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TRANSLATING ENGLISH WORDPLAY INTO SERBIAN: EVIDENCE FROM THREE DYSTOPIAN NOVELS¹

Abstract

The paper deals with ludic use of language in dystopian fiction, with focus on Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*, and how instances of wordplay in these three novels are translated into Serbian. As wordplay is a complex phenomenon both from the perspective of specific linguistic mechanisms used to achieve it and from the perspective of various communicative functions it may serve, it is usually considered difficult to translate. After some introductory remarks on the nature of wordplay, a selection of examples will be discussed in order to shed light on the strategies used in the translation of wordplay in these three novels.

Key words: language play, wordplay, translation, dystopia, dystopian fiction, Aldous Huxley, Margaret Atwood

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¹ I am indebted to Professor Bugarski for teaching me that language play is a serious business.

1. Introduction

The propensity to play is a universal human trait, found in all cultures and in all periods of history and is, as Žyško (2017: 2) says, probably as old as language itself. Huizinga (1949/1980: 1) points out that play actually predates culture “for culture [...] always presupposes human society, and animals have not waited for man to teach them their playing”. As such, play is an evolutionary, biological and physiological phenomenon, the purpose of which has not yet been fully understood. Various attempts to explain what makes us play have been made, focusing on different aspects and functions of ludic activity, but the answer to the question why humans and (some) animals play remains elusive (for an overview of different hypotheses, see Blumenfeld 1941, Huizinga 1949/1980, Caillois 1961/2001, Norbeck 1974, Schwartzman 1979, Sutton-Smith 1980, Cook 2000, Elkonin 2005). At the same time, play performs important anthropological, sociological and psychological functions in human societies and can take many diverse forms. One such form, or rather, medium, is language.

Following Jakobson (1960), the functions of language have traditionally been classified as referential, emotive, phatic, conative, metalingual (or metalinguistic)² and poetic. But language also has a ludic function, i.e. it is used not only to convey information, express attitudes or emotions, establish or maintain communication, etc., but is also used to play. In order to incorporate ludic aspects of language use into this typology, different authors have linked them to some of Jakobson’s functions: metalinguistic, emotive, phatic and poetic. Yaguello (1998, as cited in Kabatek 2015: 221fn) believes that all verbal play is metalinguistic in nature but Kabatek (2015: 221-222) argues that although a general property of wordplay is that it is not only the content of the message, but the message itself which is the focus of attention, this does not automatically subsume language play under the metalinguistic function. Kullman (2015: 52-53) links puns to metalinguistic and emotive functions as they relate to the language and the sender but recognizes that wordplay “might have a communicative and social function which is not quite covered by Jakobson’s categories” (Kullmann 2015: 47). In his analysis of wordplay in works by William Shakespeare, Lewis Carroll and Count Baldassare Castiglione, he finds that “most of the puns somehow force the interlocutor to go on talking [...],

² Although Jakobson (1960) uses the term ‘metalingual’, there seems to be a preference in more recent publications towards the term ‘metalinguistic’.

to continue sending messages, to go on with a social game” (Kullmann 2015: 53), which he finds similar to yet distinct from phatic utterances and proceeds to posit another function of language, which he calls ‘ludic’ or ‘provocative’. Finally, it seems logical to relate wordplay to the poetic function of language, as Maybin and Swann (2007) do. Jakobson himself (1960: 357) uses an example of wordplay (Eisenhower’s political slogan *I like Ike*) to illustrate this function and says that “any attempt to reduce the sphere of poetic function to poetry or to confine poetry to poetic function would be a delusive oversimplification. Poetic function is not the sole function of verbal art but only its dominant, determining function, whereas in all other verbal activities it acts as a subsidiary, accessory constituent” (Jakobson 1960: 356). But this relationship is not completely straightforward, either. As Kabatek (2015: 223) points out, “even if wordplay might be an important element of many instances of poetry, there are also many examples of everyday wordplay without any aim at being poetry”, reducing the meaning of the term ‘poetic’ to its narrow sense of a literary form. Perhaps the most balanced approach is taken by Zirker and Winter-Froemel, who say that “in many cases, specific realizations of wordplay seem to oscillate between a metalinguistic and a poetic function, and still other functions may be of even greater importance for certain cases of wordplay” (Zirker and Winter-Froemel 2015: 9-10).

What is clear even from this brief overview is that the ludic aspect of language does not fit neatly into Jakobson’s functional model. Different authors relate it to one or the other of the six functions but admit that it cannot be fully equated with any of them, or they solve the problem by introducing an additional function. A more fruitful approach might be to view language play not as one of the functions or a separate function altogether, but rather as a mode of communication that can fulfil any of the six functions in varying degrees in a particular communicative situation while at the same time achieving an additional communicative effect. In other words, the speaker can use language referentially, emotively, conatively, poetically, phatically and/or metalinguistically and choose to do so playfully. To play or not to play is thus a matter of choice.

But why play in the first place? After all, wordplay is “a superfluous ornament not necessary for the basic needs of transmitting a message” (Kabatek 2015: 226). Moreover, utterances involving wordplay require increased cognitive effort from both the addresser and the addressee and as such violate Grice’s maxims of manner and relation (Bauer 2015: 269,

Kullmann 2015: 48; Żyśko 2017: 5). The answer to why we play with language is – because we can, because it is fun and because it serves a higher purpose, which are not mutually exclusive. That playing with language is fun is a well-known experiential fact, stressed, among others, by Huizinga (1949/1980), Crystal (2001) and Khir (2012). It seems that humans take particular delight in utilizing their linguistic capacity for purposes of enjoyment and entertainment, to “show a mastery of language” and to create “an atmosphere of humour and playfulness” (Kullmann 2015: 47). Language play may also have a purely aesthetic effect, fulfilling our aesthetic needs (Kabatek 2015: 226). Clearly, language play is inextricably linked to humour, creativity and beauty but the discussion of these complex relations is far beyond the scope of this paper.³ We will focus on what it is that wordplay adds to the message in the communicative sense or, to use Kabatek’s words, how it modulates the message, adds or subtracts communicative weight (Kabatek 2015: 226) and how this is transferred in the process of translation.

2. Wordplay and its translation

Wordplay is notoriously difficult to translate, as pointed out by a number of authors (Laurian 1992, Delabastita 1994, 1996, Weissbrod 1996, Alexieva 1997/2014, Díaz-Pérez 2013, 2015, to name just a few) and is thus frequently considered to be a translation problem. As Delabastita (1994: 223) says, “the cause of these (real or alleged, theoretical or practical) difficulties lies in the fact that the semantic and pragmatic effects of the source-text wordplay find their origin in particular structural characteristics of the source language for which the target language more often than not fails to produce a counterpart”. Nevertheless, most authors seem to agree that although it does not travel well, it does not mean that it cannot travel at all, as will be shown below. Further difficulty in the case of English-Serbian translation of wordplay is possibly presented by the fact that speakers of Serbian do not seem to be particularly prone to play with language (Bugarski 2013: 22), at least not at the morphological

³ For different aspects of the relationship between ludicity and creativity, see Cook (2000), Carter (2004), Bagasheva and Stamenov (2013), Jones (2016). Humour and language play are explored by Maybin and Swan (2007), Bell (2016), Kao, Levy and Goodman (2016).

level. Although there are certainly some notable exceptions (for various examples, see Bugarski 2011, Klikovac 2008a, 2008b, Prodanović-Stankić 2014), the reasons for this seem to be both linguistic and cultural. That is why it might be interesting to see how translators cope with instances of wordplay when translating from English into Serbian and what they do to overcome this problem.

2.1. Definition of wordplay

As wordplay is a very complex phenomenon, it is not easy to define. For the purposes of this paper, the terms ‘language play’, ‘verbal play’ and ‘wordplay’ are used interchangeably although it is, of course, possible and necessary to make distinctions.⁴ Delabastita (1996: 128) defines wordplay as “various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two (or more) linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings”. Several important features of wordplay are mentioned: it stems from the structural features of a particular language or languages, it is communicatively significant and it relies on similarity of forms and dissimilarity of meaning. Žyško (2017: 3-17) adds ambiguity, novelty and humour to this list, while Kabatek (2015: 215) stresses the element of surprise without which wordplay cannot achieve its expressive effect. Renner (2015) in his study of blends as instances of wordplay recognizes the following features which contribute to wordplayfulness: formal complexity, structural transgression, graphic play on words, semantic play on words, and functional ludicity.

Wordplay is obviously a multi-faceted phenomenon which operates simultaneously on different linguistic levels, is related to creativity and humour and can perform a variety of communicative functions. In the following section, some of these aspects of wordplay will be surveyed as they are utilized by the two writers in their dystopian novels.

⁴ A further terminological distinction made by some but not all authors is that between ‘wordplay’ and ‘pun’. For an overview of terminological issues, see Žyško (2017).

2.2. Wordplay in dystopian fiction

Literature has always been a domain of creative language play in all its variety. When thinking about wordplay in English-language literature, the first names that come to mind are probably those of the great masters of ludic linguistic expression: William Shakespeare, Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll, James Joyce. More recently, however, a word lover may find the genres of science fiction, fantasy fiction and children's literature particularly rewarding in this respect, as shown by Munat (2007). For this and some other reasons that will be elaborated later, the focus of our discussion will be on three dystopian novels: *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley and *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood* by Margaret Atwood (the first two books of M. Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy).

Dystopia is commonly defined in contrast to utopia, as "any alarmingly unpleasant imaginary world, usually of the projected future" (Baldick 2001: 74) and is closely related to sci-fi and apocalyptic fiction.⁵ A. Huxley's *Brave New World* is often cited as a classic example of the dystopian science-fiction genre while Margaret Atwood insists that her books are not science fiction because they deal with things that are already possible and happening (see, for example, Atwood 2004, 2005) and labels them instead as speculative fiction or social science fiction. Truth be told, both Atwood and Huxley base most of their pessimistic projections on the existing scientific knowledge of the time – Huxley on Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopaedia and Atwood on genetic modification – and then expand on it, taking the application of that knowledge to the next stage.

These authors were chosen for several reasons. Although Huxley's and Atwood's novels were published some 70 years apart and are very different in many literary aspects, they share a number of common themes: a dystopian view of a totalitarian future society in which unimpeded scientific progress has led to horrifying social and environmental changes, human interference with natural reproduction and development, an authoritarian regime and its close relations with big corporations, mass production and consumerism, objectification of women and children and religion as a social force, to mention just a few. Both authors rely extensively on interpolations of other literary texts (Shakespeare in Huxley; Virginia Woolf, Samuel Beckett, Kurt Vonnegut, Shakespeare, etc. in Atwood) and

⁵ For terminological distinctions between "dystopia" and "anti-utopia", see Bould et al. (2009), Živković (2014).

intertextuality with other texts and/or registers (e.g. nursery rhymes and slogans in Huxley, advertising and Christian religious registers in Atwood), which will be of some significance for our analysis.

The reasons why this specific genre tends to be rich in linguistic creativity are manifold and only an overview of some of them will be given here. Firstly, many science-fiction novelists, dystopian or otherwise, create new worlds abounding with new objects and concepts that need to be named (see Stockwell 2000: 113, Bould 2009: 225, Cacchiani 2016). By naming, the words' potential for hypostatization, i.e. their ability to form concepts, is exploited. Hohenhaus (2007: 22) calls this 'functionalized hypostatization', by which he means the hypostatization of "something that does not actually exist but is part of the illusion of a fictional context, thus further increasing the overall fictional illusion" (see also Munat 2007: 178-179). For example, when Atwood uses the word *soydines* (a type of sardine-like food containing soya), she implies that there really *is* such a thing as soydines, at least in the context of the fictional world she is creating. Secondly, the use of language play and other creative linguistic devices can be seen as "deviations from the expected or ordinary use of language that draw attention to an element, foregrounding it against the relief of the rest of the features of the text" (Stockwell 2002: 14). Related to this, albeit viewed from a somewhat different perspective, the use of language play can be treated as an attention seeking device (see Munat 2007). The attention of the reader is captured by the fact that instances of language play are foregrounded, as pointed out by Stockwell, but also by the fact that more processing effort is required for their processing (Tanaka 1992, Lehrer 2003, van Mulken, van Enschoot-van Dijk and Hoeken 2005, Yus 2008). Finally, as Bould (2009: 229) observes, "linguistic social-engineering is relatively common in eutopian and dystopian fiction", the evidence for which is found in Huxley's *Brave New World* but is perhaps not so overt in Atwood's novels.

2.3 The translation of wordplay in the three novels

Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* was published in 1932 and has been translated into Serbo-Croatian by three different translators: Vlada Stojiljković (Serbian edition in 1967, Croatian edition in 1985), Stanislav Vidmar (Croatian edition in 1998) and Svetlana Stamenić (Serbian edition

in 2009).⁶ Of these, we will analyze the translations by Stojiljković (both Serbian and Croatian editions) and Stamenić. During the bibliographic phase of this research, the existence of different translations of Huxley's novel seemed promising for the analysis, both in terms of the analysis of English-Serbo-Croatian translations but also, secondarily, in terms of offering a possibility to compare Serbian and Croatian translations, including a seemingly rare existence of two translations, one Serbian and one Croatian, by the same translator (Stojiljković). But the initial enthusiasm for both of these secondary paths of linguistic pursuit soon waned when it became evident that Vidmar's translation could not be obtained in good time and when Serbian and Croatian translations by Stojiljković turned out to be more or less ekavian/ijekavian versions of the same text, at least with respect to the translation of wordplay, with only occasional lexical differences (e.g. *sala* vs. *dvorana*), as was only to be expected anyway. Further disappointment followed when we looked into the 2009 translation by Stamenić, which features many formulations identical to those by Stojiljković, again with only minor differences. Faced with these unexpected setbacks, we had to settle for what was in essence one target text with slight variations and where these do occur, they will be pointed out. If only one target-text formulation is given, it will be from Stojiljković's Serbian translation (Haksli 2014).

Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood* were translated by Goran Kapetanović and Aleksandra Čabraja, respectively. Why the Serbian publisher has not published the third book from the trilogy (*MaddAddam*, published in 2013) is not known.

One final remark has to be made before we proceed to the analysis. The aim of this paper is not to criticize the translations or make any evaluative judgement, but to investigate the transference of wordplay in the three selected novels. As already said, the analysis will focus on communicative effects of wordplay and how and whether it is translated into the target language, rather than on typologies or classifications of specific translation strategies as such.

For this purpose, we will apply the framework developed by Díaz-Pérez (2008, 2013, 2014, 2015) in his assessments of positive cognitive effects of different strategies applied in the translation of ludic elements in various types of texts. He starts from the tenets of Relevance Theory, which

⁶ The dates refer to the earliest editions we were able to locate through bibliographic research, which means there may be other translations that we are unaware of.

postulates that “the addressee will make the effort to process a statement if s/he assumes it to be relevant” (Díaz-Pérez 2014: 109). Participants in any communicative process start from the assumption of optimal relevance: the addresser intends his utterance to be relevant, and the addressee expects to derive adequate cognitive effects without investing unnecessary effort (Díaz-Pérez 2014: 110). However, as all wordplay involves increased processing effort on the part of the addressee, there must be other positive cognitive effects that would justify this (Tanaka 1992, van Mulken, van Enschoot-van Dijk and Hoeken 2005, Yus 2008). In the case of wordplay, these positive cognitive effects can stem from the appreciation of wittiness or enjoyment of humour (Solska 2012, as cited in Díaz-Pérez 2014), or intellectual satisfaction achieved by successful interpretation of wordplay (van Mulken, van Enschoot-van Dijk and Hoeken 2005), which makes the ludic utterance relevant and the necessary processing effort worthwhile.

When translating wordplay, an ideal solution is for the translator to achieve pun correspondence, i.e. to achieve wordplay “based on the same linguistic phenomenon as its original counterpart and reflecting the same semantic ambiguity” (Díaz-Pérez 2013: 284). This, however, is often practically impossible due to a lack of isomorphism between the languages involved. In those cases the translator may need to make a decision on what approach to take: whether to sacrifice the communicative effect or to sacrifice the semantic content, the decision that should be based on the relative relevance of the two in any particular situation. It should be noted that these two approaches are not mutually exclusive and are a matter of degree rather than a yes/no category. In other words, it is possible to maintain both to a degree without completely losing the other, as will be illustrated below.

In accordance with these general principles, Díaz-Pérez (2008) establishes the following general categories in the translation of wordplay: (1) from pun to pun, (2) from pun to no pun, (3) from pun to ‘punoid’, (4) direct copy, (5) transference, (6) from no pun to pun, and (7) combination of direct copy with another strategy. As Díaz-Pérez (2008) deals with puns, a concept that is somewhat narrower than that of wordplay, for the purposes of this paper his categorization will be slightly modified. We looked into any source-text (ST) sequences that qualify as wordplay, including but not limited to puns, so , although the categories are still based on the same principles as Díaz-Pérez’s, their names were changed to reflect the broader scope. The third category, from pun to ‘punoid’, incorporates

target-text (TT) formulations that try to compensate for the loss of pun by substituting it by other rhetoric devices such as rhyme, alliteration, repetition, etc. (Díaz-Pérez 2008: 50), but as we deem all these to be instances of wordplay, examples of this strategy will be discussed under the heading ‘from wordplay to wordplay’. Transference, surprisingly, proved to be very rare – found in only one instance in the translation and no instances of direct copy in combination with another strategy were found. Finally, from the methodological point of view, the research was done in such a way that only instances of wordplay in ST were taken into account, which automatically excludes Díaz-Pérez’s sixth category, ‘from no pun to pun’. This leaves the following strategies: from wordplay to wordplay, from wordplay to no wordplay and direct copy. Due to space limitations, only a selection of representative examples will be discussed.

2.3.1. Wordplay to wordplay

This category includes instances of wordplay correspondence, which means that wordplay in the ST is translated into wordplay in the TT by applying the same linguistic means. As Díaz-Pérez (2008: 39-45) points out, the TT does not need to maintain identical formal mechanisms and/or semantic correspondence – all that is relevant is that wordplay is preserved.

Brave New World

Huxley’s linguistic inventiveness permeates the whole novel and, as elsewhere in dystopian fiction, performs different functions in this literary text (different aspects are dealt with in Lange 2013, Živković 2014). It is found in the names of different scientific processes (e.g. *bokanovskification*, *decanting*, *bottling*, etc.), job positions and offices (*Matriculators*, *Predestinators*, *Deputy Assistant Fertilizer-General*, *Arch-Community Songster of Canterbury*, etc.), objects (*sporticopter*, *Super-Vox-Wurlitzeriana*, *zippicamiknicks*, etc.), slogans (*Ending is better than mending*), modified nursery rhymes (*Bye Baby Banting*, *soon you’ll need decanting*), etc. Of these, particularly interesting for the analysis were words that Huxley coins to denote new objects, various slogans used by the World State and nursery rhyme modifications because it is here that Huxley frequently plays with both the form and the meaning.

With *taxicopter* and *sporticopter* the translator had but little trouble – it was rendered into Serbian as *taksikopter* i *sportikopter*, which makes

them early examples of lexical blending in Serbian.⁷ The same structural mechanism was used and the same effects achieved. *Super-Vox-Wurlitzeriana* presented more of a problem. It denotes a kind of a music box, whose name alludes to the Wurlitzer organ. The translator seems to have thought this cultural reference to be too obscure for Serbian readers so he translated it as *Supervoks džuboks*, keeping it in the same semantic domain of automatic music boxes and adding rhyme.

The totalitarian World state uses a great number of short, catchy slogans as means of conditioning and controlling its subjects. Many of them feature various rhetoric devices such as rhyme, alliteration, repetition, contrast, etc. and are frequently modifications of existing English proverbs. The function of some of these slogans is to condition the citizens into desired behaviours, such as consumerism or consumption of soma, a euphoric and mildly hallucinogenic drug invented by Huxley. Rhyme and contrast of *A gramme is better than a damn* are retained in the translation, *Bolje gram nego sram*, with some change of semantic meaning, which is also the case with *A gramme in time saves nine*, a modification of a well-known proverb “A stitch in time saves nine”, which is translated as *Gram u pravi čas – to je pravi spas*. In the rendering of *The more stitches, the less riches*, a slogan that encourages people to buy new things rather than repair old ones, the translator creates a rhyming, proverb-like slogan in Serbian: *Novu robu u novu sobu*.

In the brave new world of Huxley’s novel, God is replaced by Ford (Henry Ford, an industrialist, the founder of Ford Motor Company and a symbol of mass production), and all the linguistic expressions referencing God, lord, etc. are changed in accordance with that. The symbol of the cross is replaced by the letter ‘T’ (reference to Ford’s Model T), a slight visual modification as T resembles the cross with the top part removed. All this is reflected in the use of language, especially idiomatic expressions. Thus *A.D.* (‘Anno Domini’) becomes *A.F.* (‘Anno Fordi’, or ‘after Ford’), *his lordship* becomes *his fordship*, *thank Lord* becomes *thank Ford*, etc. The translation maintains this transposition quite consistently throughout the novel, managing to achieve more or less the same effects. For instance, *an unfordly example* (a modification of *an ungodly example*) is translated as *fordohulan primer*, where the translator plays with word-formational

⁷ *Taksikopter* and *sportikopter* could also be treated as instances of direct copy, but as their semantic transparency is maintained in the translation, we treat them as words formed with Serbian elements, modelled upon the English original.

mechanisms in a very similar way as the author, to achieve a similar effect of surprise, novelty and creativity. Cultural substitution is utilized as means of maintaining the effects of *Young Women Fordian Association*, which is translated as *Kolo fordovskih sestara* (alluding to *Kolo srpskih sestara*, a Serbian women's charity organization).

Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood

Hybridization and genetic modification are a prominent theme in M. Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*. The names of hybrid and/or genetically modified animals and some genetically modified plants are typically coined by blending (e.g. *rakunk* [raccoon + skunk], *snat* [snake + rat], *beananas* [beans + bananas]), whereby Atwood exploits the conventional method of naming hybrids by blends in English (see Lalić-Krstin 2008a, 2008b), which in turn produces several effects. First of all, she ties it to an already existing discourse tradition, creating the sense of plausibility and authenticity on the one hand, while on the other satirizing the creation of outrageous hybrid forms. Secondly, blends are generally considered to be creative and playful coinages. In his paper on blends as forms of wordplay, Renner (2015: 121) ranks blends very high on the ludicity continuum, saying that "blending can be claimed to be the most complex form of wordplay in word-formation". Both source words are from the same domain of animal/plant kingdom, denoting different species, but their combination into a new concept and into a new word is novel and unexpected, which illustrates Cacchiani's (2016: 322) claim that "ludicity correlates positively with the computation of relatively plausible but unexpected semantic relations and associations between words". Blends are lexical puzzles (Bugarski 2001, 2013) whose reduced morphotactic transparency correlates with an increase in wordplayfulness (Cacchiani 2016: 307) and as such, they require the reader to pause in order to solve the puzzle, which, as Lehrer (2003) claims, creates in the reader a sense of amusement and accomplishment and increases memorability. If we turn now to how the two translators handle these words, we find (like Jovanović 2007) that formally there is a high degree of correspondence in the type of the word-formation process. In other words, in order to translate most of the blends that denote hybrids, the translators coined blends in Serbian too. For example: *rakunk* [raccoon + skunk] – *tvorakun* [tvor + rakun], *snat* [snake + rat] – *zmacov* [zmija + pacov], *wolvog* [wolf + dog] – *psovuk* [pas + vuk], *liobam* [lion + lamb] – *jagnjolav* [jagnje + lav],

beananas [bean + bananas] – *pasuljane* [pasulj + banane], *speat* [spider + goat] – *kouk* [koza + pauk], *gider* [goat + spider] – *paza* [pauk + koza],⁸ *lumirose* [luminiscent/luminescence + rose] – *svetloruža* [svetleća/svetlo + ruža]. Although structural correspondence is not a necessary condition for wordplay correspondence, like Atwood, both translators coin new words and they do so by using the same structural mechanism, whereby the puzzle effect is maintained, perhaps even more so for the Serbian reader for whom blending may not be as common as it is for the English reader. What is missing, though, is the relationship with the discourse tradition of naming hybrids by blends, which is not as established in Serbian and thus the effect of parody and satire towards hybridization and/or genetic modification is slightly lessened. However, as Kabatek (2015: 215) notes, discourse traditions can spread across languages by translation so the convention of naming hybrids by blends could take root in Serbian.

A very good example of wordplay correspondence without formal correspondence is provided by the translation of *SoyOBoy burgers*, *SoyOBoy wieners* and *SoyOBoy sardines*, which in TT are: *pljeskavice* “sojaja”, *kobasice* “sojaja” and *sardine* “sojaja”. *SoyOBoy* from the ST is a food brand of Margaret Atwood’s invention, constructed by applying different formal and semantico-pragmatic mechanisms. First of all, it probably draws on an existing brand name, *Soy Boy*, which immediately activates the necessary association in the mind of a reader familiar with the brand. Then, there is the rhyme in *SoyOBoy*, a well-established and much used poetic and advertising device that deviates from the ordinary use of language and “draw[s] attention to an element, foregrounding it against the relief of the rest of the features of the text” (Stockwell 2002: 14). Furthermore, some believe that rhyme “invites the reader’s consideration of semantic as well as of sound similarities” (Fussell 1979: 110, as cited in Pilkington 2000: 138), which in this case would lead to contrasting the meaning of *soy(a)*, traditionally used as meat and dairy substitute in many modern commercially sold foods, with that of the *Oh boy!*, which can express a whole range of emotions, from delight and appreciation to resignation and

⁸ For some reason, the translator reversed the order of constituents in these two words, despite having to coin two blends with the same source words in reverse sequence, in order to translate *speat* and *gider*. Although this may not be crucial in this particular case, it should be noted that in the formation of the names of hybrid species, it is customary for the name of the sire (the male parent) to be positioned initially. Jovanović (2007: 203) notes the same for *rakunk* (= *tvorakun*) and *wolvog* (*psovuk*), where the reversal might have been caused by a desire to achieve euphony.

annoyance. The fact that it is a brand name would, in normal circumstances, probably be aimed at activating the more positive uses of *Oh boy!*, but for the reader familiar with Atwood's avid environmentalism, the irony is all but obvious. Finally, unusual capitalization, which in itself is a form of linguistic deviation from the ordinary, draws attention to common branding and advertising practices. Indeed, as pointed out by Jovanović (2007: 200-201), M. Atwood shows remarkable adeptness in thinking up names for commercial products, many of which, we will add, involve instances of wordplay at different levels of linguistic expression, as shown by the above examples. But how did the translators approach this problem of multiple ludic effects? In the case of *SoyOBoy* words, their brand name status is signalled by the use of inverted commas. At the formal level, the wordplay is achieved by blending *soja* and *do jaja* (informal idiom meaning 'very good') into *sojaja*. Through the use of these source words the semantic content of the original is preserved, while the use of the word-formation process of blending achieves the wordplayfulness effect. Lexical blends in Serbian are quite common in brand names, especially of food products, which helps the translators link it to that particular discourse tradition.

One more illustrative example of this strategy will be discussed. The translator of *The Year of the Flood* keeps most of the very creative coinages of the translator of the first book, which is, of course, highly commendable as it maintains consistency in the sequel. She does, however, make some minor changes in a couple of them. One of these is the translation of *Happicuppa*, a coffee brand, which in the first book was translated as *slatkafa*. In the second book, this is changed to *srećkafa*, which not only corresponds more closely to the original in terms of its semantics, but also fits in more smoothly into the translation of paronymy-based wordplay in *HAPPICUPPA IS A CRAPPICUPPA* (a text on a protest sign) as *SREĆKAFA JE SRAĆKAFA*. Consistent with this is the change of *slatkapučino* into *srećkapučino* as the translation of *Happicuppuchino*. By way of digression, let it be said that in a few instances where the same word in *The Year of the Flood* was translated differently from an earlier occurrence in the same book, the later translation tends to be more playful, as if, emboldened by the writer's creativity, the translator plucked up the courage to be more ludic herself. For example, *plebmob* is translated as *plebejska mafija* (p. 64) and then later as *plebanda* [plebeja + banda] (p. 167). Likewise, *polyberry* is *višeboični grm* (p. 26) and *višebobice* (p. 198).

Lexical blending as means of achieving ludicity is applied not only in the translation of ST blends but in other cases too, which is further evidence that this word-formation process is becoming more firmly entrenched in Serbian (see Bugarski 2013, 2016). Thus *Mo'hair* ('a species of sheep genetically spliced with humans in order to provide hair replacements'), which again resembles a commercial brand name, is a play on homophony between *more hair* and *mohair*, unachievable in Serbian, so the translator opts for a blend instead and translates it as *perikovca*, perhaps overtranslating a little but still preserving wordplay. The name of a car repair establishment, *Fender-Bender Body Shop* is translated as *Auto-servis Peglokaroserija*, a good example of how despite a minor loss of the semantic content it was possible to maintain both the meaning and the ludic effect.

2.3.2. Wordplay to no wordplay

Díaz-Pérez (2008: 45) defines this strategy as translations where the pun from the ST corresponds to a sequence which has no pun. If it is not possible to maintain both the form and meaning of the original, then, the translator will have to decide whether it is preferable to sacrifice content to the effect produced by a pun or whether, on the contrary, meaning should prevail over the effect of wordplay (Díaz-Pérez 2014: 115).

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As shown above, many of the playful modifications of slogans were translated in such a way as to keep at least some of the ludic effects. In some cases, though, wordplay is lost or greatly diminished. One such example would be the translation of *zippicamiknicks*, a garment whose name is coined by cleverly combining *zipper* and *camiknickers* (itself a blend of *camisole* and *knickers*). The novelty of the coinage (and probably of the concept too) is completely lost for the Serbian reader, who is offered *patent kombine* (*patent kombinezon* in Haksli 2009) as the translation.

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Although it is evident from the analysis that both translators strive to keep as much of the original cognitive effects as possible when translating playful parts of the texts, there are a few instances where this was not achieved. For example, *Manic Botanics*, the nickname children in the God's Gardeners

community gave to a school subject, is translated as *Manijakalna Botanika*; *fleather* ('fake leather') as *veštačka koža*; *furzooter* ('a person wearing a furzoot, a fake-fur costume worn by people employed to advertise products in shopping malls') as *kostimirani reklamer*. In all the cases it was obviously deemed more important to keep the content and sacrifice the wordplay.

A few longer sequences also feature loss of wordplay in favour of semantic content. *BIGZOOT – SAY IT WITH FURRORE!*, an advertising slogan of a furzoot company, features *bigzoot*, coined by combining *big* with *zoot* from *furzoot*, thus producing a whole chain of lexical invention (*fur suit* > *furzoot* > *zoot* > *bigzoot*), and *furrore*, a play on *fur* and *furore*. None of these playful effects were kept in the Serbian translation: *RECITE TO KRZNOM!* Similarly, *Fear no weevil*, which is a play on *Fear no evil*, is translated as *Ne boj se kornjaša*, where the translator opted for literalness thus sacrificing wordplay, the path pursued too in the translation of *I think, therefore I spam* into *Mislim, dakle šaljem mejlove*.

2.3.3. Direct copy

This strategy does not involve translation as such but is instead based on borrowing into the target language.

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Although the translator used this strategy to translate some of the scientific terminology, no instances of direct copy were found in the translation of ludic sequences in this novel.

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As previously said, it is evident that both translators of M. Atwood's novels try hard to maintain wordplay and reflect cognitive effects created by the author's lexical inventiveness. It is only in a handful of examples that they resort to direct copy: *sus multiorganifier* (as already pointed out by Jovanović 2007), *SeksMart* is retained in the original, whereby the wordplay stemming from two possible interpretations (*sex mart* vs. *sex smart*) is lost. Another case of direct copy would be *Painball – Pejnbol*, with its obvious allusion to paintball maintained in the TT but with the semantics of *pain* lost, which is why the translator provided a footnote explaining the wordplay.

3. Conclusion

It is indisputable that wordplay, with all its formal and semantic complexity and rich communicative effects should be translated. Clearly, the three translators were aware of the significance of wordplay in the analysed novels and clearly they tried to recreate it in their translations. They frequently applied the same structural mechanisms but if this was unachievable, they compensated with other means that are typically considered to be ludic, proving Bugarski's statement that "all translation is creation" (Bugarski 1997: 236). Particularly conspicuous in this respect is the exploitation of the expressive potential of lexical blends in the translations of M. Atwood's novel, which surely contributes to further entrenchment of this word-formation process in Serbian.

Although the types of wordplay used by the two writers were not compared and contrasted consistently at this time, the impression is that in M. Atwood's novels ludicity in most cases stems from playing with both form and meaning, whereas Huxley tends to play more with meaning and less with form and relies more on neosemanticization. This, of course, needs to be more thoroughly researched for any valid conclusions to be made.

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ПРЕВОЂЕЊЕ ВЕРБАЛНЕ ИГРЕ С ЕНГЛЕСКОГ НА СРПСКИ ЈЕЗИК
НА ПРИМЕРИМА ИЗ ТРИ ДИСТОПИЈСКА РОМАНА

Сажетак

Овај рад бави се функцијама употребе вербалне игре у три дистопијска романа на енглеском језику (*Brave New World* Олдоса Хакслија и *Oryx and Crake* и *The Year of the Flood* Маргарет Атвуд) и степеном очуваности тих функција приликом њиховог превођења на српски језик. Након краћег осврта на порекло и улогу игре у антрополошком смислу, нешто већа пажња посвећена је вербалној игри у светлу Јакобсонових функција језика, а конкретни примери сагледани су уз примену теоријског оквира Теорије релевантности. Превођење вербалне игре увек представља потешкоћу јер њени семантички и прагматички ефекти проистичу из структурних особености изворног језика, за које најчешће не постоји кореспонденција у циљном језику те је, у случајевима када је немогуће сачувати и прагматички ефекат и семантичку садржину, преводилац често приморан да бира између ова два, жртвујући једно на уштрб другог. У том смислу, дистопијски жанр, који зна обилovati лексичким иновацијама и вербалним играма уопште, показао се као нарочито захвалан како за анализу функција игара речима у изворном тексту, тако и за анализу степена очуваности тих функција у преводу.

Кључне речи: вербална игра, игре речима, превођење, дистопија, дистопијска књижевност, Олдос Хаксли, Маргарет Атвуд