



Oliwia Soprych

Akademia Nauk Stosowanych w Raciborzu

Monika Porwoł

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1094-3910>

Akademia Nauk Stosowanych w Raciborzu

A GUIDE TO TRANSLATING HUMOR IN VIDEO GAMES: A CASE STUDY OF *UNDERTALE*

Abstract: Humor in video games presents unique localization challenges due to its reliance on timing, multimodal cues, player interaction, and culturally bound language. This article applies a pragmatic approach to humor translation, grounded in Chesterman's (2016) taxonomy of strategies, to probe the attempted Polish localization of *Undertale*, a title rich in puns, system-driven jokes, and typographically encoded character voices. A focused case study analyzes emblematic examples such as the reinterpretation of acronyms (LOVE/EXP), UI-timed gags („too many dogs”), and persona-specific orthography (Sans/Temmie). Based on scrutinized analyses, a decision tree for humor translation is proposed, offering a repeatable method for humor-critical content. The findings demonstrate that effect-driven translation (emphasizing timing, pacing, and persona preservation) outperforms literal approaches in maintaining comedic impact. This study contributes an actionable protocol for practitioners and educators, bridging theory and localization workflows.

Keywords: video game localization, humor translation, pragmatic strategies, audiovisual translation (AVT), Chesterman taxonomy, *Undertale*, acronym reinterpretation, translator training

PRZEWODNIK TŁUMACZENIA HUMORU W GRACH VIDEO: STUDIUM PRZYPADKU GRY *UNDERTALE*

Streszczenie (abstrakt): Humor w grach wideo stanowi wyjątkowe wyzwanie lokalizacyjne ze względu na swoją zależność od tempa, wskazówek multimodalnych, interakcji gracza oraz języka silnie osadzonego w kulturze źródłowej. Niniejszy artykuł stosuje pragmatyczne podejście do tłumaczenia humoru, opierając się na taksonomii strategii Chestermana (2016), by przeprowadzić próbę polskiej lokalizacji gry *Undertale* jako tytułu bogatego w grę słów, żarty oparte na mechanice systemowej oraz typograficznie zakodowane cechy postaci. Studium przypadku koncentruje się na reprezentatywnych przykładach, takich jak reinterpretacja akronimów (LOVE/EXP), gagi zależne od czasu działania interfejsu użytkownika („za dużo psów”) oraz ortografia specyficzna dla danej postaci (Sans/Temmie). Na podstawie szczegółowych analiz zaproponowano drzewo decyzyjne przekładu humoru, oferujące powtarzalną metodę pracy z treściami, w których humor odgrywa kluczową rolę. Wyniki wskazują, że tłumaczenie ukierunkowane na efekt (z uwzględnieniem tempa, rytmu i zachowania cech postaci) przewyższa podejścia literalne pod względem skuteczności komicznej. Badanie wnosi praktyczną instrukcję do zastosowania zarówno przez praktyków, jak i dydaktyków, łącząc teorię z rzeczywistymi procesami lokalizacyjnymi.

Słowa kluczowe: lokalizacja gier wideo, tłumaczenie humoru, strategie pragmatyczne, przekład audiowizualny (AVT), taksonomia Chestermana, *Undertale*, reinterpretacja akronimów, kształcenie tłumaczy

Introduction

Translating humor in video games is a multifaceted challenge that requires far more than lexical equivalence. Unlike static text, humor in games is often entangled with multimodal elements, i.e. timing, user interface (UI) feedback, sound cues, and visual gags, that co-create player experience. In this context, the translator's task is not simply to render text from one language into another, but to reconstruct comedic effect under tight technological and cultural constraints.

This article approaches humor translation from a pragmatic standpoint, emphasizing player reception and communicative intent as the key measures of fidelity. Building on Chesterman's taxonomy of translation strategies (2016), the study examines how syntactic, semantic, and especially pragmatic strategies can be used to preserve humor in localization (when direct translation is insufficient or counterproductive).

Using the indie title *Undertale* as a case study, this paper explores translation decisions involving acronym misdirection (LOVE/EXP), character-specific humor (Sans, Papyrus, Temmie), and time-sensitive interface gags („too many dogs”). These elements are not isolated punchlines; they form cohesive systems that require coordinated decisions across scenes to maintain consistency and comedic payoff.

To address these challenges, the study proposes a five-step localization loop that helps translators prioritize player effect over textual literalism, enabling more effective adaptation of humor-critical content. The loop includes joke classification, solution drafting, constraint testing, timing validation, and rationale logging. In other words, the steps that streamline workflows while ensuring quality and consistency.

The article's contribution is both descriptive and prescriptive. It documents how humor functions in *Undertale*, evaluates the success of specific translation strategies in the Polish localization, and generalizes a practical, repeatable protocol for future translation work. While grounded in a single case, the findings have broader implications for humor-forward indie titles, translator training, and localization quality assurance.

Theoretical Framework

Translating humor in video games requires a nuanced understanding of how meaning is constructed not only through language, but also through timing, visual design, and player interaction. A purely lexical approach often fails to capture the full communicative function of humor in this medium. Instead, a **pragmatic orientation** (which prioritizes communicative intent, context, and audience response) offers a more effective foundation for localization work (where player experience is central).

Pragmatics, as a field of linguistic inquiry, emphasizes how utterances function within specific contexts. In video game localization, this means interpreting meaning as

something co-produced by text, visuals, sound, and interactivity. Dialogue is not delivered „in a vacuum”. It may appear in timed textboxes, be stylized through unique fonts, or coincide with animations that frame or even deliver the punchline. In such environments, **literal translation often undermines effect**, especially when the humor hinges on incongruity, character voice, or player expectation. A pragmatic approach shifts the unit of fidelity away from the individual word and toward the **player’s perceived effect**, making reception (not form) the benchmark of success.

To translate this principle into operational practice, this study draws on **Chesterman’s taxonomy of translation strategies** (2016), a framework that distinguishes between syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic levels of adaptation. While syntactic strategies involve changes in grammatical structure and semantic strategies adjust meaning at the lexical level, **pragmatic strategies** offer the greatest flexibility in humor translation. These include cultural filtering, changes in tone or formality, shifts in the speech act itself (e.g., from statement to question), and adjustments that make the translator’s choices more or less visible. Such strategies are especially relevant when dealing with context-sensitive jokes, puns based on typographic cues, or acronyms that acquire new meanings over the course of a game, for instance in *Undertale*.

Importantly, this framework does not advocate for unbounded creativity. Rather, it supports **purposeful intervention**, guided by the goal of recreating the intended emotional or comedic effect for the player. This is particularly crucial in cases where the humor is multimodal, where the joke resides not solely in language but in its **timing, layout, or alignment with gameplay mechanics**. As Aarons (2012) and Vandaele (2002) argue, humor is often driven by cognitive incongruity and surprise. If a joke’s setup and payoff depend on visual sequencing or UI state, then its translation must be timed and framed just as carefully as its wording.

The theoretical framework adopted here thus performs a dual function. First, it explains why literalism fails in humor-critical content, especially in interactive formats. Second, it equips practitioners with a **structured vocabulary** (through Chesterman’s strategies) for analyzing and justifying translation choices. This vocabulary becomes particularly valuable in collaborative environments, where translators, editors, and quality assurance (QA) testers must work together to assess not only what a joke says, but what it does.

Finally, this framework lays the groundwork for the **practice-oriented protocol** developed in the flowchart that incorporates pragmatic principles into a replicable localization workflow. By rooting the method in both linguistic theory and production reality, the study offers not only insight into how humor is lost or preserved in translation, but also a clear, teachable path for achieving effect-equivalence in future projects.

Methodology

This study is rooted in a practice-oriented methodology that adapts theoretical insights from pragmatics and translation strategy taxonomies to the real-world challenges of localizing humor in video games. Rather than treating theory and practice as separate

domains, the approach here integrates them into a replicable workflow that guides the translator from joke identification through final line selection, with an emphasis on player reception, timing, and contextual fit.

The methodology was initially developed in response to recurring localization issues observed in the attempted Polish version of *Undertale*, particularly where humor depended not only on linguistic form but also on interface timing, narrative misdirection, or character-bound stylistic cues. These challenges revealed the limitations of conventional translation workflows, where humorous strings are often translated in isolation, tested late in production, or evaluated according to subjective stylistic preferences rather than their functional effect on the player.

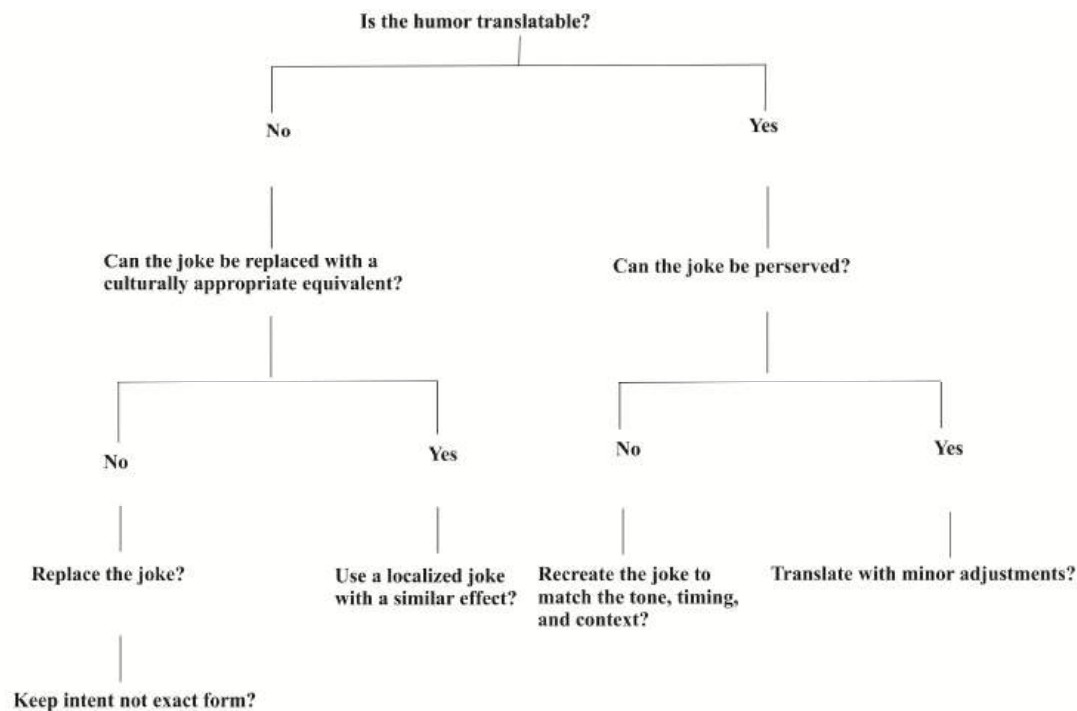


Diagram 1. Decision-making diagram illustrating the process of translating jokes (Soprych, 2025)

Diagram 1 presents a decision tree for humor translation, offering a systematic framework for navigating the complex process of localizing jokes. Structurally, the flowchart adopts a binary decision-making pattern with four possible outcomes, allowing translators to respond flexibly to diverse humorous content. The decision flow begins with a pivotal question: **Is the humor translatable?** as a critical assessment that guides the translator’s entire approach by determining whether the joke’s core mechanism can function in the target language. From this point, the tree branches into two primary paths. If the answer is no (i.e., the humor is not translatable), the translator must consider whether the joke can be replaced with a **culturally appropriate equivalent**. If so, the recommendation is to **use a localized joke with a similar effect**; if not, the strategy becomes to **replace the joke** while preserving the original intent rather than the exact

form. Conversely, if the answer is yes (i.e., the humor is translatable), the translator must then evaluate whether it can be **preserved** in its current form. If preservation is possible, the translator is advised to **translate with minor adjustments**. If not, the guidance is to **recreate the joke**, ensuring that tone, timing, and contextual nuance are retained.

This model provides several key insights. First, it emphasizes a **pragmatic approach**, prioritizing communicative effect over textual fidelity (as seen in the explicit instruction to "keep intent, not exact form"). Second, it offers **graduated solutions** rather than a simplistic binary, presenting four nuanced strategies that reflect real-world translation constraints. Third, the model displays **contextual sensitivity**, especially through the "recreate" node, which recognizes that humor is often multimodal (an especially relevant insight for game localization, where visual, audio, and textual elements intertwine). Finally, its emphasis on **cultural appropriateness** highlights the sociolinguistic reality that humor rarely transfers directly across cultural boundaries.

In terms of practical relevance, the diagram aligns seamlessly with the *Undertale* case study methodology discussed in the article. It can serve as a **preliminary assessment framework**, complementing the more iterative localization loop described later.

However, while the diagram offers a strong conceptual foundation, it is not without limitations. It oversimplifies the often gray-area nature of humor, which may not always fit neatly into binary decisions. It also fails to address technical constraints, such as character limits, font compatibility, or memory space that are especially pertinent in game localization contexts. Additionally, unlike the five-step loop in the article, the diagram does not incorporate iterative processes or feedback mechanisms, which are essential for refining translations through testing and revision. Despite these limitations, the decision tree remains a valuable high-level tool, best used in conjunction with more detailed, adaptive methodologies such as those proposed in the article.

Case Study: Humor in *Undertale*

The localization of *Undertale* into Polish offers a uniquely illustrative case of how humor in video games functions as a multimodal and system-dependent phenomenon. Unlike isolated one-liners or detachable wordplay, the game's comedic structure is embedded in its mechanics, dialogue systems, and visual rhythm. Translating this humor thus requires more than clever rewording; it demands systemic coordination, pacing control, and a sustained awareness of how linguistic and extralinguistic elements co-produce player experience.

One of the most prominent examples is the narrative misdirection built around the acronyms **LOVE** and **EXP**. Early in the game, these terms are presented as benign RPG metrics – "Level of Violence" and "Execution Points" only become apparent after the player has begun interacting with enemies and are explicitly explained by Sans by the end of the game. In English, the joke hinges on the gap between surface familiarity and eventual reinterpretation. A literal translation of these terms would preserve their final meanings but lose the breadcrumb trail that makes the reveal effective.

The endeavored Polish localization addresses this by reengineering the acronyms to preserve both the **initial innocence** and the **later twist**. For instance, LOVE becomes *MIŁOŚĆ*, redefined as *Miara Łącznej Okrutności* („Measure of Combined Cruelty”), while **EXP** is adapted into *PD* (*Punkty Destrakcyjności*) – a dark reinterpretation of the commonly known *Punkty Doświadczenia* („Experience Points”). These choices demonstrate pragmatic strategies such as **explicitness change**, **distribution control**, and **cultural filtering**, applied across the game’s timeline to ensure the twist remains effective. Importantly, the translator had to engineer the acronym system not as a one-off joke, but as a **narrative mechanism**, planned scene-by-scene so that the eventual reinterpretation would land with the same conceptual force as in the original.

Another layer of humor arises from **UI-driven gags**, in which comedic timing is anchored in the interaction between text and interface. A particularly emblematic case is the Waterfall sequence where the player attempts to collect the „Legendary Artifact,” only to find their inventory silently filled with an „annoying dog”. When the game displays the message „You’re carrying too many dogs”, the humor stems not from linguistic cleverness but from the **deadpan delivery synchronized with the unexpected visual development**. In Polish, this line is rendered as „*Masz za dużo psów w plecaku*” or „*Słyszysz szczekanie z ekwipunku*” (translations that preserve brevity, cadence, and deadpan tone, ensuring that the visual and textual cues continue to align). These examples showcase **sentence reshaping**, **tempo control**, and **cohesion shifts**, all orchestrated to protect the comic timing. Here, paraphrase is not a deviation from fidelity but a technique for preserving **functional equivalence**.

A third domain of challenge involves **character-specific humor encoded typographically**. In *Undertale*, characters such as **Sans**, **Papyrus**, and **Temmie** express their personas not just through dialogue content, but through **font choice**, **orthography**, and **stylistic irregularities**. For example, Sans speaks entirely in lowercase Comic Sans, while Papyrus uses all-caps Papyrus font. Temmie’s broken grammar and idiosyncratic phrasing form part of her recognizable voice. In Polish, these traits are carried over through carefully calibrated **interpersonal shifts** and **visibility adjustments**, such as deliberate misspellings (*pż*, *nie-mity*) or hyphenated constructions that reflect speech patterns while avoiding confusion or stylistic overkill.

What distinguishes these solutions is their **consistency and patterning**. Once a stylized form is introduced, it is repeated as a **scheme change**, forming part of the character’s identity. The goal is not to mimic the English typography directly, but to reconstruct the character’s distinctiveness in the target language in a way that is both legible and ethically sound. The translator’s decisions reflect an awareness that **voice is multimodal**, and preserving it requires a balance of creative intervention and constraint sensitivity.

Beyond these specific instances, *Undertale*’s humor often unfolds over sequences (such as the *Lesser Dog’s endlessly elongating neck* or *Greater Dog’s anti-climactic reveal*) where dialogue and visual escalation are choreographed. Here, translation involves **calibrating the pacing** so that the buildup and payoff remain intact. Brevity is essential:

the translated text must leave enough space for the animation to carry the joke, without undermining the setup or overexplaining the punchline.

Across all these cases, the use of the five-step translation loop enabled a consistent method for handling ambiguity, testing pacing, and documenting decisions. Each localized joke was processed through function analysis, solution drafting, constraint testing, in-context simulation, and rationale logging. This methodology not only ensured that the Polish version retained the **tonal and functional fidelity** of the original, but also created a transparent record for quality assurance, reducing revision cycles and enhancing team coordination.

Ultimately, the *Undertale* case study demonstrates that humor in games is not an isolated challenge but a **systemic one**, embedded in narrative structure, player interaction, and visual language. Successfully localizing such humor requires translators to engage with the game as both linguistic and experiential text (one where every line must work in concert with animation, typography, and timing to preserve the laugh).

Findings and Discussion

The analysis of humor translation in *Undertale*, grounded in pragmatic strategies and processed through the proposed five-step localization loop, reveals several key patterns that can inform both future research and real-world localization practice. These findings are consistent across the emblematic cases examined (acronym reinterpretation, UI-timed jokes, and typographic character voice) and collectively support the central claim of this study: **effect-oriented translation consistently outperforms literal rendering when humor is functionally or systemically embedded in a game's design.**

First, the study confirms that **player effect (not lexical fidelity) is the correct unit of translation in humor-critical contexts.** Whether it is a joke delivered through interface text, a narrative twist built on acronym misdirection, or a punchline reliant on character voice, the success of the translated line depends not on whether it mirrors the original wording, but on whether it triggers the intended player reaction. Literal translations that preserve surface form often misfire when timing, tone, or cultural logic are mismatched. In contrast, variants that adapt form while maintaining function (through pacing control, paraphrase, or explicitness change) preserve the immersive quality of the original.

Second, the translation of **system-bound humor**, such as acronyms like LOVE and EXP, requires **scene-to-scene planning** rather than isolated fixes. In *Undertale*, the reinterpretation of these metrics unfolds narratively; successful localization depends on seeding plausible translations early, maintaining coherence, and engineering the reveal so that the punchline clicks into place. This necessitates strategies such as **distribution change, explicitness modulation, and cohesion reinforcement**, all applied at the systemic level. The implication for practice is clear: certain joke types behave more like narrative arcs than one-off lines and must be localized as **structures**, not just strings.

Third, the findings highlight the importance of **typography and orthography in character construction.** In a game like *Undertale*, where fonts and formatting encode

identity, the translator must employ pragmatic and interpersonal strategies to recreate these effects in the target language. Polish renderings that use deliberate misspellings, hyphenation, or variant spellings (e.g., *nie-miły*, *pż*) succeed not by replicating the English visual style but by capturing the same **performative voice cues**. The findings reinforce that **visual layout and character rhythm** are not optional extras (they are part of meaning).

Fourth, the use of **decision logs and rationale documentation** emerged as a significant process benefit. By recording why a particular variant was chosen, e.g., to preserve rhythm, to align with UI pacing, or to maintain character consistency; translators created an auditable trail that made later QA reviews more efficient. Instead of rewriting lines based on taste or stylistic preference, reviewers could assess whether the translated line achieved its intended effect. This shift from **subjective opinion to functional evaluation** reduced back-and-forth, stabilized workflows, and improved consistency across the build.

Across all findings, the five-step localization loop proved effective not just as a heuristic but as a **production tool**. Translators were able to anticipate layout and timing constraints earlier, test their solutions in context, and retain a record of decision-making that supported both consistency and collaboration. While the study focused on *Undertale* and a single language pair, the loop's structure is flexible enough to be adapted for other titles, particularly those with dense humor, stylized dialogue, or timing-dependent gags.

In sum, the case study demonstrates that **humor translation in games is not an art of clever substitutions**, but a design process that requires strategic choices under constraint. When approached through a pragmatic lens and supported by structured workflows, the localization of humor becomes not only feasible but reproducible, preserving player immersion while minimizing late-stage rework.

Conclusion and Future Work

This study set out to explore the challenges of humor translation in video games through the lens of pragmatics and strategy-based localization. Using *Undertale* as a case study, it demonstrated that comedic content in games is often inseparable from its delivery context; text layout, timing, interface behavior, and character voice all play critical roles in shaping how humor is perceived. Translating such content demands a shift in focus: from form to function, from lexical fidelity to player effect.

The five-step translation loop proposed in this article offers a concrete, repeatable method for navigating these complexities. By guiding translators through joke classification, adaptive drafting, constraint testing, tempo validation, and rationale logging, the loop transforms humor localization from an improvised craft into a disciplined process. It allows teams to front-load constraints, minimize rework, and improve communication across translation, editing, and QA roles.

The findings from the sought Polish localization of *Undertale* affirm that pragmatic strategies (especially those involving cultural filtering, explicitness change, and

interpersonal adjustment) are essential in preserving the comedic impact of the original. More broadly, the study highlights the value of viewing game translation not simply as textual transfer but as **experience design**, where every localized element contributes to the player's engagement, perception, and enjoyment.

While the focused scope of this study allowed for methodological clarity, it also imposes certain limitations. The analysis was based on a single title and language pair (English to Polish), which may limit generalizability across other genres, engines, or script systems. Future work can extend this research in several productive directions.

One promising avenue involves testing the **typography-as-voice strategy across typologically diverse languages**, particularly those with non-Latin scripts, syllabaries, or character-based writing systems. Do controlled orthographic deviations remain legible, ethical, and rhythmically effective in languages such as Korean, Arabic, or Russian?

A second direction is to treat **acronym reinterpretation** as a transferable system: applying the LOVE/EXP translation model to other games that rely on subversive UI anchors – such as item names, stat categories, or quest markers – to assess how well such structural reengineering generalizes across interfaces.

Finally, further research should seek to **quantify effect equivalence**, rather than infer it. Classroom or studio A/B testing could pair timing metrics (read speed, UI dwell time) with player feedback (amusement ratings, recall accuracy) to compare literal and pragmatic translation variants. Such empirical validation would offer a stronger foundation for advocating pragmatic localization standards in industry settings.

Ultimately, the value of this work lies not just in how individual jokes were solved, but in how the solving was systematized. By reframing humor translation as a process driven by player effect and operationalized through a structured, teachable method, this study offers a concrete, immediately applicable tool for both professional practice and translator education.

Supervisor Commentary

This article emerges from a licentiate project that does something our field urgently needs: it turns the messy, multimodal challenge of translating humor in games into a procedure that teams can actually run inside real production pipelines. My role here is to make explicit why that contribution matters, how it generalizes beyond the source title, and where it fits in both translator education and professional workflows. Using the *Undertale* corpus as a proving ground, the student's work shows that effect-equivalence under tight technical constraints is not a vague ideal but a repeatable method. The specific challenges (i.e. acronym redefinitions, character-bound punning, and punchlines bound to narrow timing windows) are not curiosities of a single game. They recur across humor-forward indie titles and, more importantly, across engines and interfaces that funnel text into fixed-width boxes, battle logs, and dialogue frames. What makes the approach portable is its pragmatics-first stance: the aim is not to license unbounded creativity, but to create

a traceable path from identifying the communicative function of a joke to selecting a rendering that keeps the player’s experience intact.

At the core is a five-step loop that appears simple but is operationally powerful: identify the joke’s type and function; propose multiple renderings spanning a literal-to-creative spectrum; check UI and timing constraints; test the line in-engine or through a disciplined timed read-aloud; then select the version that best preserves the intended effect and log the rationale. Three things follow when teams adopt this loop. First, constraints get front-loaded, which prevents brittle literal solutions from surviving untested until late builds. Second, decisions become auditable; a documented rationale transforms later edits from opinionated rewrites into evidence-based adjustments. Third, consistency improves because running gags, persona tics, and acronym systems are managed as systems (coherent patterns) rather than isolated clever fixes. These are not theoretical advantages: they reduce rework, stabilize LQA, and cut the number of last-minute changes that often swamp small localization teams.

The method also translates directly into curriculum. In a studio-style lab, students can work with short humor bundles paired with mock UI frames, submitting three candidate translations per line and briefly justifying their final choice against timing, glyph availability, and persona. Assessment targets the **quality of decision-making** under constraints rather than mere ingenuity. A follow-on exercise flips roles: peers act as LQA testers who time punchlines, check line breaks, and flag solutions that erode character voice or gag setup. This built environment normalizes translator-tester dialogue and gives graduates a working sense of how jokes live or die in context. Crucially, students learn to think beyond words and into rhythm, layout, and player perception.

For industry workflows, there are three natural insertion points. Before text lock, a lightweight humor risk review tags strings likely to break under timing or format pressure and earmarks them for creative review; the cost is negligible, and it prevents crisis rewrites. On the first playable, a targeted pass-through gag-critical scenes (done with the translator present) lets the team time lines in context and kill fragile solutions early. During LQA, testers consult the translator’s logged rationale; if the effect is intact, changes should be minimal, but if the laugh beat misses (even when wording is „accurate” a revision is warranted). This shared standard reduces friction and increases trust, because both sides are optimizing for player experience rather than competing for stylistic control.

The risk calculus is straightforward. When humor fails, it fails loudly: awkward screenshots circulate, players develop a narrative about „bad localization,” and teams scramble to patch. The pragmatic loop mitigates this by catching problems early, shortening LQA cycles for flagged strings, and improving acceptance of translator choices that are already justified on functional grounds. Even very small teams can trade an hour of early, focused timing checks for several hours of late-stage firefighting.

Ethically and academically, the division of labor is clear. The student’s thesis is the empirical foundation: examples, analysis, and the initial articulation of a procedure. My contribution in this article is the applicability layer: extracting a generalizable, testable workflow; demonstrating how it maps to translator education and studio practice; and

specifying the precise touchpoints where it yields measurable benefits. The article's structure makes that transparency explicit, and all adapted examples remain attributed to the underlying analysis.

Undoubtedly, a single title and language pair set outer boundaries. That limitation is a strength for method development but invites replication. Two pragmatic next steps present themselves. First, a multi-language classroom study can apply identical humor bundles and compare decision logs across typologically different target languages, observing where timing, morphology, or orthography pressure the pipeline. Second, controlled A/B playtests can measure recall, timing perception, and amusement for literal and pragmatic variants, giving us a quantitative picture of effect-equivalence in practice. These extensions would deepen the evidence base while keeping the method lean enough for everyday use.

All in all, the value of this work is not just in how particular jokes were solved but in how the solving was **made reproducible**. By centering effect, documenting trade-offs, and insisting on in-context testing, the approach offers a compact, auditable procedure that educators can teach, studios can adopt, and researchers can evaluate. That is why it merits space in a scientific journal: it turns theory into practice in a way the profession can use immediately.

Based on:

This article draws on the licentiate thesis „**The Analysis of Pragmatic Translation Strategies for Humor in *Undertale*: A Guide for Future Translators**” (Soprych, 2025), completed at the University of Applied Sciences in Racibórz under the supervision of dr Monika Porwoł.

Bibliography

1. Aarons, D. (2012). *Jokes and the Linguistic Mind*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203814741>.
2. Chesterman, A. (2016). *Memes of Translation: The spread of ideas in translation theory. Revised edition*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/btl.123>.
3. Fox, T. (2015). *Undertale* [Video game]. tobyfox. <https://store.steampowered.com/app/391540/Undertale/>.
4. Vandaele, J. (Ed.). (2002). *Translating Humour* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315538259>.

Contact details

Oliwia Soprych, oliwia.soprych03@gmail.com

Monika Porwoł, monika.porwol@akademiarac.edu.pl