

# Open Your Eyes and Open Them Again: A Comparison of Pun Type Trends and Variants in Two Croatian Translations of Terry Pratchett's *The Wee Free Men* and *A Hat Full of Sky*

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**Open Your Eyes and Open Them Again:**

*A Comparison of Pun Type Trends and Variants in Two Croatian Translations of Terry Pratchett's  
The Wee Free Men and A Hat Full of Sky*

MA thesis

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Zagreb, 2021.

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## **Abstract**

Wordplay is a staple in many genres, from news titles to fine literature, yet the amount of research on its construction and mechanisms is still scarce. Young translators especially are wondering about puns, how they will mesh with machine translation, how the translators who came before solved the puzzles they present and in what ways these patterns can be recognized and used as aides in future translations.

This paper aims to examine whether English and Croatian have different preferences regarding common pun types, as well as whether different translators will favour different types of solutions. This will be accomplished by examining two books by Terry Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men* and *A Hat Full of Sky*, as well as their translations into Croatian, *Tiffany protiv vilinske kraljice* by Milena Benini and *Šešir pun neba* by Marko Maras. All four texts are analysed for the number and types of puns, which are classified according to a combination of Linda Broeder's expansive pun type classification and an adapted form of Dirk Delabastita's study of puns and their solutions.

The types of these solutions show that English and Croatian are indeed not always fully compatible, and that a pun type presented in one text is solved with a different type in its translation. Finally, the translators themselves also display individual strategies even when working within the same pun category.

**Keywords:** wordplay, pun, Terry Pratchett, translation, classification, pun type

## **1. Introduction**

The beginning of this research process was dictated by the material it was to examine. Puns were chosen as a topic because they are a prolific form of wordplay highly reliant on the existing landscape of a language and the culture it describes. Because of their versatility and complexity they present a unique challenge when translating them, one that easily justifies a closer look into the constants and the intricate mechanics of their inner workings. Moreover, puns are as abundant as they are prolific – not only can almost anything become a pun, but in so many genres it already is. From news titles and movie posters to tourist brochures and literature, the ability to surprise with a twist and imbue the smallest possible number of units with the biggest possible amount of meaning is a skill that requires mindful learning, just like any other. Furthermore, the younger generations of translators have continuously and explicitly expressed an interest in how puns work, the go-to strategies that may help them deal with the translation problems they pose, as well as their impact

on the reader on the supralinguistic plane. These young researchers' papers examine humour in general and puns in detail, their treatment in translation, various problems and solutions as well as how compatible they might be with machine assisted translation. This indicates an interest not only in the past conventions regarding puns but also an expectant view of what the future may bring, including a readiness to contribute to it.

As puns are a type of wordplay based on subverting expectations and realized on all levels from the phonetic to the multi-lingual, their reach is wide and the mechanisms governing them capable of stacking complexity to a truly impressive degree. In order to translate them one must keep in mind the fundamental question of whether to stay true to the source or the target text, as well as rely on one's entire bank of phonetic, lexical and cultural knowledge that the pun may play upon and subvert. This complexity makes it important to describe the pun's intricacies, explore its mechanisms and chart possible translation solutions for the challenges it may bring. Creating such maps can reveal helpful patterns of preference dictated by the language, the genre or even the target audience. Furthermore, such study can only expand one's general understanding of a language and the speakers who utilize it, enabling greater knowledge of tone, humour and a wider vocabulary – all useful paths to professional and personal development. This paper will present some examples of existing literature on the topic and employ it to explore the structure and possible correlation of both the English and the Croatian puns present in the sample texts: two books by Terry Pratchett. These texts will have the puns extracted, classified and analysed in order to reveal if some types are used more frequently than others as translation solutions corresponding to pun types in the source text.

The specific situation of the texts is this: that of one translator, Marko Maras, continuing the work of another, Milena Benini, while inheriting a set of solution patterns dictated by circumstances such as editorial decree, language rigidity and the style choices typical of an individual, genre or era. Puns in particular can be easily affected by such decisions – insistence on footnotes or lack thereof can interrupt the flow and timing of the joke, overexplaining or underexplaining can take away that crucial element of surprise or erase the pun altogether, avoiding or favouring a particular transcription of speech can interrupt the pun signalling via dialect, and so on. Thus, effort was put into bringing the English texts as close together as possible with regards to these criteria. Since no Pratchett book has been translated into Croatian twice, this paper will examine the first and second instalments of the Tiffany Aching series as published by Penguin Random House in 2003 and 2004 and Lumen in 2012 and 2017. The overarching Discworld cycle it belongs to is at the time of its writing an established setting created by an author with a developed, consistent style and years of experience in the comedic fantasy genre – Pratchett began writing at the age of thirteen and by the time of publishing *The Wee Free Men* he had already written 29 books in the Discworld cycle

(Penguin Random House n.d.a and n.d.b.). The Tiffany Aching series in particular adds another equalizing note and that is its target readership – children and teenagers (Penguin Random House n.d.a. and n.d.b.). Choosing two books close together in the series' timeline ensures that all these variables are as close to each other as possible, including an established cast of characters, themes and vocabulary. This closeness ensures a level playing field where any noteworthy deviations from the pattern of translation solutions can be easily spotted and ascribed to the translator's choice as opposed to a difference in circumstance.

This paper will work to give these solutions appropriate time and thought in order to reveal any patterns indicating that the Croatian language prefers puns of a certain type either as solutions to translating those belonging to a different language or simply as its own standard. While notable deviations from wider classification patterns will be remarked upon and examined in the context of classifying their appearance in the translators' work, ascribing them a definitive cause will not be attempted as one simply cannot know for certain and aimless speculation is not the purpose of this exercise.

Terry Pratchett was chosen as the author to focus on both because of his interesting magnetism for other students of translation and because of his unique position in the world of literature. Before his death in March 2015, he was active as a writer for 54 years and produced 44 works based in his fictional universe Discworld alone (Penguin Random House n.d.a. and n.d.b.). The social themes he explores are those of personal and communal responsibility, survival through empathy, morality in the face of profit and selfishness, the numerous cruelties of exploitation and oppression, as well as the gruelling, consistent work of indiscriminate kindness (White 2020). These topics are timeless and have a renewable sort of value – with every new miserable incident of the same type in the world they once again become relevant, and Pratchett's work is yet to run out of reprints (White 2020). On a more linguistic level, his style is marked by a wry sense of timing and character, multi-layered wordplay and extensive references to genre conventions, real world people and events as well as running jokes within his series (White 2020).

All these factors make quality translation of his work vital, for not only can skimming on nuance impoverish the message, but it can also affect the reader's direct understanding of dialogue, events and characters. For example, the Nac Mac Feegle leader Rob Anybody thoroughly lives up to his name, and yet it is openly remarked upon only in the second book (Pratchett 2004, 32) after his introduction: "There's nothing illegal about the words 'Rob Anybody'. Unless, of course, [...] it's meant as an instruction!" In the Croatian translation (Pratchett 2017, 27) it is handled as "Nema ništa nezakonito u riječima 'Rob Biloko'. Osim, naravno, [...] ako to nije uputa da bilo koga pretvorite u roba!" To ignore the meaning apparent in the name would render the second book's

explanation gibberish, and so care must be taken not only with the text handled in the present moment but also the possibility of it becoming relevant many, many pages and years down the line – a tantalizing situation to explore after the fact.

*The Wee Free Men* (Pratchett 2003) and *A Hat Full of Sky* (Pratchett 2004) published by Penguin Random House and their translations into Croatian *Tiffany protiv vilinske kraljice* (Pratchett 2012) and *Šešir pun neba* (Pratchett 2017) published by Lumen have been chosen because no Discworld book by Pratchett has been translated into Croatian twice at the time of writing this paper, limiting the pool of available sources. These two book pairs form the first and second instalments in the Tiffany Aching series. As the series is focused on the exploits of a 9- and later 11-year-old witch-in-training Tiffany, it is targeted at young readers, which guarantees consistent style, complexity of vocabulary and themes (Peschel 2006). Furthermore, since the books were published only a year apart, Pratchett's own style has not had the time to significantly diverge and thus add other variables to be accounted for in research. The plots of both take place on the Chalk, an area intentionally written to resemble the Somerset and Buckinghamshire areas of south England, where Pratchett grew up, providing fertile ground for culturally referential and dialect-based wordplay (Peschel 2006). Moreover, the names of characters ranging from the Scotland-invoking Nac Mac Feegles to local Achings (or Achens, Akins, etc) provide ample opportunity for phonetic punning. Pratchett's signature extended metaphors are paired with playing on a great variety of idioms to an impressive effect (Broeder 2007, 64).

## **2. Key Concepts**

The translation of Pratchett's work has been mostly investigated by young researchers as part of their BA and MA research projects. For example, Lengálová (2006) wrote *Jan Kantůrek's Notes in the Translation of Terry Pratchett's Discworld Series* at Masaryk University, where she discusses the notion of a translator's individual style. She notes that Kantůrek “managed to adopt a style of writing similar to that of Pratchett himself” and that his notes

draw the attention of the reader not to the story but rather to the act of translation of the text. Kantůrek emerges from the traditional position of the translator as a hidden entity behind the text and shows to the reader some of the difficulties he encountered during translating of Pratchett's original. (56)

Even though Benini and Maras have a more subtle presence than Kantůrek, who “disclosed his role as the translator and commentator of Pratchett's book”, the notion of translation as a series of visible, tangible choices remains (Lengálová 2009,12).

At the University of Turku, Mustonen (2016) wrote *Translating wordplay: A case study on the translation of wordplay in Terry Pratchett's Soul Music* and was the first of the comparative studies in a language other than English that I found, raising the question of pun classification and translatability. Mustonen (2016, 60) explains that “differences in cultures and languages make it difficult to reproduce source text wordplay faithfully. [...] In the data in the case study, it was found that approximately a third of all wordplay was lost in translation,” which sets a precedent for the difference in wordplay count between a text and its translation. Mustonen (2016, 60) further notes that “this result is very positive considering that translating wordplay has at one time been considered impossible.” This development from impossibility to mostly success is indicative of the changing landscape of translation, as well as the importance of further researching the resources that enable it to bridge so many gaps between texts and languages.

At the An-Najah National University, Khanfar (2013) wrote *The Translation of Puns; A Semantic or Pragmatic Equivalent* discussing the two approaches and the tension therein. Khanfar posed two questions, on how English majors can identify the pun word and the other on which equivalent they adhere to, the pragmatic or the semantic one. While the answer to the first was multi-level reading of the pun at the sentential, contextual and referential levels, the answer to the second is that the English majors observed by Khanfar (2013, 88-89), “employ the semantic equivalent (due to the lack of the socio-cultural background as a result of the lack of exposure to others' cultures) [...] if they couldn't figure out the context and the culture behind words.” By addressing the difficulty in translating puns due to their ambiguity, Khanfar extends Delabastita's notion of

“certain generations or groups of readers are more responsive to semantic slippage or doubleness than others, and will rediscover, discover or (should one say) invent puns by endowing potential double readings and verbal associations with a semantic substance, a communicative value, and a form of intentionality they did not possess before, perhaps not even in the minds of the text's author or most immediate audience. Other generations or groups of readers may again be less alive to semantic plurality, if not downright hostile to it.” (1997, 7)

The acknowledgement that a pun's capacity to “land” and evoke the humorous response depends on its audience extends the translator's role yet again beyond superficial output. In order to produce a quality translation, one must also be aware of the audience that they are translating for as well as the audiences that came before and that will follow. Khanfar's research shows the tangible effects of a lack of such awareness, proving that this is a learned skill that further research can only bolster.



At Utrecht University, Broeder (2007) wrote *Translating Humour: The Problems of Translating Terry Pratchett* and defined a pun as

“the deliberate use of one or more particular words or phrases in a context that signals two or more differing meanings thereof or signals a word or phrase which is (to some degree) identical in form (in pronunciation, graphologically, morphologically, etc.) but differs in meaning, to the end of producing a comic effect.” (54)

The elements of intentional use, incongruence of meaning and similarity of form are consistent themes in the process of recognizing and translating puns. She furthermore invokes Ross’ (1998, 8) three elements that create the humour in a pun:

“There is a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs in the pun; This conflict is caused by an ambiguity on some linguistic level; The punch line is surprising, since it is not the expected interpretation, but it does resolve the arisen conflict.” (Broeder 2007, 54)

The resolution to the conflict can also be delayed in order to achieve a greater emotional impact once it finally happens – extended metaphors in particular will keep the wordplay ongoing for much longer than, for example, a pure homophone.

It is Broeder’s thorough cataloguing of the types of humour present in Pratchett’s entire Discworld series that served as a base for the system of classification for the puns extracted from the books, namely the section on Puns and the table based on Delabastita (1993, 78-81), Veisbergs (1997, 155-176), Ross (1998, 8-24) and Nash (1985, 137-147). For the sake of clarity and consistency, it is presented below in its most thorough form as compiled by Broeder (2007, 55-58):

#### - Phonological puns:

- o Homographs: words or phrases that have identical writing but different pronunciation and meaning, e.g. convict (noun) vs. convict (verb) (Broeder 2007, 55)
- o Malapropism: a word or phrase used instead of a different but phonetically similar, intended one, e.g. “Totalno je propupalo” (Pratchett 2017, 209)!
- o Spoonerism: the switching of initial sounds in two or more words, e.g. dear old queen vs. queer old dean (Broeder 2007, 55)
- o Mimes: non-existent words or phrases that resemble existing words and the meaning of which can be inferred from context, e.g. “It was all a bit... well, goody-goody. Obviously that was better than being baddy-baddy (...)” (Pratchett 2004, 109).
- o Meaningful names: proper names that gain semantic significance upon pronunciation, e.g. Rob Anybody (Pratchett 2004, 32)

## - Graphological puns

- o Homophones: words and phrases with identical or close pronunciation but different meanings and writing, e.g. “*Geas*: a very important obligation, backed up by tradition and magic. Not a bird” (Pratchett 2004, 4).
- o Anagram: a word or phrase created by rearranging the letters of a different word or phrase, e.g. Tom Marvolo Riddle vs. ‘I am lord Voldemort’ (Broeder 2007, 56)
- o Playing with word boundaries: new words and meanings are created when the boundaries between words are displaced or adjusted, e.g. *guzunder* = chamberpot, traditionally goes under the bed (Pratchett 2003, 50)
- o Acronym: an abbreviation of words or phrases made of their initial components, e.g. IBM vs. I Blame Microsoft (Broeder 2007, 56)

## - Morphological puns

- o Playing with the class of morphemes: the class of a morpheme is changed in order to create a new word, e.g. “The moon gibbous’d at her through the crescent-shaped hole cut in the door” (Pratchett 2003, 55).
- o Playing with compound words: the order of morphemes in compound words is switched in order to create a new word or to refer to the separate parts and their distinct meanings that are not apparent in the compound word, e.g. *misfortune-telling* (Pratchett 2003, 5)
- o Portmanteaux: the merging of two words into a new one that combines both meanings, e.g. *noonlight* (Pratchett 2003, 162)
- o Pseudomorph: a non-morpheme is extracted from within a word and used as a morpheme, e.g. “What do you do with a wombat? Play wom” (Nash 1985, 143 in Broeder 2007, 57).

## - Lexical puns

- o Homonyms: words or phrases with same pronunciation and spelling but different meanings, e.g. “Anyway, however they were spelled, all her ancestors had been Aching to stay, not Aching to leave” (Pratchett 2003,10).
- o Playing with idioms / proverbs / famous quotes: puns based on ambiguity created by semantic transformations
  - Extended metaphor: a comparison sustained into the next unit, e.g. “‘I can see we’re going to get along like a house on fire,’ said Miss Tick. ‘There may be no survivors’” (Pratchett 2003, 25).

□ Zeugma: the usage of a single linker to connect two or more words or phrases, while maintaining different meanings in relation to these components, e.g. “Fifty small faces, full of worry and hope and broken noses, looked up at her” (Pratchett 2004, 185).

□ Dual actualisation: the activation of both the idiomatic and the literal meaning of a phrase, e.g. “‘Oh you’ve got to know where you’ve come from, miss,’ said the teacher. ‘Otherwise how will you know where you’re going?’ - ‘I come from a long line of Aching people,’ said Tiffany. And I think I’m moving on” (Pratchett 2003, 20).

o Playing with connotations: puns based on using words or phrases with similar meanings but different connotations, e.g. “You’ve got Nac Mac Feegles” (Pratchett 2003, 69).

o Playing with collocation: puns based on using words or phrases with similar meanings but different collocations, e.g. “The very small pilot tried to look her up and down, but only managed to look her up and further up” (Pratchett 2003, 105).

#### - Syntactic puns

o Playing with structure on sentence or phrase level: puns where underlying structures add ambiguity to the surface structure of a phrase or sentence, e.g. “Very good woman with pig diseases” (Pratchett 2004, 115).

o Playing with idioms / proverbs / famous quotes: puns based in structural transformations of fixed expressions

□ Addition: addition of new words to the original expression, e.g. “[...] the Feegles inside fought the ground-in dirt *and* each other” (Pratchett 2004, 181).

□ Insertion: insertion of new words into the original expression, e.g. “A bird in the hand is worth two in the economic bush” (Veisbergs 1997, 158 in Broeder 2007, 58).

□ Allusion: referring to the original expression as opposed to reproducing it fully, e.g. “the ancient tiger still burned brightly in the back of her brain, [...]” (Pratchett 2004, 269).

□ Ellipsis: borrowing only part of the original expression, e.g. “A bird in the hand, I thought, and accepted his offer” (Veisbergs 1997, 158 in Broeder 2007, 58).

□ Substitution: replacement of words in an expression by other words, e.g. “[...] what you don’t know can kill you” (Pratchett 2004, 13).

- Etymological puns: puns that arise from contrasting the current meaning of a word or phrase with its etymological meaning, e.g. “Nero made Rome the focus of his artistic attention.” Focus in Latin

means fireplace, thus making a play on Nero burning Rome physically as well (Nash 1985, 144 in Broeder 2007, 58).

- Bilingual puns: puns based in playing with words or phrases in two or more languages, e.g. “I move for a writ of *Habeas Corpus* [...] and enter a plea of *Vis-ne faciem capite repletam*, without prejudice” (Pratchett 2003, 279).

*Traductio: Essays on Punning and Translation* edited by Delabastita (1997) serves as a primer on existing literature and terminology, as well as a vow to a new direction in the study of puns. Delabastita is quick to challenge “the idea of a perfectly stable and controllable language — according to which semantic plurality is limited to the small and clearly demarcated subset of utterances that we call puns” as well as “the opposite notion of total free play or unregulated semantic anarchy”, opting instead for

“a complex and historically variable constellation of factors having to do with text producers and receivers, with verbal and situational contexts, with genres, text-types and pragmatic situations of discourse, with psychological and cognitive mechanisms, with ideologies, with the ways in which different language systems set up and regulate relationships between signifieds and signifiers, and so on.” (1997, 7)

This approach is one balanced upon a formidable amount of variables and thus demands a kind of flexibility that can only heighten one’s perceptiveness regarding the ambiguity of wordplay. It is an overwhelming state of mind to maintain and just like Pratchett’s all-aware and all-fearing monster the hiver, a sensible set of generalizations can serve as touchstones and references that ground and refocus a translator’s efforts.

Another work by Delabastita (1993) *There’s a Double Tongue: An Investigation into the Translation of Shakespeare’s Wordplay, with Special Reference to “Hamlet”* provided another vital classification that was used in concert with Broeder’s. This directly follows his own preference, which he expressed by writing

“the following model is certainly open to further refinement: for instance, being restricted to the single technique of wordplay, it would ideally have to be integrated into more comprehensive models in order to do full justice to the synfunctional dimension of translation.” (Delabastita 1993, 191)

His system delineates possible solutions to puns and how their semantic fields interact. Pun to pun, punoid and non-pun are the concepts adapted to this research in order to provide another axis to the analysis.

### **3. Goal and hypotheses**

This paper has three complementary goals. One is to explore the structure of puns, another to explore the differences in solutions used to translate them within a limited corpus of samples, and the third to draw attention to the lack of Croatian language resources on that very topic. The hypotheses that follow from these three goals and that the paper will examine are as follows:

- Pun classes repeat themselves within a single author's work and a single language, but may correspond to different classes in translation;
- English and Croatian prefer different types of puns and there are differences in their structure and frequency dictated by this preference;
- Different translators have their own preferences for solutions and these preferences may be visible despite external streamlining.

### **4. Methodology**

The research itself was conducted by first gathering the two source texts, the 2003 edition of *The Wee Free Men* and the 2004 edition of *A Hat Full of Sky* in English, and the two Croatian translations, the 2012 translation by Milena Benini and the 2017 translation by Marko Maras. Puns were extracted into an Excel table from the English text in tandem with its Croatian translation, noting page number in both and including wider context where needed.

Broeder's system was introduced after this first extraction and placed into the first sheet of an Excel document with descriptions of each pun type attached. A new sheet was opened for *The Wee Free Men* and *A Hat Full of Sky* each with columns for page number in the source text, English text pun, its type according to Broeder's classification, page number in the target text, Croatian text pun and its type. After all entries were analysed to one degree of classification i.e. not delving further into puns combining multiple types beyond the most prominent one as dictated by context, the entries were counted and the resulting data prepared for more thorough exploration. Pun types that did not make an appearance in the texts were excluded from further analysis.

The next step was accomplished by introducing Delabastita's classification to act as the second axis upon which the puns were placed. While Broeder's showed specific pun types, Delabastita's served as a touchstone for the overarching trends governing puns and their solutions in translation. It must be noted that due to that inherent ambiguity of puns it is perfectly possible that another reader recognizes a different number of puns or sorts them into a different type. This is to be

expected as these models are hardly set in stone and, in Delabastita's case in particular, specifically built to be flexible and open to interpretation.

The layout of the tables later in this paper uses an adapted version of Delabastita's classification of pun-solution relationships. Delabastita himself wrote in *There's a Double Tongue* that "the following model is certainly open to further refinement: for instance, being restricted to the single technique of wordplay, it would ideally have to be integrated into more comprehensive models in order to do full justice to the synfunctional system." (Delabastita 1993, 191) By embedding it into Broeder's system, Delabastita's is provided the role of foundation it was designed for while keeping the approach flexible according to the needs of the material. This classification was also simplified in order to streamline the process of sorting a smaller volume of samples into a reduced volume of types as well as to leave space for a more detailed discussion below.

The first category that was considered while constructing the figures below is Source Text Pun Type, referring to the type of pun used in the English text and sorted according to Broeder's classification on the vertical axis. On the horizontal one, pun-solution relationships are presented as outlined by Delabastita (1993, 191), who warns

"At first sight my list of techniques may look like a kind of mail-order catalogue from which translators can make their choice at will. [...] It should be clear from the outset that it is possible in many cases to combine two or more techniques, that there are particular circumstances in which the application of particular techniques is *not* possible technically [...]."

This complexity of context and content fits well the scope of this project and its limitations. Yet, not all nine options were taken and instead below are outlined the four that were the most relevant.

The first type borrowed from Delabastita is a PUN > PUN transfer, where

"the T.T. contains a pun that can be identified as a translational solution to the S.T. pun in question through the similar positions of the S.T. pun and the T.T. pun within the S.T. and the T.T. respectively, and/or through their comparable characteristics." (1993, 192)

This is complicated by the dilemma of establishing a precise demarcation of elements, their linguistic, formal and semantic structure as well as their interpretation. Due to this, within this paper this group has been split into Same Pun Type and Different Pun Type categories. While both solutions rest in the PUN > PUN transfer category, they also overlap with Delabastita's second type, PUN > PUNOID.

This second type of transfer Delabastita delineates is the one where "the translator has effectively perceived the S.T. wordplay and, moreover, has tried to recreate its textual effect by

using some other, wordplay-related rhetorical device” (Delabastita 1993, 207). Delabastita takes these devices as separate from equivalent puns, writing that

“the consideration of the various parameters needed to define wordplay reveals a number of verbal phenomena that are **not** puns but that can nevertheless be distinguished from them only in a **gradual** manner.” (1993, 217)

In Broeder’s system the likes of metaphor and allusion etc. still count as such and were sorted under Same Pun Type or Different Pun Type according to equivalency.

Delabastita’s third type is the PUN > NON-PUN transfer, where a pun is met with a lack of wordplay as a solution. Be it complete deletion of a pun or the selection of only one semantic field at the cost of erasing the other, the NON-PUN is embodied as such in the table below.

Delabastita’s fourth transfer is the NON-PUN > PUN, where “the T.T. contains wordplay in a passage that is obviously meant as a translational solution to an S.T. passage that features no wordplay” (1993, 215). However, as there are only two occurrences of this relation over the course of both books, it has not been implemented on a scale greater than its isolated appearance in the first table.

## **5. Findings and Discussion**

### 5.1. Benini’s Translation

Of the 128 puns recorded in *The Wee Free Men*, 111 were translated into the same pun type in Milena Benini’s translation *Tiffany protiv vilinske kraljice*. There are 7 instances of translation into a different pun type and 10 of non-pun solutions. There are only two instances of text containing no puns being translated into wordplay (Table 1).

Regarding Broeder’s classification (Table 1), the most numerous type is phonological puns with 49 appearances, followed closely by lexical puns at 48. The 10 graphological puns, 9 syntactic, 8 morphological and 2 bilingual puns show a much lower number of instances.

Table 1. *The Wee Free Men*

Broeder’s Classification	Source Text Pun Type	Nr.	Same Pun Type	Different Pun Type	Non-Pun
PHONOLOGICAL PUNS	meaningful name	45	45	-	-

LEXICAL PUNS	dual actualization	21	19	-	2
LEXICAL PUNS	extended metaphor	17	16	1	-
GRAPHOLOGICAL PUNS	homophone	9	6	1	2
SYNTACTIC PUNS	allusion	8	7	1	-
LEXICAL PUNS	connotations	5	5	-	-
MORPHOLOGICAL PUNS	playing with morpheme class	4	2	1	1
PHONOLOGICAL PUNS	mime	4	4	-	-
LEXICAL PUNS	homonym	3	2	1	-
MORPHOLOGICAL PUNS	portmanteaux	3	3	-	-
LEXICAL PUNS	collocations	2	1	-	1
GRAPHOLOGICAL PUNS	playing with word boundaries	1	-	-	1
BILINGUAL PUNS	bilingual pun	2	-	-	2
-	none	2	-	2	-
MORPHOLOGICAL PUNS	playing with compound words	1	1	-	-
SYNTACTIC PUNS	substitution	1	-	-	1



The Croatian solutions show remarkably little divergence from these numbers, noting only one or two instances of different pun type or non-pun solutions per category that displays it.

The next section will give a more in-depth view of the most numerous pun types and the strategies used in creating their solutions.

#### 5.1.A. Meaningful names

The most numerous type of wordplay in *The Wee Free Men* by a wide margin is meaningful names, manifesting 45 times with an equal number of localizations. Broeder describes this category as “proper names which on first sight do not have any semantic significance (as is usual for proper names), but when pronounced they seem to correspond to a meaningful (often characterising) word or phrase” (2007, 56). In this book the most prominent groups of named characters are the people in Tiffany’s village and the Nac Mac Feegles. For all that the books belong to the fantasy genre, they are still intentionally nostalgic for certain areas and folklore native to the Celtic nations of their origin.

The names of the villagers are typical of the English language. Inconspicuous when first observed, when pronounced they signal the characters’ personalities or position, such as the rough old shepherdess Sarah Grizzel (later known as Granny Aching), Mr. Block the woodworker who “doesn’t go in for delicate work”, or those invoking specific connotations, such as Punctuality Riddle, “who had been much loved by his young parents even though they’d named him Punctuality (reasoning that if children could be named after virtues like Patience, Faith, and Prudence, what was wrong with a little good timekeeping?)” (Pratchett 2003, 51-229). Benini’s choices of translating these names as “gospodin Klada” and “Točnost Zbun” makes their meaningfulness more apparent by translating them at all, but they maintain resemblance to typical Croatian naming structures and fit in well within the fantastical world of the story.

Our protagonist Tiffany herself comments on her name with doubt,

“She was nine years old and felt that Tiffany was going to be a hard name to live up to. Besides, she’d decided only last week that she wanted to be a witch when she grew up, and she was certain Tiffany just wouldn’t work. People would laugh.” (Pratchett 2003, 3)

While historically appropriate to the vaguely medieval era as it is a derivative of the popular Theophania, sounds anachronistic and even childish to the modern reader used to encountering it in their contemporary context. Yet this only supports her internal displacement from the patterns of thought and behaviour expected by her home village and establishes her more solidly as someone remarkable – a practical thinker and young witch. Keeping it as Tiffany in the Croatian translations

stays true both to this meaning of displacement and, more pragmatically, does not clash with the recognizability of the franchise.

When it comes to Nac Mac Feegles, their names are built to reflect their mythical origins and the placement within the Scottish stereotype. Red-headed, prone to cussing, fighting and stealing, clad in kilts and woad, literally called *pictsies*, they are tiny in size and great in bravery, strength and the ability to “get in and out of anywhere, aside maybe the pub” (Pratchett 2003, 240). Their names reflect the specifics of their culture – the Feegles often share names of renowned Feegle heroes and add prefixes to differentiate between different bearers: “‘No’-as-big-as-Medium-Sized-Jock-but-bigger-than-Wee-Jock-Jock, mistress,’ said Not-as-big-as-Medium-Sized-Jock-but-bigger-than-Wee-Jock-Jock. ‘Ye were one jock short,’ he added helpfully” (Pratchett 2003, 148).

Others are simpler but still distinct from those of human characters – William, Daft Wullie, Hamish etc. While Benini translates some Feegle names fully, such as “Vel’ki Jan” or “Rob Biloko,” others are left untranslated, such as Jock and Fion. Others yet have been phonetically transcribed into “Vilim” and “Hamiš” (Pratchett 2017, 79, 107).

Here it is important to note our protagonist once again. The language of the Nac Mac Feegles blends expressions and phonology belonging to dialects of Celtic languages. The ubiquitous cry of *Crivens!* is a Glaswegian speciality while Tiffany’s name in the Feegle tongue, *Tir-far-thóinn*, which in turn means Land Beneath Wave, is an alternative name of the Celtic land of eternal youth *Tír na nÓg*. Since one of Tiffany’s most pronounced struggles is that of fitting her pragmatic and distinctly witchy way of thinking within an environment that leaves little room for it, this play on meanings is as profound as it is humorous – just as Tiffany has trouble with Feegle names, so does her own end up changed in the mouths of the Feegle speakers, and it honours the form of the pun by unexpectedly indicating something about her own identity.

### 5.1.B. Dual actualization

The second most numerous type of wordplay is dual actualization. Of its 21 appearances in Benini’s translation, 19 instances are of being translated into the same category and 2 are resolved with non-puns.

Pratchett is prolific in unexpected and clever twists on idioms and common phrases, making this one of the hallmarks of his style. To borrow from Delabastita’s model specifying semantic fields, a dual actualization joke is structured as follows:

“We’re in the cushy stuff noo! There’s a beid in this room. Wi’ pillows!” (Pratchett 2003, 52)

s1: easy, not demanding or difficult

s2: soft, pliable, fluffy

“Sa smo sletli na mekano! Tu ima i krevet! S jastucima!” (Pratchett 2012, 42)

s1: easy, not demanding or difficult

s2: soft, pliable, fluffy

English offers multiple collocations for *cushy* e.g. *cushy position*, *cushy job*, which is easily extended into an idiom with the metaphorical meaning as shown in the first semantic field. By adding the following two exclamations, Pratchett actualizes the literal meaning of the phrase and invokes pillows and beds. Thus the idiom shows both of its meanings. The Croatian solution shows no results in corpus searches and thus exemplifies particularly clever turn of skill – Benini devised an idiom that fits so seamlessly into the structures and conventions of Croatian that its metaphorical meaning is easy to pick up on, even though it is not an existing phrase in common usage.

The two cases of non-pun solutions show that not every pun is met with an equivalent solution. Here Tiffany has received a mostly invisible and intangible hat from Granny Weatherwax that she can sometimes feel on her head if she thinks at it just right. Trying to convince herself that her work was that of a proper witch even though she does not quite feel like it after adventure’s finished, she says it is,

“*virtually* a pointed hat” (Pratchett 2003, 299)

s1 almost a hat that comes to a point

s2 almost the proper pointy hat of a proper witch

s3 a hat that is virtual, intangible and imagined

“zamišljeni šiljasti šešir” (Pratchett 2012, 217)

s1 a pointed hat that Tiffany has imagined

s2 -

s3 -

This instance of dual actualization being solved via non-pun is demonstrative of the principle of dropping one or more of the semantic domains at play. The literal meaning of a hat that is not quite real and tangible is kept, while the metaphorical meanings denoting a hat that is almost pointed and a hat that belongs to almost a proper witch are dropped.

### 5.1.C. Extended metaphor

Extended metaphor appears in Benini's translation 17 times, 16 of which it is solved with an equivalent and once with a different pun type. Extended metaphor relies on the element of comparison that is then applied to more than the single phrase. For example,

“You could read the Nac Mac Feegle like a book. And it would be a big, simple book with pictures of Spot the Dog and a Big Red Ball and one or two short sentences on each page.”  
(Pratchett 2003, 177)

s1: simple to understand, uncomplicated

s2: to read a book

“Nac Mac Feeglee moglo se čitati kao knjigu. I to veliku, jednostavnu knjigu sa slikama psa Žučka i velike crvene lopte i jednom-dvije kratke rečenice na svakoj stranici.” (Pratchett 2012, 130)

s1: simple to understand, uncomplicated

s2: to read a book

While the presence of two semantic fields indicates the possibility of dual actualization as well, the sheer length of the application tilts the scales towards extended metaphor and further reminds that the categories are not strictly divided without possibility of overlap.

### 5.2. Maras' Translation

In *A Hat Full of Sky* there are 131 noted puns, 122 of which were met with the same pun type in translation and 6 were solved with non-puns (Table 2).

Regarding Broeder's classification, the most numerous type is phonological with 70 instances, followed by 37 lexical puns and 11 graphological puns. The remaining 9 syntactic puns and 2 bilingual puns show another marked drop.

Table 2. *A Hat Full of Sky*

Broeder Classification	Source Text Type	Nr.	Same Pun Type	Different Pun Type	Non-Pun
PHONOLOGICAL PUNS	meaningful name	69	69	-	-

LEXICAL PUNS	dual actualization	25	25	-	-
GRAPHOLOGICAL PUNS	homophone	11	6	2	3
LEXICAL PUNS	extended metaphor	9	9	-	-
SYNTACTIC PUNS	substitution	5	5	-	-
BILINGUAL	bilingual pun	2	2	-	-
SYNTACTIC PUNS	playing with structure on phrase or sentence level	2	1	1	-
LEXICAL PUNS	collocation	2	1	-	1
LEXICAL PUNS	connotation	1	1	-	-
PHONOLOGICAL PUNS	mime	1	-	-	1
SYNTACTIC PUNS	addition	1	1	-	-
SYNTACTIC PUNS	allusion	1	1	-	-
MORPHOLOGICAL PUNS	portmanteaux	1	-	-	1
LEXICAL PUNS	zeugma	1	1	-	-

The Croatian solutions match the number of puns closely with only the aforementioned 6 instances of non-puns to be substituted from the total number. Of those 6, only three occurred in the same category (homophones), and will be examined below.

### 5.2.A. Meaningful names

In *A Hat Full of Sky*, Tiffany's world expands as she is apprenticed to an older witch in a different town. The cast of characters expands to match and thus we are met with an increase in the number of meaningful names. All 69 are matched with localized and humorous equivalents that follow the same principle as the solutions in the previous book – something about the characters' background or personalities is revealed through the explicit or implicit features of their names.

A significant theme introduced to the story is that of appearances, performance and opulence as opposed to down-to-earth, uncomplicated truth of things. This is reflected in the two senior witches Tiffany interacts with – Mrs Earwig, who is very focused on the spooky and mysterious atmosphere of witchcraft, and Miss Level, who is complimented by Mistress Weatherwax herself on her courage to do the most harrowing of mundane tasks such as washing the dead and helping those unwilling to help themselves. Their Croatian translations preserve the relevant themes and even strengthen them, introducing “*gospođa Vedrica Uholoža*” and the dilemma of “which witch is which”, turned into “*koja je Jakoja koja*” (Pratchett 2004, 115; Pratchett 2017, 116).

### 5.2. B. Dual actualization

First, Second and even Third Thoughts are one of the greatest tools of a witch, who does not only think but also thinks about *how* she thinks and how she thinks about the way she thinks. Paired with First Sight (different from Second Sight by virtue of focusing on what is truly there instead of seeing what one wants to be there), they are the makings of a proper community pragmatist and magic practitioner. They are also a flourish of dual actualization which, in *A Hat Full of Sky*, is matched by full pun type equivalents in all 25 instances. The trick to Second Thoughts is that here they are utilized both literally and idiomatically,

Second Thoughts (Pratchett 2004, 61)

s1: thoughts going back on previous conclusions, doubts

s2: thoughts following a previous one

primisli (Pratchett 2017, 48)

s1: a secret intention

s2: thoughts following a previous one

The idiomatic meaning of doubting yourself is turned literal by placing the phrase in a sequence with the other kinds of thoughts. “Prve misli,” “primisli” and “domisli” form the equivalent sequence in Croatian. The numerical literal meaning is replaced with spatial values implying proximity via the prefixes “pri” and “do”. “Primisli” are those next to “prve misli” and “domisli” are those to the side of “primisli”. Thus the sequence is preserved (Pratchett 2004, 61, Pratchett 2017, 61).

### 5.2.C. Homophones

The third most common pun type in *A Hat Full of Sky* are the 11 counts of homophones, dethroning the extended metaphor of *The Wee Free Men*. They are also the pun type showing the most variation in its solutions, with only 6 equivalent pun type matches, two different pun type translations and three instances of non-pun.

“Tis a heavy thing, to be under a geas.” - “Well, they’re big birds” (Pratchett 2004, 91).

geas: a very important obligation, backed up by tradition and magic. Not a bird (Pratchett 2004, 4).

geese: plural of goose, a type of bird

“Teško je nosit viru.” - “Šta se nosi viru?” (Pratchett 2017, 79)

vira: a very important obligation, backed up by tradition and magic. Not a bird (Pratchett 2017, 8).

vir: a vortex of water, whirlpool

The phonetic similarity of the words creates pairs that are combined in order to create a misunderstanding. The Croatian pair vira/vir is assisted by the verb “nositi” or to carry, stabilizing the pun through repetition. The English pair geas/geese leaves the “geese” implied and only referred to by the following remark.

When it comes to different pun type solutions, one may look to the example of Sensibility Bustle. Mr Bustle, absorbing and then absorbed by the hiver, is nonetheless undaunted in his enthusiasm and will often remark how something is utterly,

binkers (Pratchett 2004, 285)

homophone: misspelling of “bonkers” (unbelievable, insane)

propupalo (Pratchett 2017, 209)

malapropism: substitution of “prolupalo” (unbelievable, insane) with a word similar in sound but not in meaning

Because “binkers” is not an existing word, it is not classified as a malapropism. While “propupalo” is only a letter away from “prolupalo” and could similarly be a misspelling in origin, the result is still its own unit with established meaning.

Finally, the instances of non-pun. Here the solution draws no phonetic parallel to a previous element and is resolved with no other pun type as a substitute.

“In it she, kept... keepsakes” (Pratchett 2004, 62).

“U njoj je čuvala... uspomene” (Pratchett 2017, 49).

The lack of metaphorical meaning to “keepsakes” eliminates dual actualization as a classification option, and so the focus shifts to the phonetic plane. The phonetic similarity of “keep” and “keepsake” creates a set that is not preserved in the Croatian translation. Instead, only the pause is retained and the solution itself is phonetically unclaimed “memories.”

### 5.3. Croatian Translations

It is time to return to the research questions:

1. Do different languages favour different pun types?
2. Do different translators favour different approaches?

The search for the answers to both questions can be aided by Table 3. Our translators form the columns, and the numbers of total puns translated are compared to the type of solution they used to handle them. Different Pun Type and Non-Pun Solutions will be analysed as illustrative of the Croatian language simply not being able to provide a direct equivalent.

Table 3. Comparison of the Croatian Translations via Delabastita

	Benini	%	Maras	%
Total Puns Translated	127	100	131	100
Total Same Pun Type Solutions	111	87,40	122	93,13



Total Different Pun Type Solutions	6	4,72	3	2,29
Total Non-Pun Solutions	10	7,87	6	4,58

Milena Benini's translation of *The Wee Free Men* solved 127 puns in total, 111 or 87,40% of them with the same pun type, 6 or 4,72% with a different one and 10 or 7,87% with a non-pun. Marko Maras's translation of *A Hat Full of Sky* solved 131 puns in total, 122 or 93,13% of them with the same pun type, 3 or 2,29% with a different one and 6 or 4,58% with a non-pun.

The percentages are the format that most clearly shows an interesting trend. While Maras translated more of his total puns with the same pun type than Benini, they both favour non-puns as a solution over using a different pun type. Instances of these deviations are not significantly competitive to the number of same pun type solutions, but they do show that English and Croatian are not always fully compatible – a pun type favoured in English will not always work in Croatian even with the mechanism of translation in place searching for a functioning solution.

When it comes to specific pun types according to Broeder, Table 4 uses the same approach. Only the four most numerous pun types will be analysed for the simple reason of sample size – where there is no plural, there are no trends to observe. As Benini's most numerous categories differ from Maras', all four were included for the sake of comparison. Same Pun Type solutions were chosen to inspect the most straightforward and unambiguous relation. These are the categories elaborated upon above for each translation, and visualizing them in a table side by side offers a more precise selection to form a perspective on.

Figure 4. Comparison of the Same Pun Type Croatian Translations via Broeder

Pun Class	Pun Type	Source N.	Benini	%	Source Nr.	Maras	%
Phonological pun	Meaningful name	45	45	100	69	69	100
Lexical puns	Dual actualization	21	19	90	25	25	100
	Extended metaphor	17	16	94	9	9	100
Graphological pun	Homophone	9	6	67	11	6	54

The two translators show a definitive difference in how they handle these specific pun types. Where Maras opts for the Same Pun Type solution more often than Benini, she shows more variation in her solutions and does not shy away from Different Pun Type solutions. They handle

meaningful names with matching ease, as this pun type is quite flexible owing to the sheer number of options one has to choose from when conveying a character's characteristics. Dual actualization is where Benini first opts for Non-Puns, which carries over to extended metaphors and the case of Different Pun Type solution. Both translators show the most variance in homophones, a pun type reliant on the phonetic structure of language and thus difficult to match one for one if the languages do not share a similar set of sounds to play with. Here Benini opted for the Same Type solution more often than Maras, cementing the fact that different translators can approach the same type of challenge and come away with a different type of result.

## **6. Conclusion**

From news titles to fine literature, wordplay is everywhere, and seeing patterns in its usage can only aid the quality and confidence of our work. Providing meaningful overviews of puns will not only allow translators in training to feel less overwhelmed by their sheer span and the common lack of direct equivalents, but also provide them a springboard for a way of thinking meaningfully about their craft, honing their perceptiveness and exercising flexibility necessary to find appropriate solutions to translation problems. Future research will only further our understanding of the Croatian language and our capability of producing quality, appropriate translation.

This paper seeks to answer the questions of whether English and Croatian favour different types of puns and whether different translators opt for different types of solutions to puns. The answer to both of these questions has been sought via trend analysis and classification, showing that even as close of a match of external factors as possible can still leave room for individual solution trends and preferences.

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