

**The Rabbit Hole of Fidelity:
Trends for translating puns from
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
into Russian¹**

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Abstract

The notions of formal equivalence (fidelity to the text's linguistic aspects) and dynamic equivalence (fidelity to the text's effect on its reader) come to a critical intersection in the translation of puns, which convey both linguistic content and metalinguistic effects to the reader. This study analyzes the shifting relationship between formal and dynamic equivalence in the translation of what are called syntagmatic homonym (specifically homophone) puns from English into Russian, using data from four Russian translations of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. I posit that pun translation can be analyzed as involving three steps: the translator selects how many senses to maintain, the target language's structure determines available linguistic forms for the pun, and the translator implements individual stylistics. For Russian in particular, I predict which forms and what levels of graphemic and/or phonetic correspondence translated puns will exhibit, based on how many senses the translator selects to maintain. Lastly, I suggest that some pervasive trends exist for pun translation into Russian, such as the prevalence of homonymous roots and a preference for incorporating derivational morphology into puns prior to inflectional morphology. These trends suggest that some effects of Russian's linguistic structure may transcend a translator's individual preference in determining how puns are translated.

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1 Introduction

The translation of puns is a test case for competing notions of translational faithfulness, a term which denotes a translated text's overall correspondence with its source text. In prose texts, puns serve a linguistic function by conveying content, as well as a metalinguistic function by conveying humor or similar effects. Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (hereafter *Alice*) offers prime examples of the dual function of puns. For instance, a pun on a mouse's tale and its physical tail both introduces a story and creates a playful ambiguity, such that the printed text of the story appears on the page in the winding shape of a mouse's tail.

When puns appear in the text of *Alice*, translators are challenged to faithfully render the pun, with both its plot-based content and ambiguous form. This difficulty is prominent when *Alice* is translated into Russian, since Russian varies widely from English, notably in its morphology and the syllable count of its words. By examining different approaches to translating puns from *Alice* into Russian, this study evaluates translators' faithfulness in terms of linguistic fidelity and overall pun success; it identifies how, when linguistic fidelity to the original is maintained to varying degrees, Russian's structure allows us to predict the linguistic form of the translations. These forms are highly dependent on Russian's case system, its specific capacity for wordplay based on homonymous roots, and other aspects of Russian morphology.

Although translators may render puns differently, an overall process of pun translation occurs: the plot and/or translator selects which sense(s) of a pun will be maintained, the linguistic capabilities of the language define the options available to the translator, and the translator's individual preference selects from these options. Ultimately, this broad pattern predicts how homophone puns might be translated into Russian as a general practice. It also shows how, independent of translation approaches, Russian seems to favor methods of punning that utilize Russian's morphological structure.

Following this introduction are discussions of fidelity in translation, the linguistic concept of puns, the competing views and theories on puns' translatability, and the particular role of puns in *Alice*. Next is a presentation of the Russian texts used in this study and an analysis of select puns from these texts. Last is a discussion of the results and the overall trends they suggest, as well as a discussion of the implications of these trends for predicting and evaluating pun translations, both from English into Russian and perhaps among other languages.

1.1 Translation Fidelity

The concept of translation fidelity rests primarily on the notion of “equivalence,” also referred to as “accuracy,” “adequacy,” “correctness,” “correspondence,” “faithfulness,” or “identity” (Venuti 2012:5); these terms all describe the connection between the translated text and the original. Absolute equivalence is impossible because different languages do not have one-to-one correspondences in their semantics, phonetics, or morphosyntax, yet translators endeavor to maintain equivalence as much as possible. Concerning equivalence as a goal, Eugene Nida (1964:144) identifies two equivalence categories: “formal” and “dynamic.” Formal equivalence denotes preservation of the source text’s form and content, whereas dynamic equivalence denotes the text having an effect on its reader that is equivalent to the effect the source text has on its original reader. This idea is abstract and difficult to qualify; therefore, this study evaluates the presence of a pun’s basic parameters as a proxy for dynamic equivalence (discussed further in 2.3.2). Translation approaches often vary in how they prioritize or balance these types of equivalence.

In terms of puns, formal equivalence consists of the interlinguistic correspondence in sounds, structure, and the pun’s two semantic senses. Meanwhile, a pun’s dynamic equivalence consists of the intersection between the ambiguous semantic, phonetic, and/or graphemic forms of language. The co-occurrence of these factors within a given pun is essential to the pun’s metalinguistic effect.

In the case of fairly straightforward translation, the idea of form might belong strictly to formal equivalence. However, in the case of puns, a pun’s effect (i.e. dynamic equivalence) is to some extent inextricable from its form. Due to this, a pun’s internal correspondence, its “form” as a pun, is more closely tied to dynamic equivalence, and translations must maintain this pun form to exhibit dynamic equivalence. In fact, the need to modify the definition of dynamic equivalence for puns is indicative of the challenge puns pose to translators.

Thus, pun translation marks a unique intersection between these two types of equivalence. Particular tension arises from the fact that in prose, the semantic senses contained in the pun may seem equally as important as the pun’s role as a stylistic device, defined by its effect rather than its content. Puns’ relationship to the particular content and style of *Alice* is further discussed in 1.4, but in general, textual puns present this translation dilemma by their very nature.

1.2 Puns as a Linguistic Phenomenon

Puns are not only defined by both linguistic and metalinguistic aspects, but they may be a phenomenon universal to all languages (Attardo 1994), as far as humor has been examined in a given language. In linguistics, puns are also referred to as “transjacence” or “paronomasia.” Malone (1988:196) defines puns as the phenomenon that occurs when “the cenematic [i.e. phonetic/phonological] form of a word sets up an occasion for plerematic [i.e. semantic and syntactic] ambiguity or double meaning, usually as an intentional figura on the part of the author,” although a pun need not be intentional.²

For every pun, Attardo (1994) defines three characteristic parameters. First of all, puns are expressions with signifiers that “involve two senses” (Attardo 1994:134), such that two distinct semantic meanings are present. Secondly, the utterance “revolve[s] around an ambiguity” regarding the linguistic unit(s) signifying these senses (Attardo 1994:128); two interpretations are possible. The third parameter is that puns simultaneously “preserve two senses of a linguistic unit” (Attardo 1994:112), such that each interpretation allows a valid reading of the whole. These parameters require the two senses to be “opposed,” or “semantically incompatible in context,” rather than “random” (Attardo 1994:133), meaning that each sense yields an interpretation of the utterance that is incompatible with the other possible interpretation.

1.2.1 Phonetic/Graphemic Classification

Within these parameters, puns are categorized by the level of phonetic and/or graphemic correspondence that gives rise to the pun’s two senses. An important distinction for this study is between homonym and paronym puns.³ A homonym pun contains signifiers with identical phonetic and/or graphemic representations; thus the term includes both homophones and homographs. An example of a homonym pun is (1) below, whose signifiers (bolded) have identical phonetic and graphemic representation:

² Delabastita (1994) critiques theorists for assuming that all punning is intentional on the part of the author and supporting their arguments with this assumption; while this issue applies to some contexts, it is not the case for *Alice*, where Carroll’s (and his translators’) punning is clearly deliberate.

³ In some contexts, “paronym” is defined as “a word that is a derivative of another and has a related meaning” (Stevenson & Lindberg 2011). To avoid confusion, this study uses the term chiefly in the same sense as Attardo 1994, which only refers to phonetic/graphemic correspondence and does not refer to refer to any morphological relationship, whether derivational or historical.

(1) Time **flies** like the wind; fruit **flies** like bananas.

In (1), *flies* and *flies* are phonetically and graphemically identical, but the former is a verbal denoting aerodynamic movement, and the latter is a nominal denoting a type of insect. This study focuses on the translation of similar homophone puns, which frequently occur in *Alice*.

On the other hand, paronym puns display similar phonetic and/or graphemic representations in their two signifiers, but not identical ones. Example (2) is a paronym pun from *Alice*, in which the Mock Turtle describes his education (Gardner 1960:98):

(2) “and then the different branches of Arithmetic—**Ambition, Distraction, Uglification,** and **Derision**”

In the above example, the words *Ambition*, *Distraction*, *Uglification*, and *Derision* have partial phonetic correspondences with *addition*, *subtraction*, *multiplication*, and *division*, respectively. These correspondences also may be categorized as graphemic, considering words like *ambition* and *addition* share six graphemes in analogous positions.

However, the categories of homonym and paronym need not be mutually exclusive; Attardo (1994:120), who analyzes paronym puns based on their calculated “phonemic distance,” suggests that homonym puns are paronym puns with a 0% difference between the written and/or spoken form of the two signifiers. In light of translation, this suggests that translating homonym puns as paronym puns is not changing the type of pun but instead moving along a spectrum of phonetic or graphemic correspondence; both puns may be considered paronym puns, but any divergence from the pun’s status as a homonym pun constitutes an increased difference in form between the two signifiers.

1.2.2 Semantic and Structural Classification

Another type of distinction is between syntagmatic and paradigmatic puns. In syntagmatic puns, both signifiers are present; these are the types of puns addressed in this study. Therefore, each example contains one linguistic expression for one of the pun’s senses, as well as a second expression for the second sense. An example of this is (3), with *tune a* and *tuna* as the two expressions (McKean 2011):

(3) You can **tune a** guitar, but you can't **tuna** fish.

In contrast, paradigmatic puns contain only one linguistic expression, with the second expression, and consequently the second sense, implied. An example of this occurs in *Alice* (Gardner 1960:98):

(4) “He taught **Laughing** and **Grief**, they used to say”

In (4), the pun relies on evoking the sounds of the words *Latin* and *Greek*, as well as the reader recognizing these as subjects commonly taught in British schools.

Example (4) illustrates why this study focuses on syntagmatic puns rather than paradigmatic ones. Paradigmatic puns often reference a phrase or expression that one accesses through cultural knowledge, to some extent. In (4), the subjects Latin and Greek are an Anglophone referent. Therefore, to isolate the role of linguistic elements in pun translation, this study focuses on syntagmatic puns, which present both senses, rather than puns that rely on outside knowledge, which is a different but equally complex concern.

A third category of puns relevant to this study is punning based on idioms. This occurs when a word or phrase denotes several potential meanings, in which one meaning is literal and the other figurative. For example:

(5) By placing a donkey's head on the actor Bottom, Puck **made an ass of him**.

In this instance, the phrase *made an ass of* recalls the literal meaning ‘turned into a donkey’ and the figurative meaning ‘made him look like a fool’. In homonym and paronym puns, the expressions may be unrelated semantically and/or morphologically. However, idiom-based puns use one repeated expression with multiple meanings, such that both of the pun's senses are semantically related. In (5), one meaning is derived from *ass* as a word for donkey, and the second meaning comes from characteristics associated with donkeys. While the homonymous puns from *Alice* in this study do not utilize idioms, some of the translations do.

1.2.3 Why Puns are Funny

The metalinguistic effect of puns, typically humor, results from an intersection of the pun's phonetic/graphemic and semantic qualities. According to Attardo (1994), puns allow speakers to temporarily suspend certain rules of language, which elevates puns above the normal use of language. One such suspension occurs only in paronym puns where there is more than 0% phonetic difference between the two expressions; in this case, "the threshold of phonemic difference" gets suspended, and the speaker pretends that two words with a close phonetic and/or phonemic correspondence actually sound the same (Attardo 1994:149). This does not pertain to homonym puns, but it is an added consideration for paronym puns with some level of difference in form between their two expressions, which appear in this study.

Puns in general suspend other linguistic rules. Attardo (1994:149) explains that speakers producing puns "pretend to use linguistic signs as if they belonged to a semiotic system that would be characterized as non-arbitrary (i.e. motivated)" because in a motivated linguistic system, each sound or grapheme would have a predetermined meaning based on its identity (i.e. homonyms would not exist). Thus Attardo (1994:169) argues, when speakers pun, they intentionally use language as if linguistic signs carried meaning; this is knowingly using language in an unusual way, where speakers playfully exhibit "the incongruous behavior of associating similar sounds [or other linguistic signs] with similar meanings and pretending that some two dissimilar meanings are similar in the safety provided by the metalinguistic status of their utterance."⁴

The ultimate effect of these pretended sign-meaning correspondences is a "subversion" of the Gricean maxims of relevance and quantity. Relevance is violated because "if the speaker is obscure or ambiguous, his/her contribution will not be relevant since the hearer will not be able to evaluate whether the information provided is 'to the point'" (Attardo 1994:291), implying that not all of the pun's meanings may be considered relevant information. Additionally, puns violate quantity by giving insufficient information for the addressee to distinguish between two possible meanings.

For humor to result, both the speaker and the addressee must be aware that the speaker is making the pun. However, alternative situations—that only the speaker is aware of the pun or

⁴ Attardo (1994)'s claim refers primarily to spoken language. However, individual phonemes in signed languages can and often do carry semantic meaning, as discussed by Fernald & Napoli (2000).

that the pun is accidental—may result in a violation of Gricean maxims that destabilizes the discourse. This possible outcome may also speak to the puns in *Alice* and influence their translation. This is discussed further in section 1.4.

1.3 On the Translatability of Puns

In *Alice*, puns' contributions to the plot demand linguistic fidelity in translation. However, the puns' humor relies on their ambiguous linguistic form, such that maintaining the pun itself requires metalinguistic fidelity. Due to these constraints, many consider puns untranslatable, such as Nina M. Demurova (discussed below). However, a variety of opinions from both linguistic and translation-scholar communities speaks to a lack of consensus on the issue, as well as to the issue's overall complexity.

Those who argue for puns' translatability promote translators' utilization of linguistic similarities. Attardo (1994:29) suggests that “similarities in the two linguistic systems” may “allow the rendering of the pun in another language with a minimum of distortion.” In a similar vein, translator Suzanne Levine (1991:15), whose scholarly work details her experience translating pun- and wordplay-ridden texts from Spanish into English, argues:

And yet, as with puns, where the accent falls on a rediscovered familiarity between two distant terms, so does good translation seek out, stress the common but hidden bonds that may exist between two languages, two cultures, two poems, two puns.

Although Levine (1991:16) speaks more generally to “the mythic belief in a possible primal source that would be the ‘confluence of all secular tongues,’” both Attardo and Levine imply that the underlying linguistic similarities which enable pun translation are highly dependent on the languages involved and their unique relationship. For example, Levine (1991:15) posits that English translators can capitalize on English's flexible morphology and its wealth of synonyms and homonyms in order to translate puns from another language; this perhaps suggests that the potential to target an underlying linguistic correspondence with the source language lies within this wealth. Yet Levine specializes in translating Spanish literature, and languages that contain shared Greco-Latinisms often allow for easier pun translation (Liu 2014).

However, Nina M. Demurova (1995:27), who first translated *Alice* into Russian in 1967 and revised her translation in 1978, presents an opposing view: “one cannot translate word play; one can choose only between what is said and the way it is said, that is, between the concrete fact (or

content) and the device.” This presents the overall view that pun translation involves a choice between fidelity to the text’s content and fidelity to the pun as a linguistic device, where “a translation capturing one level of meaning often results in loss of the other meanings” (Demurova 1995:23). Thus in Demurova’s eyes, translating puns, particularly those in *Alice*, necessitates a tradeoff between formal and dynamic equivalence.

Support for Demurova’s position comes from Nida (1964:148)’s assertion that “it is not easy to produce a completely natural translation [...] precisely because truly good writing intimately reflects and effectively exploits the total idiomatic capacities and special genius of the language in which the writing is done.” If writers who pun, especially Carroll, capitalize on their language’s uniqueness, then we would expect *not* to readily find analogous punning capacity in another language. Gardner (1960:xv) presents a corresponding view in his introduction to *The Annotated Alice*; he claims that the puns and linguistic humor in *Alice* “would have taken quite different forms if Carroll had been writing, say, in French” or another language, which suggests not only that Carroll’s use of English in his wordplay is unique, but also that an analogous version in another language might not appear to be a formally faithful translation.

However, there appears to be a middle ground between the contesting camps of ‘translatable’ and ‘untranslatable.’ Burak (2013:92), a Slavic translation specialist, characterizes the difference between languages as “the other,” which is “a general manifestation of the foreign language in all of its incredible complexity and versatility.” This relates to Nida (1994)’s notion that writers capitalize on a language’s uniqueness. Burak (2013:92) suggests that in dealing with “the other,” a translator works between two extremes and either is “superimaginative” or “sucks up” the difficulty and makes no attempt to translate. However, he also acknowledges that many translators take a middle-ground approach and “neutralize” or “normalize” the text. Translating in this way reduces the text’s original effect. While Burak (2013) does not explicitly discuss the idea of a ‘partial translation,’ this may be what he is describing when this “normalizing” force is applied to wordplay.

A common argument for the translatability of puns is that pun translations *do* exist, in some form. This is readily observed in the numerous translations of Shakespeare, a playwright fond of puns. However, Delabastita (1994:226) presents a more complex view on this observation, offering that puns are translatable, but should not be considered an isolated unit in the translation process; instead, they should be viewed on a “macro-structural level,” and the translation of

wordplay should be considered a “cline” rather than a binary, an idea this study explores in depth. Yet Delabastita (1994:227) also critiques theorists’ utter rejection of the concept of untranslatability, claiming that this notion instead “constitutes the rationale of translation as a human activity.”

The fact that varying opinions exist suggests that a binary view of translation versus non-translation may not be helpful. Moreover, comparing views on translatability is complicated by a lack of consensus on the criteria for what constitutes a pun’s “translation,” making it difficult to know on what basis each theorist asserts their claims. As this study explores, viewing puns as devices that can be translated to different extents and in different capacities allows for insights into the overall translation process and mechanism. By demonstrating the issue of translatability more concretely and methodically, this study elucidates the degree to which a pun may be considered successfully translated.

1.4 Puns and *Alice*

Another factor in pun translation is the overall context in which the puns occur. Arguably, puns in literary works like those of Shakespeare do not serve a function identical to that of puns in *Alice*. While puns are generally considered humorous and may be viewed as such in *Alice*, the subversion of Gricean maxims that occurs in punning involves a deliberate undermining of the pragmatic assumptions upon which communication relies. In subverting and/or violating these maxims, puns can contribute to a destabilization of language and logic, which is a theme in *Alice*.

Several contemporary scholars discuss this destabilization in *Alice*. As Gardner (1960:xxi-xxii) explains, “the last level of metaphor in the *Alice* books is this: that life, viewed rationally and without illusion, appears to be a nonsense tale told by an idiot mathematician”; he later suggests that the book’s persistent illogic, to which the ambiguous language of puns contributes, ultimately evokes “the monstrous mindlessness of the cosmos.” This suggests that if a pun’s effect is due to two corresponding forms and two contrasting meanings, we may home in on meaning non-correspondence as a thematic facet of the puns in *Alice*. Yet only through form correspondence is this aspect brought to the forefront.

Trubikhina (2015) expands on this idea by linking the linguistic humor in *Alice* to the use of language itself. She discusses how “the organization of language becomes a question of

‘discovering surface entities and their games of meaning and of non-sense[...].’ (Deleuze, as cited in Trubikhina 2015:42). In this universe where language games correspond with physical disorientation and confusion, Trubikhina (2015:43) depicts Carroll’s world as one where “there is nothing beyond [the world’s] surface, beyond language itself.” This proposes that Carroll’s wordplay undermines and lays bare the semantics of an entire world, which may dominate more playful aspects of the text.

In *Alice*, language has the power to confuse, confound, and generate strange turns of events simply by being uttered, and instances of wordplay are “pure language devices in which materialized metaphors become a vehicle of the plot” (Trubikhina 2015:43). Nearly every pun in *Alice* occurs in dialogue that turns the plot on its head, particularly statements by the Mock Turtle and the Duchess. For example, the Duchess, hearing Alice mention the Earth’s axis, uses the distortion of punning to turn the situation into a different one entirely, crying, “Talking of axes, chop off her head!” (Gardner 1960:62).

This is not to say that humor is not a function of the puns in *Alice*. However, Weaver (1964) argues that *Alice*’s humor is different for child audiences versus adult audiences; children appreciate the novelty and oddity of the text, while adults enjoy its cleverness and unconventional “logic.” This suggests that the puns may be humorous for children but more subversive for adults, especially due to their linguistic, philosophical, and occasionally political nature. Yet regardless of how exactly these puns function, these analyses propose that *Alice*’s puns exhibit a broader tonal aspect that transcends single utterances.

While analyses of *Alice*’s language may not bear directly on the translation of individual puns, they present complex views on what role puns play in the text, which informs the definition of dynamic equivalence. The role of a pun may have as much to do with the ambiguous semantics as the pun’s form (a distinction that is analyzed later in more depth). Thus, the different extents to which complete, partial, or incomplete pun translations relate to each feature of dynamic equivalence may be influenced by the destabilizing role of the pun in *Alice*. Indeed, the majority of the translations analyzed in this study preserve non-correspondence in meaning, although they exhibit varying form correspondences.

2 Translation Analysis

2.1 Russian vs. English

Aside from the translation challenge puns pose in general, there are significant linguistic differences between English and Russian that complicate pun translation. To begin, Russian nouns exhibit a highly regular case system, and Russian verbs have highly regular conjugation schemata; both of these utilize concatenative morphological endings. Conversely, English does not decline its nouns and has fairly irregular verbal morphology. Moreover, Russian tends to have more syllables per word than English does. Demurova (1995:19) summarizes these differences:

English has a large stock of one- and two-syllable words as against three- and five-syllable Russian ones; its syntax allows the omission of conjunctions and relative pronouns such as where, which, and that, which is absolutely impossible in Russian. As a result, an English sentence generally becomes much heavier and longer when translated into Russian.

According to Demurova (1995:19), these differences usually result in a “10 percent growth” of a text when it is translated. The translations in this study correspond with this idea. The original English puns are all based on two words/phrases with one or two syllables each; yet the syllable count of the translated pun is always greater than or equal to that of the English, with the number of syllables in a translated pun word typically doubling or tripling.

Due to Russian’s overt morphology and polysyllabic words, it is difficult for Russian to generate homonym puns. When homonym puns do arise, they result from both expressions being in the same case (see 2.4.3 for an example) or coincidental phonetic and/or graphemic correspondence (see 2.4.2 for an example).

However, Russian does possess a number of homonymous, specifically homographic, roots. While these roots are spelled the same way, the stress placement in a given word and the resultant vowel reduction affects whether these roots are homophones. Thus, they have the capacity to be homophonous but are not necessarily so in all contexts. Townsend (1968)’s *Russian Word Formation* lists over 60 homonymous pairs of roots with unrelated meanings, each typically a vowel between two consonants (CVC). This suggests that while Russian may not be predisposed to homonym puns, it does have a significant capacity for paronym puns based on homonymous morphology.

Another factor influencing pun translation is that Russian orthography is fairly shallow, while English's orthography is deep. In the Cyrillic alphabet, letters tend to correspond one-to-one with sound segments in fairly regular ways. However, unstressed vowels get reduced in pronunciation, such that one grapheme in a given morpheme may represent several vowel allophones. For example, in the word *raskopki* 'mines', the stressed *o* is realized as [o], but in *kopajsâ* 'dig', the *o* is unstressed and realized as [ə].

The English puns in this study all exhibit phonetic correspondence, but due to English's deep orthography, only some exhibit graphemic correspondence. Sometimes the English words correspond graphemically, such as with *mine* and *mine*, but often they do not, such as with *tail* and *tale*, making these puns homophones but not homographs. However, the Russian puns in this study more consistently exhibit graphemic correspondence, and they exhibit this more often than phonetic correspondence. In this study, instances of phonetic correspondence in Russian almost always coincide with graphemic correspondence (see *sprutikom/s prutikom* in 2.4.3). However, when only graphemic correspondence occurs, it is because vowel reduction alters the pronunciation of the words' shared representations (see *kopi/kopi* in 2.4.2). Thus it appears that Russian's orthography makes it more disposed to graphemic correspondence than English, though not necessarily phonetic.

2.2 Texts of *Alice* in This Study

The translations of *Alice* used in this study strive to sample the variety of Russian translations in existence.⁵ The earliest, *Sonâ v carstve diva* (abbreviated SVCD), was published in 1879 and is the work of an unknown translator (Demurova 1995). The others represented here are Vladimir Nabokov's well-known translation from the 1920s (abbreviated VN), a 2010 edition of Nina M. Demurova's translation (originally done in the 1960s and revised in the 1970s; abbreviated NMD), and Boris Zahoder's translation from the 1970s (abbreviated BZ).

Translation norms for different time periods and individual translator preferences shape how puns are translated, and each version presents a unique overall approach to translating *Alice*. Early translators, Nabokov among them, aimed "to bring the original as close as possible to

⁵ *Sonâ v carstve diva* and Vladimir Nabokov's translation both use old Russian orthography, but this has no bearing on the analysis. The most prominent orthographic differences for these versions are the overt marking of hard consonants with the hard sign <ѣ> (transliterated as "ъ"), the vowel *vat*' <ѣ> (transliterated *ě*), and different punctuation styles.

Russian readers” through cultural naturalization, referred to as Russification (Demurova 1995:20). However, Trubikhina (2015:59) claims that the early translation *Sonâ v carstve diva* is of “poor quality” due to the rushed conditions under which it was likely produced, and she suggests that “the translator seems quite baffled by the ‘strangeness’ of the text.” She and Demurova (1995) both appraise Nabokov’s translation as one superior to its predecessors; according to Demurova (1995:21), it exhibits “a degree of freedom that bespeaks a future master” despite the Russification of the text. Demurova (1995:22-23) describes her own approach as an attempt at balance, in which she “discarded both Russification and literal translation,” keeping in mind Carroll’s “dual intention” of both innovative content and deeper undertones. Meanwhile, Zahoder’s version caters to children and exhibits more liberal renderings of Carroll’s text (Demurova 1995).

Such variety among these versions is ideal for identifying overall trends. Linguistic elements that appear among varying approaches speak to more universal patterns in pun translation rather than to a specific approach or period.

2.3 Methodology

This study evaluates four puns taken from the original text of *Alice*. For each pun, the Russian translations of SVCD, VN, NMD, and BZ are evaluated side-by-side. Each translation is analyzed in terms of formal equivalence, dynamic equivalence, and the relationship between these two equivalences. From these analyses, I infer the apparent inverse relationship between formal and dynamic equivalence and note the linguistic features exhibited in each translation, based on how these two equivalences interact. This indicates overall trends and gives rise to predictions that are discussed in section 3.

Formal and dynamic equivalence are assessed separately with two independent measures. The formal equivalence of each translation is evaluated using a measure of linguistic fidelity; translations are assigned a value representing the correspondence between the linguistic parameters of the original pun expressions and the two Russian expressions that correspond with the original pun expressions. The dynamic equivalence of each translation is evaluated by locating the translation along two spectra of pun success, one for form and one for meaning.

2.3.1 Formal Equivalence: Linguistic Fidelity

Each translation's correspondence with the English original is evaluated using a set of parameters. These measure how closely the linguistic aspects of each Russian expression correspond with those of the original English. One English pun expression is designated as word 1 (W1), and the other is designated as word 2 (W2). The corresponding translation of each is identified in the Russian text, and the two English-Russian pairs are compared using the following parameters:

- Phonetic⁶ correspondence on the word level (abbrev. "phonetic, word"): whether the full English word and the full Russian word correspond phonetically, with sound segments in comparable locations
- Phonetic correspondence on the root level (abbrev. "phonetic, root"): whether the root of the English word (often the full word due to English's lack of case)⁷ and the root of the Russian word (disregarding case) correspond phonetically in comparable locations
- Maintenance of the word's sense (semantically)
- Maintenance of morphological category

In addition to word-specific parameters for each English-Russian pair, there is a parameter for non-relocation; this denotes whether the original text is altered in a way that is motivated by the translator's decision to maintain the occurrence of punning elsewhere in the text.

A translation receives a 1 if it upholds a parameter and a 0 if it does not. The only exception is when phonetic correspondence is partially upheld, for which translations receive fractional values. Thus the linguistic fidelity score is a positive number, and a larger value indicates higher linguistic fidelity to the original. For this metric, values of high fidelity range from 4-5, medium fidelity from 2-3, and low fidelity below 2.

2.3.2 Dynamic Equivalence: Measures of Pun Success

Dynamic equivalence is an abstract concept, yet for pun translations, dynamic equivalence arguably does not exist if the translation itself is not a pun. Therefore, this study evaluates the

⁶ While graphemic correspondence can be evaluated on an intralinguistic level, it cannot be evaluated on an interlinguistic level because English and Russian have different orthographic representations.

⁷ There is only one instance in this study where an English pun word has concatenative inflectional morphology: *lessons*. In this case, the *-s* plural morpheme does not contribute to the pun with *lessen*. The other exception in which the English pun is not between two full words is the pun based on the single word *tortoise* and the phrase *taught us*.

linguistic parameters that constitute a pun (here referred to as measures of “pun success”) as proxies for dynamic equivalence.

Dynamic equivalence for each translation is evaluated based on two criteria of pun success: form and meaning. The criteria of form and meaning refer to the qualities within an individual pun or set of puns in a given language. These are represented as spectra in Figure 1, where the directions of the arrows represent increasing correspondence.

Dynamic Equivalence: Spectra of Pun Success

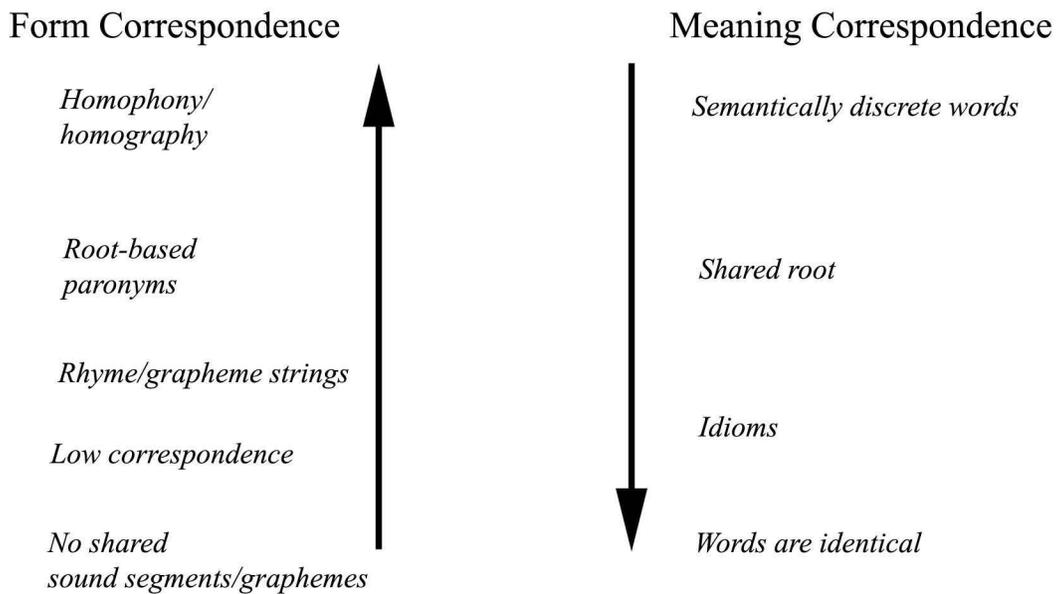


Figure 1. Spectra Measuring Pun Success

In Figure 1, the spectrum for form describes to what extent the two expressions of an individual pun correspond phonetically and/or graphemically. Moving from top to bottom, the spectrum ranges from exact homophony/homography (100% phonetic/graphemic correspondence) to paronyms of increasing difference. At the bottom of the spectrum, 0% correspondence occurs when expressions share no sound segments or graphemes. Between the two extremes are correspondences such as simple rhyme/simple grapheme strings and sound segment/grapheme strings that result from root-based punning.

The spectrum for meaning represents to what extent the two expressions differ semantically. In this study, meaning correspondence is evaluated based on the morphology of the pun words. The top of the spectrum represents a maximal difference in meaning, where the two expressions

have semantically different roots/origins. Near the bottom of this spectrum are idiom puns, which represent a high level of semantic correspondence, since the idiomatic meaning of an expression is derived from its literal meaning. Somewhere between these two values are words/phrases that share the same semantic root but are different forms of a word (e.g. nominal versus verbal) or words with the same root but differing meanings.

In the following analyses, I discuss each pun’s position on these two spectra, and in section 3, I discuss overall trends of pun alignment along these spectra.

2.4 Homophone Puns and Punning Tendencies

The puns from *Alice* evaluated in this study are English homophone puns: *tale/tail*, *mine/mine*, *Tortoise/taught us*, and *lesson/lessen*. In each of these puns, there is no morphological nor other semantic relationship between the two English expressions used to create the pun (Stevenson & Lindberg 2011). On the spectra measuring pun success, the relationship between form and meaning in these puns is represented with a line connecting homophony to semantically discrete words:

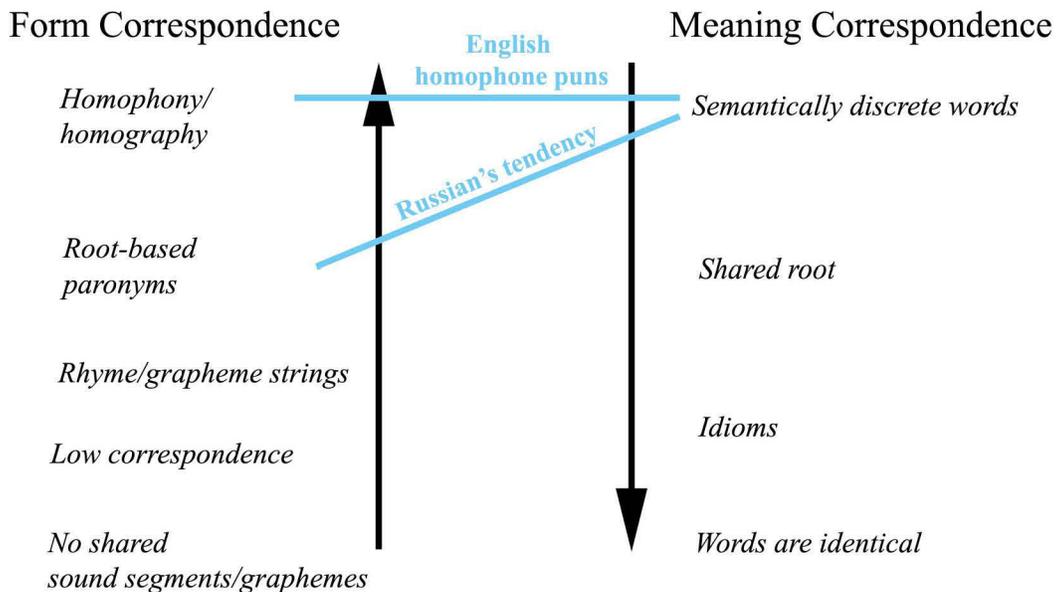


Figure 2. Punning Tendencies

As discussed in 2.1, Russian’s wealth of homonymous roots presents the opportunity for paronym puns based on these roots with no semantic correspondence between the two pun expressions. This tendency is represented by the diagonal line in Figure 2.

In Russian, it is useful to discuss form correspondence both including and independent of inflectional morphology. While the majority of English pun words in this study have neither overt case endings nor regular verbal morphology (q.v. *taught*), several of the Russian words have overt case endings. However, some exceptions to this in the data occur in masculine singular nominative. Therefore, at times I discuss form correspondence independent of case, as occurs in 2.4.2. However, I do not disregard case altogether, since in 2.4.3 I show that this may also contribute to form correspondence when the translator has the opportunity to employ matching case for pun words.

However, different considerations must be taken into account for derivational morphology. While inflectional morphology is determined by the role of the word in the sentence, the presence of derivational morphology is a result of the particular word selected by the translator; thus, one might argue that a translator's manipulation of inflectional morphology and their manipulation of derivational morphology reflect different types of tasks and should be considered separately.

Due to the nature of synonyms, it is potentially easier for a translator to manipulate derivational morphology through word choice. Meanwhile, inflectional morphology is manipulated through syntactic alterations, which in some cases may compromise the perceived naturalness of the translation (e.g. using a more marked construction). However, the amount of synonyms available to a translator, as well as their perceived naturalness in Russian, may influence this as well.

While it is not fully clear which morphology type's presence and correspondence is easier for the translator to control, these two types of morphology should arguably be treated separately when examining form correspondence. The distinction between these two types is supported by psycholinguistic studies on Spanish morphology, which suggest that each type is processed differently in the brain (Álvarez, Urutia, Domínguez, & Sánchez-Casas 2010). Moreover, other research and case studies, such as inflectional affix omissions and substitutions made by individuals with aphasia, posit that "the phonological output lexicon represents lexical entities in their decomposed form" (Caramazza, Laudanna, & Romani 1988:330); for languages with case endings, this means that lexical morphemes are stored in non-inflected forms. As discussed further in 3.3, this study posits, as well as preliminarily demonstrates, that derivational morphology more frequently contributes to form correspondence in Russian puns than

inflectional morphology does; these findings suggest that inflectional morphology may be secondary to derivational morphology in terms of its perceived contribution to puns' form correspondence. However, both types can contribute to this correspondence.

Although both English and Russian incorporate inflectional and derivational morphology into punning, the English puns in this study also suggest that inflectional morphology may play a lesser role, perhaps on a cross-linguistic level. This occurs in the pun (analyzed in 2.4.4) on *lessons* and *lessen*, where the inflectional morpheme *-s* is overlooked for the purposes of the pun. Regardless, there still appears to be a general preference for full homonymy, since the other English puns have a 0% phonetic difference, and there are also instances in the translations of 0% phonetic/graphemic difference that incorporate inflectional morphology.

In the subsequent data, I examine how linguistic fidelity, particularly the choice to maintain one or both of the pun's senses, relates to the translator's ability to maintain semantically different roots between the pun's two expressions and achieve maximum correspondence within the pun's form. For homophone pun translations, I assume that translators attempt to translate a homophone pun in English as a homophone pun in Russian if presented with the means and opportunity, as is seen in 2.4.3. However, higher linguistic fidelity in translation (specifically the maintenance of more of the pun's senses) correlates with decreased form correspondence, suggesting that linguistic fidelity limits the translator's ability to move towards 0% difference on the form spectrum.

2.4.1 Both Senses Maintained

The homophone pun on *tail* and *tale* (pun words are bracketed in examples) yields translations in which translators maintain both senses (Gardner 1960:33):

- (6) "Mine is a long and sad [tale]!" said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.
"It is a long [tail], certainly," said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; "but why do you call it sad?"

In this pun, both senses, 'tale' and 'tail', are practically necessitated; the text following the pun contains a story that is organized on the page in the shape of a tail. The strong semantic and visual roles of this pun in the text thus may compel translators to maintain as many factors as possible. As seen in Tables 1a and 1b, all four translators maintain both senses. This and other

linguistic correspondences between the Russian and the English lead to high linguistic fidelity in the translations.

These values appear in Table 1a: SVCD’s version has a score of 5 (the highest score achieved in the study), and the other three translations have scores of 4. For the most part, these scores occur because the translators maintain both senses, and both words are nouns in either language. It is noteworthy that every translation contains the word *hvost* ‘tail’ or its diminutive, *hvostik*. Presumably, this is because there are few Russian words that can denote ‘tail’ in this context, since *hvost* does not appear particularly productive for punning.

Table 1a. Linguistic Fidelity for Translations of ‘tale’ and ‘tail’⁸

		SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
Word 1	tale	povest’	raz-skaz”	istori-â	istori-i
Word 2	tail	hvost”	hvost”	hvost	hvost-ik-om
	Phonetic, word, W1	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, word, W2	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W1	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W2	0	0	0	0
	Sense W1 (tale)	1	1	1	1
	Sense W2 (tail)	1	1	1	1
	Category W1	1	1	1	1
	Category W2	1	1	1	1
	Non-relocation	1	0	0	0
	Total:	5	4	4	4

As shown in Table 1a, only SVCD receives a 1 for non-relocation because the translator does not alter the original text in order to locate the pun elsewhere. However, the other translators do; as indicated in Table 1b, three translators relocate the pun so that it occurs between the word/phrase denoting ‘tail’ and an added pun word/phrase. In all “Sense Maintenance and Added Pun Words” tables, the Russian expressions which constitute the pun are bolded.⁹ The last row of the table notes whether the form correspondence between the two pun expressions, at whatever level it occurs, is graphemic, phonetic, or both.

⁸ In all linguistic fidelity tables, inflectional and derivational morphemes are segmented from the root to clarify instances of phonetic correspondence in the root.

⁹ The full Russian text of these puns and literal English translations may be found in the appendix (section 6). If no additional pun word appears and there is at least some sort of form correspondence between the translations of the two original pun words, these are assumed to represent the pun’s attempted translation.

Table 1b. Sense Maintenance and Added Pun Words for *tale/tail* Pun

Pun words	SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
tale	pověst' story[F.NOM]	razskaz'' story[M.NOM]	istori-â story-F.NOM	istori-i story-F.DAT
tail	hvošt'' tail[M.ACC]	hvošt'' tail[M.NOM]	pro hvošt about tail[M.ACC.S]	s hvošt-ik-om with tail-DIM-M.INS
Added pun word	X	prost'' simple[ADJ.M.NOM.S]	prohvošt scoundrel[M.NOM.S]	s hvošt-ik-om with more ¹⁰ -DIM-M.INS
Phonetic or graphemic correspondence	both	both	both	both

In terms of dynamic equivalence, the individual translations exhibit a variety of form and meaning correspondences. Three translators use two discrete words for the pun, each with a semantically different root from the other; there are no shared roots among the words *pověst'*, *prost''*, *hvošt''*, or *prohvošt* (“*Pověst''*” n.d.; Vasmer 1973). The translation that does not maintain semantic difference is BZ’s, which puns on the literal and idiomatic meanings of *s hvoštikom*.

While most of the translations exhibit semantically different roots, their form correspondences do not follow a salient trend. SVCD’s *pověst'* and *hvošt* share three consecutive consonants (although *st* is soft [here palatal] in *pověst'* and hard [here dental] in *hvošt''*), yet only the consecutive grapheme/sound segment string *st* is maintained in both words, yielding a significant difference between the two. On the other hand, VN produces rhyme through the string *ošt*; this generates slightly more graphemic/phonetic correspondence than SVCD’s version, but it is still not a homonym.¹¹ In these instances of weaker form correspondence, the translators employ words that seem monomorphemic, in that there is no part that is clearly the root combined with another part that is clearly not the root; this is due to the fact that there are zero case endings on the roots *pověst'*, *hvošt*, and *prost*. These words do not correspond graphemically/phonetically on the root level, so SVCD and VN attain only partial form correspondence.

NMD and BZ exhibit homophones in their puns, yet this correspondence comes at a cost to linguistic fidelity. In the case of NMD, this cost is the insertion of *prohvošt* ‘scoundrel’, a

¹⁰ *s hvoštikom* is glossed for its two contextual meanings, but it is the same phrase.

¹¹ In VN’s version, Alice mishears *hvošt''* as *prost''*, which Trubikhina (2015:64) describes as “a misunderstanding based on a misheard word that may sound vaguely like a homophone.”

concept which is not in the original text. BZ also alters the text to create a context in which *svostikom* occurs with its idiomatic meaning, so that he can employ this idiom.

While there is a trend of punning on semantically discrete words, which is the highest possible difference on the meaning spectrum, there is not a clear trend in form correspondence. The relatively weak correspondences of SVCD and VN suggest that maintaining linguistic fidelity and difference in meaning correlates with a compromised ability to maintain form correspondence. While BZ's translation is somewhat anomalous in its use of an idiom, this idiom pun and its homophony/homography suggest a correlation between high form correspondence (desirable for these puns) and high meaning correspondence (undesirable for these puns); this correlation complements VN and SCVD's exhibition of low form correspondence (undesirable) and low meaning correspondence (desirable).

At first glance, NMD's pun seems to contradict this trend by exhibiting low meaning correspondence and high form (phonetic and graphemic) correspondence. This may partially be her talent (and luck) in identifying homophonous phrases. However, this also comes at a cost to linguistic fidelity that is not clearly reflected in the tables above.

2.4.2 One Sense Maintained

When translators maintain only one of the pun's original senses, we see medium levels of linguistic fidelity, and the emergent translation patterns seem to be connected to Russian's inherent linguistic capacity. This happens for (7), which is a homophone pun on *mine* as an excavation and *mine* as a possessive pronoun (Gardner 1960:92)¹²:

- (7) there's a large mustard [mine] near here. And the moral of that is — 'The more there is of [mine] the less there is of yours.'

In Table 2a below, the translations exhibit medium values of linguistic fidelity, with two translations having scores of 2. Due to phonetic correspondences, NMD obtains a score of 2.58 and BZ obtains a score of 2.43. In NMD and BZ's versions, each translation contains two words for 'mine'. The phonetic correspondence scores for these are determined by averaging the

¹² According to Gardner (1960:92), Carroll invented this proverb, which confirms that this is a syntagmatic homophone pun and does not involve paradigmatic punning on a common saying, which Carroll does elsewhere in *Alice*.

phonetic correspondence scores of the two synonyms. These fractional scores represent the number of sound segments the Russian word shares with the English word divided by the total number of sound segments in the longer Russian word (in this study, the Russian word always contains more sound segments than the English word).¹³

NMD's score of 0.25 for phonetic correspondence on the word level for W1 comes from *miny* sharing two of its four sound segments (*m* and *n*) with *mine* (a correspondence of 0.5), averaged with zero correspondence between *podkopah* and *mine*. The value of 0.33 for phonetic correspondence on the root level (W1) is an average of zero (no shared sound segments between *podkop-* and *mine*) and 0.66 (*min-* shares two [*m* and *n*] of its three sound segments with *mine*).

Similarly, BZ's *minirovali* shares two (*m* and *n*) of its ten sound segments with *mine* (0.20), and *minami* shares two of its six sound segments with *mine* (0.33); these average to 0.27 for phonetic correspondence on the word level (W1). For W1's phonetic correspondence on the root level, the root *min-*, found in both *minirovali* and *minami*, has two out of three sound segments (*m* and *n*) in common with *mine*, yielding an average of 0.66. Additionally, BZ has a score of 0.5 for the category of W1 because *minami* is a noun like *mine* (excavation), but *minirovali* is a verb.

Table 2a. Linguistic Fidelity for Translations of 'mine' and 'mine'

		SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
Word 1	mine	kop-i	ras-kop-k-i	min-y / pod-kop-ah	min-ir-ova-l-i min-ami
Word 2	mine				
	Phonetic, word, W1	0	0	0.25	0.27
	Phonetic, word, W2	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W1	0	0	0.33	0.66
	Phonetic, root, W2	0	0	0	0
	Sense W1	1	1	1	1
	Sense W2	0	0	0	0
	Category W1	1	1	1	0.5
	Category W2	0	0	0	0
	Non-relocation	0	0	0	0
	Total:	2	2	2.58	2.43

¹³ To justify this, we might envision that the shorter word has a number of zero sound segments word-finally to make the two words have the same number of sound segments; this is similar to Attardo (1994:120-121)'s practice of classifying "phonemic distance" based on the number of phonemes in one word that correspond to zero phonemes in another.

In Table 2a, each translator receives a zero for non-relocation because each alters the text by adding a pun word. Table 2b shows that all four translators do not provide a semantic equivalent for ‘mine’ (possession), and they attempt dynamic equivalence by introducing an additional word that relocates the pun:

Table 2b. Sense Maintenance and Added Pun Words for *mine/mine* Pun

Pun words	SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
mine (excavation)	kop-i mine-NOM.PL	raskop-k-i mine-DIM- ACC.PL	min-y mine-ACC.PL / podkop-ah ¹⁴ mine-PREP.PL	minirovali ¹⁵ min-ami mine.IPFV;PST;PL mine-INS.PL
mine (possession)	X	X	X	X
Added pun word	kop-i save_up.IPFV-2S.IMP na-kop-iš' PFV-save_up-2S.PRES	kop-ajsâ dig.IPFV- 2S.IMP;REFL	min-a expression- F.NOM.S	minova-t' escape-INF
Phonetic or graphemic correspondence	graphemic	graphemic	both	both

Russian has two roots related to ‘mine’ (excavation): *kop* and *min*.¹⁶ According to Vasmer (1973), these roots have different origins; *kop* is Slavic, while *min* originates from Modern High German. Among the above puns and their roots, one pair bears a semantic relationship. VN’s *raskopki* and *kopajsâ* both come from the same semantic root *kop*. SVCD’s *kopi* and *kopi/nakopiš'* also play on a root *kop*, but these are two homonymous versions of the root that do not have a semantic relationship to one another (Vasmer 1973); we see this in the fact that SVCD’s pun words denote the distant meanings ‘mines’ and ‘save up’, whereas VN’s denote the related meanings ‘mines’ and ‘dig’.

¹⁴ NMD uses two words for ‘mine’, yet punning only occurs with the first word. While word-doubling may be a compensatory strategy in pun translation, it does not occur uniformly or frequently enough in these data to provide a basis for analysis. However, in 2.4.4, NMD employs a similar but slightly different strategy of repeating each of her pun words.

¹⁵ BZ puns on *min* as two homonymous roots. Both *minami* and *minirovali* have the same root, (R. Feldstein, personal communication, November 29, 2015), while a different homonymous root occurs in *minovat'*.

¹⁶ Although *kop* is closer to the meaning of *mine* (excavation) in Carroll’s text, while *min* typically denotes a mine as an explosive.

While *mina* acts as both pun words in NMD's version, the two instances of *mina* are homonyms of different roots: one is from Modern High German, as noted above, and the second one, meaning 'expression', is believed to be of a different German origin (Vasmer 1973).¹⁷ Similarly, BZ's homonymous uses of *min* denote unrelated meanings: 'mined with mines' and 'to escape'.

The grapheme (and sometimes sound segment) strings that give rise to form correspondence in these puns are not significantly longer than those for the *tale/tail* pun (2.4.1). However, the puns above utilize decomposable morphemic units rather than chance sound correspondences. For example, while VN uses words that happen to end in the string *ost* for the *tale/tail* pun, here he uses a root, *kop*. On the surface, this string does not have a significantly stronger graphemic correspondence, but it is bolstered by the fact that the string is a root, which could make the form correspondence appear more prominent to the reader.

This set also suggests trends in inflectional and derivational morphology. If we consider the above examples minus inflectional morphology, NMD achieves total graphemic/phonetic correspondence on the root level for her uses of *min*, since the words *miny* and *mina* differ only in their inflectional endings. BZ also has graphemic/phonetic root correspondence between *minirovali minami* and *minovat'*, but the words/phrases differ in their inflectional endings, and the verbs *minirovali* and *minovat'* also differ by the derivational affix *-ir-*. Similarly, VN's pun words correspond in their roots but have different inflections and differ by the derivational prefix of *ras-* on *raskopki*. Since Russian is a heavily inflected language, this preliminarily suggests that it is a punning tendency in Russian to overlook inflectional differences and perhaps derivational ones, focusing instead on the recognition of root identity.

However, SVCD achieves a homonym pun through form correspondence between two roots (both *kop*), as well as between the nominal nominative plural ending and the verbal second person singular imperative ending. However, the root *kop* has a stressed *o* in *kopi* 'mines', but an unstressed *o* in *kopi* 'you save up', which means this pun contains homographs but not homophones. Even so, this example is somewhat of a graphemic "double pun"; SVCD puns on the root, as well as the inflectional morphology, which is two endings that happen to correspond graphemically. Nevertheless, this level of form correspondence is somewhat surprising, as

¹⁷ There is an alternative suggestion that both words share the same French origin, but it is not the presiding opinion (Vasmer 1973).

SVCD typically exhibits weaker levels of form correspondence in other examples; for instance, later on in 2.4.3, the other translators exhibit high levels of form correspondence, but SVCD exhibits only graphemic root-based correspondence.

While there does not appear to be a straightforward explanation for why this strong pun appears in SVCD, part of the reason this pun is possible may be that the word *kopi* is composed of a relatively short grapheme string; it is more likely for a small grapheme string rather than a large one to have a corresponding homograph. The shorter disyllabic structure of this string is also somewhat unusual for Russian, and we might compare this to how English's monosyllabic and disyllabic words seem to facilitate homonym punning, as seen in the English puns in this study. We might even posit that the translator chose this string based on its productivity, since there are other translation options for 'mine', such as *raskopki*. Even so, it would not be unreasonable to posit that SVCD's ability to maintain one of the original senses, as well as achieve a homograph pun based on that sense, is somewhat due to luck. Although given further study, we might find that shorter words and/or grapheme strings, either by chance or by design, are associated with higher form correspondence in Russian punning.

Overall, this set demonstrates consistency in technique; all four translators pun on homonymous roots, such that the puns' form correspondences consist of morphological units rather than simple grapheme strings. This contrasts with 2.4.1, where the grapheme/sound segment strings are semantically inextricable from the rest of the pun word. Additionally, with the exception of SVCD, there is a tendency to base punning strictly on roots, overlooking derivational affixes and inflections.

2.4.3 Neither Sense Maintained

In this example, the English homophone pun is not on two words of the same category but on a noun and a verb phrase (Gardner 1960:96):¹⁸

(8) We called him [Tortoise] because he [taught us]

This pun's translations are distinct from previous examples because none of the translators explicitly maintain the original senses, instead selecting words and phrases that fit a general

¹⁸ For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that the two expressions are pronounced as homophones, though this may vary based on the speaker.

context of education. As may be expected, these translations have low linguistic fidelity scores; the decision not to maintain any original senses provides no words that might be judged to correspond with the original (thus the metric treats it like an omission), generating several scores of 0, as shown in Table 3a. Low linguistic fidelity may be expected, since the original pun compares two syllables of a single word to two syllables belonging to two separate words; this makes translating this pun a heightened challenge, as opposed to translating a pun that compares one word to one word.

The only attempt at literal translation is SVCD’s inclusion of *nas*” ‘us’, which earns SVCD a score of 1 due to half of the sense and half of the category preserved for W2 (*us* in *taught us*).

Table 3a. Linguistic Fidelity for Translations of ‘tortoise’ and ‘taught us’

		SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
Word 1	tortoise				
Word 2	taught us	<i>nas</i> ” ¹⁹			
	Phonetic, word, W1	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, word, W2	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W1	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W2	0	0	0	0
	Sense W1 (tortoise)	0	0	0	0
	Sense W2 (taught us)	0.5	0	0	0
	Category W1	0	0	0	0
	Category W2	0.5	0	0	0
	Non-relocation	0	0	0	0
	Total:	1	0	0	0

¹⁹ Values of 0.5 are given for the sense and category of W2, since *us*, one of the two words in the original *taught us*, has an equivalent in the translation. Although *nas*” and *us* seem to have phonetic correspondence, the *s* occurs in different locations in the phrases *nas*”*tam*” *morili* and *taught us*; if we consider the verb-object pairs translation units, *s* does not occur in analogous locations in each and does not provide a basis for analyzing phonetic correspondence.

Table 3b. Sense Maintenance and Added Pun Words for *tortoise/taught us* Pun

Pun words	SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
tortoise	X	X	X	X
taught us	X	X	X	X
Added pun word	mor-em ²⁰ sea-N.INS	Sprut-om ²⁰ octopus-M.INS	Sprut-ik-om octopus-DIM-N.INS	Piton python[M.NOM]
Added pun word	nas ²⁰ 1PL.ACC / mor-ili exhaust-PST;PL	s ²⁰ prut-ik-om ²⁰ with switch-DIM-M.INS	s prut-ik-om with switch-DIM-M.INS	pitonc-y ²⁰ <i>pitomc-y</i> pet-NOM.PL
Phonetic or graphemic correspondence	graphemic	both	both	both

In Table 3b, all pun pairs have no morphological or other semantic relationship between their expressions, and thus they exhibit a maximal difference in meaning (R. Feldstein, personal communication, October 1, 2011; “Piton” n.d.; Vasmer 1973).

For this particular set, all translations exhibit consistently high phonetic and graphemic correspondence between the two pun expressions, although SVCD has the weakest form correspondence with a pun based on homographic roots. The other three translations show both high graphemic and high phonetic correspondence, with VN and BZ’s second pun words containing all of the graphemes and sound segments of the first pun word; for BZ, these graphemes/sound segments occur word-initially in the two pun words, and for VN, the second pun expression contains an additional hard sign (which only affects graphemic correspondence) and the *-ik* diminutive suffix. Lastly, NMD’s translation is a true homophone pun.²¹ In the cases of NMD and of VN, inflectional morphology is incorporated into the pun’s graphemic/phonetic correspondence.

Of all the examples so far, this set exhibits both the lowest values for linguistic fidelity and some of the strongest form correspondences, as well as semantically discrete pun words/phrases across the board.

²⁰ BZ uses a misspelling of *pitomcy* ‘pets’. While this could arguably be treated a sub-pun, where the paronym of *pitoncy* puns paradigmatically with *pitomcy*, this study only addresses the punning as it occurs syntagmatically.

²¹ VN’s and NMD’s translations are very similar. While it is possible both translators independently picked similar solutions, it is also not unlikely that NMD built on VN’s solution.

2.4.4 Variety Among Approaches

This last example further exemplifies the observed patterns between sense selection and translation tendencies. Pun (9) plays with the homophones of the verb *lessen* and the noun *lesson* (Gardner 1960:99):

- (9) “That’s the reason they’re called [lessons],” the Gryphon remarked: “because they [lessen] from day to day”

Each translator takes a slightly different approach, yet each approach aligns with a previous example. SVCD maintains both senses as occurs in 2.4.1. VN maintains one sense, that of ‘lessen’, as in 2.4.2. NMD also selects one sense, but hers is ‘lesson’. BZ exhibits the pattern shown in 2.4.3, as he maintains neither sense but adds two additional pun words. This highlights how the translator’s choice to maintain a particular sense is not necessarily predictable, but it leads to somewhat predictable outcomes.

As may be expected, SVCD achieves a high score of 5 for linguistic fidelity, VN and NMD achieve medium scores of 2, and BZ’s fidelity score is 0. These scores are consistent with those in previous examples, where the maintenance of one or more senses corresponds with different ranges of fidelity scores.

Table 4a. Linguistic Fidelity for Translations of ‘lessons’ and ‘lessen’

		SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
Word 1	lesson-s	učen’-e		zanât-i-â / zanât-i-âh ²²	
Word 2	less-en	u-bav-lâ-l-o-s’	u-korač-iva-l-i-s’		
	Phonetic, word, W1	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, word, W2	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W1	0	0	0	0
	Phonetic, root, W2	0	0	0	0
	Sense W1 (lesson)	1	0	1	0
	Sense W2 (lessen)	1	1	0	0
	Category W1	1	0	1	0
	Category W2	1	1	0	0
	Non-relocation	1	0	0	0
	Total:	5	2	2	0

²² The word occurs twice in the text; either version of the word yields the same analysis.

Table 4b. Sense Maintenance and Added Pun Words for *lesson/lessen* Pun

Pun words	SVCD	VN	NMD	BZ
lesson	učen'-e lesson-N.NOM	X	zanâti-â lesson-N.PL.ACC / zanâti-âh lesson-PREP.PL	X
lessen	ubav-lâ-los' diminish-IPFV- PST;N;REFL	ukoračiva-lis' shorten-IPFV- PST;PL;REFL	X	X
Added pun word		ukor-ami reproach-PL.INS	zanima-em borrow-IPFV- 1PL.PRES / zanima-t' borrow-IPFV-INF	propada-l vanish-IPFV-M;PST
Added pun word				propadavatel-i ²³ <i>prepodavatel-i</i> teacher-NOM.PL
Phonetic or graphemic correspondence	both	graphemic	both	both

The puns in Table 4b above align with larger trends. SVCD exhibits high linguistic fidelity, no morphological relationship between its pun words, and fairly weak graphemic/phonetic correspondence; only the grapheme/sound segment *u* is shared between the two words. This aligns with weaker form correspondences observed in the *tale/tail* pun (2.4.1).

Although NMD and VN each select different senses, their puns align with trends for when one sense is maintained. For both puns, form correspondence occurs primarily in roots. VN's pun is on two unrelated roots: the single root *ukor* and the combination of the derivational prefix *u-* and a portion (*kor*) of the root *korot*, which mutates into *korač* in its imperfective verbal form. If we consider the entirety of each pun word, the shared grapheme string is actually *ukora*, and when the word is divided into syllables rather than morphemes, the words have a matching three-syllable string: *u-ko-ra*. However, the correspondence of syllables rather than morphemes, if it is significant here, does not occur in any other puns in this study and thus does not seem to indicate an overall tendency. Moreover, it is unclear how much the *a* contributes to the pun for readers, since it is part of the root and stressed (bolded) in *ukoračivalis'* but part of inflectional

²³ This is another example where BZ intentionally misspells a word in order to achieve higher phonetic correspondence.

morphology and unstressed in *ukorami*. In view of the previous analyses, it seems most significant that VN's pun capitalizes on root identity and derivational morphology.

NMD exhibits slightly different patterns. She puns on *zan*, which is associated with a root much like the puns in 2.4.2; *zan* matches in its graphemes and sound segments. However, *zan* has the same historical origin in each pun word: the verb *zanimat'* and the noun *zanâtie* are both derived historically from the prefix *za-* plus the verb *imet'* ("Zanâtie" n.d.; "Zanimat'" n.d.). This gave rise to the verb *zanimat'* (with the root *zanima-*), which mutates in its perfective form into *zanâ-*, a form we see in *zanâtie*. Therefore, this indicates a stronger correspondence between these two words on the meaning spectrum.

However, the perceived semantic correspondence of these words may be weaker. The process of deriving the words from the same root is complex, which could create an impression of distance between the two words. Indeed, the meanings 'lesson' and 'borrow' are not as similar as one might expect from two related words. This introduces the possibility that these words, while related, may not be perceived to correspond as strongly in meaning as other related words.

Lastly, BZ exhibits low linguistic fidelity, but with no meaning correspondence and high phonetic/graphemic correspondence between his pun words, due to the fact that *propadavateli* contains all the sound segments/graphemes of *propadal*. This is consistent with the high phonetic correspondences and low semantic correspondences seen in 2.4.3, when translators maintain neither sense.

Another quality of this set is that each pun's grapheme and/or sound segment strings are word-initial. While this does not occur with every pun in this study, I discuss a potential tendency for word initial punning in 3.3.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Translation Process

While translation theory and practice vary on a surface level, there appear to be patterns and trends for translating English homophone puns in the above data. These emerge when translations are categorized based on how many of a pun's senses the translator maintains. As the puns in 2.4.4 especially demonstrate, variations in the dynamic equivalence of pun translations, as well as the linguistic means of achieving this equivalence, seem to result from initial decisions to maintain linguistic fidelity. Based on these choices, subsequent trends emerge in the language

of the translations. Therefore, I propose three overall steps for translating English homophone puns into another language:

- 1) The translator selects how many and which sense(s) to maintain.
- 2) The linguistic capabilities of the target language shape the options available to the translator.
- 3) The translator's personal style shapes the final result.

This is not to say that the translator consciously makes decisions about fidelity and translation in this particular order. Rather, this process indicates how one step must logically occur before the next in explaining the patterns we see, regardless of whether the translator performs these steps with intention.

3.2 Predictions

After establishing these steps, the next stage is to make predictions. Based on the above analysis, the observed trends suggest that, based on what we know about how many senses will be maintained, we may be able to predict what the actual linguistic form of the translation will look like. This refutes the vaguely-defined ideas of pun translation being “all-or-nothing” or a random product of the individual translator's creative abilities. Instead, it suggests that there is an underlying structure to the process of pun translation, even if the realm of theory has not reached a consensus on puns as a phenomenon in translation.

Whether or not a translator chooses to maintain one sense, both, or neither is never entirely predictable. However, sometimes the original text can serve as a predictor, as with the *tale/tail* pun in 2.4.1. If one were trying to make predictions about an individual translator or a particular translation approach, knowing the fidelity tendencies of these individuals and their views on formal vs. dynamic equivalence could lead to predictions of how many senses would be maintained, and thus predictions of what the translated puns would look like.

3.2.1 Predictions for When Both Senses are Maintained

When a translator maintains both senses, the results are somewhat random. However, more so than in other examples, translations of the *tale/tail* pun (2.4.1) show a tendency for weaker form

correspondence. This is supported by the correspondence of only one sound segment/grapheme in SVCD’s translation of the *lesson/lessen* pun (2.4.4). Thus, we can predict that the translation’s surface result will likely be a paronym pun with perhaps three or fewer shared graphemes and/or sound segments. Without a more extensive data set, it is difficult to say whether homonymous root punning occurs in this context and if so, how much it is inhibited by sense maintenance; however, no instances of homonymous root punning with dual sense preservation occur in these data. In general, we might visualize this on the pun-success spectra with the blue line below:

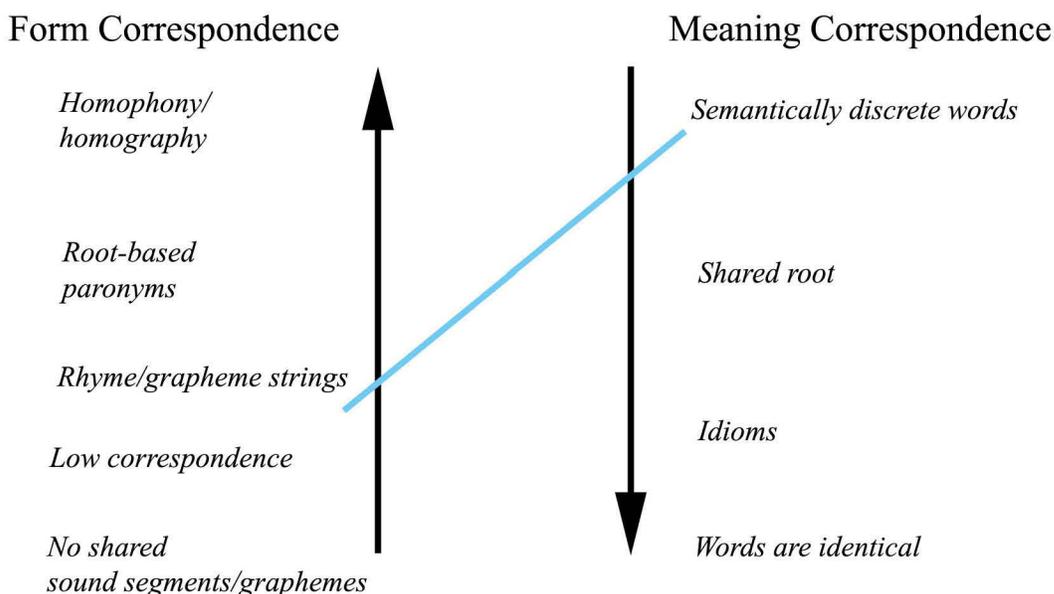


Figure 3. Dynamic Equivalence Tendencies for Both Senses Maintained In visualizing the relationship between form and meaning, the left side of the line hovers between rhyme/grapheme strings and low correspondence, and the right side indicates semantically discrete words.

An alternate outcome, as shown by NMD and BZ in 2.4.1, is that if stronger form correspondences occur, there is a sacrifice elsewhere, often in the realm of linguistic fidelity.

3.2.2 Predictions for When One Sense is Maintained

When the translator elects to maintain one sense, we will likely see punning on roots. Of all the translated puns in this study, there are six instances when one sense is maintained, and in all six instances, the form correspondence of the translated pun occurs in the root of a word composed of perceptibly discrete morphemes (i.e. the morphology is concatenative). Moreover, in four of these six instances, the two roots in the pun are homonymous and semantically unrelated.

Another of these six root-punning instances is NMD’s pun on *zanâtiâ* and *zanimaem*, where a semantic relationship between the words exists historically, but its perceived strength is unclear.

Thus, when one sense is maintained, we can predict that the pun will be primarily on the roots of the words (regardless of which sense is selected) and that its form correspondence is not likely to incorporate inflectional morphology (although SCVD’s *kopi/kopi* pun is an exception). Due to Russian’s wealth of homonymous roots, it is reasonable to predict that the two roots in the pun will be semantically discrete. This trend is mapped onto the pun success spectra in Figure 4:

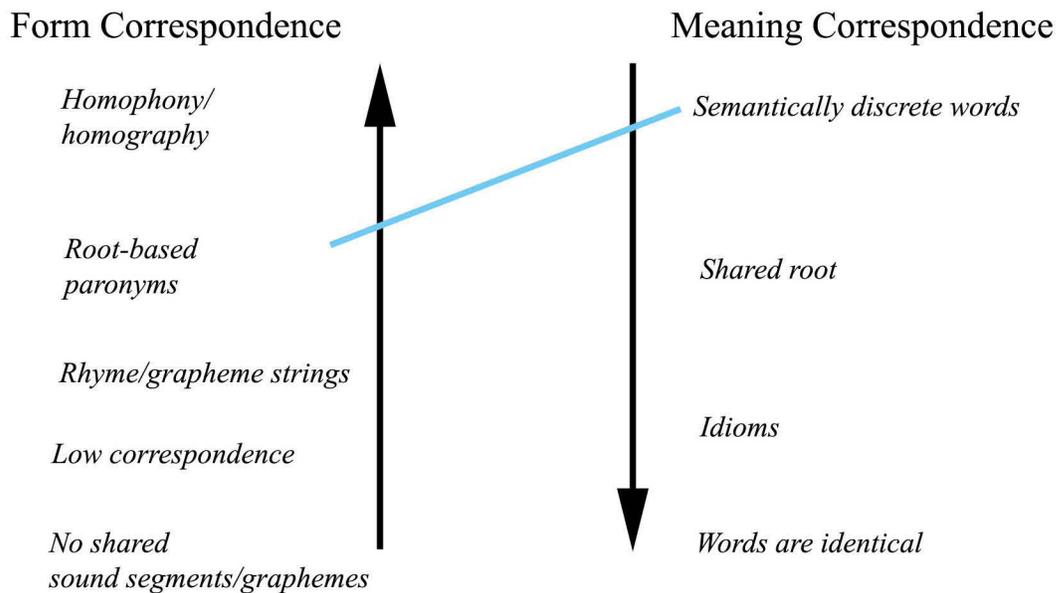


Figure 4. Dynamic Equivalence Tendencies for One Sense Maintained In visualizing the relationship between form and meaning for this category, the line connects root-based paronyms with semantically discrete words.

The data suggest that for this root punning, the translator may choose the sense whose word contains a more productive grapheme (and perhaps sound segment) string. For example, in the *mine/mine* pun translations (2.4.2), Russian has multiple words for ‘mine’ as an excavation (at least three options appear in the data). Yet for the sense of ‘mine’ as a possessive pronoun, Russian possession is typically expressed through adjectival forms from the root *mo-* ‘my’ or *svo-* ‘one’s own’. There are substitutes for these (M. Rojavin, personal communication, October 14, 2015), but anything that deviates from the most common option could appear more marked.

Based on these preliminary data, it appears that translators may select the sense associated with a more productive grapheme string; based on what we know about Russian’s abundance of homonymous roots, this suggests that the word with the most productive string is one that offers

the canonical string CVC. Thus, CVC-structured roots are more productive for punning, as a root taking the most common form *likelier* has a homonym. In the above example, the roots *mo-* and *svo-* do not have the structure CVC. Thus, if presented with two senses, translators may choose the sense which has a productive string in its potential roots. However, further study is needed to establish whether this is truly the case.

3.2.3 Predictions for When Neither Sense is Maintained

When translators choose not to explicitly maintain either sense, we can first predict that translators will maintain a semantic difference between pun words, as is the tendency for most of the translations in this study. Additionally, we can predict higher levels of form correspondence. However, how this correspondence is expressed may depend on the goals of the individual translator. For example, BZ twice achieves high correspondence by intentionally misspelling words so that one pun word contains all the graphemes/sound segments present in the other pun word. Other translators have different approaches to maintaining neither sense; VN achieves graphemic/phonetic correspondence similar to BZ's, where one pun word contains the graphemes/sound segments of the other, but he does so without manipulating the words' spelling. In the case of NMD, correspondence occurs through a true homophone pun.

In the data, the translators' disregard of both senses in the *tortoise/taught us* pun (2.4.3) provides prominent examples of form correspondence achieved through case matching. Presumably, this occurs because in disregarding both senses, the translator has a greater amount of overall freedom. Similarly, we might predict that if case matching occurs, it is most likely to occur in these instances.

This overall trend is depicted in Figure 5:

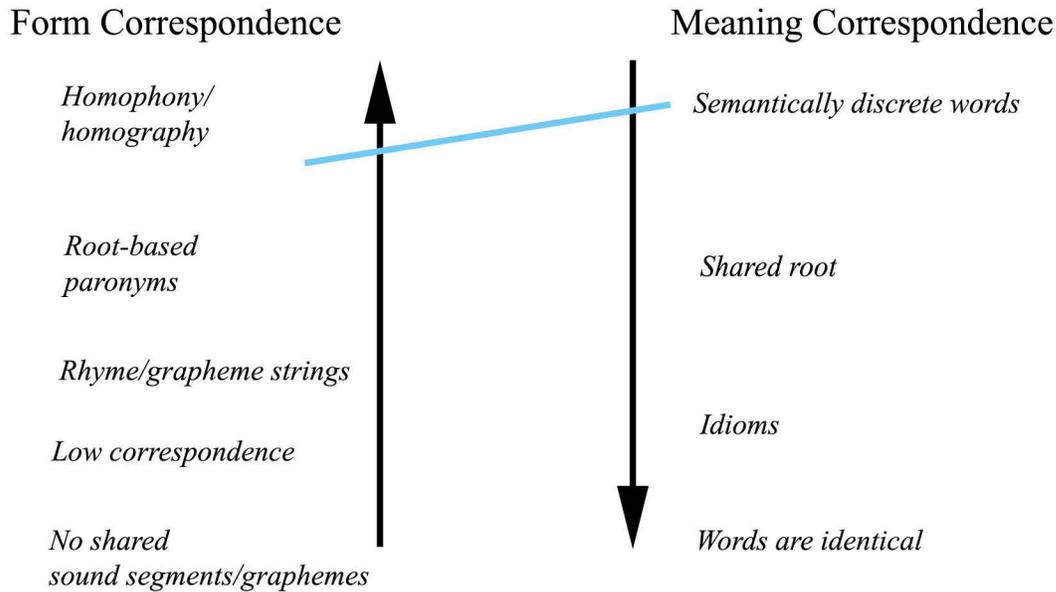


Figure 5. Dynamic Equivalence Tendencies for Neither Sense Maintained In visualizing the relationship between form and meaning for this category, the left side of the line is located in a general region of high form correspondence (which sometimes appears as homophony in the data), and the right side indicates semantically discrete words.

3.3 Priorities in Punning

As a whole, the puns in this study grant insight into overall priorities in translating homophone puns into Russian. First of all, semantic difference between the two pun words/phrases appears to be relatively easy for translators to maintain, as well as preferable. Of the sixteen puns analyzed, thirteen successfully maintain this difference. This ultimately suggests that regardless of how many senses are selected, we can expect high levels of semantic difference in the overall translation of homophone puns.

Logically, we might expect this difference to be frequently maintained, since any given word has more terms unrelated to it than related to it. For example, in SVCD's pun on *pověst* 'tale' and *hvošt* 'tail', it is unlikely that the translator selected the words based on their lack of relationship; instead, the words' discrete meanings arise naturally.

However, the *mine/mine* pun translations (2.4.2) shed light on this issue. VN's translation of this pun contains two words that have a morphological relationship through the shared root *kop*, which means that VN uses the shared root as a means of achieving form correspondence. Thus in aiming for form correspondence, a translator may choose related words precisely because these

words correspond in their roots. Yet it is unclear if translators often face the dilemma between form correspondence and maintaining semantic difference when shared morphology is an option.

The data also suggest that translators have priorities in actualizing form correspondence. To begin, Russian's form correspondence tends to be graphemic, and if vowel stress/reduction affects both grapheme strings equally, it is subsequently phonetic. Additionally, while further research is necessary, there is a potential tendency to locate form correspondence in the word-initial position; punning exists word-initially in twelve of the sixteen translated puns. This may in part be due to Russian's inflectional morphology being word-final, which means homonymous roots or even shared roots are more likely to be in the word-initial position. However, counterexamples to this proposed location occur, such as the pun on *prost* 'simple' and *hvošt* 'tail'. Therefore, it is possible that translators locate form correspondence in the word-initial position, but this may also be a natural consequence of Russian's structure.

Even so, a tendency to pun on word-initial roots and/or affixes may indicate the prioritization of different types of morphemes. The primary tendency we see is punning on root morphemes. For example, of the sixteen puns analyzed, thirteen pun on a grapheme/sound segment string in which the root (usually a CVC string) of the first pun word corresponds with the graphemes/sound segments of the second pun word's root. An example is the pair *miny* 'mines' and *mina* 'expression' (from 2.4.2), both based on *min*.

Another tendency is punning on roots plus derivational morphology. Of the thirteen root-based puns, four puns combine derivational morphology and the root to create a shared grapheme string between the two words. This happens with *ukoračivalis* 'they are shortened' and *ukorami* 'with reproaches'. In *ukoračivalis*, the derivational prefix *u-* is combined with the string *kor*, which corresponds graphemically with the root *ukor* in *ukorami*.

Compared to this, there are fewer instances of incorporating inflectional morphology into the pun's form correspondence. In these cases, inflectional morphology seems to be incorporated only *after* derivational morphology has been incorporated. This occurs in NMD's pun on *s prut-ik-om* 'with a little switch' and *sprut-ik-om* 'little octopus', where the inflectional suffix *-om* for the instrumental case is shared between the two words, as well as the derivational diminutive suffix *-ik*. Even in examples such as SCVD's *kopi/kopi* translation of the *mine/mine* pun, this trend holds; the words have identical absences of derivational morphology (zero prefixes/suffixes), and only after this matching do they pun on inflectional morphology.

However, VN's pun on *sprut-om* and *s' prut-ik-om* is an exception, as the two expressions share the inflectional suffix *-om* but differ by the derivational suffix *-ik*.

While we cannot thoroughly conclude that derivational morphology is incorporated into puns prior to inflectional morphology, or why this might occur, this study, as well as the discussion in 2.4 about the mental distinction between morphology types, suggests that this is a potential trend that could be further investigated.

3.4 Other Factors

Although consistent trends occur in Russian translations of homophone puns, there are also unknown factors, such as the cultural role of punning and translation practice. These factors may introduce uncertainties into the puns and results above.

One cultural element that has not been addressed so far is the role of punning in Russian literature. While punning is apparently a universal linguistic phenomenon (Attardo 1994), the role of punning in Russian may be slightly different than in English. English puns are often considered cheesy, facetious, and perhaps irreverent, though exceptions exist. However, Russian literature contains punning in more solemn texts. For example, the Russian poet Marina Tsvetaeva puns in her work; she creates a homophone/homograph pun on *žgut*, which can either mean 'they burn' or mean 'handful/bundle' (S. Forrester, personal communication, October 1, 2015). From examples such as this, it might be argued that puns can potentially be more serious and profound in Russian, rather than merely humorous or ambiguous. Thus, dynamic equivalence in translating puns between English and Russian may be more complex than this study's scope acknowledges.

Moreover, translation theories may define formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence differently. One major division in this debate is whether one should write the text as it would be expressed in one's own language or modify one's own language to do innovative things. These are two very different interpretations of dynamic equivalence. In this study, it could be argued that BZ's translation does the former, as it often sacrifices fidelity to create wordplay through misspelling and idioms, which may have a stronger effect in Russian. However, NMD's translation, in striving to create true homophone puns, could be said to do the latter, creating puns that do not occur as frequently in Russian and may seem more foreign to Russian speakers.

Despite these differences, the *tortoise/taught us* pun (2.4.3) suggests that the translators in this study prioritize homophony and high phonetic correspondence when possible. Moreover, the fact that we still see trends despite these different approaches supports the argument that such trends indicate overall features of English-to-Russian homophone pun translation.

4 Conclusion

By viewing pun translation in terms of formal and dynamic equivalence, and further evaluating dynamic equivalence in terms of form and meaning, we are able to concretize some of the arguments presented on the translatability of puns. It appears that the selection to maintain senses, a product of both the text and the translator's commitment to linguistic fidelity, predetermines what translation options are expedient for rendering homophone puns in Russian. The maintenance of senses primarily affects the internal form correspondence that the translated pun exhibits, while it tends not to affect the maintenance of semantic difference between the two words/phrases in the pun. Overall, this tradeoff between sense maintenance and internal form correspondence confirms the classic assumption that there is a tradeoff between formal and dynamic equivalence.

This study not only upholds this assumption but shows what its actual linguistic results tend to look like, due to Russian's structure and its capacity for root-based puns. Based on how many senses are selected, there are higher likelihoods of weak form correspondence, homonymous-root puns, or even true homophone puns. In achieving this form correspondence, root-based punning seems to be the most salient solution, and we see indications that punning on derivational morphology may be prioritized over punning on inflectional morphology. Our ability to predict these outcomes thus suggests that some effects of Russian's linguistic structure may transcend the decisions of an individual translator in the process of pun translation.

While this study focuses on English and Russian, its overall method might be used to describe homonym pun translation between any two languages and the linguistic structures that impact translation. The metric for linguistic fidelity and the spectra of pun success can be combined with an analysis of linguistic structures to determine what types of form and meaning correspondence frequently occur in a given language. For example, if one were to study the relationship between English and Chinese, the line defining Chinese's punning tendencies may fall in a different place

on the spectra for pun success than the line for Russian's. One could then analyze Chinese translations of English puns and make new predictions based on sense maintenance.

Since puns are a complex phenomenon, there is much yet to be explored, and my research offers several topics for future study. One topic not addressed here is the potential effect of borrowed and loan words on pun translation. For instance, some of the puns in this study contain words originating from German (*mina*) and Greek (*piton*). The English word *mine* (excavation) also comes from the same German root as the Russian word, just as English's *python* also originates from Greek (Stevenson & Lindberg 2011). The idea that a word with phonetic correspondence may already exist between the target language and source language due to its origins could affect word choice in pun translation. As globalization increases borrowing and commonalities among languages, this presents a topic for future investigation.

Also, this study does not address the perceived humor of puns. While humor is difficult to measure, one might examine whether the varying levels of dynamic equivalence observed in this study are perceived as humorous by Russian readers. For example, Demurova's puns often exhibit high phonetic correspondence simultaneously with maximal semantic difference; readers may perceive this differently from Zahoder's misspellings or Nabokov's root-based puns.

Just as analyses of *Alice's* apparent nonsense grant insight into the text's philosophy, this study teases out order from the apparent randomness of pun translation, shedding light inside the rabbit hole that is translation fidelity. While further research is needed to solidify the ideas presented here, this study offers a preliminary exploration of the underlying linguistic mechanisms of pun translation and how linguistic structure may to some extent play a determining role in this process. Thus puns may stretch the limits of language, but translation too, in a distinguishable process, stretches languages to portray these puns.

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6 Appendix: Russian *Alice* Translations

The first item in each section is the original text from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, as it appears in Martin Gardner (1960)'s *The Annotated Alice*. All Russian translations are given first in the original Cyrillic text, followed by a transliteration into Roman orthography using the ISO 9 system and a literal English re-translation of the Russian. Curled brackets indicate slight divergence from literal translation for the sake of comprehension. All translations utilize conventional English punctuation, regardless of the Russian punctuation used. The Russian names remain unchanged, although in the re-translations, they are spelled as they would be with English orthography.

6.1 Tale/tail

“Mine is a long and sad [tale]!” said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.

“It is a long [tail], certainly,” said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse’s tail; “but why do you call it sad?”

The Annotated Alice p. 33

„Ахъ, грустная и длинная [повѣсть] моей жизни“, вздохнула мышь, глядя на Соню.
„Длинная-то, длинная“! подумала Соня, оглядывая на мышиный [хвостъ], „но почему грустная, любопытно знать,“

„Ah“, grustnaâ i dlinnaâ [pověst’] moej žizni“, vzdohnula myš’, glâdâ na Sonû.
„Dlinnaâ-to, dlinnaâ“! podumala Sonâ, oglâdyvaâ na myšinyj [hvost’], „no počemu grustnaâ, lûbopytno znat’“,“

“Ah, sad and long is the [story] of my life,” the Mouse sighed, looking at Sonia.
“Long, yes, long!” Sonia considered, examining the Mouse’s [tail], “But why sad, it is interesting to know,”

Sonâ v carstve diva p. 33

„Мой [разсказъ] [прость], печалень и длиннень“, со вздохомъ сказала Мышь, обращаясь къ Анѣ.

„Да, онъ несомнѣнно, очень длинный“, замѣтила Аня, которой послышалось не „[прость]“, а „[хвостъ]“.

„Moj [razskaz’] [prost’], pečalen’ i dlinnen’“, so vzdohom’ skazala Myš’, obrašaâs’ k’ Aně
„Da, on’ nesomněnno, očen’ dlinnij“, zamětilla Anâ, kotoroj poslyšalos’ ne „[prost’]“, a „[hvost’]“.

“My [story] is [simple], sad and long,” with a sigh said the Mouse.

“Yes, it is doubtlessly, very long,” remarked Anya, who had heard not [simple], but [tail].”

Vladimir Nabokov p. 25

—Это очень длинная и грустная [история] — начала Мышь со вздохом.

Помолчав, она вдруг взвизгнула:

—[Прохвост]!

—[Про хвост]? — повторила Алиса с недоумением и взглянула на её хвост. —Грустная [история] [про хвост]?

—Èto očen' dlinnaâ i grustnaâ [istoriâ] — načala Mys' so vzdohom.

Pomolčav, ona vdrug vzvizgnula:

—[Prohvast]!

—[Pro hvost]? — povtorila Alisa s nedoumeniem i vzglânula na eë hvost. —Grustnaâ [istoriâ] [pro hvost]?

“It’s a very long and sad [story],” began the Mouse with a sigh. Growing silent, she suddenly screamed:

“[The scoundrel]!”

“[About a tail]?” repeated Alisa with bewilderment and looked at the Mouse’s tail. “A sad [story] [about a tail]?”

Nina M. Demurova p. 114

Мышь повернулась к Алисе и тяжело вздохнула.

—Внемли, о дитя! Этой [истории] [с хвостиком] тысяча лет! — сказала она.

—Истории [с хвостиком]? — удивленно переспросила Алиса, с интересом поглядев на мышкин [хвостик]. — А что с ним случилось страшного? По-моему, он совершенно цел — вот он какой длинный!

Myš' povernulas' k Alise i tâželo vzdohnula.

—Vnemli, o ditâ! Ètoj istorii [s hvostikom] tysâča let! — skazala ona.

—Istorii [s hvostikom]? — udivlenno peresprosila Alisa, s interesom poglâdev na myškin [hvostik]. — A čto s nim slučilos' strašnogo? Po-moemu, on soveršenno cel — vot on kakoj dlinnij!

The Mouse turned to Alisa and heavily sighed.

“Listen, oh child! To this [story], a thousand years [and a little more] old!” said she.

“A story [with a little tail]?” surprisedly repeated Alisa, having looked at the Mouse’s [little tail] with interest. “But what scary thing happened to it? To me, it is completely intact — look how long it is!”

Boris Zahoder

6.2 Mine/mine

“there’s a large mustard [mine] near here. And the moral of that is — ‘The more there is of [mine] the less there is of yours.’”

The Annotated Alice p. 92

„Вот даже не по-далеку отсюда есть горчичные [копи], как же ископаемое! Отсюда выходишь, что сколько ни [копи] довольно не [накопишь]!“

„Vot’ daže ne po-daleku otsûda est’ gorčičnyâ [kopi], kak’ že iskopaemoe! Otsûda vyhodiš’, što skol’ko ni [kopi] dovol’no ne [nakopiš’]!“

“Look, not even very far from here there are mustard [mines], how dug out! From there you get that no matter how much you [mine], you will not [save up] enough!”

Sonâ v carstve diva p. 132-133

„Тут недалеко производятся горчичные [раскопки]. И мораль этого: не [копайся]!“

„Tut’ nedaleko proizvodâtsâ gorčičnyâ [raskopki]. I moral’ ètogo: ne [kopajsâ]!“

“Here not far away they carry out mustard [mines]. And the moral of this: don’t [dig]!”²⁴

Vladimir Nabokov p. 80

Из неё делают [мины] и закладывают при [подкопах]... А мораль отсюда такова: хорошая [мина] при плохой игре — самое главное!

Iz neě delaût [miny] i zakladyvaût pri [podkopah]... A moral’ otsûda takova: horošââ [mina] pri plohoj igre — samoe glavnoe!

“From this they make [mines] and they place [mines] nearby... and the moral from this is as follows: {putting on} a good [expression/{front}] during a bad game is the most important thing!”

Nina M. Demurova p. 206

Тут неподалеку что-то [минировали] горчичными [минами] совсем на днях. А отсюда мораль: “Чему быть — того не [миновать].”

Tut nepodaleku što-to [minirovali] gorčičnymi [minami] sovsem na dnâh. A otsûda moral’: “Čemu byt’ — togo ne [minovat’].”

“Here not far away they [were mining] something with mustard [mines] just the other day. And thence is the moral: ‘Whatever is to be, one cannot [escape] it.’”

Boris Zahoder

6.3 Tortoise/taught us

“We called him [Tortoise] because he [taught us],”

The Annotated Alice p. 96

„Мы его называли [моремь], потому что [насъ] тамъ [морили]“,

²⁴ While *kopajsâ* literally means ‘dig’, it is suggested that *ne kopajsâ* is a euphemistic way of saying ‘don’t pick your nose’ (S. Forrester, personal communication, October 17, 2015).

„My ego nazyvali [morem’], potomu čto [nas’] tam’ [morili]“,

“We called him [sea], because there they [exhausted us],”

Soná v carstve diva p. 142

*Name of ‘Tortoise: Молодымъ [Спрутомъ] / Molodym’ [Sprutom’] / Young [Octopus]

„Мы его звали такъ потому, что онъ всегда былъ [съ прутикомъ]“

„My ego zvali tak’ potomu, čto on’ vsegda byl’ [s’ prutikom’]“

“We called him that because he always [had a little switch]”

Vladimir Nabokov p. 84

—Мы его звали [Спрутиком], потому что он всегда ходил [с прутиком]

—My ego zvali [Sprutikom], potomu čto on vsegda hodil [s prutikom]

“We called him [Octopus] because he always walked around [with a little switch]”

Nina M. Demurova p. 210

—Он был [Питон]! Ведь мы — его [питонцы]!

—On byl [Piton]! Ved’ my — ego [pitoncy]!

“He was [Python]! After all, we are his [pets]!”²⁵

Boris Zahoder

6.4 Lesson/lessen

“That’s the reason they’re called [lessons],” the Gryphon remarked: “because they [lessen] from day to day.”

The Annotated Alice p. 99

„Ничего не странно! Сама увидишь. Вѣдь иначе никогда не отъучишься! Вотъ понемногу [ученье]-то и [убавлялось].“

„Ničego ne stranno! Sama uvidiš’. Věd’ inače nikogda ne ot’učiš’sâ! Vot’ ponemnogu [učen’e]-to i [ubavlâlos’].“

“Nothing is strange! You will see for yourself. Otherwise you will never finish studying! And see how little by little [the learning] [was diminishing].”

Soná v carstve diva p. 143

²⁵ *pitoncy*, as noted in the analysis, is an intentional misspelling of *pitomcy* ‘pets’.

„Поэтому они и назывались [укорами] — [укорачивались], понимаете?“

„Poètomu oni i nazyvalis’ [ukorami] — [ukoračivalis’], ponimaete?“

“Therefore they were called [reproaches] — they [shortened], you understand?”

Vladimir Nabokov p. 87

— [Занятия] почему так называются? — пояснил Грифон. — Потому что на [занятиях] мы у нашего учителя ум [занимаем]... В таких случаях говорят: «Ему ума не [занимать]». Поняла?

— [Zanâtiâ] počemu tak nazyvaûtsâ? — poâsnil Grifon. — Potomu čto na [zanâtiâh] my u našego učitelâ um [zanimaem]... V takih slučaaâh govorât: «Emu uma ne [zanimat’]». Ponâla?

“Why are [lessons] called that?” explained Gryphon. “Because at [lessons] we [borrowed] a mind from our teacher ... In these situations they say: ‘He doesn’t need [to borrow] a mind.’”

Nina M. Demurova p. 218

— А с нашими учителями иначе не получалось, — сказал Грифон. — Текучий состав: каждый день кто-нибудь [пропадал]. Поэтому их и называют [пропадаватели], кстати.

— A s našimi učitelâmi inače ne polučalos’, — skazal Grifon. — Tekučij sostav: každyj den’ kto-nibud’ [propadal]. Poètomu ih i nazyvaût [propadavateli], kstati.

“But with our teachers it never happened any othe way,” said Gryphon. “Fluctuating staff: every day someone [vanished]. That's why they call them [teachers],²⁶ by the way.”

Boris Zahoder

²⁶ *propadavateli*, as noted in the analysis, is an intentional misspelling of *prepodavateli* ‘teachers’.