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Bakalářská práce

# The Linguistic Analysis of Television Form of the TV Serial Miranda

# Jazyková analýza televizní formy seriálu Miranda

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České Budějovice 2017

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**Poděkování**

Ráda bych touto cestou poděkovala vedoucí mé bakalářské práce Mgr. Ludmile Zemková, Ph.D. za profesionální vedení a pomoc, a za podporu a čas, který mi věnovala.

**Acknowledgement**

I would like to express many thanks to the supervisor of my bachelor thesis Mgr. Ludmila Zemková, Ph.D. for her professional attitude and help, and for support and time she gave me.

**Anotace**

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na lingvistickou analýzu televizní formy seriálu Miranda v rozsahu vybraných episod z let 2009 – 2015. Práce v úvodu charakterizuje obecně humor a poté také přímo Britský humor. Jazyková analýza se soustředí na slovní hříčky, jejich rozdělení do kategorií a to včetně charakteristických rysů. Praktická část následně pracuje s příklady z britského televizního seriálu Miranda, které jsou rozděleny do kategorií and následně analyzovány.

**Abstract**

This bachelor thesis focuses on the linguistic analysis of the TV series Miranda and the selected episodes from 2009 – 2015. In the beginning, the bachelor thesis characterizes humour in general and then the British humour. The linguistic analysis focuses on the wordplay, its categorization and characteristic features. Subsequently, the practical part works with the examples from the British TV series Miranda, which are categorized and analysed.

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# Introduction

Humour represents a significant part of our everyday life. It brings us joy, happiness and laughter, which is the same for every society. On the other hand, it differs in some aspects, for example, what is hilarious in one country, may be a complete taboo in other. Humour is very interesting topic from a linguistic point of view, it can also serve as a useful way of learning foreign language, understanding the customs and identity of the society.

The thesis is divided into two parts. In the first section of the theoretical part, I will mention humour in general, especially British humour, and elements which make it unique and so internationally popular. The following chapter will deal with the terms sitcom and its subtype britcom, what do they mean, represent, and what exactly people can expect from these types of television comedy.

Another section will address the main source of my thesis - TV sitcom Miranda, its creator Miranda Hart, then the main characters, and lastly the important comical element, which makes this sitcom so brilliant, and it is “breaking the fourth wall”.

In the following chapter, I will focus on a wordplay, explain the meaning of this term, and then divide it into five categories: Phonological and graphological structure, Lexical structure (polysemy), Lexical structure (idiom), Morphological structure and Syntactic structure. Next chapter will introduce some of the genres of humour, with examples.

In the practical part, I will focus on the examples of the humorous aspects used in the language of the sitcom, such as wordplay, which will be divided into five categories I have mentioned in the previous chapter. Examples will be explained in detail.

# I. Theoretical Part

## 1. Humour

It is hard to find one universal definition of humour, because it has many definitions. We can simply say, that humour is basically something which makes people smile or laugh. The main function of humour is to amuse people, provoke laughter, and bring happiness, joy and positive attitude. Without any doubts, humour has an important social role in our everyday life.

As a student of linguistics, I find humour very helpful in my studies and English practice. Jokes and funny situations in a form of sitcoms or comedy books can be a really good way of learning a foreign language. I personally think, that humour can be used as an interesting and amusing aspect of learning foreign languages, because it is amusing and people also become closer to each other, thanks to funny situations.

Humour is versatile and can be seen from many points of view. For example Ross (1998:1) define humour as: "something that makes a person laugh or smile". He also claims, that it is possible to say that something is humorous, even though no one laughed at the time – it can often happen that people laugh, but someone can claim, "That's not funny". According to Ross (1998:1), in the matter of humour, people are not uniform, so if something is funny for one person, it is not necessarily funny for others. Another interesting point is that people laugh in the company. Research has shown that when people are alone they rarely laugh, even though the same example of humour makes them do so in a room full of people. There is a strong social aspect to the way people respond to humour. If you watch your favourite comedy in the presence of people who remain straight-faced, it can stop you finding it so funny. (Ross 1998:1) In the first paragraph I have mentioned that humour has a strong social side and other people can have an influence on our perception of humour.

People commonly assume that humour equals laughter, which is not true. Of course laughter is often caused by humour. But laughter is not necessarily a sign of amusement, it can also be a sign of nervousness, embarrassment or even fear. On the other hand, if we find something funny, we can also show it through blushing, crying, chuckling or just a simple smile.

## 1.1 British Humour

What makes Britain laugh? It is really hard to define a national humour and mentality in general. Every country has its own humour and uses specific themes or features which make their humour "just theirs".

In this subchapter, I will focus on British humour, and its specific elements. Main themes of British humour are innuendoes, intellectual jokes, sexual taboos and well-known British class system. British humour is internationally popular and I would say that probably because almost no subject is taboo.

The main part of British humour represents British television comedy which had a presence from the earliest days of broadcasting. The four main popular formats of British television comedy are stand-up comedy, sitcoms, impressionists and sketch shows. With no doubt, sitcoms are one of the most enduring genres in British television.

British class system, which has always been a big question mark for foreigners, represents a great source of humour for the British. In former times, people used to "know their place" and all they could do, was to accept their status as upper-class, middle-class or working class, and they should behave in a certain way appropriate to their class. People who tried to pass themselves off as a member of a higher class were, indeed, laughed at. A good example of a sitcom about difficulties of the class system is *Steptoe and Son*, which gain success in the 1960s. The main character, Harold Steptoe is desperately searching for a way out of his poverty and low status in society but unfortunately, his intentions are always frustrated by his cunning father, Albert. Viewers were amused, and sympathised with poor Harold and couldn't help laughing at his hopeless foolish dreams. (http://www.screenonline.org.uk)

Sexual themes used to be a social taboo and lead in censorship rules governing matters of sex, which have been much stricter than in other European countries. The censorship worked as a prohibition of sexual humour on screen or stage, which was indirect and took the form of innuendoes, remarks which suggest something sexual. In the 1960s, censorship began to relax and it was a beginning of the popular sketch-comedy television show, *The Benny Hill Show.* The main character Benny Hill is a podgy middle-aged man, who plays multiple characters. Even though, the show was accused of sexism, the audience never seemed to tire of the humour of this show. Three decades later, in the 1990s, sketch-comedy show *Smack that Pony* made fun of modern relationships and offered sexual jokes from a woman's perspective. On the other

hand, nastier and filthier humour is pictured in sitcoms like *Coupling* from 2000. (http://www.screenonline.org.uk)

Work, represents the great part of our lives, whether we like it or not. We all have some experience with stress, bothersome co-workers and a bossy boss. Because of that, we can't help but sympathise with characters from sitcoms with workplace settings who make us laugh because as we all know, humour is a great way to relieve stress. It is not hard to find the best TV comedy from this category – it is *The Office* (2001), which cynically analyses the workplace of the large paper company Wernham Hogg and follows the day-to-day troubles of this dysfunctional company. It is marked as a mockumentary sitcom, which means that the whole plot is fictional but it is presented as a documentary. (http://www.screenonline.org.uk)

Politics represents a great source of humour for the British. The most common way of making fun of politics is through satire, which uses humour to show that something or someone is foolish. Basically, it is the job of satire, to provoke and ridicule the powerful, which can be controversial. It is the point of satire, to make people angry because if it wouldn't, it hasn't succeeded. The most popular satirical sitcom is *Yes Minister* from the 1980s, and its sequel *Yes, Prime Minister*. The series ridicule behaviour of politicians and it is about a fictional Department of Administrative Affairs, and it takes place in the private office of a British Cabinet minister. (http://www.screenonline.org.uk)

British people love losers and fools, simply because they make them laugh and let them know that there is always someone worse off than themselves. Losers entertain us with their own ambitions, failures, trying and again failing. Typical loser or fool has some fatal character flaws, which make their humiliation so enjoyable for the viewers. Over the years, British sitcoms have featured a various number of losers, from the frustrated and pretentious hero Aloysius Hancock from sitcom *Hancock's Half-Hour*, to *The Office's* arrogant David Brent. Another interesting loser is annoying and snobbish Basil Fawlty of *Fawlty Towers* (1975). This sitcom with a total of twelve episodes, is set in a fictional hotel Fawlty Towers and the plot centres on hotel owners – rude Basil, his dominant wife Sybil, and their employees, who try to run the hotel, despite ridiculous situations with demanding and odd quests. (http://www.screenonline.org.uk)

The British are famous for their eccentrics, which can explain the odd and unique side of their sense of humour. Madness and Surrealism are another aspects of British comedy, and even though Surrealism has always been more associated with countries like Spain or France, the

British have claimed this movement in comedy, as their own. A great example of surrealistic TV series, is a sketch comedy *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, which is a composition of innuendo-laden surreal and black humour without a punchline. The main sources of humour are characteristic features of British life. (http://www.screenonline.org.uk)

## 2. Sitcom

A situation comedy or just sitcom, is a specific genre of comedy television program mainly centred on the main character or a fixed small group of characters. The plot is usually simple and not very demanding. Sitcoms are so popular because the main characters struggle with everyday life situations in a funny way, which amuse people the most. Indivisible parts of a sitcom are catchy jokes, playful and interesting dialogues, hilarious storyline and most importantly the same and likable characters in various day-to-day situations. The plot is often situated in the ordinary surroundings, for example - at work, at school or at home. Another factor, which is attractive to broadcasters, is a rather short duration – commonly 25-35 minutes. Episodes are short, humorous and thanks to its length the course of events is quick and entertaining.

The transition of the sitcoms from the radio to the television form started in the beginning of the 1960s when the television comedy gained popularity. The arrival of television offered huge possibilities for comedy genre, but the one which was the most popular was a situational comedy. (Corner 1991:75)

The humour in a sitcom comes from playing around with the comic possibilities of those particular character types interacting with each other in that situation, and may not involve lines or gags which are funny in isolation. (Ross 1998:89)

### 2.1 Britcom

British sitcom is a situation comedy produced in Great Britain. Like sitcoms in most other countries, britcoms deal with situations around a family, workplace, friends or other institution where a group of contrasting characters can be brought together. Britcoms have typically series of six episodes and about three or four seasons. They also differ from other sitcoms in their common use of black humour and its absence of sentiment as well as a common use of satire. Also, topics like social problems, or lack of ability to solve the character's issues and their effort to escape from his or her bad situation, are very typical features of British situation comedy. Viewers sympathise with the character, but are at the same time very amused by his or her fate.

## 3. Miranda

British sitcom Miranda which contains three seasons and two specials is written by actor and comedian Miranda Hart, who is also the main character in the TV series. The sitcom aired from 2009-2015 on BBC with a total of twenty episodes, with 30-35 minutes running time for each of them.

The main heroine is a clumsy, awkward and not average girly girl Miranda, who struggles with everyday situations and try hard to fit into society. As a result of being 6 feet 1 tall, she is way too often called “sir” which creates many ridiculous situations. This fact, unfortunately, not helps with Miranda's already low self-esteem, caused by her mother, who is constantly ashamed of her only child's single life and career. Miranda runs her own joke shop, and she often regrets making her best friend Stevie Sutton the shop manager, mainly because of her overstated marketing ambitions. On the other hand, Miranda is a lazy homebody – she likes being at home and enjoys a company of her “fruit friends”, which is probably the main reason why Miranda finds every social occasion extremely awkward and with her luck, her clumsiness and awkwardness can easily turn an everyday situation into a total fiasco.

One day, Miranda bumps into Gary Preston, her old friend from university and her secret crush, who starts working as a new chef in the restaurant next door. And that is the moment where the main story and the sitcom Miranda begin.

### 3.1 Creator

The whole series is written and created by British comedian Miranda Hart, who is also the main character of the sitcom. Miranda Hart is also an actress, stand-up comedian, producer and writer. Hart achieved great popularity for her semi-autobiographical sitcom Miranda, which is actually based on her radio series on the BBC Radio 2 called Miranda Hart's Joke Shop in 2008. The sitcom ran on the BBC with a total of three series and two special episodes from 2009 to 2015 and earned a huge success. In 2014, Miranda Hart as a stand-up comedian completely sold out her own stand-up area tour called “My, What I Call, Live Show”, and she is one of the Britain's top comedians.

Thanks to her popularity and her great comedy reputation, she made her Hollywood debut in 2015 in the action and comedy film Spy, starring Melissa McCarthy and Jude Law. Apart

from sitcoms and films, Miranda Hart is also an author and has written three books. The first one, “Is It Just Me?” is a semi-autobiographical book, published in 2012, and a winner of the 2013 National Book Awards, as the best Non-Fiction book. The second, and also successful book “The Best of Miranda” from 2014, is in a form of scripts from the sitcom, with interesting and funny side information from the backstage. Hart's most recent book, “Peggy and Me” was published in 2016 and is about Miranda and her lovable dog Peggy.

## 3.2 Characters

*Miranda* – 34-year-old main protagonist of the sitcom is single, 6 feet tall and socially awkward woman, who owns a joke shop and lives above it. She is childish, clumsy and has an interest in odd things, likes making “fruit friends”, “vegeta-pals”, singing out loud in improper situations or galloping on the streets like a horse. Because of that, Miranda struggles with everyday adult life.

*Gary Preston* – is an old friend of Miranda's and mainly her secret crush. He is friendly and loves travelling, so he can visit new countries, but also gain new and exotic cooking experiences. When he starts working at the restaurant next to Miranda's joke shop, they bump into each other there after many years and they are both happy to meet again. Although, Gary is more self-confident than Miranda, he's same as her, shy and awkward in romantic moments.

*Penny* – Miranda's mother, and a typical middle-class lady with a busy schedule, has only one main life goal, which is to find a husband and a proper job for her daughter. Among the middle-class people, a good impression is the only thing which matters, so Penny tries her best to change Miranda's behaviour and not be ashamed of her. Penny is also very open with her opinions, sometimes even rude. She makes fun of Miranda, by calling her obese and destitute, and instantly disparages her joke shop and single status. Penny's catchphrases are “Such fun!” and “What I call,” which she uses inappropriately, for completely normal and everyday things, for example: “I’m off to meet someone for a spot of, what I call, tea.”

*Stevie Sutton* – Miranda's best friend and also a manager of the joke shop, who enjoys doing weird things like Miranda, so they often have fun together. Stevie is ambitious, a well-organized woman who often motivates herself and also Miranda with a song “Proud” by Heather Small. Stevie and Miranda have a true and genuine friendship, but they also push each other's buttons and make fun of each other.

*Tilly* – is a kind of annoying old school friend of Miranda's. Tilly is self-centred, gossipy and sometimes rude with her too personal questions. She also calls Miranda by her school nickname "Queen Kong", even though Miranda is not really happy about it. Tilly is always busy with her text messages, so she often uses her catchphrase "bear with" to stop the conversation, and when she finishes her reading, others can talk again. The way she talks is also specific, she's quite loud and likes to use diminutives and new words created by mixing the English and French language.

*Clive Evans* – the owner of the restaurant where Gary begins to work. Clive is a mischievous man, so he can be quite vicious, harsh and savage with his comments on others. He tries to help Miranda with confessing her feeling to Gary, but Clive is more of an obstruction than help. On the top of that, he also often let the cat out of the bag, so he accidentally reveals someone's secret.

## 3.3 Breaking the fourth wall

This term comes originally from the theatre. The fourth wall is just imaginary and it represents a separation between the audience and the act. Apart from the theatre, the fourth wall also appears on the television and films. When a character speaks directly to the camera he or she is breaking the fourth wall, which means that he or she acknowledges that they are just fictional. A character usually discusses his/her problems or inner thoughts with the audience and interact with us – as the audience, so it makes us feel like we are a part of the story. This phenomenon originally started as a comical action, so that's why it is mostly used in sitcoms or comedy films.

Miranda breaks the fourth wall in every episode and directly addresses the audience. Each episode starts with a welcome and Miranda sums up what has happened in her life since the last time she has informed us. For example she begins the very first episode like this: *"Hello to you and thanks for joining. This is exciting isn't it, ey? Now let me get you up to speed. Previously in my life, my mother tried to marry me off. She was upset because I just told her how I blew my inheritance. I bought a joke shop."*

Miranda interacts with the audience throughout a whole episode, which is really funny, because she sometimes tells us, that she just lied or she doesn't know what to do when she's

desperate. Sometimes she just simply looks into the camera and makes a funny expression, which is totally priceless.

## 4. Wordplay

Wordplay, or in other words "play on words", is a form of using a language in a clever and witty way which also includes for example: puns, tongue twisters or jokes that can be understood in two ways, and one of them is usually sexual. Wordplay is more often used orally because the sound and the meaning can be different, which cause an association with something else and that is the point of making jokes. But written language is also full of play on words.

People use wordplay basically every day, for example, during conversations with their friends or family members, at work, when they write an email or a funny note for their roommates. The main aim of wordplay is to capture the attention of viewers or readers and amuse them, commonly in the form of magazine articles, TV news, films or sitcoms.

According to *Oxford Learner's Dictionary,* the definition of wordplay is: Making jokes by using words in a clever or amusing way, especially by using a word that has two meanings, or different words that sound the same.

Definition of wordplay used by Delabastita (1996:128) is: "Wordplay is the general name for various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two or more linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings. "

Delabastita also uses a synonym for wordplay which is "pun". Same as him, other scholars, treat these terms interchangeably, which means that they represent the same entity, so they are on the same level. On the other hand, according to Chiaro (1992:4), puns are only the subcategory of wordplay, which means that wordplay is a broad term, and puns represent just small parts of this term.

The linguistic categorization of wordplay according to Delabastita (1996:130):

- *Phonological and graphological structure:* Delabastita (1996:130) says that there are only a very limited number of graphemes (letters) and phonemes (units of sound which distinguish one word from another) in languages which can occur in certain combinations only. It means, that there are many pairs of words which are completely unrelated, but which have a similar or identical form or meaning. On the term "soundplay", Delabastita (1996:130) shows how the basis for the verbal association is provided by sounds. As an example, he uses "*Love at the first bite*" which is simply derived from *love at first sight*.

- *Lexical Structure (polysemy):* Every language is full of polysemous words, which have two or more meanings. These words have not just a semantic connection, but they are also related through their formal realization. According to Peprník (2001:26) an example of polysemy is a word *operation*: it can be done by an army as a battle activity, or done in mathematics, or made by a doctor.

- *Lexical Structure (idiom):* Delabastita (1996:130) says that every language contains a great number of idioms, i.e. combinations of words with a meaning which is not easily predictable from the meanings of its constituents. The actual meaning is historically based on. This distance between literal and idiomatic reading offers an opportunity for wordplay. An example from Kumar (1998:45): *a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*, which means, that having something now is way more valuable than having something greater, but at some uncertain time in the future.

- *Morphological structure:* According to Delabastita (1996:130), many compounds and derivatives can lose some of their original transparency through the process when they end up becoming a part of the vocabulary. As an example, Delabastita chose a word *breakfast*, which most people today consider as a single morpheme, and not as the compound which it really is. In most morphological puns, words are interpreted as derivatives or compounds, which are etymologically "incorrect" interpretations, but effective in a semantic way. As in this example*: Is life worth living? It depends upon the liver*.

- *Syntactic structure:* Puns can be also generated as phrases or sentences which can be determined in more than just one way. For example: *He gave her cat food,* which has two possible meanings, either that he is giving cat food to her, or that he is giving her cat some food.

## 4.1 Phonological and graphological structure

According to Delabastita (1996:128), wordplay can be created by many different ways on the graphological and phonological level, including homonymy (words with identical sounds and spelling), homophony (words with identical sounds but different spelling), homography

(identical spelling but different sounds), and paronymy (there are slight differences in sounds and spelling).

Furthermore, Delabastita distinguishes between *horizontal wordplay* and *vertical wordplay*. When he refers to *vertical wordplay*, he says that it is "two formally similar linguistic structures, which may clash associatively by being co-present in the same portion of text." (Delabastita 1996:128). It basically means that one of the linguistic structures is not present in the text, and "it has to be triggered into semantic action by contextual constraints." (Delabastita 1996:129).

An example of a vertical pun (Skrzypczak, 2012:188): *Buff and Polish.* (A headline of an article about Poland's museums getting and overhaul)

In *horizontal wordplay*, both linguistics structures are present in the text and they occur one after another. "The mere nearness of the pun components may suffice to bring about the semantic confrontation; in addition, grammatical and other devices are often used to highlight the pun," says Delabastita (1996:129).

An example of a horizontal pun (Skrzypczak 2012:189): *I enjoy bass fishing and playing the bass guitar.*

Horizontal and vertical puns can serve as a specific typology of puns, created by Delabastita (1996:128).

**Table 1: Horizontal and vertical typology of puns**

| **Homonymy** | **Homophony** | **Homography** | **Paronymy** |
|---|---|---|---|
| VERTICAL Pyromania: a burning passion | VERTICAL Burning passion | VERTICAL MessAge (name of mid-1990s rap band) | VERTICAL Come in for a faith lift (slogan on church) |
| HORIZONTAL Carry on dancing carries Carry to the top (article on ambitious young dancer named Carry) | HORIZONTAL Counsel for Counsil home buyers | HORIZONTAL How the US put US to shame | HORIZONTAL It's G.B. for the Beegees (article on pop band touring Britain) |

### 4.1.1 Homonymy

Words, which have the same spelling or same pronunciation, but differ in meaning, are called homonyms. According to Peprník (2001:33), there are three kinds of homonyms: The Real homonyms which look and sound alike, for example *bank* – a slope vs. *bank* – a place for money. The homophones, which are spelled differently but sound alike, *course* vs. *coarse.* And the third kind, the homographs, which have identical spelling but different pronunciation, for example *lead* [li:d] and *lead* [led].

### 4.1.2 Homonymy vs. polysemy

Another interesting topic which Peprník (2001:33) mentions is the smooth border between homonymy and polysemy. Definition of polysemy according to Peprník (2001:26) also contains a description how it differs from homonymy. "Polysemy, i.e. having two or more meanings, that is referring to two or more items of extralinguistic reality, but at the same time sharing at least one element of meaning – without this shared meaning, it would be a case of homonymy, that is two words of the same form, but with different meanings." As an example of polysemy, Peprník (2001:26) mentions the adjective *big*, which has multiple meanings, "important" (boss), "spacious" (town), "numerous" (nation), "high" (tree), "considerable" (difference) and "adult" (boy). Polysemy also contains special cases, when one meaning is general but the other one is specific. Peprník (2001:26) mentions the word *cat*, which in one case represents various breeds of the common cat, and in the other one the beasts of prey, including lion, cheetah, tiger, etc.

Traditionally, dictionaries distinguish homonyms from polysemous words. Atkins (2008, 280) provides an example of the word-form *punch*, when it functions as a noun. These sentences show the relationship between homonymy and polysemy. Sentences (1) - (3) examine the different uses of *punch*:

*(1) She gave him a punch in the stomach.* (a hard hit with the fist)
*(2) It lacks the emotional punch of French cinema.* (a forceful, memorable quality)
*(3) Glasses of punch were passed around.* (an alcoholic drink mixed with fruit juices)

According to Atkins (2008:280), meaning of the word *punch* in (1) and (2) are related, but the meaning of *punch* in (3) has nothing in common with the meanings of the sentence (1) and (2). The use of punch in (3) entered the language later and from a different source,

to be precise from the Sanskrit word "panch", which means "five": the drink was originally made from five ingredients. According to dictionary terms, *punch*[1] is a polysemous word which has two different meanings used in (1) and (2), as a forceful hit with a fist, even though in the sentence (2) it is used as a metaphorical expression, it has the same meaning as in (1). On the other hand *punch*[2] in sentence (3) is a homonym, and it is a drink, made by mixing pieces of fruit and often wine or other alcoholic drinks.

### 4.1.3 Homophony

Homophones are types of homonyms, they are words, which share the same pronunciation, but have different spelling and meaning. For example [eɪt] which can be either *ate* or *eight.*

### 4.1.4 Homography

Homographs share the same spelling as another word, but has a different pronunciation same as different meaning. Peprník (2001:34) provides some examples. The word *bow*, in the form of the noun it is pronounced as [boʊ] and it is a weapon used for shooting arrows, in the form of the verb it is pronounced as [baʊ] and it means to move your head forwards and downwards. Another example is the word *lead*, in the first case as the noun it is pronounced as [led] and it represents a metallic element, in the form of the verb, it is pronounced as [liːd], which means to go in front or to guide.

### 4.1.5 Paronymy

Wordplay based on paronymy creates a humorous meaning with both, similar spelling and pronunciation. Skrzypczak (2012:189) uses an interesting example of a play on words based on paronymy:

I used to be a doctor, but then I lost *patients*.

This sentence contains a wordplay based on the word *patients,* which leads to the target word *patience*. The first meaning is, that I used to be a doctor, but then I lost *patients* – people who receive medical care. The second meaning can be interpreted in this way: I used to be a doctor, but I lost my *patience* – the ability to continue something despite difficulties.

## 4.2 Lexical structure (polysemy)

I have already mentioned polysemy in the subchapter dealing with the relationship between homonymy and polysemy. According to Peprník (2001:26) "Polysemy, i.e. having two or more meanings, that is referring to two or more items of extralinguistic reality, but at the same time sharing at least one element of meaning."

As an example of polysemy word, I chose the adjective *good*, and its multiple meanings are demonstrated in the following sentences:

(1) John and I had a *good* time yesterday.
(2) Give me a *good* orange.
(3) This ticket is *good* for traveling all over the world.

In each sentence, an adjective *good* carries a different meaning: In (1) it means satisfying or enjoyable, in (2) it means suitable for an intended purpose, and in the sentence (3) it is something generally acceptable and valid. Even though meanings are different, there is a clear connection between the senses, because (1) - (3) refer to something of a high quality or an acceptable standard.

The basic classification of polysemy according to Márquez (2011:152), explains two types of relations between polysemous senses, *linear* and *non-linear polysemy.*

### 4.2.1 Linear polysemy

According to Márzquez (2011:153), linear polysemy relations contain typically a general and a specialized sense. One of the senses is more basic than the other one, which creates the linear relation. As an example, Márzquez (2011:153) uses the word *dog*, which in a general sense refers to the canine species as in the following example: "*Owners of cats and dogs must restrain*". In a special sense the word *dog*, refers to the male animal only as in "*John prefers dogs to bitches.*"

Linear polysemy can be divided into four types:

- *Autohyponymy:* Cruse (2000:111) claims, that autohyphonymy is a word which has a default general sense, and another sense, which is contextually restricted and is more

specific, so it denotes a subvariety of the general sense. As an example of an autohyponymous word, Márzquez (2011:153) introduces a word *drink*:

(1) You must not *drink* anything on the day of the operation.

(2) Charles does not *drink*, he'll have a mineral water.

Verb *drink* in the sentence (1) has a general sense of swallowing a liquid, but in the sentence (2) it has a specific sense, in which *drink* means drinking alcohol.

- *Automeronymy:* words which are automeronymous occurs in a parallel way to words which are autohyponyous, because as Márzquez (2011:153) says, word senses act in a similar way. So the only difference is, that the specific sense is not a type, but a part of the general sense. According to Márzquez (2011:153), an example of automeronymy is a word *door*, which represents the whole number of elements – leaf panel, threshold, jambs, hinges, etc. or can be understood only as the leaf panel, which is a part of the whole set.

  (1) Go through that *door*.

  (2) Tate the *door* off its hinges.

  Sentence (1) has the general sense and it represents the door as the whole number of elements, as an entrance. On the other hand, in the sentence (2) it means just the leaf panel, a part of the whole set, so it has the specific sense.

- *Autosuperordination:* According to Márzquez (2011:154) it means "taking a specific sense to cover a general example, as a result of the lexical gap existing for general senses." A good example is the noun *man*, which refers to the whole human race (including both female and male members) as in the sentence "When *man* appeared on Earth." Márzquez (2011:154) also offers another similar word - *cow*, although as he says, reversed in gender to describe bovines of both sexes as in the sentence "The field is full of *cows*."

- *Autoholonymy:* Márzquez (2011:154) says, that it is the reverse of automeronymy and sometimes also autosuperordination. "It seems to be more difficult to discriminate cases of autoholonymy from those of automeronymy, because there seem to be different

default readings (the first one which comes to our mind without context)." (Márzquez 2011:154) This phenomenon is observed in these two sentences concerning the noun *body*: *"Amy really loves to show off her body."* In this context, it denotes the whole body, because Amy definitely wants to show off her whole body and not just the truck. However, in the following sentence: *"He received serious injuries/blows to the body."* The meaning is clear and it refers just only to the truck, excluding the head.

### 4.2.2 Non-linear polysemy

Márzquez (2011:154) says, that results from non-linear polysemy are two basic semantic phenomena: metonymy and metaphor.

- *Metaphor:* It can be understood as an example of a figurative meaning, which is based on resemblance. According to Peprník (2001:44), "the metaphor represents a transfer of meaning on the basic exterior feature, which is actually a shortened simile." The category of similarity involves: colour, location, extent, function and shape, and Peprník (2001:44) introduces following examples:

  An example of colour: *a chocolate colour*, which is similar to that of *chocolate*.
  An example of location: *the foot of the hill*, which means the base or the lowest part.
  Examples of extent: a small amount of something can be expressed by "*a spot of wine*" or "*a dash of rum*".
  An examples of function: *leg*, can be used as *a leg of a human* or as *a piece of furniture.*

  An example of shape: *mouth*, means either the part of the river or the part of your face.
  According to Cruse (2000:112), the noun *position* is a good example of a metaphor:
  *"That is an uncomfortable position to sleep in."*
  It literally means a position as a physical situation.
  *"John has an excellent position in ICI."*
  Here the meaning is metaphorical, it refers to a good job.
  *"What is your position on Brexit?"*
  Same as in the previous sentence, the meaning is also metaphorical and the meaning refers to an opinion.

- *Metonymy*: Márzquez (2011:154) says, that the metonymy is a figure of speech and its figurative meaning is based on association with another meaning, which is in the same utterance. Márzquez (2011:154) provides following examples:
  *"My parents had too many mouths to feed when we were little."*
  "Mouth" here represents "human beings".
  *"Joan married a loyal bank account."*
  "Bank account" is here used as an association with "wealthy man".

## 4.3 Lexical structure (idiom)

Delabastita (1996:130) says that every language contains a great number of idioms, i.e. combinations of words with a meaning which is not easily predictable from the meanings of its constituents. The actual meaning is historically based on. Ross (1998:17) defines idioms as "groups of words which should be regarded as a single unit, because their meaning cannot be worked out from constituent parts."

There are some examples of the most used idioms in the English language:

*"Can't judge a book by its cover."* It means, that you cannot know what something or someone is like just by looking only at that person or thing's appearance.

"*Kill two birds with one stone."* To be successful in achieving two things in a single action.

*"Piece of cake."* Something, which is easy and simple to do.

"Speak of the devil! " This expression is used when the person you were talking about appears unexpectedly.

*"Let the cat out of the bag."* This idiom is used, when you reveal a secret by accident.

According to Cruse (2000:73), idioms have some atypical grammatical properties, which he sums up in the following main points:

*(a) Elements are not separately modifiable without loss of idiomatic meaning:*

(1) *He pulled his sister's legs.

(2) *He pulled his sister's left leg.

(3) *He pulled his sister's leg with a sharp tug.

(4) He pulled his sister's leg mercilessly.

Only in the sentence (4) the idiom is modifiable as a whole, and the sentence carries the idiomatic meaning. The idiom “pull someone's leg” means deceive someone playfully or tease someone.

*(b) Elements do not co-ordinate with genuine semantic constituents:*

(1) *He pulled and twisted his sister's leg.

(2) *He pulled his sister's leg and arm.

(3) He pulled his sister's and brother's leg.

In sentences (1) and (2) we can notice a loss of the idiomatic meaning. In sentence (1) the loss is caused by the combination of the verbs *to pull* and *to twist*. The sentence (2) does not have an idiomatic meaning due to the combination of the nouns *leg* and *arm*. So these two sentences do not carry an idiomatic meaning, but they still carry a literal meaning. There is no loss of the idiomatic meaning in the sentence (3).

*(c) Elements cannot take contrastive stress, or be the focus of topicalizing transformations:*

(1) *It was his sister's LEG that he pulled.

(2) *What he did to his sister's leg was pull it.

*(d) Elements cannot be referred back to anaphorically:*

(1) *Mark pulled his sister's leg; Emma pulled it, too.

(2) Mark pulled his sister's leg; Emma did it, too

The sentence (1) does not have an idiomatic meaning, because the second part of the sentence *“Emma pulled it, too”* refers to the leg, so Mark literally pulled his sister's leg and

Emma pulled it too, so they both used physical strength. However, in the sentence (2) the meaning is idiomatic, because *"Emma did it, too"* refers to the idiom as the whole, so it means that Marked teased his sister and Emma teased her too.

*(e) An idiom does not survive the substitution of any of its constituent elements by a synonym or near-synonym:*

(1) *He tugged her leg about it.

(2) *He pulled her lower limb about it.

Using a synonym or near-synonym causes a loss of the idiomatic meaning. We cannot replace constituents of the idiom with words, which have the same or nearly the same meaning if we want to keep the idiomaticity. In the sentence (1) the loss of the idiomatic meaning is because the verb *pulled* was replaced with *tugged.* In the sentence (2) the loss is caused, because the noun *leg* was replaced with a synonym *lower limb*.

*(f) Some aspects of grammar (e.g. voice) may or may not be part of an idiom:*

(1) *The bucket was kicked by her.

(2) Her leg was being pulled continually by the other girls.

According to Cruse (2000:74), in the sentence (1) the idiomatic meaning is destroyed because of the change in the voice – here is used the passive voice. In the sentence (2) the idiomatic meaning is not destroyed, so the active voice is not part of the idiom proper, as Cruse says (2000:74).

## 4.4 Morphological structure

Delabastita (1996:130) says that morphological wordplay is created by words which are interpreted as compounds or derivatives, in a way treated as etymologically "incorrect", but very effective in a semantic way, as in the following example:

"*Is life worth living? It depends upon the liver*."

The wordplay here is created by derivation, a process of formation of a new word from an existing word. The noun *liver* is derived from the verb *live* by the process called suffixation by adding a suffix *-er*. The noun *liver* is an organ in the body, but the meaning of the sentence refers to a living person. It is "incorrectly" created as a contrast to the verb live, and the result of this wordplay is semantically effective.

In the following subchapters, I will introduce some morphological processes which appear in the TV sitcom Miranda.

### 4.4.1 Derivation

It is a word formation process of forming a new word from an existing word, by adding an affix – a suffix or prefix. Peprník (2001:109) introduces the example of suffixation as in *"feel mondayish",* which means that you have feelings like on Monday, and it expresses an aversion to work. It is created from the noun *Monday* by adding the suffix *-ish.* (Peprník 2001:110). The example of prefixation is the word *unhappy*, which is created by adding a prefix *un-* to the adjective *happy*.

### 4.4.2 Blending

A result of blending is a word, which is formed from parts of two or more words, when these parts are removed from each of them and then joined together, to create a new word, which has meanings of the source words. Blend words can be formed by one of these methods:

*(a) When we combine the beginnings of two words:*

*Cyborg* from *cyb*ernetic and *org*anism, which refers to a creature that is partly a machine and partly a human.

*(b) When we combine the beginning of one word to the end of the other one.*

*Smog*, from the combination of *sm*oke and f*og,* it is a mixture of gases, chemicals and smoke in cities which is harmful to health.

*(c) Blends can be also created with a phonological overlap*, so the final blend word is a result of combining the beginning of one word and the end of the second word, with a phonological overlap in the middle, which both words share.
*Motel*, created by *mot*or and h*otel*, which is a roadside hotel mainly for motorists.

### 4.4.3 Compounding

It is a word formation process of creating a new word by a combination of two or more already existing items. A good example of a compound is shown in these two following sentences:

(1) Mark saw *a black bird.*
(2) Mark saw *a blackbird.*

In the sentence (1) *black bird* means just a bird that is black, so the adjective *black* modifies the noun *bird*, and together they create a noun phrase. However, in the sentence (2) *blackbird* means a particular species of bird, and it is a compound. (Kristin Denham, Anne Lobeck 2012:197)

The most common compounds in English are: noun-noun compounds – *earring*, adjective-noun compounds – *greenhouse*, and adjective-adjective compounds – *light-green*. Compound words can be written as one word, two separate words or two hyphenated words.

- Open compounds: written as two words, *side salad*
- Closed compounds: written as one word, *armchair*
- Hyphenated compounds: *merry-go-round*

### 4.4.4 Conversion

Also called zero derivation, is a word formation process of creating a new word from an existing one without any change in the word form. Sometimes it can be difficult to define what part of speech it is without the context:

(1) Adverb: “Come *down*.”
(2) Preposition: “The children ran *down* the hill.”
(3) Noun: “The *ups-and-downs* of life.”
(4) Verb: “She *downed* a glass of beer.”

Conversion can be divided into four main types:

1. Verb → noun: *to call* (to say something in a loud voice), *a call* (a loud voice)
2. Noun → verb: *sugar* (a sweet substance), *to sugar* (to add sugar)
3. Adjective → noun: *Poor* (without money), *the poor* (poor people)
4. Adjective → verb: *Empty* (to have nothing inside)
   *to empty* (to make something empty)

### 4.4.5 Neologisms and nonce words

Denham and Lobeck (2012:196) say, that neologisms (also called coinings) are words which have been recently created and may be in the process of entering the language permanently. Neologisms are commonly used by writers, when they need to name made-up objects, technology, etc. Examples of neologisms in modern English: *to Google* (a verb used for searching for more information on the internet), *Kleenex* (trademark of a new product). The problem with neologisms is that their meaning is unknown and impossible to be guessed. To understand these words, we need the context.

Nonce words are different from neologisms because they do not have aspirations to enter the English language permanently. They are also called occasionalisms, because they are commonly created just for a single occasion, to suit the situation.

## 4.5 Syntactic structure

According to Delabastita (1996:130), wordplay can be also generated as phrases or sentences which can be determined in more than just one way, which is called "syntactic ambiguity". For example:

*"He gave her cat food."*

This sentence has two possible meanings, either that he is giving cat food to her, or that he is giving her cat some food.

Another example of the syntactic ambiguity:

*"I saw the man with the binoculars."*

The first meaning of the sentence is “I saw the man through the binoculars.”, because the noun *man* is modified by the prepositional phrase. And the second meaning is “I saw the man who was holding the binoculars.”, because here the prepositional phrase modifies the verb *saw.*

# 5. Forms of Humour

## 5.1 Black humour

According to the *Cambridge dictionary*, black humour is a humorous way of looking at or treating something that is serious or sad. This genre is also commonly known as a morbid humour or a dark comedy. The majority of the jokes are launched against an individual or people, who somehow stand out of the society because of their religion, colour, appearance, health, age, social position and the other. Other things that are considered in black humour can be taboos such as death, divorce or drinking. All the topics are parodied by means of offensive and insulting jokes. (Medgyes 2002:4)

Some examples of black humour:

*Black humour is like a pair of legs. Not everyone has* it.

*Why did this woman cross the road? Because I was not fast enough to hit her.*

## 5.2 Irony

Irony represents a situation, in which something which was intended to have a particular result has the opposite or a very different result. Basically, we use irony, when we mean something different from what we say or write. Irony can be divided into three categories: Verbal, situational and dramatic irony. The most used type is verbal irony and it can be detected in the person's voice that is, for example mad or upset or in the use of sarcasm.

Irony and sarcasm represent almost the same, except the fact, that the sarcasm is used for a higher level of irony, it is usually very rude and offensive. Attardo (2000:795) also defines sarcasm as an overtly aggressive type of irony, with clearer markers/cues and a clear target. Irony is introduced in the following sentences:

*I can totally keep secrets. It's the people I tell them to that can't.*

*My job is secure. No one else wants it.*

## 5.3 Parody

It is a type of humour created to imitate or make fun of some original work. Parody is very common in literature, art, culture, music, television, film and radio. Parody is also an imitation by means of humour. Parody and satire are sometimes confused. Both comment on and ridicule something original. However, satire deals with a wider range of problems.

Example:

> *Your friend Kelly is known for chewing gum all the time. Looking at her, you begin stuffing gum in your mouth and chewing very loudly, saying, "Hi! I'm Kelly! Do you have any extra gum? I could really use some more."*

This example shows joking with a friend, when you use imitating her habit of chewing a gum in a funny way.

## 5.4 Sexual innuendo

It is a risqué playing with words and the final phrase can be understood in two completely different ways. The main intention is to make a joke by saying something, which sounds totally innocent, but it has a sexual meaning. Aarons (2012:108) says, "An innuendo is an insinuation or indirect remark which can carry the suggestion of some impropriety." Example:

> *At a local farmer's market, a woman is working at a fruit stand. A man walks up…*
> Man: "Wow, those are some huge melons you've got there. Did you grow them yourself? Can I see one?"
> Woman: "EXCUSE ME?"
> *Man points to a pile of watermelons behind her*
> Man: "The watermelons, can I see one?"
> Woman: "Oh, yes, of course. Here you go."

This scene introduces a common situation in a comedy. The language used by the man created a misunderstanding and a sexual innuendo, and that's why the woman was shocked and thought that the man was sexually harassing her.

## 5.5 Sarcasm

As I have mentioned in the subchapter about irony, sarcasm is actually a higher level of irony. Sarcasm is bitter and rude humour which harshly ridicule or mock on purpose. What is really important is a tone of voice, so we basically say the opposite of what we really mean with a particular intonation. Sarcasm is more contradictory and illogical than any other features that can the language offer. Example:

*„My girlfriend told me to go out and get something that makes her look sexy, so I got drunk“*

## 5.6 Satire

The main aim of satire is to ridicule and criticize stupidity of people. But the purpose is not just to amuse, but also to make people think, by using humour to draw more attention to important issues in our society. According to Simpson, satire clearly has an aggressive function. It singles out an object of attack, in fact, it cannot, strictly speaking, be satire unless it demonstrates this capacity. (Simpson 2003:3) Satiric humour is present almost everywhere, in literature, newspaper, television or even pop culture.

Example:

As an example of satire, I chose a pop song and also the most viewed video on Youtube – song Gangnam Style by Psy. It is not just very entertaining and catchy music video but mainly a satire of high-class Korean lifestyle. The lyrics are indeed in Korean, but they worth the translation and fully understanding the message of the song. Gangnam is the posh part of Seoul, full of expensive stores and restaurants and it is a place for only the richest people of Korea. Psy makes fun of the Gangnam lifestyle and behaviour of the posh people living there.

# II. Practical Part

## 6. Wordplay in Miranda

In the practical part of my bachelor thesis I will demonstrate examples of wordplay in the TV series Miranda, and comment on them. Miranda Hart as the main protagonist and also a producer of the sitcom, created a hilarious and fruitful TV series full of wordplay.

This part of my thesis will be divided into five categories: Phonological and graphological structure, Lexical structure (polysemy, Lexical structure (idiom), Morphological structure and Syntactic structure. Each category will contain several examples of wordplay. Each example also includes information about the number of the episode and season in which it occurred. The abbreviations which are used to specify each example are:

S - stands for the season and E - stands for the episode.

## 6.1 Phonological and graphological structure

**Example 1:**

(S02E01) In the first episode of season two, Penny pretends to be Miranda's maid, because Miranda wants to make a good impression on her new crush Danny.

Penny: I am cleaner. Miss Penelopia.

Stevie: And where are you from?

Penny: Poland? And I was coming down because I needed polish. Imagine, I am **Polish**, and I forgot my **polish**.

The pun is an example of homonymy, because those words share the same spelling and pronunciation /ˈpɑː.lɪʃ/, but they have different meanings. It is also a capitonym, a word that changes its meaning based on whether or not it is capitalized. (Verma 2016:234).

Penny said that she is from Poland, so the first word *Polish* as an adjective refers to the nationality and the second *polish* as a noun is a substance used for cleaning. The wordplay here is based on the same pronunciation and change of the meanings when one word is capitalized and the other one is not. In this context, it may be understood as “I am a cleaner and I forgot my cleaner.”

**Example 2:**

(S01E03) Miranda wants to know how old does she look like, so she asks a random customer in her shop, but the customer thought she is nine years older than she actually is so Miranda kicks her out of the shop. The following wordplay is an example of homophony:

> Miranda: Don't you think, madam? Out of interest how old would you have me? They always come under, Stevie.
> Customer: 43.
> Miranda: I know what's happened. You're dyslexic. Because I'm 34, you've reversed the numbers in your head. That's what's happened here.
> Customer: No, I thought you were 43.
> Miranda: Right, get out, please!
> Customer: But I need to **buy**...
> Miranda: **Bye-bye** is what you need to do. Bye-bye!

Here the pronunciation is based on homophony, words which share the same pronunciation but have different meanings and spellings. Miranda wants to kick out the rude customer out of here shop, but the woman wants to say that she needs to *buy* something, but Miranda quickly responds and says that she needs *bye-bye*, which means that the woman needs to leave. It is a play on words because those two words share the same pronunciation as you can see here: buy /baɪ/, bye /baɪ/.

**Example 3:**

(S03E01) Another example of homophony is at the beginning of the third season, when Miranda has to find a new job, but she struggles there, because no one seems to have a sense of humour there. On the meeting when they have to introduce themselves one woman has a funny name:

> Susan Perb: My name is Susan **Perb**. Call me **Sue**.
> Miranda: **Sue Perb**?

The shorter form *Sue* of the name Susan creates together with her surname a homophone to an adjective *superb* /suːˈpɜːb/ because they share the same pronunciation. It indicates that her name could be miss "excellent". Even though one expression is a proper name and the other one adjective, the difference can be hardly noticed in the spoken language.

**Example 4:**

(S01E04) Miranda is excited about her hotel room and all the equipment here, especially about coffee sachets.

> Miranda: Nowhere else but in a hotel room is one so excited to see free tea and coffee sachets. Good word, "**sachet**". As I **sashay up** to the sachet.

Miranda likes how the noun *sachet* sounds so she creates a wordplay by using a verb *sashay up*, which means to confidently walk while moving your hips from side to side. These words are homophones, they have different spellings and meanings, but the same pronunciation. Sachet is pronounced as /ˈsæʃ.eɪ/ and sashay as /ˈsæʃ.eɪ/

Many puns in the sitcom are based on **paronymy,** which creates humorous meaning with both, similar pronunciation and spelling. I chose some examples of paronymy in Miranda:

**Example 5:**

(S01E01) Stevie finds out that Miranda put all the delivery boxes into her room, which is her personal space and it makes Stevie really angry.

> Steve: Miranda, I cannot believe you **filled** my personal space.
> Miranda: This is not the time …. that is not what it sounds.

The verb *filled* means to use an empty space and make it full. On the other hand, Miranda confuses it with a word *filth* pronounced as /fɪlθ/, which means disgusting dirt, and in this context it may sound like Miranda had a bowler movement in Stevie's personal space and *the filth* is a synonym for it.

**Example 6:**

(S02E02) Miranda is going to a funeral of one of her relatives, but Gary made some muffins for her and Stevie, so Miranda can't resist and she takes one muffin.

> Miranda: I'd better get ready.(takes a muffin before she goes). It's the grief.
> Stevie: It's not **grief**, it's **greed**.

Stevie makes fun of Miranda's food obsession and used the noun *grief* /gri:f/ against Miranda, but it has similar pronunciation as the noun *greed /gri:d/.* Miranda wanted to say that she was hungry because of the *grief*, which means a great sadness, especially at the death of

someone. But Stevie used the word *greed*, a strong desire for more food, which refers to Miranda's huge appetite.

**Example 7:**

(S03E01) Miranda does not want to spend Christmas with her parents, and Penny wants to convince her to visit them.

> Penny: But you could play with your father's present. I've got him an **iPatch**.
> Miranda: PAD. **IPAD**. Why's it so irritating when they get it wrong?

Penny, who has problems with modern technology, mispronounces the word *iPad* /ˈaɪpæd/ as *iPatch*, which sounds literally like an *eyepatch* /ˈaɪ.pætʃ/, a cover which is worn over the eye to protect it. The noun *iPad* is a name for a line of computer tablets developed by Apple Inc.

**Example 8:**

(S01E01) Another example of paronymy occurs in the very first episode of the series when Miranda wants to be elegant and feminine, but Stevie makes fun of her height and weight.

> Miranda: Right. I'm off. Well, my lunch is very important. It's what us **elegant girls** about town do.
> Steve: Don't you mean **elephant girls?**

Stevie used an insulting way or wordplay when she makes fun of Miranda's appearance by calling her elephant. Words *elegant* /ˈel.ɪ.gənt/ and *elephant* /ˈel.ɪ.fənt/ have similar pronunciation.

**Example 9:**

(S01E04) Miranda is annoyed by women who are just talking about children and think that until you've not brought the gift of life, you're not complete. Miranda makes fun of those women and creates paronymy:

> Miranda: "I'm a saint. I've just given birth. I don't even have enough time to eat! My **ovaries** work and I'm so very excited! "**Not very annoying, ovary annoying**!

By saying very annoying /ˈver.i/ /əˈnɔɪ.ɪŋ/, the idea of wordplay immediately pops out in Miranda's head and she combines it with an adjective *ovary* /ˈəʊ.vər.i/ which sounds similar to

an intensifier *very* /ˈver.i/. The ovary is an ovum-producing reproductive organ, found in pairs as part of the vertebrate female reproductive system. (Khan 2014:407)

**Example 10:**

(S02E01) In this episode, Stevie wants to help Miranda scared her mother, so she would leave Miranda's flat, but because of similar pronunciation, Stevie thought that Penny hates goats and not ghosts as Miranda said.

> Miranda: There's a massive goat in my sitting room and you just forgot to say.
> Stevie: It's good, isn't it? You said your mum hates **goats**.
> Miranda: Ghosts. I said **ghosts**. Who has any strong opinions on goats?

In this case, it was basically Miranda's fault that Stevie was confused about the meaning. At the beginning of the episode when Stevie asked Miranda what does her mother hates, she had some candies in her mouth so the pronunciation of the word *ghosts* was not proper and it sounded more like *goats*. These words have similar pronunciation as you can see: *Ghosts* /gəʊsts/, *goats* /gəʊts/.

**Example 11:**

(S01E06) Miranda is having a lunch with Tilly and Fanny, and they are worried about her bad luck of being naked in social occasions, so they make fun of her:

> Fanny: You're always half naked in public. You are Rafael **Nude-al**.
> Miranda: I'm not always half naked in public. The hockey final at St Wilfred's? Well, I just forgot my kit.

Fanny calls Miranda Rafael *Nude-al*, which is obviously a remark to a famous tennis player Rafael Nadal, and she playfully combines it with the adjective *nude* /nju:d/, to make fun of Miranda and her nude incidents in social occasions.

**Example 12:**

(S03E01) Miranda and her friends are watching the news on TV and suddenly, Miranda appears on TV at the end of an obesity report. She insists on the fact that the camera was just panning away and she is not a part of the report. But all her friends make fun of her and Tilly says:

Tilly: **Obese-Wan Ken-Obiste**!
Miranda: I'm not obese. The camera was just panning away, wasn't it?

This pun is a reference to the character Obi-Wan Kenobi from Star Wars, and Tilly combine it with a word *obese*, to make is sound similar to Obi-Wan Kenobi. She changes the first and the last syllable *obi* in both words for *obese* /əʊˈbiːs/, which makes it sounds similar to its original form Obi-Wan Kenobi.

## 6.2 Lexical structure (polysemy)

**Example 13:**

(S01E02) Stevie tries to help Miranda, with her intimacy and problems around sex.

Steve: You're just, you're just very British aren't you? I mean, say "sex".
Miranda: (Sex.). You know I don't like to say it. I prefer the term "**shenanigans**". Sounds nicer. And you're British!

The noun *shenanigans* stands for secret activities, which are usually humorous and interesting. But Miranda uses the noun *shenanigans* as a metaphor for sex and doing sexual things.

**Example 14:**

(S01E02) Gary and Miranda have different standards for food, so they sometimes argue about the quality of the food.

Gary: You're not actually going to eat that kebab are you?
Miranda: No, I bought it just to chuck in a bin(!)
Miranda: I'm unashamed to admit that, for me, this is **the dog's bollocks.**
Gary: It probably literally is. You should put it in the bin.

Term *the dog's bollocks* is used for something extremely good. In this case, Miranda wants to say that the kebab is really delicious. But Gary hates street food and he told Miranda that the kebab is probably literally the dog's bollocks, which he meant as something disgusting and awful.

**Example 15:**

(S01E03) Miranda argues with the gym trainer about the cancellation of her membership, and she wants to do it on the behalf of all the plus size women who pay for a gym membership and they never go there.

> Miranda: Yeah, we could get you. OK, maybe not, but we could have a sit-on**,** and I will personally **sit on you**, and not in a fun way.

*Sit on somebody* is an informal phrasal verb, used when you want to force someone to be silent or to do something. When Miranda says "I will personally *sit on you*" she wants to say that she will force the gym trainer to cancel her membership. But then she realizes the literal meaning of this expression, so she adds a comment, that she won't sit on him in a fun way, which means to place herself in a sitting position on him.

**Example 16:**

(S01E03) Miranda prepares for her job interview and speaks to the audience, so she is breaking the fourth wall.

> Miranda: What do you think? Interview chic. Get me **a skinny Frappuccino.** I've no idea what that is. I like to think you might be presented with a tiny Italian man.

Miranda doesn't know what is *a skinny Frappuccino* (it is a type of a low-calorie coffee), so instead of the true meaning, she uses it as a metaphor for a person, to be precise, for a tiny Italian man.

**Example 17:**

(S01E03) Miranda has a job interview at the department store called Evergreens.

> Miranda: Hello. Thanks for seeing me.
> Interviewer: It's a pleasure. So let's get straight to it, what do you think you could **bring to this job**?

Miranda: **Bring to it**? Oh, erm...I think I could bring...some tea and cakes to it, would it like that?

The expression *"What can you bring to this job?"* means – what can you offer as a candidate for this position and what makes you different from the other candidates. But Miranda understands it in its literal meaning which means to carry something to a place or a person, and that's why she offered some tea and cakes.

**Example 18:**

(S01E04) Following wordplay is a good example of the way Miranda flirts.

A man at the discotheque: So, er...tell me something about yourself.

Miranda: The other day, I weighed my breasts to see how much they'd cost to post. **Too heavy to go second class**, if you know what I mean.

In this example of metaphor, Miranda wants to be a little bit naughty and flirty, so she uses this expressing which refers to the size of her breasts.

**Example 19:**

(S01E05) Penny wants to make a party for Miranda to set her up with someone, but Miranda does not want it and that's why she goes out with an army doctor, who is Tilly's friend.

Stevie: Wait. Penny, it must be a massive effort to host a party just to set Miranda up. Particularly when **she's already got a date. With a doctor.**

Penny: **Oh, no, darling, that's called an appointment.**

Stevie: No, no. An Army doctor.

At first, it sounds like Miranda has just *an appointment with a doctor* because the noun date is a synonym for an appointment. But here the meaning stands for a social meeting, between two people who might have a romantic relationship.

**Example 20:**

(S01E05) Because Miranda doesn't want to be set up with someone anymore, she tells her mother that she is a lesbian.

Penny: This is fantastic news.

Miranda: What?

Penny: I always had my suspicions and kept hoping. You bat for the other side and all this time I didn't think you batted for anyone. But who knew your wicket was being thoroughly knocked by **a bowler with no balls**?

The term *a bowler with no balls* is an association to a female gender because women literally have no "balls". This figure of speech is called metonymy.

**Example 21:**

(S01E06) Stevie and Miranda have one of their silly competitions, and they want to know which one of them is more attractive and who would Robert ask on a date.

Miranda: But just out of interest, if you had to take one of us out to dinner who would...? Who would it be?
Robert: Oh, er, well, it's a nice **position** to be in, um...
Stevie: That would be later, Robert.

The noun *position*, is a good example of metaphor because it can be understood in many metaphorical ways. In this example, Robert says that it is a nice position to be in, and he means it as a metaphor for a *good and flattering situation*. On the other hand, Stevie wants to flirt with him, and use the noun position as a metaphor for a *sexual position.*

**Example 22:**

(S02E01) Miranda accidentally ends up in the bed shop as an employee, and she talks with her "colleagues" about men.

Miranda: In't that just right, though, innit? Yeah, I've had enough of men...innit.
Shop assistant: That's it. **Go girl**.
Miranda: Oh, **do you want me to go**? Oh, I see. Sorry, you go girl. No, I go. Go me.

Miranda understood the expression *"go girl"* in its literal meaning, so she thought that she should leave. But *"you go girl"* is an expression of encouragement, it is connected with feminism.

**Example 23:**

(S02E01) New chef in the restaurant Danny visits Miranda and compliments on her joke shop.

Danny: Clive said you worked here? Nice shop.

Miranda: Thanks. Have you seen my **trinkets**? Not a euphemism.

Nervous as always, Miranda asks Danny whether he has seen her *trinkets*. She uses this expression for the pieces of jewellery which she wears. But then Miranda realizes that it might sound impropriate, so that's why she adds a comment about no euphemism (a pleasant form of a word that is used instead of one which is unpleasant or embarrassing). It can be understood as a metaphorical expression for breasts.

**Example 24:**

(S02E02) Miranda attended a funeral and she had to do the speech, but she did not know "who was in the box", so her speech was quite embarrassing.

Miranda: Oh, it was mortifying. I wish **the ground could have swallowed me up**. (Miranda fell in a grave)

(later, in the restaurant, Gary takes care of Miranda)

Garry: Better?

Miranda: Yeah, thank you.

Clive: What happened?

Miranda: I fell in a grave.

The expression *to wish the ground would swallow you up* means that you wish you could immediately disappear because you feel very embarrassed. And as Miranda wanted, her wish was fulfilled and the ground has literally swallowed her up. Which she later says to Gary and Clive, and they both can't stop laughing.

**Example 25:**

(S02E02) Miranda wants to hear what would Gary says at her funeral.

Gary: "Here lies Miranda. She was **warm**..."

Clive: "Very **warm**. Because she... carried that extra little bit of weight. She was a sweaty woman, but nice!"

Clive intentionally changes the meaning of Gary's compliment on Miranda's personality, as he says that Miranda was very *warm*, which refers to the temperature and the fact that she sweats a lot, which is an insult and not a compliment. By calling Miranda warm, Gary wanted to say that she is a friendly and loving person.

**Example 26:**

(S02E05) Miranda wants to drink some water at the psychiatric office, but the tap of the water cooler stuck, and in a few moments water is all over the floor.

> Miranda: It might sound a little odd, it's just that **I'd wet the floor.** You know, **I hadn't weed on it.**
> Penny: Will you shut up?
> Miranda: Sorry.

In this example, the sentence "I'd wet the floor" has two possible meanings. One is that Miranda spilled some liquid on the floor by an accident, which really happened in this situation. The second meaning, which Miranda mentioned by herself, is that she urinated on the floor.

## 6.3 Lexical structure (idiom)

**Example 27:**

(S01E01) Miranda meets Gary after few years, and because she doesn't know if he's single, she lied when Gary asked whether she's married or not.

> Gary: Look, I just popped in to ask, you're not with anybody, or married or anything at the moment?
> Miranda: Yep, yep, of course, yeah.
> Gary: Oh, really? Kids?
> Miranda: Yeah, got two. There's Orlando...Orlando and, er...Bloom. You?
> Gary: No, still single.
> Miranda: Me too.
> Gary: You just said you're married?
> Miranda: Divorced now.
> Gary: And the kids?
> Miranda: Dead.

Gary: Really? What happened?

Miranda: They froze. They froze to death, Gary. It's a funny story, actually. Not funny, ha ha. But, funny in that it's almost unbelievable. We were on holiday in the Himalayas at the base camp of Everest, and they were just running around in shorts and T-shirt, and I kept saying, "Put your coat on, **you'll catch your death**!" **And they did**.

Gary: None of that's true, is it?

Miranda: No.

The idiom *"you'll catch your death!"* means, that if you don't dress properly, you will get sick. But Miranda changed this meaning into the literal meaning, so she basically said that the children were running around and then they caught their death – they literally died.

**Example 28:**

(S01E03) Penny tries to convince the captain to give Miranda a job in the Navy because she has excellent sea leg.

Penny: Please take her!

Captain: No.

Penny: She's got excellent **sea legs**. Show him your sea legs.

Miranda: No.

Captain: I really don't need to see her legs.

Penny: Come on, show them. Put your sea legs on the Captain's table!

*To get your sea legs,* in its idiomatic meaning, means to have the ability to keep your balance when you're walking on a moving ship and not feel ill. Which sounds like a good reason for Miranda to join the Navy, but Penny meant it literally, and the expression sea legs works here as an association for having big feet.

**Example 29:**

(S02E04) Miranda and Stevie have once again one of their silly competitions over a friendship with Tamara. Miranda and Stevie want to be friends with her and keep up with her. When they have a competition they tease each other, like in the following example:

Stevie: Drooling over Gary, are we?

Miranda: **Mutton dressed as lamb,** are we?

This idiom is a disparaging expression for middle-aged women who are pretending to be much younger than they are, and they also dress and act like younger girls. In this situation, Miranda makes fun of Stevie because she is wearing a black t-shirt with a large shiny heart on it.

## 6.4 Morphological structure

### 6.4.1 Derivation

**Example 30:**

(S01E06) Miranda, Stevie and Gary go to a self-defence class and the self-defence trainer needs a volunteer for a practice. In the following example he explains why he chose Miranda.

> Self-defence trainer: I think it's that you're perfect to practise on. You're more of a **mugger** than a **muggee**.

This is an example of derivation from a verb *mug*, which means to attack someone in a public space and steal their money. *The mugger*, which is derived from the verb *mug* by adding a suffix –er, is a noun and it represents someone who attacks people and steals their money. On the other hand, the other derivation *a muggee* is a noun, but this word does not exist. The noun *muggee* is created by adding a suffix -ee and in this context, it supposed to be an antonym for a noun *mugger*. So the noun *muggee* supposed to be someone who is attacked by a mugger.

**Example 31:**

(S02E01) At the end of the first season, Gary went to Hong Kong and Miranda misses him every single day but pretends to be over him. Stevie teases her with a postcard from Gary.

> Stevie: A lovely postcard written in Gary's lovely, fair hand. A lovely **cheffy** hand.

*Cheffy*, is a derivation from a noun chef by adding a suffix -y, which creates an adjective. Garry is a chef, so Stevie just wanted to indicate that the postcard is written by lovely and skilled hand.

**Example 32:**

(S02E02) Miranda is attending a party for a baby, and everyone uses diminutive forms when they are talking about things for the baby.

Chris and Alison: Booties, little booties! Aaah! To go with the vesties - little vesties!
Miranda: **Wine-y**, little **wine-y**! Is no-one else drinking?

In this situation, everyone is excited about the baby stuff, except Miranda, who is drunk. She creates a diminutive form of a noun *wine* by adding a suffix *-y*, and the result of derivation is a y-diminutive *wine-y*. Diminutives create a meaning of something small or little. Chris and Alison use words like *booties* and *vesties* in an adorable way, and Miranda also shows her affection. To a glass of wine.

**Example 33:**

(S03E01) Gary and Miranda want to remain friends, but sometimes it is hard for them to not flirt with each other. Then Tilly and Stevie see them laughing and cooking together, so they assume that they are dating or something. But Miranda and Gary claim that they are just friends.

Gary: We're just friends. We are hanging. We are sorting it.
Stevie: "We" this, "We" that.
Miranda: Yeah, can you stop "**Weeing**"?

A verb "*weeing*" is derived from the pronoun *we*, by adding a suffix -ing. But this wordplay is really creative because it has the same spelling and pronunciation as a verb *weeing*, which means to urine. This is an example of homonymy, because these words share the same spelling and pronunciation /wiːɪŋ/.

**Example 34:**

(S03E01) Tilly and Stevie catch Garry and Miranda out together and on the brink of a kiss.

Gary: Are you feeling on the brink?
Miranda: Maybe a bit **brinky**, yeah. We must be **brinkless** Gary.
Gary: Sorry, no **brinking**.

*To be on the brink of something* is an idiom, which means to be on the verge of doing something or about to experience something new. The noun *brink* by itself is a point where a new or different situation is about to begin. Miranda and Gary make derivations from this noun:

*brinky* is an adjective created by adding a suffix *-y*, *brinkless* is a noun created by adding a suffix *-less*, and the last derivation is a verb *brinking* which is derived from the noun *brink* by adding a suffix *-ing*.

### 6.4.2 Blending

The sitcom is full of blending, which is a word formation process of creating a new word by taking and combining parts of two or more words together.

**Example 35:**

(S03E02) One of the Miranda's biggest nightmares is shopping clothes. In this scene, Miranda and Stevie are in the shop, but the shop is dark and loud music is playing here. Miranda is wondering whether people are bopping or shopping.

> Miranda: Stevie, I don't like it. I mean it's so dark and loud. Is it a shop or a disco? It's like a **discop**.

Miranda is confused whether she's in the shop or at the discotheque, the shop is dark and people are dancing and bopping to the loud music. She says that it is like a *discop*, which is a blend created from the combination of two words: a beginning of the word *disc*otheque and the end of the word sh*op*.

**Example 36:**

(S01E01) Miranda goes wedding dress shopping with Tilly and Fanny, but when the shop assistant asks for a size, Miranda feels ashamed of her bigger size, so instead of telling the truth she uses a blend word for “her size”.

> Shop assistant: I think we may have something. Size?
> Miranda: Ten.
> Miranda: **Tenty**! (whispering) I'm a size twenty.
> Shop assistant: I think we have one in a "**tenty**"!

Not to feel so bad about herself, Miranda says that her size is *tenty*, which is a blend word from numbers *ten* (which Miranda wish she had) and *twenty*.

**Example 37:**

(S01E03) In this episode, Miranda is trying to find a "what her mother calls" proper job. And when Penny shares this information with Tilly, she is really excited about it and uses a blend word to express how awesome it is.

> Penny: We were just talking about Miranda's new job in television.
> Tilly: Yeah! Mummy told me! Congratulasareeny, Queen Kong! Mwah! Mwah! It sounds **spectaculant**.

*Spectaculant* is a blend word in a form of an adjective, created from the combination of two adjectives: *spectacul*ar and brilli*ant.* Tilly can express that something is outstanding and great with one newly created adjective.

**Example 38:**

(S02E03) Gary has a new menu and shows it to Miranda, who is excited about the brunch section.

> Miranda: Lovely. I love that you're now doing breakfast.
> Gary: I prefer to call it "brunch".
> Miranda: I couldn't be more sorry. But, I mean, combining two meals, really, it's insanity personified. What next, **linner**?
> Gary: Or **lupper**.
> Miranda: Funnier, **lupper**.

Miranda and Gary use an already well-known blend word *brunch*, to create blend words for new meals. They suggest two new words: *linner* which is a combination of lunch and dinner, and *lupper* which is a combination of lunch and supper.

**Example 39:**

(S01E03) Penny is very active and sociable person and she enjoys trying new things, especially creative sports courses.

> Penny: Speak later, dashing off to **Cakersize** with Belinda.
> Stevie: **Cakersize**?
> Penny: Cake decorations and aerobics, you have to leave exactly the same weight as you came in. Such fun!

*Cakersize*, is a blend word created by combining the beginning of the noun *cak*e and the end of the noun exer*cise*. The blend represents a new word for a course, where you decorate cakes, eat them, and then you have to exercise as much as you can because like Penny said, you have to leave exactly the same weight as you came in.

**Example 40:**

(S02E05) The psychiatrist asks Miranda if she wants to talk about her childhood.

Psychiatrist: Do you want to talk about that, Miranda?
Miranda: No, no, don't want to talk childhood, "Oh, she got rid of my dog when I was 11." Although you did.
Penny: Well, it kept pooing in the house.
Miranda: Only because you didn't let her out regularly for what I call **pooportunities**.

Miranda uses term *pooportunities* which is a blend word created from the combination of the noun *poop* and the noun *opportunities*. When Penny argues that she got rid of Miranda's dog because it kept pooing in the house, Miranda angrily says there were no *pooportunities* for her, which means that the dog had no opportunities to poop.

### 6.4.3 Compounding

**Example 41:**

(S02E02) Miranda is disappointed because Chris and Alison got her only „in the running" for a godmother, because Gary is a godfather, and she wants to share something with him.

Clive: I'll ask Gary to put in a good word for you.
Miranda: No, don't worry.
Clive: No, but listen, you godmother, Gary, godfather! Nice! You'd share a god-daughter.
Miranda: Yeah, we will be like we're sort of god-married. Then we could go on a **goddy-moon**.

Miranda is so excited about the idea of being a godmother and sharing a god-daughter with Garry so she says that they will be kind of god-married and go on *a goddy-moon*. This term works here as the substitution of the compound *honeymoon* on which the wordplay is based on.

The compound *goddy-moon* can be understood as an expression for a holiday for people who are godparents.

### 6.4.4 Conversion

**Example 42:**

(S02E02) Miranda changed her mind about the godmother thing, and she does not want Chris and Alison to choose her as a godmother, so she went to the library to find some evil books.

> Miranda: Well, I'd be an unacceptable godparent if I'm waiting for them at the restaurant, reading a whole load of Hitler.
> Librarian: Shush!
> Miranda: Sorry.
> Librarian: Shush!
> Miranda: I was just saying sorry.
> Librarian: Shush! Right, you can put those...
> Miranda: Shush!
> Librarian: No, you shush.
> Miranda: I was shushing you.
> Librarian: No, I do **the shushing** around here.

In this example of conversion, the Librarian and Miranda is arguing about who should be silent. Later in the dialogue, the librarian uses the verb *shush* in the plural form and creates the noun *shushing*. The noun *shushing* is a conversion from the plural verb *shushing* without any overt marking.

### 6.4.5 Neologisms and nonce words

**Example 43:**

(S02E04) Miranda and Stevie both want to be friends with Tamara, but of course, they have another silly competition, and they compete who will be a better friend for Tamara.

> Miranda: I'm just off to meet Tamara for a coffee.
> Stevie: Going for a coffee with Tamara, are we? She's just as much my friend.

Miranda: No, she's not, because I was the one who made friends with her. You're a friend of a friend. Friend-ish. **Friendoid**.

Miranda made a new word, a neologism *Friendoid*, which is a noun, and it is an expression for someone who is just a friend of a friend.

## 6.5 Syntactic structure

Whole phrase or sentence can be generated as a wordplay, and they can be determined in more than just one way, and it is called "syntactic ambiguity". I found just one example of this structure in the sitcom Miranda.

**Example 44:**

(S02E03) Gary and Miranda are going on a date to a fancy and new restaurant.

Gary: I'll book a table for eight, is that OK?
Miranda: Yeah, although I thought it would just be the two of us.

The sentence "I'll book a table for eight" has two possible meanings. The first meaning is, that *Gary booked a table for him and Miranda for 8 o'clock*, but Miranda points out its second meaning, which is that *Gary booked a table for eight people*.

# 7. Conclusion

My bachelor thesis is based on humour and linguistic analysis of the British TV series Miranda, which aired from 2009-2015 on BBC. For the analysis, I chose the linguistic phenomenon called wordplay. It may sound unfamiliar to someone, but we all commonly use it, intentionally or unintentionally in our everyday communication and create our own puns. The main purpose of intentionally made puns is to grab our attention and bring laughter, that's why they are plentifully used in radio, television, advertisements or books. Unintentionally created puns may be based on ambiguity, in other words, they can have more than one interpretation, which opens up new possibilities in the linguistic analysis of their meaning.

In the theoretical part of my thesis, I focused on defining humour in general, the national humour of the British, and what makes it so unique and internationally popular. But the main aim of the theoretical part is the categorization of wordplay. I chose Delabastita's categorization, which is divided into five structures: phonological and graphological structure, lexical structure (polysemy), lexical structure (idiom), morphological structure and syntactic structure.

For the analysis in the practical part of my thesis, I chose 44 examples from the TV series Miranda and divided them into five categories according to Delabastita's categorization. The linguistic analysis was entertaining as well as challenging. The main aim of the practical part was to analyse the chosen puns, divide them into the linguistic categories and explain them in detail. I managed to find some examples for each category, but the most wordplay examples are based on polysemy. Sometimes, it can be hard to properly determine all meanings of the polysemous examples because, without the context one of the meanings might be omitted. My research has shown, that humour in the TV series Miranda is mainly based on: morphological structure (blending and derivation), phonological and graphological structure (homonymy and paronymy), and lexical structure (idioms).

Nonetheless, wordplay is a creative and playful way of making puns and amusing people. Wordplay can also serve as an instrument for learning foreign languages. You can kill two birds with one stone, having fun as well as learning a new language or improving your linguistic knowledge. It is obvious that sitcoms are great sources for the linguistic analysis and better understanding the foreign languages.

# 8. Závěr

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na humor a jazykovou analýzu britského televizního seriálu Miranda, který byl vysílán v letech 2009 – 2015 na BBC. Pro analýzu jsem zvolila lingvistický fenomén – slovní hříčky. Ty mohou někomu připadat nepovědomé, ale my všichni je běžně používáme, a to záměrně či nezáměrně v naší každodenní komunikaci, a vytváříme tak své vlastní slovní hříčky. Hlavním cílem záměrně vytvořené slovní hříčky je upoutat naši pozornost a vyvolat smích, a proto se často používají v radiu, televizi, reklamách či knihách. Slovní hříčky vzniklé nezáměrně mohou být založené na dvojsmyslnosti, jinými slovy, mohou mít více než jednu interpretaci, což otevírá nové možnosti v lingvistické analýze jejich významu.

V teoretické části mé práce jsem se soustředila na definování humoru v obecné rovině, na národní humor Britů, a také na to, co ho činí tak specifickým a mezinárodně populárním. Avšak hlavním cílem teoretické části je kategorizace slovních hříček. Zvolila jsem kategorie dle Delabastity, které jsou rozděleny do pěti konstrukcí: fonologická a grafologická konstrukce, lexikální konstrukce (polysémie), lexikální konstrukce (idiom), morfologická konstrukce a syntaktická konstrukce.

Pro analýzu v praktické části mé bakalářské práce jsem vybrala 44 příkladů z televizního seriálu Miranda a rozdělila je do pěti kategorií podle Delabastity. Lingvistická analýza byla pro mě nejen zábavou ale i výzvou. Hlavním cílem praktické části bylo analyzovat vybrané slovní hříčky, rozdělit je do lingvistických kategorií a detailně je vysvětlit. Podařilo se mi najít pro každou kategorii několik příkladů, ale nejvíce jich bylo založeno na polysémii. Občas může náročné, správně vymezit všechny významy těchto příkladů polysémie, protože bez kontextu může být jeden z významů opomenut. Můj výzkum také ukázal, že humor v televizním seriálu Miranda je založen hlavně na morfologické konstrukci (blending a derivace), fonologické a grafologické konstrukci (homonyma a paronyma) a lexikální konstrukci (idiomy).

Nicméně, slovní hříčky jsou kreativním a hravým způsobem jak vytvářet vtipy a bavit lidi. Slovní hříčky mohou také sloužit jako nástroj pro studium cizích jazyků. Můžete tedy zabít dvě mouchy jednou ranou, bavit se a rovněž se učit nový jazyk nebo zlepšovat své lingvistické znalosti. Je tedy zřejmé, že sitkomy jsou skvělým zdrojem pro lingvistickou analýzu a lepší porozumění cizího jazyka.

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