The rendering of idiomatic expressions is considered one of the most problematic aspects of translation as the figurative meaning of idioms as well as their cultural references are not always possible to be transferred successfully. The rendering of idioms in audiovisual translation (AVT), which is a comparatively new branch of translation studies, has received considerable attention in the world. However, idiomatic expressions in the subtitles of children’s cartoons is a rather unexplored topic. The main aim of the presentation is to show which element, propositional meaning or figurative meaning, is given preference in the translation of English idioms into Lithuanian in five children’s cartoons: Valiant (2005), The Wild (2006), Over the Hedge (2006), Ratatouille, Horton Hears a Who (2008) and Rio (2011). In order to indicate the levels of idiomaticity and to highlight their possible influence on the target language translations, source language idioms are subdivided into two categories: semantically unmotivated (also called pure or opaque) and semantically motivated (also called literal or transparent). According to the analysis, the dialogues of the cartoons contain 34 unmotivated and 156 motivated idioms. In the translation of unmotivated idioms the element of propositional meaning gets preference. 23 idioms are reduced to propositional meaning without transferring their figurative meaning. One of the reasons for that is the very nature of subtitling, i.e. a limited number of syllables and a fast rate of speech. 6 idioms retain both the propositional and the figurative meaning in the subtitles, while 5 idioms are mistranslated. One of the possible causes for mistranslation is the lack of motivators, which allows for misinterpretation. With regard to motivated idioms, in the majority of cases, 81, the element of propositional meaning is retained in the subtitles; in 68 cases the figurative meaning is transferred. Similarly to the situation of unmotivated idioms, 5 idioms are mistranslated in the Lithuanian subtitles, one of the causes being the already mentioned lack of motivators. There are also two cases of omission; however, it is partial, as
only the repetitions of idioms are omitted in the Lithuanian subtitles, which causes no loss of information.