

# Translation of slang in Croatian and Russian translations of Anthony Burgess's A Clockwork Orange

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**Translation of slang in Croatian and Russian translations of  
Anthony Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange***

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Zagreb, September 2019

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## **Biography**

I was born on 21 January 1995 in Varaždin. Having graduated from Prva gimnazija Varaždin in 2013, I enrolled in double major programmes English Language and Literature and Russian Language and Literature at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. In 2017, I earned my bachelor's degree and started master's degree programmes (translation specialization). In August 2017, I attended Ciklopea Summer School on translation and localisation processes, while in July 2018, I participated in the International Russian Language Summer School at the Pushkin State Russian Language Institute in Moscow. From October 2018 until March 2019, I participated at the European Green Activist Training aimed at familiarising young people with the European Union, green politics and sustainable development policies. From October 2017 until May 2018, I worked as an in-house translator at Projectus grupa. I currently work as a quality assurance and technical assistant at Ciklopea.

## **Abstract**

For the young protagonists of his 1962 novel *A Clockwork Orange* written in the English language, Anthony Burgess invented a timeless slang called Nadsat, which is mainly based on the Russian language, thus challenging the translators with the task of preserving the linguistic creativity and atemporality employed in the novel. This must also be complemented by the easiness with which the slang is apprehended due to its embeddedness in the context. These factors render the translation process into any language exigent and give translators a plethora of opportunities to showcase their creativity. Considering the different approaches that the translators into various languages used to translate and reinvent the invented slang, the aim of this paper is to test the importance of the context for the comprehension of different translations of Nadsat on the example of the sole Croatian translation and two Russian translations which use diametrically opposite approaches to the translation of the slang. That is, the objective is to see how well native speakers of Croatian and Russian comprehend the translation of the novel's invented slang in isolation and in context, as well as to some extent compare the level of their comprehensibility.

## **Аннотация**

Самый известный роман Энтони Бёрджесса «Заводной апельсин» (1962 г.), выделяется своим специфическим языком, который до сих пор вызывает интерес

исследователей, не только литературоведов, но и лингвистов. Язык романа, написанного на английском языке, отличается тем, что Бёрджесс в нем для персонажей-подростков, создал совсем новый молодежный сленг – *надсат*, основой для которого использовал именно русский язык, но не только русский, так как на него повлияли и между прочим сленг кокни, английский язык Шекспира и елизаветинцев и малайский язык. Тот факт, что сленг основан на русском языке сделал перевод на русский еще сложнее, но это не помешало ряду переводчиков постараться перевести сленг. Для данной работы выбраны два перевода 1991-ого года, демонстрирующих совсем разные подходы к переводу надсата. Речь идет о переводе Владимира Бошняка; основой его сленга является русский язык, но сленг написан латиницей и иногда добавляются английские суффиксы; и о переводе Евгения Синельщикова, чей сленг основан на английском языке и написан кириллицей. Данная работа занимается понятием сленга, созданного в этих двух переводах и в единственном хорватском переводе Марка Фанчовича (1999), в котором для основы надсата сохранен русский язык. Цель настоящей работы – определить, насколько хорошо носители русского и хорватского языков понимают переводы придуманных слов сначала в изоляции, а потом в контексте, т.е. с помощью короткого отрывка с самого начала романа, а целью также является сравнение степени понимания хорватского и русских переводов.

### **Key words**

*A Clockwork Orange*, translation, slang, Nadsat, invented language, context

### **Ключевые слова**

*Заводной апельсин*, перевод, сленг, надсат, вымышленный язык, контекст

## 1. Introduction

*A Clockwork Orange* (1962) is Anthony Burgess' best-known novel, which brought him fame only after the release of Kubrick's film of the same name in 1971. The novel follows the fate of fifteen-year-old Alex, and is concerned with "the conflict between the individual and the state, the punishment of young criminals, and the possibility or otherwise of redemption" (IABF 2019a). The moral questions that it raises certainly helped in keeping the novel relevant to this day. Nevertheless, the linguistic originality of the book should not be overlooked – on the contrary, it has been one of its most important and impactful aspects. The novel's language is precisely its most innovative part; for his protagonists (Alex and his group of friends), Burgess invented a special slang called Nadsat. The basis for the slang is the Russian language, which is visible from the slang's name *Nadsat*, which comes from the Russian suffix *-надуать* equivalent to the English *-teen* used in the formation of numbers<sup>1</sup>. In addition to Russian influence, the slang's vocabulary consisting of around 400 words is also derived from "Romany; Cockney rhyming slang; the language of the criminal underworld; the English of Shakespeare and the Elizabethans; armed forces slang; and the Malay language" (IABF 2019a). Considering the fact that Nadsat is based on the language unknown to most of the readers, one would not expect that studies (e.g. Saragi, Nation and Meister 1978) show that the slang is highly comprehensible and learnable. The focus of the present research is precisely on the comprehension of the translation of this invented slang by native speakers of two languages – Croatian and Russian. The challenge of preserving the slang is all the more difficult for the translators into Russian, as Nadsat is to a great extent based on that language. At the same time, this also gave them a lot of opportunities to show their creativity. The two translations used for the purposes of this research show two completely different ways of dealing with the invented slang. To simplify a bit, Boshniak transliterates the Russian slang words into the Latin script and sometimes English suffixes are added to Russian words, while Sinel'shchikov creates a whole new slang based on the English language. On the other hand, there is only one translation into Croatian, and the translator did not face the same challenges as the two Russian translators, ideas as he was able to keep Russian as the basis for the invented slang. Considering the different approaches used by the three translators, the aim of this paper is to test and compare the comprehensibility of Nadsat by the native speakers of Croatian and Russian in the

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that it is not possible to use the Russian suffix *-надуать* in the same manner as the English *-teen* to designate teenagers; however, in the novel teenagers are called precisely that "nadsats" (see Burgess 2000).

translations into their respective languages. First the comprehensibility of Nadsat words in isolation will be tested, and then in context. This will provide an insight into which of the two Russian translations is clearer to readers, as well as how the comprehensibility of the two Russian translations compares to the Croatian one.

## **2. Previous research and key concepts**

### **2.1. Anthony Burgess and *A Clockwork Orange***

Anthony Burgess (1917–1993) was an English novelist, poet, playwright, composer, linguist, translator and critic, who was immensely prolific, producing “thirty-three novels, twenty-five works of non-fiction, two volumes of autobiography, three symphonies, more than 250 other musical works, and thousands of essays, articles and reviews” (IABF 2019b). He is best known for his 1962 novel *A Clockwork Orange*, which explores whether it is feasible for the youth to take over the urban space and what are the consequences of it. The author gives young fifteen-year-old Alex free will to choose between good and evil and lets him choose evil, thus creating a clash of values “between the lawless hero and a society that hopes to control him” (Rabinovitz 1979: 43). Alex, together with his teenage gang, violently delights in his endowed free will – for example, during only one night, he beats an old man, fights a gang, steals a car and rapes a woman. However, he is eventually caught and sentenced to be “cured” through a state-sponsored psychological rehabilitation, but after his release, he is beaten by the police officers and attempts to kill himself which results in his regaining free will. Nevertheless, the novel ends on an optimistic note with Alex maturing and seeing violence as a part of his adolescence. However, the American edition of the book had the last chapter omitted, for the reasons which Burgess himself explains in an interview (Burgess and Dix 1972: 185): “when they were going to publish it in America, they said ‘we’re tougher over here’ and thought the ending too soft for their readers.” Yet it was on this version of the book that Stanley Kubrick based his 1971 film of the same title, which brought fame to the novel and the author (IABF 2019a). Both the book and the film have had a major impact on literature, music and visual culture and are subjects of many papers (IABF 2019a).

### **2.2. Nadsat**

Considering that *A Clockwork Orange* is notable for the constructed language used by its main protagonist Alex and his friends, the novel has been the subject of a plethora of studies in different fields – literary studies, translation studies and even studies of vocabulary



acquisition (Vincent and Clarke 2017: 248). However, despite the popularity of both the novel and its invented slang, Vincent and Clark (2017: 248) point out that these analyses often describe Nadsat without providing its definition and relying on an unauthorised Nadsat glossary<sup>2</sup>, which results in numerous inconsistent and inadequate definitions and research. The difficulties in defining Nadsat arise due to what Malamatidou (2017: 292) denotes as “peculiar characteristics” – its lexicon is to a large extent a hybrid between natural languages (English and, most notably, Russian) – which positions Nadsat somewhere between constructed and natural languages. In a similar vein, Vincent and Clark (2017: 260) highlight that Nadsat is not a full art language<sup>3</sup>, but rather “an artistically created anti-language, with a core lexis of mostly Russian derivation, augmented by a series of smaller linguistic effects”, such as reduplication, truncation and wordplay. The two authors define Nadsat as an anti-language, the term first used by Fowler (1979: 259), who defines it as a “special argot [...] of thieves, prison inmates and other sub-cultures which exist[s] in an antagonistic relationship with the norm society”. He (Fowler 1979: 263) goes on to explain that the term “anti-language” was coined by Hilliday “to refer to the special jargons or canting slang, or secret languages, spoken by the members of what he [Hilliday] calls ‘anti-societies’”; hence when talking about *A Clockwork Orange*, the anti-society in mind is Alex and his delinquent group of friends. Given that there is no agreement on the definition Nadsat – it is defined in terms of being an anti-language, which is defined as being an argot, which is in turn defined in terms of a jargon or a canting slang – for the purposes of this paper, Nadsat is considered to be a slang. It is characterised by what Dumas and Lighter (1978: 12) call the most crucial feature of slang – “it is used deliberately, in jest or in earnest, to flout a conventional social or semantic norm<sup>4</sup>”. Naturally, since Dumas and Lighter (1978) deal with natural language, it should be pointed out Nadsat is considered to be a constructed slang, invented by Anthony Burgess, who was a keen linguist and philologist<sup>5</sup>. As it has already been mentioned, the slang is “far from being a mere relexification of Russian into English, but it is rather a complex creation which functions to render itself comprehensible

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<sup>2</sup> Vincent and Clarke (2017: 248) point out that there are at least three different and conflicting glossaries (all of them are unauthorised) – Biswell, 2012; Hyman, 1963; Rawlinson, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Vincent and Clarke (2017: 260) explain that “these are languages produced for artistic purposes, for example the Elvish languages in the work of Tolkien or, more recently, the languages invented for the *Game of Thrones* series (Peterson 2015). Art languages are a sub-type of constructed languages, or conlangs (e.g. Esperanto).”

<sup>4</sup> For more details on the problems of defining what slang is and deciding which criteria are to be met for a word to be a slang word, see *Is Slang a Word for Linguists?* (Dumas, Lighter 1978).

<sup>5</sup> Vincent and Clarke (2017:248) note that Burgess was “a lifelong philologist, he produced linguistics textbooks such as *Language Made Plain* (1964) and *A Mouthful of Air* (1992), as well as other art languages such as ‘Ulam’, the reconstruction of proto-Indo-European created for Jean-Jacques Annaud’s (1981) film *Quest for Fire*.”

via a broad range of linguistic and stylistic strategies” (Vincent and Clarke 2017: 248-249). As far as the origin of Nadsat is concerned, in the novel itself (Burgess 2000: 86), Dr Branom, who is using Ludovico’s Technique to cure Alex of enjoying violence, describes it as “[o]dd bits of old rhyming slang, [...] [a] bit of gipsy talk, too. But most of the roots are Slav. Propaganda. Subliminal penetration”. McQueen (2012: 228) expands this explanation offered by the novel by adding that “[m]ost of the words are modified from Russian, although there are numerous German, Latin, Dutch, regional Slavic, Gypsy, French and Arabic word, Cockney rhyming slang and some invented words and expressions”. Burgess himself, in a 1972 interview with Carol Dix, explains whether his 1961 trip to Russia had an influence on the creation of Nadsat:

Ten years ago, I was writing it in England and trying to find the sort of dialect to use. It wasn't viable to use the existing dialect as it would soon be out of date. Then I went to Leningrad to gather material for *Honey for the Bears*, and I found they were having problems with teenagers too. So I combined the dialects. (Burgess and Dix 1972: 184)

Burgess’ combining of the dialects essentially means that Nadsat is a complex slang in which various linguistic influences meet and which consists of around 400 words. These can be divided into seven categories according to Vincent and Clarke (2017: 255): core Nadsat words (218 words, e.g. *bolshy*, *cal*), archaisms (36 words, e.g. *ashake*, *canst*), babytalk (10 words, e.g. *eggiweg*, *purplewurple*), rhyming slang (5 words, e.g. *luscious glory*, *pretty polly*), truncations (21 words, e.g. *guff*, *hypo*), compound words (46 words, e.g. *afterlunch*, *bruiseboy*) and creative morphology (20 words, e.g. *appetitish*, *crunk*).

### 2.2.1. *The importance of context when translating Nadsat*

Although there are numerous Nadsat words in the novel, Burgess claimed that “[i]t will take the reader no more than fifteen pages to master and revel in the expressive language of ‘nadsat’” (Vincent and Clarke 2017: 249). Burgess’ claim was tested in terms of vocabulary acquisition by Saragi, Nation and Meister (1978: 76), and it was found to be substantially sound; hence, the three authors conclude that “a considerable amount of repeated words can be learned incidentally through extensive reading, by meeting them in context without reference to a dictionary”. Such unconscious learning results in an interesting phenomenon, which is, according to Clarke (2017: 24), one of the key successes of Nadsat: “the reader of the text is ‘brainwashed’ into learning a small but notable Russified lexis, thus mirroring the brainwashing theme of the novella itself”. Other critics, such as Dix (1971), Mikhailovna (2012)

and Windle (1995) also stress the importance of context<sup>6</sup> for the learning of Nadsat. Dix (1971: 14) explains that the slang does not make the novel impossible to read, as it takes “only a few pages before context and meaning make the language perfectly comprehensible.” Burgess’ motivation for creating such a slang is explained by Mikhailovna (2012: 117), who points out that “Burgess wanted for readers themselves to decipher the meaning of the foreign words from the context,” which can be likened to his belief (Burgess and Dix 1981: 445) that “once you start writing clearly contained, well-thought-out, periodic sentences, you’re not being true to the subject matter. [...] In fiction there should be an element of doubt in the sentence”. Here, it is important to highlight that all of this is symptomatic of why Burgess opposed any type of Nadsat glossary (Vincent, Clarke 2017: 250). Furthermore, Windle (1995: 168) points out that in most cases, the context will “probably render the reference to the glossary unnecessary.”

### *2.2.2. Challenges in translating Nadsat*

Taking into account all of the aforementioned features of Nadsat, it is not surprising that Clarke (2017: 23) stresses that the invented slang “poses significant challenges to translators, who are tasked with attempting to recreate, either through close tracking of the original or else via creative invention [...] the connotational impact of Burgess’s invented slang”. In order to accurately represent the author’s intention, the novel’s translators are tasked with perhaps “the professional translator’s biggest problem” – neologisms, which Newmark (1988: 140) defines as “newly coined lexical units or existing lexical units that acquire a new sense”. Naturally, Nadsat challenges its translator with a quite demanding task, for is not only a set of neologisms that should be translated, but it is at the same time a slang, which means that the difficulty in translating it “lies not only in linguistic problems, but also in pragmatic and semiotic difficulties, since their presence in the text adds meaning far beyond the linguistic level” (Ramos Pinto 2009: 291). The complex task presented to translators of the novel, whatever the target language, therefore is to become “creators of a new linguistic system” – “linguistic innovators” as Burgess himself was when inventing the slang (Malamatidou 2017: 293). Precisely due to the importance of Nadsat for the novel, translators are confronted with “important questions of principle” – how to translate the slang (Windle 1995: 165). Ramos

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<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of this paper, context is defined according to Dash (2008: 22) as “an immediate linguistic environment (rarely detached or isolated) in which a particular word occurs.” She also points out that “[s]ince it is not always explicit, it may be hidden within the neighboring members of a word used in a piece of text” and goes on to explain that “[i]f we cannot extract the information relevant to the meaning of a word from its immediate linguistic environment, we need to take into account the topic of discussion as a sphere of necessary information” (Dash 2008: 22).

Pinto (2009: 265-96) notes that this leaves the translators with three strategies for the translation of Nadsat to choose from: first one being the “direct import of certain lexical features from the source text ST” (leaving some of the lexical items present in the target text TT untranslated), second strategy is the “introduction of lexical features from the ST, but following the spelling norms of the TT” (this means that “some source language lexical items are imported into the target text, albeit in a target language graphological form”), and the third strategy – the “development of a ‘virtual dialect’”, which she exemplifies by referring to *A Clockwork Orange*; she goes on to point out that the translator of the novel is forced “to follow the author’s example and also create a new dialect based on the target language, but full of lexical items or syntactic constructions that will be strange to the target text reader”. Notwithstanding the challenges that *A Clockwork Orange*’s complex languages poses to translators, the novel has been translated “more than 50 times into 32 different languages” (Clarke 2017: 23).

### 2.2.3. Two Russian translations of Nadsat

Although the novel was published in 1962, first Russian translations of *A Clockwork Orange* came into being only 30 years later (Pavlova 2017: 22)<sup>7</sup>. Pavlova (2017: 22) explains this by pointing out that not only is the novel’s plot scandalous and concerned with an atrocious teenage gang ruling the streets of London, but it is also quite challenging to translate it into the Russian language. The biggest challenge stems precisely from the Russian-based slang’s “translingual elements”, as Pavlova (2017: 23) calls them – which are exotic to most of the English-speaking readers and were chosen in order to create a word play and evoke certain similar-sounding English words. In addition, Clarke (2017: 23) emphasises that Burgess’ “stated aim in building the invented language of Nadsat around a lexis of Anglicised Russian loanwords was to generate, during the Cold War era, ‘a dialect which drew on the two chief political languages of the age.’” Taking all of this into account, it is clear that Russian is crucial for the novel, hence, when translating it into the Russian language, the language pair shifts from English into Russian to Russian into Russian, which makes it impossible for the cultural and language reality of the original be reproduced in the translation (Pavlova 2017: 21). Notwithstanding all of these challenges, many Russian translators ventured into translating the novel: Boshniak, Sinel’shchikov, Gazov-Grinzberg, Netesova, Rozenfel’d, Hrenov, etc. (Pavlova 2017: 24). Pavlova (2017: 23) explains that the translators into Russian choose

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<sup>7</sup> Quotations and paraphrases from all secondary sources in Russian (Pavlova (2017), Kalashnikova (2010), Mikhailovna (2012), Sinel’shchikov (1991)) are translated by the author of this paper.

between three different translation strategies (similar to the aforementioned ones described by Ramos Pinto (2009: 296)): the first strategy requires the change of places between the source and the target language, namely, English becomes the basis for Nadsat; in the second strategy, Russian is retained as Nadsat's basis, yet the slang is transliterated (that way, the words that are known to the reader are perceived as elements of another language); while the basis for Nadsat when employing the third strategy is any language which could be perceived as exotic by the Russian-speaking reader. For Burgess, the choice was simple; as Windle (1995: 165) notes, Burgess saw no difficulty in translating the novel into Russian – English words should replace his loaned Slavonic ones.

However, this method was rejected outright by one of the two translators whose translations of *A Clockwork Orange* are studied in this paper, namely, by Vladimir Boshniak (1991). He uses Pavlova's second strategy – his method “relies on a combination of modern youth slang and the liberal use of the Latin script for what are, in the main, familiar Russian words: malltshick [...], prestupnik, nozh” (Windle 1995: 165-66); nevertheless, in an interview (Kalashnikova 2010), Boshniak stresses that he did not aim to transliterate all the words correctly, but rather do completely the opposite: to create “quasi-Russian words written in the Latin script”, so he “ironically cyphered” the words, he mixed the roots with the suffixes, and even “provided the readers simple rebuses to solve”, in order to make the words sound as if they were pronounced by characters-foreigners, to whom Russian is completely unknown. Even though this strategy is in opposition with Burgess' idea on how the Russian translation of Nadsat should be conceived, Boshniak considers his decision legitimate; he elaborates that in his view, it is conceptually absurd to translate Nadsat with various anglophone words (such as *шумы* [shuzy] or *герла* [gerla]), for “the Russian slang was used by the author to express the idea that the evil is coming from the East, from the USSR, from Russia, which was considered the empire of evil[;]” therefore, Boshniak concludes that the usage of anglophone words changes the perspective and the idea of the novel (Kalashnikova 2010). However, critics point to a few problems in regard to his choice; on one hand, Mikhailovna (2012: 119) notes that although Boshniak's translation conforms to all the requests for equivalency and adequacy, Nadsat words written in the Latin script unfortunately get lost among other slang words, which leads to Nadsat being a quite easily understandable slang which is merely visually perceived as a new unknown slang. On the other hand, Windle (1995: 181) points out that “Boshniak's

translitterative method certainly obscures his meaning at times,” due to the estrangement<sup>8</sup> which is achieved by using the Latin script, the practice of truncating words and forming Russian-English compounds; however, he also emphasises that less effort is required of Boshniak’s reader to comprehend the slang than of the original’s. Indeed, the reading of Russian in the Latin script became almost ordinary with the advent of new technologies, thus making the comprehension of the slang much easier. This is elaborated by Boshniak himself:

Today it is difficult to imagine, but when I was translating *A Clockwork Orange* (that is, twenty years ago, in the late 1980s), there was no mobile phones, no mass usage of computers, and, as they say it in the factory, there was no such thing as writing of Russian letters in the Latin script. It became ordinary in the following ten years. And now this method in reality looks simple, even trivial [...]. (Kalashnikova 2010)

The other Russian translation of *A Clockwork Orange* studied in this paper is Sinel’shchikov’s (1991), based on the American edition of the novel, which lacks the last chapter (Windle 1995: 170). Sinel’shchikov’s translation strategy is completely opposite to Boshniak’s – Sinel’shchikov favours Burgess’ proposition: his Nadsat is based on “the extensive use of anglicisms to replace Burgess’s Russianisms” (Windle 1995: 166). Sinel’shchikov (1991) explains his decision in the preface to his translation by pointing out that his strategy was determined by the attempt to reproduce Burgess’ masterful representation of many processes that became part of contemporary society; hence, he “tried to recreate the ‘Nadsat’ language of Russian teenagers, which is a melange of the teenager slangs of the 60s–80s, in which words of English origin prevail”. However, this certainly does not mean that Sinel’shchikov’s Nadsat consists only of previously adopted borrowings Windle (1995: 168) gives an example of an English phrase “tired a bit”, which is adopted by Sinel’shchikov. *таэд э бум* [taed e bit]. It is also important to note that Sinel’shchikov provides a glossary of about 140 Nadsat words, however, it “is less than complete[,]” since it omits many words, which occur in the text (for example, *кар* [kar], *майнер* [tajper], *рум* [rum]) (Windle 1995: 167). Moreover, besides creating a dictionary, some critics emphasise other changes that Sinel’shchikov made while translating; for example, Mikhailovna (2012: 120) points out that Sinel’shchikov’s rendering of the novel is more imaginative than Burgess’, for in the translation, he actively uses profanity (*дурик* [durik], *папик* [papik], *ублюдок* [ublyudok]), which distorts the meaning of the source. Moreover, Windle (1995: 175-176) notes that

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<sup>8</sup>The notion of estrangement (Russ. *ostranenie*) was constructed by Viktor Skhlovsky, who defined it as “the removal of [the] object from the sphere of automatized perception [...] by a variety of means” (1991: 6).

Sinel'shchikov's translation is basically a free translation "notable for substantial additions," which often invert the meaning of the source and are at times witty, and in keeping with Burgess intentions, yet he warns that "[a]t the same time, some of the faintly blasphemous references in the original are seized upon and enthusiastically developed". The critic (1995: 176) goes on to add "[a]t some points the motivation for Sinel'shchikov's additions and changes is far from clear"<sup>9</sup>. It should also be highlighted that many critics (Pavlova 2017, Mikhaylova 2012, Windle 1995) point out that the choice of English as the basis for Nadsat perhaps does not reflect the impact and role of Russian in the original. However, it is worth remembering that, at the time when Sinel'shchikov was translating the novel, the presence of English in a Russian text was more striking than today, as was the transliteration of the Russian language in Boshniak's case.

#### 2.2.4. *The Croatian translation of Nadsat*

There is only one translation of *A Clockwork Orange* into the Croatian language, that by Marko Fančović (1999)<sup>10</sup>. Unlike the translators of the novel into Russian, Fančović can't have faced such big challenges since he could retain Russian as the basis for the slang. However, in the preface to his translation, he explains the problems he encountered when translating into Croatian the slang based on a mixture of Russian and English:

Unfortunately, in the translation, it was virtually impossible to transfer the brilliantly funny way in which the author used the mechanisms of the creation of the English slang to incorporate Russian words into English pronunciation. The best that could be done [...] was to [...] at least to retain the atmosphere of the adolescent affectation to use a foreign language in everyday communication. (Fančović<sup>11</sup> 1999: 6)

Moreover, although Fančović's (1999: 6) translation of Nadsat is based on the Russian language, which is unknown to the majority of Croatian-speaking readers, he does not provide the reader with the dictionary since he believes that "due to much greater cognateness of Russian and Croatian than that of Russian and English, we concluded that there is no real need for one in our [Croatian] edition." The cognateness that Fančović is talking about has to do with the fact that both Russian and Croatian are Slavic languages, Russian being an East Slavic language,

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<sup>9</sup> For the examples illustrating these points, see Windle (1995).

<sup>10</sup> It should be mentioned that the novel was translated into Serbian by Zoran Živković in 1973. Since Serbia and Croatia were both constituent republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, this translation was also read by Croatian audience.

<sup>11</sup> Quotations and paraphrases from Fančović (1999) are translated from Croatian by the author of this paper.

and Croatian South Slavic one. Both stem from Proto-Slavic – the parent language of all present-day Slavic languages, which has resulted in certain similarities between the two languages (Pereltsvaig 2012: 27). It should also be mentioned that there is no critical literature studying Fančović's translation of the novel.

### **3. Aims and hypotheses**

#### **3.1. Aims**

The aim of this paper is to test the comprehensibility of Croatian and Russian translations of the slang invented by Anthony Burgess in his novel *A Clockwork Orange*. More precisely, the aim is to test the native speaker's comprehension of the slang's translations first in isolation, and then by providing the readers with a context (the paragraphs in which the tested words appear). The comprehension of Nadsat in Russian translation is tested on two translations which offer completely different approaches to the translation of Nadsat, hence, another aim is to compare which one of the two is more easily comprehensible to the respondents. Unfortunately, such comparison could not be done with Croatian respondents for there is only one Croatian translation of the novel. However, the Croatian respondents' comprehension of Nadsat in translation into their language will be compared to the Russian respondents' comprehension, both in isolation and in context, to test the impact of the target language.

#### **3.2. Hypotheses**

In accordance with the aims of this research, the hypotheses can be divided in two big groups – the ones related to the comprehension of the invented slang's translations in isolation, the ones related to their comprehension in the context, the ones in which the comprehension of the words in isolation and in context is compared, and the ones in which the level of comprehension of various translations is compared (in isolation and in context). To facilitate reading, the hypotheses are grouped by their focus. Firstly, there are the hypotheses concentrate on the comparison of the comprehension of Nadsat words in isolation and in context.

H1: The meaning of Nadsat words is more easily comprehended in context than in isolation. It is expected that the overall difference in comprehensibility, for all three translations taken together, will be statistically significant.

The following subhypotheses state the more specific expectations regarding each of the translations, based on a pilot test:



- H1a: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in isolation and in context combined is significantly higher than the accuracy with which Croatian native speakers can determine their meaning in the Croatian translation.
- H1b: The accuracy with which Croatian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context is significantly higher than the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in isolation.
- H1c: In Boshniak's translation, there is no statistically significant difference between the accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context and the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in isolation.
- H1d: In Sinel'shchikov's translation, the accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context is significantly higher than the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in isolation.
- H1e: Croatian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in isolation with low accuracy, and in context with high accuracy.
- H1f: In Boshniak's translation, Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words both in isolation and in context with high accuracy.
- H1g: In Sinel'shchikov's translation, Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat both in isolation and in context with low accuracy.

It is important to note that for the purposes of this paper, the accuracy is considered to be high when it is equal to or over 60%. It is expected that the comprehension of Nadsat in isolation will be low in Fančović's Croatian translation since the pilot test showed that the comprehension is quite low, while their comprehension in context is much higher. However, this did not prove true for Sinel'shchikov's translation; the comprehension was low in isolation and in context. Boshniak's translation of Nadsat is expected to be readily comprehensible, as most of the slang is only written in the Latin script, with only few exceptions (still based on Russian but with English suffixes). It is expected that for Fančović's Croatian and Sinel'shchikov's Russian translation there will be no significant difference between the accuracy with which the word meaning is determined in isolation and in context because the slang is in both cases based on a foreign language (in the Croatian translation, it is based on the Russian language, while in Sinel'shchikov's translation on the English language). On the other hand, for Boshniak's translation no significant difference is expected, as the slang words are Russian words written in the Latin script.

In second set of hypotheses, the accuracy of the comprehension of the three translations is compared, first by comparing the comprehension of the Croatian translation to the two Russian ones, and then by individually comparing the translations.

H2: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in isolation is significantly higher than the accuracy with which Croatian native speakers can determine their meaning in the Croatian translation.

H2a: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in isolation in Boshniak's translation is significantly higher than the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in Sinel'shchikov's translation.

H2b: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in isolation in Boshniak's translation is significantly higher than the accuracy with which Croatian native speakers can determine their meaning in Croatian translation.

H2c: There is no significant difference between the accuracy with which Croatian and Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in isolation when comparing Sinel'shchikov's translation and the Croatian one.

H3: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context is significantly higher than the accuracy with which Croatian native speakers can determine their meaning in the Croatian translation.

H3a: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context in Boshniak's translation is significantly higher than the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in Sinel'shchikov's translation.

H3b: The accuracy with which Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context in Boshniak's translation is significantly higher than the accuracy with which Croatian native speakers can determine their meaning in Croatian translation.

H3c: There is no statistically significant difference between the accuracy with which Croatian and Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context when comparing Sinel'shchikov's translation and the Croatian one.

These hypotheses stem from the suppositions that the comprehension of Fančović's Croatian and Sinel'shchikov's Russian translations of slang will be similar since the two are based on foreign languages, hence being much more challenging to discern than Boshniak's translation

written in the Latin script. Moreover, it is presupposed that therefore when comparing the accuracy of the two Russian translations and the Croatian one, the Russian respondents will be more successful in discerning the meaning of Nadsat words in both cases.

## **4. Methodology**

### **4.1. Material**

Given that the goal of this research is to test and compare Russian and Croatian native speakers' comprehension of the translation of the slang invented in Antony Burgess' novel *A Clockwork Orange*, translations of the novel into the two languages were selected. There is only one translation of the novel into Croatian, while, as already mentioned, there are many translations into Russian. The two Russian translations – Boshniak's and Sinel'shchikov's – used for the purposes of this research were chosen for three reasons: firstly, on VK<sup>12</sup>, there is an online poll on which Russian translation of *A Clockwork Orange* is the best<sup>13</sup>; the users of the social network voted precisely Vladimir Boshniak's and Evgenii Sinel'shchikov's translations the best. Moreover, these two translations are used in two analyses of the translation of the novel's slang invented: in Kevin Windle's article *Two Russian Translations of "A Clockwork Orange", or the Homecoming of Nadsat* (1995), as well as in Pavlova Mariya Vladimirovna's *Artistic Bilingualism and the Problem of Untranslatability (By the Example of the Novel 'A Clockwork Orange' by Anthony Burgess)* (2017); and Boshniak's translation is used by Anna Ginter in her article on the translation of Nadsat into the Polish language – *Slang as the Third Language in the Process of Translation: A Clockwork Orange in Polish and Russian* (2003). Finally, as it has already been explained, these two translations show two divergent approaches to the translation of the invented slang in the novel.

### **4.2. Procedure**

The comprehension of Nadsat was tested using an online questionnaire survey, in which the participants had to write the meaning of the given words, first in isolation and then in context. The number of Nadsat words tested could not be too large because it could affect the respondents' willingness to fill in and/or finish the questionnaires. It was clear that the same words should be tested in both parts of the questionnaire, so as to have a clear picture of the

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<sup>12</sup> VK (short for *VKontakte*) is an online social media and social networking service primarily used by Russian speakers. It is the most popular social networking site in Russia. (Mynewsdesk)

<sup>13</sup> For more information on the poll, see (VK).

difference in the respondents' comprehension of the words without context and with context. The respondents were not allowed to return to the first part of the questionnaire and change their replies related to words in isolation after seeing the words in the context.

#### 4.2.1 Choosing Nadsat words

Another equally important question was which Nadsat words to test: whether to choose random Nadsat words from the novel's different chapters and ask the respondents to decide their meaning based on isolated sentences or whether to choose a particular paragraph and isolate Nadsat words from it. So as to simulate a real experience of reading *A Clockwork Orange's* translation, it was decided to test the comprehension of the invented slang by giving the respondents the first few paragraphs from the very beginning of the novel. The length of the paragraphs given for each translation depends on the number of Nadsat words – for the sake of not overburdening the respondents with too many words in the first part of the questionnaire and too much text to read in the second part, in each translation, the first twenty words belonging to the invented slang and corresponding paragraphs were chosen for the questionnaires.

After it had been decided that the first twenty words and corresponding paragraphs will be used in the questionnaires, beginning of each translation of *A Clockwork Orange* was once again read and first twenty words belonging to the invented slang were extracted from each translation and organised in a table. Having extracted the words, the paragraphs in which they appear were transcribed with the words to be used emphasised in bold and underlined. It is important to explain the process of choosing slang words for the questionnaire, as there were some decisions to be made. For instance, some words that do belong to Nadsat were left out from the questionnaires for different reasons. In Fančović's translation the name of the milk bar – *Korova* – is explained in parenthesis so this word was left out from the list of Nadsat words whose meaning is to be discerned, however, no intervention was made to the text. Moreover, in Fančović' and Boshniak's translations names of the drugs put into the milk to make a special drink served in the milk bar also belong to the invented slang (in the Croatian translation: *vellocet*, *synthemesc*, *drencron*, in the Boshniak's one: *велосет*, *дренкром*), however, considering that their names are taken directly from the source text (*vellocet*, *synthemesc*, *drencrom*) and they represent different kinds of Russian names for drugs (*vellocet* – amphetamines, *synthemesc* – synthetic mescaline, *drencrom* – adrenochrome) the respondents were not asked to discern the meaning of these words. It should also be mentioned that in the questionnaires with Fančović's and Sin'elshchikov's translations, a paragraph was

left out from each, although for different reasons. In Fančović's translation into Croatian there is a whole paragraph in which the clothes of the four characters are explained and the meaning of almost every single Nadsat word is glossed in parenthesis or in commas. Therefore, this whole paragraph was left out from the questionnaire for Croatian native speakers. Likewise, a paragraph was left out from Sin'elshchikov's Russian translation because no Nadsat words are used in it; the paragraph in question is the one in which the effect of the drink served in *Korova* milk bar is explained. It is essential to mention that the decision to leave out these paragraphs was carefully thought through – it was important not influence the respondents' ability to comprehend the meaning of the tested Nadsat words; the paragraphs which were left out did not change the meaning of the text as they provide more details to the narrative. Furthermore, this decision enabled the respondents to read the text in the second task (discerning the meaning of the words belonging to the invented slang in context) faster, consequently reducing the time necessary for the respondents to finish the questionnaire.

#### *4.2.2. Semantic analysis of Nadsat words*

As it has already been explained, the slang in each translation is created differently: Fančović's slang is based primarily on Russian, Boshniak's also on Russian but written in the Latin script, while Sin'elshchikov's slang is based on English and written in Cyrillic alphabet. In order to make the assessment of the respondents' answers easier and faster, the first twenty slang words from each translation were extracted into a table and then a semantic analysis was conducted (tables for each translation are represented in the corresponding section). Since this research paper is in English, the semantic analysis of the words was done in the English language. The semantic analysis of the extracted words belonging to the invented slang was done since neither the original text, nor the two translations (Fančović and Boshniak) offer any kind of dictionary of Nadsat words. However, Sin'elshchikov encloses a dictionary of Nadsat to his translation (but not all the words belonging to the invented slang appear in the dictionary); therefore, an additional column with the existing explanations of the words was created in the table. The semantic analyses themselves consisted of retracing possible origins of the translation of the slang (either explained by the translators or studied by other researchers of the translation of the invented slang), followed by discerning the meaning from the context and checking relevant dictionaries (both Russian and English); and, naturally, the analysis Sin'elshchikov's slang was conducted for the words that are not included in the dictionary, while the explanations of the included words were mostly just translated into the English

language. In order for the analyses to be more lucid, a table was created for each translation; each one having three columns: the first column for the twenty slang words, the second one for the semantic analysis of the word (or the existing explanation in Sin’elshchikov’s translation) – (possible) origin of the word discerned with the help of the dictionary (accompanied by all relevant forms that might have influenced the creation of the word), and the third column containing the English meaning of the Nadsat word (sometimes it is a combination of a few forms of the same word or even more words) and a short explanation on how the word came to be.

#### 4.2.2.1. Semantic analysis of Fančović’s Nadsat

As it has already been mentioned, Fančović’s slang is based on the Russian language, however, there he did not provide a glossary of Nadsat words. Therefore, the semantic analysis of Fančović’s Nadsat was conducted by analysing the context in which the slang words appear and using primarily Russian dictionaries to discern the meaning. The meaning of the twenty words studied for the purposes of this paper can be found in Table 1.

Table 1 – Semantic analysis of Fančović’s Nadsat

	<b>Fančović’ Nadsat</b>	<b>Origin [transcription]</b>	<b>English (semantic analysis)</b>
1	druzja	Russ. друг (sg.) друзья (pl.) [drug, druž’ia]	friend (from plural form of the Russian word meaning ‘friend’)
2	lupati razudoke	Cro. lupati + Russ. рассудок [rassudok]	to think (from the Croatian verb “to hit” + Russian word meaning ‘to think clearly’, ‘rationality’)
3	mjasto	Russ. место [mesto]	place (from the Russian word meaning ‘place’)
4	skorajšo	Russ. скоро (adj.), скорейший (sup. adj.) [skoro, skoreishii]	fast (from the superlative of the Russian adjective meaning ‘fast’)
5	veščica	Russ. вещица [veshchitsa]	thing (diminutive) (from the Russian diminutive of the word meaning ‘thing’)
6	moloko	Russ. молоко [moloko]	milk (from the Russian word meaning ‘milk’)
7	pjati	Russ. пить [pit’]	to drink (from the Russian verb meaning ‘to drink’)
8	vešča	Russ. вещь [veshch’]	thing (from the Russian word meaning ‘thing’)
9	horroršo	Russ. хоррор + хорошо [horror, horosho]	horror + good (from the English word “horror”, rarely used in Russian, + Russian word meaning ‘good’)

10	Gospodjin	Russ. Господин [gospodin]	God (from the Russian word meaning 'God')
11	mjazg	Russ. мозг [mozg]	brain (from the Russian word meaning 'brain')
12	đengi	Russ. деньги [den'gi]	money (from the Russian word meaning 'money')
13	krastanje	Russ. красть [krast']	stealing (noun derived from the Russian verb meaning 'to steal')
14	tolčokirati	Russ. толкнуть (v.), толчок (n.) [tolknut', tochok]	to hit (verb derived from the Russian verb meaning 'to hit' and the noun 'strike')
15	vjek	Russ. человек [chelovek]	man (contracted from the Russian word meaning 'man')
16	vidjati	Russ. видеть [videt']	to see (from the Russian word meaning 'to see')
17	starejši	Russ. старый (adj.), старейший (sup. adj.) [staryi, stareishii]	old (from the superlative of the Russian adjective meaning 'old')
18	djevočka	Russ. девочка [devochka]	girl (from the Russian word meaning 'girl')
19	maljčik	Russ. мальчик [mal'chik]	boy (from the Russian word meaning 'boy')
20	golova	Russ. голова [golova]	head (from the Russian word meaning 'head')

Russ. – Russian; Cro. – Croatian

sg. singular, pl. plural

n. – noun; v. – verb; adj. – adjective; sup. adj. – superlative adjective

#### 4.2.2.2. Semantic analysis of Boshniak's Nadsat

As it has already been mentioned, in Boshniak's translation of *A Clockwork Orange*, the slang is written in the Latin script thereby making it easily visible in the text. However, given that the slang is based on the Russian language as it is in the English original, the translator does not provide the reader of the translation with a dictionary of Nadsat words since there is not that many cases in which a new slang word is created by using, for example, the English inflection suffix *-ing*; most of the words are solely slang words written in the Latin script. Therefore, the semantic analysis for this invented slang consisted mostly of the transcription and the search for the meaning of the slang words.

Table 2 – Semantic analysis of Boshniak's Nadsat

	<b>Boshniak's Nadsat</b>	<b>Origin [transcription]</b>	<b>English (semantic analysis)</b>
1	drug	Russ. друг [drug]	friend (from the Russian word meaning 'friend')
2	glupyì	Russ. глупый [glupyì]	stupid (from the Russian word meaning 'stupid')

3	korova	Russ. корова [korova]	cow (from the Russian word meaning 'cow')
4	mozg	Russ. мозг [mozg]	brain (from the Russian word meaning 'brain')
5	zavedenije	Russ. заведение [zavedenie]	institution, establishment, place (from the Russian word meaning 'institution')
6	plevatt	Russ. плевать [plevat']	to not care about (from the Russian verb meaning 'to not care about'; secondary meaning; primary meaning: 'to spit')
7	shtutshka	Russ. штука, штучка [shtuka, shtuchka]	thing (diminutive) (from the Russian diminutive of the word meaning 'thing'; informal, spoken language)
8	pitt	Russ. пить [pit']	to drink (from the Russian word meaning 'to drink')
9	baldiozh	Russ. балдеть [baldet']	enjoyment (noun derived from the Russian slang word meaning 'to enjoy')
10	tortsh	Russ. торч [torch]	enjoyment, euphoria (from the Russian slang word meaning 'euphoria', 'enjoyment')
11	dratsing	Russ. драться [drat'sia] + Eng. <i>-ing</i>	fight (noun derived from the Russian verb meaning 'to fight' + English suffix <i>-ing</i> )
12	gasitt	Russ. гасить [gasit']	to hit (from the Russian slang word meaning 'to hit')
13	kodla	Russ. кодла [kodla]	gang (from the Russian slang word meaning 'gang')
14	babki	Russ. бабки [babki]	money (from the Russian slang word meaning 'money')
15	toltsbok	Russ. толчок [tolchok]	strike (from the Russian word meaning 'strike')
16	hanyga	Russ. ханыга [hanyga]	drunk (from the Russian slang word meaning 'drunk', 'alcoholic'; 'beggar')
17	obtriasi	Russ. обтрясти [obtriasi]	to rob (from the Russian slang word meaning 'to rob')
18	krasting	Russ. красть [krast'] + Eng. <i>-ing</i>	stealing (noun derived from the Russian verb meaning 'to steal' + English suffix <i>-ing</i> )
19	ptitsa	Russ. птица [ptica]	woman (from the Russian slang word meaning 'woman'; from context; primary meaning: 'bird')
20	rvatt kogti	Russ. рвать когти [rvat' kogti]	run for it; run for one's life (from the Russian slang phrase meaning 'run for it'; 'run for one's life')

Russ. – Russian; Eng. – English



#### 4.2.2.3. Semantic analysis of Sinel'shchikov's Nadsat

By comparison, Sinel'shchikov chooses a completely different path to translate *A Clockwork Orange's* invented slang. Since Sinel'shchikov provides a dictionary of Nadsat words, the analysis of this slang consisted of first checking the Nadsat dictionary, followed by the search for the English word which was used to make up the Nadsat word. However, not all of the Nadsat words used are present in the dictionary; among the twenty words tested for the purposes of this paper, just one (мани [mani]) was not glossed, so a semantic analysis was carried out.

Table 3 – Semantic analysis of Sinel'shchikov's Nadsat

	<b>Sinel'shchikov's Nadsat [transcription]</b>	<b>Nadsat dictionary [transcription] (additional explanation)</b>	<b>Origin – English (semantic analysis)</b>
1	френд [frend]	друг [drug]	friend
2	дринкинг [drinking]	призв. от «пить» [pit'] (Eng. from “to drink”)	to drink
3	токинг [toking]	призв. от «болтать» [boltat'] (Eng. from “to converse”, “to babble”)	to talk, to converse
4	тин-кинг [tin-king]	призв. от «думать» [dumat'] (Eng. from “to think”) (*although this word is spelled without hyphen <i>тинкинг</i> in the dictionary, in the novel, it is spelled with a hyphen, so the form with a hyphen was used in the questionnaire)	to think
5	плейс [pleis]	место [mesto]	place
6	серв [serv]	подавать (на стол) [podavat' (na stol)]	to serve (food, drink)
7	поршн [porshn]	порция [porciia] (*the word <i>поршн</i> is explained as a part of the phrase: “фор поршнз — четыре порции” [for porshnz – chetyre porcii])	portion
8	покет [poket]	карман [karman]	pocket
9	мани [mani]	/	money (from the English word “money”)
10	эмьермент [em'iuzment]	развлечение [razvlechenie]	amusement
11	хэд [hed]	голова [golova]	head
12	уотч [uotch]	наблюдать [nabludat']	to watch (from the English verb “to watch”)

13	свимать [svimat']	произв. от «плавать» [plavat'] (Eng. from “to swim”)	to swim
14	блад [blad]	кровь [krov'] (*the word “кровь” is under the same entry as the derived adjective: “блад, блади — кровь, кровавый” [blad, bladi – krov', krovavyi])	blood
15	юрин [iurin]	моча [mocha]	urine
16	пей визит [pei vizit]	навестить [navestit']	pay visit
17	дресст [dresst]	одежда, одеваться [odezhda, odevat'sia]	to dress, dressed (одежда is a noun meaning ‘clothes’, одеваться is a verb meaning ‘to dress’; in the paragraph tested this word is used as a verb)
18	фэшн [feshn]	/	fashion (from the English noun “fashion”)
19	багги-уош [baggi-uosh]	брюки из мешковины [brjuki iz meškoviny]	trousers made of sackcloth (literally, this noun is made from two English adjectives often used to describe trousers – “baggy” + “(light) wash”, therefore, such answers will be accepted)
20	сливз [slivz]	рукава [rukava]	sleeves

Eng. – English

#### 4.2.3. Questionnaires

Since three translations of *A Clockwork Orange* are studied for the purposes of this research (one into Croatian, two into Russian), there are three questionnaires – one for each translation. Given that the respondents are native speakers of either Russian or Croatian, for reasons of practicality the survey was conducted online using LimeSurvey. Each questionnaire was in the mother tongue of the respondents; nevertheless, their form was the same. All had two parts related to the comprehension of the translation of slang, whereas the third part of the research encompassed questions which are linked to potential interfering variables, as explained below.

In the first part of the questionnaire, which tested comprehension of the translation of the invented slang, the respondents were given a list of twenty Nadsat words in the order in which they appear in the novel with the instruction to write their meaning. They were asked to fill in as many words as they possibly could; however, they had the option to write “0” in the blank if they had no idea what the word meant. After they had finished the first part of the

questionnaire, the respondents moved on to its second part, without being allowed to return to the first part and change the answers.

In the second part, the respondents were given the same list of twenty Nadsat word in the same order in which they appear in the novel, but they were also provided with the short paragraphs in which those words appear. The words belonging to the invented slang were emphasised – in bold and underlined – in order for the respondents to spot them more easily. The instruction was the same as for the first part: the respondents were asked to discern the meaning of as many words as they possibly could, this time with the help of the context, and they also had the option to leave the meaning of the word unanswered by writing “0” in the blank.

Having completed the two parts of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked a few questions concerning the possible interfering variables. These, however, were not the same in all the questionnaires since the translations of the slang vary, causing one interfering variable to slightly vary as well. Four of the five questions reoccurred in all the questionnaires since they are not strictly related to the translations; these are the questions relating to the age of the respondents, their studies in the university (whether they study or did study languages or linguistics), as well as those relating to whether they had read Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange* or watched Stanley Kubrick’s film of the same title (1971). The question which varied was related to the respondents’ knowledge of the language used in translating the invented slang. Therefore, since the slang in the Croatian translation of the novel is based on Russian, the respondents were asked whether they had learned or were learning Russian and for how long. The Russian respondents who filled in the questionnaire for Sinel’shchikov’s translation (Nadsat based on English) were likewise asked about their knowledge of English.

The time allowed to fill in the questionnaire was unlimited; however, the pilot test showed that the time necessary to complete the questionnaire was around ten minutes (this information was added at the beginning of each questionnaire).

### **4.3. Respondents**

Ideal respondents for this study would be Croatians and Russians who have not studied languages or linguistics and belong to the age group categorised in psychology (Levinson 1986: 7) as young adults, that is, they are between 18 and 35 (maximally 40) years old. This age group encompasses potential respondents who were born in the period when the communist

regime in the U.S.S.R. started to weaken, which led to their being more exposed to the English language (important factor in the comprehension of Sinel'shchikov's translation)<sup>14</sup>. However, considering that finding Russian native speakers willing to fill in an online questionnaire is a quite challenging task (especially while in Croatia), it was decided that any Russian native speaker was an acceptable respondent; nevertheless, both the age of the respondents and their knowledge of languages were added as questions in the third part of the questionnaires as it might play a role in the comprehension of Nadsat, thereby being one of the interfering variables. Considering the already mentioned challenge in finding Russian respondents in general, the target number of respondents for each questionnaire was set at twenty, meaning sixty respondents altogether: forty Russian (as there are two questionnaires, one for each translation) and twenty Croatian native speakers (only one questionnaire). The questionnaires were distributed via social networks, especially Facebook, and the respondents were given a link to the questionnaire and asked to fill it in.

#### **4.4. Data analysis**

After the respondents had filled in the questionnaires, the results were exported from LimeSurvey into Excel tables.

Next, quantitative and qualitative analyses of the respondents' answers were conducted to check whether the hypotheses were confirmed. First, a semantic analysis for each of the three questionnaires was conducted in order to see which Nadsat words posed the biggest problem and which were easily understandable to the native speakers. Each slang word was analysed separately – the compliance of the respondents' answers was compared to the meaning of Nadsat words discerned in the semantic analysis. Each answer of each respondent was evaluated as correct (+), partially correct (+/-) or incorrect (-), and when there was no answer, a "0" was attributed to the response. (The semantic part is further discussed in the following *Findings* section of this paper.) After each word had been analysed in this manner, it was counted how many correct, partially correct and incorrect answers there was and how many words remained unanswered both in isolation and in context. This served as a preparation for the quantitative analysis conducted with the help of JASP programme for statistical analysis. It should be highlighted that for the purposes of this paper, whether there is a statistically

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<sup>14</sup> These periods of Russian history are called *perestroika* (Russ. "restructuring") and *glasnost* (Russ. "openness"). For more information, see (Britannica).

significant difference is be determined by an open-source statistics programme called JASP, while the threshold value for  $p$  is 5%.

## **5. Findings**

### **5.1. Sample**

In total, there were 35 respondents for the Croatian questionnaire, 37 for Boshniak's Russian one and 22 for Sinel'shchikov's. However, the age of the respondents varied largely. There were 34 Croatian native speakers between the age of 18 and 29, and one 48-year-old respondent; Boshniak's questionnaire hand the most responses, and consequently the widest age range – the respondents were between 21 and 60 years old, with 22 being between 21 and 38 years old, and 14 between 40 and 60; and the third questionnaire, Sinel'shchikov's one, had 22 respondents, all of which were between 19 and 29 years old, except for one 42-year-old. Considering that the goal was to have 20 respondents for each questionnaire and that the preferred age group were young adults, it was decided that, so as to have a homogenous group encompassing the age group between 19 and 38 years, only the results of the respondents of that age would be used. Hence, the results studied in this paper are those of 34 Croatian respondents between the age of 18 and 29, 22 respondents of Boshniak's translation, who are between 21 and 38-years-old, and 21 respondents between 19 and 29 for the Sinel'shchikov's translation.

It should be noted that in the questionnaire testing the comprehension of Boshniak's Russian translation, due to an error, the word *dratsing* did not appear in the first question, in which the comprehension of the slang words is tested in isolation, thus, this word had to be left out from further analysis, which resulted in not 20, but 19, Nadsat words studied. In the other two questionnaires, all of the 20 words in isolation and in context were successfully tested.

### **5.2. Qualitative analysis**

As it has already been explained, the qualitative analysis of the results consisted of a semantic analysis, namely, of assessing whether the respondents' answers are correct, partially correct or incorrect. Such analysis was conducted for each of the 20 Nadsat words (19 in Boshniak's case).

### 5.2.1. Semantic analysis of the respondents' answers – Fančović's Nadsat

Although there were 34 Croatian native speakers who filled in the questionnaire, none of them defined all the words correctly both in isolation and in context. More precisely none of them defined all of the Nadsat words correctly in isolation, nevertheless, one respondent successfully discerned all of the words in context (interestingly enough, this person is not a linguist, nor has he/she studied Russian, read the book or watched the film). There were five Nadsat words which none of the respondents could decipher in isolation; these were *skorajšo*, *veščica*, *veščica* and *vjek*, and the phrase *lupati razudoke*. The reasons for the incorrect definitions of the four words could lay in the fact that there are similar-sounding words in Croatian. For example, *skorajšo* (Nadsat for 'fast') sounds similar to Croatian adverb *skoro* or *uskoro* which means 'soon', this resulted in an interference the respondents' incorrect answers were soon (Cro. *skoro*, *uskoro*) and about to happen (Cro. *skorašnje*, *ono što će se dogoditi u skoro vrijeme*, *koji će se dogoditi uskoro*). Moreover, there were two different answers, which have similar sounds as *skorajšo*: *kraj* (Eng. ending) and *skorojević* (Eng. parvenu). However, in context, this Nadsat word was successfully discerned by 23 respondents. Similarly, the Nadsat word *vjek* meaning 'man' was incorrectly defined by the respondents as time (Cro. *vrijeme*), duration (Cro. *trajanje*), moment (Cro. *trenutak*), hour (Cro. *sat*), year (Cro. *godina*), century (Cro. *stoljeće*), period (Cro. *vijek*), life (Cro. *život*), and even as the adverb always (Cro. *uvijek*). Even though there is a word *čovjek* (Eng. man) in Croatian (similar to the Russian word of the same meaning – *человек* [chelovek] which served as the basis for the tested Nadsat word), there were 14 incorrect answers even when the respondents were provided with the context due to the similarity of the word *vjek* to the Croatian word *vijek* (Eng. century, age, period, duration, lifetime). *Vešč* and its diminutive form *veščica* (both meaning 'a thing', however, *veščica* is used to indicate a drug) were both problematic to the respondents: *veščica* was defined in isolation as a shoelace (Cro. *vezica*), witch (Cro. *vještica*), small jumper (Cro. *vestica*), shopping bag (Cro. *vrećica*), news (Cro. *vijest*), small news (Cro. *vjestica*, rarely used in Croatian), afternoon (Cro. *predvečer*) and even as a notebook (Cro. *bilježnica*). All of these responses, except for the definition meaning 'notebook', are at least share some similar sounds to the Nadsat words. Naturally, the incorrect solutions offered when defining the words in context were naturally different to those with the words in isolation, so in context, *veščica* was defined as a bottle (Cro. *bočica*), drink (Cro. *pićence*, *napitak*), herbs (Cro. *začin*), and even as a nun (Cro. *časnica*). As expected, the definitions offered by the respondents for the word *veščica* were similar – shoelace (Cro. *vezica*), witch (Cro. *vještica*), shopping bag (Cro. *vrećica*) and

news (Cro. *vijest*) reoccurred, as well as jumper (Cro. *vesta*) and bag (Cro. *vreća*), which were proposed as the solutions for *veščica* in diminutive forms; and some new definitions appeared: woman (Cro. *žena*), evening and in the evening (Cro. *večer* and *večeras*), bigger (Cro. *veća*, feminine form of the adjective *veći*), skilful (Cro. *vješt*), lingerie (Cro. *rublje*; whose is a synonym is *veš*), and not so transparent propositions, t-shirt (Cro. *majica*) and book (Cro. *knjiga*). These two Nadsat words proved quite difficult to comprehend even in context; *veščica* was correctly defined by 12 respondents, whereas *veščica* was successfully discerned by 17 of them. The phrase *lupati razudoke*, meaning ‘to think about’, ‘propose ideas’, was quite challenging to the respondents in isolation – nine of them did not try to define it. The remaining 25 answers were all incorrect, however some were not that far from the correct solution since they encompassed the notion of talking, which stems from the verb *lupati*, which in Croatian means ‘to talk nonsense’ (secondary meaning); hence the proposed solutions were *lupetati gluposti*, *govoriti gluposti*, *pričati bezveze*, *govoriti besmislice*, *pričati gluposti*, *lupati gluposti* and *baljezgati gluposti*, all meaning ‘to talk nonsense’, and, along those lines, there was also the response *gluposti* (Eng. nonsense). Most of other responses was related to the act of hitting something, considering that the primary meaning of the verb *lupati* in Croatian is ‘to hit’; so, the proposed answers were *tući* (Eng. to beat), *tući ljude* (Eng. to beat people), *tući razbojnike* (Eng. to beat outlaws), *udarati neprijatelje* (Eng. to hit enemies), *lupati prozore* (Eng. to brake windows), *lupati razlike* (Eng. to hit differences; an unusual collocation in Croatian), *fizički se obračunavati sa štreberima* (Eng. physical altercation with nerds), and even *jeba\*i radoznale* (Eng. to f\*ck curious people). Other not so transparent solutions were to fool around (Cro. *šaliti se*) and to spend money (Cro. *trošiti novce*). Even though none of the respondents defined this phrase correctly in isolation, it was quite successfully defined in context 23 respondents provided a correct definition and one respondent gave a partially correct definition *planirati* (Eng. to plan). On the other end of the spectrum, there were words that all and almost of the respondents defined correctly in isolation and in context. The sole word that was successfully defined by all the respondents both in isolation and in context was *djevočka*, meaning ‘a girl’. This is so probably due to the fact that the Croatian word meaning ‘a girl’ is quite similar *djevojka*. Nadsat adjective meaning ‘old’, *starejši*, was also successfully defined in context by all 34 respondents since the Croatian adjective of the same meaning is *star* and its comparative form is *stariji* (and there is a regionalism of the same meaning *stareši*); however, in isolation one respondent incorrectly defined this Nadsat word as *starješina* (Eng. patriarch), which has the same root as the adjective. The same goes for *mjasto*, which was incorrectly defined by only one respondent in isolation since the Croatian word *mjesto* meaning place has the same

meaning as this Nadsat word. The incorrect definition in isolation was caused by the interference of a similar-sounding Croatian word *umjesto* (Eng. instead of). Another word correctly defined by all respondents in context was *Gospodjin*, Nadsat for 'God'. Such successful deciphering of the word was enabled by the fact that Croatian for God can be *Gospodin*. There is also a word *Bog*, which interfered, and caused one partially correct answer one respondent defined *Gospodijn* as *Božji*, the possessive form of the noun meaning 'God', while one respondent incorrectly defined this Nadsat word as 'a leader of the group' (Cro. *vođa skupine*). Moreover, there were five words that were difficult for the respondents to define in isolation, but in context more than 30 of them managed to provide the correct definition. The Nadsat verb *vidjati*; meaning to watch, to see, was correctly defined in isolation by 28 respondents due to its similarity to the Croatian verb *vidjeti* (Eng. to see), while in context 32 out of 34 respondents provided correct answers. Similarly, *golova*, the Nadsat word for 'a head', was correctly defined by all respondents in context, however, in isolation only eight of them guessed the words meaning. Some of the incorrect answers were once again caused by the interference of Croatian; *golova* sounds similar to the Croatian adjective *gol* (feminine form: *gola*), meaning 'naked', which misled 15 respondents (and another respondent's answer was *golotinja* (Eng. nudity)). Other incorrect answers were *cilj*, meaning 'a goal', which was perhaps influenced by the English; *gotova* (Eng. finished), and *tužna* (Eng. sad). The word *đengi* (Nadsat for 'money') was also solved in context with quite high accuracy, 30 respondents correctly defined it. This word is particularly interesting as it accounts for the highest difference in the comprehension of the words in isolation and in context: as it has already been mentioned, in context, it was correctly defined by 30 respondents, while in isolation only two of them managed to do so (one learned Russian for three years, but neither of them watched the film or read the book), which does not come as a surprise considering that there is no similar word in Croatian. This also contributed to a number of interesting incorrect answers: two respondents defined *đengi* as a dog (Cro. *pas*) and three as a gipsy (Cro. *cigan*); other responses were: earrings (Cro. *naušnice*), cool guy (Cro. *faca* and *frajer*), stairs (Cro. *stepenice*), and even a phrase *k njoj* (Eng. to her). *Druzja*, Nadsat for 'a friend', was also quite successfully defined in context (33 correct responses), however, in isolation, there were six correct definitions, and 23 partially correct ones. This stems from the fact that there is a similar word in Croatian *drug* and it has the same meaning; however, this Nadsat word probably sounded like this word's plural form, so many respondents defined it as a crew (Cro. *ekipa, društvo*) or a group of friends (Cro. *družba* or *družina*). To some respondents this form sounded like the feminine form, so they offered solutions *prijateljica* and *družica* (Eng. female friend), while there was only one



answer that did not define *družja* as people *nerazdvojno* (Eng. inseparable). Likewise, the Nadsat word meaning ‘to drink’ – *pjati* – was correctly defined in context by 32 respondents, whereas in isolation only five respondents managed to do so due to the interference of the Croatian regionalism *pjat*, meaning ‘a plate’ (22 respondents), and the Croatian verb *pjevati* (Eng. to sing) – 5 respondents; moreover, there was one solution *spavati* (Eng. to sleep) which was perhaps also influenced by the Croatian regionalism *spati*. The respondents were also fairly successful in discerning the meaning of the slang words *moloko* and *maljčik* in context: *moloko* was correctly defined by 26 respondents and 27 of them correctly defined *maljčik*, whereas in isolation the former word was discerned by seven respondents, while the latter one by 15. *Moloko* (Nadsat for ‘milk’) was incorrectly defined as *malo* (Eng. a little) by 11 respondents, *mlako* (Eng. lukewarm) by four, *maleno* (Eng. small) by three, *mokro* (Eng. wet) by two respondents, and one respondent defined it as the devil (Cro. *đavao*). The other Nadsat word, *maljčik* (Nadsat for ‘a boy’), was incorrectly defined mostly due to the interference of the Croatian adjective *malen*, meaning small, by 13 respondents, and two respondents defined this Nadsat word as a hammer (Cro. *malj*). The two words with the least correct responses were *krastanje* and *tolčokirati*. *Kratsanje*, meaning ‘stealing’, ‘robbery’, was successfully discerned by only two respondents in isolation and 17 respondents in context. This was so due to the interference of Croatian similar-sounding words; hence, three incorrect answers were related to the word *krasta* (Eng. scab); other answers were *krštenje* (Eng. christening), *krstarenje* (Eng. a cruise), *prljavo* and *zmazano* (Eng. dirty; probably caused by the Croatian regionalism of the same meaning *krstav*), *odrastanje* (Eng. growing up), *kestenje* (Eng. chestnuts); *križanje* (Eng. crossing). Other not so similar-sounding solutions offered were *ranjavanje* (Eng. wounding), *cijenjenje*, *zacjelivanje* and *zarastanje* (Eng. healing), *skupljanje* (Eng. collecting), *trganje* (Eng. tearing apart). Correctly defined by only one respondent in isolation and four in context, *tolčokirati* (Nadsat for ‘to hit’, ‘to beat’) was the Nadsat word with the least correct definitions. It should be noted that the sole respondent who correctly defined this word in isolation read the book in the Croatian translation. The difficulty in discerning this word stems from the fact that there is no similar word in Croatian, resulting in a number of creative responses when testing the meaning of the word in isolation: *provjeriti* (Eng. to check), *telefonirati* (Eng. to telephone), *trčati* (Eng. to run), *pogoditi* (Eng. to hit the mark), *stavljati točke* (Eng. to put dots), *provjeriti* (Eng. to check), *ispraviti* (Eng. to correct), *točiti* (Eng. to pour), *odmjeriti* (Eng. to measure), *raspodijeliti* (Eng. to divide), *shvatiti* (Eng. to realise), *voziti* (Eng. to drive), *žonglirati* (Eng. to juggle), *voziti bicikl* (Eng. to ride a bike), *nešto s kotačem* (Eng. some tithing with a wheel; probably stems from the Croatian regionalism *točak* signifying ‘a wheel’), *puniti rezervoar*

(Eng. to fill the tank), *tračat* (Eng. to gossip), *zaudarati* (Eng. to stink). When tested in context, *tolčokirati* was in most cases confused for a robbery. *Horroršo*, somewhat unusual Nadsat word combining words *horror* and *show* while sounding similar to the Russian word *xopouo* (Eng. good), resulted in equally unusual results; that is, more people defined it correctly in isolation than in context because of the vague context which left a lot of possibilities for interpretation. This is visible when comparing the incorrect solutions in isolation and the ones in context; incorrect solutions in isolation were *horor film* (Eng. horror film), *horor predstava* (Eng. horror piece), *lijepo* (Eng. beautiful), *naravno* (Eng. of course), *hvala* (Eng. thank you); while in context the incorrect responses were *ispovijed* (Eng. confession), *euforija* (Eng. *euphoria*), *stanje opijenosti* (Eng. intoxication), *prestrašen* (Eng. *frightened*), *odmor* (Eng. rest), *high* (anglicism), *sigurno* (Eng. safe), and *spokojan* (Eng. peaceful).

#### 5.2.2. Semantic analysis of the respondents' answers – Boshniak's Nadsat

There were 22 respondents for the questionnaire concerning Boshniak's translation of *A Clockwork Orange*. Nevertheless, none of them successfully discerned the meaning of all Nadsat words in both isolation and context; however, six respondents defined all words correctly in context. Only two of these six respondents read the book, both in Russian (one respondent did not note whose translation, the other one read it in Bosniak's translation), the remaining four respondents did not read the book, however, two of them studied languages at the university, but none of the six respondents watched Kubrick's film. Two Nadsat words were correctly defined by all of the respondents both in context and in isolation; these were *zavedenije* (Eng. institution, bar) and *babki* (Eng. money). Moreover, five words were correctly defined by all respondents in context *drug*, *korova*, *plevatt*, *pitt* and *baldiozh*. *Baldiozh*, Nadsat for 'enjoyment', was in isolation discerned by all respondents except for one, which partially correctly defined it as relaxation. The Nadsat verb meaning 'to drink', *pitt*, was correctly defined by 20 respondents, two respondents left this question unanswered. Likewise, another Nadsat verb, *plevatt* (Eng. to not care about), was also correctly defined by 20 respondents in isolation and the two incorrect solutions are related to the first meaning of the Russian verb *плевать* (Eng. to spit), which served as the basis for the Nadsat word in question: *сплюнуть* (Eng. to spit out) and *харкать* (Eng. to expectorate). The name of the bar in which the protagonists sit at the beginning of the novel and Nadsat for 'a cow', *Korova*, was correctly defined by 17 respondents in isolation, due to the interference of the secondary meaning of the Russian word *корова* designating a fat or unintelligent woman; hence, the offered incorrect

solutions were *толстая, толстушка, полная женщина* and *крупная женщина* (all Eng. fat woman). The last word correctly defined by all of the 22 respondents in context, *drug*, Nadsat for ‘a friend’, was successfully defined by 18 respondents in isolation. The three incorrect answers were the same *наркотик*, meaning ‘a drug’, which was probably influenced by the English word drug. Furthermore, two Nadsat words were correctly defined by almost all respondents; *glupiy* (Eng. stupid) and *shtutshka* (Eng. thing – diminutive; drug) were both correctly defined in context by 21 respondent and one respondent managed to provide a partially correct definition in both cases. Interestingly, Nadsat word *glupiy* was successfully defined in isolation by all the respondents, yet in context it was correctly defined by 21 of them, that is, one respondent partially correctly defined it as one who cannot orient themselves (Russ. *не ориентируется*). *Shtutshka* was partially correctly defined in context as a secret delicacy (Russ. *секретное лакомство*), whereas in isolation, where it was correctly defined by 14 respondents. Some of the incorrect solutions offered by the respondents were influenced by the fact that the Russian word *штучка*, which served as the basis for this Nadsat word, can in slang denote a beautiful, sexually attractive girl; hence, here, the incorrect solutions were *девушка легкого поведения* (Eng. easy girl), *привлекательная девушка* (Eng. attractive girl), *штучка (про девушку)* (Eng. about a girl), and *красивая девочка, элемент одежды* (Eng. beautiful girl, focus on the element of clothes). Other solutions were *экземпляр* (Eng. sample), *нечто* (Eng. something), and *интересная особа* (Eng. interesting individual). Furthermore, three words were successfully discerned by 20 respondents in context; these were *mozg* and *rvatt kogti*. The Nadsat word for the brain, *mozg*, was correctly defined in isolation by 17 respondents. The incorrect answers were caused by the fact that the Russian word *мозг* [mozg], which is the basis for this Nadsat word, has a secondary meaning; it designates a smart person. Thus, the incorrect answers were *умный человек, инициатор идей* (Eng. a smart person, initiator of ideas), *умный* (Eng. smart), *умный, смышлёный в компании* (Eng. smart person, smart one in the company) and *умный человек* (Eng. smart person). There was also one answer *орган* (Eng. organ) which was marked as partially correct answer since it was not specified which organ. Interestingly, this respondent answered the same when defining *mozg* in context, making it the only partially correct answer in context. Moreover, there was also just one incorrect definition in context, which also appeared in isolation *инициатор идей* (Eng. initiator of ideas), thus indicating that perhaps the respondent did not pay much attention to the paragraph provided. When isolated, the Nadsat phrase *rvatt kogti* (meaning ‘to run for it’, ‘to flee’), was also correctly defined by 17 respondents. The incorrect solutions offered were *беситься* (Eng. to be furious), *добиваться* (Eng. to achieve), *сожалеть* (Eng. to pity), *очень*

*стараться что то сделать / получить* (Eng. to work very hard to achieve / get something) and similarly *очень стараться добиться чего-либо* (Eng. to work very hard to get something). In context, the word was incorrectly identified only by one respondent as *беситься* (Eng. to be furious), and another one left this word empty. *Gasitt*, the Nadsat verb meaning ‘to hit’, ‘to beat up’, and *obtriasti*, meaning ‘to rob’, were also quite successfully discerned in context; both were correctly defined by 19 respondents. The latter word was incorrectly defined in context by three respondents as *отпиздить* (Eng. to beat the shit out of somebody), *получить* (Eng. to get) and *пинать* (Eng. to kick); whereas in isolation it was incorrectly defined by five respondents, who defined it as *получить* (Eng. to get), *переворошить*, *перетрести*, *обыскать кого то* (Eng. to search somebody), *переговорить* (Eng. to discuss), *очиститься* (Eng. to clean oneself), and as *опустошить* (Eng. to devastate). Also successfully discerned by 19 people, *gasitt* was incorrectly defined in context by only one respondent, who defined it as *ускоряться* (Eng. to accelerate), while two respondents gave partially correct answers *убивать* and *мочить* (both meaning to kill). In isolation, this Nadsat word was successfully deciphered by 13 people. Due to the interference of the Russian verb *гасить* [gasit’], the first meaning of which is ‘to put out’, the incorrect solutions offered by the respondents were *потушить*, *тормозить* (Eng. to extinguish), *можно погасить огонь а также погасить и чувства* (Eng. fire, as well as feelings, can be extinguished), *гасить (гасить свечу)* (Eng. to put out, to put out a candle), *выключать* (Eng. to shut down), *тушить* (Eng. to put out). There was also one solution, not related to the first meaning of the verb *не давать сделать что-то* (Eng. to not let somebody do something). Another word, which was not that successfully defined in context is *tortsh* (Nadsat for ‘enjoyment’, ‘euphoria’). In isolation it was discerned by 11 respondents, while seven of them defined it incorrectly as a drug addict because of the interference of the word *торчок* [torchok], meaning a ‘drug addict’. However, in context, 18 respondents successfully defined *tortsh*; while the two incorrect answers were *быть зависим от наркотиков* (Eng. to be addicted to drugs) and *забытье* (Eng. semiconsciousness). *Toltshok*, Nadsat for ‘a strike’, was successfully defined in context by almost half of the respondents, 15 of them, while in isolation only ten respondents successfully discerned its meaning. This was caused by the fact that the Russian word *толчок* [tolchok], which served as the basis for this Nadsat word, can also mean ‘a toilet’, so most of the incorrect solutions offered were along those lines. However, interestingly, in context, some of the respondents incorrectly defined *toltshok* as a robbery. *Kodla* and *krasting* are two Nadsat words that were left empty by nine and ten respondents respectively in the first part of the questionnaire (defining the words in isolation). *Kodla*, Nadsat for ‘a gang’, was correctly

defined by the same number of respondents in both isolation and context. Nevertheless, in context the word was partially correctly defined by ten more respondents; the responses were partially correct because they did not include the criminal connotation that the Nadsat word has, but rather they only emphasised that it is a group of people; such responses were *толпа* (Eng. crowd), *группа людей* (Eng. a group of people), and *компания* (Eng. crew). Naturally, it was quite challenging for the respondents to define the Nadsat word for a theft, *krasting*, as it is created by adding the English suffix *-ing* to the Russian verb meaning to steal, *красть* [*krast'*]. Isolated, it was correctly defined by seven people. Three out of five incorrect answers were the same a similar sounding word to the Nadsat one *кастинг* [*kasting*] (Eng. casting); another solution was *панкование* (Eng. to act as a punker) and one respondent simply transliterated the word. In context, the word was not defined by five respondents, but 16 of them managed to define it correctly. The one incorrect answer was that of the respondent who once again simply transliterated the word. *Hanyga*, Nadsat for 'a drunk' or 'a beggar'; was correctly defined by eleven people in context, and by eight in isolation. There was a plethora of incorrect answers ranging from various descriptions of people, ranging from *тот, у кого мало денег и он постоянно ноет* (Eng. a person who has little money and constantly whines), *жадный* (Eng. stingy person), *исключительно тупой и неприятный человек* (Eng. stupid and unpleasant person), *зануда* (Eng. a bore), *вор, хулиган* (Eng. thief, hooligan), *подозрительный человек, обманщик, мошенник* (Eng. suspicious man, deceiver, cheater), to the Jewish Hanukkah (Russ. *Ханука*) and *конец* (Eng. end). In the questionnaire concerning Boshniak's translation, there was only one word which was not correctly defined in isolation by any of the respondents the Nadsat word for 'a woman' *ptitsa*. This does not come as a surprise considering that the first meaning of the Russian word *птица* [*ptica*], used as the basis for this Nadsat word, is 'a bird'. However, two respondents gave partially correct answers *люди* (Eng. people) and *девушки* (Eng. girls). The word with the least correct answers was *ptitsa*. In context, *ptitsa* was correctly defined by ten respondents, which marks the greatest difference when comparing the number of correctly defined words in isolation and context in Boshniak's translation. Several respondents offered as the solution *птица* (Eng. birds); other responses were *непостоянный человек* (Eng. unstable person) and *жертва* (Eng. victim).

### 5.2.3. Semantic analysis of the respondents' answers – Sinel'shchikov's Nadsat

There were 21 Russian native speakers who filled in the questionnaire on the comprehension of Sinel'shchikov's Nadsat. Of the 20 words tested, all respondents

successfully defined three words both in isolation and in context; these were *френд* [frend] (Eng. friend), *мани* [mani] (Eng. money) and *фэшн* [feshn] (Eng. fashion). Interestingly, only one respondent correctly defined all Nadsat words both in isolation and in context. This respondent was the youngest one, a 19-year-old who had read *A Clockwork Orange* in Bosniak's translation. Three more words *дринкигн* [drinking] (Eng. to drink), *токинг* [toking] (Eng. to talk, to converse) and *плейс* [pleis] (Eng. place), were successfully defined by all respondents in context. Moreover, only two respondents incorrectly defined *плейс* [pleis] in isolation as *пожалуйста* (Eng. please), probably due to the similarity of the English word *place*, which served as the basis for the Nadsat word, and the Russian word for *please*. In isolation, 18 respondents successfully defined *токинг* [toking]. One respondent left the blank empty, while the two incorrect answers offered were *использование токена* (Eng. use of a token) and *дань* (Eng. toll). Nadsat verb meaning to drink, *дринкигн* [drinking], was successfully defined by 16 respondents in isolation. There were two partially correct answers (both the same) which were on the trail of the correct solution *напитки* (Eng. drinks), whereas the incorrect answers were *пьянство* (Eng. drunkenness) and *любитель выпить* (Eng. one who loves to drink); however, both incorrect answers encompassed the component of drinking. *поршн* [porshn] (Eng. portion, glass) and *дресст* [dresst] (Eng. to dress/dressed) were both correctly discerned in context by 20 respondents. When discerning the meaning of *поршн* [porshn] in context, there was no incorrect answer, but rather one respondent did not offer a solution. Nonetheless, in isolation, this Nadsat word was incorrectly defined by four respondents as *поршень* (Eng. piston, plunger), *давление* (Eng. pressure), *запчасть* (Eng. spare part), and as the verb *двигать* (Eng. to move). There was one partially correct answer when defining *дресст* [dresst] in context *наряд* (Eng. outfit). In isolation, the word was correctly defined by 14 respondents, while the three incorrect answers all mean the same clothes (two answers were *одежда*, and one was *гардероб*). Interestingly, once again, the incorrect answers encompassed the correct component this time of getting dressed. Nadsat words *блад* [blad] (Eng. blood) and *покет* [poket] (Eng. pocket) were correctly defined in context by 19 respondents, whereas in isolation they were successfully defined by 15 and 13 respondents. In context, *блад* [blad] was incorrectly defined by one respondent as *рвота* (Eng. vomit), while another one did not provide answer. However, in isolation, it was incorrectly defined as *лист* (Eng. leaf, sheet), probably the German word *Blatt* meaning 'leaf' interfered; it was also defined as *пустой говор* (Eng. empty words), *острый* (Eng. sharp), and *жестокость* (Eng. brutality). One respondent incorrectly defined *покет* [poket] in context as a package (Russ. *пакет*), while another one partially correctly defined it as *карманы*,

*кошелёк* (Eng. pocket, wallet). In isolation, this Nadsat word was correctly defined by 13 respondents; most common incorrect answer was *пакет* (Eng. package), given by five respondents probably due to the fact that only one vowel differs this word from the Nadsat one; other incorrect solutions were *игра* (Eng. game), *маленький* (Eng. small), and *карманный, маленький* (Eng. pocket (adj.), small). The Nadsat word correctly defined by the same number of respondents, 18 of them, in both isolation and context, is the word *хэд* [hed], meaning ‘a head’. Although the same number of respondents correctly defined the word, in isolation, there were two incorrect solutions (both the same, *главный*, meaning ‘the person in charge’) and one respondent left the question unanswered, while in context, the situation was reversed, two respondents did not fill in this question, and there was one incorrect answer *рюмка* (Eng. glass). A bit more challenging to define was the Nadsat word for amusement – *эмыюзмент* [em'iuzment], with 14 correct definitions in context and 12 in isolation. It was incorrectly defined as *угнетение* (Eng. oppression), *план действий* (Eng. plan of action), *что-то с музыкой* (Eng. something related to music), *получать удовольствие* (Eng. to enjoy), *радость* (Eng. happiness), and even as the adverb *восхитительно* (Eng. delightful) in isolation, while in context other solutions were proposed: *занятие* (Eng. occupation), *план действий* (Eng. plan of action), *мероприятие* (Eng. event), and *желание* (Eng. wish), and there was one partially correct answer meaning ‘adventures’ (Russ. *приключения*). There were four words which were correctly defined in context by 14 respondents, these were *тин-кинг* [tin-king] (Eng. to think), *уотч* [uotch] (Eng. to watch), *свимать* [svimat'] (Eng. to swim) and *сливз* [slivz] (Eng. sleeves). *Тин-кинг* [tin-king] had the greatest difference between the number of correct definitions in isolation and in context in Sinel'shchikov's translation with only four correct answers in isolation and 14 in context. This was so due to the fact that the word is spelt with a hyphen, which is misleading from the word *thinking*, which was the basis for this word, towards something related to the word *king*; this can be seen in the incorrect answers: *король* (Eng. king), *что-то вроде зам. короля или его близкого подданного* (Eng. sth in the vain of a king's deputy or his close subject), *король молодёжи* (Eng. the king of the young), *маленький король* (Eng. a little king), *юношеский король* (Eng. a young male king), *король тинейджеров* (Eng. the king of teenagers), *молодой король* (Eng. a young king), *король жестянок* (Eng. king of tins; makes little sense), *главный в банде подростков* (Eng. the leader of the gang of teenagers); there were also some answers, which were not as transparent: *маленький, но сильный* (Eng. small but strong), *флирт* (Eng. to flirt), and *звенеть* (Eng. to ring). The Nadsat verb meaning to watch, *уотч* [uotch], was correctly defined by 13 respondents in isolation. Most common incorrect definition of this word was *часы* (Eng.

a watch), since in isolation, it was impossible to discern whether the English word *watch*, which served as the basis for this Nadsat word, was used as a verb or a noun; however, this was also the incorrect answer given by all of the five respondents in context, which could mean that they did not pay attention to the context. Nadsat for ‘to swim’, *свимать* [svimat’], was correctly defined in context by 14 respondents and only one less in isolation, where it was incorrectly defined by two respondents as a similar-sounding verb *снимать* [snimat’] (Eng. to record). Moreover, it was defined as a phrase *кружить голову* (Eng. to turn someone’s head), and even as a vulgar expression *Твою мать!*, which is similar to the English expression *Go to hell!* (it should be noted that there is a number of possible translations for this Russian phrase). However, in context, proposed incorrect solutions were different, influenced by the context: *лежать* (Eng. to lay), *плевать* (Eng. to spit), and *валяться* (Eng. to roll around). The Nadsat word for sleeves, *сливз* [slivz], was successfully deciphered in isolation by 11 respondents, while seven of them left the question unanswered; the three incorrect answers were *опущение* (Eng. omission), *украшения* (Eng. accessories), and *отказаться* (Eng. to refuse). In context, only three respondents did not give an answer, and there were four incorrect answers: two of them were *плечи* (Eng. shoulders) which could be influenced by the fact that sleeves are a part of garments, while the other two were along the same lines: *выступ на одежде* (Eng. pointy part on clothes) and *шипы* (Eng. spikes). Just over half the respondents, 12 of them, correctly defined *юрин* [urin] (Eng. urine) and *пей визит* [pei vizit] (Eng. to pay a visit), whereas in isolation both words were successfully defined by only six respondents. In isolation, *юрин* [urin] was not defined by nine respondents, which is the highest number for Sinel’shchikov’s translation, while the incorrect answers were *ты там* (Eng. you’re there), *внутри* (Eng. inside), *спешить* (Eng. to hurry), *быстро* (Eng. fast), and *мальчик* (Eng. boy); furthermore, there was one partially correct answer: *прочие человеческие жидкости* (Eng. other body fluids). In context, this partially correct answer reappeared, and there were four incorrect answers: *сопли* (Eng. snot), which occurred twice, *рвота* (Eng. vomit), and *слезы* (Eng. tears), all of which represent body fluids which could make sense in the context. The English phrase *to pay a visit* that was the basis for the Nadsat phrase of the same meaning *пей визит* [pei vizit], which was quite challenging for the respondents. Most of the incorrect answers in isolation and in context included the component of paying, so some of the answers were *платный визит* (Eng. visit you have to pay for), *оплатить посещение* (Eng. to pay for a visit), *оплатить вход* (Eng. to pay entrance fee), *платная встреча* (Eng. meeting you pay for), *платежный визит* (Eng. visit you have to pay for), *платный приём* (Eng. reception you have to pay for), *оплачиваемое посещение* (Eng. visit you have to pay for). Moreover, there



were some answers that were more creative: *ограбление* (Eng. theft) and *расчет* (Eng. bill). The Nadsat word meaning ‘to serve’, *серв* [serv], was correctly defined in isolation with quite low accuracy; only 4 respondents correctly defined it. The most common incorrect answer was *служить*, meaning ‘to serve’, to work for, stemming from the second meaning of the English verb *to serve*; however, in Russian the verb *служить* cannot be used in the meaning ‘to serve food or drinks’. Other incorrect solutions offered in isolation were *выжить* (Eng. to survive), *сервер* (Eng. server), *сервис* (Eng. service), and *сохранять* (Eng. to save). However, in context, only four respondents gave incorrect answers, while 16 of them correctly defined the Nadsat word, and one respondent partially correctly defined it as *сервировка* (Eng. table setting). The Nadsat word which was defined by less than half of the respondents even in context was *багги-уош* [baggi-uosh], which Sinel’shchikov defines in the dictionary as ‘the trousers made of sackcloth’; however, for the purposes of this paper the answer that was just trousers was also accepted as correct. In isolation, there were only two correct responses, eight respondents left this question unanswered and there were 11 incorrect answers. These were various, but for most of them were influenced by the English words which served as the basis for this Nadsat word *to wash* and *baggy* (which was often confused with *buggy*); hence, the solutions offered were *мыть* (Eng. to wash), *сходит в душ* (Eng. to take a shower), *что-то стереть, стирать* (Eng. to wash something), *мытьё багги* (Eng. washing of a buggy), *мини багги* (Eng. mini buggy), *промывать мозги* (Eng. to brainwash), *мешковатый* (Eng. baggy), *что-то свободное* (Eng. something free (loose)), *вечеринка* (Eng. party), and *сумка для покупок* (Eng. shopping bag). Eight respondents provided a correct definition for *багги-уош* [baggi-uosh] in context, yet a large number of them, six, did not provide an answer at all. There were two partially correct answers: *широкие джинсы* (Eng. wide jeans) and *какая-то одежда* (Eng. some kind of clothes); and five incorrect answers: *моющийся* (Eng. that is in the wash (adj.)), *тренировочные штаны* (Eng. sweatpants), *кожанка* (Eng. leather jacket), *легинсы* (Eng. leggings), and *костюм* (Eng. suit).

### 5.3. Quantitative analysis

A statistical analysis of the results was conducted after the qualitative using JASP programme for statistical analysis. This gave a more detailed view into the level of comprehension of the three translations tested, and also enabled the verification of the hypotheses. Detailed comparative analyses of the translations can be found in the Appendices. The analysis showed the accuracy of the comprehension of the three translations both in context

and in isolation (Table 4). This proved the following hypotheses right: the respondents defined Nadsat words in Boshniak’s translation with high accuracy (over 60%) in isolation and in context (H1f); moreover, the Croatian respondents solved the questionnaire with a low accuracy in isolation and high in context, thus confirming H1e. However, contrary to the expected results based on the pilot test, Sinel’shchikov’s Nadsat was defined by the Russian respondents with high accuracy in isolation and in context, thereby disproving H1g. As expected, Boshniak’s translation achieved the best results, with the best level of comprehension both in isolation and in context, while the comprehensibility of Fančović’s Croatian translation was the lowest also in both cases. The biggest difference in the level of comprehension between the two conditions can be noted for Fančović’s translation, and the smallest for Boshniak’s one.

Table 4 – The average number of correctly defined words in all three translations in isolation and in context

	IN ISOLATION			IN CONTEXT		
	Boshniak	Fančović	Sinel'shchikov	Boshniak	Fančović	Sinel'shchikov
<b>Mean</b>	68.66	35.51	60.71	87.44	73.82	81.55

The analysis also showed that the words were more successfully defined in context than in isolation in all three translations and confirmed that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of all the words in both Croatian and Russian translations, thus confirming H1 (Appendix 1). Further analysis showed that the accuracy with which native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context is significantly higher than the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in isolation in each translation, thereby proving H1b (Fančović’s translation) and H1d (Sinel’shchikov’s translation), but disproving H1c (Boshniak’s translation) (Appendix 1). Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of the Croatian and the two Russian translations, taking into account the successfulness of comprehension in isolation and in context, which proves H1a (Table 5). As shown in Appendix 2, there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of Croatian and Russian translations in isolation; however, there is no statistically significant difference in the comprehension of Croatian and Russian translations in context, which proves H2, but disproves H3.

Table 5 – Comparison of the level of comprehension of Croatian and the two Russian translations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
LANGUAGE	10400	1	10400	8.536	0.005

The comparisons of the individual translations provide more detailed information on the respondents' accuracy in discerning the meaning of Nadsat words. As for the comparison of the two Russian translations, the analysis shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the two translations either in isolation or in context; hence disproving hypotheses H2a and H3a stating that there is a statistically significant difference between the two translations due to the fact that Boshniak's translation is basically Russian written in the Latin script (Table 6; for more detail, see Appendix 3).

Table 6 – Comparison of Boshniak's and Sinel'shchikov's translations when comparing the accuracy in both isolation and context

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
TRANSLATION	933.0	1	933.0	0.980	0.329

When comparing Fančović's Croatian and Boshniak's Russian translation, the analyses show that there is a statistically significant difference between the two translations when taking into account both conditions as shown in the Table 7. Nevertheless, there is a statistically significant difference between the two translations only when comparing the successfulness of the respondents in isolation, thereby proving H2b, but disproving the hypothesis H3b stating that there is a statistically significant difference between Fančović's and Boshniak's translation in context (Appendix 4).

Table 7 Comparison of Fančović's and Boshniak's translations when comparing the accuracy in both isolation and context

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	10653	1	10653	8.019	0.007

As shown in Table 8, the analysis did not confirm the hypotheses stating that there is no statistically significant difference between the accuracy with which Croatian and Russian native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in both conditions combined when comparing Sinel'shchikov's translation and Fančović's Croatian one. However, there is a statistically significant difference between the two translations when comparing the respondents' results in isolation, but not in context, thereby proving H2c and disproving H3c (Appendix 5).

Table 8 Comparison of Fančović's and Sinel'shchikov's translations when comparing the accuracy in both isolation and context

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
LANGUAGE	5420	1	5420	3.912	0.055

## 6. Conclusions

Nadsat, the mostly Russian-based slang invented by Anthony Burgess for *A Clockwork Orange*, was translated using completely different strategies in Boshniak's and Sinel'shchikov's Russian translations and in the sole Croatian translation, that by Fančović. The comprehension of these translations by native speakers of the two languages was tested and compared in isolation and in context. Qualitative analysis showed that the comprehension of Nadsat words was better in context than in isolation, where it was influenced by the interference of similar sounding words and phrases from the native language of the respondents (especially in the Croatian questionnaire testing the comprehension of the slang based on the Russian language), or the similar sounding words from the English language (in Sinel'shchikov's translation, where the slang is based on the English language), or the comprehension was influenced by other meanings of the multiple-meaning words (in Boshniak's translation, in which the slang is based on Russian, but is written in the Latin script). The quantitative results show that in all three translations, the comprehension of Nadsat words was better in context than in isolation (H1 proved), as well as that the accuracy with which native speakers can determine the meaning of Nadsat words in context is significantly higher than the accuracy with which they can determine their meaning in isolation in each translation (H1b and H1d proved, H2c disproved). When comparing Fančović's and the two Russian translations, it was noted that the comprehension of the Croatian translation was statistically significantly lower in isolation (H2 proved). In context, however, it was proven that there is no statistically significant difference in the comprehension (H3 disproved). The analysis of the individual comparisons of the three translations showed that when analysing the accuracy of comprehension in isolation, there is a statistically significant difference between Fančović's and each of the two Russian translations (H2b proved, H2c disproved), but there is no statistically significant difference between the two Russian translations (H2a proved). Interestingly, when comparing the accuracy of the comprehension between the three translations in context, there is no statistically significant difference when comparing any of the translations (H3a, H3b, H3c disproved).

These results provide a lot of material for further research. On one hand, a larger scale study which would encompass respondents of different age could be done, as well as a study which would test different parts of the three translations. Moreover, it would also be interesting to test the comprehension of the original by English native speakers. On the other hand, given that here only two Russian translations are tested, more research could be done by using other translations. Considering that the novel is translated into 32 languages, it would be interesting to test the comprehension of the translation of Nadsat into any of those numerous languages.

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## 8. Appendices

### Appendix 1

Table A Comparison showing that the accuracy of the definitions in context is higher than the accuracy in isolation when testing the comprehension of all three translation

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SE</b>
IN ISOLATION	59	54.73	34.68	4.515
IN CONTEXT	59	80.83	21.39	2.784

Graph 1 Comparison of the comprehension of both Russian and Croatian words in isolation and in context showing that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of both Russian and Croatian words in isolation and in context

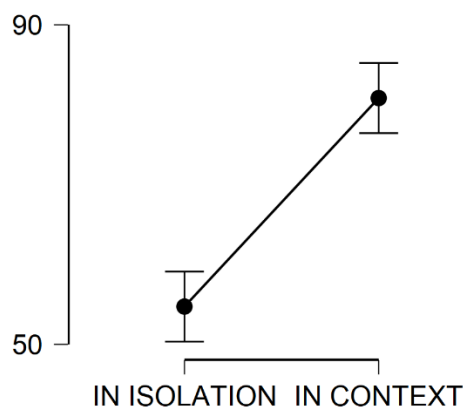


Table B Comparison of the accuracy with which the words in isolation and in context were defined proving that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of all the words in isolation and in context

	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
IN ISOLATION - IN CONTEXT	-8.422	58	< .001

Table B1 Comparison of the accuracy with which the words in isolation and in context were defined proving that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of all the words in isolation and in context in Fančović's translation

	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
IN ISOLATION - IN CONTEXT	-5.417	19	< .001

Table B2 Comparison of the accuracy with which the words in isolation and in context were defined proving that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of all the words in isolation and in context in Boshniak's translation

		<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
IN ISOLATION	- IN CONTEXT	-5.544	18	< .001

Table B3 Comparison of the accuracy with which the words in isolation and in context were defined proving that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of all the words in isolation and in context in Sinel'shchikov's translation

		<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
IN ISOLATION	- IN CONTEXT	-5.541	19	< .001

## Appendix 2

Table C Comparison showing that there is a statistically significant difference in the comprehension of the Croatian and the two Russian translations in isolation

### IN ISOLATION

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	11173	1	11173	10.87	0.002

Table D Comparison showing that there is no statistically significant difference in the comprehension of the Croatian and the two Russian translations in context

### IN CONTEXT

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	1484	1	1484.0	3.378	0.071

## Appendix 3

Table E Comparison showing that there is no statistically significant difference between Boshniak's and Sinel'shchikov's translation in isolation

### IN ISOLATION

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
TRANSLATION	615.2	1	615.2	0.778	0.383

Table F Comparison showing that there is no statistically significant difference between Boshniak's and Sinel'shchikov's translation in context

**IN CONTEXT**

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
TRANSLATION	338.3	1	338.3	1.178	0.285

**Appendix 4**

Table E Comparison showing that there is a statistically significant difference between Fančović's and Boshniak's translation in isolation

**IN ISOLATION**

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	10705	1	10705	9.407	0.004

Table F Comparison showing that there is no statistically significant difference between Fančović's and Boshniak's translation in context

**IN CONTEXT**

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	1807	1	1806.6	3.610	0.065

**Appendix 5**

Table G Comparison showing that there is a statistically significant difference between Fančović's and Sinel'shchikov's translation in isolation

**IN ISOLATION**

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	6350	1	6350	5.415	0.025

Table H Comparison showing that there is no statistically significant difference between Fančović's and Sinel'shchikov's translation in context

**IN CONTEXT**

<b>Cases</b>	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>p</b>
LANGUAGE	596.6	1	596.6	1.118	0.297