

# Croatian Translation of Michael Coleman's Internet Detectives - Net Bandits: A Look at Translation Strategies

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**SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU  
UČITELJSKI FAKULTET  
ODSJEK ZA UČITELJSKE STUDIJE**

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DIPLOMSKI RAD**

**CROATIAN TRANSLATION OF  
MICHAEL COLEMAN'S *INTERNET  
DETECTIVES - NET BANDITS*: A LOOK  
AT TRANSLATION STRATEGIES**

**Zagreb, rujan 2020.**

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**DIPLOMSKI RAD**

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strategies

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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of this graduation thesis is to give a detailed overview of translation strategies used by Zoran Vučić when translating Michael Coleman's novel *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits*. The thesis is divided into two parts. In the first part the author of the novel and the novel are briefly addressed. After that, there is an overview of theoretical works explaining translation and classifications of translation strategies, consulting translation theory experts like Mona Baker, Roger T. Bell and Christopher Taylor. The first part also explains how to translate culture-specific items and computer-related expressions.

The second part of the thesis contains the analysis of translation strategies used in the Croatian translation of *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits*. The analysis was made by taking into consideration different translation theory experts and their classifications of translation strategies. Particular attention is paid to translating computer terminology and idiomatic expressions. There is an overview of strategies used while dealing with different problems one can encounter while trying to provide an adequate translation. The analysis also notes possible changes that could have been made in the translation.

**KEY WORDS:** translation, translation strategies, culture-specific items, computer expressions

## SAŽETAK

Cilj ovog diplomskog rada je dati detaljan prikaz strategija prevođenja koje je Zoran Vučić iskoristio kod prevođenja na hrvatski djela *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* (u hrvatskom prijevodu: *Detektivi interneta: Zov labirinta*), Michaela Colemana. Rad je podijeljen u dva dijela: u prvom djelu dana je kratka biografija autora te sadržaj samoga djela. Slijedi pregled teorijskih radova koji objašnjavaju što je prijevod te različite klasifikacije strategija prevođenja, koristeći kao oslonac radove Mone Baker, Rogera T. Bella i Christophera Taylora. U prvom djelu je također objašnjeno kako pristupiti prevođenju kulturno-specifičnih elemenata te računalnog nazivlja.

Drugi dio rada sadrži analizu djela *Detektivi interneta: Zov labirinta*. Analiza je napravljena sagledavanjem različitih teoretičara prevođenja i njihovih klasifikacija strategija prevođenja. U analizi se nalazi pregled strategija kojima se moguće poslužiti kod susreta s različitim problemima kako bi nastao kvalitetan prijevod. U analizi se također predlažu potencijalne promjene koje je prevoditelj mogao napraviti.

**KLJUČNE RIJEČI:** prevođenje, strategije prevođenja, kulturno-specifični elementi, računalno nazivlje

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely believed that anyone can be a translator, but it is not such a simple task. Translators must know how to approach different expressions in both the source and the target language and how to deal with the lack of an equivalent word in the target language. Translators, therefore, have to know both languages, their cultures and various translation strategies to make an appropriate translation. This paper will give a detailed look into translation strategies used by Zoran Vučić while translating Michael Coleman's novel *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits*. The source language is the language in which a literary work was originally written, and the target language is the language into which the translator will be translating it. In this case, the source language is English and the target language is Croatian. It is important to note that different translation theory experts classify translation strategies in different ways. This thesis will analyze the *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* mostly using Mona Baker's classification and consulting Christopher Taylor's.

Roger T. Bell and Mona Baker were among the first translation theory researchers to describe translation strategies in detail and give examples on how and when to use which strategies. Christopher Taylor is another important figure in the field of translation studies. In his book *Language to Language* Taylor gave an overview of all possible complications translators could face while trying to give a decent translation. More recently, Ana Fernández Guerra wrote an article in 2012 about translation strategies, while Shekoufeh Daghoughi and Mahmood Hashemian wrote an analysis of translation strategies in 2016, and all of them focused on problems encountered while translating culture-specific items the most. Milica Mihaljević wrote a number of articles dealing with the translation of computer-related expressions, the most notable one in 2006, which is important while analyzing *Net Bandits*, because there is a plethora of computer language in the book.

In the following chapters, first, a short biography of Michael Coleman will be given as to understand the author, and it will be followed by a short summary of the novel. The thesis will go on to explain what translation is and what problems translators often encounter while doing their work, especially focusing on computer-related expressions and culture-specific items, such as idioms. Translation strategies that are vital for the analysis of this



novel will be mentioned and briefly explained. The central part of the thesis will provide a detailed analysis of translation strategies Vučić used along with suggestions for possible substitutions he could have made.

## **2. MICHAEL COLEMAN**

Michael Coleman is a British writer who was born on May 12, 1964. He spent his childhood playing sports, and, as a consequence, he developed a deep passion for soccer; because of this he wrote a book series about soccer called *Foul Football* ("Michael Coleman biografija | Lektire.hr", 2020). He was a computer science professor at Portsmouth University for a big part of his life, so he poured his knowledge of computers in a book series called *Internet Detectives*. The first novel of this series is *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* and it is also the topic of this thesis. *Net Bandits* was followed by 7 more *Internet Detectives* novels.

### 3. ABOUT THE NOVEL

*Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* was published in 1996 and, as mentioned earlier, is the first novel in the *Internet Detectives* series. The novel contains illustrations of computer and Internet applications which make the story seem modern for the time in which it was written and it makes it easier to follow. In 2004, the novel was made into a movie by Eric Wotila. *Net Bandits* was translated into Croatian in 2005 by Zoran Vučić.

The novel is about a group of teenagers that are discovering the joys of the Internet and become friends online. Three of them live in Portsmouth, England and the other three live in Australia, Canada, and the USA, but they met on the Internet. When one of the teenagers from Portsmouth, Rob sends a crypted email saying that he is in trouble, the rest investigate using the Internet, even though they are on the opposite parts of the world. Finally, the two characters living in Portsmouth, Tamsyn and Josh find out where Rob lives and come to his rescue.

Novels are put on the mandatory reading assignment list because it is believed they have a way of teaching learners some things about the world around them and themselves. This novel is a part of the mandatory reading assignment for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade (lektira). The learners can choose one of three books from the *Internet Detectives* series. The novel shows its readers how people viewed the Internet when it was first made available to the masses and how much technology has advanced over the years.

## 4. TRANSLATION STUDIES

This chapter will be dealing with some trends in translation theory. Definitions of two important concepts in translation, equivalence and non-equivalence, will be given. It will also deal with computer-related expressions, focusing on different strategies used when translating them.

### 4.1. What is translation?

As this thesis will be focusing on translation strategies, it is important to provide some definitions of translation. First translations date back as far as two thousand years ago. Many linguists define translation as a type of movement between languages, a shift from the source language, in the case of *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits*, English, to the target language, in this case, Croatian (Bell, 1991). The task of translating may sound as simple as just shifting the words from one language to another, but translators have a much more difficult task, they have to preserve the semantics and stylistics of the literary work they are translating. (ibid.). Translators try to preserve the semantics and stylistics by looking for equivalents.

One of the most prominent figures of translation studies in Croatia was Vladimir Ivir. Ivir wrote several books dealing with translation strategies and problems and is still highly admired by many European linguists. In this thesis his book *Teorija i tehnika prevodenja* (1978) will be consulted while dealing with translations of culture-specific items.

The scientific project titled *Building Intercultural Bridges Through Children's Literature Translations: Texts, Contexts and Strategies* was also an immensely important contribution to translation studies in Croatia. The project brought together several experts who analyzed children's literature translations, focusing among other things on strategies used while translating and culture-specific items ("BIBRICH UIP-2014-09-9823", 2018). The project ended in 2018, but the linguists that were part of it continued their research at the Faculty of Teacher Education in Zagreb. One of the results of the project was the founding of the Centre for Research in Children's Literature and Culture (CRCLC).

## 4.2. Equivalence

Equivalence is one of the most important concepts in translation. We call words and phrases equivalent when they mean the same in both the source and the target language. But every language is a reflection of the culture it comes from, so translators often encounter words in a source language that simply do not exist in the same degree in the target language or vice versa, this is called non-equivalence (Baker, 1992). Because of this, translators look at the whole instead of the word, they look for context to understand what is meant in a phrase, and it helps them if they have vast cultural knowledge.

For a deeper understanding of equivalence, it is important to differentiate between types of meaning of words. There is lexical meaning, which is the root meaning of each word without any prefixes or suffixes (Baker, 1992). For example, the Cambridge dictionary defines the word *care*<sup>1</sup> as “the process of protecting someone or something and providing what that person or thing needs”, but when we add the suffix *-ful* the meaning changes to “giving a lot of attention to what you are doing so that you do not have an accident, make a mistake, or damage something”.

*Propositional meaning* is the relation between a word and the concept it represents in the real or imaginary world. Propositional meaning helps the reader to judge a word as true or false (Baker, 1992). For example, the propositional meaning of the word *sock* is a piece of clothing made from soft material that covers your foot and the lower part of your leg, Because of the propositional meaning we know that it would not be correct to refer to a sock as a piece of clothing you put on your arms or hands.

*Expressive meaning*, on the other hand, cannot be viewed as true or false, because it considers the speaker’s perspective of a word (Baker, 1992). In her book *In Other Words* Mona Baker gives an example of the English word *famous* and the French *fameux*, where both words have the meaning of well-known, but the French word has a negative connotation, while the English word has a neutral connotation.

Words can have both propositional and expressive meanings. It is important for translators to know about these different meanings, because if a word has only an expressive

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/care>

meaning, it can be removed from an utterance without affecting its information, but if it has a propositional meaning and it is removed, it changes the context of an utterance. Translators must be aware of words they can eliminate or modify without changing the information of an utterance (Baker, 1992).

*Presupposed meaning* deals with restrictions between words in an utterance i.e., which words or expressions appear before or after which lexical units. For example, which adjectives are used when speaking of inanimate objects and which are used when speaking of human subjects, this is called selectional restriction. Another type of restriction is collocational restriction, referring to inconsistencies in the logical following of the propositional meanings of words (Baker, 1992). In *In Other Words* Baker gives an example of *brushing teeth* in English and *washing teeth* in Polish.

The final meaning is *evoked meaning*, which deals with variations of a language: dialect and register. A dialect is a variety of language that a group of speakers share, based on their shared geographical location, age group or social class. Register is a variety that speakers regard as appropriate to use or not use depending on the situation they are in (ibid.).

Out of these four types of meaning, the only one that affects the truthfulness of an utterance is propositional meaning, but that does not mean that translators should focus solely on it (ibid.). If they do not give enough attention to any other type of meaning, the context seems to stay the same, but the overall meaning changes in a subtle way.

#### **4.3. Non-equivalence**

As mentioned earlier, non-equivalence is the absence of a word or expression that has the same meaning in both the source and the target language. There are different kinds of non-equivalence and they require a different way of dealing with them, and because of this, translators use various translation strategies. Based on the level of non-equivalence, translators can eliminate some strategies and be partial to others. It is extremely important to choose a suitable translation strategy to use to preserve the complete meaning of a text (Baker, 1992).

#### 4.4. Dealing with computer terminology

In the last 30 years, technology significantly advanced, and with it a new set of words emerged. But how should translating computer terminology be approached? Mihaljević (2006) says that we must understand the way computer terminology occurs in Croatian in order to know how to translate it. There are 5 ways in which computer terminology is constructed in Croatian. The most common is borrowing, where the word is taken from English and slightly adapted to fit the rules of Croatian grammar, but it is not uncommon to encounter words that have been left in the original form with no adaptations, such as *download* and *Cloud* (Mihaljević, 2006). When translating computer terminology equivalents are often used, meaning that an expression is not translated literally into Croatian. Instead a Croatian expression is used that has a different form but conveys the same meaning. ( e.g. *search engine* – *tražilica*). The third method is changing the meaning of words that already exist in Croatian (e.g. *ikona* - *pov. umj. rel. a. slika* Krista, Bogorodice, svetaca ili svetog prizora izrađena na drvu po pravilima i običajima istočnih crkava *b. mala slika ili lik* becomes *ikona* borrowed from *icon* and assumes a new meaning: *inform. sličica na kompjuterskom ekranu koja predstavlja određenu datoteku ili program, aktivira se mišem*).<sup>2</sup> Computer language can often appear as a compound in Croatian, for example, *software* becomes *računalna podrška*. This makes derivations difficult to achieve and it is not economical, so translators tend to borrow the original, English form. And the last way computer expressions are formed in Croatian is when dealing with abbreviations. In these cases abbreviations are left in their original form but an effort is made to find the Croatian equivalent for the compound (e.g. *CAD* – *computer aided design* – *CAD* - *računalno potpomognuti dizajn/oblikovanje*) (see Mihaljević, 2006).

While translating computer expressions it is important to mention synonymity. Many English expressions can be translated into Croatian in a couple of different ways. For example, the word *port* can be translated as *ulaz*, *port*, *ulazište*, *priključak*. Synonyms should not be used while translating scientific and administrative articles (Mihaljević,

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<sup>2</sup> <http://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search>

2006). On the other hand, it is recommended to use them while translating literature to avoid monotony.

There are different principles that should be followed when translating computer terminology. First, it is important to keep in mind that if there is a target language word for the concept, it should be used. If there is no target language equivalent, words coming from Greek and Latin should be used, rather than English, French or German. If an expression can fit into Croatian with its phonetic structure it is acceptable, but it should be replaced if it significantly deviates from the language. A term that is widely accepted has the advantage over the term that is not as widespread. Any term translated must follow the rules of the Croatian standard language. Shorter expressions are better to use than the longer ones, because as mentioned earlier, one of the biggest drawbacks of Croatian computer language translation is the length of the words. A term from which it is easier to make derivations should be used instead of the words that make this difficult or impossible. And lastly, the term used should not have more than one meaning within the same terminological system, to avoid confusion (Mihaljević, 2006). It is often overly complex to follow all of these rules, because in some cases one term will have advantage while looking at one rule, and the other will have advantage if looking at a different rule. To deal with this, translators should contact an expert in the field of informatics if not sure what is the correct term to use.

## 5. TRANSLATING CULTURE-SPECIFIC ITEMS

To understand what culture-specific items are, it is important to understand what culture is.

“Culture is whatever one has to know, master or feel in order to judge whether or not a particular form of behavior shown by members of a community in their various roles conforms to general expectations, and in order to behave in this community in accordance with general expectations unless one is prepared to bear the consequences of unaccepted behavior” (Albrecht, Drescher & Göhring, 1987:10).

Culture is a set of rules and norms that one must act according to so he or she would fit into a specific society. The physical world differs for every person, people who live in tropical areas have a different understanding of the world than people who live in polar areas, and therefore humans had to cultivate those areas differently, creating different cultures. Because of this, it can be said that every translation is a translation of a culture rather than just the language (Ivir, 1978). As there are different concepts in different cultures there are many cases in which a word in the target language does not exist for a concept from the source language. This concept can relate to food, clothes, a religious practice, a custom, etc. (Fernández Guerra, 2012).

When translators encounter culture-specific items they must find a proper approach to translating them, which is an exceedingly difficult task. It is impossible to succeed completely in translating culture. The reason behind this lies in the fact that there are small cultural differences inside of every shared culture. For example, there are big cultural differences in Croatians from Dalmatia and Croatians from Hrvatsko Zagorje. They may share the Croatian culture, but they speak in different dialects, so they have some problems while trying to communicate, and they live vastly different lives in general. If a person from Hrvatsko Zagorje spends every summer on the Dalmatian coast the cultural differences between these two people slowly disappear, as they get accustomed to each other's cultures. Because of this, it is important to often repeat unfamiliar cultural items to make the readers familiar and comfortable with them (Ivir, 1978).



One of the first Croatian linguists to deal with the topic of culture-specific items is, as mentioned earlier, Vladimir Ivir, one of the most prominent figures in translation studies. In his book *Teorija i tehnika prevođenja* he tried to explain how translators deal with translating culture and what culture-specific items are.

Silvija Matijašić (2015) wrote a paper about her research of treatment of culture-specific items. In the paper the author gave an overview of strategies used when translating culture-specific items in the Croatian and Russian translations of *The Maltese Falcon*.

In the context of translating culture, Marija Andraža investigated translating culture-specific items in the context of children's literature. In her article *Pinokio u hrvatskim prijevodima: strategije prenošenja kulturnoga konteksta* (2019), Andraža also researched re-translation, a process of translating a novel that was already translated into the target language because the original translation is archaic or if the original translator did not deal with non-equivalences appropriately. Andraža's article focused mostly on the translation of culture-specific items such as character names, food and idiomatic expressions when analyzing the retranslations.

### **5.1. Idioms**

To understand what idioms are, it is important to note what idioms are not. Idioms are not the same as collocations, as it is sometimes believed. Collocations are words that go together creating a fixed expression (Taylor, 1998). They are flexible, it is possible to change their form a bit and they are still perceived as acceptable collocations. Baker gives the example of *deliver a letter*, *delivery of a letter*, and *having delivered a letter*. Idioms on the other hand do not allow variation unless the speaker is doing it consciously for humoristic purposes (Baker, 1992). The Cambridge dictionary defines idioms as “a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own”<sup>3</sup>. Idioms often pose a problem to translators because of their complex nature. To translate an idiom, it is crucial to notice the idiom and to understand its meaning (Baker, 1992).

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<sup>3</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/idiom>

Recognizing an idiom can be a difficult task as they are not always obvious. There are of course extremely recognizable idioms, mostly given the fact that they are impossible exaggerations of the real world, e.g. *Cat got your tongue*, *pot calling the kettle black*, *dead as a doornail*. Phrases starting with *like* can also be a sign of an idiom, e.g. *like a fish out of water*. In most cases translators spot idioms because their meaning does not make sense if trying to be understood literally. But some idioms can be misleading. This happens if an idiom has both figurative and literal meaning, and the context of the surrounding text does not give a clear clue of which meaning is implied (Baker, 1992). Because of this it is vital that the translator have a vast knowledge of source language idioms.

Another possible problem while translating idioms is the fact that some idioms in the source language have a close counterpart in the target language that does not necessarily have the same meaning (Baker, 1992). A good example of this is the English idiom *to pull someone's leg*, meaning 'to tell someone something untrue as a joke in order to shock them temporarily and amuse them when they found out later that it was a joke', looks very similar to the Croatian construction *vući noge*, which means 'drag your feet while walking'. There is also another idiom, *vući koga za nos*, which again has a different meaning, and it means 'play games with someone's emotions'.

If a translator recognizes the idiom, the first part of their task is complete, but they then encounter another issue: What to do if the idiom in the source language has no counterpart in the target language? The source language can express meaning through one word while the target language expresses it through multiple words, or vice versa, a different language can express it using an idiom (Baker, 1992). Languages are unpredictable, so the translator needs to decide how to deal with idioms that do not exist in the target language.

There are different strategies used while translating idioms. Using an idiom of a similar meaning and form would be the best strategy to use. Unfortunately, this can rarely be achieved, because there are simply not a lot of perfect equivalents (ibid.). The example of an idiom of a similar meaning and form is the English idiom *to have more holes than Swiss cheese* and its Croatian equivalent *biti pun rupa kao švicarski sir*. They both have a very similar form and the same meaning: someone or something with a lot of flaws and problems.

Translators often use an idiom of similar meaning but with a different form because it is most practical. It is almost always possible to find an idiom in the target language that has the same meaning as an idiom in the source language (ibid.). A good example of idioms with a similar meaning but a quite different form is the English *as busy as Grand Central Station* and its Croatian counterpart *vrvi kao u košnici*. Their form is completely different, but both idioms mean ‘a very crowded, even chaotic place’.

Another way to translate idioms is translating by paraphrase. This strategy is the most common one when translators cannot find an equivalent for the source language idiom in the target language (ibid.). The paraphrase can be perceived as correct or incorrect, but translators use this strategy because it is sometimes more convenient than explaining the idiom in a footnote.

The last strategy that translators sometimes succumb to is translating by omission. This is often perceived as a “bad” translation strategy, but it is appropriate when an appropriate match does not exist in the target language and therefore it is extremely difficult to paraphrase (ibid.).

## **6. TRANSLATION STRATEGIES**

Translation strategies can be defined as the procedures leading to the optimal solution of a translation problem (Fernández Guerra, 2012). The terminology is not always consistent, as some authors use “methods”, while others use “strategies” and “procedures” (Matijaščić, 2015). In this thesis the term “strategies” will be used when referring to solutions translators come to when dealing with culture-specific items and non-equivalence.

### **6.1. Literal translation**

Literal translation has several different names, such as direct translation or word-for-word translation. It is a translation strategy in which the one word at a time is translated without looking at the words as a whole (Fernández Guerra, 2012). Literal translation is often found when dealing with scientific, medical, and legal texts. It can be useful when trying to keep to the original form of a text, like when translating important speeches but it should not be used as a sole translation strategy while translating most literary works because it ignores the cultural context of a text (Taylor, 1998). Literal translations should not be used when translating idioms because it cannot convey their meaning (Baker, 1992).

### **6.2. Omission**

Translating by omission means removing one or more words from the source language text. Omission is often used when dealing with hostile or taboo language. In some Arab countries, for example, translators omit English swear words to avoid controversies. Translating by omission can also be used when there is no equivalent in the target language for the source language word or expression. It would be better for translators to find a suitable replacement but if it is not possible or if the replacement is difficult to understand or even archaic, they opt for omission (Baker, 1992). However, omission is not frequent when dealing with cultural terms, and when it is used it is to avoid repetition or to achieve a more natural flow of the text (Fernández Guerra, 2012).

### **6.3. Borrowing**

Borrowing, transference or using loan words is a translation strategy in which a word is taken from the source language and left in the target language translation. It is mostly used when there is no word in the target language for the source language word, but there are some cases in which there is an equivalent in the target language and nevertheless a loan word is used (Taylor, 1998). There are two types of borrowing; pure and naturalized. Pure borrowing means that there is no change from the source language word, its form stays completely the same, e.g. *déjà vu*. Pure borrowings are often called foreignisms, Anglicisms, Germanisms, etc. When it comes to naturalized borrowing, some modifications are made to the source language word for it to fit in the target language. Borrowing is often used when dealing with medical and technical terms, especially computer-related vocabulary (Baker, 1992).

### **6.4. Cultural equivalence**

Cultural equivalence refers to the replacement of source language cultural concept with an inaccurate but suitable concept in the target language (Daghoughi & Hashemian, 2016). An example from *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* is the target language word *informatika* for the source language subject *Design and Technology*. Although *Design and Technology* focuses more on design and how to use media to create projects, the closest equivalent in Croatian is *informatika*, in which students learn the basics of computer science.

### **6.5. Adaptation**

Adaptations are often called “free translations”. This strategy deals with cultural differences that can confuse the reader if translated literally (“Translation and Adaptation - Translation Blog”, 2020). Adaptation also fits into cultural equivalence, if there is no suitable concept in the target language, adaptation looks for a more acceptable one. It most often appears in movie titles, book titles, character names, etc.

An example of adaptation is the movie *The Sound of Music*, which was translated into Croatian as *Moje pjesme, moji snovi*. The adapted title is easy to remember and sounds more natural than translating it literally as *Zvuk glazbe*.

## 6.6. Other translation strategies

When dealing with non-equivalence, translators often use translation by a more general word. This strategy is used to deal with words that have a higher level of specificity in the source language than the target language (Baker, 1992). Baker gives the example of translating the word *shampoo* (v.) from the source language, English into *lavar* (v. wash) in the target language, Spanish.

Translators often have to use couplets, since one translation strategy sometimes does not suffice for a high-quality translation, so it is necessary to combine two or more translation strategies (Daghoughi & Hashemian, 2016).

Footnotes, glossaries, and additions are used when a translator wants to give additional information about a word. They leave the word in the same form it had in the source language and write the explanation in a footnote or translate the word into the target language, but if there was a wordplay that was efficient only in the source language, they explain it in a footnote or addition (Daghoughi & Hashemian, 2016). Footnotes are always found on the same page as the word that needs further explaining, while a glossary is found at the end of the book. A glossary is an alphabetical list of all the items a reader could find confusing along with their explanation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/glossary>

## 7. ANALYSIS OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIES USED IN THE TEXT

The following chapter will present an analysis of translation strategies used by the translator while translating the book. This chapter will serve as an overview of strategies that were used the most, that were unexpected, or could be improved, starting with the translation of the title and then focusing on strategy by strategy.

### 7.1. Translation of the title

The title was translated from *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* to *Detektivni Interneti: zov labirinta*. The translator literally translated the title of the series, but he completely changed the title of the book itself. *Zov labirinta* or *Lure of the labyrinth* in the source language is the videogame that the book is about. It is the name of the videogame that the disgruntled former employee of one of the main character's (Rob's) father and Rob's tutor are trying to steal. This translation is again a literal translation. The verb *lure* can be translated in many different ways, such as, *zamamnost* or *privlačnost*, but *zov* (literally *call*) fits more naturally and it is more appropriate for the target audience, pre-teens. The translator probably had in mind the novel *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London, that was translated into Croatian as *Zov divljine*, so this translation already sounds familiar to readers. Another reason why *zov* was the most suitable choice for the translation is the fact that it is the name of a videogame, so it should not be a complicated, long name, as most videogames have short names that are easy to remember. Vučić's translation of the title is an example of adaptation, a translating strategy that is mostly used when translating titles of works of art: books, movies and characters. The title is obvious to someone who has read the book, it is clearly about something important in the book.

### 7.2. Analysis of borrowing in the novel

The translator used borrowing quite frequently while translating this book. The examples are shown in Table 1. This was mostly necessary as the book really uses a lot of words that simply do not exist in Croatian. Croatian translators often leave names of places and residences as is when translating, but Vučić made an effort to explain what *manor* and *abbey* mean, which is commendable. He could have translated some words that do have a Croatian equivalent, like *Mail: 1 message waiting* or *bulletin board*, but it is

understandable that he opted for the English version, because those words are easy to understand to anyone who used a computer and the Internet and leaving them as is makes the read seem more authentic.

*Manor House* is the name of a residence and Croatian translators have the practice of leaving such toponyms in the source language but changing their forms to fit the norms of the target language (Peradin, 2015). Vučić went a step further and while using naturalized borrowing also put the meaning of the collocation in a footnote. He even mentioned in the footnote, that even though Manor House could mean ‘vlastelinski dvorac’, in this case it is the name of the residence and that is why he left it in the source language. The same can be said for *Abbey School*, which he left it in the source language while noting in a footnote what an Abbey School is or was.

When translating *super-smiley* and *mail log*, Vučić used pure borrowing. Regarding the word *super-smiley*, there is simply no acceptable word in the target language to translate such a construction. There is no word for ‘smiley’ that is an official part of the Croatian standard language, but there is a word often used in colloquial Croatian: ‘smajlić’. In this situation it did not matter if the translator used ‘super-smiley’ or ‘smajlić’ because they are both borrowings, and the readers can easily understand both translations.

A *mail log* is an almost forgotten concept, similar to the email inbox today. The difference is that the mail log was a list of all correspondences, both incoming and outgoing, but you could not open the emails, as it was simply a record. Today’s teenagers do not know what a mail log was, and there is no suitable translation for it other than ‘zapisnik pošte’ which can be more difficult to understand than just leaving the word mail log in the source language. The translator could have put an explanation of what a mail log is in a footnote, or in the glossary to make it clearer.

The translator could have translated *MAIL: 1 MESSAGE WAITING*<sup>5</sup> literally to the target language. There were no reasons to leave it in the source language, there is an equivalent for the expression and translating it would not affect the meaning or context in which it appears. The translator probably left it in the source language because people mostly

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<sup>5</sup> This phrase is capitalized in both the source and target text.



encounter computer expressions in English, so they would understand it with no problem. It is not difficult to understand this expression, but to preserve all aspects of the target language it would be better to translate it.

As mentioned earlier in this study, some words can have more than one meaning, and we encounter this when dealing with the compound *bulletin board*. The construction ‘bulletin board’ in English has two meanings: 1. a board on a wall for putting up notices, 2. a place on a computer system where users can read messages and add their own. If the translator solely looked for the target language equivalent, he would have translated ‘bulletin board’ to ‘oglasna ploča’, and this would not be correct, because it refers to the wrong meaning of the compound. So the translator looked deeper and decided to use a naturalized borrowing *message boardu* and this is an adequate translation. He could have improved this translation by consulting Mihaljević’s principles of translating computer-related expressions. Mihaljević (2006) stated that if there is no expression in the target language that can be used for an English concept, the translator should choose a word derived from Latin or Greek rather than English, French, etc. and that the translator should always choose a shorter expression rather than a longer one. There is a word that fits both of these criteria better than ‘message board’ and that is the Latin derived word ‘forum’ that is often used in Croatian to describe a bulletin board.

The compound *space-shuttle* has no equivalent in Croatian, but it is a widely known concept, so there was no need for Vučić to explain it in a footnote or in the glossary. While translating it, he used naturalized borrowing, so space-shuttle became *space-shuttleova* to follow the norms of Croatian grammar.

**Table 1.** Examples of borrowing in the novel

SOURCE LANGUAGE	TARGET LANGUAGE	PAGE AND CONTEXT
Manor House	Manor Houseu – footnote: Manor House znači „vlastelinski dvorac“, ali to je ovdje ime pa smo ga ostavili u originalu.	1/5 Obitelj Zanelli je živjela u Portsmouthu, u Manor Houseu, koja je bila smještena visoko na brijegu Portsdown.
Abbey School	„Abbey School“ – footnote: Abbey School bi se moglo prevesti kao „opatijska škola“, „škola pri opatiji“, „samostanska škola“.	5/9 A tamo negdje u sredini popisa, jedno mu je ime privuklo pažnju: „Abbey School“.
Mail: 1 message waiting	Footnote: jedna poruka čeka	22/24 U donjem desnom uglu palila se i gasila poruka: MAIL: 1 MESSAGE WAITING
Bulletin bord	Message bordu	34/37 Slučajno sam naletio na njega na šahovskom message bordu.
Space-shuttle	Space-shuttleova	37/39 „... a onda je s Interneta skinuo jedan file koji mu je trebao da bi mogao dobivati vijesti iz NASE u Floridi o lansiranjima space-shuttleova.“
Mail log	Mail log	60/61 „Brzinom koja je i nju samo iznenadila kliknula je na MAIL LOG ikonu...“
Super-smiley	Super-smiley	61/62 Je li to bio nekakav super- smiley ili nešto više?

The translator did not use omission unless it was necessary for the translation to sound more natural. When translating *arrow-shaped pointer* to *pokazivač*, he removed the adjective *arrow-shaped* because it would be unnecessary to translate it as *pokazivač u obliku strelice*, as the readers are aware of the shape of the pointer. The translator omitted the word *computer* when translating *computer's fan* and translated it into *ventilator* because the context of the paragraph implies that the fan is a part of the computer.

The translator omitted the whole sentence of *He finished with a flourish.* because it is exceedingly difficult to translate to Croatian without the sentence losing its meaning. When using this expression, the author is referring to the last line of the email, that is the signature of Zmaster – Rob's username, which is a bold gesture, because Rob is not the one writing the email the other main characters, Tamsyn and Josh are. There just is not an appropriate translation into the target language, so it was better to omit this sentence.

The translator omitted a part of the last sentence in Table 2, because it was unnecessary for the context of the novel. The translator probably thought that there was no need to show the whole path the character took, as it did not bring anything valuable to the translation.

**Table 2.** Examples of omission

SOURCE LANGUAGE	TARGET LANGUAGE	PAGE NUMBER
On the screen an arrow-shaped pointer moved onto the Internet icon – a miniature globe.	Posegnuo je za mišem, doveo pokazivač na ikonu Interneta koja je izgledala kao minijaturna zemaljska kugla i dva puta kliknuo na nju.	2/6
As the computer's fan slowed to a halt, the room seemed quiet.	Kada se ventilator zaustavio, soba je djelovala tiho.	22/26
He finished with a flourish. "What do you think?"	"Što ti se čini?"	42/44
Closing his door behind him, he headed off down the hallway and into the lounge.	Zatvorio je za sobom vrata i krenuo ka salonu.	46/48

### **7.3. Translation of computer expressions in the novel**

The translations of computer expressions are shown in Table 3. While translating *hard disk*, Vučić embraced the translation strategy of borrowing, more specifically, the naturalized type of borrowing. In other words, he did not leave the word in the exact same form as it is in the source language but rather adapted it to fit into the norms of the target language. In this case the norm that had to be met was the change of the noun according to cases.

*"Začulo se tiho zujanje hard-diska."* (Coleman, 1998:5)

In the above sentence the word 'hard disk' should be in the genitive, and that is why the suffix *-a* was added. The translator added the hyphen so to obey the rule of Croatian grammar which states that a hyphen is used when there is a compound of two words in

which only the latter goes through declension.<sup>6</sup> The only thing that the translator could have done differently is to use the Croatian word for hard disk, which is also a borrowing, but it is already a part of the Croatian standard language, and that word is *tvrđi disk*. The translator probably avoided this word because the pre-teen population is so familiar with the English words for computer vocabulary that he knew that they would understand the source language word with more ease than the target language translation.

Vučić also used naturalized borrowing when translating *Click on the* and *netiquette*. In both translations he made the words and expressions comply to the rules of the Croatian language. When translating *Click* to *klikni* he made the word fit into Croatian spelling while keeping more or less the same pronunciation. In the case of *netiquette*, he did something similar: the letter *-q* does not exist in the Croatian alphabet but he used the letter *-k*, preserving the pronunciation of the source language word. This translation could be confusing to readers because it is a false cognate. The Croatian word *etiketa* means label, and the English word *etiquette* is translated as *bonton*. It would have been more appropriate if the translator used the expression *internetski bonton*.

The translator used pure borrowings throughout the book, which will be analyzed more closely later in this thesis. Now, only the translation of *newbie* will be mentioned. The word *newbie* is an informal word meaning someone who has just started doing an activity, a job, etc.<sup>7</sup> This word has several equivalents in the target language, like *novak*, *novajlija* or, if wanting to use an even more colloquial word, he could have translated it to *zelen* (Engl. greenhorn), which is a common translation of words like *newbie* or *rookie*, especially in children's books. When translating the word *newbie*, Vučić opted for pure borrowing, which was the appropriate decision. If he had translated it to one of the options in the target language mentioned previously, the paragraph would not make sense anymore. After using the word *newbie*, the author explained it as a newcomer to the Internet, so the readers would understand the word even if they did not know it previously. It is commendable that the translator decided to keep this word in its original form to fit into computer culture.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://pravopis.hr/pravilo/spojnica/68/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/newbie>

When translating *screen display* to *grafičko sučelje* Vučić used equivalence. When taken as a whole, the construct has the same meaning, but if looked at as two pieces, the literal translation of *screen* in this context is *ekran* or *monitor* (which are also borrowings *ekran* = *fr. écran*<sup>8</sup>, *monitor* = *engl. ← lat.: savjetnik ≈ monere: podsjetiti, savjetovati, upozoriti*<sup>9</sup>) and the translation of *display* is *zaslon* or *prikaz*. The translator realized that if translated literally as two components the translation would not be credible, it would lose its meaning, but if translated as a whole to *grafičko sučelje*, a concept with the same meaning, it will be easily understood by the reader.

Vučić used omission when dealing with *arrow-shaped pointer* and translated it simply as *pokazivač*. *Arrow-shaped* is an adjective dealing with the appearance of the pointer. Vučić probably omitted this adjective because of two reasons: first, if he translated it literally to *u obliku strelice* it would sound unnatural in the target language and second it is unnecessary to note the shape of the pointer as most readers are aware of its shape and it does not contribute to the context and plot.

There are many literal translations in the book, as visible in Table 3. The translator used this strategy in appropriate situations and does not change the meaning of the words when using it. He is careful to look for a more suitable strategy when dealing with words that lose meaning if translated literally.

*Design and technology* translated as *informatika* uses two different translation strategies. The first one, as mentioned earlier in this paper is cultural equivalence. Vučić found the closest cultural equivalent to a school subject that does not exist in Croatia, and therefore would be difficult for the reader to understand, and used something familiar to the reader, *informatika*. *Design and technology* is a school subject found in all schools in the UK and it is a part of the national curriculum since 1988. The students taking this class learn how to produce various projects using different types of media. *Informatika* became a part of the Croatian national curriculum in 2018 for upper primary school, while it is still an elective in lower primary school. Because of these differences in the two subjects we can say that Vučić also used the strategy of translating by a more general word. *Informatika*

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<sup>8</sup> <http://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search>

<sup>9</sup> <http://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search>

indicates a broader learning area, the students learn parts of the computer, both hardware and software, how to use different programs on the computer, in some schools they even learn how to program, while in *Design and technology* students do not learn as many technical terms, rather they focus more on the practical.

**Table 3.** Examples of computer language translations

<b>SOURCE LANGUAGE</b>	<b>TARGET LANGUAGE</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>TRANSLATION STRATEGY</b>
Hard disk	Hard-diska	1/5	Borrowing – naturalized
Screen display	Grafičko sučelje	2/6	Equivalence
Arrow-shaped pointer	Pokazivač	2/6	Omission, Literal translation (Couplet)
New Users	Novi korisnici	4/8	Literal translation
Design and Technology	Informatika	10/14	Cultural Equivalence, Translating by a more general word (Couplet)
Information superhighway	Informacijski superautoput	10/14	Literal translation
Surf the Net	Surfanje Mrežom	11/15	Literal translation
Computer screen	Zaslon	15/20	Literal translation
Electronic mail	Elektronička pošta	16/21	Literal translation
Display	Monitor	17/21	Equivalence
Click on the	Klikni	19/23	Borrowing – naturalized
Newbie	Newbie	24/28	Borrowing - pure
Netiquette	Netiketa	27/31	Borrowing – naturalized

Table 4 shows some examples of pure borrowing in the novel. As can be seen, the translator decided to use pure borrowing when dealing with various button names on the computer.

The translator explained the words *OFF* and *RETURN* in the glossary. When explaining the *RETURN* key he also explained the *ENTER* key. He did not translate the words *return* and *enter*, but he explained what computer keys with those names do. The same goes for the *OFF* key.

Vučić did not translate other computer keys, there is no mention of them in the glossary either. It is understandable that he did not see the need to understand them because the readers very probably own a computer and are aware of those buttons and their functions. When translating the keyboard key names he mostly left them in the exact same form as in the target text, the only one he changed was the expression *CAPS LOCK* in the source text this expression was indeed written in Caps Lock, while in the target text it was not written in Caps Lock.

**Table 4.** Examples of pure borrowing in computer expressions

SOURCE LANGUAGE	TARGET LANGUAGE	PAGE
With a swiftness of touch that Josh would have been proud of, she flicked the switch to OFF.	Brzinom kakvom bi se i Josh ponosio prebacila je sklopku na OFF.	10/14
You chose FILE and QUIT.	Izabereš FILE i Quit.	16/20
Quickly, he flicked on the CAPS LOCK key and began to type...	Munjevito je pritisnuo Caps Lock tipku i stao pisati...	54/56
Rob's fingers hammered repeatedly at the RETURN key until the three words he'd typed scrolled off the screen.	Brzo je udarao po tipki RETURN sve dok tri riječi koje je natipkao nisu iščezle s ekrana.	55/57



The translator used a lot of borrowing. Mostly he used naturalized borrowing to fit the criteria of the target language, but in some cases, he opted for pure borrowing. He used pure borrowing when translating computer expressions regarding different computer keys and menu options. When using pure borrowing he sometimes put the explanations of the words used in the glossary. In situation that he did not explain the meaning of the word in the glossary he probably thought that the aimed readers (pre-teens) will understand the word because they use computers daily. This seemed somewhat inconsistent, because the criteria on which he decided which words to put in the glossary and which not is not clear. Why would he explain words like *OFF*, *RETURN*, *PAGE DOWN* but not words like *CAPS LOCK*, *SHIFT*, or *SEND*? There was no need to put any of those words in the glossary because it is very probable that every reader will know exactly what they mean.

#### **7.4. Translation of idioms in the novel**

There are many idioms in this novel. On his website the author, Michael Coleman said that he used many idioms and colloquialisms for a humorous effect. A few of the most interesting examples of idioms will be analyzed in this chapter and listed in Table 5.

Vučić used a couple of different strategies while translating idioms. When translating *I don't have to waste time*, he used a Croatian idiom with a similar form and meaning: *ne moram gubiti vrijeme*. As mentioned before, this is the best strategy to use when possible. He also used this strategy when translating *like a kid with a new toy* to *kao dijete kada dobije novu igračku*, again both idioms have the exact same form and meaning. Consequently, this was the most appropriate strategy to use.

When approaching the idiom *All Greek to you* Vučić opted for omission. This idiom has a Croatian equivalent that has the same meaning but a vastly different form: *to su za mene španska sela*. Vučić could have used this variation, but he probably decided to omit the idiom completely because in the original text this idiom was used for a humorous effect. Tamsyn and Josh were talking about her not understanding the French homework, so he used this idiom to annoy her by adding a language that is even more difficult to understand and being a bit arrogant. Omitting this idiom did not affect the plot of the novel in any way, but it did give the audience one less chance to connect to the characters. Translators use omission when there is no equivalent in the target language, and because there was an

equivalent in this case, it would have been better if the translator had used the idiom *to su za mene španska sela*. There is another equivalent that would be even more appropriate to use, but it is more colloquial and that is *kao da je to kineski*. This idiom even has a similar form to the idiom in the source text.

*To knock someone into shape* is an idiom meaning ‘to return someone or something into acceptable condition or behavior, especially through direct, efficient, and practical means’<sup>10</sup>, and Vučić translated it by using *muštrati* (*tjerati u red, podvrgavati disciplini kao vojnike na vježbama; uvježbavati, vježbati*<sup>11</sup>), which is an acceptable translation because the overall meaning of both sentences remains the same. But the translator could have used the Croatian idiomatic expression, that we can even see above in the definition of *muštrati*, and that is *tjerati u red*. Unlike *muštrati*, which is archaic, *tjerati u red* is a common idiom and would be more suitable to use in this context, because it carries the same meaning even though it has a slightly different form.

When someone *takes a shine to someone* it means that ‘they liked them very much at their first meeting’<sup>12</sup>. Vučić translated this idiom as *zaljubio se u tebe* which is an appropriate translation, considering there is no equivalent for the source language idiom in the target language. The translator used the strategy of translating an idiom by paraphrase. He could not have identified an idiom with the same meaning in Croatian, so he simply explained what the author was trying to imply. The translator could have used the construction *svidjeti se na prvi pogled* because, unlike his translation, this one conveys that he liked her from the moment he met her, which is the true meaning of the source language idiom.

*To get about* means ‘to be able to go to different places without difficulty’<sup>13</sup>, and in the novel it means that he travels all over the world with the help of the Internet. Vučić translated this idiom with *surfa po cijelom svijetu*, which accurately depicts what the author was trying to say even though it is not an idiom; he again used translation by paraphrase. The context of the source text implied that the idiom *to get about* was used to

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<sup>10</sup> <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/knock+into+shape>

<sup>11</sup> <http://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/take-a-shine-to-someone#:~:text=phrase,a%20shine%20to%20Miss%20Richmond>

<sup>13</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/learner-english/get-about>

mock the character it was said about, and the translation Vučić used is an observation without the mocking manner. To convey this tone of mockery the translator could have used a colloquial Croatian term *posvuduša*, because its expressive meaning has a negative connotation that the author was trying to convey in the source text.

**Table 5.** Examples of idiom translations in the novel

SOURCE LANGUAGE	TARGET LANGUAGE	PAGE
I don't have to waste time	barem ne moram gubiti vrijeme	7/11
All Greek to you, is it?	Omitted	8/12
Josh was like a kid with a new toy.	Josh je bio kao dijete kada dobije novu igračku.	19/23
Knocking you into shape?	Muštra li te dovoljno?	23/27
taken a shine to you	“Izgleda da se zaljubio u tebe”	39/41
gets about	surfa po cijelom svijetu	41/43

When translating idioms, the translator tried to find idioms with a similar form and meaning in the target language. Unfortunately, this was not always possible, so he had to find idioms with different form, but similar meaning and he again succeeded in his intention. His only problematic decision was omitting the idiom *All Greek to me* because it added humor and made the characters more likeable. He could have used the Croatian *kao da je to kineski* and it would preserve the humor of the dialogue.

## 7.5. Glossary

The glossary is at the end of the novel and it consists of 29 expressions. Glossaries are usually particularly useful, but in this case, it would be a lot more convenient if the translator used footnotes. While explaining the terms found in the glossary, he used a lot of examples from the text. It would probably be easier to follow for the reader if he explained some of those terms at the pages where they first appeared. It is obvious that since the book was translated in 2005, the translator thought it was necessary to explain words like *browser* or *Internet* which do not need to be explained any more. Also,

expressions like *zbombati mail* are archaic, and were used at the time the novel was written but were not used any more by the time it was translated. It would have been better if the translator used the naturalized borrowing *spamati*, which is more appropriate to use for the targeted audience. While translating some words, Vučić could have translated them using another translation strategy rather than using pure or naturalized borrowing and then putting the literal translation in the glossary. For example, he could have translated *login name* as *korisničko ime* in the book, instead of putting it in the glossary.

**Table 6.** Selected expressions from the glossary

Browser	Program pomoću kojeg se gledaju web-stranice
Cyber	Označava nešto što ne pripada stvarnom nego virtualnom, računalnom svijetu
Internet, Net, Mreža	Razni nazivi za mrežu kompjutera, koja obuhvaća cijeli svijet
Laptop	Prijenosno računalo
Login, login name	Korisničko ime koje se, uz lozinku, koristi kod pristupa e-mail account (npr. Zmaster). E-mail adresa obično počinje tim imenom (npr. zmaster prime.co.uk), ali to ne mora uvijek biti slučaj)
Menu	Izbornik
Zbombati mail ( <i>engl. Bung up</i> )	Tako se u kompjuteraškom slangu kaže kada se na nečiju e-mail adresu pošalje toliko pošte da to ovome smeta, bilo brojem poruka (češće) ili njihovom veličinom. Ovdje je štos u veličini. Svaki David Copperfield bi mogao imati najviše oko 1 Mb. Ako pretpostavimo da Robov mailbox može primiti samo 3Mb ili manje doista bi mogao imati nekih (manjih) problema. (No u praksi su poštanski sandučići najčešće veći od 3 Mb)

## 8. CONCLUSION

Translation is a complicated task. Translators must have a plethora of knowledge of the culture of the source and target language to give a decent translation. They also have to know when it is appropriate to use different translation strategies to stay true to the source text. Zoran Vučić made a great effort when translating *Internet Detectives: Net Bandits* to use translation strategies that he deemed appropriate.

All in all, Vučić's translation was adequate. In the most part he chose appropriate translation strategies when dealing with computer-expressions and culture-specific items. There were just a few expressions for which he could have found a better equivalent in the target language, but those did not significantly affect the context of the book. He sometimes used expressions that are archaic, but it is important to take into consideration that the book was translated in 2005. I think that that this novel should be retranslated, especially if it is offered as a reading assignment to primary school students. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, retranslation is a process of translating a text that has already been translated into the target language when the previous translation becomes inadequate. Retranslations occur for various reasons – archaic texts that children do not understand or do not enjoy; changes in the socio-political context being the most frequent. Also, inadequate, bad translations may be the reason (Andraka, 2019). The retranslation of the novel would make it more appropriate and a lot easier to understand for the readers of today, as computer-related expressions have evolved and changed considerably since 2005.

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Potpis

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