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Sherlock Holmes: English Humour in Translation

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Abstract: *Adrian Conan Doyle expressed in an interview with Joan Bakewell (Conan Doyle, 1969) that his father gave Sherlock Holmes certain characteristics—vices as it were—to make him more human. One of those was his use of the seven percent solution of cocaine. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1927) also indirectly confirmed the human side of Sherlock Holmes by receiving correspondence addressed to Sherlock Holmes from people all over the world who considered him to be a real person and asked him for advice. The present article addresses the humour—another human trait—in the canon and how it is received in translation by a Japanese reading audience.*

Introductory Considerations on the Canon and Other Available Editions in View of Elements of Humour

Introduction

There are various ways to familiarize oneself with the Sherlock Holmes canon. Depending on one's purpose, available texts range from unabridged editions to translated editions. In this paper I will expound in detail on the different possible editions similar to how Jakobson has observed the existence of different translation types (1959): intralinguistic translation (rewording in the same language) and interlinguistic translation (translation proper into other languages). The triad in his system is formed by the inter-semiotic translation type (transmutation into another medium). From book to film can be considered as one form of medium transference. However, this is beyond the scope of the present paper. What happens to the humour of the original in these different editions is the reason why a survey was done among Japanese readership with regard to one particular adventure within the canon.

The main subject in this study is the question of humour, clearly present in the Sherlock Holmes canon, and how that is either kept or altered in other possible editions of the canon. Although the survey with a group of native speakers of Japanese looks at the humour in translation into another language, for comparison the study will also refer to the graded

reader editions of *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*, the main story in the survey. The relation between graded reader and unsimplified editions of the same work is to enhance reading ability for second language learners, resulting in them being able to read unsimplified material (Nation, 2009, p. 50) as a goal. Since graded readers are simplified editions—or reworded translations in the same language—it has some effect on the aspect of humour of the original. In more detail this will be addressed further in the section dealing with graded reader.

In order to identify the types of humour, other stories in the canon will also be addressed. The humour in the canon is not merely constricted to verbal means; there are also humorous situations abundantly present which need to be explored. The essential question of the survey is whether the humour of the original can actually be appreciated in the translated edition by a Japanese reading populace.

Theoretical Overview of Humour

In the preparation of this article on the humour in the Sherlock Holmes canon, it is necessary to introduce some of the theoretical studies done in this field. Humour can be researched through a wide range of inter-disciplinary approaches. In Raskin (2008) it is possible to look at humour from study fields like psychology, philosophy, anthropology, and other academic disciplines. Since this paper is mainly looking at humour from a literary point of view, the chapters of Attardo (pp. 101-155), Nilsen (pp. 243-280), Carrell (pp. 303-332), Triezenberg (pp. 523-542), and Chiaro (pp. 569-608) are very

Bode, J. (2015). Sherlock Holmes: English humour in translation. *OTB Forum*, 7(2), 31-44.

beneficial for that purpose. The first chapter is a discussion of linguistic analyzing models of humour for quantifiable results; the second chapter introduces the wide field of literary humour and their researching participants; the third chapter repeats more accessibly the first chapter highlighting on the Raskin' theory of GTVH (see below) and other basic theories (Incongruity, Disparagement, Release/relief, and others); the fourth chapter applies GTVH model to examples from a long history of literature; and the last chapter is on humour in translation. The GTVH model is a recurrent feature in the chapters referred to above. In appendix 1 the model extends humour from a linguistic/semantic to a non-linguistic/ pragmatic level as well.

This article discusses the types and situations of humour (Attardo) used in the Sherlock Holmes canon with examples. Edward Hardwicke (2003; Dr. Watson in the Granada series) observed in an interview that people doing a difficult job tend to laugh more. The result of this, not stated by Hardwicke, is that the fictional character Holmes combined with his other flaws (drug addiction, unsocial character at times, among others) made him more real than life itself. It resulted that the reading public initially thought he was a real person.

Types of Editions

There are different possibilities in selecting a particular Sherlock Holmes edition, the choice of which depends largely on the preferences of the individual readers. One of the reasons to read an unabridged edition is to appreciate through the particular language use of Conan Doyle how the story and characters come alive in one's imagination with a 19th century atmosphere because of its wording. The graded readers are partially functioning as a means to language acquisition; Nation (1999) also recognizes there are other benefits in reading graded readers. For example, by introducing the story on a more accessible level the reader can understand the story content more fully. The translated edition of this Sherlock Holmes story brings out the content and language of source text (English) into the target text (Japanese). One of the respondents of the survey for this article selected Speckled Band edition (the Kadokawa edition, 2011) to read during his bus ride to Tokyo from Mito. This means he could read the story in his first language (Japanese) in about two hours, while the original would have taken him weeks to complete.

In the next section, I will describe what kind of humour is present in the original and how this has either been kept or altered in the translated or graded reader editions. One important fact to remember regarding the Sherlock Holmes canon is that the stories are interlinked, although the stories can also be read independently. The humour in *The Speckled Band* (Conan Doyle, 2007, pp. 214-229) is recurrent in a much later story titled *The Three Gables* (Conan Doyle, 2007, pp. 1059-1069). Therefore, it is necessary to look initially at certain cases in the canon before concentrating on the main Sherlock Holmes story used for this survey. The humour in this particular story will then be understood in context with the humour throughout the canon.

The humour "infested" in the Sherlock Holmes canon?

In the Sherlock Holmes canon humour has an essential quality in demonstrating among others the sharpness of Holmes' ability in observation and deduction. It also functions as a way to show Holmes' ability to remain collected and peaceful when people are intentionally or unintentionally testing his patience. In the canon there are two main categories of humour clearly apparent. One is on a verbal level, while the other has a more non-verbal, perhaps even a situational, quality to it. Moreover, at some occurrences in the canon the humour comes about with the two integrated. Through a selected number of examples from the original stories I will attempt to clarify the categories described above. In the subsequent sections on the graded reader editions and translated editions I will describe how the humour either was retained or disappeared through linguistic and/or cultural necessities. Through the survey, I will attempt to elucidate what the effect was of the translation onto the humour embedded in the original.

In the first story of the canon, *A Study in Scarlet*, there are indicators on a lexical level that Holmes is either a priest or someone involved in criminal investigations. Words like confess and cross-examination find their way in the dialogue between the two future room-mates (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 14). However, from the general context of finding out their general natures and tendencies these idiosyncratic vocabulary choices are out of place and have the effect of creating a humorous quality to this particular section. The words *confess* and *cross-examination* could be seen as a form Script Opposi-

tion (SO) (Attardo, 2008) wherein compatible A (confess) is in opposition with compatible B (cross-examination). Script Opposition is one of the parameters Attardo and Raskin recognized in what they call General Theory of verbal Humour (GTVH). This theory is a revision of the earlier Raskin's Semantic-Script Theory of Humor (SSTH) and focuses on semantic/pragmatic study of humour. Interesting to note, is the reference to the Mormon religion and sect throughout the story, which has been described as committing crimes in the pursuit of their religion. To some extent, this could be considered ironic, since they prosecute their own members, after this religious denomination had been prosecuted and had to displace itself to a new area in the US.

In the second story, *The Sign of Four*, there are two sections to note. In the first one, Watson's suggestion to Thaddeus Sholto of taking large doses of strychnine as a sedative indicates a rather dark sense of humour within Watson (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 76). By killing the patient it will be possible to calm him down. Watson was partially irritated by Sholto's insensitive talk towards Mary. A second example is the disguise Holmes used in his investigation to play a practical joke on Watson and Inspector Jones, the main Scotland Yard inspector in this case, waiting for him to return to Baker Street. They were totally taken in by his new appearance as an old mariner in dress as well as his assumed dialect (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 95).

A highly situational example of humour can be observed in *The Scandal of Bohemia* wherein Holmes as well as Irene fool each other in their disguises. The verbal humour in this case is less prominently present. The disguise of Holmes culminates in having to be the witness for Irene and Godfrey in their marriage (Conan Doyle, 2007, pp. 117 - 131).

The way Holmes expresses himself in *An Adventure of Identity* (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 157) marks the developed mind of moral justice, towards the sneering look of the culprit in this story (Mr. Windibank) and knowing that the law cannot touch him, he announces:

“it is not part of my duties to my client [Windibank's stepdaughter], but here is a hunting crop handy, and I think I shall just treat myself --- “.

This looks very much like treating oneself to

something that gives great pleasure. Here it is the punishment of a culprit deserving a beating. Due to the misplaced wording (...treating oneself...) humour has been achieved even in this potentially serious development in the case.

When Mycroft is introduced in *The Greek Interpreter* (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 401), he has a small contest with his younger brother showing the ability in observation and deduction between the two Holmes brothers in a quick succession of their retorts to each other. Like Watson, the reader will be surprised to learn that Holmes has a brother with even keener faculties than himself. Their rhetoric in quick succession produces a humorous effect in the process.

“An old soldier, I perceive,” said Sherlock.

“And very recently discharged,” remarked the brother.

“Served in India, I see.”

“And a non-commissioned officer.”

“Royal Artillery, I fancy,” said Sherlock.

“And a widower.”

“But with a child.”

“Children, my dear boy, children.”

“Come,” said I, laughing, “this is a little too much.”

“Surely,” answered Holmes, “it is not hard to say that a man with that bearing, expression of authority, and sun-baked skin, is a soldier, is more than a private, and is not long from India.”

“That he has not left the service long is shown by his still wearing his ‘ammunition boots’, as they are called,” observed Mycroft.

“He had not the cavalry stride, yet he wore his hat on one side, as is shown by the lighter skin of that side of his brow. His weight is against his being a sapper. He is in the artillery.”

“Then, of course, his complete mourning shows that he has lost some one very dear.

The fact that he is doing his own shopping looks as though it were his wife. He has been buying things for children, you perceive. There is a rattle, which shows that one of them is very young. The wife probably died in childbed. The fact that he has a picture-book under his arm shows that there is another child to be thought of.”

Holmes’ smoking habit is nicely encroached upon in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 463) when Watson is overtaken by a coughing fit when he enters the room:

“Caught cold, Watson?” said he.

“No, it’s this poisonous atmosphere.”

“I suppose it is pretty thick, now that you mention it.”

“Thick! It is intolerable.”

“Open the window, then!...”

Possibly through the unintentional humour of Watson’ complaint triggers an ensuing dialogue that produces the humorous effect not guaranteed by the actual situation

In the description of the pub incident in *The Solitary Cyclist* we see Woodley’s cascade of direct questions to Holmes resulting into the following description of the situation:

“He [Woodley] had a fine flow of language, and his adjectives were very vigorous. He ended a string of abuse by a vicious back-hander which I failed to entirely avoid. The next few minutes were delicious. It was a straight left against a slogging ruffian.” (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 605)

In *The Priory School* Holmes has a verbal joust instead with the local countryman named Hayes. If Holmes is unable to walk further he should hop further as far as Hayes wants to extend his help:

(SH) “I can hardly put my foot to the ground.”

(H) “Don’t put it to the ground.”

(SH) “But I can’t walk.”

(H) “Well, then, hop.” (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 623)

As a final example for this section on humour in the canon in the Milverton story (*The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton*) Holmes is suggesting to Watson (?) to do an “action that is morally justifiable, though technically criminal [to burgle Milverton’s house to collect the pocket book filled with information Milverton uses for his blackmailing schemes].”

“We have shared the same room for some years, and it would be amusing if we ended sharing the same cell.” (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 649)

Within the canon verbal humour is sometimes the outcome of the situational context it is based on. Holmes’ sense of humour seems to help him in difficult situations as well as on an interpersonal basis with Watson. The discussion of the humour in *The Speckled Band* and *The Three Gables* is kept for the next section, and this is mainly because of the strong similarity between them as far as the imposing visitor goes. Since *The Speckled Band* forms the essential story for the survey discussed in this paper, it deserves to be discussed separately.

The Humour in *The Speckled Band* and *The Three Gables*

In *The Speckled Band* there are at least three sections where a certain degree of humour can be considered. In the beginning of the story (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 214), the description of the forced wake-up by the visitor of Mrs. Hudson, and in turn of Holmes, and at the end of Watson has a certain degree of situational humour to it. For referring to it later in discussing the graded reader, I would like to denote this scene as the “knock-up incident at Baker Street”. The second point of humour is Roylott’s visit to Holmes and his subsequent flow of language addressing Holmes in an offensive way, and Holmes undisturbed reaction to this (see appendix: *Speckled Band* 220-221). The third humour element is at the end of the story where Holmes suggests to Helen and Watson that he and Watson spend the night in her room. Both Helen and Watson are astonished and slightly shocked by this particular plan (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 224), but they soon discover the necessity of staying over at the old scene of the crime where Helen’ sister dies by the designs of her stepfather. In *The Three Gables* (Conan Doyle, 2007, p.

1059), the unnamed visitor at first (Steve Dixie) is, in a similar way as it occurred in *The Speckled Band*, put off by Holmes' response to the intimidation attempt (see appendix: *The Three Gables*). In both instances Conan Doyle depicts Holmes as being unfazed by intimidation by using humour as a means to control the situation. His humour, however, has also a force of conviction to it, namely, not to underestimate him with it.

“Thick! It is intolerable.”

“See here, Mr. Holmes, you keep your hands out of other folk's business. Leave folks to manage their own affairs. Got that, Mr. Holmes?”

“Keep on talking,” said Holmes. “It is fine.”

“oh! It's fine, is it?” growled the savage. “It won't be damn fine if I have to trim you up a bit. I have handled your kind before now, and they did not look fine when I was through with them.”

These two examples show how the Sherlock Holmes canon encapsulates a ‘fine flow’ of humor. Although there is a similarity between these two quotations almost 20 years apart, the sense of humour of Holmes seems to have not altered in that period of time. On the other hand, Holmes' humour

seems to have matured in his later periods towards his close associates. In the beginning the humour of Holmes seemed more hostile/aggressive (Attardo, 2008) towards either Watson or Lestrade. There is a gradual change within the canon of Holmes' judgment of slow(er)-minded individuals than himself becoming less sharp and harsh in his statements towards them. What actually made him change is difficult to spot in a single statement, but after his retirement to Sussex when he has to write and sees firsthand how difficult it is to record a case smoothly (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 1083: *The Adventure of the Lion's Mane*).

Humour in the Graded Readers

Since the main topic of this paper is on what happened to humour in translation it might be instructive and helpful to see what happened in the intralinguistic editions (graded readers) of *The Speckled Band* before actually to explore the interlinguistic translation in Japanese through the answers the participants of the survey gave. By having read Sherlock Holmes in English first, it is almost impossible to keep an unbiased perspective in reading different editions in another language. Therefore, devising a survey for native speakers of Japanese became a necessity for gathering information.

Returning to the topic of this section, there are some differences among the available graded readers for *The Speckled Band*. Because there are differ-

Table 1. *Comparison of the Treatment of Humorous Episodes in Three Graded Readers*

Oxford (stage 2: 700 headwords)
1. Holmes & Knock up incident: excised (p. 1)
2. Roylott visit: excised (# p. 6)
3. Holmes suggestion (stay overnight): retained (p. 9)
Penguin (level 4: 1700 headwords/intermediate)
1. Holmes & Knock up incident: just the facts; without humour (p. 1)
2. Roylott visit: although simplified, to some extent the humour remained; the colourful language of the original has not been kept (p. 10)
3. Holmes suggestion (stay overnight): retained (p. 15)
MacMillan readers (level 5: 1600 basic words/intermediate)
1. Holmes & Knock up incident: excised (p. 4)
2. Roylott visit: retained, but just the facts and without a strong element of humour (p. 12)
3. Holmes suggestion (stay overnight): retained (p. 18)

ent levels for this story in publication, it is interesting to see that with higher levels the humour in the story could be retained. As shown in Table 1, the main characteristics are given of the Oxford, Penguin, and MacMillan editions regarding the three sections of *The Speckled Band*. It seems that with the rewording in the Oxford edition (stage 2) more than in other editions, certain elements, such as humour, in the story could not be kept. However, with a difference of 1000 headwords the element of humour emerged in the higher level editions of Penguin (level 4) and MacMillan (level 5). The graded readers are also designed with language acquisition objectives set and therefore choices must be made whether to retain or disregard humorous sections in an attempt to make the reader more accessible for the language learner.

Humour in an Academic Setting

Martin (2012) devotes his chapter on the subject of humour as it is incorporated within positive psychology. This is a pursuit of study in psychology wherein both positive and negative sides in people are studied to optimise human functioning in society. He introduces humour and the different methods to measure it in a historic setting. Although the main topic of his chapter is beyond the scope of this article, his emphasis on a measurement system which includes both adaptive (beneficial) and maladaptive (harmful) uses of humour in coping with stress, as well as ways in which humour may both facilitate and impair social relations (p. 324, paraphrased) could be considered in the present article on the use of humour within the Sherlock Holmes canon.

In the case of Sherlock Holmes's implementation of humour in his life and work, psychologists could expand further on whether his type of humour has a healthy defense mechanism (p. 315) to it to insure psychological mental health and well-being as an outcome, or instead has a more detrimental element to it and is inherently harmful to himself as well as the interaction with others. From the examples stated above Holmes' humour seem to have more the quality of defusing a potential dangerous situation, or to mentally detach himself from a seemingly unsolvable conundrum. His humour does not seem to function as a form of defensive denial (p. 322) to avoid dealing with the difficulties at hand, although at times it has a sarcastic quality to it as well when he shows Watson his flaws in using

Holmes' method of deduction.

The aspect of humour within the Sherlock Holmes canon has also been addressed to by Klinger (2005, pp. 1530-1531) in his annotated study of the entire canon. It shows humour as experienced by Holmes himself personally with the telltale occurrences of his laughter, smiles and other such direct indicators of experiencing humour. The present paper is not concerned with Holmes personal sense of humour, but more with the reception of the canon's humour, both in its linguistic form as well as situational form, by its readership. What is more this paper is looking at the responses from an audience of a different culture and language into which the original story has been translated. It shows the possibilities of transferring "local" humour towards "global" humour.

Survey on *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* in Japanese (Madara no Himo)

Introduction

The survey for the present paper was conducted among twenty two respondents with Japanese as their first language. The purpose of the survey was to examine whether the main points of the story; the historical sub-elements (inter alia, use of carriages, the colonial period of India); and Conan Doyle's particular sense of humour could be understood by the respondents in reading the selected Japanese edition of their choice. The number of returned survey reached 50% of the total. Among the male respondents this amounted to six; while the female respondents returned five answer sheets. In most cases, the survey answer sheets followed a digital path, while the different editions were sent out in hard-copy style through the postal services. From the eleven returned three were hand-written and subsequently transcribed in a digital format. The low return has most likely been the result of the time it took to read the self-selected edition by the respondent and to fill out the survey. It took one respondent a bus-ride to Tokyo from Mito, which means about two hours to read the entire story with additional time needed for answering the survey. The author of the present paper did not participate in the survey in order to keep a neutral position in view of this survey. Furthermore, the initial purpose was to see the responses of first language (Japanese) respondents, not those from respondents reading Japanese as a second or third language. The author himself is a non-native

Japanese reader, who has the tendency to read the translation of Sherlock Holmes stories with the original stories in mind; this hardly constitutes an unbiased reading of the available translated editions in Japanese.

Details of the Actual Questions

The survey contained seven questions; ranging from bibliographic/linguistic considerations, and content focused concerns, to the humour centered element in the story. Here, I will give the translation of these questions for reference.

After a brief introduction on the survey and its purpose, the respondents were asked to supply a little individual background information. Besides the identity of the responder (full name), occupation (with details), age-group and birthplace (for local humour response differences) were also necessary information details for classifying the survey results.

The seven questions were as follows:

Question 1 – What edition did you choose, and why did you choose this one?

Question 2 – Why did you not choose the other ones?

Question 3 – From the edition you had chosen, what was your impression regarding the personalities of the characters, the incidents, and/or the historical references in the story?

Question 4 – What is your impression of Dr. Roylott’s appearance in the story?

Question 5 – Do you think the Japanese is unnatural in the Japanese editions of the Sherlock Holmes story?

Question 6 – Have you ever read the story Speckled Band in the original language? If yes, please give bibliographic details

Question 7 – Within the story have you felt

anything of being humorous? If yes, please write down the section and page number

Survey Results

Through the survey it became evident that the respondents were able to retrieve the basic storyline with its particular plot and setting. The reasons why a certain edition has been chosen is very different from respondent to respondent. But, if they are generalized, the reasons were for some respondents linguistic in nature (length of sentences, accessible expressions, the presence of paragraphs, degree of succinctness, or the fluent style in Japanese expressions); however, other placed more emphasis on the general book design. The other editions lacked or did not have these qualities and were therefore set aside.

Among the eleven respondents, the Kadokawa Bunko edition received the highest score (5), while the Shinchō Bunko edition scored not at all (0). In figure 4 I have separated the scores according to male and female respondents. Among the female respondents the Kadokawa edition scored highest; while Kōbunsha edition scored better with the male respondents. The reasons, as stated earlier, were mostly linguistic in nature; with book design considerations in merely two of the surveys returned.

These translations leaves these readers with an almost similar understanding of the main points in the story. Roylott comes over for the Japanese male readers as a person who is selfish, impolite, having criminal tendencies, afflicted with mental ailments and is borderline deranged. The female readers broaden these observations with a more adverse description of his character. He is, inter alia, violent, malicious, greedy, extremely short tempered; however, at the same time, he is also seen as being a person with a certain degree of erudition and learnedness. This shows that Roylott has been preserved in the translated edition as a rather complex character.

Table 2. Responses for the Different Japanese Editions

Edition	Respondents	Male	Female
Kadokawa Bunko	5	2	3
Kōbunsha Bunko	4	3	1
Sōgen Suiiri Bunko	2	1	1
Shinchō Bunko	0	0	0
Total	11	6	5

The respondents commented that the Japanese in the translation did not present any inhibition in the reading process, although two of the six male respondents and two of the five female respondents expressed that some minor linguistic awkwardness were visible. One respondent gave the following examples to go beyond the survey point (humour in translation) and commented on the limitations of literature in translation:

From the Kadokawa edition (p. 257), there is the following sentence:

「探偵の仕事を楽しむがゆえに (tantei no shigoto wo aisuru ga yue ni)」

According to this respondent, the Sōgen Suiri Bunko edition (p. 299) has the same part in a slightly more formal register, while the first one follows a more colloquial style to it. The language register of the Sōgen edition he considered a little out of place when one considers the content of the story.

「探偵術の愛着から (tanteijutsu no aichaku kara)」

The original sentence can be found in the Strand edition (2007) on page 214 in the following manner extended from the partial quotation:

[...working as he did rather] for the love of his art [than for the acquirement of wealth]

Two more examples this respondent provided regarding Japanese idiomatic expressions which are not in general use at present and seem to him a tad too grave for the overall effect.

The Sōgen Suiri Bunko edition (p. 299) translated the term *singular* as it appeared in the following quotation as:

「奇奇怪怪 [な様相] (kikikaikai na yōsō)」
[..., I cannot recall any which presented more] singular [features than that which were associated with...the Royslotts]

The second example (Sōgen Suiri Bunko, p. 299) by the same respondent concerns the idiomatic Japanese expression for untimely death, 急逝 [kyūsei]) as it appears in the following context:

「…、つい先月その約束の相手の女性が急逝し、(. . . , tsui sengetsu sono yakusoku no aite no josei ga kyūsei shi,)」

In the Strand edition (2007, p. 214) this quotation is stated as follows:

[.. I have only been freed during] the last month by the untimely death of the lady to whom the pledge was given,...

Except for one respondent, the respondents emphasized that they had not previously read the story in the original language and they responded merely to the Japanese translation. Because they had not read the story in the original edition, they were not hindered by any foreknowledge of the story, and it resulted into answers that were genuine and unbiased.

As for the point of humour, the respondents recognized two of the three major ones. The knock-up segment was recognized as being situational humorous by one of six male respondents, and one out five of the female respondents. Royslott's intrusion and attempted intimidation received a higher score. Among the male respondents it received a score of five out of six, and among female respondents it received two out of five. One respondent in each group concluded that the story was devoid of humour.

One respondent located an overlooked humorous exchange between Holmes and Watson in the Kadokawa edition (p. 291):

「とんでもない家だね。あれはひひだよ」
[家: ie]

[source text: "It is a nice household," he murmured. "That is a baboon."] (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 226). This was uttered by Holmes after being surprised by a strange creature in the dark garden of Royslott's ancestral house. In effect, Holmes commented here on the singular composition of Royslott's household.

The third humorous exchange I mentioned above not being identified by the respondents is between Holmes, Watson, and Helen Stoker (client). Because they misunderstood Holmes' intention completely the situation becomes rather strained but humorous.

"In the first place, both my friend and I must spend the night in your [Helen's] room."

Both Miss Stoner and I gazed at him in aston-

Table 3. *Translations of the Miss Stoner Bedroom Statement*

<p>The Kadokawa edition (p. 286): 「まず第一に、ぼくとワトスン博士があなたの部屋で夜を明かします」 ヘレン・ストーナーもぼくも、びっくりしてホームズを見つめた。 「そう。ぜったいそうしなければならない。これからちゃんとお説明しますから。」</p> <p>The Kōbunsha Bunko edition (p. 340): 「ではまず第一に、今夜、ぼくとワトスン君はあなたの部屋ですごします」 ストーナー嬢もわたしも、びっくりしてホームズの顔を見つめた。 「そうしなくてはならないんです。わけはあとで説明しましょう。」</p> <p>The Sōgen Suiri Bunko edition (p. 299) 「ではまず第一に、今夜はぼくとここにいる友人とが、ふたりだけであなたの部屋に泊まり込みます」 ストーナー嬢のみならず、この私までが、驚いて友人の顔を凝視した。 「そうです、ぜひともそうする必要がありますのです。説明させてください。」</p> <p>The Shinchō Bunko edition (p. 351/2) 「まずだいいちに、今晚は私とワトスン君が二人で、あなたのお部屋で夜をあかさなければなりません」 これにはストーナー嬢も私も驚いて、ホームズの顔を見なおした。 「必ずそうしなければなりません。お待ちなさい。」</p>

ishment.

“Yes, it must be so. Let me explain...” (Conan Doyle, 2007, p. 224)

The Kadokawa edition (p. 286) provides the following:

「まず第一に、ぼくとワトスン博士があなたの部屋で夜を明かします」

ヘレン・ストーナーもぼくも、びっくりしてホームズを見つめた。

「そう。ぜったいそうしなければならない。これからちゃんとお説明しますから。」

The Kōbunsha Bunko edition (p. 340), however, has a somewhat different version:

「ではまず第一に、今夜、ぼくとワトスン君はあなたの部屋ですごします」

ストーナー嬢もわたしも、びっくりしてホームズの顔を見つめた。

「そうしなくてはならないんです。わけはあと

で説明し

ましょう。」

Finally, the Sōgen Suiri Bunko edition (p. 299) offered this:

「ではまず第一に、今夜はぼくとここにいる友人とが、ふたりだけであなたの部屋に泊まり込みます」

ストーナー嬢のみならず、この私までが、驚いて友人の顔を凝視した。

「そうです、ぜひともそうする必要がありますのです。説明させてください。」

Finally, the Shinchō Bunko edition (pp. 351-352) has the following:

「まずだいいちに、今晚は私とワトスン君が二人で、あなたのお部屋で夜をあかさなければなりません」

これにはストーナー嬢も私も驚いて、ホームズの顔を見なおした。

「必ずそうしなければなりません。お待ちな

さい。」

The Japanese editions have the following translation of this section in the story. There are some minor differences between these editions, but for the most part they follow the original very closely. The Sōgen Suiri Bunko edition is rather too specific in stating that only Holmes and Watson will stay in Helen Stoker's room. The humorous effect has been cancelled by this. The Shinchō Bunko edition is the only one where the last part has been translated in completely free-style fashion: "a moment if you please", instead of the original: "Let me explain...". This type of misunderstood comprehension for humorous effect is most likely a culturally fixed matter, which either has not a reception point within the Japanese humour experience, or the content implication transgress Japanese sense of appropriate humour.

Conclusion

Although humour can be considered from an individual as well as a cultural point of view, the survey showed that translation is not automatically eliminating it from the final product. It is certainly possible for the target readers to appreciate a sense of humour not exactly matching with their own cultural sense of humour. The translators of these editions have achieved to bridge any cultural gaps while balancing the original with the linguistic and cultural necessities of the target language and culture for the Japanese translations of this particular story from the Sherlock Holmes canon.

Through the survey it became apparent that the same text in translation (regardless of the edition) has been read in different ways by the individual readers. More than half of the respondents expressed with location indicators (page number(s) and short section descriptions) that the text certainly contained humour elements, however one out of six male respondents and 2 out of five female respondents stated there was no humour elements in the build-up of the story.

An unexpected result from the survey, wherein Japanese texts (also translation therein) are not read in a singular way, but that the respondents by personal experiences and other background factors (education, profession, personality, character) read the text in an individual manner with personal observations and interpretations. For example one of the respondents, who is a medical doctor, expressed

the possibility that Roylott has been suffering from psychological ailments.

Although the survey results were based on a small number of respondents, it was possible to generate a preliminary conclusion that humour can be transmitted and transferred through translation into another cultural without any ill effect for both the source text and target text. It shows that humour is certainly to cross over in translation and the general opinion that humour is impossible to translate cannot be maintained as a valid explanation towards the cultural differences in the perception of what humour is.

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- Conan Doyle, A. (2012). *Shaarokku Hōmuzu no Bōken* [The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes]. Tōkyō (Japan): Shinchō Bunko.
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About the author: Jeroen Bode began working at Tsukuba University as a lecturer in 2005 and was promoted to assistant professor in 2012. From 2007 he began working as an independent official translator of Japanese. His translation work led him to redirect his attention to applied language skills during the process of translating and let to include forensic linguistics as his major academic interests. He received his M.A. in Japanese language and culture in 1996 from Leiden University in the Netherlands

Appendix 1

A Primer of Humour Research

Raskin (2008)

General Theory of Verbal Humor (GTVH) and the six knowledge resources

1. SO: the Script Opposition of the SSTH (cf, also Attardo 1997);
2. Logical Mechanism (LM): corresponds to the resolution phase of the incongruity/resolution models, essentially it is the mechanism whereby the incongruity of the SO is playfully and/or partially explained away (cf. Attardo et al., 2002);
3. Situation (SI): refers to the "props" of the joke, the textual materials evoked by the scripts of the joke that are not funny (so, in a joke about a dog in a pub, the background knowledge about pubs, such that they serve beer, etc. is part of the SI);
4. Target (TA): what is known as the butt of the joke;
5. Narrative Strategy (NS): the "genre" of the joke, such as riddle, 1-2-3 structure, question and answer, etc.; and
6. Language (LA): the actual lexical, syntactic, phonological, etc. choices at the linguistic level that instantiate all the other choices.

Appendix 2

Survey Results Table and Communication between Holmes and Roylott



Roylott's visit (illustration by Sydney Paget) [Source: Conan Doyle, 2007]

Reading tip list

In this section, a short, and certainly not complete, list of recommended studies and other interesting works on Arthur Conan Doyle and his Sherlock Holmes canon are collected. The reader can look thematically in the list and look for books on his/her interests. To keep it as a list only the main features of the books in the list are given. In this way it might help the reader to avoid crap sources (see for details of these: Klinger, 2005) and waste time therein.

The canon of Sherlock Holmes adventures and other writings:

Conan Doyle, A. (2007). *The original illustrated 'Strand' Sherlock Holmes, The complete facsimile edition*. Bath (UK.): Robert Frederick Limited.

Feature: all the adventures with the Strand illustrations included.

Conan Doyle, A. (1988). *Strange studies from life and other narratives: The complete true crime writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* (J. Tracy, Ed.). Bloomington (USA): Gaslight Publications.

Feature: on real criminal cases in the 19th century.

Annotated editions:

Conan Doyle, A. (2005). *The new annotated Sherlock Holmes (Vols. 1-3)* (L.S. Klinger, Ed.). New York: W.W. Norton & company, Inc.

Feature: besides being a well researched annotation, it introduces both valuable studies and studies to be avoided in further readings.

Studies on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Lycett, A. (2007). *The man who created Sherlock Holmes: The life and times of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*. New

York: Free Press.

Feature: a very extensive biography on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Costello, P. (1991). *The real world of Sherlock Holmes: the true crimes investigated by Arthur Conan Doyle*. New York: Carroll & Graf Pub.

Feature: A biography on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, highlighting his criminological interests in extension of his literary life work. The English edition is given below.

Costello, P. (1991). *Conan Doyle detective: the true crimes investigated by the creator of Sherlock Holmes*. London: Robinson.

Feature: This is the UK edition of the book. For the most part it is the same book as abovementioned. The difference lies in the table of contents wherein chapter 9 (on George Edalji) and 14 (on Oscar Slater) have been split in sub-sections. However, the main text of the book remained the same.

Wade, S. (2013). *Conan Doyle and the Crimes Club: The creator of Sherlock Holmes and his criminological friends*. England: Fonthill.

Feature: Conan Doyle and his extra-curricular life as club-member.

On Sherlock Holmes and the applied science in the canon:

O'Brien, J. (2013). *The scientific Sherlock Holmes: Cracking the case through science and forensics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Feature: a historical overview of the scientific developments in Sherlock Holmes' times and its possible applications by Sherlock Holmes in his work.

Other perspectives:

Konnikova, M. (2013). *Mastermind: How to think like Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Viking/Penguin group.

Feature: a psychological study for the application of Sherlock Holmes methods in a practical setting of using the mind.

Reference material for reading the canon

Bunson, M. E. (1995). *The Sherlock Holmes encyclopedia*. London: Pavilion Books Limited.

Feature: very detailed with ample illustrations and searchable from a wide range of entries. Because, for Jeremy Brett only his year of birth is given, it becomes clear the books has been published before September 1995.

Hardwicke, E. (Speaker). (2003). *Elementary My Dear Watson: An interview with Edward Hardwicke* [Sherlock Holmes Complete Granada Television Series box set]. : Blue Underground Ltd.

Feature: An interview with Edward Hardwicke (actor: Dr. John H. Watson) on the making of the Granada series of Sherlock Holmes with Jeremy Brett.

Manners, T. (1997). *The man who became Sherlock Holmes: The tortured mind of Jeremy Brett*. London: Virgin books/Virgin publishing ltd.

Feature: it deals with the difficulties and destructiveness of playing Sherlock Holmes for Jeremy Brett.

Redmond, C. (2009). *Sherlock Holmes handbook*. Toronto: Dundurn Press.

Feature: from the description of the adventures in the canon, its characters, the different canon editions, Conan Doyle, it also deals with historical issues in the adventures, and ends with an update of recent developments (media, Holmesian communities).

Ross, T.W. (1997). *Good old index: the Sherlock Holmes handbook*. Columbia, SC: Camden House, Inc.

Feature: an easy access index with searchable by every possible entry present in the canon adventures of Sherlock Holmes.



Source: Conan Doyle, A. (2007), p. 1111 (*The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger*) By Frank Wiles in *Strand Magazine*, 1927