vidjeti **Kraljicu**?

*(Mycroft ulazi u prostoriju)*

SHERLOCK: Čini se, da.

Buckingham palace is also culture specific term, but one that is familiar to the wider audience so there is no need to translate it or adapt it in any way. On the other hand, *queen*, the slang word, is used as a disparaging term for a gay man (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/queen>). John thinks they are about to see the Queen of England but Sherlock uses the term in a different sense, which is supposed to be an insult to Mycroft. Here is another case of the creators of the show playing a gay joke. This scene might suggest that Mycroft is secretly gay and usually has a very high opinion of himself, but it is most likely that it was used because the actor, Mark Gatiss, is gay in real life. The word *queen* has to be translated literally to Croatian as *kraljica* because that was John's original question. However, in Croatian it only has that one meaning. In order to make it clear for the audience why Sherlock referred to Mycroft as the *queen* and why that is funny, an additional explanation could be added to the subtitles. In the end it would look like this:

JOHN: Here to see **the Queen**?

*(At that moment Mycroft walks in from the next room.)*

SHERLOCK: Oh, apparently yes.

JOHN: Došli smo vidjeti **Kraljicu**?

*(Mycroft ulazi u prostoriju)*

SHERLOCK: Čini se, da. **(kraljica- pogrdni**

**naziv za homoseksualca)**

However, a word that could signify both the royal origin and suggest that someone is sensible, has high opinion of himself and maybe is gay, could also be *visočanstvo*. This would promote the stereotype that gay men are gentle, sensible and like to dress nicely. So, John would ask “Došli smo vidjeti Visočanstvo?” and Sherlock would confirm that when Mycroft walks in to the room.

(14) *Sometime later, Sherlock has dressed and is sitting on the sofa again beside John. Mycroft and the equerry sit on the opposite sofa. Mycroft is pouring tea from a teapot.*

**MYCROFT: I'll be mother.**

SHERLOCK: And there is a whole  
childhood in a nutshell.

*Nekoliko trenutaka kasnije, Sherlock se obukao i sjedi na kauču pored Johna, a Mycroft i kraljevski predstavnik sjede nasuprot njima. Mycroft toči čaj.*

**MYCROFT: Ja ću biti majka.**

SHERLOCK: I imamo cijelo djetinjstvo  
u nekoliko riječi.

*I'll be mother* is an idiomatic British expression which refers to an old tradition of one person pouring tea for the others ([https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/be\\_mother](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/be_mother)). Usually that was done by the mother. The expression has to be translated literally because Sherlock's answer implies that Mycroft behaved like a mother when they were children. The Croatian culture does not have such an elaborate tradition of pouring and preparing tea, so the additional explanation is needed for the Croatian audience. The end result would be this:

**MYCROFT: Ja ću biti majka.**

**(osoba koja toči čaj)**

SHERLOCK: I imamo cijelo djetinjstvo  
u nekoliko riječi.

The next example includes a slang word and an attempt to find a corresponding slang word in Croatian language.

(15) 221B BAKER STREET. John is sitting on the sofa reading the papers while Sherlock, wearing his blue dressing gown over his shirt and trousers, stomps across the room and throws the Daily Star onto the pile of newspapers on the coffee table.

SHERLOCK: “**Boffin**”.

“**Boffin** Sherlock Holmes”.

JOHN: Everybody gets one.

SHERLOCK: One what?

JOHN: Tabloid nickname.

‘SuBo’; ‘Nasty Nick’.

No worries. I’ll probably get one soon.

*Adresa 221B Baker Street. John sjedi na kauču i čita novine dok Sherlock, obučen u hlače, majicu i svoj plavi kućni ogrtač, korača po sobi i baca novine Daily Star na hrpu novina na stoliću za kavu.*

SHERLOCK: „**Znanstvenik!**“

„**Znanstvenik**“ Sherlock Holmes.

JOHN: Svi ga dobivaju?

SHERLOCK: Što?

JOHN: Nadimak za tabloide.

„SuBo“, „Opaki Nick“. Bez brige,

vjerojatno ću ga i ja uskoro dobiti.

*Boffin* in British slang is a scientist, engineer, or other person engaged in technical or scientific work (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boffin>). The translator translated it as *znanstvenik*, which is the correct translation, but *boffin* is a slang word and it is possible to find a slang word in Croatian language. Instead of *znanstvenik*, *boffin* could be translated as *štreber*.

(16) SHERLOCK: Oh, Henry Fishgard  
never committed suicide.

*He picks up an old hardback book from the table and slams it shut in a flurry of dust  
before going back to his microscope.*

**Bow Street Runners**

missed everything.

JOHN: Pressing case, is it?

SHERLOCK: They're all pressing  
'til they're solved.

SHERLOCK: O, Henry Fishguard se nije ubio.

*Uzima staru knjigu sa stola i prašina poleti kada ju naglo zatvori prije nego se okrene  
natrag prema mikroskopu.*

**Policija** je sve propustila.

JOHN: Hitan slučaj?

SHERLOCK: Svi su hitni  
dok se ne riješe.

The *Bow Street Runners* have been called London's first professional police force. The force, originally numbering six men, was founded in 1749. *Bow Street runners* was the public's nickname for the officers. The Bow Street group was disbanded in 1839 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bow\\_Street\\_Runners](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bow_Street_Runners)). The translator correctly translated this term as *policija*. This is an example of how the full meaning of the cultural term is lost in translation and the term itself is simply paraphrased.

(17) *Convinced Sherlock is dead, John moves on with his life. However, with Mycroft's help, Sherlock is back in London after 2 years and wants to surprise John.*

MYCROFT: You know, it is just possible  
that you won't be welcome.

SHERLOCK: No it isn't.

Now, where is it?

MYCROFT: Where's what?

SHERLOCK: You know what.

*Anthea also knows what, because she immediately appears in the open doorway holding Sherlock's Belstaff coat.*

ANTHEA: Welcome back, Mr Holmes.

SHERLOCK: Thank you... **blud**.

*Uvjeren da je Sherlock mrtav, John je nastavio dalje sa svojim životom. Međutim, uz Mycroftovu pomoć, Sherlock je nakon 2 godine opet u Londonu i želi iznenaditi Johna.*

MYCROFT: Znaš, uvijek je moguće

da nećeš biti dobrodošao.

SHERLOCK: Ne, nije.

A sada, gdje je?

MYCROFT: Gdje je što?

SHERLOCK: Znaš što.

*Anthea isto zna što jer se odmah pojavi na vratima sa Sherlockovim Belstaff kaputom.*

ANTHEA: Dobrodošli kući,

g. Holmes.

SHERLOCK: Hvala...**brate**.

*Blud* is a slang word that comes from *bredrin* (brother) or *blood brother*, but does not have to mean a literal brother, more like a friend (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=blud>). The translator translated this term as *brate*, which is correct, but there is a slang word in Croatian that would fit much better in this context, the word *buraz*. It is used to address a friend or someone whose name you do not know.

(18) *At the end of the third season Sherlock shot the bad guy and it was all caught on video. In order to free Sherlock of all charges, Mycroft had the video remade so that it seems as if the man was killed by one of the police officers.*

MYCROFT: Once beyond these walls,  
you must never speak of it.

A **D-notice** has been slapped  
on the entire incident.

Only those within this room, code names  
Antarctica, Langdale, Porlock and Love,  
will ever know the whole truth.

*Na kraju treće sezone Sherlock je upucao glavnog negativca. Kako bi ga oslobodili svih optužbi, Mycroft je naredio da se snimka prepravi tako da izgleda kao da je jedan od policajaca pucao.*

MYCROFT: Kada izađemo oдавde, ne  
smijete nikada pričati o ovome.

Još uvijek je **oznaka „D“**  
na cijelom incidentu.

Samo oni u ovoj sobi,  
kodnih imena Antarctica,  
Langdale, Porlock i Love,  
će ikada znati pravu istinu.

A *DSMA-Notice* (Defence and Security Media Advisory Notice), formerly a *DA Notice* (Defence Advisory Notice), and before that called a *Defence Notice* (D-Notice) until 1993, is an official request to news editors not to publish or broadcast items on specified subjects for reasons of national security (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DSMA-Notice>). The system is still in use in the United Kingdom and therefore it is not familiar to a wider audience. The translator here translated it literally, but *oznaka D* does not mean much to the Croatian audience because there is no such, or similar, term which would correspond to the English original. That is why a strategy of paraphrase should be used here in order to make it

more understandable in Croatian. Some possible solutions could be *Mediji su posebno obavješteni o cijelom incidentu*, or *Medijima je zabranjeno govoriti o incidentu*.

(19) SIR EDWIN: That is now the official version,  
the version anyone we want to will see.

LADY SMALLWOOD: No need to go to the trouble of getting  
some sort of official pardon.

You're off the hook, Mr Holmes.

You're **home and dry**.

SIR EDWIN: To je od sada službena verzija,  
verzija koju mi želimo da svi vide.

LADY SMALWOOD: Nema potrebe da prolazite kroz  
neku formu službenog oprosta.

Vi ste službeno

slobodni, g. Holmes.

**Kod kuće ste i na suhom.**

*Home and dry* is a British expression which means that something was successfully achieved or within sight of achieving ([https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/home\\_and\\_dry](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/home_and_dry)). Literal translation used here is good because the message is clear, but literal translation should be avoided if there is another alternative. An alternative in this case could be *Na sigurnom ste*.

(20) *Sherlock texts John (shown on the screen):*

Baker Street? Tomorrow five PM?

Lestrade says he has a **belter**.

*Sherlock šalje poruku Johnu (poruka se vidi na ekranu):*

Baker Street? Sutra u 17h?

Lestrade kaže da ima **dobar slučaj**.



*Belter* means excellent, very good or cool (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=belter>). In this context Sherlock means that Lestrade has a case that seems to be very interesting. Lestrade is usually the one bringing cases to Sherlock when police does not know how to solve them. The translator correctly translated it as *dobar slučaj* and another possible solution could be *zanimljiv slučaj*.

### 3.5. Subgroup – Literary references

(21) JOHN: Now what's wrong?

SHERLOCK: Not sure. I just ...

**'By the pricking of my thumbs.'**

JOHN: Seriously? You?!

SHERLOCK: Intuitions are not to be ignored, John.

They represent data processed too fast  
for the conscious mind to comprehend.

JOHN: Što nije u redu?

SHERLOCK: Nisam siguran...

**Bridenje u mom palcu...** Zlakob,  
MacBeth, Shakespeare.

JOHN: Ozbiljno? Ti?

SHERLOCK: Intuicija se ne  
smije zanemariti, John.

Ona predstavlja  
podatke prebrzo obrađene  
da bi ih svjestan um shvatio.

*Pricking of one's thumbs* is an intuitive feeling, a foreboding, often with allusion to the words of the Second Witch in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606). It was customary to fold the thumb into the palm of the hand as a precaution against the supernatural (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/pricking-ones-thumbs>). *Bridenje* describes a warming feeling one can feel in a part of the body, like a warning that something is wrong. The translator here added an explanation that the phrase is actually a quote from Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. Another possible solution is to find the Croatian version of this phrase in the official Croatian translation of *Macbeth*.

Then this phrase would be *Nešto me u palcu žiga*. This expression is connected to the belief in superstitions, so that is why John is surprised when Sherlock says it. It is also possible to avoid mentioning Shakespeare at all and simply translate this phrase as *Imam neki loš predosjećaj*.

([http://www.matica.hr/media/uploads/knjige/zmek/macbeth-06\\_12\\_2011.pdf](http://www.matica.hr/media/uploads/knjige/zmek/macbeth-06_12_2011.pdf) str. 81.)

(22) SHERLOCK (*high on drugs*):

Once more unto the breach,  
dear friends, once more;  
Or close the wall up  
with our English dead.  
In peace there's nothing  
so becomes a man  
As modest stillness and humility;  
But when the blast of  
war blows in our ears,  
Then imitate the action of the tiger;  
Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,  
Disguise fair nature with  
hard-favour'd rage;  
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;  
Let pry through the portage of the head  
Like the brass cannon; let  
the brow o'erwhelm it  
As fearfully as doth a galled rock  
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,  
Swill'd with the wild  
and wasteful ocean.  
Now set the teeth and  
stretch the nostril wide,  
Hold hard the breath and  
bend up every spirit  
To his full height. On, on,  
you noblest English.

Whose blood is fet from  
fathers of war-proof!  
Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,  
Have in these parts from  
morn till even fought  
And sheathed their swords  
for lack of argument:  
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest  
That those whom you  
call'd fathers did beget you.  
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,  
And teach them how to war.  
And you, good yeoman,  
Whose limbs were made in  
England, show us here  
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear  
That you are worth your breeding;  
which I doubt not;  
For there is none of you  
so mean and base,  
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.  
I see you stand like  
greyhounds in the slips,  
Straining upon the start.

SHERLOCK (*pod utjecajem droga*):

Još jednom na juriš,  
mili prijatelji! Još jednom!  
Ili preplavite zid  
leševima engleskim!  
Sada stegnite zube,  
raširite nozdrve!  
Dižite snažno i zapnite  
svom snagom!

Naprijed! Naprijed vi  
najplemenitiji Englezi,  
dokažite da ste sinovi očeva  
svojih. I vi dobri slobodnjaci,  
čije su mišice u Engleskoj rasle,  
pokažite nam ovdje  
vrijednost svoje paše.  
U što ja ne sumnjam!  
Jer nitko od vas nije  
tako nizak i rđav  
da nema u očima svojim  
plemeniti sjaj!  
Vidim da stojite kao  
hrtovi na lancu,  
gotovi da za tren polete!

This is a speech from William Shakespeare's Henry V, spoken by King Henry. Sherlock is under the influence of drugs in this scene, but he is still preparing to face his enemy. One possible solution for this is to find the official Croatian translation of this speech and use it here, but also adapt it to conform to the rules of subtitles. The other solution would be for the translator to give a free translation of the speech, without considering the rhyme, meter and rhythm. Presumably, this is what the translator here did.

### 3.6. Subgroup – Miscellaneous phrases

(23) LESTRADE: Very popular. She was going places.

HOLMES: Not any more. So, dead two days.

According to one of her staff,  
Raoul de Santos, she cut her hand on a  
rusty nail in the garden. Nasty wound.

Tetanus bacteria enters the  
bloodstream, **good night, Vienna.**

LESTRADE: Bila je vrlo popularna. Napredovala je.

HOLMES: Više ne napreduje. Mrtva je dva dana.

Njezin sluga, Raoul de Santos, kaže da  
se posjekla na hrđavi čavao u vrtu.  
Gadna rana. Bakterija tetanusa  
Uđe u krvotok **i laku noć.**

*Goodnight, Vienna* is British slang and it means that the events have reached a state of completion; there is nothing more to be done ([https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/goodnight\\_Vienna](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/goodnight_Vienna)). Translator paraphrased it as *i laku noć* which is an appropriate translation for the Croatian audience because it is a frequently used phrase in everyday life. Another possible variation could be *i doviđenja*.

(24) WATSON (saying what Moriarty makes him say): This is a turn-up, isn't it,  
Sherlock?

HOLMES: John. What the hell...?

WATSON: Bet you never saw this coming.

What...would you like me...

to make him say... next?

**Gottle o' gear... gottle o' gear...**

**gottle o' gear.**

HOLMES: Stop it.

WATSON (govori ono što mu Moriarty kaže): Ovo je iznenađenje,  
zar ne, Sherlock?

HOLMES: John! Koji vrag...?

WATSON: Kladim se da nisi ovo očekivao.

Što bi htio da ga natjeram

da kaže sljedeće?

**Voca pibe, voca pibe, voca pibe.**

HOLMES: Prekini.

*Gottle o' geer* imitates a ventriloquist's attempt at "bottle of beer", a phrase traditionally supposed to be difficult for ventriloquists to say ([https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/gottle\\_o%27\\_geer](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/gottle_o%27_geer)). The translator translated it as *voca pibe*. Such cases appear in the speech when a person is not paying attention to what they are saying or if they are speaking too quickly. It is a good strategy in this case because if the letter *g* in

*gottle* and *gear* was replaced by letter *b*, it would produce a correct phrase, *bottle of beer*. However, this phrase is known to be a product of something hard for ventriloquists to pronounce. There are many tongue-twisters in Croatian language as well, so here one could also use a phrase *riba ribi grize rep*, or *na vrh brda vrba mrda*.

(25) *An agent of the American secret service points a gun at Sherlock and makes him open Irene Adler's safe.*

NEILSON: Thank you, Mr. Holmes.

Open it, please.

SHERLOCK: **Vatican cameos.**

*Instantly John throws himself to the floor. At the same moment Sherlock pulls open the door of the safe while ducking down below the fireplace. Inside the safe, a tripwire attached to the door tugs on the trigger of a pistol with an equally long and over-compensatory silencer which is aimed straight out of the safe. The gun fires.*

*Agent američke tajne službe uperi pištolj u Sherlocka i natjera ga da otvori sef Irene Adler.*

NEILSON: Hvala vam, g. Holmes.

Otvorite, molim vas.

SHERLOCK: **Vatikanski dragulji!**

*John se odmah baci na pod. Istovremeno Sherlock otvori vrata sefa i sagne se ispod kamina. Unutar sefa, žica spojena na vrata povuče okidač na pištolju s prigušivačem koji je uperen da puca izvan sefa. Pištolj opali.*

The phrase *Vatican cameos* first originated in World War Two. It was used when a non-military person, who was armed (gun or knife) entered a British military base. The phrase was a signal for everyone to duck out of the line of fire. Sherlock knew that John, being a military man, would recognize this phrase and duck out of the way of the gun. It is not a code phrase which Sherlock and John coordinated as a safe word.

(<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Vatican%20Cameos>)

Also, *Vatican cameos* are briefly mentioned in the original stories when Sherlock says that he is working on that case, but there is no further explanation or information (<https://www.quora.com/Sherlock-TV-series-What-exactly-are-Vatican-cameos-What-is-the-significance-of-the-phrase>). The translator translated it literally as *Vatikanski dragulji*, although there is a word in Croatian, *kameja*, which would be more accurate translation, but this translation also works. Another mention of *Vatican cameos* appears in the third season of the series, in the second episode, when Sherlock says it again to discreetly warn John that something dangerous is happening. However, it could be good to simply leave the original phrase, without translating it, so the audience can understand it as a phrase that John and Sherlock use in dangerous situations.

(26) *Gary and Billy wanted to use the story about the vicious hound roaming the moors in order to attract more tourists, so they got a big dog that would scare people a bit. However, because of it, Henry Knight believes that there is a monster out there which killed his father 20 years ago.*

GARY: It was just a joke, you know?

LESTRADE: Yeah, hilarious!

You've nearly driven  
a man out of his mind.

*At the end of the episode when everything is sorted out:*

*Sherlock snorts laughter, and then looks across to a nearby table where Gary is pouring coffee for two other customers. He smiles apologetically across to Sherlock, who puts his mug on the table and stands up.*

JOHN: Where're you going?

SHERLOCK: Won't be a minute.

**Gotta see a man about a dog.**

*Gary i Billy su htjeli iskoristiti glasine o strašnom, velikom psu koji luta pustopoljinom kako bi privukli više turista te su nabavili velikog psa kako bi malo plašio ljude. Međutim zbog toga je Henry Knight počeo vjerovati da se opet vratilo čudovište koje je prije 20 godina ubilo njegovog oca.*

GARY: To je bila samo šala, znate.

LESTRADE: Da, urnebesna!

Skoro ste natjerali

čovjeka da poludi!

*Na kraju epizode kada je sve riješeno:*

*Sherlock se nasmiješi zatim pogleda prema obližnjem stolu gdje je Gary točio kavu mušterijama. Nasmiješi se Sherlocku kao da mu se ispričava, a Sherlock zatim spusti svoju šalicu na stol i ustane.*

JOHN: Gdje si krenuo?

SHERLOCK: Odmah se vraćam.

**Moram posjetiti čovjeka u vezi psa.**

*To see a man about a dog* is an English idiom, usually used as a way to say one needs to apologize for one's imminent departure or absence, generally to euphemistically conceal one's true purpose, such as going to use the toilet or going to buy a drink ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/See\\_a\\_man\\_about\\_a\\_dog](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/See_a_man_about_a_dog)). The meaning of this phrase in the context used in the series could be that Sherlock is going to talk to Gary about the entire case of a huge dog terrorizing the villagers, or it could mean that Sherlock was really going to the toilet and thought it would be amusing to use this phrase, considering the case involved two people getting a dog in order to scare tourists. The translator translated this phrase literally, which is good because it fits the context that Sherlock will talk to Gary about the dog. The Croatian language, however, does not have a phrase that would fit this context, so the Croatian audience will not realize that there is another, idiomatic, meaning to this phrase.

(27) *Sherlock talks about some cases he and John tackled.*

SHERLOCK: ... and of course I have to mention

**the elephant in the room.**

*The boys stand in the doorway of what looks like a fairly ordinary room somewhere. They stare up wide-eyed at what they can see. Sherlock opens his mouth. Off screen, an elephant trumpets loudly. Sherlock closes his mouth again.*



*Sherlock govori o nekim slučajevima koje su on i John rješavali.*

SHERLOCK: Naravno, moram spomenuti  
**i neugodne stvari.**

*Njih dvojica stoje na vratima neke sasvim obične sobe. Gledaju uvis širom otvorenih očiju. Sherlock otvori usta. Čuje se samo glasna rika slona. Sherlock zatvori usta.*

*Elephant in the room* is a metaphorical idiom for an obvious problem or risk no one wants to discuss, or a condition no one wants to challenge ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant\\_in\\_the\\_room](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elephant_in_the_room)). The translator translated it as *neugodne stvari*, which is correct, but the very next scene shows that there was an actual elephant in the room. That is why this should be translated literally as *slon u sobi*. It is possible that this phrase could also imply that Sherlock and John dealt with uncomfortable cases as well, one of which was the case of an elephant in the room and in that case it could be translated as *neugodne stvari*, but the literal translation is needed here. Also, later in the episode Sherlock says *On second thoughts, I probably should have told you about the elephant in the room.*

(28) SHERLOCK: So, he disguises himself.

Steals the man's home,  
steals his identity.

JOHN: But only for one night.

Then he's gone.

SHERLOCK: He's not a ghost, John.

He's a **mayfly**.

He lives for a day.

SHERLOCK: Dakle, on se prerašava.

Krade čovjeku dom, krade mu identitet.

JOHN: Ali samo na jednu noć. Zatim nestaje.

SHERLOCK: Nije on duh, John. On je **vodencvijet**.

Živi samo jedan dan.

*Mayfly* translated to Croatian is *vodencvjetokrilaš* or *vodencvijet* as the translator here offered. Mayflies are aquatic insects that rarely live longer than 24 hours (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayfly>). *Vodencvijet* is correct translation, but it may not be familiar to Croatian audience. A term *moljac*, or in English *moth*, would be more suitable here. People are much more familiar with moths and their short life, which is actually the most important characteristic in this case. Also, the word itself is shorter, which is always an advantage when it comes to subtitling. Later in the episode Sherlock and John refer to this man as the *Mayfly Man*, which could then be translated as *čovjek-moljac*.

(29) *Sherlock keeps himself busy by solving many cases at the same time while waiting to find out something new about Moriarty. John is talking to him but Sherlock does not listen, he is focused on some other case.*

JOHN: Sherlock, you can't go on

**spinning plates** like this.

SHERLOCK: That's it! The

place was spinning.

*Sherlock radi na više slučajeva istovremeno dok čeka da sazna nešto novo u vezi Moriartyja. John pokušava razgovarati s njim, ali Sherlock ga ne sluša, usredotočen je na neki slučaj.*

JOHN: Sherlock, ne možeš nastaviti

tako **virtjeti teorije**.

SHERLOCK: To je to! Soba se okretala.

*Spinning plates* means doing many things at once which Sherlock is doing by solving many cases at the same time (<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=spinning%20plates>). Translation offered here is *virtjeti teorije*, which is a good translation, but a more appropriate translation could be *virtjeti se u krug*, because that is what Sherlock is doing. He is not after Moriarty directly, but he takes different cases in order to discover some vital information that could lead him to

Moriarty. Furthermore, Sherlock then says that some room was spinning which is important for another case. Word *spin* in Croatian translates as *vrtjeti*.

(30) *Sherlock intentionally making a false deduction in order to scare his client:*

Tomorrow the US president  
will be at the embassy  
as part of an official state visit.  
As the president greets members  
of staff, Greta Bengtsdotter,  
disguised as a **twenty-two stone cleaner**,  
will inject the president in the back  
of the neck with a dangerous new drug  
hidden inside a secret compartment  
inside her padded armpit.

*Sherlock namjerno izvlači krivi zaključak kako bi preplašio svog klijenta:*

Sutra će predsjednik SAD-a  
biti u tom veleposlanstvu kao dio  
službenog državnog posjeta.  
Kada predsjednik bude pozdravljao  
osoblje, Greta Bengtsdotter,  
prerušena u **22-godišnju čistačicu**  
**kamenja** ubrizgat će predsjedniku  
sa stražnje strane vrata opasnu  
novu drogu, skrivenu u tajnom  
pretincu unutar podstave pod pazuhom.

*Twenty-two stone cleaner* refers to the weight of the cleaning lady. Sherlock meant that Greta Bengtsdotter will be disguised as the fat cleaning lady in order to get to the President. A stone is the unit of weight, so twenty two stones are approximately 140 kilos. The translator here literally translated the expression, but this does not make any sense in Croatian. The correct translation would simply be *Greta Bengtsdotter, prerušena u debelu čistačicu*.

(31) SMITH: H. H. Holmes loved the dead.

He mass-produced 'em.

SHERLOCK (to John): Serial killer, active  
during the **Chicago Fair**.

SMITH: H. H. Holmes je volio mrtvace.

Masovno ih je proizvodio.

SHERLOCK: Serijski ubojica, aktivan  
za vrijeme **Čikaškog sajma**.

*Chicago fair* was a world's fair held in Chicago in 1893 to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the New World in 1492 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World%27s\\_Columbian\\_Exposition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World%27s_Columbian_Exposition)). *Fair* does mean *sajam*, but in this case the better translation would be *Svjetska izložba u Chicagu 1893*. This gives clearer information about time and place of murders.

(32) SHERLOCK: If you increase the

dosage four or five times

toxic shock should shut me

down within about an hour.

SMITH: Then I restore the settings.

Everyone assumes it was a fault,

or you just **gave up the ghost**.

SHERLOCK: Yes.

SHERLOCK: Ako povećaš dozu četiri ili pet puta,

toksički šok će me ubiti za sat vremena.

SMITH: Onda ću vratiti postavke.

Svi pretpostavljaju da je greška

ili **da si se prepustio duhovima**.

SHERLOCK: Da.

*Give up the ghost* means *to die* (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/give-up-the-ghost>). Translator here translated it as *prepustiti se duhovima*, which is not a bad translation in itself, but it is also not standard in the Croatian language. There is a phrase *ispustiti dušu*, which would be more acceptable for this context.

(33) SMITH: I do like to mess with people and yes,  
I am a bit creepy, but that's just  
my **U.S.P.** I use it to sell  
breakfast cereal. But am I  
what he says I am?  
Is that what you're asking?

SMITH: Istina je. Volim se poigravati  
s ljudima i pomalo sam jeziv.  
Ali to je moja **ekskluzivna  
ponuda za prodaju.**  
Koristim kada prodajem  
pahuljice za doručak.  
Ali da li sam to što on  
kaže da jesam?  
Da li to pitate?

*USP* is a marketing concept first proposed as a theory to explain a pattern in successful advertising campaigns of the early 1940s. The term has been used to describe one's "personal brand" in the marketplace ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unique\\_selling\\_proposition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unique_selling_proposition)). It is quite literally translated here, but there is a better and more familiar term which could be used to translate USP. The term in Croatian is *marketinški trik*.

## 4. CONCLUSION

Translating cultural references in subtitles is a demanding task. Due to the rules of subtitling and differences in cultures, the translator must be resourceful and creative in order to provide an acceptable translation. The seven strategies proposed by Ivir (2003) can be a great reminder and help to the translator in deciding how to translate a certain word, or a phrase. From the examples analyzed in this paper and as it can be seen in *Table 1*, the most used strategy is that of literal translation. Even though literal translation can be good and is sometimes the easiest to use, it is not recommended as the most reliable strategy. The reasons for this are cultural differences, which may lose their meaning and/or function if translated literally. *Table 1* also shows that the next most commonly used strategy is the strategy of paraphrasing. This strategy is a much better choice because it is possible to keep the intended meaning of the original and provide a translation acceptable to the audience of the target culture. However, when it comes to specific terms and contexts where a suitable translation cannot be found, it might be necessary to use additional explanation. This can be difficult in subtitling because it requires additional space and time, so subtitlers do not usually use it. Omission as the strategy is also used when the cultural reference is not important for the context and if there is no possible translation. Furthermore, the analysis has shown that the names of people and places are usually kept, even though the audience of the target language may not be familiar with these names.

Due to the lack of time, or pending deadlines, translators either translate phrases literally or omit them altogether, which can lead to some confusing or incorrect solutions. Preferably, cultural references should be translated whenever possible because subtitles help people who are not native speakers of the source language, children, the deaf or hard of hearing, those who speak both languages and those who want to learn more about another language and culture.

Subtitling *Sherlock* includes not just translating words and phrases but also cultural and temporal differences which happened between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. In a way, the series itself is a translation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian England and the most famous British detective novel. The stories, adventures, Sherlock's methods of reasoning and relationships between characters are still as relevant today as they were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it is definitely one of the timeless classics of literature and screen. That is why Sherlock Holmes is very often referred to as *a man out of time*.

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*Sherlock*, BBC, 2010. :

Season 1: *The Blind Banker*, *The Great Game*

Season 2: *A Scandal in Belgravia*, *The Hounds of Baskerville*, *The Reichenbach Fall*

Season 3: *The Empty Hearse*, *The Sign of Three*

Season 4: *The Six Thatchers*, *The Lying Detective*