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Wordplay in *Yes, Prime Minister*

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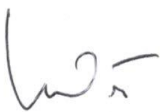
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1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to introduce motivation and purpose of this thesis, formulate research question and also pose the structure and methodology of this work.

1.1 Research motivation and purpose

Yes Minister and its sequel, *Yes, Prime Minister*, is a popular British satirical sitcom written by Antony Jay and Jonathan Lynn that was broadcasted by BBC Television between 1980 and 1988. Set in the private office of a British Cabinet minister in the fictional Department of Administrative Affairs in Whitehall, *Yes Minister* follows the ministerial career of The Rt Hon Jim Hacker MP while the sequel, *Yes, Prime Minister*, follows the events of the premiership of Jim Hacker after his unexpected elevation to Number 10. In addition to providing a humorous insight into the political life and party intrigues, the sitcom actually offers various struggles between three main characters – Hacker, his Permanent Secretary Sir Humphrey Appleby and Principal Private Secretary Bernard Woolley. Their witty dialogues often contain many jokes which are based on ambiguity and wordplay.

Yes Minister and mainly its sequel *Yes, Prime Minister* has become one of my favorite sitcoms in recent times. Having read the book I paid attention to exceptional amount of wordplay in it. The book, written in the form of diaries, official documents and letters, is filled with different types of wordplay that create a humorous effect. It would be far from truth to say that *Yes, Prime Minister* is based on wordplay only but any loss in translation would be also a serious loss to the target audience. When I started reading *Yes, Prime Minister* I naturally paid more attention to wordplay and its mere recognition. Having stumbled upon several instances of wordplay I became even more interested to investigate wordplay and see what translation strategies were used when rendering the wordplay into Czech.

This work assumes that a translator of *Yes, Prime Minister* will attempt to preserve the level of humor in the target text. However, wordplay and humor are connected to the source language and source culture. Therefore, translation of wordplay will probably differ to some extent. Main goal of this study is to analyze and categorize wordplay in

Yes, Prime Minister using Dirk Delabastita's (1996) typology of wordplay. In addition, this work is going to investigate which translation strategies the translator used to maintain the wordplay in the target text as well as the extent to which the translator had to omit the wordplay from translation. For this purpose I am going to create my own corpus consisting of thirty-six instances of wordplay that were found in the text. It should be noted that although some numerical values relating to the frequency of wordplay in *Yes, Prime Minister* will be presented, this work does not aim at quantitative analysis. I believe that having thirty-six examples of wordplay is not sufficient to provide quantitative figures to state how frequent wordplay is in *Yes, Prime Minister*. However, the results may serve as examples of the kind of wordplay or frequency of different strategies for translating wordplay that a translator may encounter or use. Since Delabastita's work was published later than the translated publication of *Yes, Prime Minister*, the translator's possible motivations for using each translation strategies are based only on my assumptions. This work relies heavily on the work of Dirk Delabastita, as his definition, typology of wordplay and translating strategies are used as a frame of reference.

1.2 Structure

The thesis will be divided according to traditional custom into theoretical and practical part where first four chapters will be of theoretical nature while chapter five will be practical.

The first chapter introduces the topic, author's motivation, structure of the work and will describe shortly the material and method used for this work.

The second chapter will discuss the concept of wordplay. As mentioned before, I will be referring to Delabastita's definition of wordplay, which will serve as a central frame of reference for my analysis. Delabastita defines wordplay as follows:

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 (1996, 128).

Also, two typical features of wordplay (intentionality and incongruity) will be outlined in this chapter.

In chapter three the typology of wordplay together with various samples of wordplay based on ‘phonological and graphological structure’, ‘lexical structure (polysemy)’, ‘lexical structure (idiom)’, ‘morphological structure’, and ‘syntactic structure’ as defined by Delabastita (1996, 130) will be provided. The distinction between ‘horizontal’ and ‘vertical’ wordplay (1996, 128) will be specified as I intend to sort out the puns according to these criteria as well.

Chapter four will tackle the question of ‘untranslatability’ and strategies for translating wordplay.

Chapter five will be then aimed at analysis of data and general findings will be provided.

1.3 Material and method

The source material from which the instances of wordplay being analyzed were taken is the book *Yes, Prime Minister* and their official Czech translations. Thirty-six instances of wordplay in the source text were recognized and I decided to include all of them in the analysis even though some types of wordplay are clearly more common than others. To recognize wordplay in the source text, close reading was applied and when stumbling upon situations in the text which might have been considered as wordplay, various dictionaries were consulted to double check the meaning of lexical units in order to make sure that every possible reading of wordplay was considered. Those examples where the author of this work was not hundred percent sure were simply omitted.

2. DEFINING WORDPLAY

In this chapter, I will first of all discuss the definition of wordplay (section 2.1) that is needed for the analysis and general understanding of this language phenomenon. Next, characteristics of wordplay will be presented in particular in 2.2, namely the difference between ambiguity and puns and the aspect of incongruity.

2.1 Definition of wordplay

Before we proceed to definition and classification of wordplay it has to be noted that the terms “wordplay” and “puns” are used interchangeably in this work. It is a common practice that the two are treated differently, meaning that puns are usually treated only as a subclass of wordplay. However, this work will follow Delabastita’s approach and both terms will be thus used interchangeably.

Wordplay has only recently come under the spotlight of many linguist and scholars who try to investigate and classify this language phenomenon. When reading Freud’s remarks in his *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* one might get the impression that wordplay did not have a good reputation among researchers. To be more specific, Freud referred to wordplay as “the lowest form of verbal joke, probably because they are the cheapest” (Freud 1960, 142). W.D. Redfern had similar ‘approach’ describing puns as “bastards, immigrants, barbarians, extraterrestrials: they intrude, they infiltrate. In effect, they are inferior, accidental and need to be apologized for.” (Redfern 1984 in Abass 2007, 52). However, there are linguists who try to advocate the usage of puns. One of them is Nash who states the following: “We take punning for a tawdry and facetious thing, one of the less profound forms of humour, but that is the prejudice of our time; a pun may be profoundly serious, or charged with pathos. We also take it for a simple thing, which it is not.” (Nash 1985, 137)

In order to analyze wordplay, it is necessary to understand the term itself and discover what exactly is behind this language phenomenon. There are quite a few definitions as to how wordplay should be understood and treated, yet many of these definitions provide only very brief sketches of what wordplay actually represents. For instance, Delia Chiaro in her exploratory investigation of wordplay says that “the term word play

includes every conceivable way in which language is used with the intent to amuse” (1992, 2) and later she goes on to explain that “the term word play conjures up an array of conceits ranging from puns and spoonerisms to wisecracks and funny stories” (1992, 4).

Chiaro’s definition of wordplay only demonstrates how broadly the term can be interpreted. In layman’s terms, she refers to a playful way of using language. Such definition is rather vague as wordplay is a bit more sophisticated than just playful use of language.

With the above-mentioned definition provided by Chiaro, it would be practically almost impossible to locate the instances of wordplay in the source text and decide what counts as wordplay and what does not. Therefore, a precise definition of wordplay is needed for this study. Having this in mind, the following definition of wordplay by Dirk Delabastita (1996) is used as a central frame of reference:

Wordplay is the general name for the 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. (1996, 128)

First, puns as such are based on at least two linguistic structures resembling each other in form (in a simplified way words that look and/or sound the same) that are contrasted. This contrast eventually creates humorous effect. Delabastita (1996, 128) then specifies different linguistic structures in terms of homonymy (identical sounds and spelling as in *bank*, a financial institution or land along the sides of the river), homophony (identical sounds but different spelling as in *belles* and *bells*), homography (different sounds but identical spelling as in *bow* which can be read either as [bəʊ] meaning *a ranged weapon* or [baʊ] in which case it suggests *the front of a ship*), and paronymy (slight differences in spelling and sound as in *face* and *faith*).

To support Delabastita’s definition, Salvatore Attardo, a humour analyst, suggests in his book *Linguistic Theories of Humour* that “the two senses of a pun must be present at the

same time and be in conflict with each other, although one is usually introduced before the other. The resolution consists of a disambiguation process, in which both the first expected sense and the second hidden sense must be involved.” (Attardo 1994, 144 – 136) That the two senses in a pun must be in conflict with each other actually corresponds to what Delabastita refers to as significant confrontation of two linguistic structures.

Second, according to Delabastita (1996, 128), the following features exploited by the punster can be found at all levels of language, meaning the linguistic structures through which the pun can be embedded:

- *Phonological and graphological structure*: According to Delabastita (1996, 130) there are only limited number of graphemes (letters) and phonemes (sounds capable of generating meaning difference) in languages that can be combined together in certain combinations. This means that there are supposedly many unrelated pairs of words, which are somehow identical in meaning or form. Terms such as ‘soundplay’ (alliteration, consonance and assonance) and ‘anagrammatic’ wordplay (based on spelling) used by Delabastita (1996, 30) are bound to be found within puns. For instance, *love at first bite* is derived from *love at first sight*.
- *Lexical structure (polysemy)*: Languages are full of polysemous words, i.e. words that are related not only through their formal realization but there is also a semantic connection between them. The example of polysemous word *do* is provided by Delabastita (1996, 30) in *Surfers do it standing up*. In this case, the verb *do* refers to the activity of surfing or it can also refer to sexual activity.
- *Lexical structure (idiom)*: Puns can be based on idioms, i.e. an expression that cannot be understood from the individual meanings of its elements. According to Delabastita, (1996, 130) it is the distance between the idiomatic and literal reading of idioms that gives the punster an opportunity for creation of a pun (as in *Britain going metric: give them an inch and they’ll take our mile*). This example of wordplay is based on an idiomatic expression give somebody a hand and somebody will take an arm.

- *Morphological structure*: Many derivatives and compounds can be utilized in punning as well as a distinction between the accepted meaning of the words (for example, a result of compounding) and the interpretation of the components (as in “*I can’t find the oranges,*” said Tom fruitlessly).
- *Syntactic structure*: Grammar can also generate puns as sentences or phrases can be parsed in more than one way. Delabastita offers the following example of a slogan – *Players Please*, referring to either a brand of cigarettes that please smokers or to a request to a shop assistant.

Delabastita’s classification of wordplay is very similar to Otto Ducháček’s taxonomy of wordplay. Attardo says that “Ducháček’s (1970) attempt is the most accomplished in this group of taxonomies. His major contribution is his extremely elaborate taxonomy of puns, arranged according to the linguistic phenomena involved.” (Attardo 1994, 113)

Figure 1 – Ducháček’s taxonomy of puns

1. Homonymy

a. Homophony

- i. Between different words
- ii. Two or more words
- iii. A simple word with a composed one
- iv. One word with a group of two or more words
- v. Two groups of words

b. Homography

c. Paronymy

2. Polysemy

3. Antonymy

4. Morphemic attraction

5. Tendency to motivation

6. Contamination

Similar to Delabastita, Ducháček also classifies puns in terms of phonological and graphological structure (homonymy, homophony, homography and paronymy), lexical structure (polysemy) and morphological structure. Attardo then provides explanation of homonymy, homophony etc. but the explanation was already given for these linguistic phenomena and there is no reason to repeat them.

However, Ducháček's taxonomy of puns serves only as a support for Delabastita's classification of wordplay which is used as frame of reference for this study.

Third, Delabastita (1996, 129-130) in his study argues that puns are textual phenomena, meaning that they are dependent on the structural characteristics of language as an abstract system. He further says that languages are full of potential ambiguities and associations, "which are not normally perceived as significant in ordinary, non-significant discourse." (1996, 129) To create the humorous effect of puns, mere ambiguity does not always prove to be sufficient enough. That being said, puns usually require something more. Possibilities and various associations that are omnipresent in languages need to be somehow evoked. Where any potential ambiguity might fail, the context is required. It is important to mention that the context can be verbal or situational. As Delabastita puts it:

Verbal contexts follow from our expectation of grammatical well-formedness (thus, the fact that certain word classes are normally used in certain syntactic positions only will tend to block a reading of *can* as a verb in a phrase like 'can of lager' and of thematic coherence (1996, 129).

In short, verbal contexts are related to the human knowledge and expectations of grammatical and coherent texts. Situational contexts, on the other hand, might include, for instance, visual image in media or punning advertisement, which gives an additional meaning to the accompanying text. That is something that Henrik Gottlieb is well aware of when he states: "The intended effect of wordplay can accordingly be conveyed through dialogue (incl. intonation and other prosodic features), through dialogue combined with non-verbal visual information, or through written text..." (1997, 210)

Since this thesis deals with written text only, Gottlieb's statement serves only as an extension of Delabastita's broad definition of context.

Fourth, one of the most important features of a pun is its intentionality. This is what Delabastita refers to as communicative significance. According to him "a pun is communicatively significant if and when it is intended as such." (1996, 132) It is nevertheless crucial to differentiate between accidental ambiguities in the text and intentional cases of wordplay (described in section 2.2). What can cause problems to readers is the mere recognition and appreciation of puns in the text as it is not always clear to see the intention of the author and there is a thin borderline between 'underreading' and 'overreading' of the text containing this textual phenomenon. As Delabastita (1996, 132) argues, the recognition depends heavily on the reading habits of the text user, as well as the genre conventions and language conceptions.

Delabastita sees wordplay as a confrontation of two different meanings. Bistra Alexieva (1997, 138) tackles the issue of wordplay from a slightly different point of view. She envisages that wordplay should be studied as not only words and their meanings but rather as what she refers to as "domains of human knowledge and experience they can be associated with" (1997, 138). Alexieva provides the following joke on which she explains her notion:

Example (1): *Teacher: What does it mean when the barometer falls?*

Boy: Er... the nail has come out of the wall, sir?

The example can be interpreted two ways. What causes the humorous effect here is the semantic shift of the word *fall*. First, the teacher is asking a technical question about barometric pressure. Second, it is the student's answer which has to do with gravity. Moreover, what Alexieva (1997, 138) tries to suggest is that puns should rather be seen as a confrontation of two different domains where these meaning belong in the human mind. For her, it is a matter of human knowledge and experience, saying that the "distance" between these two domains and the "way they are connected" influence the humorous effect of wordplay.

Similar approach is being used by Kathleen Davis (1997, 24) who observes that wordplay does not apply solely to linguistic ambiguities. According to her, wordplay refers to “the systemic operation of language itself” (1997, 24) as she further develops her theory claiming that wordplay relies heavily on a conjunction and yet a difference between two (or more) words that are part of the whole language system. She also provides an example from a movie on which she illustrates her idea. Using the homophonic words *jeans* and *genes*, one of the characters, named Kevin Kline, is asked by a lady to father her child because of his good *genes*. She tries to advocate that the pun cannot be deciphered unless the relationship between designer jeans – known for sexiness and social superiority (encouraged by Calvin Klein through advertising) and genes – associated with reproduction, has already been decoded. As Davis (1997, 24) puts it: “We cannot get the joke without thinking of meaning in terms of a system.”

Alexieva’s and Davis’ approach is similar to what Raskin (1985) and later Attardo (1994) refer to as script opposition. Script opposition theory was developed by Victor Raskin in his book *Semantic Mechanisms of Humour*. Even though the theory is meant for the analysis of jokes, I believe that it is also applicable to wordplay as well as wordplay is humorous in its nature. Raskin says that in each joke there should be two opposing semantic scripts present. A script is defined as a “chunk of semantic information evoked by a word, the semantic information that can be common to the whole community or that can constitute idiosyncratic information.” (Raskin 1995, 81) He also provides an example of a lexical script. See figure 2 below.

Figure 2 - Lexical Script for DOCTOR

Subject: [+Human] [+Adult]

Activity: > Study medicine

= Receive patients: patient comes or doctor visits

doctor listens to complaints

doctor examines patient

= cure disease: doctor diagnoses diseases

doctor prescribes treatment

= (Take patient’s money)

Place: > Medical school

= Hospital or doctor's office

Time: > Many years

= Every day

= Immediately

Condition: Physical contact

(Raskin 1985, 85)

For better illustration of the script opposition, Raskin provides an example of his own.

Example (2) *"Is the doctor at home?" the patient asked in his bronchial whisper. "No," the doctor's young and pretty wife whispered in reply. "Come right in."* (Raskin 1985: 100)

Although the joke above is not an instance of wordplay, it is a good example of the opposition script as it contains two opposing scripts, the first script is *the doctor* (evoked by the lexical units such as *doctor*, *patient* and *bronchial*) and the second script is the lover (evoked by the fact that the doctor's wife invites a man she hardly knows inside and also by the fact that she whispered).

Wordplay therefore can be described as a play of differences where meaning is produced by its differential relation with all other items in the system meaning that no word or lexical item itself bears any meaning itself in punning, the context is equally important.

One aspect that has not been mentioned so far is the humorous effect of wordplay. Obviously, it is practically impossible to define what makes people laugh as outlined by Attardo who (1994, 3) remarks that, "[e]ven though it is almost impossible to define what it is that makes something humorous, we are at least able to identify humor." Nevertheless, the humorous effect is vital as people in general are deliberately taking advantage of certain characteristics of language such as the existence of homonyms or polysemous words to create the humorous effect. Therefore, it can be said that the function of wordplay is to amuse the reader or listener. Delabastita states that apart from creating a humorous affect and drawing the audiences's attention to something in the text, wordplay is "forcing the reader/listener into greater attention, adding to persuasive

force to the statement, deceiving our socially conditioned reflex against sexual and other taboo themes, and so forth” (Delabastita 1996, 130).

Apart from attracting the reader’s/listener’s attention with the intention to amuse, we may assume that wordplay has additional goals as described above and thus should not be underestimated by linguists and translators in particular.

2.2 Characteristics of a Pun

The aspect of ambiguity as a central feature of wordplay has been mentioned in the section 2.1 where definition of wordplay was provided. This section aims to discuss two important characteristics of wordplay in detail, namely the difference between ambiguity and puns and the feature of incongruity.

2.2.1 Difference between ambiguity and puns

According to Attardo all linguistic analyses and attempts to define puns come to a conclusion that puns involve two senses. (Attardo 1994, 128) Ambiguity is also defined as “the state of having more than one possible sense” (Lynne Murphy 2010, 84). Such possibility then of course may lead to creation of a humorous effect. Ambiguity is thus the basis of wordplay. Simply put, when a word, phrase or a sentence is ambiguous, two or even more interpretations are possible. Such possible interpretations are a result of the author’s witty usage of language, deliberately using ambiguous words to create a humorous effect, we may therefore claim that ambiguity in puns is always purposeful. “A pun is defined as a humorous verbalisation which has two interpretations couched in purposeful ambiguity of a word or a string of words.” (Dynel 2009, 131)

This aspect of intentionality is nevertheless crucial to differentiate between puns and ambiguity. According to Delabastita (1996, 132) it can be sometimes very difficult to determine the intention of the author. Recognition and appreciation of wordplay then depends heavily on the reader’s reading habits, as well as the genre conventions of the text.

2.2.2 Incongruity

Another important aspect of humor and wordplay that will be mentioned here is incongruity. Since puns are humorous, this characteristic which is typical for theories of humor and are usually applied to jokes in general can be equally applicable to wordplay as well. This theory is important because “any humorous text will contain an element of incongruity.” (Attardo 1994, 144) Therefore, all puns must be incongruous as well.

Chapman and Foot define incongruity as “a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs in the joke” (1976, 12). Such aspect of humor refers to something that is regarded as out of place or absurd. To better understand what incongruity refers to, an example from Ross (1998, 7) is provided in which these “conflicts” and “what is expected” are obvious.

Example (3): *Do you believe in clubs for young people?*
Only when kindness fails.

The *club* may well correspond to leisure groups or a wooden stick used in this case as a weapon, thus provoking something absurd or abnormal. Vandaele (1999, 243) sees incongruity as a part of “cognitive scheme” which he defines as a human ability to relate and to give meaning to certain stimuli from the outside world. So when we speak about airports, planes are expected, when we speak about dancing, some music is expected. “The cognitive schemes constitute the constructions a person has learned to use in order to cope with the world he or she lives in.” Therefore, incongruity can be considered as a “contradiction of the cognitive scheme.” (1999, 243)

This section tried to outline the two main characteristics of a pun, namely the aspect of intentionality and the aspect of incongruity i.e., some sort of unexpectedness. Presence of these two characteristics is therefore crucial for wordplay.

3. TYOLOGY OF WORDPLAY

This chapter will present a tyology of wordplay. There are numerous definitions of wordplay as mentioned in the previous chapter and as a result, various tyologies of wordplay can be found as well. However, for the purpose of this thesis I chose to follow Delabastita's (1996) tyology of wordplay that fits the instances of wordplay recognized in *Yes, Prime Minister*.

Figure 3 – Wordplay structured on various levels

- Phonological and graphological structure
- Lexical structure (polysemy)
- Lexical structure (idiom)
- Morphological structure
- Syntactic structure

3.1 Phonological and graphological structure

As mentioned earlier, there are numerous ways of creating wordplay on the phonological and graphological level which include homonymy (identical sounds and spelling), homophony (identical sounds but different spelling), homography (different sounds but identical spelling), and paronymy (slight differences in spelling and sound).

For my analysis, Delabastita's (1996) tyology is used, which I will try to demonstrate on his examples. The following table provides specific tyology of wordplay with illustrative examples, the table below is borrowed from Delabastita (1996, 128).

Figure 4 - Typology of puns

Homonymy	Homophony	Homography	Paronymy
<p><u>VERTICAL</u> Pyromania: a burning passion</p>	<p><u>VERTICAL</u> Wedding belles</p>	<p><u>VERTICAL</u> MessAge [name of a band]</p>	<p><u>VERTICAL</u> Come in for a faith lift [slogan on church]</p>
<p><u>HORIZONTAL</u> Carry on dancing carries Carry to the top [article on a dancer named Carry]</p>	<p><u>HORIZONTAL</u> Counsel for council home buyers</p>	<p><u>HORIZONTAL</u> How the US put US to shame</p>	<p><u>HORIZONTAL</u> It's G.B. for the Beegees [article on pop band]</p>

From the table above, it is evident that Delabastita also distinguishes between **horizontal** and **vertical** pun.

Horizontal pun

According to Delabastita, (1996, 128) in horizontal puns, linguistic structures occur one after another in the text. “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). It is the repetition of a word in the text that triggers the secondary meaning. Usually, the components mentioned in the horizontal pun tend to appear one after the other very shortly as can be seen in:

Example (4): *“I [Humphrey] wouldn’t want to go there, though. It’s an awful country. They cut people’s hand off for theft, and women **get stoned** when they commit adultery. Unlike Britain, where women commit adultery when they **get stoned**.”*

Example (4) above can be considered a typical illustration of a horizontal pun in which the two highlighted linguistic structures appear one after another.

Vertical pun

On the contrary, vertical puns differ from horizontal puns in its representation and its mere recognition can be considered a bit more demanding. While in a horizontal pun both linguistic structures (components) are present in the text, in a vertical pun “one of the pun’s components is materially absent from the text and has to be triggered into semantic action by contextual constraints” (1996, 129). An example of a vertical pun found in *Yes, Prime Minister* follows, preceded by context in which the pun appears.

Hacker’s first TV appearance as Prime Minister gives his advisers some troubles when deciding what he should say in front of cameras as he has been in office for seven days only. Hacker himself comes up with an idea to tell the press that he is an ordinary man, one that can identify with the problems of ordinary people. One of his advisors is cautious about this idea saying that this sort of publicity can be counterproductive:

Example (5): *“Perhaps it’s better that we build you up a bit – photos of you doing the washing might make you look a bit wet.”*

This example of homonymic pun is vertical because only one component is present in this fragment of the text. First meaning of the word *wet* (moisture) then clashes with the second meaning of the word *wet* (a British informal term for someone who is feeble or foolish) that needs to be recovered from the context.

When Delabastita refers to a vertical pun, he refers to punning in which “two formally similar linguistic structures may clash associatively by being co-present in the same portion of text.” (1996, 128) This means that only one component of the pun is present in the text and the reader’s knowledge of language and his/her ability to associate the materially present component with some other semantic reading is needed.

From the table above, it is obvious that homonymy, homophony and homography have something in common. In the following few paragraphs, some important differences will be mentioned together with Delabastita’s examples from the aforementioned table.

3.1.1 Homonymy

Homonymy is based on a lexical ambiguity that refers to words with the same spelling and same pronunciation, although the meaning differs. For instance, consider one of Delabastita's examples:

Example (6): *Carry on dancing carries Carry to the top.*

The 'punning' here is realized by a homonym *Carry* (carry as a verb and Carry as a proper noun). This example may seem a bit problematic as readers/speakers may not consider this as an instance of wordplay as the aspect of incongruity is missing and clash of the two meanings or two senses is also absent, it is just a repetition of words based on sameness.

Delabastita's vertical realization of homonymous wordplay is much better and clearer.

Example (7): *Pyromania: a **burning** passion*

This vertical pun plays with the meaning of the word *burning* which refers to flames or heat while the second sense, a figurative one, refers to something rather urgent or intense. The example also employs the word *pyromania* that actually triggers the wordplay when one realizes that *pyromania* refers to "*the uncontrollable impulse and practice of setting things on fire.*" (The Free Dictionary) Both meanings of burning then come into play as the confrontation of burning (uncontrollable) and burning (things of fire) is the source of humorousness.

It should be noted that homonymy may be easily mistaken for polysemy. For the purpose of this thesis I will differentiate between the two. On the notion of polysemy, Klein and Murphy (2001, 259) provide the following definition:

[w]ords that have a number of related senses. They use the word 'paper' as an example, saying that it can refer to both a substance and a publication printed on that substance.

While polysemous words are defined clearly as words with related meaning, homonyms can be according to Klein and Murphy (2001, 259) described as:

[t]wo different word meanings converge on the same phonological representation, or in which a single word diverges into very different meanings.

Again, they use an example, this time it is the word 'bank' referring to a financial institution and a land along the sides of the river. It is necessary to add that these two, apart from the same spelling and pronunciation, do not have anything in common, no related meaning. To further highlight the difference between homonymy and polysemy, Small (1988, 4) reiterates: "Homonymy refers to words whose various definitions are unrelated." Taylor (1989, 99) says that polysemy is the association of two or more related senses with a single linguistic form. It is nonetheless quite a difficult task to differentiate between the two. There is a certain level of subjectivity when deciding whether the given lexical item is homonymous or polysemous. The aspect of relatedness is also questionable as Lyons (1977, 550) puts it:

Relatedness of meaning is a matter of degree. Those lexical items which one person might regard to be semantically related to a certain degree, the other person might see them to be very far apart.

Therefore, a criterion has been created for the purpose of this thesis. The criterion is the aforementioned *relatedness of meanings* and this criterion will be used to differentiate between polysemy and homonymy. According to Geoffrey Leech (1981), meanings can be related either historically or psychologically. As he puts it: "Two meanings are historically related if they can be traced back to the same source, or if the one meaning can be derived from the other" and "two meanings are psychologically related if present-day users of the language feel intuitively that they are related, and therefore tend to assume that they are different uses of the same word." (Leech 1981, 227-228)

For better illustration, I will demonstrate this notion of relatedness on before-mentioned words *paper* and *bank*. The word *paper* was used as a polyseme and rightly so because according to the *Online Etymology Dictionary* it has two meanings – a document and a

substance. The two meanings are related as they are listed under one entry in the dictionary.

On the contrary, the lexical unit *bank* is treated as homonymous because it has two entries in the dictionary, namely a financial institution and a land along the sides of the river.

To differentiate whether two lexical units are related or not, I will refer to *Online Etymology Dictionary* – if the meanings are related, they will be treated as polysemic; if they are not related, they will be considered as homonymic.

3.1.2 Homophony

This typology refers to the situation where two words have identical sounds but are spelled in a different way. Homophones usually create the humorous misunderstanding, something everybody is exposed to during his or her life. Therefore, homophones are predominantly matter of spoken language rather than written but it is not always the case as reading is sometimes required so that the pun occurs to reader as seen in the example below. It is important to mention that homophonous wordplay can be seen rather as unintentional due to a spelling error but this very rare as punsters are well aware of goals they want to achieve. The example borrowed from Delabastita shows a vertical wordplay:

Example (8): *Wedding belles*.

The interpretation of the above example when pronounced may sound either as *belles* (referring to beautiful girls) or *bells* (metal object that makes a ringing sound). The example proves that reading here is required as ‘belles’ is rather an archaic word, thus the pun works rather visually.

Again, Delabastita provides an example (9) of wordplay that is let say a bit controversial as it seem only as a repetition of the words that sound the same which do not clash associatively.

Example (9): *Counsel for council home buyers*

It is possible that the meaning of this pun is unnoticed from my side but I have not discovered any possible meanings or combinations how these two lexical units might be confronted as *counsel* refers to a piece of advice while *council home* refers to “*houses or apartments owned by the government for which the rent is lower than homes that are privately owned.*” (Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary) I believe that just a mere similarity or sameness of form or pronunciation does not account for wordplay. This may be referred to as soundplay where the confrontation of two linguistic structures is absent.

3.1.3 Homography

In this typology of wordplay, homographs work with the same spelling and different sound. Thus, meaning of homographs differs as well. As Henrik Gottlieb (1997, 210) remarks, the central feature at play is graphemic ambiguity. This proves to be the case in the following examples given by Delabastita in which the play with graphemes is employed:

Example (10): *How the US put US to shame.*

The punster utilizes the abbreviation of the United States *US* in contrast to capitalized pronoun *us*. Pronunciation of the two is, of course, different. While the abbreviation sounds like [ju:es], the personal pronoun is pronounced [ʌs]. Puns based on homography are mainly prevalent in advertising, therefore it is rare to find them in literary works.

Another example of homographic wordplay as provide by Delabastita.

Example (11): *MessAge*

The same applies as what has been said about example 10, this pun can work only visually in order to trigger the punning effect meaning that *message* refers to a piece of

information and *MessAge* – a compound of *mess* (untidy) and *age* (the period of time) probably referring to difficult times.

3.1.4 Paronymy

The paronymic pun is based on the similarity both in pronunciation and spelling. Paronyms are derivatives of cognate words as can be seen below:

Example (12): *Come in for a **faith** lift.*

This slogan posted on a church plays with the close sound resemblance of the words *faith* [feiθ] and *face* [feis]. The punning here is realized when the collocation *face lift* is changed into *faith lift*, playing on religious theme.

The last example of wordplay taken from Delabastita (see figure 4) follows.

Example (13): *It's **G.B.** for the **Beegees***

This paronymic, this time horizontal, pun plays with the acronym *G.B.* which may stand for Great Britain even though it is used without periods, rather it is an inverted acronym (*B.G.*) for *Beegees* a famous British band. It is questionable if the pronunciation and spelling are similar in this case.

3.2 Lexical Structure (polysemy)

Languages are full of polysemous words, i.e. words that are related not only through their formal realization, moreover there is also a semantic connection between them. As a reminder, Klein and Murphy (2001, 259) say about polysemy:

[w]ords that have a number of related senses. They use the word ‘paper’ as an example, saying that it can refer to both a substance and a publication printed on that substance.

To better illustrate the definition an instance of wordplay taken from *Yes, Prime Minister* is used here. Context is also provided.

The French Ambassador and Hacker discuss the arrival of the French President and his wife. Hacker then asks the French Ambassador to suggest to the President to bring a different gift. The French Ambassador then explains that it is the President's wife who wants to bring the puppy. Hacker feels that if he says no, he will be insulting the first lady but decides to tell him that it may not be possible. The French Ambassador, a bit disquieted, says:

Example (14) *"I [The French Ambassador] fear it would be interpreted as both a national and an insult. To the President and his wife."
I'd had enough of this bullshit. I stood up too. "Excellency, please ask the President not to bring that **bitch** with him."*

It was definitely not intentional from Hacker as it was obviously a slip of tongue and the intentionality of the pun here is questionable but I decided to leave it here as it was the author's intention to make this part ambiguous. Hacker is weary of all this conversation and reacts angrily, suggesting that the President does not bring that bitch with him. As soon as he pronounces the word bitch he knows exactly what he said. He meant the puppy as *bitch* can refer to a female dog but it can also refer to a malicious or unpleasant woman, in this case the President's wife. The word bitch has one entry in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* meaning a female dog and contempt applied to women that only recently is used as the most offensive appellation.

3.3 Lexical structure (idiom)

Languages contain many idioms which are considered to be semantically peculiar. In general, an idiom is usually defined as a fixed or 'frozen' expression where meaning cannot be inferred from the meanings of its individual parts. *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines an idiom as

a group of words in a fixed order that have a particular meaning that is different from the meanings of each word on its own.

Such definition is adequate for the purpose of this thesis. More important is to see how this phenomenon can be used in the punning discourse. Veisbergs (1997, 157) states that wordplay based on the idiomatic expression can be either semantic or structural, to be more specific, idioms that are modified. According to him, this type accounts for a large number of cases of wordplay. Structural modifications of idioms refer to modification where words are inserted, omitted or substituted in the idiom in order to change its meaning. Semantic modification, on the other hand, refers to what Delabastita (1996, 130) sees as the distance between the idiomatic and literal reading of idioms that gives the punster an opportunity for creation of a pun. Both structural and semantic modifications are demonstrated on the two following examples.

At least some context is again needed to justify the selection of this example. The French President is coming by car so that he can bring the puppy in the car. Humphrey then question Hacker if he is ready to give instructions for the President's car to be stopped and searched. Humphrey starts the conversation.

Example (15) *“Are you prepared to violate their diplomatic immunity and search the diplomatic bag?”*

I [Hacker] was confused. “You can't put a puppy in a bag.”

“It would be a doggy bag,” said Bernard.

“That would really set the cat among the pigeons.”

“And let the dog out of the bag.”

This is an example of structural wordplay in which the highlighted idiomatic expression is modified by the insertion of the lexical unit *dog*. Original wordplay is however *Let the cat out of the bag* which means to reveal a secret. Given that the previous discussion evolved around the puppy, the insertion of the word *dog* adds to the effect of a clash of two scripts.

Humphrey, Bernard and Hacker are in discussion about the educational system in Britain. Humphrey objects that the educational system is in a bad condition and that it

will not improve unless the responsibility for education is taken away from local councils and put under the Department of Education and Science. Hacker likes the idea:

Example (16) “*Humphrey*,” I [Hacker] said, “do you think I could? Actually **grasp the nettle and take the bull by the horns?**”

Bernard spoke for the first time. “Prime Minister, you can’t take the bull by the horns if you’re grasping the nettle.”

“I mean, if you grasped the nettle with one hand, you could take the bull by one horn with the other hand, but not by both horns because your hand wouldn’t be big enough, and if you took a bull by only one horn it would be rather dangerous because...”

In this example of semantic transformation two idiomatic expressions used by Hacker are interpreted literally by Bernard. *Grasp the nettle* means to deal with something that is unpleasant. *Grab the bull by the horns* basically means the same, to confront a problem. Bernard’s analysis of what can be grabbed at a same time or not is a word-for-word interpretation of the idioms mentioned by Hacker.

As stated before, puns can be based on idioms. To have a pun based on an idiom, its idiomatic reading needs to be violated either semantically (giving the idiomatic expression new meaning or reading the idiom literally) or structurally (where certain units are substituted or omitted).

3.4 Morphological structure

Within this category, many derivatives and compounds can be found which may cause a humorous effect. Last but not least, morphological puns based on derivation and compounding are usually treated as rather incorrect yet something very effective. Delabastita (1996, 130) provides the following:

Example (17): *Is life worth living? It depends upon the liver.*

In the example (17) above, the punster used a derivational pattern in which he construed a new word on the basis of an existing word, in this case the verb *live* from which he/she derived a noun *liver* by adding a suffix *-er*. It must be mentioned that vocabularies do recognize such entry but with a completely different interpretation. While vocabularies recognize the word as a particular organ, the meaning of the given word used by the punster is meant to be or refers to a human being, someone who lives the life.

3.5 Syntactic structure

Wordplay so far has been described on a *phonological and graphological level*, *lexical level* and *morphological level*. The last piece of wordplay category will be dealt with on a syntactic level.

MacDonald et al. (1994, 676) suggest a simple definition of this phenomenon: “Syntactic ambiguities arise when a sequence of words has more than one syntactic interpretation.” Simply, ambiguity can be achieved through the use of several syntactical devices, such as prepositions, article usage, etc. Let me demonstrate on the following example taken from Ivan Poldauf’s study *The Have Construction* (1967, 24):

Example (18): *Our girls sell well.*

Obviously, the example (18) can be considered as a pun only if it is intended as such. The sentence itself is only ambiguous as further context would be required to disambiguate. Double reading of the sentence above can be triggered by the so called medio-passive voice, trying to point out that call girls are in demand. Obviously, literal meaning of the sentence is also possible, i.e. girls are good in sales.

To conclude, this short albeit very representative sample of wordplay as presented so far shows that not every play with words can be considered to be punning. As examples showed, soundplay based on mere similarity of form and pronunciation (see examples 6 and 9) will be further excluded from the study.

4. TRANSLATING WORDPLAY

Translators face one big problem when dealing with translation of puns: whether maintain the translation or not. In an ideal case, a translator should be able to provide perfectly equivalent translation but this is not always the case as languages differ in their typology and it is hardly possible to find a viable solution every time. Of course, original piece of text can be substituted for by something equally effective or can be omitted completely (see Delabastita 1996, 133-134), which on the other hand can affect the humorous aspect of the text, given the text is built primarily on puns and ambiguity. Thus, it is the translators' duty to recognize and provide correct translation.

4.1 The notion of untranslatability

Ideally, translators should respect the source text and should be able to find the best possible solutions for its counterparts in the target language. However, it is not always possible for several reasons. There are many differences between languages and translators have to overcome these 'obstacles' in order to provide equally consistent translation. As Delabastita (1996, 131) points out, structural differences between languages are evident even between Western languages which, of course, may affect the wordplay.

Discussing the notion of translatability of wordplay, Delabastita (1996, 133) remarks: "[f]ocusing on wordplay and ambiguity as facts of the source text and/or the target text, we may be tempted to say that wordplay and translation form an almost impossible match, whichever way one looks at it." Thus any 'untranslatable' puns in the source text should be then translated with equally potent pun in the target text. But such substitution will most probably affect the textual environment of the target text. As Delabastita points out, "a new textual setting needs to be created for the target-text wordplay to come to life." (1996, 135)

Kathleen Davis (1997, 26) has similar approach as Delabastita when she observes that languages have their own manner of meaning, not reliant on the individual words but

the complexity of the linguistic system. In other words, what works within one language, does not have to work within other language.

Furthermore, Davis (1997, 37) also pays attention to the notion of translation studies from a source-text to a target-text when she remarks that a translation is considered to be a translation only when it is regarded as such by a receiving culture. She also points out that a source-text can be freely cited by a target-text, with its meaning being determined by a new context in the target culture. Her approach is identical to Delabastita's, when she rejects the notion of untranslatability stating that almost every instance of wordplay is translatable even though the new context may be construed in order to salvage the original wordplay.

Bistra Alexieva goes a bit deeper with her understanding of wordplay as something not solely relying on a confrontation of two (or more) different meanings only, she comes to a conclusion that wordplay has something to do with human knowledge and experience as well. She also tackles the question of translatability of puns, saying that wordplay, a universal feature of language, is possible in any language. (Alexieva 1997, 138) She does not provide anything new since the features such as polysemy, homography, homophony, synonyms and near-synonyms that evoke different associations are discussed. These features, however, "exemplify the basic asymmetry between language and the extralinguistic world it is used to denote." (1997, 139)

If every language functions independently and autonomously, then one cannot expect that the asymmetry between its signs and the extralinguistic entities will reflect an identical pattern across languages. (1997, 141) Having that in mind, translators are sure to know that different structures within languages occur, for instance their semantic structure:

A polysemous word in the source language may not be polysemous, or may be polysemous in a different way, in the receptor language; words may be found in the target language that are referentially synonymous with a source-language word, but have radically different emotive or stylistic meanings; and so on. (1997, 141)

Nevertheless, Alexieva believes that the process of translating does not necessarily mean translating on the semantic or grammatical level only. She observes that asymmetry within source-language and target-language may be analyzed on a broader scale. That said, translators might deal with two completely different languages and have to find another ways of creating wordplay as there might be certain limitations when translating from English to Czech, for example. Moreover, punning has a specific application within different languages and cultures. Interestingly, such differences in the application are said to depend mainly on the perception of entities and events, meaning that it depends not only on how people perceive such things but also on the way they have seen or heard it. Another factor such as the ‘frequency of the instances of perception’, which somehow promotes greater familiarity and such entities are then better stored in our minds, plays its role as well. In addition to it, our own interaction with those entities play its irreplaceable role as it also very much depends whether such contact or interaction is rather direct or indirect. (1997, 141)

To put it more plainly, let me provide an example. Children in the Czech Republic will probably react to stories about dogs and hedgehogs more promptly than to stories about seagulls or sharks. Naturally, it is because of the experience children have with them and the nature of contacts. Thus, such relatively unknown entities/animals are described to children only indirectly via magazines, television etc. Children living along the coast will probably have better understanding of sea life as they have more hands-on experience of fishing or seafood markets. This example is based on Alexieva’s own example comparing Bulgarian children with those in America. (1997, 142)

What Alexieva tries to point out here is that there are several obstacles that await translators. He or she has to bear in mind not only linguistic or stylistic devices when translating texts. Cultural aspects, own sense of humor and translator’s perception of the world can affect the translator’s work more than one could think. Humor and punning are, therefore, language- and culture-specific. As Alexieva (1997, 153) puts it:

wordplay should be studied not only in terms of the vehicles of expression that language put at our disposal, but also in terms of what lies beneath, i.e. in terms of the mechanisms governing the structuring of

the various domains of knowledge and experience across languages and cultures.

The best outcome of translating wordplay is the one that is fully preserved in the target language. As this is not always the case when dealing with puns in translations, Henrik Gottlieb (1997, 217) provides the following factors that can lead to the loss of wordplay:

- *Language-specific constraints*: the presence of ‘untranslatable’ elements in the original which fail to have linguistic counterparts in the target language.
- *Human constraints*: lack of talent, interest, or experience in the translator, time pressure, lack of incentives, etc.

Even though Gottlieb’s paper deals with subtitling wordplay I believe his thoughts are well applicable on translations in general if slightly modified. It might seem that Gottlieb’s factors that can influence translators and their respective work is the same as of Alexieva’s and it is, in fact, true. Gottlieb does his research comparing Danish translations of English commercials and thus has specific data to support his analysis. Regarding the *language-specific constraints* he comes up with the results showing that wordplay based on homophony is the most difficult to translate, in most cases almost untranslatable. He says that “two specific words that sound alike in any source language will possibly sound more differently in any target language involved.” (1997, 217) To further support his claim, he provides a nice example of homophony from one of the Tequila commercials.

Example (19): *Watch out for that crazy Mexican licker!*

The pun here plays heavily on the identical pronunciation of the words *licker* and *liquor*. To trigger the punch line, however, the visual aspect of the commercial plays its role as well as one can see a Mexican licking various objects in that TV spot.

Gottlieb (1997, 226) concludes his study convinced that wordplay is in most cases translatable, with translations of certain types of wordplay more feasible than others,

translators dealing with puns either ignore wordplay completely for some unspecified reason or the mere recognition of wordplay fails.

As mentioned before, translators face many constraints and limitations rendering the verbal humor, hence they often fail to recognize and fail to provide any viable solution.

4.2 Recognition of wordplay

As Ritva Leppihalme states at the very beginning of her paper “*Caught in the Frame. A target Culture viewpoint on Allusive Wordplay*” from 1996, “[a] translator can choose among a wide range of translation methods when translating wordplay. But in order to select one of these methods, or even to start contemplating what might be at stake in a given choice, he or she will have to identify the instances of source-text wordplay in the first place” (1996, 199).

A translator must be competent enough in the language he is translating in order to recognize an instance of wordplay in the text that is the first and most obvious requirement. In addition to understanding the given language, translator should possess certain sociocultural knowledge which might be sometimes helpful to spot a pun in the source text.

Example (20) serves to demonstrate an instance of wordplay that is not only language specific but also culture specific. The example is based on the homonymous reading of the word *banger*. Hacker, slightly drunk, asks Sir Humphrey if he is looking forward to the Cabinet Office, Humphrey’s new position within government.

Example (20): *Sir Humphrey enthused, but added kindly that everyone was still very excited over the vexed question of the Eurosausage.*

*“Ah yes,” slurped the Minister, “the **Eurobanger**.”*

*Sir Humphrey was unable to resist a little joke at Hacker’s expense and replied that surely the **Eurobanger** was NATO’s new tactical missile.*

“Is it?” asked Hacker, confused.

In this case, the pun is based on the word *banger* which is misleading for Hacker after Humphrey plays a little trick on him. Hacker uses the word *banger* (British colloquial expression for sausage) in its most common way when he refers to a traditional British dish – bangers and mash. On the other hand, *banger* can also refer to a small noisy firework. When Humphrey refers to Eurobanger as NATO's new tactical missile, Hacker, partly because of alcohol, does not understand the joke. This example shows that wordplay can also be considered as culture specific even though this is very rare in *Yes, Prime Minister*. It means that *Yes, Prime Minister* does not play heavily on this sort of humor and the analyzed instances of wordplay are rather language dependent.

4.3 Translation strategies

As mentioned before, translating wordplay is not an easy task for any translator due to its complexity. Maintaining the humorous effect in translation is therefore crucial as perfectly equivalent translation is not always possible. Most researchers would agree that 'free adaptation' is more or less acceptable and in many cases only viable solution.

Figure 5 – Translation methods provided by Delabastita (1996)

- PUN → PUN: the source-text pun is translated by a target-language pun, which may be more or less different from the original wordplay in terms of formal structure, semantic structure, or textual function
- PUN → NON-PUN: the pun is rendered by a non-punning phrase which may salvage both senses of the wordplay but in a non-punning conjunction, or select one of the senses at the cost of suppressing the other; of course, it may also occur that both components of the pun are translated 'beyond recognition'
- PUN → RELATED RHETORICAL DEVICE: the pun is replaced by some wordplay-related rhetorical device (repetition, alliteration, rhyme, referential vagueness, irony, paradox, etc.) which aims to recapture the effect of the source-text pun

- PUN → ZERO: the portion of text containing the pun is simply omitted
- PUN ST = PUN TT: the translator reproduces the source-text pun and possibly its immediate environment in its original formulation, i.e. without actually ‘translating’ it
- NON-PUN → PUN: the translator introduces a pun in textual positions where the original text has no wordplay, by way of compensation to make up for source-text puns lost elsewhere, or for any other reason
- ZERO → PUN: totally new textual material is added, which contains wordplay and which has no apparent precedent or justification in the source text except as a compensatory device
- EDITORIAL TECHNIQUES: explanatory footnotes or endnotes, comments provided in translators’ forewords, the ‘anthological’ presentation of different, supposedly complementary solutions to one and the same source-text problem, and so forth

Translators then face a dilemma whether to completely omit the pun in their translation or to provide say a free adaptation of the source-text pun based on the methods mentioned above. It is without any doubt a very serious question the translators face during their years. Delabastita (1996, 135) says about this issue: “the only way to be faithful to the original text (i.e. to its verbal playfulness) is paradoxically to be unfaithful to it (i.e. to its vocabulary).” This is accepted by Henrik Gottlieb, who points out that “in a few situations even non-wordplay – e.g. the use of non-punning jokes – may trigger the desired effect in the audience, and thus fulfil the function of the original wordplay” (1997, 216).

As a result, translators may often opt for a pragmatic approach with various factors that affect the translation. Time usually play its role as translators need to meet the deadline, therefore they might very often favor the first more or less suitable translation of wordplay that occurs to them. And last but not least, it is the translators’ ability to recognize and translate wordplay. Then, of course, personal taste and willingness to take

the trouble to deal with wordplay as such to satisfy the target-text audience can play its role as well. Many puns and the contextual settings in which they appear have to be sometimes altered, thus bringing the translator to a question whether to translate and how to translate. (Delabastita 1996, 135)

As a conclusion, it is not my intention to advise translators what translation strategies or techniques should be used. My purpose is to examine the translation strategies used in the translation of *Yes, Prime Minister*.

5. ANALYSIS

Even though the thesis does not aim to provide any quantitative analysis on the wordplay found in the text, some numerical values are provided for better illustration to see what types of wordplay occurred in the corpus most frequently. Then, instances of wordplay will be divided into eight groups based on Delabastita's typology of wordplay, i.e. homonymy, homophony, homography, paronymy, polysemy, idioms, morphology and syntax. Instances of wordplay will be then further divided into horizontal and vertical wordplay. After analyzing the found instances of wordplay, the official Czech translation will be provided to see what translation strategies, based on Delabastita's categorization, the translator used to render the pun from the source to the target text.

5.1 Wordplay in the Corpus

The following figure shows the number of instances of wordplay divided into six categories, i.e. homonymy, homophony, paronymy, polysemy, idioms and morphology that were found in *Yes, Prime Minister*. Note that the instances of wordplay based syntax or homography were not recognized in the source text, hence they are not included in the corpus.

Figure 6 – Wordplay in the corpus

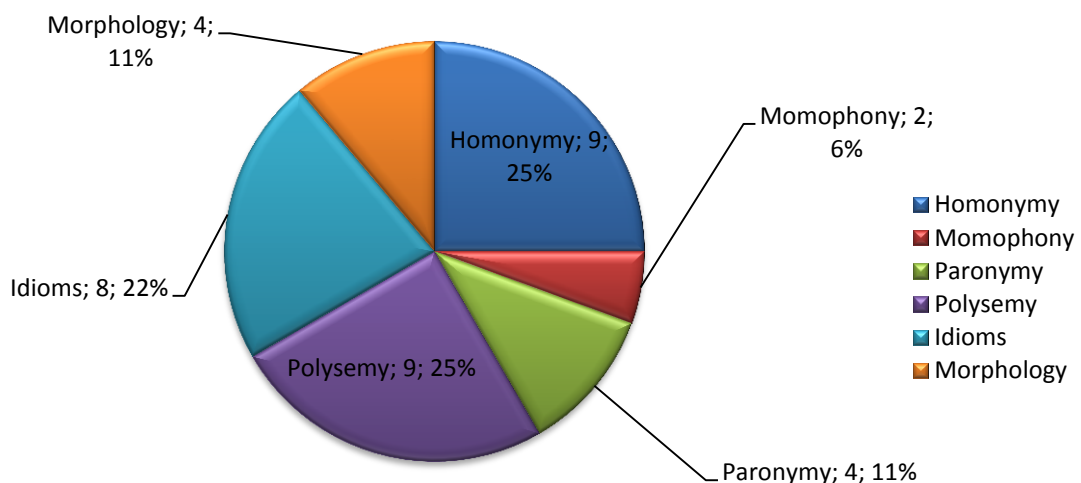
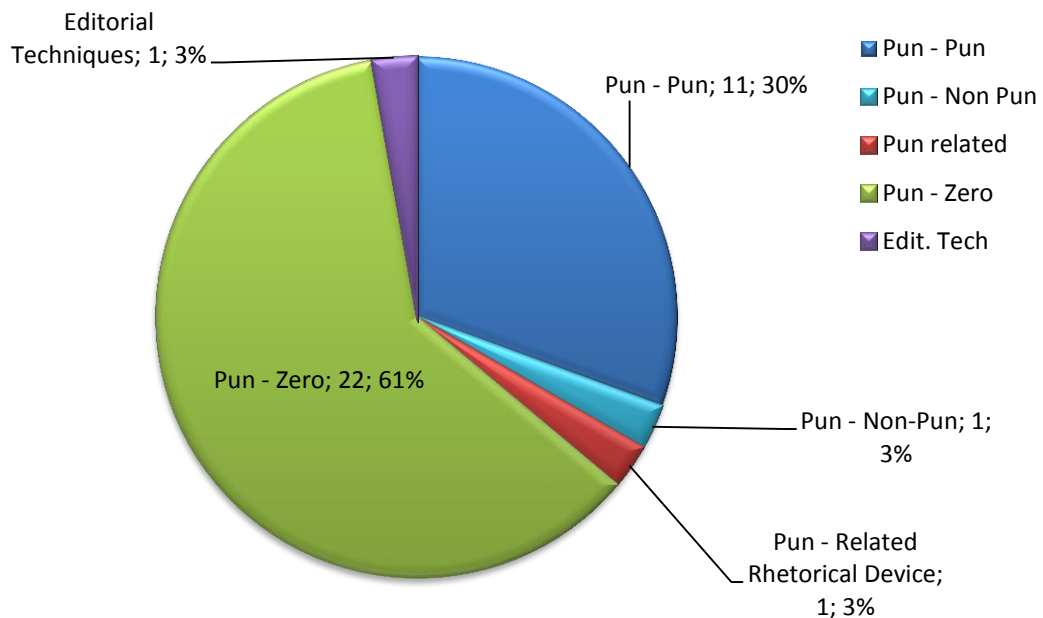


Figure 6 shows the types and total number of occurrences of wordplay in the corpus. The corpus consists of 36 instances of wordplay with 9 samples of puns based on polysemy – the highest amount of occurrences together with 9 samples of puns based on homonymy, 8 samples of puns based on idioms, 4 samples of puns based morphology, 4 samples of puns based on paronymy and 2 samples of puns based on homophony.

5.2 Translation strategies used

Figure 8 shows the number of translation methods for wordplay used by Jan Klíma. Note that the methods such as pun ST to Pun TT (method of rendering puns without actually translating), Non-Pun to Pun (a pun in textual position where the original text has no wordplay as a compensation for source-text pun lost elsewhere) and Zero to Pun (totally new textual material containing wordplay is added) are not included as they were not used by the translator. Total number of translation strategies is identical to number of occurrences of wordplay, i.e., 36 instances of wordplay.

Figure 7 – Translation strategies used



As can be seen from the Figure 7 above, the most frequent translation strategy is omission of wordplay – 22 samples were omitted. Wordplay was successfully rendered

in 11 samples while the strategies used less frequently are Pun to Non-Pun translation, Editorial Techniques and Related Rhetorical Device that account for 1 sample each. The data collected in both figures will be presented in the following analysis.

5.3 Homonymy – Horizontal puns

Example (21) is based on the homonymous reading of the word *banger*. Hacker, slightly drunk, asks Sir Humphrey if he is looking forward to the Cabinet Office, Humphrey's new position within government.

- (21) Sir Humphrey enthused, but added kindly that everyone was still very excited over the vexed question of the Eurosausage.
“Ah yes,” slurped the Minister, “the **Eurobanger**.”
Sir Humphrey was unable to resist a little joke at Hacker's expense and replied that surely the **Eurobanger** was NATO's new tactical missile.
“Is it?” asked Hacker, confused.

(Party Games, 19)

In this case, the pun is based on the word *banger* which is misleading for Hacker after Humphrey plays a little trick on him. Hacker uses the word *banger* (British colloquial expression for sausage) in its most common way when he refers to a traditional British dish – bangers and mash. In addition, *banger* can also refer to a small noisy firework. When Humphrey refers to Eurobanger as NATO's new tactical missile, Hacker, partly because of alcohol, does not understand the joke. The Czech translation follows:

- (21') Sir Humphrey se začal rozplývat nadšením a pak mile dodal, že nicméně jsou všichni neobyčejně zvědaví, jak on, Hacker, vyřeší ten zapeklitý problém **europárku**.
„Jo, ten,“ napil se ministr. „**Eurotalián!**“
Sir Humphrey neodolal, aby na Hackerův účet nezavtipkoval a řekl, že Eurotalián je spíš Ital, který věří ve sjednocenou Evropu.

Jan Klíma, the translator of *Yes, Prime Minister*, decided to completely omit the wordplay in the translation. Moreover, the humorous effect was not maintained at all. In

this case, *europárek* and *Eurotalián* do not clash associatively and thus, second reading is not triggered and humorous effect is lost as well.

Another example (22) of homonymy can be seen in a situation when Annie (Hacker's wife) uses the phrasal verb *run in* in a completely different meaning than what her husband wanted to say.

(22) “So the resignation is to give time for the new leader to be **run in** before the next election.”

“Now, that the Home Secretary's been **run in** already,” said Annie with a quiet smile.

(Party Games, 26)

Hacker's usage of *run in* is meant as a time for the new leader to run the campaign and eventually become popular within the electorate. The phrasal verb *to run in* is commonly used in connection with cars, which implies that it needs some time before it functions properly. Annie, Hacker's wife, is aware of the situation that the Home Secretary had been charged with drunken driving uses the phrasal verb in its figurative meaning – that the Home Secretary has been taken into legal custody.

(22') „Takže skutečně rezignoval, aby se nový předseda strany stačil do příštích voleb **zaběhnout**.“

„Teď, když ministr vnitra **doběhal**,“ usmála se Annie.

Klíma here rendered the pun by a non-pun, maintaining the humorous effect using the verb *zaběhnout* as certain time that is needed for a car to run properly or to give someone some time to get accustomed to new role and the verb *doběhat* in its figurative meaning – that something is over. The translation can be considered more or less successful.

In the case below, the pun occurs in a situation when Annie is writing some Christmas Cards and asks Bernard for some help which he immediately refuses, saying that as a Civil Servant he is not allowed to help with the Minister's political activities.

(23) Annie replies: "I'm just asking you to **lick** some stamps."

I [Bernard] explained that it would be government **lick**.

"Suppose all these cards were to journalists?" she asked.

So I settled down on the sofa to **lick** some stamps, reflecting privately that **licking** is an essential part of relationships with the press.

(Party Games, 24)

In this pun, Bernard plays with the word *lick* that Hacker's wife uses in its literal meaning. However, quick-witted Bernard reacts with a remark that *licking*, meaning beating or thrashing in this context, is a part of relationships with the press.

(23') Usadil jsem se tedy na pohovce, a jak jsem tak **olizoval** známky, napadlo mě, že komunikace s tiskem zpravidla spočívá v tom, že to člověk **slízne**.

The wordplay is maintained in the Czech translation using the technique of replacing pun by pun. Klíma has translated the homonym in the source text so that the original sense of the wordplay is transmitted to the target audience. The verb *slíznout* clashes associatively with the verb *lízat* employed in the first part of the text.

In another homonymous example of horizontal pun, the punning is realized by the *get stoned* with copulative get as to become. Humphrey compares the situation in Qumran, an archaeological site in Israel, to the situation in Britain when he says:

(24) "I [Humphrey] wouldn't want to go there, though. It's an awful country. They cut people's hand off for theft, and women **get stoned** when they commit adultery. Unlike Britain, where women commit adultery when they **get stoned**."

(The Bishop's Gambit, 217)

Humphrey elegantly uses the *get stoned* which has two meanings. First, *get stoned* is a form of capital punishment where a group of people throws stones at a person until death ensues while the second meaning refers to a situation when one becomes very drunk.

(24') „Já bych tam rozhodně nejel. Je to příšerná země. Zlodějům tam uřezávají ruce a nevěrné ženy kamenují.“

The translator decided to leave out the wordplay in this example, failing to preserve the humorous effect in the target text as well. The pun is completely ignored.

After some information leaked to the press which might have seriously damaged Hacker's reputation, it turns out that it was one of the Civil Servants who told the press and Hacker asks for the immediate dismissal of the man. Humphrey warns Hacker that it is not in his interest to do it.

(25) “Not in my interest to punish people for undermining the whole **fabric** of government?” I [Hacker] enquired icily.

Bernard said: “Um, you can't undermine a **fabric**, Prime Minister, because fabric hangs down so if you go underneath you...”

(Official Secrets, 325)

Example (25) above is an example of homonymous realization of the word *fabric* which, in Hacker's interpretation, means structure or system while Bernard yet again substitutes the meaning for different meaning of the word *fabric*. When Bernard is speaking about undermining the fabric he refers to a piece of cloth which cannot be undermined physically.

(25') Není v mém vlastním zájmu potrestat člověka, který podkopal dobré jméno této vlády?“ zeptal jsem se chladně.

Bernard řekl: „Ehm, pane premiére, můžete podkopat důvěru nebo pošpinit dobré jméno, ale nemůžete...“

Again, the punning is lost in the translation when it was omitted. Humorous effect is not achieved as well.

Leslie Potts, the Minister of Sport who has 4000 tobacco workers in his constituency, wants to discuss Hacker's intended personal attack on the tobacco industry. When Hacker questions his interest in the matter, the Minister of Sport reacts:

- (26) "What about my **seat**?"
"What about your lungs?" I [Hacker] said.
"My lungs are fine," he [Leslie Potts] snarled.
"And he doesn't breathe through his **seat**," said Bernard.
Later on.....
"But sometimes one must take a broader view."
"Even broader than your **seat**," added Bernard.

(The Smokescreen, 198)

Example (26) is considered to be horizontal pun which plays on the homonymous word *seat* that refers to an official position and to a bottom part of human body. When Leslie talks about his seat he refers to his post while Bernard humorously refers to his bottom.

- (26') „Myslete na svoje plíce!“
„Moje plíce jsou v pořádku!“

The punning is lost in the translation into the target text.

5.4 Homonymy – vertical puns

Hacker's first TV appearance as Prime Minister gives his advisors some troubles when deciding what he should say in front of cameras as he has been in office for seven days only. Hacker himself comes up with an idea to tell the press that he is an ordinary man, one that can identify with the problems of ordinary people. One of his advisors is

cautious about this idea saying that this sort of publicity can be counterproductive. Later on Malcolm clarifies his point of view:

- (27) “Perhaps it’s better that we build you up a bit – photos of you doing the washing might make you look a bit **wet**.

(The Grand Design, 74)

This vertical pun relies on the homonymous word *wet* which, of course, can be understood as covered in water or moistened but Malcolm meant something totally different. Another meaning of the word *wet* is a British informal term for someone who is feeble or foolish.

- (27’) Možná bude lepší, když se spíš zaměříme na to, abyste vypadal jako energický chlap – na fotografii, jak **perete**, byste vypadal trochu jako **bačkora**.

The Czech translation is not successful in maintaining the punning effect as the lexical unit *bačkora* does not confront with activity of doing the washing (*prát*) at all. The pun is omitted by Jan Klíma.

As Hacker’s first TV appearance is fast approaching, certain things like what color of suit he wants to wear or what gestures to use to make his non-verbal communication more appropriate, Godfrey, an ex-BBC producer, is called to advise Hacker on the art of television. When Godfrey raises one final matter, asking Hacker about the opening music, Hacker feels that it might be appropriate if they used music by British composers. Something that would reflect his image. Godfrey likes the idea:

- (28) “Elgar, perhaps?”
“Yes,” I said (Hacker), “but not *Land of Hope and Glory*.”
“How about the *Enigma Variations*?” said Bernard.

(The Ministerial Broadcast, 102)

The well-known music by famous British composer Edward Elgar plays a big part in this pun. Hacker refuses a British patriotic song Land of Hope and Glory and this is a chance for Bernard to come with his own, rather ambiguous, suggestion. Enigma Variations is Elgar's famous composition and the word *enigma* refers to something mysterious and impossible to understand and, of course, to the famous German machine used during the Second World War for enciphering and deciphering secret messages.

(28') „A co třeba **Záhadné variace?**“ navrhl Bernard.

The translator omitted the word *Enigma* which is the source of punning. Using the word *enigmatický* could be employed instead but the confrontation with the German coding machine would be still missing.

The following example (29) is a vertical pun where the word *mike* is, in fact, a colloquial term for microphone.

(29) Perhaps he's called **Mike** because he's always on the radio.

(**The Bishop's Gambit, 217**)

Hacker uses the first name of *Mike* Stanford, which at the same time refers to shortened version of the word microphone. Mentioning the radio obviously triggers the pun as microphone is one of the basic radio equipments.

(29') Možná mu říkají **Mike**, protože mluví pořád v rádiu.

Mike je zkrácenina pro mikrofon. (Pozn. překl.)

This is the only case where editorial techniques using explanatory footnotes or endnotes was used in translation. The Czech translation is in this case impossible as there is simply no equivalent which might work effectively, so the translator decided to use footnotes (*Mike je zkrácenina pro mikrofon.*), one of the translation techniques described by Delabastita.

5.5 Homophony – horizontal puns

Only two puns were found based on homophony, both are horizontal.

Daily Post published a story which should discredit Hacker for attempting to suppress memoirs of his predecessor. One specific part of the memoirs says that Hacker once supported the proposal to expand a nuclear plant, which, according to Hacker, is not true. The press is waiting for a statement. Hacker is furious:

- (30) “Now this happens and they charge in like a **herd** of vultures.”
“Not **heard**, Prime Minister,” said Bernard inexplicably.
I [Hacker] told him I’d speak louder. Then I realised I’d misunderstood.
“Herd,” he said, “not heard. Vultures, I mean they don’t herd.....”
(Official Secrets, 300)

The misunderstanding which leads to this horizontal pun is based on an identical sound of two different words *herd* and *heard* [hɜːd]. *Herd* refers to a large group of animals and when Bernard tries to correct Hacker that vultures do not herd, Hacker confuses these two words thinking that Bernard cannot hear what Hacker says.

- (30’) „A teď když došlo k tomuhle, útočí na mě jako stádo supů.“
„Promiňte, pane premiére,“ ozval se Bernard, „ale supi se nesdružují ve stádo. Sdružují se v hejno. A neútočí, supové...“

The punning is omitted in this case due to different typology of the two languages. Here, Czech language fails to provide any equivalent as it is practically impossible to find a homophone in Czech which would preserve the pun.

The day after the grant for National Theatre was voted down, Hacker is to attend the British Theatre Awards. Together with his advisors he is worried about a cool reception from the audience.

- (31) “What about when I make my speech?” I [Hacker] asked hopelessly. “The audience will be totally hostile. There may even be **boos**.”
- There’s always lots of **boos**,” said Malcolm. I was appalled. Was he serious? “But we don’t have to pay for it,” he continued reassuringly. I suddenly realised he meant **booze**, not boos.
- “Booo!” I hooted in explanation, and added a “Ssss” for good measure.

(The Patron Of The Arts, 435)

This example of horizontal pun is based once again on misunderstanding of two different words with an identical sound. Boos and booze [bu:z] are misinterpreted by Hacker who is worried about boos – an expression of disagreement. When Malcolm confirms that there is always lots of booze – alcohol, Hacker cannot believe his ears.

- (31’) „A co až budu mít já projev?“ zeptal jsem se deprimovaně. Publikum bude absolutně nepřátelské. Bude tam plno nepřátelských emocí.“
- Touhle dobou je vždycky plno nemocí,“ řekl Malcolm. „Ale nevím, proč by zrovna tam byly nepřátelštější než jinde.“
- „Emocí!“ opakoval jsem zlostně. Nepřátelských emocí. Můžou mě taky vypískat!“

It is the same case as in the previous example, finding homophonic equivalent is a difficult task. Unlike the example (30), the translator tried to play with the text and is more or less successful in maintaining the wordplay. The translator ignored the pun based on homophony and substituted it with the pun based on paronymy. The words *nemocí* and *emocí* sound similarly and are spelled almost identically.

5.6 Homography

No instances of puns based on homography were found.

5.7 Paronymy – Horizontal puns

Sir Humphrey cannot stand the presence of Mrs Wainwright and Hacker accuses him that he wants her out of the way. Humphrey reacts:

(32) “No, no. Splendid woman, Mrs **Wainwright. Upright, Downright, Forthright.**”

(The Key, 120)

In this horizontal pun, Humphrey uses three adjectives *upright*, *downright* and *forthright* to describe Mrs Wainwright’s qualities which have the same ending as Mrs Wainwright.

(32’) „Ne, to ne. Skvělá žena, paní Wainwrightová. Čestná, ctnostná, skvostná.“

The pun is lost as it is impossible to find a good translation in this case because the pun is based on a certain part of the lady’s surname. Klíma attempted to retain the pun based on rhyme but if the adjectives ended in –ová which would rhyme with Wainwrightová, the punning might be better maintained using this related rhetorical device.

(33) is a situation when Hacker needs to send several Christmas cards and is advised by Bernard to send one to Maurice, an EEC Agriculture Commissioner in Brussels, who has forced through the plan to standardize the Eurosausage.

(33) Bernard tactfully suggested that I [Hacker] should send Maurice a Christmas card, nonetheless. I toyed with the idea of wishing him an **offal** Christmas and a **wurst** New Year, but Bernard advised me against it.

(Party Games, 12)

The words *offal* [ˈɒf.əl] and *wurst* [wɜːst], (even though a German word, I believe it can be used for punning, especially when Hacker himself uses the word intentionally), have

a close phonemic resemblance with words *awful* ['ɔ:.fəl] and *worst* [wɜ:st]. This paronymic pun also serves as an example of a vertical pun when one of the pun's components is absent from the text and needs to be triggered by the previously mentioned *sausage*. The Czech translation follows:

(33') Bernard mi diplomaticky poradil, abych nicméně Mauriceovi vánoční pozdrav poslal. Pohrával jsem si s myšlenkou, že bych mu popřál v novém roce hodně rekonstituované svaloviny na kostře, ale Bernard mi to rozmluvil.

In this example, the translator decided to ignore the pun which is based on two languages.

5.8 Paronymy – vertical puns

Example (34) is also considered to be a paronymic pun. A senior member of the Church of England is sent to Qumran on a mercy mission to plead for a nurse who is held in Qumran for the alleged possession of a bottle of whisky. When Hacker questions the purpose of such travel, Bernard remarks:

(34) “Although he’s a Christian he’s an expert on Islam. It’s a **faith to faith** meeting.”

(The Bishop’s Gambit, 223)

This vertical pun plays with the close sound resemblance of the words *faith* [feɪθ] and *face* [feɪs]. The punning here is realized when the collocation *face to face* is changed into *faith to faith*, playing on a religious theme.

(34') „Je to sice křesťan, ale je expert na islám.“

It seems that translating puns based on paronymy is quite a difficult task as Jan Klíma omitted the part containing the pun in his translation once again.

When deciding what to say in a speech that would give Hacker more popularity, Humphrey comes up with an idea to announce a cut in interest rates, saying that a cut in interests would give him a considerable success. Dorothy Wainwright is thinking ahead:

(35) “Won’t a cut in interest rates mean that prices will go up?”

She’s right, of course, but frankly at that moment I just didn’t care, so long as I got a **standing inflation**.

(A Conflict Of Interest, 381)

Again, not very similar but still at least some resemblance of the words *inflation* [ɪnˈfleɪ.ʃən] and *ovation* [əʊˈveɪ.ʃən]. The pun is realized when the collocation *standing ovation* is changed into *standing inflation* – a term used for continuous increase in prices. It is a case of a vertical pun.

(35’) „Nezpůsobí snížení úrokových sazeb zdražování?“ To má samozřejmě pravdu, ale mám-li být upřímný, to mi v té chvíli bylo jedno, na srdci mi leželo jen jedno: inflace! (Podle našeho názoru chtěl říct Hacker „ovace“, ale.....)

It is quite surprising that the Czech translation does not preserve the pun, which in my opinion, is not impossible in this case as the translator might easily use even the same type of wordplay based on paronymy. It is quite common to use *ovace ve stoje* where *ovace* could be replaced by *inflace*. *Inflace ve stoje* or using sentence like *pokud se mi dostane mohutných/bouřlivých inflací* would have the same humorous effect as its English counterpart – *standing inflation*.

5.9 Polysemy – Horizontal puns

Puns based on polysemous words are words whose meanings are etymologically or psychologically related. The etymological relatedness was given priority as this criterion is more reliable and less subjective. Meanings of the polysemes below were consulted with *Online Etymology Dictionary*.

Etymological relatedness was found in the following examples:

- **Example 36** – The word withdrawal has several meanings and can be understood as – *an act of taking back* and as a synonym for *coitus interruptus*. Both meanings have a common entry in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* and are therefore etymologically related.
- **Example 37** – Even though the words *fidelity* and *hi-fi* have different entries in the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, I decided to include them in the group of polysemy due to their psychological relatedness. As high fidelity refers to *faithful* reproduction of sound and fidelity refers to *faithfulness*.
- **Example 38** – The word *swallow* has two meaning and both have a common entry in the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, i.e. *to ingest through the throat* and *to accept without question*.
- **Example 39** – The word *smokescreen* has only one meaning according to *Online Etymology Dictionary* and that is *a form camouflage*. The word is treated as polysemous as the meaning of the word can be understood literally as a mass of dense artificial smoke.
- **Example 40** – The word *bitch* has two meanings in the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, both have common entry. The two meanings are *female of the dog* and *the most offensive appellation that can be given to an English woman*.
- **Example 41** – The verb blackball is *to exclude from a club by adverse votes*, it also means to ostracize someone socially. The etymological relatedness was not found, however the psychological relatedness is present as both meanings are related to the act of exclusion.
- **Example 42** – The word *faceless* is yet another word not found in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* but I believe its psychological relatedness is obvious as both meanings, *being anonymous* or its literal meaning – *without face* have similar aspect of being without identity.
- **Example 43** – The compound *high-flyer* was not found in the *Online Etymology Dictionary*. It is classified as polysemy for the following reasons. First, *high-flyer* is someone ambitious with ability to succeed. Second, it's literal meaning, the one used in the example 38. The etymological relatedness was not found, however the psychological relatedness is obvious.

- **Example 44** – The word *ghettoblaster* was found in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* as a *large, portable stereo*. It is a compound of two lexical units such as *ghetto* referring to *crowded urban quarters of minorities (especially blacks in U.S. cities)* and *blast* referring to an *explosion* or *noisy party*. The etymological relatedness is questionable but I believe the psychological relatedness was justified in this case.

Hacker receives some confidential report about Eric, a serious candidate to become the next Prime Minister, from the Security officers. The report briefly explains that Eric is a sex maniac and a dirty old man. Hacker sees a chance how to get rid of one of his opponents. He tries to persuade Eric to withdraw.

(36) “I [Hacker] mean, I wouldn’t care to explain your private life to Her Majesty, would you?”

“I’ll **withdraw**,” he muttered.

About time too, I thought. If he practised **withdrawal** a little more often he wouldn’t be in this predicament now.

(Party Games, 47)

The punning here is realized by the verb *to withdraw* which means to retreat and the noun *withdrawal* which, in this case, refers to an intentionally interrupted sexual intercourse.

(36’) „Chci říct, nestojím o to, abych vysvětloval tvůj soukromý život Jejímu Veličenstvu, ty ano?“

„Dobře, budu se držet zpátky,“ zamumlal.

Nejvyšší čas, pomyslel jsem si. Kdyby se držel zpátky častěji, nebyl by dnes v takové bryndě.

The Czech translation does not preserve the pun. The humorous effect could be maintained using *stáhnout* which would be also polysemous in the meaning of (*stáhnout kandidaturu*) – to retreat and (*stáhnout kalhoty*) to pull down the pants.

Annie, slightly drunk, is talking to a very small and dapper musician who had been appointed Principal Guest Conductor and finds Mrs Hacker extremely attractive. The first pun with *high-fidelity* is horizontal and concerns polysemy The second pun is vertical and is realized by word *bang*.

(37) “I’m interested in **hi-fidelity** too,” she said. “My husband is a **high-fidelity** husband.”

“In a way,” she said conspiratorially, and giggled. “**High fidelity** but low frequency.”

The conductor, who clearly found Mrs Hacker extremely attractive, seemed unsure how to reply. “You mean, sort of **Bang and Olufsen**?”

“Well, **Olufsen** anyway,” said Mrs Hacker.”

(The Patron Of The Arts, 447)

In the example (37) two puns occur in a very short passage. Annie uses *high-fidelity* in two senses. She refers to a sound reproduction of a very good quality but only moments later she uses the word *fidelity* in its formal interpretation which means loyalty to a partner. *High fidelity but low frequency* simply means that her husband is a faithful husband but they do not have sex very often. The conductor’s reaction does not surprise Annie when he mentions the famous manufacturer of audio and video products as she reacts with *Olufsen anyway*. She intentionally omits the *Bang* part as it means sexual intercourse, to put it mildly.

(37’) „Mám totiž **hi-fi** manžela, je vysoce **věrný**.“

„Tak to vám gratuluju,“ řekl dirigent, který se proslavil tím, že se choval přesně opačně.

„Není k čemu,“ řekla Annie konspirativně a zahihňala se. Vysoká věrnost, ale nízká frekvence.“

Dirigent, kterému zjevně paní Hackerová připadala velice atraktivní, si nebyl jistý, jak má reagovat. „Vysoká frekvence není všechno. Záleží taky na **výkonu**.“

„To mi povídejte,“ řekla paní Hackerová.

The Czech translation is very successful in this case as the source-text pun is translated by a target-language pun. The equivalence is preserved when the translator maintained the humorous effect with *hi-fi*, using the words such as *věrnost* and *výkon*. *Věrnost* and *výkon* are both ambiguous here, referring either to sexual intercourse or to the sound system and its parameters.

5.10 Polysemy – Vertical puns

The EEC tries to force through the plan to standardise the Eurosausage and Hacker is worried that Britain will have to accept this term.

The following example uses the verb *to swallow* in its figurative meaning

- (38) Of course, they can't actually stop us eating the British sausage. But they can stop us calling it a sausage. It seems that it's got to be called the Emulsified High-Fat Offal Tube. And I was forced to **swallow** it. I mean, it is a perfectly accurate description of the thing, but not awfully appetising.

(Party Games, 11)

The following example uses the verb *to swallow* in its figurative meaning – to put up with, while the most common interpretation of the verb *to swallow* in connection with food would be the process of eating when food passes through the mouth and throat. The humorous effect is achieved when one realizes that Hacker is talking about food and he is forced to swallow it, but not to swallow the sausage but the description of the thing.

- (38') "A to jsem si musel nechat líbit!"

The translator completely ignored the pun. Literal translation would work as *spolknout*, apart from its literal meaning, it also means to put up with.

The Minister of State for Health discusses a complete ban on all cigarettes with Hacker who wants to cut taxes. Aware of the fact that smoking brings in four billion pounds a

year in revenue, Hacker plays a little trick on the Minister of State for Health. He will give him his support but knows that it is a battle he cannot win as four billion is probably too much to let go, so the Treasury will have to give him something in return – the income tax cut. Bernard is amazed by this plan and asks Hacker:

(39) “So you’re using cigarettes to create a sort of **smokescreen**?”

(**The Smokescreen, 193**)

Bernard uses the word *smokescreen* in its figurative meaning – an action or statement used to conceal plans, while it can also mean a mass of dense artificial smoke. He deliberately uses the word *cigarettes* to make it ambiguous.

(39’) „Takže chcete použít cigaret k vytvoření jakési kouřové clony?“

Smokescreen has two meanings in English, one is literal, the second is figurative. The Czech translation is yet again not successful as it ignores the figurative meaning, thus the pun is omitted.

The French Ambassador and Hacker discuss the arrival of the French President and his wife. Hacker then asks the French Ambassador to suggest to the President to bring a different gift. The French Ambassador then explains that it is the President’s wife who wants to bring the puppy. Hacker feels that if he says no, he will be insulting the first lady but decides to tell him that it may not be possible. The French Ambassador, a bit disquieted, says:

(40) “I [The French Ambassador] fear it would be interpreted as both a national and a personal insult. To the President and his wife.”

I’d had enough of this bullshit. I stood up too. “Excellency, please ask the President not to bring that **bitch** with him.”

(**A Diplomatic Incident, 340**)

The example (40) is obviously a slip of tongue and the intentionality of the pun here is questionable but I decided to leave it here as it was the author’s intention to make this

part ambiguous. Hacker is weary of all this conversation and reacts angrily, suggesting that the President does not bring that bitch with him. As soon as he pronounces the word bitch he knows exactly what he said. He meant the puppy as *bitch* can refer to a female dog but it can also refer to a malicious or unpleasant woman, in this case the President's wife.

- (40') „Obávám se, že by to bylo interpretováno jako národní urážka, a to nejen pana prezidenta, ale i jeho manželky.“
 Už jsem měl těch keců dost. Také jsem vstal a řekl: „Excelence, buďte tak laskavý a požádejte pana prezidenta, ať s sebou tu **čubku** nebere.“

This is one of the easier cases of punning where the formal equivalence is preserved. *Čubka* can be used the same way as the English word *bitch*, referring either to a female dog or as an unpleasant appellation for a woman.

The Burandan High Commissioner is concerned at the rumor that an investigation into Phillips Berenson bank will start soon. This shady bank lent a large amount of money to the President of Buranda and the Chairman of Buranda. The commissioner later accuses Hacker of racism and informs Hacker they would move to have Britain expelled from the Commonwealth. Hacker is furious:

- (41) “The President of Buranda is a crook! He doesn't belong to the Commonwealth Club, he should be **blackballed**.”
 “He is already, isn't he?” said a smiling Bernard.

(A Conflict Of Interest, 380)

Hacker uses the word *blackballed*, its first meaning – to vote against a member of a group, the second meaning – to ostracize someone socially. Hacker uses the expression in its first sense but Bernard, being slightly racist with his remark, uses the expression in its second sense.

- (41') „Buranský prezident je podvodník!“ vztekal jsem se. „Ten nemá v Commonwealthu co dělat. Měl by být pranýřován jako **černá ovce!**“
 „No **černý** už je, stačí ho pranýřovat jako ovci,“ zasmál se Bernard.

Here the translator maintained the punning. While using a bit different lexical units, Klíma was able to retain the racist remark in the target text. Černá ovce can be understood in its figurative meaning – to be a shame to one’s family for example, while Bernard uses the adjective black(černý) literally referring to the color of the skin.

BBC wants to interview Humphrey for a documentary on the structure of government. Hacker is worried that he will say something controversial. Humphrey assures Hacker that he has no inclination to become a celebrity.

- (42) I [Hacker] told him that my understanding of the Civil Service was that we were supposed to be **faceless**.
“They don’t show your face on radio.”

(The Tangled Web, 418)

The pun in the example (38) is based on the ambiguity of the word *faceless*. Hacker uses the adjective as for someone with no clear characteristics who wants to stay anonymous. Humphrey then reacts with the literal interpretation of the word *faceless* meaning without face.

- (42’) Řekl jsem mu, že podle mého názoru by státní správa v **pozadí** zůstat neměla.
„V rádiu nebude vidět, jestli jsme vpředu nebo v **pozadí**.“

The translation is successful when Klíma uses the word *pozadí* which is ambiguous, the first meaning is to stay aloof from something. The second meaning is to stay in the background. Such equivalence is possible as *pozadí* works in the similar way as *faceless*.

When further discussing Mike Stanford’s impressive career details, Hacker feels he has found a significant gap in his CV and asks Bernard:

- (43) “Has he ever been an ordinary vicar in a parish?”

Bernard was surprised by the question. “No Prime Minister. Clergymen who want to be bishops try to avoid pastoral work.”

“He’s a **high-flyer**,” remarked Humphrey.

“So was Icarus,” replied Bernard.

(The Bishop’s Gambit, 221)

The pun in this case is based on the term *high-flyer* which is used for someone with a lot of ability and ambition. This term is perfectly adequate for an ambitious Mike Stanford but Bernard plays with the word high-flyer in its literal meaning (someone who can fly high up the sky) and compares Mike to Icarus, the son of Daedalus, who flew too near the sun and his wings melted. As an analogy to Icarus, Mike put himself out of the running because of his ambition.

- (43’) To ne, pane premiére. Kněží, kteří se chtějí stát biskupy, se snaží vyhnout pastorační práci.“

„**Mířil vysoko**,“ poznamenal Humphrey.“

„To Ikaros taky,“ dodal záhadně Bernard.

The Czech translation is successful, an ambiguous phrase *mířit vysoko* is for someone who is ambitious and the analogy to Icarus works the same as in English.

Sir Humphrey asks Prime Minister to obtain a cassette player so that he could listen to his first radio interview. When Hacker informs Humphrey that he finally managed to borrow one from one of the Garden Room Girls, Humphrey is not sure if he knows what it actually is. Bernard recalls:

- (44) Sir Humphrey hadn’t heard the word **ghettoblaster**, and enquired if it was used in the demolition industry. How true – the demolition of hearing.

(The Tangled Web, 423)

Ghettoblaster is a compound of ghetto and blaster, with the latter referring to a large, portable stereo known for its loudness. Humphrey, not aware of this slang term for a cassette player, asks if it is something that is used in the demolition industry as *blaster* is a term for someone who is employed to blast with explosives. Bernard's last remark about the demolition of hearing only highlights the humorous effect of this pun.

- (44') Vypůjčil jsem si kazetový magnetofon od jednoho z děvčat ze suterénu.
Ke kazetě byl připojen nějaký lístek.

The pun is lost in translation as Czech language has no equivalent to the English word *ghettoblaster* which could be later confronted with the *blaster* (someone who is employed to blast with explosives).

5.11 Polysemy - Idioms

Puns can be based on idioms. To have a pun based on an idiom, its idiomatic reading needs to be violated. Another option is to have a literal meaning which would clash with the idiomatic reading of the given expression. Dividing puns into horizontal and vertical would be irrelevant as they are based on the idiom which is present in the text.

Hacker and Humphrey have a meeting about a study paper that Humphrey sent Hacker on the subject of reintroducing conscription. When Hacker informs Humphrey that he will no longer accept any delaying tactics and that the conscription is going to be reintroduced during his time as Prime Minister, Humphrey replies:

- (45) "I'm not sure it would be **fruitful**. The time may not be **ripe**. It could turn out to be a **banana skin**."

(The Smokescreen, 190)

This pun is based on the usage of the words *fruitful* (producing good results) and *ripe* (ready to be collected or as in this example used in the idiom *the time is ripe* – suitable time for certain activity) which can be easily associated with fruit. Both these expressions, however, are not used in the connection with fruit. The same applies to the

idiomatic expression *banana skin* which in this case is not used in its literal meaning, but rather as something unforeseen that might result in faux-pas or can be considered as an obstacle.

- (45') „Pochybuj, že by to přineslo ovoce. Ještě nenazrál čas. Mohlo by se to obrátit proti vám.

The pun is ignored by the translator. The first two sentences are equivalent to the source text but the *banana skin* is translated indirectly because it is an idiom, and it results in the loss of punning effect.

The Home Secretary is charged with drunken driving. It transpires that the Home Secretary had an accident in which he smashed his car into a car which was being driven by the editor of the local newspaper. Hacker asks Humphrey:

- (46) “What will happen to him?”
“I [Humphrey] gather,” he replied disdainfully, “that he was as **drunk as a lord** – so after a discreet interval they’ll probably make him **one**.”

(Party Games, 24)

This pun is based on an idiomatic expression *drunk as a lord*, meaning very drunk. Humphrey then uses one of its constituents – *lord*, the title denoting a peer of the realm, referring to the fact that the Home Secretary will most probably have to retire and will receive this title from the Queen.

- (46') „Co s ním bude?“ podíval jsem se na Humphreyho.
„Až se na to zapomene,“ řekl Humphrey opovržlivě, „nejspíš z něho udělají lorda.“

The Czech translation ignores the pun completely even though Czech language offers various possible equivalents (*opilý jak zákon káže, navalený jako děkan* etc.) Obviously it would have to clash associatively with *lord* or some other lexical unit to trigger the punning effect.

Hacker needs some public success to improve the chances of becoming the new Prime Minister. His problem with the Eurosausage remained.

- (47) I was stuck with the awful Eurosausage hot potato, and somehow I've got **to pull something rather good out of the hat**. Or out of the delicatessen.

(Party Games, 47)

The punning in the example (47) uses the idiomatic expression *to pull something out of the hat/bag* which means to do something quickly which may solve a problem. Once again, Hacker uses the idiom and substitutes one of its constituents with his own word – *delicatessen* – which would result in *to pull something out of the delicatessen*. The altered idiom loses its idiomaticity but the punning here is triggered by the word *delicatessen* which can be associated with sausages.

- (47') Jenže problém byl, že jsem ještě pořád měl na krku ten příšerný europárek. Musím přijít na to, jak z toho nějak úspěšně vybruslit.

Klíma decided to omit the punning in the target text. The humorous effect is lost as well.

The French President wants to present Her Majesty with a labrador puppy and Hacker has to come up with a solution in order to avoid a diplomatic incident. The puppy would have to stay in a quarantine for six months and the French would refuse to understand it officially. Hacker sends for the Foreign Affairs Secretary, expecting some positive suggestions. Hacker is informed by the Foreign Affairs Secretary that the Home Office is responsible for quarantine and that he does not know how to deal with this situation. Hacker's thought:

- (48) I think he was **passing the buck**. Or the puppy.

(A Diplomatic Incident, 336)

The idiom *to pass the buck* means to give the responsibility to someone else. As in the previous example, Hacker substitutes the constituent *buck* with the word *puppy* (both representatives of the animal kingdom) and violates the fixed phrase as *to pass the puppy* loses its idiomaticity.

(48') Jenom se to snažil přehrát na někoho jiného.

Again, as in the previous example, the Czech translation ignores the second part which further exploits the idiomatic expression. Czech might provide idiomatic expressions like *ani ryba ani rak* complemented with *ani štěně* which might eventually clash with *pes* or *štěně*. The contextual environment might have to be adjusted a little bit but it seems that possible equivalents are at hand in Czech as well and the loss of the wordplay is unnecessary in this case.

Hacker informs the French Embassy that the puppy will have to remain in a quarantine for six months but the French are determined to bring it anyway. Humphrey bursts into the room with urgent news. The French President is coming by car so that he can bring the puppy in the car. Humphrey then question Hacker if he is ready to give instructions for the President's car to be stopped and searched. Humphrey starts the conversation.

(49) "Are you prepared to violate their diplomatic immunity and search the **diplomatic bag**?"

I [Hacker] was confused. "You can't put a puppy in a bag."

"It would be a **doggy bag**," said Bernard.

"That would really **set the cat among the pigeons**."

"**And let the dog out of the bag**,"

(A Diplomatic Incident, 348)

This short excerpt of the text contains two puns. First, *diplomatic bag* is "a container or bag in which official mail is sent, free from customs inspection, to and from an embassy or consulate" (The Free Dictionary, 2013: diplomatic bag). Hacker, confused, says that they cannot put a puppy in a bag. That is a chance for Bernard's witty remark saying that it would be a *doggy bag*. The humorousness of this pun lies in its realization as

doggy bag can be understood in its literal meaning as a bag for a dog or its figurative meaning which refers to a small bag that restaurants provide for any leftover food. This pun could be included in the part which analyses polysemy but I decided to include it under idioms because of the second pun which is based on idioms and very much depends on the part with the *doggy bag*. Second pun employs an idiomatic expression *set the cat among the pigeons* which means to do or say something that causes trouble. Another idiomatic expression which immediately follows is altered by Bernard. *Let the cat out of the bag* which means to reveal a secret is altered by Bernard when he substitutes the *cat* with the word *dog* so that it fits into context with the dog that is to be brought over from France.

- (49') Nemůžete přece nacpat psa do kufru," namítl jsem. „Spíš ho bude mít někde pod dekou.“
 „Pod psí dečkou," řekl Bernard.
 „Řekněme, že bychom to auto skutečně prohledali a toho psa našli,"
 uvažoval jsem o všech eventualitách. „To bychom si ale hráli s ohněm.“
 „A oni by si pak hráli s námi – jako pes s myší," přisadil si Bernard.

In this excerpt, the translation of pun is achieved at least for the second part concerning the last two sentences. The translator preserved the pun when replacing the component *kočka* with *pes* in the expression *hrát si jako kočka s myší*. First instance of wordplay involving diplomatic and doggy bag is difficult to translate as Czech does not have a concept of doggy bag which might be translated as *psí box/krabička* thus the translator would have to find other means in order to preserve the pun.

Monsieur le Président wants a private word with Hacker concerning the puppy they brought from France. Hacker is adamant that it is not a misunderstanding and informs the President:

- (50) “I [Hacker] cannot ask the Queen to **break the law**.”
 He smiled. “I do not want the Queen to break the law, I merely ask the Prime Minister **to bend it**.”

(A Diplomatic Incident, 350)

Hacker uses the phrase *to break the law* which means to violate or obey a law, to act contrary to a law. The President counters when he says he merely asks the Prime Minister *to bend it* which means to overlook the rule in a way that is not harmful. The pun plays on a semantic similarity of the verbs *to bend* and *to break* meaning that if something is bent too much, it will eventually break.

(50') „Nemohu požádat královnu, aby přestoupila zákon.“

Usmál se. „Nežádám paní královnu, aby přestoupila zákon. Žádám pouze pana premiéra, aby přimhouřil oko.“

The translation is correct but it does not retain its punning effect as *přestoupit zákon* and *přimhouřit oko* are too far from each other semantically.

Hacker is to attend the British Theatre Awards and together with his advisers they try to come up with any idea how to avoid this ceremony. Hacker realizes that he has no other option, he says:

(51) “I’ll have to go,” I decided. “I’ll **keep stiff upper lip. Grin and bear it.**”

Bernard said, “You can’t actually grin with stiff upper lip because...”

And he demonstrated.

“You see, stiff lips won’t stretch horizontally...”

(**The Patron Of The Arts, 437**)

The idioms *to keep a stiff upper lip* which means to hide someone’s feeling when being upset and *to grin and bear it* which means to accept something bad without complaining are interpreted literally by Bernard. *To grin* means to smile which cannot be done without stretching your stiff not moving lips horizontally.

(51') „Zachovám kamennou tvář a budu se na ně usmívat.“

Bernard namítl: „Omlouvám se, pane premiére, ale nemůžete zachovat kamennou tvář a přitom se usmívat, protože,“ předváděl, „když se usmějete, tak se vám tvář...“

The Czech translation is successful as Czech language has similar idiomatic expression at its disposal. Both idioms are interpreted literally by Bernard, thus the pun is preserved in the translation as well.

Humphrey, Bernard and Hacker are in discussion about the educational system in Britain. Humphrey objects that the educational system is in a bad condition and that it will not improve unless the responsibility for education is taken away from local councils and put under the Department of Education and Science. Hacker likes the idea:

(52) “Humphrey,” I [Hacker] said, “do you think I could? Actually **grasp the nettle** and **take the bull by the horns**?”

Bernard spoke for the first time. “Prime Minister, you can’t **take the bull by the horns** if you’re **grasping the nettle**.”

“I mean, if you grasped the nettle with one hand, you could take the bull by one horn with the other hand, but not by both horns because your hand wouldn’t be big enough, and if you took a bull by only one horn it would be rather dangerous because...”

(The National Education Service, 469)

Two idiomatic expression used by Hacker are once again interpreted literally by Bernard. *Grasp the nettle* means to deal with something what is unpleasant. *Grab the bull by the horns* basically means the same, to confront a problem. Bernard’s analysis of what can be grabbed at a same time or not is a word-for-word interpretation of the idioms mentioned by Hacker.

(52’) „Humphrey,“ řekl jsem, „myslíte, že bych mohl... vzít kormidlo pevně do rukou a chytit býka za rohy?“

Bernard poprvé zasáhl do hovoru. „Pane premiére, když budete svírat pevně kormidlo, nemůžete chytit býka za roh.“

„Chci říct, i kdybyste kormidloval jenom jednou rukou a měl druhou volnou, nevešly by se do ní oba dva rohy, takže byste mohl chytit býka pouze za jeden roh, což by ale bylo dosti nebezpečné, protože...“

Again, the pun is preserved as the punning is based on an idiom and its literal interpretation.

5.12 Morphology

Hacker is surprised when the Director-General of MI5 tells him that the meeting should be off the record.

(53) I [Hacker] was **agog**. And my **agogness** was soon to be rewarded.

(One Of Us, 238)

This pun is based on the adjective *agog* from which Hacker forms a noun *agogness* by adding a suffix *-ness*. This enrichment of vocabulary where affixes change the part of speech is known as **derivation**. (Veselovská 2009, 19) *Agog* means excited and *agogness* should probably refer to excitement.

(53') Byl jsem napjatý, o co jde. A moje zvědavost, jak se vzápětí ukázalo, byla zcela na místě.

The pun is lost in the translation as the translator ignores the pun based on derivation. The ungrammatical construction of the noun *agogness* is highly unpredictable. The unusual form of the word *agogness* – as the main element of the humorousness and of the wordplay – is disregarded in the Czech translation, although the expression is being highlighted by the repetition of the verb. Possible equivalent might be using the expression *být jako na trní* from which the new word *trnovost* might be derived to serve the purpose of wordplay.

Hacker wants to be known as a Great Reformer. He is playing with an idea to return power to the ordinary people. He already feels that such reform will grant him a place in the history books. He says:

(54) “The strength of Britain does not lie in offices and institutions. It lies in the stout hearts and strong wills of the **yeomen**...”

She [Dorothy] interrupted. “Women have the vote too.”

“And **yeowomen**...” That didn’t sound right. “**Yeopeople, yeopersons**...”

(Power To The People, 392)

Hacker uses the word *yeoman* a term used for free man who cultivated his own land. Dorothy objects that the term *yeomen* is too gender-specific. Hacker then tries to be gender correct when he pronounces *yeowomen*, *yeopeople* and *yeopersons*. Another mean of vocabulary enrichment employed in this punning is called neologism. Neologisms are defined as “newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense.” (Newmark 1988, 140) Newmark points out the types of neologisms: old words with new senses, new coinages, derived words, abbreviations, collocations, eponyms, phrasal words transferred words or acronyms.

(54’) „Síla Británie nespočívá v úřadech a institucích. Spočívá v odvážných srdcích a silné vůli svobodných mužů...”

„Ženy mají také volební právo,“ přerušila mě.

„A žen...” To už tak neznělo. „Svobodného obyvatelstva. Svobodomyslných občanů...”

The pun is not preserved, *yeomen* has no equivalent in Czech. The noun *man* is not ambiguous in Czech therefore it is difficult to find a suitable solution which would lead any equivalence.

When discussing the employment of actors with Nick Everitt, the Arts Minister, Hacker feels that some of them will have to find another job, outside the theatre. Nick disagrees with such claim saying that they are unemployable outside the theatre. Annie points out that half the mini-cab drivers are out-of-work actors. Nick explains:

(55) “It’s more glamorous than describing yourself as a ‘**Moonlighting** nightwatchman’.”

Bernard raised a forefinger and looked in my direction. Apparently he felt he had a useful contribution to make to the discussion.

“Er, nightwatchmen can’t moonlight. It’s a moonlight job to start with. If they drove minicabs they’d be **sunlighting**.”

(**The Patron Of The Arts, 443**)

The pun is based on the words *moonlighting* and *sunlighting*. *Moonlighting* means to have an extra job (usually working at night in addition to one’s full-time job). When Bernard says that nightwatchmen cannot moonlight, he actually points out to the fact that nightwatchmen already work during the night so it cannot be considered as *moonlighting* (extra job, working at night). If they drove minicabs, they would be *sunlighting*, meaning that they would drive by daylight. I believe that this is also an example of neologism as *sunlighting* is cannot be found in dictionaries, it is Bernard’s ability to play with word that gives *sunlighting* a certain meaning.

(55’) „Většina řidičů těch taxíků jenom tvrdí, že jsou herci. Dělá to lepší dojem, než kdyby řekli, že jsou to noční hlídači, co jezdí načerno.“

The translation of this pun is omitted. *Načerno* may refer to something illegal (extra job) but it can hardly refer to working during the night (potmě) and the analogy with sunlighting as working during the day is missing completely.

The press is waiting for Hacker’s statement following the leak which should discredit Hacker for attempting to suppress memoirs of his predecessor. One specific part of the memoirs says that Hacker once supported the proposal to expand a nuclear plant. Humphrey offers up a press release. Phrases like ‘Communication breakdown....misunderstanding.....acted in good faith....’ Hacker reacts angrily:

(56) “It’s a **whitewash**,” I [Hacker] complained. “And not even a very effective whitewash.”

“More of a **greywash**, really,” agreed Bernard.

(**Official Secrets, 326**)

Hacker, obviously not happy that such information leaked to the press, uses the word *whitewash* which in this case means concealment of flaws but it can also refer to a white liquid used for painting the rooms. Bernard then intentionally substitutes the white color for grey when he remarks that it is more of a *greywash*, probably implying that the offered press releases are only bad excuses which will not work.

(56') „Je to jenom takový pokus zahrát to do autu,“ stěžoval jsem si. „A ještě ke všemu nijak přesvědčivý.“

A mohl by skončit vlastní brankou,“ souhlasil Bernard.

Even though the translator ignores the morphological aspect of the pun, he managed to achieve the equivalence using other means how to exploit the pun.

5.13 Syntax

No instances of puns based on syntactic structure were found in *Yes, Prime Mnister*.

DISCUSSION

It is important to mention some general findings that can be deduced from the analysis. Typology of wordplay as outlined by Delabastita (1996) proved to be sufficient enough to cover all instances of wordplay found in the corpus which was created for the purpose of this thesis. All thirty-six instances of wordplay were analyzed without any considerable difficulties. Only categorization of wordplay based either on homonymy or polysemy may seem a bit problematic. Therefore, a criterion created for the purpose of differentiating between polysemy and homonymy was needed which proved to be effective as the selection of puns based on polysemy was justified. It can be said that the analysis itself was carried out successfully.

In each of thirty-six instances of wordplay, the confrontation of two linguistic structures as outlined by Delabastita (1996) or two senses in a wordplay as outlined by Attardo (1994) or the script opposition as outlined by Raskin (1985) was found and provided. Concerning horizontal and vertical puns, it is important to mention that horizontal wordplay is easier to locate as the two linguistic structures occur one after another in the text. "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). Vertical puns, on the other hand, proved difficult to disambiguate because context in this case does not disambiguate.

Last but not least results of the analysis concerning translation strategies used by Jan Klíma needs to be mentioned as well. Of thirty-six instances of wordplay, 61 percent of puns, what accounts for 22 samples, were translated by omission. Similarity or sameness of form (cases of homonymy, paronymy, homophony) proved difficult to deal with for the translator. On the contrary puns based on polysemy and puns involving idioms seem less problematic, surprisingly a few instances of wordplay based on polysemy and idioms were ignored in translation even though possible equivalents were at hand in Czech.

CONCLUSION

Wordplay aims at the audience with the intention to amuse. However, the mere recognition of wordplay might present a very difficult task as it requires a lot of effort from the reader/speaker to spot the ambiguity. It is a matter of experience, knowledge of the given language and imagination to understand what message the author of a pun wanted to convey. It usually happens that context does not disambiguate (especially in vertical puns). When looking for instances of wordplay in the text, the aspect of incongruity proved to be a helpful tool. Such unexpectedness in texts usually indicated an instance of wordplay.

The purpose of this study was to find and analyze instances of wordplay in *Yes, Prime Minister*. Their Czech counterparts were then provided to investigate what translation strategies Jan Klíma used in translation. For the purpose of this thesis a corpus consisting of thirty-six samples of wordplay was created.

The analysis consisted of two phases. First, the instances of wordplay were classified based on Delabastita's typology of wordplay and the confrontation of two linguistic structures was provided. All puns were divided into eight groups according to the language structures in which they appear. Each of the eight groups (homonymy, homography, homophony, paronymy, polysemy, idioms, morphology and syntax) was described in the theoretical part and the respective samples were analyzed in the analytical part. The analysis revealed that the majority of puns found in the corpus is based on homonymy – 9 instances of wordplay, polysemy – 9 instances of wordplay and puns involving idioms – 8 instances of wordplay. Combined they account for twenty-six instances of wordplay which is slightly more than 70 percent. The remaining number of wordplay accounts for 4 instances of wordplay based on paronymy, 2 instances of wordplay based on homophony and 4 instances of wordplay based on morphology. No instances of wordplay based on homography were found in the source text. This is probably due to fact that puns based on homography work rather visually and require some visual context. This typology of wordplay is probably more frequent in advertising rather than verbal (written) form. Also, no instances of syntactic wordplay were recognized in the text.

CONCLUSION

Second phase of the analysis is based on Delabastita's translation methods. The instances of wordplay were compared to its Czech counterparts to see what translation strategies were used by Jan Klíma. It was assumed at the very beginning that the translator will try to preserve wordplay and its humorousness. In fact, twenty-two instances of wordplay (slightly more than 60 percent) were translated by omission (Pun > Zero). Klíma was successful eleven times in rendering wordplay into the target-text (Pun > Pun). Other translation methods such as Pun > Related Rhetorical Device, Pun > Non-Pun and Editorial Techniques were used only three times. Delabastita's translation methods are extensive, yet not all of them seem to be usable enough. Methods such Non-Pun > Pun and Zero > Pun seem a bit controversial as it would require an extra effort from translators to introduce a pun in textual positions where the original text has no wordplay as a form of compensation or to add totally new textual material containing wordplay. Klíma either substituted the pun with an equivalent pun or omitted the translation of wordplay completely.

The linguistic analysis of wordplay also showed that cases of polysemy and puns involving idioms are easier to render into the target-text as possible equivalents are usually at hand in Czech, while cases of similarity and sameness (puns based on homonymy or paronymy) are difficult to deal with.

This thesis shows that puns are not untranslatable. The mere recognition of wordplay proves to be a difficult task and the translation of wordplay itself, trying to preserve the effect of the source text, can be very demanding. Considering the fact that only a minor part of examples was translated successfully, this thesis can serve as a starting point for further analysis in the area of translation or linguistic studies.

SHRNUTÍ

Diplomová práce se zabývá slovními hříčkami z *Yes, Prime Minister* a jejich lingvistickou analýzou. Práce sestává ze dvou částí – praktické a analytické. Praktická část se zabývá slovní hříčkou, kde je tento lingvistický jev pojmenován a definován. Druhá část se potom zabývá samotnou analýzou slovních hříček. Pro účely této práce byly analyzovány slovní hříčky z publikace *Yes, Prime Minister*. Cílem práce je najít a analyzovat slovní hříčky z dané publikace a jejich následné porovnání s oficiálním českým překladem z hlediska překladu a překladatelských metod použitých překladatelem.

Pro potřeby analytické části bylo nejdříve zapotřebí uvedení teoretických informací o slovních hříčkách. V teoretické části byl tento lingvistický jev pojmenován a definován. Zejména byla popsána typologie slovních hříček zasahující do různých jazykových rovin a jejich forma realizace (horizontální a vertikální). V neposlední řadě pak byly popsány nezbytné charakteristické rysy slovních hříček, jako jsou záměrnost a inkongruence. Dále se práce zabývala dvojznačností, na které je slovní hříčka založena, a také rozdílem mezi slovní hříčkou a dvojznačností jako takovou. Teoretickou část potom zakončuje kapitola o nepřeložitelnosti slovních hříček a různých kulturně jazykových problémech, se kterými musí překladatel nutně při překladu počítat.

Analytická část je dále rozdělena do dvou fází. V té první jsou slovní hříčky rozděleny podle typologie navržené Delabastitou zasahující do různých jazykových rovin (homonymie, homofonie, homografie, paronymie, polysémie, idiomatika, morfologie a syntax), kdy každá ze skupin je následně analyzována a vztahy mezi dvěma smysly daných hříček jsou identifikovány. Druhá část analytické části potom poskytuje oficiální český překlad a zkoumá metody, které byly při překladu slovních hříček použity.

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ANNOTATION

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Master's Thesis Topic in English	Wordplay in <i>Yes, Prime Minister</i>
Master's Thesis Topic in Czech	Slovní hříčky v <i>Yes, Prime Minister</i>
Abstract in English:	The aim of this thesis is to provide a brief view on wordplay as a phenomenon in languages. The theoretical part offers a categorization of wordplay and its characteristic features. The practical part attempts to apply the facts gained in the theoretical part on the examples from <i>Yes, Prime Minister</i> . These examples are then confronted with the Czech translation to see investigate the translation strategies used by the translator.
Key words in English:	wordplay, homonymy, polysemy, humor, idiom, ambiguity
Abstract in Czech:	Cílem této práce je podat stručný pohled na problematiku slovních hříček Teoretická část práce předkládá rozdělení slovních hříček a jejich povahových rysů. Praktická část práce je snahou o aplikaci daných poznatků z části teoretické na příkladech z <i>Yes, Prime Minister</i> . Tyto příklady jsou poté porovnány s oficiálním překladem za účelem zjištění, které překladatelské metody byly překladatelem použity.
Key words in Czech:	slovní hříčka, homonymie, polysémie, humor, idiom, víceznačnost,
Attachments included in the thesis:	1 CD
Scope	81 p.
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