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ODSJEK ZA ANGLISTIKU

FINAL THESIS

**TRANSLATING COMICS: TRANSLATION CHALLENGES ANALYZED THROUGH
EXAMPLES OF DEADPOOL COMIC SERIES**

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Sarajevo, 2020

Contents

Abstract	2
Introduction	3
Defining comics	4
History of comics	7
Classification of comics	9
Comics in Translation Studies	11
Similarities and differences of comics translation with translating of other media	12
Genre-specific aspects in comics translation	13
Translation strategies	13
Localization, Domesticizing and Foreignizing	15
The concept of constrained translation	17
Verbal elements	19
Proper names	19
Titles	20
Nonverbal elements.....	21
Comic format	21
Inscriptions.....	22
Onomatopoeia	22
Case study: Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly and Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.....	24
Translation of verbal elements.....	28
Translation of nonverbal elements.....	34
Conclusion	44
Bibliography	46
Primary sources	46
Secondary sources	46

Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to examine the specific challenges of comics translations, and to determine whether the translator achieved and preserved the meaning without affecting and changing the content and characters in the translation process of the comic material. This is done through examination of different areas of comics where verbal messages appear and by analyzing the Serbian translation of Marvel's *Deadpool* comic series. This paper also discusses the comics elements as they are highly relevant and hold a key role in the translation process. Elements of comics serve as a basis for the analysis of the translation procedures and strategies.

Since the *Deadpool* comic series is abundant in cultural as well as historical humor and references, and Deadpool himself as a character is of a rather challenging nature, the translator had a demanding task in the process of translation. Nevertheless, the study shows that the specifics of translated material were delivered and adapted successfully.

Keywords: comics, translation, comics translation, Serbian translation, source language, target language, Deadpool

Introduction

Comics are a pervasive literary and art form based on the employment of both words and images. This unique combination of words and images has successfully been used to tell different kind of stories and convey different information from history, science, literature, etc. These graphic narratives appear in various formats and are rich in history, culture and tradition what, in return, highly affects the process of translation.

Translating comics can be considered simple, since there is not a lot of text narrative and the fact that comics are usually regarded as an artistic form of a lower status. At the same time, any form of translation requires excellent knowledge in certain aspects and specifics of source material. In examining the difficulties of comics translation, various aspects, elements and traits tend to be overlooked or neglected. Translating aspects and language features such as onomatopoeia, proper names and titles do not appear in comics exclusively. However, a translator should be aware that comics can employ some of these forms rather specifically and that such usage can only be found in comics. Along with being aware of the editing practices, limited space, interplay between visual and textual part and other elements and language features, a translator should understand comics as a very culture-specific form as well. It is the only way to ensure that the translation quality will not suffer since comics and translated comics are equally embedded in modern culture.

Defining comics

Defining comics influences the interpretation, helps a translator develop a better understanding of what comics are and, in return, provides a better translation. Literary critics used to regard comics as a lower form of mass entertainment, and, unfortunately, it used to reflect the common misconception of this medium.

In 1992, Art Spiegelman's graphic novel *Maus* won a Pulitzer Prize for literature. It was previously unthinkable for a comic book to be recognized and praised as one of the best works in literature and journalism. This graphic narrative is the true story of an Auschwitz survivor. Spiegelman uses an unconventional animal cast to tell the story of the Holocaust, of horrors that the Jews faced in Europe during the World War II and of the enduring pain of those who survived. *Maus* is just one brilliant example of the power and capability of the comics to communicate profound ideas through a combination of text and images (Duncan & Smith, 2009).

Potential complex and profound expression of comics as both literary and visual art forms is widely recognized today (as cited in Duncan & Smith, 2009, p. 1). Even popular mass-produced superhero comics targeted at younger audience with less depth (compared to works such as *Maus*) are considered art forms. Such pieces are considered art forms because they are created in a set of limitations, materials and techniques and a translator should be aware of these aspects.

What exactly are comics? How do we define them and how does it affect translation? Before going through scholarly definitions, we should acknowledge that, in working with comics, a translator is dealing with a particular kind of sequential art (Eisner, 2000). Compared to stand-alone art pieces, which are often based on invoking an emotional response by capturing a single moment, sequential art is usually focused on storytelling. Discussion of definitions must begin by separating the comic book medium from the semantic confusion of the term *comics* (Duncan & Smith, 2009). It is certainly difficult to find any meaningful connection between such a term and, for example, a comic book like above mentioned Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, which deals with the horrors of the Holocaust and which is certainly not comical. Therefore, the word '*comics*' can be confusing and misleading in regard to the nature of many publications that carry this label (Saraceni, 2003).

As will be discussed in the historical overview, early American comic books started out as collections of newspapers strips that were of a humorous nature. By the time that comics became

recognized, and even though featured science fiction and adventure stories not told for laughs had become popular among readers, the label of “comics” had already been semantically attached to that art form (Duncan & Smith, 2009). That label has endured for over nine decades and it is still misleading.

Towards the end of the 1970s, in an attempt to create a term, which would provide a better description of comics, a new term, ‘graphic novel’, was established to replace ‘comic book’. For artists, labeling their work as a graphic novel seemingly separated them from the connotations associated with early comic books. For publishers, graphic novel seemingly elevated the status of the comics and promoted them in bookstores, libraries and the academic world. In practice, there is no real distinction between ‘comics’ and ‘graphic novels’ labels today and it has nothing to do with content or with any other feature (Saraceni, 2003).

Research by Federico Zanettin (2018) points out that there is no consensus among scholars and researchers on the universal definition of comics. Nonetheless, a translator should be familiar with different approaches to this term in order to have a wider perspective. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* published in 2009 defines ‘comic’ as “a magazine for children that tells a story using comic strips”; however, throughout the years comics evolved from comic strips to a very variable art form that is not reserved only for young readers.

“Depending on the theoretical framework adopted and on the context in which the term is used, comics have been variously termed a ‘genre’, ‘medium’, ‘language’, ‘semiotic system’ etc.” (Zanettin, 2014, p. 5); however, instead of referring to comics as a genre, it is more appropriate to refer to the genres of comics. The Longman Dictionary offers a definition that is a too narrow to include a different range of works labeled as comics.

In *Understanding Comics* (1994) Scott McCloud defines comics as “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer” (McCloud, 1994, p. 9). McCloud’s definition adds a functional dimension which seems irrelevant and limiting. An artist can produce a comic entirely as a means of self-expression without ever reaching another reader and still be a comic. Furthermore in his work, McCloud explicitly celebrates ahistorical nature of comics by talking about the narrative sequences of pictures produced by William Hogarth and in the eighteenth century, pre-Columbian picture manuscripts from eleventh-century Mexico, Egyptian tomb paintings and scribes, and the Bayeux

tapestry (McCloud, 1994, p. 10-14) as examples of comics produced prior to the nineteenth century.

Aaron Meskin (2007) argues that the ahistorical nature of McCloud's definition distorts our perspective and appreciation of the historical artefacts and simultaneously establishes "an ersatz history for comics—one that might legitimate their place in the world of art" (Meskin, 2007, p. 374). Meskin further points out that "those interested in comics suffer from a sort of aesthetic insecurity. Comics have not been taken seriously as art throughout most of the last 150 years, and those interested in the medium seem to feel need to provide an apology for their interest" (Meskin, 2007, p. 374). Comics, however, should be understood by reference to its own history because "comics have earned the right to be considered art on their own merits" (Meskin, 2007, p. 376), which makes it unnecessary to go prior to the nineteenth century when comics actually emerged.

Groensteen (2009) in his *System of Comics* rejects the essentialist approach and the idea of essential definition of comics, because, as he states, any single comic "only actualizes certain potentialities of the medium, to the detriment of others that are reduced or excluded" (Groensteen, 2009, p. 12). A list of attributes and aspects that are characteristic for comics may be long, but any comic will generally only have a few of these attributes, and hardly every single one of them. Therefore, there is no single attribute that is essential to comics and there is no single aspect that is present in all comics. Of course, all comics are visual, but that is hardly an attribute exclusive only to comics, and thus offers no solid ground for a separate definition.

Some scholars like Douglas Wolk (2007) even refuse to find a single unified definition. "If you try to draw a boundary that includes everything that counts as comics and excludes everything that doesn't, two things happen: first, the medium always wriggles across that boundary, and second, whatever politics are implicit in the definition always boomerang on the definer" (Wolk, 2007, p. 17).

We have seen that defining comics is difficult, and that it even gets neglected occasionally. Some scholars do include historic art examples such as the Bayeux tapestry or William Hogarth's paintings, while others do not. Some researches do include single-panel cartoons, while others do not. Some consider the image dominant in comics, some consider the image as something that can be "read" like text, while others see the complimentary relation between image and text. Some

people describe comics as a medium or a genre, some as multimedial. However, all of the before mentioned definitions offer a good understanding of what comics are.

What for a translator is important to keep in mind, is the real diversity of the art phenomenon that is generally described as “comics”. Comics can range from popular superhero comics, to journalistic non-fiction comics, to the webcomic, to Japanese manga, to limited edition artwork books, to instructional pamphlets, to lengthy graphic novels, and those are just the recognized examples. All these different forms of comics employ a different way of reading and analyzing, and leave different questions to scholars and translators. It is hard to write about “comics” in general, because a generic, conventional comic does not exist.

History of comics

Comics as we know them today were established in the late nineteenth century. However, since comics are a form of sequential art which has been a part of human culture and expression from the very beginning, the origins of modern comic books can be traced can throughout the whole history (Zanettin, 2014).

As McCloud points out, the beginning of the process which formed comics as they are known today started with the invention of printing, with which this art-form could be widely spread among people (McCloud, 1994). In Europe, the origins of comic books as they are known today are credited to William Hogarth and Rodolphe Töpffer and Wilhelm Busch. Hogarth’s satirical and moralistic series of six paintings and engravings from 1731 named *A Harlot’s Progress* (followed by another series in 1735 named *A Rake’s Progress*) were meant to be read in a sequence. The nineteenth century illustrated short stories of Rodolphe Töpffer and Wilhelm Busch, which consisted of pictures and accompanied by narration, were mostly oriented towards children and produced for educational purposes rather than for entertainment (Duncan & Smith, 2009).

In the United States, on the other hand, comic strips made their first appearance in newspapers. In 1894, *The Yellow Kid*, created by Richard F. Outcalt, first appeared in New York newspapers. It was soon followed by numerous newspaper comics which were read by the entire family. (Duncan & Smith, 2009). *The Yellow Kid* was one of the first comics printed in full color that included dialogue within speech balloons, which would not appear Europe and Japan until the 1920s. Before

that, European *'proto-comics'* did not feature balloons, but only narrations written underneath the images. Therefore, certain American comics were translated as illustrated stories. Their speech balloons were removed and the dialogue was rewritten into rhymed sentences underneath each panel. This localization practice was especially common in Italy (Zanettin, 2014).

The introduction of the superhero genre and the periodical, cheap comic book form during the 1930s marked a boom in the American comic book industry. Apart from predominant superhero genre, western, romance, and adventure stories were popular among readers. World War II significantly influenced the development of superhero genre, which gained popularity because of stories of patriotic superheroes (mostly Superman and Captain America) who were fighting Adolf Hitler, Nazi or Japanese soldiers. Gradually the so-called *'Golden Age of Comics'* was slowed down by an increased negative publicity and campaign against the comics as one of the supposed causes of juvenile delinquency, post-war loss of faith in patriotic heroes, and the fact that television became the dominant mass medium (Duncan & Smith, 2009).

The 1960s signified the *'Silver Age of Comics'*. It was characterized by *'Comics Code Authority'* and the introduction of a new generation of comic heroes. Comics Code Authority was a self-regulatory set of rules established by the publishers themselves which determines what could and what could not be published in comic books. A new generation of characters such as *Hulk, Spider-Man, Iron Man, Dr. Strange* and *Thor* were introduced to the world. Europe, mainly Italy, France and Belgium started producing their own comic books as well. They were first published in comic magazines, and released as albums after completion. European publishers were not limited by Comics Code Authority which resulted in having a wider range of genres, a bigger audience and a comic book culture that was different from the initial American one (Duncan & Smith, 2009; Petersen, 2010).

From the 1970s onwards, *Marvel Comics* and *DC Comics*, the two major American comic book publishers, gradually moved away from the Comics Code Authority regulations and morality of the *Silver Age*. Their artists and writers started introducing different and more relevant themes such as social issues of the day, from racism to exploited workers to pollution and dangers of drug use.

Since 1980s, comics are no longer seen as literature exclusively for children and teenagers, and they have gradually been recognized as a medium capable of producing quality works for the adults

as well. The range of genres expanded and CCA (Comics Code Authority) lost its authority in the comic world production. CCA was never fully abandoned, but it was modified several times. For example, in 1990s the homosexuality ban was revised and, nowadays, CCA is nothing more than a mere formality and most series are being published without its approval.

In 1986, two graphic novels, Alan Moore's *Watchmen* and Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* were published. Although both superhero comics, they primary focus on social and political issues of the time rather than on 'typical' superhero action. Both of these comics served as a comment on political situation, the Cold War and the possibility of outbreak of a nuclear war. *Watchmen* and *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* are seen as highly important, because they signify the beginning of the 'Modern Age of Comics' (Wolk, 2007). Since their publishing onwards, various notable works of comics dealing with social, political and emotional issues were published both in Europe and the United States of America. For example, Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (dealing with holocaust and death camps), Brian K. Vaughan's *Pride of Baghdad* (takes place during the second war in Iraq and tells a story of captive lions) or Jason Aaron's *Scalped* (a detective story of an Indian reservation, organized crime, poverty, drug addiction and alcoholism and the preservation of a cultural identity). Consequently, comics today are understood as a medium rather than a genre (Duncan & Smith, 2009; Petersen, 2010).

Classification of comics

Classification of comics can be done in several ways since comics have been "referred to as a publication format, a medium, a genre and a semiotic system, depending on the approach" (Zanettin, 2004, p. 1).

Comics can be categorized according to artistic features, function and themes, and according to publishing policies and format. Comics can be also subdivided according to area or country they come from i.e. American and British comics, European comics, East Asian comics etc. because "different cultures introduce different kinds of comics" (Rota, 2014, p. 81).

When it comes to artistic features, comics can be divided into many categories. Every artist has their own style and employs a range of styles in their works, but two main comic art styles worth mentioning are *iconic* and *realistic* style. The iconic or *cartoony* style uses the wide variety of lines

and characters are usually simplified. On the other hand, the realistic style employs iconic forms with the sense (McCloud, 1994).

Comics can be read for various reasons – “like most printed matter, comics are mainly produced and read for leisure or for educational purposes and can generally be categorized according to their primary function (entertainment vs. instruction)” (Zanettin, 2014, p. 5). Accordingly, comics can be subdivided to two main functional divisions: fictional and educational genres. Most comics are fictional, but there is a notable amount of educational and instructional comics for different readers and age groups around the world as well. Apart from functional division and genres, comics can be further classified according to their theme. Often the boundaries between genres are not easily traced. However, we can distinguish three main types or ‘*super-genres*’: comedy, epics and tragedy. Comedy genres range from humorous comics strips reserved for children to a social satire targeted at adults. Epics is thematically the most varied genre and it includes comic books from science-fiction, war, crime and detective fiction, horror, romance, adventure to historical fiction. Tragedy comics appeared only recently and they are mostly popular in Japan, therefore this sub-genre has not been studied enough (Zanettin, 2014, p. 5-6).

According to their form and to the length of the particular comic, comics can be divided into three groups. *Cartoon* is the shortest and one of the oldest forms of comics, which consists of a single panel (image) and a textual commentary. Cartoons are usually satirical and related to social or political issues. The second form is *comic strip*, which generally consists of three panels. Finally, the last category is a *comic book*, which includes almost all comics from short stories, long series to graphic novels.

Format usually refers to the publishing policy of a particular comic. This classification is related to the forms because some of the subcategories share the same names, although they refer to different aspects. Short stories can usually be found in magazines, while cartoons and comic strips are more common for newspapers. These forms are then eventually reprinted in collections. Comic collections generally contain works of a single author. Thematically connected collections by various authors are very rare. Comic series are usually published in weekly or monthly issues. (Rota, 2014).

Comics in Translation Studies

Comics translation was not investigated within a particular field for a long time. It was instead studied across several different disciplines, such as linguistics, semiotics, literary studies and criticism and communication studies (Kaindl, 2010). According to Zanettin (2014), Roman Jakobson was one of the first to mention comics in the field of Translation Studies in his 1960's study *Concluding statement: Linguistics and poetics*. Furthermore, the translation of comics was not investigated in great detail as comics were not considered interesting enough from an artistic point of view. Instead, they were viewed as a mass-produced entertainment. However, this attitude has been changing since the late 1980s (Sabin, 1996):

“With the cultural turn in Translation Studies (...), comics as a topic of Translation Studies became more interesting because so-called mass literature, too, was now an object of study. Moreover, as translation was no longer merely referred to as a linguistic operation, multimodal texts such as films, children's books (...) and comics increasingly became the centre of attention in case studies in the field of translation.” (Kaindl, 2010, p. 37)

Even though this specific translation has now been acknowledged into a clearer field, some theoreticians find that the field of Translation Studies has not yet truly recognized the specifics of comics. Celotti (2014), D'arcangelo and Zanettin (2004) and Kaindl (2010) argue that contemporary literature and research on the translation of comics is divided and limited to linguistic features which can be found in comics but are not always specific to the them (e.g. onomatopoeia, proper names, etc.). Authors also remain focused on a single comic series (e.g. *Calvin and Hobbes*) or on a single genre (humorous comics). However, as D'arcangelo and Zanettin (2004) and Kaindl (1999) point out, some studies are also more oriented towards semiotics and focused on the relationship between text and image. These studies see the comics translation as 'constrained', or spatially limited translation (Zanettin, 2014, p. 20).

In his essay *Comics in Translation Studies*, Federico Zanettin suggests that the translator should not focus only on the text, but also become familiar and take into consideration other parts of the discourse that is being translated, even if these parts remain unchanged. (Zanettin 2014, p. 2).

Similarities and differences of comics translation with translating of other media

As was stated previously, comics are not only been defined as a genre of literature, but also as a separate medium. Similarities and differences in translating comics, literature and film can be divided into two categories. The first category is textual elements, which are related to the text part itself. The second category is technical elements, which is related to discourse and to the form rather than to the content. Textual elements generally can be modified and adapted by translator, while the technical elements are usually remain unchanged by the translator or are only slightly modified by the publisher (for example, the format of the published work can be changed).

Both translated works of literature and comics take into consideration various stylistic features of the text, like syntax, lexical choice and sentence structure. Even though these stylistic features are also common in the process of translating film, they are more apparent in written media. During the translation of both literature and comics, it is necessary to keep the text coherent and, therefore, the translator cannot presume that the dialogues or narrations in comics are independent clusters of text placed in balloons or captions. However, literature, unlike comics, has no limitations that would prevent the translator from modifying the text. On the other hand, comics translation is limited by the size of the captions or speech balloons.

Both film and comics translations are limited by space. Whereas comics translation only encounters spatial limitation, film translation, whether it is subtitles or dubbing, encounters both spatial and temporal limitations. Spatial limitation considers the length of the lines in the case of subtitling, or the limit determined by the lips movement in the case of dubbing. Temporal limitation depends on the screen duration of the subtitle or on the length of the speech that is being translated. Comic books translators also have to take into consideration the graphic features because comics, unlike film, visualize sound. Images are an important part of the analysis and translation. Both comics and film include some untranslatable elements. The translator of film subtitles cannot modify the visual part of the film, while the translator of comics cannot modify the artworks in comics.

Genre-specific aspects in comics translation

The following sections discuss the specific and challenging aspects of the comics that are relevant to the translation process, namely different translation strategies, the concept of '*constrained translation*', and translating verbal and nonverbal elements.

Translation strategies

Klaus Kaindl (1999) and Nadine Celotti (2014) provide their own classifications of possible translation strategies for comics with different approaches. Kaindl draws on strategies proposed by Delebastita (1989) used for analyzing audiovisual translation and suggests that these strategies can also be applied to comics translation. Delabastita describes six categories, which Kaindl matched with his own definitions:

- *repetitio*: transferring source content, text or image elements over to target language content without modifying them
- *adiectio*: adding text or image elements to target material which were not a part of the source material
- *detractio*: removing only certain parts of text or image elements in translation
- *transmutatio*: modifying order of original text or image elements in translation
- *substitutio*: replacing text or image elements from source text with culturally "equivalent" elements in the target text
- *deletio*: completely removing text or image elements (Kaindl, 1999, p. 275-283)

Celotti, however, solely focusses on text and verbal messages in comics. She remarks that there is a range of translation strategies in '*linguistic paratext*', which represents: "the verbal signs outside the balloon and inside the drawing: inscriptions, road signs, newspapers, onomatopoeia, sometimes dialogues, and so on." (Celotti, 2014, p. 38).

Linguistic paratext can have both visual and verbal function within comics. When paratext is embedded in the image, it can be difficult to translate and the translator has to work together with the artist and the publisher who eventually makes the final decision. According to Celotti's research, this is what makes the paratext an interesting and a challenging specific of comics translation. While the other loci of translation can usually be transferred to target language

consistently, the linguistic paratext can require various translation strategies (Celotti, 2014). These translation strategies are described following the order of Celotti's article. First, translator has the option to translate the source text to target language with modifying the image if it is necessary. This often happens when the verbal message is deeply embedded in the image and plays a crucial role in understanding the complete story of the comic. Another option, however, when the verbal message is crucial to the story, is to provide a translation with a footnote. Translator can opt for this strategy when the text is, again, deeply embedded in the artwork or when the verbal message becomes an iconic message that a translation within the image would be intrusive. The third strategy is leaving the paratext untranslated in the source language and without a footnote. Function of some messages is more visual than verbal e.g. graffiti, newspaper titles or advertisements. Such messages serve to emphasize the setting of the story and, unless it will not cause any kind of non-coherence, they can be left untranslated.

Another strategy is a cultural adaptation. The translator can translate the source text in a way that the target text is both translated and adapted in order to fit the target culture. This can be part of an overall strategy of domesticizing, which can easily be found in Serbian translation of *Deadpool* comics. At times, the translator can opt for the strategy that allows deleting the linguistic paratext altogether. It is a common practice when leaving the source text untranslated would cause confusion and when that specific piece of information is not crucial to understand the story and a reader will not feel like they are missing something.

In practice and as Celotti's final strategy, there is the policy of mixing and combining strategies. These strategies can be found in all sort of scenarios and combinations. For example, in order to make a coherent translation, the translator can go for partly translating or adapting, and partly in deleting, or leaving the linguistic paratext untranslated (Celotti, 2014, p. 40-42).

Localization, Domesticizing and Foreignizing

The process of localization involves “taking a product and making it linguistically, technically, and culturally appropriate to the target locale where it will be used and sold” (Zanettin 2014, p. 200). Although not explicitly mentioned in this definition, localization is related to the ‘translation’ of products like software products and videogames. Zanettin points out that localization framework can be used for analyzing translated comics. Localization means translating the source material (modifying text or rearranging and omitting the panels) and translating formats and other related specifications.

In his essay *Aspects of Adaptation: The Translation of Comics Formats*, Valerio Rota (2014) argues that two translation strategies may be used while translating and adapting comics: d and foreignizing (Rota, 2014). Domesticizing “involves the publication of a foreign comic in the local format, notwithstanding the characteristics of a foreign publication” and may be “accompanied by many alterations of the original comic” (Rota, 2014, p. 86). The process of foreignizing means that “the comics keeps, as far as possible, its original cultural and editorial characteristics” (Rota, 2014, p. 84).

Domesticizing strategies often modify and adapt the source material in order to make the target language material easily approachable for readers. Some of these strategies are related exclusively to format changes while others modify text or even the images as well. Rota lists six domesticizing strategies (Rota, 2014, p.86). Half of them deal with the alterations of the format, and the rest modify the discourse. The strategies related to changes in the format include:

- shrinking or magnification of panels and pages
- publishing black-and-white comics in color, or, vice versa, publishing color comics in black and white
- mutilation of text (Rota, 2014, p. 86)

Shrinking or magnification of source elements is a rather common procedure when a comic in the source language is adapted to fit a different format in the target language. Mutilation of text is often a consequence of modifying the original format to a smaller one. This practice can also be considered a strategy for modifying the text. In practice, translated text tends to become longer than the source text and therefore becomes difficult to be placed back in the speech balloons. The

translator adapts the text by choosing the shortest words and leaving out everything that is non-functional. How much will be reduced also depends on the skill of the letterer, who writes texts in speech balloons whether by hand or mechanically.

The other three domesticizing strategies related to modifying the discourse are:

- re-arrangement of panels and pages
- omission of panels and pages
- cultural or political censorship (Rota, 2014, p. 87)

Occasionally, the proportions between the source format and the target one are too different and publishing houses may decide to rearrange the panels and pages in order to fit the new format. It is one of the biggest alterations since this strategy disrupts the graphic balance originally established by the artist. Another strategy is omitting a single page or entire pages in order to fit the story within a lower number of pages of the target format. Consequently, it is necessary to rearrange remaining panels. Finally, some changes may be done for cultural or political reasons. If something is considered too 'strange' to be understood in the target environment, it can be eliminated or replaced with an element that is considered more appropriate, e.g. more disturbing or controversial.

Foreignizing strategies are less common than domesticizing strategies. They are aimed to keep cultural and editorial characteristics of the original comics. This strategy is mainly adopted in countries with the readers who appreciate the artistic importance of comics and who would not view drastic alterations of the original as something favorable. (Rota, 2014, p. 84). The most common foreignizing strategy is preserving the original format of the comic books, i.e. the original size in which the comics were published. Even though the number and size of the pages are fundamental elements for comics as an art form, their translated editions are so heavily altered in order to meet expectations of different readership and cultures.

Similarly to domesticizing, foreignizing affects both the format and the content of the comic book because it may or may not involve the adaptation of graphic content. Verbal elements such as onomatopoeia and titles that are graphically rendered and considered an integral part are left untranslated because the mainstream readers do not tolerate altering and modifying them. Foreignizing strategy normally has the advantage of preserving many of the features of the original

work but it mostly depends on economic concerns and to the taste of the public (Rota, 2014, p. 85-86).

The concept of constrained translation

Comics translations are ‘constrained translations’, which means that the written text within comics needs to be translated as associated to another communication medium, notably images (Mayoral, Kelly and Gallardo, 1988).

Comics have certain *quantitative restrictions* and are spatially limited due to the fact that written message can only appear in speech balloons, text boxes and as a part of image panels. Grun and Dollerup (2003) describe ‘constrained translation’, as “(...) translations that are, for practical or commercial reasons, spatially limited (...)” (p. 198). Therefore, the translator is dealing with limited space available and they have to make the translation concise without affecting the story in any way. According to Kaindl (2010), modern technology and digitization practices facilitate the work of translators. They can now use graphics software and different editing programs, which help solving the special limitations by modifying the size of the handwritten characters. Nonetheless, a font cannot be too small and affect the reading experience.

The *qualitative restrictions*, as referred to by Valero Garcés (as mentioned in Guillaume, 2015), result from the multimodality of comics. This interplay between the text and the images produces a combined effect that text or images separately would not be able to achieve. Since both the text and the images in a comic book are a part of the story and affect the narrative, the translator is not only obliged to provide translations of both the verbal (text) and nonverbal (images) elements but also to preserve the interaction of these elements. This means fewer options and strategies to choose from. Substitution, for example, can pose a problem because the culturally unique visual object is immediately visible and cannot be easily modified or adapted (Guillaume, 2015).

Guillaume’s article provides a possible example of how this word-image interaction affects the translation: the cartoon *National Character* from Simmonds’ *Literary Life* shows several groups of people walking in the English countryside. While they are passing past a bed of daffodils, every individual starts reciting the famous Wordsworth poem *Daffodils* (1807). According to Guillaume, there are theoretically four main possible strategies in translating the reference to *Daffodils*:

- keeping the English source text since there is a great chance that the poem itself will have been read in the original language during English class and recognized
- keeping the English version and adding a footnote to underline the cultural reference
- using the published French translation
- transposing the joke (Guillaume, 2015)

Transposing the joke (*substitutio*) is acceptable if the translator assumes that French readers are not familiar with Wordsworth's "Daffodils" at all. Transposition would be achieved either by providing a French poem about daffodils or by finding another object or flowers, which would represent to French literature what daffodils represent to English literature. However, this is not an option without altering the source images because the daffodils are visually present on the original page and cannot be replaced by something else (Guillaume, 2015).

Publishers, especially in Europe, avoid adapting and altering images in translated editions as much as possible. They do not only want to avoid the costs of the redrawing process of comics, but moreover, their readership expects to get an edition that is close to original (Rota, 2014). However, Rota explains why some of the comic books formats are adapted to fit the target culture:

Besides revealing the history of comics in a given cultural setting, formats have important effects on the production of comics, on their style, and also on the attitude of readers towards this form of art. The page, then, imposing artistic restrictions and potentialities, is not just an incidental feature, but rather a fundamental creative element in comics. This element, with its proportions and its characteristics, cannot be easily modified in translation through editorial processes without altering the original work substantially; therefore, changing the size of the original publication is an operation which has important consequences for the translated comic and its enjoyment. (p. 83)

Occasionally the images of the source comic can actually help the translator since they serve as a sort of guide to the translator: "However, though comics will in some cases impose certain spatial constraints on the translator, the visual should not be merely viewed as an obstacle. It is the element that may also potentially reinforce the textual, clear up confusion, offer clues, inspire and generally facilitate the process of translation." (Borodo, 2015, p. 25).

Verbal elements

Verbal elements (i.e. the elements constructed in language) such as proper names and titles play a significant part in comics or graphic novels.

Proper names

Professor Peter Newmark in his work *Paragraphs on Translation* (1993) states that “proper names are translation difficulty in any text. In literature, it has to be determined whether the name is real or invented. In non-literary texts, translators have to ask themselves what if any additional explanatory or classificatory information has to be supplied for the TL readership” (p. 15).

Furthermore, in *A Textbook of Translation* (1988) Newmark suggests that “normally, people's first and surnames are transferred, thus preserving their nationality, and assuming that their names have no connotations in the text” (p. 214). There are only a few exceptions such as the names of monarchs and saints, which are sometimes translated. However, there are no universal rules on translating or transferring proper names and it is usually up to the translator. In comics, names can have connotations or can be exophoric references and as such should be taken into consideration.

Grun and Dollerup (2003) study comments on the example of the Danish translation of the American strip *Calvin and Hobbes* by Bill Watterson. In the original strip, Calvin's name is a reference to a French theologian and reformer John Calvin. In the Danish translation, it has been translated to ‘Steen’, a common name for boys in Denmark. ‘Hobbes’ is a reference to an English philosopher Thomas Hobbes and it has been translated into ‘Stoffer’ in the Danish edition. It is the abbreviation of another common name ‘Christoffer’ and a wordplay of ‘stof’ which is a textile since Hobbes is a stuffed tiger toy (Grun and Dollerup, 2003). These ‘substitutio’ name forms in Danish do not have the same connotations as the original names in English. The plot of this comic strip follows a young boy Calvin who makes observations about childhood and life in general and is joined by his imaginary tiger friend Hobbes. It is filled with philosophical implications, including the names of the main characters who provide various insights into the meaning of life on many occasions. There is a shift in meaning in the Danish edition because original English names, and therefore the title, are targeted at the older audience since they understand the philosophical reference. The Danish translation does not have this type of reference for the educated readers but introduces an alliteration by matching the new names (Grun and Dollerup, 2003).

Names do not necessarily have to be implications or have any additional meaning to be creative. A comic writer can still come up with a name that sounds creative because of its literary style or stylistic feature, e.g. figures of speech such as alliteration, assonance, etc. Grun and Dollerup (2003) mention an example of translating assonance and alliteration in the Danish edition of the *Donald Duck*. Both names ‘Donald Duck’ and ‘Daisy Duck’ in the original comic are alliterations. In the Danish edition, ‘Duck’ is faithfully translated to ‘And’, while ‘Donald’ and ‘Daisy’ are translated to ‘Anders’ and ‘Andersine’. This translation continues the sound play of the original and Danish language allows for the female form ‘Andersine’ which makes a close auditory match to male form ‘Anders’. This means that the Danish translation used ‘substitutio’ and ‘adiectio’ strategies. Furthermore, names of Donald Duck’s nephews ‘Huey’, ‘Dewey’ and ‘Louie’ are good examples of assonance. In the Danish translation, this assonance is replaced (‘substitutio’) by alliteration and they become ‘Rip’, ‘Rap’ and ‘Rup’. This is also a case of ‘adiectio’ translation strategy since the Danish names ‘Rip’, ‘Rap’ and ‘Rup’ are phonetic minimal pairs that begin and end with identical letters, a different kind of wordplay than in the original comic, and ‘Rap’ is the Danish onomatopoeia for duck’s quack (Grun and Dollerup, 2003).

Titles

The translator should aim to translate all verbal messages in comics, but in practice, not all of them will be translated. Titles are another area where verbal messages can be identified. Generally speaking, one of the main functions of titles is to be attractive and they are often modified and adapted from one country to another. Strategies in translating film titles can be seen as prototypical example. Film titles are usually translated and adapted, but can also stay untranslated if they reveal their origin and have an exotic touch. Therefore, apart from having to translate titles and keep their marketing function, the translator should also pay attention to the possible relation between titles and the visual messages. (Celotti, 2014, p. 38).

Kaindl (2010) suggests that titles were translated adapted for the target culture during the first half of the 20th century, and that since the 1960’s it has become a common practice to leave the original title, especially if it contains the protagonists’ names. Nonetheless, this is not a general rule and many contemporary comics contradict this, such as the part of the *Deadpool* series that will be analyzed in this paper, viz. *Deadpool Volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool Volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* and their Serbian translation *Dedpul: Za jastučnicu dolara*.

Nonverbal elements

Translating comics does not only involve the linguistic but also the graphic side of it. Nonverbal elements such as comic format, inscriptions and onomatopoeia are highly relevant in the translation process. Inscriptions and onomatopoeia are treated as nonverbal elements because Rota (2014) argues that even though they are representations of sounds and speech, these elements are “graphic devices which can be (and are) employed to provoke specific effects on the reader” (p. 79).

Comic format

Comic format is a very culturally specific feature. The size and the content vary from culture to culture for different practical and historical reasons, as well as according to the expectations and tastes of the targeted readers. These cultural differences can significantly affect translation process, and consequently, make it more expensive:

Besides revealing the history of comics in a given cultural setting, formats have important effects on the production of comics, on their style, and on the attitude of the reader towards this form of art. The page, then, imposing artistic restrictions and potentialities, is not just an incidental feature, but rather a fundamental creative element in comics. This element, with its proportions and its characteristics, cannot be easily modified in translation through editorial processes without altering the original work substantially; therefore, changing the size of the original publication is an operation which has important consequences for the translated comic and its enjoyment. (Rota, 2014, p. 83)

In other words, Rota states that adapting the comic format of the source culture to the comic format of the target culture proves to be impossible without modifying the content of the original work. Very often the success of a translated edition depends on the way in which it is modified and adapted to the target culture. Publishers have to make important decisions during the adaptation according to target culture priorities and their readership. For example, if the readers prefer colored comics, the publisher can opt for coloring an originally black and white comic, or to shrink the size of a comic in order to make it more appealing, or, by contrast, if the target readers prefer to have the original format, the publisher can leave the comic as it is (Rota, 2014, p. 84).

European and American publishers have different publishing practices and readers' expectations to meet. For instance, European publishers tend to alter format as little as possible because European readers respect the original works. While American readers enjoy reading weekly issues and shorter formats, Europeans prefer completed stories in a single issue.

Finally, Rota (2014, p. 84) proposes three different ways to translate formats:

- adaptation to a local format, which is a domesticizing strategy
- retention of the original format, which is a foreignizing strategy
- adoption of a third format, different from both the original and the local ones

Inscriptions

Inscriptions are linguistic elements inserted into the image which primarily describe the context of the story in concrete terms. They can bring up the local, temporal or atmospheric frame of a story and sometimes they convey entire plot sequences. Their translation depends on how integrated are they into the illustration. The more the inscriptions are related to the illustration, e.g., graffiti on walls, road plates, etc., the more challenging is to modify them and the more likely they will stay untranslated and kept in the original form. On the other hand, some inscriptions play a more important role and can even summarize plot units, e.g. newspaper articles or letters, and have to be translated since they are essential for readers to understand the plot. (Kaindl, 2010, p. 38)

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia as a figure of speech appears in various literary works from poetry, plays and novels and it does not exclusively appear in comics. Nonetheless, it does have a significant function because it is used to visualize the auditory dimension. In comics, onomatopoeia may appear inside or outside the speech balloons and it can be conventionalized (e.g. animal sounds and exclamations) as well as non-conventionalized. In both cases, translating onomatopoeia faces physical constraints related to the issues of space, fonts and typography. Kaindl (2010) states that in comics, in general, there are two methods of forming onomatopoeia: "sound description uses the derivation of conventional word classes with an onomatopoeic meaning ("sigh", "sob", etc.). Sound imitation creates new artificial words which, based on the sound qualities of vocals and consonants, creates onomatopoeia that fit the situation (e.g., roooooaaaaaar for a lion's roaring, drrrrrrrrring for the ringing of a telephone, etc.)" (Kaindl, 2010, p. 39). Whether onomatopoeia

will be translated or not depends on the retouching and modifying effort, the genre and the target readers. Translation strategies range from direct borrowing from the source text to literal translations as well as to creating new forms of onomatopoeia.

In an interview with Guillaume (2015, p. 100), comics translator Sztajn states that “some [onomatopoeic words] are so integrated into the language that they can be kept as they are, whereas others need to be translated, because you need to make the noise explicit”. At the same time, it is well known that the representation of sounds does not always match between languages. For example, a dog can say ‘vau-vau’ in Serbian and ‘woof-woof’ in English. Onomatopoeia might be culturally specific and, for example, can represent censored expressions of insults or swear words (e.g. combinations of consonants such as ‘igrftjx!’ in Spanish), and in these cases the meaning might not be only familiar to the target language readership. (Valero-Garcés, 2014)

Moreover, Valero-Garcés (2014) claims that within every language exists a significant number of representations of sounds that come naturally as language itself. That means how, among other translation strategies, the translator can choose an equivalent and modify the source text onomatopoeia (‘substitutio’), or keep the original (‘repetitio’). Valero-Garcés’ research emphasizes that in comics translation, English onomatopoeia is generally replaced by Spanish equivalents, especially when it represents animal sounds, inarticulate human sounds, and the voicing of feelings and attitudes. On the other hand, onomatopoeic expressions representing artificial and mechanical sounds or motion and action are not translated and stay in their source English form, even when there is an equivalent form in Spanish (Valero-Garcés, 2014, p. 245-247). Therefore, leaving onomatopoeia untranslated (‘repetitio’) despite its unfamiliar and uncommon form in the target language is a possible translation strategy.

There are, however, other reasons for leaving onomatopoeic words untranslated. For the same reason that inscriptions stay preserved, if onomatopoeia is integrated into the image, translating requires extra costs for the publishers as the illustrations have to be retouched and altered. Apart from that, translating depends on “the prestige of the language” (Kaindl, 2010, p. 39). For example, onomatopoeia of English source is the most likely to stay untranslated because English onomatopoeic expressions have gained a prestige position thanks to the American long comics tradition and publishing (Kaindl, 2010).

Case study: Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly and Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.

The single issues in the collected editions of *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* were written by Gerry Duggan and Brian Posner, illustrated by Scott Koblish, Declan Shalvey and Mike Hawthorne, and lettered by VC's Joe Sabino. They were originally published in 2012 by Marvel Comics. The collected editions analyzed in this thesis are the 2014 reissued volumes of the single issues #13-19 and #20-25. The Serbian translation, *Dedpul: Za jastučnicu dolara*, is the 2017 translation by Draško Roganović published by Darkwood.

The analysis is mainly focused on the specifics of comics translation and translation strategies introduced in the previous chapters. Before moving on to translation challenges in the Serbian edition, it is necessary to provide the context of the Deadpool universe, since, as recommended by Kaindl's sociological approach (1999), context is important in producing a coherent translation. I want to underline that the aim of the analysis of Serbian translation of *Deadpool* series is not to characterize the translated material as "good" or "bad", but rather to observe before mentioned translation challenges as successful or unsuccessful in terms of preserving the overall plot and Deadpool's character traits.

Introduction to Deadpool

Originally created by artist Rob Liefeld and writer Fabian Nicieza, Deadpool made his first appearance as a seemingly throwaway antagonist in *The New Mutants* #98 (February 1991).

Known as “the Merc with a Mouth,” Deadpool, whose real name is Wade Wilson, hires himself out as a mercenary. He is trained in martial arts, armed with guns, swords, bombs and occasionally other weapons, and conducts his business while carrying on stream-of-consciousness banter and mocking his opponents. Between his witty chattering and acrobatic fighting style, Deadpool is also famous for his questionable grip on sanity and completely lacking the typical strong superhero moral center, which eventually transformed him into a popular antiheroic persona.

According to his origin story, Deadpool joined the Weapon X program (the program that gave Wolverine his powers) while he was dying of cancer. The experiment was successful, granting Deadpool a healing factor but left him with a horrifically scarred body. It is a product of his healing factor always fighting off the cancer inside of him. Deadpool is extremely sensitive to others seeing and reacting to his hideously deformed face and, therefore, wears a mask not to hide his identity, but to cover his disfigured face. Throughout his appearances in *X-force* and *The New Mutant* series as a recurring villain by various writers, Deadpool started to evolve into a more sympathetic character, if not an actual hero. The character at times abstained from mercenary killing, assisted other well-known Marvel heroes, and even sought to better himself following his romantic interest in X-Force’s Siryn (Booker, 2014).

Deadpool’s greatest changes came with his own ongoing title in 1997. Writer Joe Kelly emphasized Deadpool’s humorous elements that we know today and blended them seamlessly into the world of a deadly mercenary. Thanks to Kelly, the mercenary also began frequently breaking the fourth wall, something particularly rare in the Marvel universe (She-Hulk is the only other major character who regularly does this) and used to humorous effect. This trope became a firmly entrenched aspect of the character, persisting beyond Kelly’s writing, and followed up by later writers of Deadpool’s various series, including Christopher Priest, Gail Simone, and Deadpool’s cocreator Nicieza. Deadpool is aware that he is a fictional comic book character and does what he pleases. He even talks to the audience and often has conversations with his two internal monologues, which are shown as caption boxes in different colors compared to speech balloons in his panels (Booker, 2014).

However, his fourth wall breaking element is not simply a matter of Deadpool making jokes. This element allows audience to connect with him in a more concrete way. Throughout his comics, Deadpool uses his self-awareness to directly make fun of other heroes and even the comics industry as a whole. It makes his teaming-up with other heroes more appealing because he can roast Thor for his way of speaking or Captain America for being too boring and patriotic. In a way, he serves as the voice of the readers. He jokes with the story elements that do not make sense and asks the same sorts of questions the audience would.

Deadpool's ongoing title was rebooted in 2002, followed by the *Cable and Deadpool* series that ran from 2004 to 2008. Deadpool returned to a self-titled series in 2008, which was itself rebooted in January 2013 as part of the "Marvel Now!". Additionally, Deadpool starred in an especially large number of miniseries and ongoing spin-off titles. The volume of series reflected the explosion of popularity for the character, who had become something of a cult phenomenon. Interest in the character had risen dramatically, as had sales and prices of back issues featuring him, especially from the first ongoing series. The wave of Deadpool-focused titles *Deadpool: Merc with a Mouth* (2009–2010), *Deadpool Team-Up* (2010–2011), *Deadpool Corps* (2010–2011) and *Deadpool Family* (a 2011 one-shot) strongly reflected the quirkiness and humorous sides of the character. Even further reflecting the metafiction aspects and his 'self-deprecating' humor, Deadpool broke the fourth wall in 2010 promoting event to tell the readers to vote on which one of his titles to cancel (Booker, 2014).

Like most major, and even a great minor, Marvel characters, Deadpool has been brought and adapted to other media as well. He mainly had appearances in animated series and video games up until 2009 when he was featured *X-Men Origins: Wolverine* (2009) portrayed by Ryan Reynolds. Following the events of *X-Men: Days of Future Past* (2014), which reset the X-Men cinematic universe timeline, Ryan Reynolds reprised his role in *Deadpool* in 2016 as the first standalone Deadpool film. Producers and writers worked hard along with Reynolds to adapt the character more faithfully since his appearance in *Wolverine* film was strongly criticized. Their work resulted in the critically acclaimed R-rated superhero movie, many awards and nominations and outstanding financial and critical success. Critics and fans praised Reynolds' performance, the film's style, humor, action and faithfulness to the comics. A sequel, *Deadpool 2*, was released in 2018 and it was followed by positive reviews.

The story of Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly and Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.

Deadpool #13 and #14 appear in the *Volume 3* trade as a prelude and "flashback" issues. Deadpool was originally introduced in 1990's, but in #13, we see what Deadpool was up to in the late 70's, forcefully joining Heroes for Hire, a team-up with Luke Cage and Iron Fist to face the White Man. Following issue shows the White Man returning to the present. The threat is taken care of in the same issue and the heroes move on. In #13 there is a subplot and readers find out about mysterious people hunting down and drugging Deadpool, removing his organs and limbs and then disappearing thanks to Agent Preston whose mind is still inside of Deadpool. In his investigation, Deadpool discovers that a man named Butler has been behind these actions for years, setting up *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*. Eventually, it is revealed that Butler is a part of the Weapon Plus program located in North Korea and are conducting experiments in order to create their own invincible mutant army by mixing X-Men DNA with Deadpool's. With the help of other superhero Weapon Plus experiments, Captain America and Wolverine, Deadpool goes to North Korea to bring down the Weapon Plus program and frees the few surviving mutant experiments held as hostages. Butler traps Deadpool's daughter Eleanor and his daughter's mother Carmelita. With the help of the "other" surviving X-Men experiments, Wolverine and Captain America they take over the camp while Deadpool discovered Carmelita dead and his child missing. Deadpool kills Butler and blows up the camp before leaving North Korea with Wolverine and Captain America.

Before continuing with the main storyline, *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* features another flashback issue #20 *Wakandan vacation* in which he is looking for four mysterious puzzle pieces and travels to such far-off places and fights several creatures. It ends with Deadpool being sent to the Marvel Universe of the '90s. *Deadpool vs S.H.I.E.L.D.* plot follows the events that took place in North Korea. Deadpool decides it is time for S.H.I.E.L.D. to pay him the money they owe him for dealing with the zombie presidents. When the payment does not show up, Deadpool takes matters into his own hands and pursues agent Gorman who refuses to pay him. Meanwhile, he is trying to help Agent Preston transfer her consciousness from his brain into a robotic clone. However, it also turns out that Agent Gorman is secretly behind creating a robotic clone of Agent Preston that is selling weapons. Gorman is not pleased to learn the real Preston's alive and puts a ten million dollar price on Deadpool's head.

Translation of verbal elements

Proper names

Characters and proper names that appear *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D* can be classified in two main groups. The first group consists of names that were transcribed phonetically to Serbian. The second group covers all the names that were translated and adapted in Serbian language in order to preserve their source meaning and connotations.

Deadpool	Dedpul
Wade Wilson	Vejd Vilson
Merc with a Mouth	Lajavi Strelac
Luke Cage	Luk Kejdž
Power Man	Silni
Danny Rand	Deni Rend
Iron Fist	Gvozdena Pesnica
Wolverine	Vulverin
Nightcrawler	Noćna Senka
Storm	Storm
Captain America	Kapetan Amerika
Cap	Kep
Punisher	Panišer
Ulysses Klaw	Ulis Kandža
Cable	Kejbl
Fin Fang Foom	Fin Feng Fum
Mangog	Grozomor
Cosmic Baby	Kozmička Beba
Black Panther	Crni Panter
Agent Emily Preston	Agentica Emili Prestonova
Agent Phil Coulson	Agent Fil Kolson
Agent Scott Adsit	Agent Skot Adsit
Agent Gorman	Agent Gorman
Doctor Strange	Doktor Strejndž

Avengers	Osvetnici
Crossbones	Krosbouns
Paste Pot	Lepkar Pit
Namor	Namor
Odin	Odin
Margaret Simons	Margaret Simonsova
Michael	Majkl
John Garrett	Džon Garet
Eleanor	Elenor
Terry Junior	Teri Junior
Ms. Camacho	Gospođa Kamačo
Carmelita Camacho	Karmelita Kamačo
White Man	Beli Čovek
The Butler	Batler
Bucky	Baki
Kim	Kim
Park	Park

Table 1: characters in *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D* and their Serbian representations

Whether or not the characters are playing a crucial role in the narrative, or are just briefly mentioned, all proper names were treated equally and nothing has not been left out (no cases of ‘deletio’ strategy). There is, however, a clear preference for giving a different spelling (‘substitutio’), one which is more according to Serbian language. In standard Serbian, all foreign proper names and nicknames must be transcribed, i.e. written as spoken, according to Serbian orthography. Therefore, Deadpool becomes Dedpul, Wade Wilson - Vejd Vilson, Wolverine - Vulverin, Punisher - Panišer, Bucky - Baki, Luke Cage - Luk Kejdž, Phil Coulson - Fil Kolson etc.

In transcribing ‘Emily Preston’ to Emili Prestonova and ‘Margaret Simons’ to ‘Margaret Simonsova’ a common suffix ‘-ova’ was added since it is applied to female last names in the Serbian environment. Its absence would probably be one of the confusing aspects to the target readership.

The superhero names can be divided into two groups. The first group of names was not translated, but only transcribed and adapted, which is not uncommon in the translation of superhero-comics into Serbian. The names that belong to the first group remained untranslated and culturally unadapted. Roganović told me that certain heroes like Wolverine or Punisher, due to their popularity among the target readership, have to remain unchanged which, in return, makes them more recognizable (E. Roganović, personal communication, May 26, 2019).

The second subdivisions is more complex as it consists of names that are both translated and culturally adapted. The majority of superhero names in these comics have some characterizing function or connotations. And even though that most of these heroes are popular and well known among the readership, their transcribed names would simply sound unfamiliar and strange in Serbian language and they had to be translated (E. Roganović, personal communication, May 26, 2019).

Therefore, instead of 'Najtkroler' Roganović opted for 'Noćna Senka' and preserved the meaning behind Nightcrawler's name as the X-Men mutant who is known for his demonic appearance, teleportation, wall crawling and shadow camouflage abilities. 'Noćna Senka' perfectly reflects each one of these characteristic. Iron Fist was translated and adapted to 'Gvozdena Pesnica' which, once again, is a reference to the title of Iron Fist and ability of summoning inhumanly powerful chi energy and focusing it into ones hand.

In some cases, names of the less popular heroes are translated in order to preserve the descriptive meaning of their names for the readers who are not fluent in English (Ulysses Klaw – Uliš Kandža).

S.H.I.E.L.D.	SHIELD
ULTIMATUM	“Ultimatum”
HYDRA	“Hidra”
S.H.I.E.L.D. helicARRIER	SHIELDOV helinosač
X-men	X-men
Weapon X program	Program “Oružje X”
Manhattan	Menhetn
New York	Nju Jork
Wakanda	Vakanda
Negative Zone	Negativna Zona
Baxter Building	Zgrada Baxter
Distortion Zone	Oblast Rastakanja
Heroes for Hire	Heroji u najam
Asgard	Asgard
Department K	Odjeljenje K

Table 2: organizations and places in *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D* and their Serbian representations

Names of fictional places, programs, organizations, other worlds, dimensions, companies, parts of the cities, vehicles and aircrafts, etc. are either translated and culturally adapted or transcribed.

The same translating approach can be seen in case of the newly coined terms like ‘helicARRIER’ which becomes ‘helinosač’. From the context and images it is obvious that helicARRIER is an advanced flying carrier used by S.H.I.E.L.D. agents. S.H.I.E.L.D. was left untranslated and adapted to ‘SHIELD’ since Roganović followed the translating practice from the Darkwood’s previous Marvel editions.

Titles

Kaindl (2010) states that since the sixties there is a tendency among the publishers to keep comic titles untranslated, especially there is the protagonists' name involved. However, the translation of *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D* proves that this is not always the case.

Roganović told me that he had to find a single title for both trades that, in a way, involved both narratives ('substitutio'). In his attempt to find a single title, he took into consideration two facts. Firstly, that in *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D*, Deadpool is fighting S.H.I.E.L.D. for his promised payment in a pillowcase with a dollar sign on it. Secondly, *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is an allusion to the 1966 Italian Western film *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* directed by Sergio Leone and starring Clint Eastwood.

Since the film *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* is a part of *The Dollar Trilogy*, Roganović turned to another movie from the same trilogy *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964). He borrowed an idea behind its title, replaced 'fistful' with 'pillowcase' in Serbian and coined *Za jastučnicu dolara*. In that way, he did not leave out the story of *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D* and he did not leave out the original allusion to a Western masterpiece made by authors.

In addition, the titles of all single issues within the trades were translated and culturally adapted:

Deadpool, Power Man and Iron Fist	Kejdz, Rend i Vejd: Heroji u najam
The White Man Cometh	Bela Kuga
The Good, the Bad, the Ugly Part One	Dobar, loš, zao: Prvi deo
The Good, the Bad, the Ugly Part Two	Dobar, loš, zao: Drugi deo
The Good, the Bad, the Ugly Part Three	Dobar, loš, zao: Treći deo
The Good, the Bad, the Ugly Part Four	Dobar, loš, zao: Četvrti deo
The Good, the Bad, the Ugly Part Five	Dobar, loš, zao: Peti deo
Wakandan Vacation	Letovanje u Vakandi
Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D. Part One	Dedpulom protiv SHIELDA: Prvi deo
Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D. Part Two	Dedpulom protiv SHIELDA: Drugi deo
Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D. Part Three	Dedpulom protiv SHIELDA: Treći deo
Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D. Part Four	Dedpulom protiv SHIELDA: Četvrti deo
Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D. Part Five	Dedpulom protiv SHIELDA: Peti deo

Table 3: titles in *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D* and their Serbian translation

All the Serbian titles follow the predispositions of the original titles. They are short and have the similar number of words as the original since it is necessary to graphically adjust them as closely as possible to the original. *Dedpulom protiv SHIELDA* instead of ‘Dedpul protiv SHIELDA’ as a translation for *Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* serves as an allusion to the Serbian 90’s popular pop punk band with a funny name "Oružjem protivu otmičara" and is still faithful to the plot.

Deadpool, Power Man and Iron Fist was adapted to *Kejdz, Rend i Vejd: Heroji u najam* to keep the names short and it includes name of the business run by Luke Cage and Danny Rand (‘substitutio’ and ‘adiectio’). One of the main functions of titles is to be attractive, and by including ‘Heroji u najam’, Roganović’s strategy was to gain more attention for an old unpublished issue.

Translation of nonverbal elements

Format

The single issues in the collected editions of *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* were written by Gerry Duggan and Brian Posden, illustrated by Scott Kobilish, Declan Shalvey and Mike Hawthorne, and lettered by VC's Joe Sabino. They were originally published in 2012 by Marvel Comics. The collected editions analyzed in this thesis are the 2014 reissued volumes of the single issues #13-19 and #20-25.

Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly volume consists of an introduction by editor Jordan D. White, seven single issues introduced as chapters, their original cover art illustrations, and three illustrations and cover sketches from artist Declan Shalvey's sketchbook. *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* consists of six single issues introduced as chapters, their original cover art illustrations, #25 cover art variants by Phil Noto and Katie Cook and "Dear Deadpool" fan letters column. Both volumes were published as trade paperbacks that reprint from four to twelve issues of a monthly comic book, six issues being the standard. Trade editions are available in bookstores and comic book stores and are usually released a few months after the story they collect finishes its original run. Nowadays, Marvel and DC Comics are including older and never-collected stories in their trades as well. *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* includes Deadpool #13 and #14, a two-issue story by artist Scott Koblish while *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* includes #20 again by artist Scott Kobilish. These issues act as a prelude to the main Deadpool *Marvel NOW!* storyline.

The Serbian translation, *Dedpul: Za jastučnicu dolara*, is the 2017 translation by Draško Roganović published by Darkwood. It was published as a hardback graphic novel and it consists of translated versions of both *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* which means it includes translations of reissued volumes of the single issues #13-19 and #20-25.

Therefore, *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* and *Dedpul: Za jastučnicu dolara*, were published in different formats. Both volumes in the translated edition are thicker in a material sense than the original work, which is due to the use of the difference paper. While the original comics consist of a thin and smooth

finish kind of paper, the translated comic has a thicker and sturdier paper. The translated edition is of the same size as the original comics viz. from 26 cm by 17 cm.

In addition to the differences in paper, Darkwood opted for Shalvey's cover of the *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* as the cover image for the translated product that includes both volumes.

The Serbian edition uses Shalvey's cover of the *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* which shows Deadpool fighting along Captain America and Wolverine, popular Marvel heroes. It targets collectors. The Serbian edition was published after the first *Deadpool* film has proved as extremely successful and after Deadpool as a character has gained more recognition worldwide. *Za jastučnicu dolara* targets both younger and older audience and it was especially translated and adapted for readers who are not familiar with comics or Deadpool (E. Roganović, personal communication, May 24, 2019).

However, the Serbian edition was printed with two variant covers. The other one is #25 issue variant by artist Phil Noto that is featured in *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* and it shows Deadpool surrounded by four half-naked women with a smirk on his face. This edition was printed in more copies than the edition that targets collectors and Deadpool had to be easily seen on the bookstore shelves without featuring other heroes (E. Roganović, personal communication, August 24, 2019). Both editions are hardbacks.



Image 1: cover images of *Deadpool* volume 3: *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool* volume 4: *Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.*

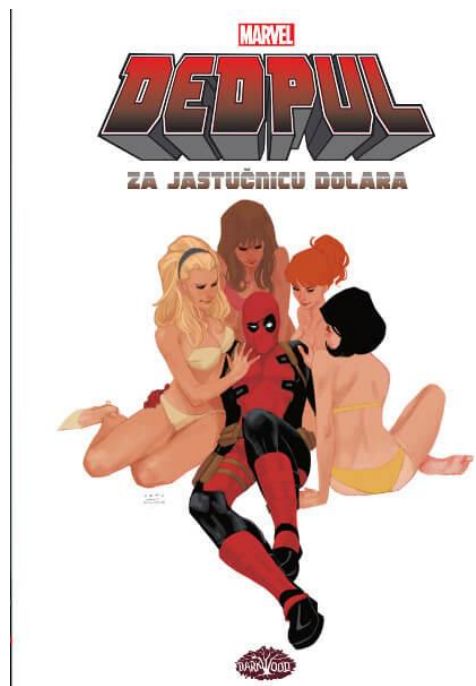
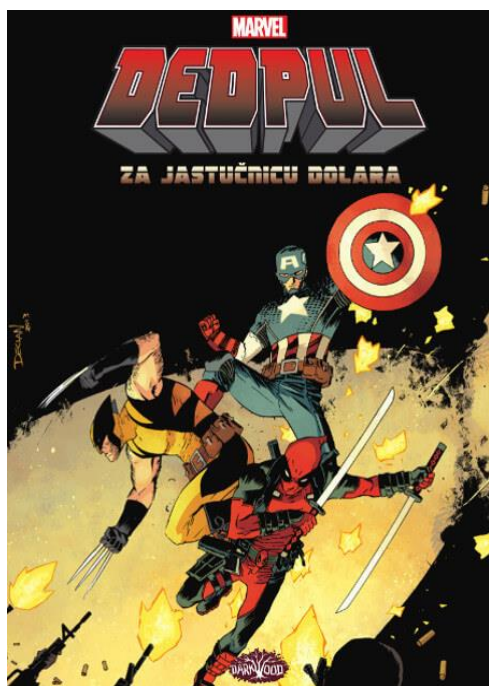


Image 2: cover images of both variants of *Dedpul: Za jastučnicu dolara*

Inscriptions

Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* include many types of inscriptions, i.e. text integrated into the imagery, viz. cinema posters, newspaper articles, scribbles on the toilet walls, shops, services, text messages, passwords, etc. Inscriptions provide the background setting of the narratives and help establish the timelines and surroundings constructed for these narratives. Therefore, in the Serbian edition inscriptions are fully translated, culturally adapted and extensively graphically adjusted.

The first inscription that supports narrative development is the Heroes for Hire advertisement which Deadpool spots in the newspapers and decides to join the team (see table 4). It is a translation and cultural adaptation of the original English text (‘substitutio’ and ‘adiectio’).. The translated advertisement title is capitalized since it is a real life publishing practice to put capitalized titles in order to draw attention. Firebombs in theater were replaced by something less dangerous but yet highly common on the Balkans – stealing bikes. It is still faithful to crimes that Heroes for Hire were ready to investigate and solve. Visually, the translation slightly differs from the original in that the line spacing and font size are smaller. This difference in font can be attributed to the fact that the original version of advertisement has less text than the translation.

<p>Heroes for Hire!</p> <p>Do you need the services of a chemically-altered Ex-Con and a Millionaire orphan? We're here to help! Wanted for a crime you didn't commit? Trouble in little Tokyo? Looking for a priceless jade tiger statue? Robots attacking Harlem restaurant? Theatre firebombed?</p> <p>We can help! Call 1-212-555-HERO today! Don't wait. Offices: 575 Madison Avenue, N.Y., N.Y. 10022</p>	<p>HEROJI U NAJAM</p> <p>Da li su vam potrebne usluge hemijski osnaženog bivšeg kriminalca i bivšeg siročeta? Stojimo vam na raspolaganju! Policija vas juri za zločin koji niste počinili? Izazvali ste veliku gužvu u kineskoj četvrti? Tragate za neprocjenjivom statuom od žada? Roboti napadaju vaš restoran u Harlemu? Neko vam je ukrao biciklo? Mi ćemo vam pomoći! Ne časite časa! Smesta pozovite 1-212-555-HEROJ! Kancelarija: Avenija Medison 575, 10022, Njujork.</p>
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Table 4: speech inscriptions, *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* – Serbian translation

A different kind of speech inscriptions are these that appear as text messages on the phone. They convey important messages and have to be translated (see table 5). In the original graphic novel, they mostly appear without punctuation marks, except for example D. Agent Gorman puts a price on Deadpool’s head and readers can see different hitmen getting a text and reacting to it. The original text exchange is somewhat shorter since the Serbian translation required more words. In the translation, punctuation marks were added (‘adiectio’), and again a different font style was used (‘substitutio’). Other than that, the translation is faithful to the original (‘substitutio’) and it looks like a regular text exchange. ‘LOL’, an acronym of ‘laughing out loud’ was not translated because it is the most common slang terms in electronic communication in Serbia as well.

<p>a: CONTRACT: DEADPOOL. TEN MILLION. TIME SENSITIVE. HIT NEEDS TO HAPPEN TODAY.</p>	<p>a: UGOVOR: DEDPUL. DESET MILIONA. STVAR JE HITNA UBISTVO MORA BITI OBAVLJENO DANAS.</p>
<p>b: WE’RE IN LOL!</p>	<p>b: DOGOVORENO. LOL!</p>

Table 5: text messages inscriptions, *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* – Serbian translation

Another type of inscriptions is the text that appears within the image of objects in the story (see table 6), e.g. on the walls, on signs, on television, banners, posters etc. Examples 6(a) and 6(b) writing on a wall and appears in a panel without any text boxes. Even the toilet graffiti inscriptions were fully translated and culturally adapted which adds to a humorous tone of the story. Graffiti elements look similar to their original form, and text is only slightly different in font style. “Abandon all hope all ye who enter here” from Dante’s *Inferno* (1472), where it is an inscription above the gates of hell. The implication is that when you enter the hell, you should give up hope of ever getting out or things ever getting better. This graffiti on the wall refers to a terrible smell and conditions of public bathrooms. However, in the translation, it was replaced with another

popular Serbian graffiti that readers are most likely more familiar with and will find it more funny than the source one ('substitutio'). As for the name and phone number on the same wall 6(b), public bathroom walls have been used as a depository of phone numbers for people looking for a good time or a good laugh. What Drašković decided to do was to make an inside joke and a reference for the Darkwood team and their readers who are regular Darkwood comic store costumers in Belgrade and therefore are familiar with the fact that their store manager is Miško (E. Roganović, personal communication, September 12, 2019).

<p>a.</p> <p>ABANDON ALL HOPE ALL YE WHO ENTER!</p>	<p>ODLAZIM ODAVDE RAZOČARAN GRDNO, HTIO SAM NUŽDIT, A SAMO SAM PRDNO!</p>
<p>b.</p> <p>CALL GER FOR A GOOD TIME 595-2113</p>	<p>ZA DOBAR PROVOD ZOVI MIŠKA 595-2113</p>

Table 6: toilet graffiti inscriptions, *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* – Serbian translation

Onomatopoeia

Onomatopoeia appears both inside (table 7) and outside (table 8) of the speech bubbles in *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* In regard to the translations, there were two strategies used, viz. ‘substitutio’ and ‘repetitio’. ‘Substitutio’ was used most frequently even with the onomatopoeia that is integrated into the images and usually stays untranslated due to publishing and economic reason. The editor of Darkwood suggested Drašković that it would be possible to translate and adapt every sound effect, which Drašković accepted as a challenge and opportunity to add another humorous note (table 8). In other comics, translated onomatopoeia may distract readers from following the narrative, so publishers prefer to leave it untranslated. However Roganović thought that Deadpool would serve as a great opportunity for a bad SFX humor (E. Roganović, personal communication, August 26, 2019).

Most frequent onomatopoeic expressions that appear in the speech balloons are ‘aaaa’ or ‘aaaah’, or any other variation with multiple letter ‘a’ and ‘h’, to express pain. Some cases of onomatopoeia like ‘oops!’ or ‘waaaah!’ are translated and adapted into a Serbian variant, viz. ‘uuups!’ and ‘kmeeee!’. Others received a different spelling, viz. ‘oof!’ becomes ‘uuuf!’, and ‘uhn!’ becomes ‘uhhh!’.

Zzzzzzz	Hrrrrrk.
Oops!	Uuups!
Gaaahhhh!!!	Aaaaah!
Waaaah!	Kmeeee!
Oof!	Uuuf!
Uhn!	Uhhh!

Table 7: onomatopoeic expressions that occur in the speech balloons – Serbian translation

Thwunk	Ubrizg
Sniff	Njuš
Wump	Odalam
Zingzplack	Odbij
Tok	Izvuc
Shrakk	Odsec
Krakaboom	Zagrrrrmmm
Thwock	Iskop
Shrrkkk	Isstrrrg
Thwam	Šutt
Blam	Beng
Splack	Raznes
Kapow	Ka-beng
Thwamm	Zaskok
Krak	Odval
Whudd	Nabodd
Gak	Zadav
Kerrakk	Slommm
Kerash	Skrrrřřř
Whumfkrk	Prrrosssp
Bamf	Bamf
Snikt	Snikt

Table 8: onomatopoeic expressions that occur outside of the speech balloons – Serbian translation

Deadpool comics contain some of the most brutal and violent fighting scenes, and yet manage to be silly thanks to Deadpool's character, Roganović's translated onomatopoeia adds to an already humorous tone and it is not distracting for readers. It makes the reading experience flow more smoothly and naturally. Again, a different font style and colors are used ('substitutio') because of extensive graphic adjustments.

E.g. The scene where Deadpool appears out of nowhere to hit a soldier in the face saying, “I’m Dr. Deadpool. Surprise dentist”, is followed by a panel with a soldier getting smashed and ‘whumpkrk’ sound which in translation becomes ‘prrosssp’ which was derived from common phrase ‘prosipanje zuba’ in Serbian.

Moreover, since this onomatopoeia is part of the image, there is no confusion about what is happening or what does it mean, translation only serves as a humorous addition to an already existing text-image interplay. Cohn (2013) states that onomatopoeia can serve not only as a sound effect, but also as a caption. Funny onomatopoeic expressions in Serbian edition are clearly descriptions of actions, since they are mostly derived from verbs, and they successfully enhance actions and communicate through sound.



Image 3: translated onomatopoeia integrated into the images from *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*

However, there were two cases of ‘repetitio’ strategy, which can be seen in leaving ‘bamf’, and ‘snikt’ sounds untranslated due to their mainstream popularity among the readers. Their definitions can even be found on some online dictionaries. ‘Bamf’ is the sound effect associated with Nightcrawler’s teleportation. It has become a standard in pop culture thanks to fans who borrowed it as a teleport sound and made it into a generic term for teleporting. ‘Snikt’ is the sound effect used in the comics whenever Wolverine draws out his claws. Both onomatopoeias are left untranslated and unadapted as they are trademark character sounds and they will not cause confusion among readers.

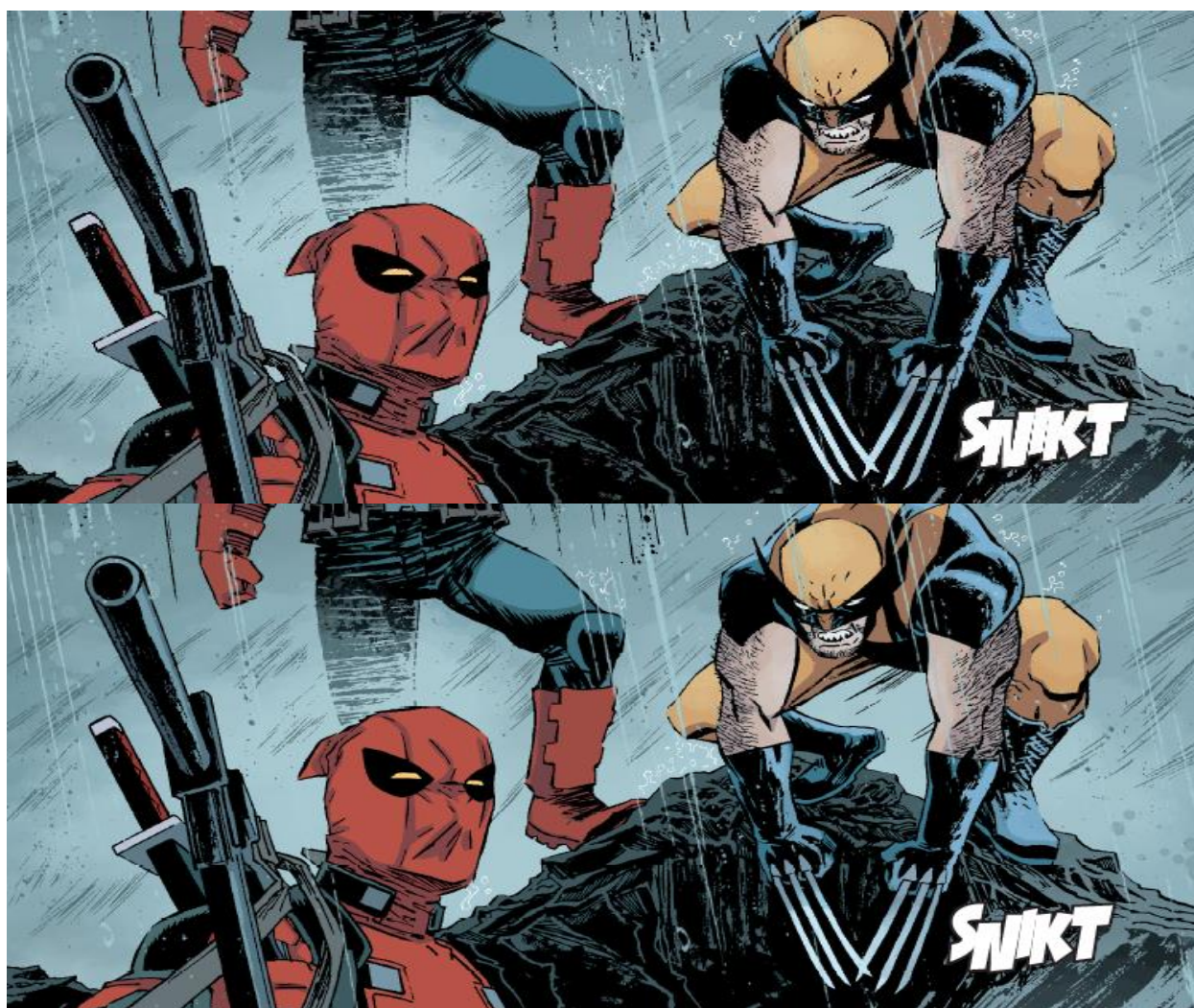


Image 4: untranslated onomatopoeia from *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*

Conclusion

Today, comics have millions of readers and translation has played an important part in the development of this culture worldwide. As any work of literature, comics translation includes challenges and interesting specifics that should be taken into consideration. Elements of comics hold a key role in the translation process and, therefore, they served a basis for the research and analysis of the Serbian translation of Marvel's Deadpool comic series. Apart from some popular European comics and titles, publishers in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not produce many translated comics. Most translated comics available on the shelves of the book and comic stores are from Serbian publishers.

The case study focusses on the translation strategies and translation of a selection of specific elements, viz. verbal elements and nonverbal elements, in the English trades *Deadpool volume 3: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* and *Deadpool volume 4: Deadpool vs. S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2014) and their 2017 Serbian translation *Dedpul: Za jastučnicu dolara*.

This research presented in this paper should not be viewed as an overview of all the possible translation challenges, translation strategies and specifics of comics translation since it is based on analysis of a single case. Moreover, the research mainly focused on the translation and adaptation of the certain specifics and traits of the comics genre and it was done with two original covered trades in English. It did not provide a complete list of specifics nor did it cover a complete series. The theoretical framework described and the analysis and examples from the Serbian translation presented here should help with understanding of the covered verbal and nonverbal the specifics of comics translation.

The case study has shown that translation strategy that recurs most frequently across the different categories while conveying meaning from the source language into the target language is 'substitutio'. The translator's preference for the domesticizing strategy is also apparent in the translation of both verbal and nonverbal elements but it did not affect the meaning.

Moreover, the research shows how translators should be skilled in reading and understanding the medium. Verbal and nonverbal messages complement each other and convey the meaning in

comics. The visual component of panels and the spatial limitations of speech balloons present an opportunity and challenge rather than a constraint. Apart from the obvious written text, translators are able to influence and contribute to the visual of the target text product.

Draško Roganović, whose translation work was analyzed, was certainly aware of these specifics, which, in return, resulted in a successful translation and adaptation into target language that managed to preserve and present Deadpool's nature to both old and new readers.

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