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A Russian Tail? On the Translation of Puns in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

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1 Introduction

In chapter 3 of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* Alice has a conversation with a mouse:

(1) However, it was over at last, and they sat down again in a ring, and begged the Mouse to tell them something more.

"You promised to tell me your history, you know," said Alice, "and why it is you hate—C and D," she added in a whisper, half afraid that it would be offended again.

"Mine is a long and a 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?" And she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking, so that her idea of the tale was something like this:

[Carroll 2001: 34]

It is quite apparent that the humorous effect in the quotation comes from the simultaneous actualisation of two possible meanings that are associated with the phonetic sequence [tejl] in English: 1) spelled <tale>: 'something told or related; relation or recital of happening' (WNW: 1365); 2) spelled <tail>: 'the rear end of an animal's body, esp. when forming a distinct, flexible appendage to the trunk' (WNW: 1363). The joke on *tale/tail* is, strictly speaking, limited to spoken English and thus primarily intended for a listener rather than a reader, but, provided that the reader has mastered the relevant English spelling conventions, the pun effect will also be actualised during a silent reading of the text.¹⁰ In addition, the text of the Mouse's tale is pre-

¹⁰ On the relationship between visual impression and aural understanding cf., for example, Sundmark 1999: 125f.

sented in the shape of a tail, and this visual effect supports the connection between the two meanings.¹¹

How can such a word pun that is based on English-specific homonymy be translated into another language such as, for example, Russian? Or is it even possible to do so?¹²

Before a closer look at the Russian translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* can be undertaken, a short presentation of the meanings that can be actualised in wordplay is needed. I will apply a modified version of the terminology suggested by Offord, who uses the expression *pivot (P)* for “the word or phrase that the ambiguity hinges on” (Offord 1997: 235).

Following Offord (1997: 238), two surface elements can be identified in the *tale/tail* pun: the first expression **P₁** (*tale*), and the second expression **P₂** (*tail*), are associated with particular meanings: **Q₁** ‘something told or related; relation or recital of happening’ and **Q₂** ‘the rear end of an animal’s body, esp. when forming a distinct, flexible appendage to the trunk’, respectively. The connection between the meanings **Q₁** and **Q₂**, which are produced through the expressions **P₁** and **P₂**, and primarily through the similarity in sound between them and the graphic layout of the written text,¹³ creates the pun. This makes it possible to identify an additional “wordplay” meaning for the expression as a whole (**P₁/Q₁+P₂/Q₂**), that is, **F**, which is actualised by the listener or reader and makes her/him accept the expression as a pun. This type of wordplay, in which two (or more) expressions (**P₁, P₂, ...**) are explicitly present in the text will be called *horizontal* wordplay.

However, if the listener or reader can be made to associate an expression **P₁** with a second expression **P₂** that is *not* explicitly present in the text, the “wordplay” meaning **F** may still be actualised. Examples of this type of wordplay can be found in chapter 9 of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, when Alice talks to the Mock Turtle, who informs her of the subjects that he took in school:

(2) “Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with,” the Mock Turtle replied; “and then the different branches of Arithmetic—Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.”

(Carroll 2001: 102)

¹¹ For a collection of examples of tail-shaped layouts of the text of the mouse’s tale in a number of editions of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, see Schaefer & Schaefer 1995. The wider question of the relationship between the text and the illustrations in the original and translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* will not be elaborated in the present investigation.

¹² For a general discussion of wordplay and translation that includes examples from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, see, for example, Koller 2001: 258–266.

¹³ Cf. also Nash 1985: 138, who gives a pun on *tale* and *tail* in Shakespeare’s *As you like it* as an example of a “homophonic pun”.

Of course, the listener or reader associates all the subjects that were mentioned by the Mock Turtle (**P₁** *Reeling*, *Writhing*, etc.) with the “normal” subjects *Reading*, *Writing*, *Addition*, *Subtraction*, *Multiplication*, and *Division* (**P₂**). Even if the **P₂** expressions are not mentioned in the text, the connection between the explicitly given *Reeling* etc. and the implicitly present *Reading* etc. (through similarities in both pronunciation and spelling) evoke—for most listeners or readers—a similar wordplay meaning (**F**) as in the *tale/tail* pun.¹⁴ This type of wordplay is usually called *vertical* wordplay.¹⁵

The discussion of the present investigation will focus on *horizontal* wordplay and its translation into Russian. The source text (ST) material includes three puns in the text of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The first of these is the *tale/tail* pun that has already been mentioned, cf. example (1). The second pun follows closely after the first, when the Mouse complains that Alice is not listening properly to its story, and is built on the homophony of the English words *not* and *knot*:

(3) “You are not attending!” said the Mouse to Alice, severely. “What are you thinking of?”

“I beg your pardon,” said Alice very humbly: “you had got to the fifth bend, I think?”

“I had *not*!” cried the Mouse, sharply and very angrily.

“A knot!” said Alice, always ready to make herself useful, and looking anxiously about her. “Oh, do let me help to undo it!”

(Carroll 2001: 35f)

The third pun occurs in chapter 9, when Alice is introduced to the Mock Turtle, and involves the Mock Turtle’s childhood memories:¹⁶

(4) “When we were little,” the Mock Turtle went on at last, more calmly, though still sobbing a little now and then, “we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle—we used to call him Tortoise—”

“Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn’t one?” Alice asked.

¹⁴ For analyses of the *Reeling/Reading* etc. puns (and their translation into Italian and Chinese) see Cammarata 2007: 163–177 and Ting 1984: 48–53.

¹⁵ The horizontal/vertical terminology for these two distinctive types of wordplay were, as far as I am aware, first introduced by Wagenknecht (1965: 21f). Cf. also Hausmann (1974: 16f, 76–80) for a detailed discussion of the classification of vertical and horizontal wordplay. The same terminology is used also by Delabastita (1996: 128) and others. Offord (1997: 234ff, 238ff), mentions also the terms *explicit* and *implicit* puns. For a theoretical introduction to Russian wordplay see Sannikov 1999: 490–513.

¹⁶ For a discussion of the gender of the Mock Turtle and other creatures in Wonderland in the Russian translations, see Eliferova 2009.

“We called him Tortoise because he taught us,” said the Mock Turtle angrily. “Really you are very dull!”¹⁷

(Carroll 2001: 100)

A *tortoise* (**P₁**) is ‘a turtle, esp. one that lives on land [...]’ (WNW: 1412), and the word can be pronounced similarly to the expression *taught us* (**P₂**) in some varieties of English.¹⁸

Following Delabastita (1993: 202–210), three main strategies for translating puns will be distinguished:¹⁹

1) PUN > ZERO. The source text (ST) that contains the pun is not translated, and the corresponding target text (TT) is omitted.

2) PUN > NO PUN. The meanings of the ST expressions **P₁** and **P₂** are both present in the TT, but the wordplay meaning **F** is lost in the translation.¹⁹

3) PUN > PUN. The focus in this type of translation is on the wordplay meaning that is present in the ST.²⁰ In addition to the wordplay meaning (**F**), which is more or less similar to the ST **F**, the TT can focus on the following meanings in the ST:²¹ a) the meanings of both **P₁** and **P₂**; b) the meaning only of **P₁**;²² c) the meaning only of **P₂**;²³ d) the meanings of neither **P₁** nor **P₂**.²⁴

¹⁷ In addition, the two expressions can be associated with the almost homophonous *tortuous* (**P₃**) ‘1 full of twists, turns, curves, or windings; winding; crooked 2 not straightforward; devious; specif., deceitful or tricky’ (WNW: 1412), which contributes an element of vertical wordplay. Cf., for example, Oittinen 1997: 80 and Weissbrod 1996: 230, who report the actualisation of the the meaning ‘one who quarrels’ in Finnish and Hebrew TT corresponding to the *tortoise/taught us* pun. Example (4) also contains a vertical pun on *school* ‘educational establishment; collection of fish’, which is mentioned, for example, by Nash (1985: 141) in his section on homonyms (Cammarata 2007 and Ting 1984, however, do not mention it). Among the Russian translations that are discussed in the present article only JA seems to make an attempt to offer a pun in the corresponding TT: “— Byla, značit, naša škola pridonna-ja. — Pridomnaja? Pri vašem dome? — peresprosila Alisa. — Pridon-naja! Na dne morskem! — rasserdilas’ Telepacha.” (Jachnin 2002: 117).

¹⁸ A fourth possible strategy, PUN > PUNOID (rhyme, alliteration, etc., cf. Delabastita 1993: 207f), is of less relevance for the investigated Russian translations and will therefore not be discussed in the present article.

¹⁹ According to Delabastita (1993: 202), this type of translation (into a “non-selective non-pun”) is often used when the translator concentrates on a “literal” translation of the ST.

²⁰ Cf. Heibert (1993: 170), who stresses that the most important level of the translation of a pun is “die rhetorische Funktions-Ebene”.

²¹ Cf. Offord 1997: 245, who distinguishes between translations “majoring” on the meaning of the first, second, or both expressions of the ST pun.

²² Cf., for example, the translation of the *tortoise/taught us* pun into Italian by Pietrocòla-Rossetti (1872: 140): ““Quando eravamo piccini,” continuò la Falsa-Testuggine, un poco più quieta, ma sempre singhiozzando, “andavamo a scuola, al mare. La maestra era una vecchia Testuggine—e noi la chiamavamo Tartaruga—” “Perchè la chiamavate Tartaruga se non era tale?” domandò Alice. “La chiamavamo Tartaruga perchè c’ insegnava a tartagliare,” disse la Falsa-Testuggine con dispetto: “Avete poco comprendonio!””. According to Cammarata, *tartaruga* is mainly used to refer to the marine species, whereas *testuggine* corresponds to the land-living *tortoise*. Pietrocòla-Rossetti’s translation, thus, switches the species in order to

2 Russian translations of wordplay in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

For the present investigation, the main TT corpus includes twelve translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Russian.²⁵

1. **GR** – *Priklučenija Ani v" mirě čudes"*, tr. into Russian by M. Granstrem, first published in 1908 (Granstrem 1908).
2. **FR** – *Alisa v strane čudes*, tr. into Russian by A.A. Frenkel', first published in 1923 (Frenkel' 1923/2006).
3. **NA** – *Anja v straně čudes*, tr. into Russian by V.V. Nabokov, first published in 1923 (Nabokov 1923/1976).
4. **OG** – *Alisa v strane čudes* (tr. into Russian by A. P. Olenič-Gnenenko, first published in 1940 (Olenič-Gnenenko 1940/2007).
5. **DE** – *Alisa v strane čudes*, tr. into Russian by N.M. Demurova, first published in 1967 (Demurova 1967/1979: *Priklučenija Alisy v strane čudes* [**DE**₁], Demurova 1967/1991: *Alisa v strane čudes* [**DE**₂]).
6. **ZA** – *Alisa v strane čudes*, tr. into Russian by B.V. Zachoder, first published in 1971–1972 (Zachoder 1972/2007).
7. **SC** – *Priklučenija Alisy v Strange Čudes*, tr. into Russian by A.A. Ščerbakov, first published in 1977 (Ščerbakov 1977).
8. **JA** – *Priklučenija Alisy v Strange Čudes*, tr. into Russian by L.L. Jachnin, first published in 1991 (Jachnin 1991/2002).

pun on the **P₁** *tartaruga*, whereas several other Italian translations keep the ST order, punning on a **P₁** *testuggine* (cf. Cammarata 2007: 159–162).

²³ Cf., for example, the translation of the *tale/tail* pun into French by Parisot (1979: 114f), which preserves only the meaning of the ST **P₂** *tail* (**P₂** *vos queues* ‘your tails’) introduced by an innovative TT **P₁** *C'est que* ‘it is that...’: “« Tu m'avais promis, t'en souvient-il, dit Alice, de me raconter ton histoire et de me dire pourquoi tu hais... les Ch... et les Ch... » ajouta-t-elle à voix basse, craignant presque de l'offenser de nouveau. « *C'est que...* c'est long et triste! » dit la Souris en se tournant vers Alice et en exhalant un soupir. « *Vos queues*, à vous autres souris, sont longues, sans doute, dit Alice, en abaissant avec étonnement son regard vers l'appendice caudal de son interlocutrice; mais pourquoi dire qu'elles sont tristes ? »”.

²⁴ Cf., for example, the translation of the *not/knot* pun into Swedish by Snellman (1946: 38): Neither the meaning of the ST **P₁** *not* nor **P₂** *knot* is preserved, but it does contain a pun on the homophonous Swedish words *kära* ‘dear’ (Å *kära* då ‘Oh dear’) and *tjära* ‘tar’: “– Jag ber om ursäkt, sa Alice mycket ödmjukt, du hade kommit till den femte kröken tror jag? – Å *kära* då! skrek musen vasst och mycket ilscket. – *Tjära?* sa Alice, alltid redo att vara till nytta och såg sig ängsligt omkring. Låt mig hjälpa dig att få bort den!”.

²⁵ For an overview of the translations of the Alice books into Russian up to 1988, see Rušajlo 1991. Cf. also the discussion by Weaver (1964: 60–61) on the early Russian translations, as well as the checklist on pp. 130–132. Some of the problems pertaining to the translation of the puns in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* are addressed in the short studies by Kurdjukova (2004), who discusses the translations by Ščerbakov, Demurova, Zachoder, and Nabokov), Garsija (2006: the translations by Nabokov, Demurova, Zachoder), and Čaryčanskaja (2005: the translations by Nabokov and Demurova).

9. **NE** – *Priklučenija Alisy v Strange Čudes*, tr. into Russian by Ju. Nesterenko, 2001 (Nesterenko 2001).
10. **KO** – *Alisa v Strange Čudes*, tr. into Russian by A. Kononenko, 1998–2000 (Kononenko 2000).
11. **ST** – *Priklučenija Alisy v Strange Čudes*, tr. into Russian by N. I. Starilov, 2000 (Starilov 2000).
12. **BL** – *Priklučenija Alisy v Strange Čudes, ili, Stranstvie v Strannuji Stranu*, tr. into Russian by M. Blechman, 1982–2006 (Blechman 2006).

In addition, a short excerpt (**SO**), which includes the pun on *tale* and *tail* from the translation by Solov'eva (Solov'eva 1909), has been included in the TT corpus.²⁶

Chronologically, the target texts represent almost a century of the translation history of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* into Russian, and include 1) the pre-Soviet period (**GR, SO**); 2) the nineteen twenties, both in the Soviet Union and abroad (**FR, NA**); 3) the prewar Soviet period (**OG**); 4) the Soviet nineteen sixties and seventies (**DE, ZA, SC**); 5) the Perestrojka period (**JA**); and 6) the post-Soviet period (**NE, KO, BL, ST**). Evidently, the later translators had at least the theoretical possibility of accessing the earlier translation, but this possibility was reliant on the degree of availability of the respective editions; that is, before the appearance of electronic editions.²⁷ However, a complete picture of the relationship between the different Russian TT is impossible to present without a much broader investigation than the present one.²⁸

²⁶ **SO** is quoted by Demurova (2000: 99f). Unfortunately, I have had no access to the original text. For Solov'eva and her translation cf. also Karlinsky (1970: 311f). Two more translations, by Tarlovskij (2007) and Čarova (2009), omit all three TT sections that correspond to the ST puns discussed in the present article.

²⁷ **NA**, originally published in 1923 (according to Boyd 1990: 557, Nabokov probably made the translation during the summer of 1922), was not published in the Soviet Union until much later. According to Rušajlo (1991), the first Soviet edition was published in 1989, and neither Zachoder nor Demurova seem to have had access to it for their translations (cf. Friedberg 1997: 124f). Vdovenko (2000), referring to Vera Nabokova, claims that Nabokov had not read any other translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* before creating his own, whereas Karlinsky (1970: 312) assumes that Nabokov must have been acquainted with **SO**. Commenting on Karlinsky's article, Nabokov himself claims that he had not seen any other Russian translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* when he was working on the translation or afterwards (cf. Nabokov 1990: 286).

Several of the later translators explicitly refer to their knowledge of earlier translations: in the preface to his translation Blechman, for example, reports being acquainted with **DE, ZA, SO**, and **NA**, and Demurova (2000: 87–100) discusses her own translation in relation to **SO, NA**, and others. Zachoder (1972/2007: 9) sweepingly refers to earlier translations into Russian of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in a negative way.

²⁸ For a more general discussion of the problems concerning the relationship between earlier and later translations of the same text cf., for example, Levy 1969: 79–82 and Delabastita 1993: 330–336.

2.1 The pun on *tale* and *tail*

In the ST (cf. appendix I), the *tale/tail* pun precedes an illustration in which the Mouse's tale is embedded within the shape of a tail, and a particular problem for any translator is how to motivate the tail-shaped layout of the written text of the Mouse's tale.²⁹ Thus, most translations can be expected to concentrate on the meaning of the second expression of the pun (**P₂ tail**).

2.1.1 No pun

Three of the TT contain little or no punning (**F**) and shift from *tale* (istorija, rasskaz) to *tail* (chvost) more or less straightforwardly. In (5), the Mouse itself calls its tale "long-tailed" (dlinnochvostym), which only provokes exclamations of interest from the audience, but no particular reaction from Alice.

- (5) – Razskaži nam" ešče čto-nibud'! – prosili oni myšku.
– Da vy ne budete slyšat', i razskaz" moj pokažetsja vam" dlinnochvostym".
– Razskaži, razskaži! – razdalos' so vsěch" storon". – Dlinnochvostyj razskaz"! Éto interesno!
– Ja razskažu vam", kakaja běda odnaždy so mnoju čut' ne slučilas':
[GR, p. 33f]

In (6), the long and simple story (dlinnaja i prostaja istorija) is compared to a tail (kak chvost), and the source of Alice's surprise is the particular comparison in itself and not the problem of the ST of how a tail can be sad. The long and sad tale has become a long and simple tale.

- (6) – Éta istorija dlinnaja i prostaja. Kak chvost, – skazala myš'.
«Istorija – kak chvost?» – udivilas' pro sebia Alisa.
No myš' uže načala, i perebivat' ee voprosami Alisa ne rešilas'. Ona liš' smotrela na myšinyj chvost i predstavljalá sebe takuju že dlinnuju, kak chvost, istoriju. Vitievatyj rasskaz myši vilsja v voobraženii Alisy chvostom.
[JA, p. 42]

In examples (7) and (8) the translators introduce a certain uncertainty into what Alice hears. The source of this uncertainty, however, does not primar-

²⁹ The only exception I have encountered is the translation into Swedish by Runeberg (1921), where the visual shape of the text of the poem has been changed into a bowl, and the pun adapted accordingly: »Du lovade berätta mig om ditt sagolika liv», sade Alice, »och varför du hatar – K och H», sade hon sakta, för hon var rädd att såra mösset en gång till. »Mitt liv har verkligen varit ganska sagolikt», sade mösset med en suck. »Det måtte då ha varit väldigt välvsmakligt!» sade Alice, för hon tyckte att sagosoppa var det allra bästa som fanns; och så här blev därför hennes föreställning om mössets sagolika liv, medan det berättades för henne:”

ily lie in Alice's perception, but in the insufficient clarity of pronunciation on the part of the Mouse. In example (7) the Mouse coughs: "but on the word *rasskaz* [the Mouse] coughed and produced some indistinct sounds, which Alice heard as being similar to the word *chvost*", whereas in example (8) the Mouse adds the word *prost* 'simple' to the description of the tale ('my tale is simple, sad, and long') and the author/translator then explains that Alice heard *prost* 'simple' instead of *chvost* 'tail'. However, in both (7) and (8) Alice's final question, why the Mouse calls its *tail* sad, is translated literally.

(7) – Éto dlinnyj i pečal'nyj rasskaz, – načala Myš', no na slove rasskaz ona zakašljala i izdala kakie-to nečlenorazdel'nye zvuki, kotorye Alise po-kazalis' pochožimi na slovo «chvost».

– Éto i vpravdu dlinnyj chvost, – skazala Alisa, s udivleniem razgljadyva-ja myšinjy chvost, – no počemu vy nazyvaete ego pečal'nym?

[ST]

(8) „Moj razskaz” prost”, pečalen” i dlinen”“, so vzdochom” skazala Myš’, obraščajas’ k” Aně.

„Da, on” nesomněnno, očen’ dlinnyj“, zamětila Anja, kotoroj poslyšalos’ ne „prost”“, a „chvost”“. „No počemu Vy ego nazyvaete pečal’nym?”“

[NA, p. 25]

2.1.2 Puns on expressions corresponding to the ST *P₁ tale*

Instead of the words *rasskaz*, *istorija*, etc., in (9) the Mouse refers to its tale with the word *kanconetta* 'canzonet, canzonetta', and explains that it is called *kanconetta* because it is short (potomu čto ona korotkaja). Alice, however, interprets the accusative form *kanconetu* as *konca netu* 'there is no end (to it)' (in the standard, *akanie* pronunciation, the unstressed *a* in *kanconetu* and the unstressed *o* in *konca netu* are pronounced similarly) and, consequently, claims that the tale should be very long instead!

(9) — Ja ispolnju vam pečal'nuju kanconetu, — vzdochnuv, skazala Myš’. — Kanconetu, potomu čto ona korotkaja.

— Počemu že? Esli konca netu, značit, ona dolžna byt’ očen’ dlinnoj, — nedoumenno vozrazila Alisa. No Myš’ izognula drožaščij chvostik, sžala ego lapkami i ispolnila nižesledujušče stichi, kotorye v pamjati Alisy byli teper’ nerazryvno svjazany s dviženijami myšinogo chvosta:

[SC, p. 54]

2.1.3 Puns on *chvost*, *chvostik*, corresponding to the ST **P₂** *tail*

Among the Russian translations that recreate the pun effect F of the ST in the TT, five make puns on the word *chvost* ‘tail’. In example (10–12) the role of **P₁** is played by the word *prochvost* ORD³⁰ ‘scoundrel’, leading to the homonymous **P₂** *pro chvost* ‘about a tail’ (a story about a tail). In (10) the Mouse declares the name of the story to be *Prochvost* ‘The scoundrel’.

(10) – Rasskaz moj nazyvaetsja «Prochvost»; on dlinnyj i pečal'nyj, – Myš' povernulas' k Alise i vzdochnula.

«Pro chvost? On dejstvitel'no dlinnyj, – podumala Alisa, s udivleniem razgladyvaja chvost Myši, odnako čto že v nem pečal'nogo?»

[NE]

In (11), the Mouse tells Alice that it is going to tell her a very long and sad story (Éto očen' dlinnaja i grustnaja istorija) and then suddenly exclaims *prochvost* ‘the scoundrel’ without any apparent motivation.

(11) – Éto očen' dlinnaja i grustnaja istorija, – načala Myš' so vzdochom.

Pomolčav, ona vdrug vzvizgnula:

– Prochvost!

– *Pro chvost?* – povtoraila Alisa s nedoumeniem i vzgljanula na ee chvost.

– Grustnaja istorija *pro chvost*?

No Myš' ee ne slušala – ona vsja ušla v svoj rasskaz. I poka ona govorila, Alisa vse nikak ne mogla ponjat', kakoe éto imeet otноšenie k myšinomu chvostu. Poétomu istorija, kotoruju rasskazala Myš', vygljadela v ee voobraženie vot tak:

[DE₁, p. 30]³¹

In (12), the Mouse starts talking about its story, but, overcome by emotion, cries out *prochvost podlyj* ‘the mean scoundrel’, whereupon Alice wonders how a story can be mean (instead of the ST *sad*): “A story about a long tail—that is understandable, but how can a story be mean?” (Rasskaz pro chvost dlinnyj – éto ponjatno, no kak možet byt' chvost podlym?).

(12) Myš' povernulas' k Alise i skazala s drožju v golose, grustno i tjaželo vzdychaja: «Moj dlinnyj rasskaz pro to, ... čto ...on, prochvost podlyj, odnaždy... V obščem, delo bylo tak.»

«Rasskaz pro chvost dlinnyj – éto ponjatno, no kak možet byt' chvost podlym?» – razmyšljala Alisa vsluch, gljadja na chvost Myši i pytajas' voobrazit' podlyj chvost. Poétomu rasskaz myši predstavlja ej primerno tak:

[KO]

³⁰ The English translations marked ORD are quoted from *The Oxford Russian Dictionary*, Oxford & New York, 1993.

³¹ In DE₂ the last section begins: “I poka Myš' govorila, Alisa vse nikak ne mogla [...].”

The pun in (13) plays upon the polysemy of the word *chvostik* ‘little tail’ but also ‘a little more’, *s chvostikom* ‘and a little more’. The Mouse explains to Alice that its tragic saga, its terrible story (Étoj tragičeskoj sage, étoj strašnoj istorii) is a little older than a thousand years (*s chvostikom tysjača let*), where the expression *s chvostikom* refers to *tysjača let*. Alice, however, connects the expression *s chvostikom* with the immediately preceding *istorija* (*Istorija s chvostikom*) and, consequently, has difficulties understanding how a story can have a tail.

(13) – Vnemli, o ditja! Étoj tragičeskoj sage, étoj strašnoj istorii *s chvostikom tysjača let!* – skazala ona.

– Istorija *s chvostikom?* – udivlenno peresprosila Alisa, s interesom pogljadev na Myškin chvostik. – A čto *s nim slučilos’ strašnogo?* Po-moemu, on soveršenno cel – von on kakoj dlinnyj!

[ZA, p. 41]

The pun on *chvost* in (14) is of a different kind. Here the Mouse presents a lengthy introduction to its story, which includes reference to its own courage (*mužestvo*) and self-sacrifice (*samopožertvovanie*). Then the Mouse declares that Alice certainly will not call the Mouse a *chvastun’ja* ‘boaster, braggart’ (derived from the verb *chvastat’ sja* ‘to boast (of)’ (*Uznav ee, vy ne nazovete menja chvastun’ej*) after having heard the story. However, Alice interprets this as a neologism *chvostun’ja*, which is associated with the noun *chvost*, thus showing that her Russian pronunciation adheres to the standard, *akanie* norm, according to which the unstressed *a* and *o* are pronounced similarly (stressed on the second syllable, *chvastun’ja* and *chvostun’ja* are pronounced the same). Looking at the Mouse’s tail, Alice cannot see why the Mouse refuses to be called *Chvostun’ja* *‘tailer’.

(14) – Moja istorija – pečal’naja istorija, – proiznesla Myš’, vzdychaja, – no ona polna samych interesnych priklučenij, v kotorych ja projavila mnogo mužestva i bol’soe samopožertvovanie. Uznav ee, vy ne nazovete menja chvastun’ej, – pribavila ona, obraščajas’ k Alise.

– Ja uverena, čto vaša istorija očen’ interesna, – skazala Alisa, nevol’no gljadja na chvost Myši, – no nazvanie Chvostun’ i vse-taki očen’ k vam podchodit, i ja ne ponimaju, počemu vy ne chotite, čtoby ja vas tak nazývala.

Ona prodolžala smotret’ na chvost Mysi v to vremja, kak ta načala govorit’, tak čto rasskaz predstavilsja ej v sledujuščem vide...

[SO]

2.1.4 Puns on other expressions corresponding to the ST P₂ tail

In (15), Alice asks the Mouse to continue (*prodolžit’*) its tale to the end (*do konca*). The Mouse promises to do so, but adds that the continuation (*prodolženie*) will be long and sad. However, Alice interprets the

prodolženie as the ‘extension’ of the Mouse’s body, and wonders why the tail is sad.

(15) — Vy obeščali prodolžit’ vašu istoriju do konca, — obratilas’ Alisa k Myši, — i rasskazat’, počemu vy nenavidite «K» i «S», — neuverenno dobavila ona šepotom, bojas’, čto Myš’ snova obiditsja.

— Ja rasskažu. No tol’ko prodolženie moe očen’ dlinnoe i pečal’noe, — skazala Myš’, povernuvšis’ k Alise i vzdychaja.

— È t o dlinnoe prodolženie, nesomnенно, — zametila Alisa, gljadja s udivleniem vниз, na myšinyj chvost. — No počemu vy nazyvaete ego pečal’nym?

[OG, pp. 26–27]

In (16), Alice asks the Mouse to tell its *istorija* and it declares that fate has given it an ordinary, but sad *konec* ‘end’ (Mne dan sud’boju obyčnyj, no pečalnyj konec). However, Alice understands *konec* to mean the end of the Mouse’s tail and follows the tail with her eyes to its very end (do samogo konca).

(16) — Vy obeščali rasskazat mne vašu istoriju, pomnite? — skazala Alisa. — Počemu vy nenavidite K i S, — dobavila ona šepotom, napolovinu bojas’, čto ta snova obiditsja.

— Mne dan sud’boju obyčnyj, no pečalnyj konec, — skazala Myš’, povoračivajas’ k Alise i vzdychaja.

— Vaš konec nesomnенно obyčnyj, — skazala Alisa, vnimatelno ogladiv Myš’ i proslediv ee dlinnyj chvost do samogo konca, — no počemu vy nazyvaete ego pečalnym?

[FR, p. 51]

2.1.5 Puns on expressions that correspond neither to the ST P₁ nor P₂

In (17), finally, the TT pun is of a different kind than in the other translations. After promising to tell its story, the Mouse complains that it is hungry (chočetsja est’) and that it feels damp (syro). Alice interprets the word *syro* as *syra*, genitive sg. of *syr* ‘cheese’ (*akanie* again), and, looking at the Mouse, Alice notices that even the Mouse’s tail has grown thin due to the Mouse’s lack of food.

(17) — Pomnite, vy mne obeščali koe-čto rasskazat’, — obratilas’ k nej Aliska šepotom, opasajas’, kak by Myš’ snova ne obidelas’. — O tom, počemu vy ne ljubite mjau i gav.

— Rasskažu, — soglasilas’ Myš’, — chotja sejčas ne samoe udobnoe vremja: chočetsja est’... syro... — i ona tjaželo vzdochnula.

— Syra u menja, k sožaleniju, ni kusočka, — skazala Aliska, — a pro sebja podumala: «Bednjažka! u nee daže chvostik pochudel! »

Myš’ načala svoj rasskaz, i Aliska vse smotrela i smotrela na Myšin chvost i uslyšala vot čto:

[BL]

2.2 The pun on *not* and *knot*

2.2.1 Omission

In (18), the Mouse's protest ("I had not!") that is directed towards Alice's assumption about the "fifth bend", and Alice's following pun have both been replaced by an exchange of words; "Why did you interrupt me..." followed by "Oh, don't be angry with me!".

- (18) – To byli kot" i pětuch"! – prervalo myšku Anja.
– Začem" ty perebila menja i ne dala dokončit' razskaz", glupaja děvočka!
– skazala serdito myška.
– O, ne serdis' na menja! – prosila Anja.

[GR, p. 35]

2.2.2 No pun

In (19), there is a lengthy addition to the TT so that the movement from *not* (Da net že!) to *knot* (Uzel!) can be achieved. This explains why Alice thinks that "in some way or another a knot had formed on the Mouse's long and sad tail" (kakim-to obrazom na ee dlinnom i pečal'nom chvoste obrazovalsja uzel).

- (19) – Vy ne slučaete, – strogo skazala Myš' Alise. – O čem vy dumae? – Prošu proščenija, – otvetila Alisa s podobostrastiem. – Vy kažetsja bližaetes' k pjatomu izgibu?
– Da net že! – serdito zakričala myš', dergaja chvostikom, – vy prosto svjazyvaete mne ruki!
Uvidev kak Myš' dergaet chvostom i v to že vremja govorit o kakom svjazyvanii, Alisa rešila, čto kakim-to obrazom na ee dlinnom i pečal'nom chvoste obrazovalsja uzel.
– Uzel! – vskričala Alisa, vsegda gotovaja pomoč' bližnemu, s trevogoj gljadja na Mys'. – Ach, pozvol'te mne pomoč' vam razvijazat' ego!

[ST]

2.2.3 Puns on expressions that correspond to the ST *P₂ knot*

In (20), the translator adds a **P₁** *ne konfuzil* 'didn't confuse' (Ešče nikto menja tak ne konfuzil: So far no one has ever confused me like this) so that he can arrive at the **P₂** *uzel* 'knot'. According to the so-called *ikanie* pronunciation of Russian, the unstressed *i* and *e* are pronounced in a similar way, and the two last syllables of *ne konfuzil* are pronounced the same way as *uzel*.

- (20) — Prostite, — otvetila Alisa očen' skromno. — Vy došli do pjatoga izgiba, ja polagaju.
— Ty sudiš' obo vsem vkriv' i vkos'! — razdraženno vskričala Myš'. — Ešče nikto menja tak ne konfuzil...

— U z e l! — ne rasslyšav kak sleduet, prervala ee Alisa. Vsegda gotovaja prinesti posil'nuju pol'zu, ona zabolivo osmotrela Myš': — O, pozvol'te mne pomoč' vam razvijazat' ego!

[OG, p. 29]

2.2.4 Puns on *zavjazat'* ‘to tie, to bind; to start’

In (21) and (22), the pun is created by the polysemous use of the verbs *zavjazat'* and *zavjazyvat'* ORD ‘to tie, to bind; to start’, and the noun *zavjazka* ORD ‘beginning, start; opening (of novel, etc.)’. In (21), the Mouse says, “This was [only] the beginning!” (Éto byla zavjazka!), which Alice interprets in terms of a knot having been tied (Uzelok zavjazalsja), and she subsequently offers to untie (*rasputat'*) the knot.

(21) — Prostite, požalujsta, — smirenno proiznesla Alisa, — vy ved', kažetsja, došli do pjatogo izgiba?

— Éto byla zavjazka! — vzvignula raz'jarennaja Myš'.

— Uzelok zavjazalsja! — ponjala Alisa, i, poskol'ku ona vsegda gotova byla priйти na pomoč', tut ze predložila: — Pozvol'te, ja pomogu ego rasputat'!

[NE]

In (22), the TT dialogue is more complicated. The Mouse asks, “Why did you begin a conversation about some tail?!” (Začem ty razgovor o kakom-to chvoste zavjazala?!), wherupon Alice, looking for a knot in the Mouse’s tail, excuses herself: “Did I tie up the tail? I’m sorry! Please, I can help to untie [it]!” (Ja chvost zavjazala? Och! Prostite! Pozvol'te, ja pomogu razvijazat'!). However, the Mouse is not happy and replies: “No one tied anything anywhere!” (Nikto, ničego i nigde ne zavjazyval!).

(22) «Izvinite», — robko otvetila Alisa — «esli ne ošibajus', vy ostanovilis' na tret' em izgibe chvosta.»

«Kakoj ešče izgib? Začem ty razgovor o kakom-to chvoste zavjazala?!!» — sprosila Myš' očen' serdito, daze neskol'ko grubovato.

«Ja chvost zavjazala? Och! Prostite! Pozvol'te, ja pomogu razvijazat'!» — skazala Alisa, vsegda gotovaja komu-nibud' i čem-nibud' pomoč', i popytalas' otyskat' glazami uzel na chvoste Myši.

«Nikto, ničego i nigde ne zavjazyval!» — skazala Myš', vstavaja i sobirajjas' uchodit'. — «Dlja menja éta tarabarščina prosto oskorbitel'na!»

[KO]

2.2.5 Puns on expressions that correspond neither to the ST P_1 nor P_2

In (23), the pun is created by the homonyms *točka* ‘full stop, dot’ (P_1) and *točka* ‘sharpening; grinding’. The Mouse becomes silent, and when Alice asks “And what next?” (A čto dal'se?) it angrily replies “Next: a full stop” (A dal'se točka). Alice tries to understand: “Sharpening? And what was sharpened?” (Točka? A čto točili?).

(23) Myš' umolkla. Alisa, s ljubopystvom sledivšaja za myšinym chvostom, tut že sprosila:

- A čto dal'še?
- A dal'še točka, – serdito otvetila Myš'.
- Točka? A čto točili? – nemedlenno zainteresovalas' Alisa.

[SC, p. 56]

In (24), the pun is created by the homonyms *perebit'* ‘interrupt’ and *perebit'* ‘break’.³² After a short conversation without any correspondence in the ST, the Mouse growls: “Now look! You interrupted [me]!” (Nu vot, [...] perebil-a), to which Alice replies: “Excuse me, but I didn’t break anything. I never break anything at all, no cups, no plates...” (Prostite, no ja ničego ne perebila [...] Ja voobšče nikogda ne b'ju ni čašek, ni tarelok...).

(24) – Kuda ubežala? – sprosila Alisa. – V kamyš?

– Čto za čuš'! Kamyš na kryše! – vozmuščenno propiščala myš'. – Slušat' nado vnimatel'no!

– Ja slušaju. Ja očen' vnimatel'na, – robko vozrazila Alisa, – ja daže sčítaju izvoroty, to est' poveroty, vašej istorii. Vy ostanovilis', po-moemu, na pjatom ili šestom.

– Nu vot, – provorčala myš', – perebila.

– Prostite, no ja ničego ne perebila, – smutilas' Alisa. – Ja voobšče nikogda ne b'ju ni čašek, ni tarelok...

[JA, p. 43]

In (25), the pun is similar to the one in (24), but in (25) it is created with the verbs *vynesti* ORD ‘to bear, to stand, to endure’ and *vynesti* ORD ‘to carry away, to carry out’. The Mouse is tired of Alice’s stupid remarks: “I am so tired of them! I just can’t stand this!” (Kak ja ot nich ustala! Étogo prosto ne vynesti!). Alice replies: “What has to be carried away?” (A čto nužno vynes-ti?).

(25) – Ty ne slušaeš'! – strogo skazala Alise Myš'.

– Net, počemu že, – otvetila skromno Alisa. – Vy došli uže do pjatoga zavitka, ne tak li?

– Gluposti! – rasserdilas' Myš'. – Večno vsjakie gluposti! Kak ja ot nich ustala! Étogo prosto ne vynesti!

– A čto nužno vynes-ti? – sprosila Alisa. (Ona vsegda gotova byla uslužit').

– Razrešite, ja pomogu!

[DE₁, p. 32]

In (26), the pun is created with the slightly different meanings of the adjective *glavnyj* ‘chief, main, principal’. Reacting to Alice’s interruption, the

³² Cf., however, Sannikov 1999: 258, who sees this as an example of polysemy.

Mouse replies: “I haven’t even come to the main [part of the story] yet” (Еšče ne bylo daže samogo glavnogo). Alice, however, looks at the bend of the tail and asks: “In that case, which one of them is the main one?” (V takom slučae kakoj že iz nich samyj glavnyj?).

(26) Izvinite, požalujsta! — skazala Alisa pokorno. — Vy, kažetsja, došli do pjatogo izgiba?

— Ničego podobnogo! — serdito vskričala Myš’. — Ešče ne bylo daže samogo glavnogo.

— V takom slučae kakoj že iz nich samyj glavnyj? — s ljubopystvom sprosila Alisa, usileno vgljadyvajas’ v chvost.

— Ty soveršenno nevozmožna, — skazala Myš’, vstavaja, i v negodovanii pošla proč’. — Ty oskorbljaeš’ menja, melja podobnyj vz dor.

[FR, p. 53]

In (27), **ZА** offers a pun on the noun *nit'* ‘thread’, but inserts a comment from the narrator³³ in which he explains that the Mouse is thinking of the thread of the narration, the gist of the story (*tkan’ povestvovaniya*). The Mouse explains that it has lost the thread (*poterjala nit’*), whereupon Alice thinks that the Mouse has lost a literal thread, and thinks that it might have fallen into the grass (*Poterjala nit’? Ona, naverno, v travu upala!*).

(27) – Prostite, ja sležu, sležu za nim, – smirenno skazala Alisa, – po moemu, vy ostanovilis’... na pjatom poverote.

– Spasibo! – ešče gromče zapiščala Myš’, – vot ja po tvoej milosti poterjala nit’!

Myš’ gorovit pro tu nit’, iz kotoroj sostoit TKAN’ POVESTVOVANIJA (čto éto take, ja i sam tolkom ne znaju!). Voobšče vperwy vstrečaju takich obrazovannyh i obidčivych myšej! I už sovsem neponyatno, počemu ona sc̄itaet svoj sobstvennyj chvostik postoronnim predmetom!

– Poterjala nit’? Ona, naverno, v travu upala! – okliknulas’ Alisa, vsegda gotovaja pomoč’. – Pozvol’ te, ja ee najdu!

[ZА, p. 43]

In (28), the wordplay relies on the referential ambiguity of the accusative *ego* of the 3rd person masculine personal pronoun *on*.³⁴ Alice mentions both the tale (*rasskaz*) and the tail (*chvostik*)³⁵ and thinks that it would be best to shorten *it*, i.e., the tale, a little bit: *Lučše, naverno, nemnožko ukorotit’ ego*. The Mouse, however, apparently understands this as a suggestion to shorten its tail, and reacts strongly (Da éto že prjamoe oskorblenie!! : Now this is a direct insult!!).

³³ ZА is characterised by the presence of a separate narrator who comments on some details of the story, cf. below.

³⁴ Cf. Delabastita 1993: 93f on “referential equivocality”.

³⁵ Both *rasskaz* and *chvostik* are masculine nouns that can be referred to with the pronoun *on* in Russian.

(28) – Prostite, požalujsta, – robko otozvalas' Aliska. – Prosto rasskaz možet ne pomestit'sja: u vas chvostika počti ne ostalos'. Lučše, naverno, nemnožko ukorotit' ego.

– Čto?! – vozmutilas' Myš'. – Da éto že prijamo oskorblenie!! – Ona vskočila i pošla proč'.

[BL]

Finally, in (29), the translator has chosen to replace the *not/knot* pun with not one, but three puns. These puns are on the words *pogib* ‘bend, twist’³⁶ and *pogibnut'* ‘to die, to perish’, *sputat'* ‘to tangle; to confuse’ and *rasputat'* ‘to disentangle’, and a particular use of the verb *dat'* ‘give; let’, respectively (cf. 29'):

(29) „Prostite“, krotko prolepetala Anja, „Vy, kažetsja došli do pjatago pogiba?“

„Ničego podobnago, nikto ne pogib!“ ne na šutku razserdilas' Myš'. „Nikto. Vot“ Vy teper' menja sputali“.

„Ach“, dajte ja rasputaju . . Gdě uzel?“, voskliknula uslužlivo Anja, gljadja na chvost“ Myši.

„Ničego Vam ne dam““, skazala ta i vstav" stala uchodit'. „Vy menja oskorbljaete těm“, čto govorite takuju čuš'!“

[NA, p. 27]

(29') – Excuse me, – Alice prattled humbly, – it seems that you have reached the fifth bend (došli do pjatogo pogiba)?

– Not at all, no one died (nikto ne pogib)! [...] Look, now you confused me (menja sputali).

– Oh, please let me disentangle (dajte ja rasputaju) ... Where is the knot? [...].

– I will not give you anything (Ničego vam ne dam), – said [the Mouse] [...].

2.3 The pun on *tortoise* and *taught us*

2.3.1 Omission

In (30), there is an example of omission of the relevant TT (cf. the ST, appendix III). After the phrase “When we were children” (Kogda my byli det'mi) the TT omits the whole section about the teacher, continuing directly to “we went to the best sea school, even if you don't believe it...” (my chodili v lučšju morskiju školu, chotja ty étomu ne poveriš'...), which prompts

³⁶ The noun *pogib* ‘bend, twist’ has the stress on the first syllable (cf. SSRLJa 10, col. 163), whereas the preterite *pogib* (of *pogibnut'* ‘to die, to perish’) is normally stressed on the second syllable. Thus, in contrast to most other puns in both the ST and the Russian TT, this pun plays primarily on homography rather than on homophony.

Alice's reply "I believe [it]!" (Ja verju) and the Mock Turtle's "I don't believe [it]!" (Ne verju!).

(30) — Kogda my byli det'mi, — prodolžala nakonec Fal'šivaja Čerepacha uže bolee spokojno, chotja vremja ot vremeni u nee i proryvalis rydanija, — my chodili v lučšuju morskuju školu, chotja ty ètomu ne poveriš...

— Ja verju! — skazala Alisa.

— Ne verju! — skazala Fal'šivaja Čerepacha.

[FR, p. 144]

2.3.2 No pun

In (31), the translator has chosen a literal translation of the **P₁** *tortoise* and the **P₂** *taught us* into *Suchoputnaja Čerepacha* ('land turtle/tortoise') and *ucil nas*, respectively, which makes the Mock Turtle's explanation of the teacher's nickname more or less incomprehensible without reference to the ST.³⁷

(31) — Kogda my byli det'mi, — Mnimaja Čerepacha nakonec zagovorila bolee spokojno, chotja inogda ne mogla sderžat' rydanij. — My chodili v školu. V glubine morja... Učitelem byl starik, my zvali ego Suchoputnoj Čerepachoj...

— Počemu že vy zvali ego suchoputnoj čerepacho? esli on žil v more? — sprosila Alisa.

— My nazyvali ego Suchoputnoj Čerepacho, potomu čto on učil nas, — serdito otvetila Mnimaja Čerepacha, — ty čto, sovsem tupaja?

[ST]

A different type of translation can be found in (32). Here the explanation for the teacher's nickname *Brjuzga* 'grumbler' is her constant grumbling: "she was grumbling all day" (ona brjuzzala s" utra do večera). This explanation can be perceived to be logical, but the pun is missing.

(32) — Kogda my byli malen'kie, — prodolžala čerepacha, — my chodili v more učit'sja. Učitel' nicej našej byla staraja čerepacha. Vsě my zvali ee Brjuzgoj...

— Za čto vy ee tak" prozvali? — sprosila Anja.

— Za to, čto ona brjuzzala s" utra do večera, — otvetila čerepacha. — Začem" ty menja peribivaeš', glupaja děvočka.

[GR, p. 134f]

³⁷ Cf. Delabastita 1993: 202f on "formal disjunction" as a result of this type of translation.

2.3.3 Puns on expressions that correspond to the ST **P₁ tortoise**

In (33), there is a joke on the expression *Rimskaja Čerepacha* that can be interpreted as both ‘Roman (antique) turtle’, and ‘[Roman] *testudo* formation’, which is a military formation where the Roman soldiers would form a square and cover their heads and all the sides of the square with their shields.

The Mock Turtle replies to Alice’s question, ““Why did you call him a *Rimskaja Čerepacha*, if he wasn’t one?”, by stating “Because he was the oldest of all the turtles and he filled our skulls³⁸ with trash³⁹”. However, if the Mock Turtle’s answer is interpreted in relation to the second, military meaning of *Rimskaja Čerepacha*, and plays on the polysemous verbs *nabit/nabivat* ‘to stuff (with), fill (with); to drive, to smash (a lot of something hard into something else)’, it also evokes a picture of the teacher beating on the skulls of the pupils like enemies beating on the shields of the Roman soldiers in a *testudo* formation.

(33) — Kogda my byli malen’kimi, — prodolžal Mok-Tartl’ bolee spokojno, chotja on vremja ot vremeni prodolžal slegka vschlipyvat’, — my chodili v morskiju školu. Staraja Čerepacha byla našim učitelem. My obyknovenno nazyvali ego Rimskoj Čerepachoju...

— Počemu vy nazyvali ego Rimskoj Čerepachoju, esli on ne byl eju? — sposila Alisa.

— Potomu čto on byl samoj drevnej iz čerepach i nabival truchoju naši čerepa! — otvetil Mok-Tartl’ serdito. — Poistine ty očen’ nevežestvenna!

[OG, p. 95]

In (34), the translator concentrates on the **P₁ tortoise** and creates an explanation for the nickname that has no counterpart in the ST, *Čeremama*, a neologism made from the first part of *čerepacha* ‘tortoise/turtle’⁴⁰ and *mama* ‘mother, mom’: *Učitel’nicej u nas byla tetja Čerepacha. No my ee zvali Čeremama* ‘Our teacher was a lady tortoise/turtle. But we called her Čeremama’.⁴¹

(34) – V detstve ja učilas’ v samoj modnoj – vodnoj – škole. Učitel’nicej u nas byla tetja Čerepacha. No my ee zvali Čeremama.

³⁸ Cf. Ru. *čerep* ‘skull, cranium’, which constitutes the first part of the Russian word for turtle/tortoise, *čerepacha*.

³⁹ Cf. Ru. *trucha* ‘dust (of rotted wood); hay-dust; (fig.) trash’ (ORD).

⁴⁰ The name for the Mock Turtle in JA, *Telepacha*, probably alludes to a child’s pronunciation of the word *čerepacha*.

⁴¹ This is followed by the explanation *Ne nazyvat’ že tetju Čerepapa!* ‘You couldn’t call a female [turtle] Čerepapa, could you!’, where *Čerepapa* would be the male equivalent of *Čeremama*. A similar pun, but with the gender references reversed, can be found in the Swedish translation by Behre (1976: 118–119): “Vi hade en gammal sköldpadda till lärare. Pärlefar brukade vi kalla honom . . . – Pärlefar! sa Alice. Pärlemor har jag hört talas om, men aldrig pärlefar! – Vi kunde väl inte kalla honom pärlemor när han var en *han*, sa den falska sköldpaddan otåligt.”

- Vot stranno! Počemu? – udivilas’ Alisa.
 – Ne nazyvat’ že tetju Čepupacha! – fyrknul Grifon. – Soobražat’ надо!
 – Da-a, – pokačala golovoj Telepacha, – ne bol’no ty soobrazitel’naja.
 [JA, p. 116]

2.3.4 Puns on other expressions that correspond to the ST **P₁**

In the TT (35–38), the translators have created new puns based on an animal other than a tortoise as **P₁**, and a **P₂** explanation of this nickname. In (35) and (36) the animal is a *sprut* or *sprutik* ‘octopus’ and the explanation for the nickname is that the teacher always had a *prutik* ‘twig; rod’ with him—the preposition *s* ‘with’ combines with the instrumental case of *prutik*, *prutikom*, into a homonym with the teacher’s nickname, also in the instrumental: *Sprutikom*, *Sprutom*.

- (35) – Kogda my byli malen’kie, my chodili v školu na dne morja. Učitelem u nas byl starik Čepupacha. My zvali ego Sprutikom.
 – Začem že vy zvali ego Sprutikom, – sprosila Alisa, – esli na samom dele on byl Čepupachoj.
 – My ego zvali Sprutikom, potomu čto on vsegda chodil s prutikom, – ovtvitol serdito Kak by. – Ty ne očen’-to dogadliva!

[DE₁, p. 83]⁴²

- (36) „Kogda my byli malen’kija“, soizvolila prodolžat’ Čepupacha, uže spokojněe, chotja vse-že vschlipyvaja po vremenam”, – „my chodili v” školu na dně morja. U nas” byl” staryj, strogij učitel’, my ego zvali Molodym” Sprutom“.

„Počemu-že vy zvali ego molodym”, esli on” byl” star”?“ sprosila Anja.
 „My ego zvali tak” potomu, čto on” vsegda byl” s” prutikom“, serdito otvětila Čepupacha. „Kakaja Vy, pravo, tupaja!“

[NA, p. 84]

In (37), the teacher’s nickname is another sea animal, a *som* ‘sheat-fish’, and, in a similar fashion to (35) and (36), the pun is created on the homonymy of the instrumental case form *somom* and the expression *s omom* ‘with *om*’. *Om* is then explained as referring to the German physicist Georg Simon Ohm (1789–1854), and, playing on the slightly different uses of the verb *zvat’* ‘to call (someone something); to ask, to invite’, the phrase *My predpočitali zvat’ ee Somom...* ‘We preferred to call her the sheat-fish...’ is rephrased as *Vot my i zvali Čepupachu s Omom provodit’ u nas zanjatija sovmestno* ‘That is why we invited the Turtle together with Ohm to conduct the lessons together’.

⁴² In DE₂, the Mock Turtle is referred to as Čepupacha Kvazi: “– My ego zvali Sprutikom, potomu čto on vsegda chodil s prutikom, – ovtvitol serdito Čepupacha Kvazi. – Ty ne očen’-to dogadliva!”.

(37) «Kogda my byli malen'kimi», – v konce koncov prodolžil Mintakrab uže spokojnee, prodolžaja tem ne menee vremja ot vremeni vschlipyvat', – «My chodili v morskoy licej. Klassnym rukovoditelem u nas byla staraja Čerepacha. My predpočitali zvat' ee Somom...»

«Počemu somom, esli on byl čerepachoj?» – sprosila Alisa.

«Potomu čto Georg Simon Om lučij v oblasti akustiki. Vot my i zvali Čerepachu s Omom provodit' u nas zanjatija sovmestno», – serdito otvetil Mintakrab, – «Kakaja ty, pravo, glupaja!»

[KO]

In (38), the animal is a *piton* ‘python’, and the **P₂** is *pitoncy*, alluding to *pitomcy* ‘pupils’: *A počemu vy ego tak nazývali [...] On byl Piton! Ved' my – ego pitoncy!* ‘Why did you call him that [...] He was a Python! Because we were his *pitoncy*!’.⁴³

(38) – Kogda my byli malen'kimi, – zagovoril Delikates menee patetičeskim tonom (chotja vremja ot vremeni vozvraščalsja k prežnim stenajjam), – my chodili v školu v more. Učitelem byl suščij Zmej Morskoj. V duše – Udar! Meždu soboj ego my nazývali Pitonom.

– A počemu vy ego tak nazývali, raz on byl Udar, a ne Piton? – zainteresovalas' Alisa.

– On byl Piton! Ved' my – ego pitoncy! – s negodovaniem otvetil Delikates. – Bojuš', ditja, ty umstvenno ostala!

[ZA, p. 120]

2.3.5 Puns on expressions that correspond to the ST **P₂** *taught us*

In (39) and (40), the translators have concentrated on the **P₂** *taught us*, and created new **P₁** nicknames that can be used as antecedents in the new puns.

In (39), **P₂** appears as *Ved' ona ž učila nas!* ‘but it was she who taught us!’. The underlined sequence, *ž učila*, is pronounced almost the same as the noun *žučičha* ‘[female] beetle; [female] rogue, twister’, which, consequently, is the TT nickname for the teacher. Furthermore, by using the polysemous *žučičha* the translator also manages to create something similar to the vertical ST wordplay on *tortoise* and *tortuous* (ST **P₃**) (cf. above, footnote 17).

(39) – Kogda že my byli malen'kie – nakonec prodolžil Čerepacha-Teljač'i-Nožki, uspokovivšis' i vschlipyvaja vremja ot vremeni, no gorazdo slabee, – my chodili v školu, v morskiju školu. Učitel' nicej byla staraja Čerepacha, no my obyčno zvali ee Žučichoj.

– Počemu že vy nazývali ee Žučichoj, esli ona ne byla Žučichoj? – sprosila Alisa.

⁴³ Cf. the comment by the narrator: “Meždu pročim, piton i udav – éto odno i to že. Alisa éto znat' ne objazana, a vam – ne mešaet. Slovo «pitoncy», po-moemu, éti čudišča vydumali sami, tak čto nečego bylo im tak už stydit' Alisu!” (p. 122).

– Ved’ ona že učila nas! – razozlilsja Čerepacha-Teljač’i-Nožki. – Kak vy nesoobrazitel’ny!

[SC, p. 120]

In (40), **P₂** *zubrit’* focuses on the activity of the pupils: *on zastavljal nas zubrit’* ‘he forced us to cram [study hard]’, and **P₁** is not a tortoise, but a *zubr* ‘(European) bison’.

(40) – Kogda my byli malen’kimi, – prodolžil nakonec Jakoby Čerepacha bolee spokojno, chotja i vse ešče vschlipyvaja vremja ot vremeni, – my chodili v školu v more. Našim učitelem byl starik Čerepacha – my obično nazyvali ego Zubrom...

– Počemu vy nazyvali ego Zubrom, esli on byl Čerepachoj? – sprosila Alisa.

– My nazyvali ego Zubrom, potomu čto on zastavljal nas zubrit’! – gnevno otvetil Čerepacha, – Voistinu, ty očen’ nesoobrazitel’na!

[NE]

2.3.6. Sequence of puns

Finally, in (41), the single ST pun on *tortoise* and *taught us* is replaced by a whole series of puns. The Mock Turtle begins by explaining that they had a teacher, but instead of the expression *klassnyj rukovoditel’* ‘form monitor’, he uses *lapa* ‘paw’ instead of *ruka* ‘hand’ as the first component of the compound *rukovoditel’* ‘instructor’, lit. ‘one who leads someone by the hand’. Alice, however, does not understand this expression immediately, and the Mock Turtle explains: “Didn’t anyone ever lead you by the paw?”

Continuing, the Mock Turtle praises the teacher because he never made any of the pupils “stand in the corner” (*nikogda ne stavil nas v ugol*). Once again, Alice is surprised, and asks “But how can there be corners in the sea?” (*Otkuda že v more ugly?*), whereupon the Mock Turtle explains that on land there are only four,⁴⁴ but in the sea there are many of them.

Finally, playing on the similarity of the words *učitel’* ‘teacher’ and *mučitel’* ‘torturer, tormenter’, the pupils address their teacher with *dorogoj mučitel’* ‘dear tormenter’, and the teacher is quoted saying “To teach you is just torture” (*Vas učit’ – splošnoe mučenie!*).

(41) Nakonec, Morskoy Byčok zagovoril, uže spokojnee, chotja i vschlipyvaja vremja ot vremeni:

– Davnym-davno éto bylo. My byli togda sovsem malen’kie i chodili v školu. A škola byla na dne morskem. I byl u nas klassnyj lapovoditel’...

⁴⁴ Whether or not the allusion here to the Russian text of the Book of Revelation would be understandable to the intended reader is a separate question: “I posle sego videl ja četyrech Angelov, stoaščich na četyrech uglach zemli [...]” (Rev. 7:1, Synodal translation <<http://bibleonline.ru/bible/rus/66/07/>>).

- Kto-kto? – peresprosila Aliska.
- Lapovoditel', tebe govorjat, – povtoril Byčok. – Tebja čto, nikogda ne vodili za lapu? Nu, tak vot: byl on strogij, no spravedlivyj, zrja nikogda ne stavil nas v ugol.
- Otkuda že v more ugly? – udivilas' Aliska.
- Éto na suše ich vsego četyre, – gordo skazal Byčok. – A v vode znaeš', skol'ko! Nu, tak vot. My vse ego ljubili i zvali «dorogoj mučitel'».
- Oj, kak že vam bylo ne stydno? – voskliknula Aliska.
- Cto že tut stydnogo?! – vspylil Byčok. – On že sam govoril: «Vas učit' – splošnoe mučenie!» A ty, esli ne ponimaes', pomalkivaj!
- Postydilas' by staršim perečit'? – vmešalsja Morskoy Volk. – Čemu vas tol'ko v škole učat?

[BL]

2.4 Conclusions

Taking into consideration the translation strategies that have been used to translate the ST puns, the TT examples that have been investigated can be assigned to the following types (cf. above):

- 1) PUN > ZERO (omission). Two examples (nos. 18, 30) in the main TT corpus.⁴⁵
- 2) PUN > NO PUN. Seven examples (nos. 5–8, 19, 31–32), of which three belong to **ST** and two to **GR**.
- 3) PUN > PUN, focusing on the meaning of the ST **P₁** (either on a more or less literal translation of the ST **P₁**, or on some other word replacing it). Seven examples (nos. 9, 33–38), of which all but one refer to the *tortoise/taught us* pun.
- 4) PUN > PUN, focusing on the meaning of the ST **P₂** (either on a more or less literal translation of the ST **P₂**, or on some other word replacing it). Ten examples (nos. 10–16, 20, 39–40), of which seven refer to the *tale/tail* pun.
- 5) PUN > PUN, neither the TT **P₁** nor **P₂** corresponds directly to the ST **P₁** and **P₂**, respectively. Eleven examples (nos. 17, 21–29, 41), of which nine refer to the *not/knot* pun.

⁴⁵ In addition, the translations by Čarova and Tarlovskij omit all three TT that correspond to the respective ST. Similar examples can be found, for example, in the Swedish translation by Emond (1979), where the TT that correspond to the ST with both the *tale/tail* and the *not/knot* puns have been omitted. However, the *tortoise/taught us* pun is translated by Emond with a focus on **P₁**, playing on the teacher's nickname *Räkan* 'the Shrimp': “ [...] Läraren var en gammal sköldpadda. Fast vi kallade honom Räkan!” ”Varför kallade ni en sköldpadda för Räkan?” frågade Alice. ”För att han lärde oss räkning förstås!” svarade Den Falska Sköldpadden”.

If we look at the distribution of the types of translations, we can notice individual differences between some of the TT:⁴⁶

1) In **ST** (nos. 7, 19, 31), all three examples follow the PUN > NO PUN strategy and replace the ST puns with what Delabastita (1993: 202) calls *non-selective non-puns*. According to Delabastita, this may in many cases be seen as the “default norm” for the translation of puns, particularly horizontal puns.⁴⁷ However, among the Russian TT examples discussed in the present article **ST** is the only one who constantly applies this translation strategy. **GR** also avoids punning, replacing it with either non-punning expressions (nos. 5, 32) or by omitting the corresponding part of the TT (no. 18).

2) In **NE** (nos. 10, 21, 40), all three examples replace the ST pun with a TT pun and consistently focus on **P₂**. **NE** applies this strategy not only for the *tale/tail* pun, where it can be seen to be motivated by the necessity of preserving the connection between the content of the text and its layout (in the shape of a tail), but also in the TT that correspond to both the *not/knot* and the *tortoise/taught us* pun.⁴⁸ Also **OG** shows a preference for punning on **P₂** (nos. 15, 20).⁴⁹

3) Also in **BL** (nos. 17, 28, 41) all three examples show the results of a PUN > PUN strategy, but in none of the cases does the TT **P₁** or **P₂** correspond directly to the respective ST **P₁** or **P₂**.⁵⁰

4) In contrast to all the other translations, **ZA** is characterised by the presence of an additional, external narrator (nos. 27, 38). This narrator, who in the preface (*Glava nikakaja*, pp. 4–11) is stated as being identical with the

⁴⁶ Note, however, that the present investigation is based on the analysis of only three of the approximately forty puns that have been identified in the ST (cf. Cammarata 2007: 79–200. Ting 1984 discusses some twenty puns or groups of puns and their translation).

⁴⁷ Cf., for example, a similar translation of the *tortoise/taught us* pun into Italian by Galasso & Kemeny (1967, quoted by Cammarata 2007: 162): “La chiamavamo Testuggine perché era lei che insegnava”.

⁴⁸ Cf. Nesterenko’s preface, in which he criticises other translators into Russian for creating their own puns instead of translating the original ones. In his own translation, Nesterenko claims to have attempted to stay close to the author’s original pun: “Ja že vzjal sebe za pravilo sochranjat’ avtorskij variant chotja by častično. To est’, k primeru, iz pary omonimov točno perevoditsja odin, a vtoroj uže podbiratsja; ili podstavljaetsja drugaja para, no pri etom schodnaja po smyslu s anglijskim originalom.”

⁴⁹ However, none of the investigated Russian TT contains a pun where both **P₁**, **P₂**, and **F** are preserved, as in the French translation of the *not/knot* pun by Parisot (1979: 115f): “« Je te demande pardon, dit, d’un air contrit, Alice : tu en étais arrivée, je crois, à la cinquième courbe. ». « Hein ? ne... » articula d’un ton sec la Souris, furieuse. « Un nœud ? dit Alice, toujours prête à rendre service, et jetant autour d’elle des regards scrutateurs. Oh! laisse-moi t’aider à le défaire! », or the Italian translation by Pietrocòla-Rossetti (1872: 38): ““Le domando scusa,” rispose umilmente Alice: “ella è giunta alla quinta curvatura della coda, non è vero?” “No, doh!” riprese il Sorcio con voce acerba ed irata. “Che! c’è un nodo?”” sclamò Alice sempre pronta e servizievole, e guardandosi attorno. “Mi conceda il favore di disfarlo!””

⁵⁰ In the preface to **BL**, Blechman claims to have followed the principle “perevudit’ sleduet ne bukvu, a duch” ‘one has to translate not the letter, but the spirit’.

translator or “re-teller”, Boris Zachoder, appears now and then in the main text of the book, commenting on various details of the story.

3 Translation strategies and translation norms

In addition to possible ST-internal factors that influence the choice of translation strategy,⁵¹ and features related to the individual artistry of the respective translators, perhaps the most important causes for the differences between the translations can be found in their relationships to the changing norms that govern translational practice, in Russia and elsewhere. The discussion of the characteristics of the two main alternatives (or two endpoints of a translation-strategy-continuum), i.e., source-oriented or target-oriented translation, is too extensive to be retold here, but following Levý, I would like to see this rather as an opposition between the general and the specific or between the whole and its parts.⁵² A similar view is expressed by Delabastita, who discusses the choice “between different levels or kinds of translation equivalence, viz. maximal equivalence on the linguistic level as opposed to maximal equivalence on the level of textual synfunctions” (1993: 318). Using these oppositions, the **BL** translation can be placed at the “general-focused” end of a continuum and the **ST** translation at the “specific-oriented” end, with the remaining TT being located somewhere in the middle.

According to Fedorov (1958: 299–301), wordplay was seldom carried over from the foreign ST into the Russian TT in nineteenth-century Russian translations, and especially rarely in prose translations. Fedorov also claims that this tradition changed during the Soviet period, which was characterised by an emphasis on recreating both homonymy and polysemy in the TT: wordplay, when it occurred, was seen as an integral part of the stylistic characteristics of the ST and thus needed to be recreated in the Russian TT.⁵³ In

⁵¹ As was already mentioned above, the *tale/tail* pun can be seen to be more essential for the progress of the story than the other two, which may explain the high proportion of corresponding TT puns focusing on the **P₂ tail**.

⁵² Levý prefers to concentrate on the *focus* of the translation: “Die wortgetreue Übersetzung heftet sich an besondere Momente [...] auf Kosten der allgemeinen Bedeutung”, whereas “[d]ie freie Übersetzung betont das Allgemeine.” (Levý 1969: 86). “Mit der Dialektik des Einmaligen und des Allgemeinen ist die Dialektik des Ganzen und des Teils eng verbunden.” (Levý 1969: 102). For Levý, the whole is often more important than the part: “Wichtiger ist das Ganze, doch sollte sich in ihm auch die semantische Einzelheit nicht verlieren. Wo das Wort nicht an sich, sondern nur als Teil des Gesamten eine Bedeutung hat, übersetzt man das Ganze ohne Rücksicht auf die Bedeutungen der einzelnen Wörter.” (Levý 1969: 102).

⁵³ Cf. Witt 2008: 219, who refers to a Soviet translation doctrine from the end of the 1930s that at least for translations *into* Russian prescribes “free translation” (*vol’nyj perevod*) instead of the earlier “literalist” tradition (*bukvalizm*). Cf., however, Sannikov 1999: 513–515 on the often negative evaluation of wordplay in Soviet literary criticism. For an overview of

the 1960s Komissarov et al. (1965) recommended that the translator “must always strive to recreate wordplay and only if all his trials have turned out to be in vain he has the right to abstain from this stylistic method. But in that case the loss must be compensated”.⁵⁴ As Nikolajeva (2005: 237ff) emphasizes, the translation of children’s literature differs in some important aspects from other literary translation, both in Russia and elsewhere.⁵⁵ However, recreating wordplay can be seen as contributing to the accessibility of a text for the target audience, and this is often valued positively: “Such translation strategies may be less faithful to the source text, but instead more loyal toward the target audience” (Nikolajeva 2005:243).⁵⁶ Among the Russian translations discussed here, all but **ST** comply more or less with this requirement.

The translator’s choice between strategies that focus on different levels of translation equivalence can be illustrated also by the translation in the Russian TT of some culturally specific items in the ST.⁵⁷ For reasons of space, the discussion here will be limited to the translation of a short sequence in chapter 2 of the ST (ex. 42): Alice has just met the Mouse, and thinks about why the Mouse does not answer her.

(42) “Perhaps it doesn’t understand English,” thought Alice. “I dare say it’s a French mouse, come over with William the Conqueror.”

[Carroll 2001: 26]

Three culturally specific elements can be identified here: 1) the language that the Mouse does not seem to understand (and which, presumably, is the language that Alice normally speaks) (ST English); 2) the (foreign) nationality

the theoretical discussions of translation principles in Russia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Friedberg 1997: 87–106.

⁵⁴ “[...] perevodčik dolžen vsegda stremit’ sja peredat’ igru slov i tol’ko v slučae, esli vse ego popytki okazalis’ tšetnymi, on imeet pravo otkazat’ sja ot peredači étogo stilističeskogo priema. No i v étom slučae on dolžen v dal’nejšem kompensirovat’ dopuščennuju poterju.” (1965: 166–167).

⁵⁵ For a general introduction to children’s literature in the Soviet Union and Russia see, for example, Hellman 1991 and Nikolajeva 1995.

⁵⁶ Cf. also Klingberg (1986: 69–70), who discusses different translations into Swedish of the *tortoise/taught us* pun and clearly advocates a type of translation that preserves the wordplay meaning. Similarly, Knochenhauer (2004), comparing the translations of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* into Swedish by Nonnen (1870), Knutsson (1945), and Runnqvist (1966), notes that the translation by Nonnen, albeit being “almost literal”, still manages to find “Swedish equivalents” to the ST puns: “Nonnens översättning av Alice är nästan ordagrant mot källtextens. Endast när det gäller vissa ordlekar och verser försöker hon hitta svenska motsvarigheter. [...] Hon hittar oftast motsvarigheter till källtextens ordlekar och ordvändningar och hennes översättning står sig därför väl än idag.” (Knochenhauer 2004: 8).

⁵⁷ For a detailed discussion of the principles of translating cultural specifics that are based on translations of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* into German, see Horton 2002.

of the Mouse (ST French); 3) the reason why the (assumed foreign) Mouse is in the same location as Alice.

Of the twelve main translations into Russian discussed in the present article, five (**DA**, **ST**, **NE**, **SC**, **OG**) preserve all three elements unchanged, whereas two (**ZA**, **BL**) do not deviate in any substantial way from the ST (in **ZA**, the language reference is less specific, changing it into “our language” (po-našemu), whereas **BL** omits it altogether; **BL** lets Alice suppose that the Mouse is a “foreigner, probably French (naverno, ona inostranka [...] Skoree vsego, francuženka)), but both **ZA** and **BL** keep the reference to William the Conqueror unchanged. Thus, all seven translations clearly maintain the English setting of Alice’s adventures.

In **JA** (p. 33), however, the Englishness has been neutralised: the Mouse does not understand “human speech” (po-čelovečeski), it is probably “a foreign Mouse” (inostrannaja myš’).⁵⁸ In **GR** (p. 22), Alice first thinks that the Mouse might speak Russian, but then decides to try with French instead: “„Možet” byt’, ona govorit’ po-russki, – podumala Anja, – a možet” byt’, éto francuzskaja myš’. Zagovorju-ka ja s” neju po-francuzski“.”. In neither **JA** nor **GR** is any explanation given for the Mouse’s appearance.

In the two translations from the 1920s, **NA** and **FR**, the TT are even more adapted towards a Russian setting. The Mouse is still French but it does not understand Russian, and the reason for its presence is associated with Napoleon: either it has arrived together with Napoleon (“prišedšaja v meste s Napoleonom” (**FR**, p. 41), or it has stayed on after the retreat of Napoleon (“ostavšajasja pri otstuplenii Napoleona” (**NA**, p. 18). Thus, the scene has been transposed into a Russian surrounding.

The remaining translation, (**KO**), carries the transposition even further, changing the Mouse’s presumed foreign nationality to English, and the reason for its presence is that it probably had come over the sea⁵⁹ together with Columbus: ““Možet ona po-russki ne ponimaet?” – podumala Alisa. – “Togda, skoree vsego, ona angličanka, navernoe priplyla v meste s Kolumbom.” A possible reading would be that Wonderland has been located in a Russian-speaking America!⁶⁰

The most target-oriented of the twelve TT are **NA**, **FR**, and **KO**. The neutralised **GR** and **JA** can be placed in the middle of the continuum, whereas the remaining seven TT all show the results of a source-oriented

⁵⁸ Cf. Horton 2002: 104. A less radical neutralisation can be found in the Swedish translation by Runnquist (2000: 34): “Den kanske inte förstår språket, tänkte Alice. Det kanske är en fransk mus, som har kommit hit på medeltiden”.

⁵⁹ A pun on the Russian verb *priplyt'*, which can mean both ‘to swim here’ and ‘to sail here’.

⁶⁰ The domesticating strategy can also be illustrated with, for example, the translations of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* into Italian by Pietrocòla-Rossetti (1872) and Bossi (1963), into French by Bour (1934), Rouillard (1945), and Peter (1971), into Dutch by Reedijk & Kossmann (1947) and de Jong (1982), into German by Enzensberger (1963), cf. Kibbee 2003: 311–313, Nord 1994, 2003.

translation strategy.⁶¹ This distribution correlates somewhat with the chronological relationship between the TT, indicating a shift away from domestication strategies between the 1920s (**NA**, **FR**) and the 1940s (**OG**).⁶² Attitudes towards the domestication strategy can still be rather negative in Russia, and this is illustrated, for example, by the recently published textbook by V.V. Sdobnikov and O.V. Petrova (2006: 393–396), in which Nabokov’s “russification” of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* is strongly criticised.⁶³

4 Conclusions

A comparison of the translation strategies that have been applied in the investigated Russian TT, both with respect to wordplay and culturally specific elements, makes it possible to provide a tentative characterisation of approximately half of the main TT: **ST**, **NE**, and **OG** seem to prefer source-oriented translation strategies, whereas **FR** and **NA** apply more target-oriented strategies. **JA**, which combines different wordplay translation strategies (cf. examples 6, 24, 31) with a neutralised cultural setting, can be said to take an in-between position in the choice between source- and target-oriented strategies. The remaining TT (**GR**, **DE**, **SC**, **ZA**, **KO**, **BL**) are less easy to classify because the limited number of examples combine both source- and target-oriented characteristics.

In order to present a clearer characterisation of both the individual translations of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* into Russian and their position among texts translated into Russian in general, further analysis clearly needs to broaden the textual base, not only by including more TT that correspond to the ST puns, but also by broadening the analysis of the cultural specifics of the ST and TT texts. An analysis of the translation of the ST poems would also add substantially to the characterisation of the respective TT.

The present analysis has focused on translations from English into Russian, but a deeper understanding of the humorous effects of wordplay and its

⁶¹ Cf., however, the preface to **ZA** (Zachoder 1972/2007: 5) where the narrator jokingly proposes some alternative titles for the story: *Alenka v Voobrazili*, *Alja v Udivljandii*, *Al’ka v Čepuchanii*, or *Aliska v Rasčudesii*. For a short presentation of Zachoder as an author and translator, see Hellman 1991: 141–143.

⁶² Vdovenko (2000), referring to **FR**, **GR**, and the first translation into Russian in 1879 (*Sonja v carske diva*), claims that **NA** is the last of the Russian translations to have been made according to the “metodom t.n. transponirovaniya” (the so-called transposition method). The translation by Kononenko (**KO**), however, is not mentioned by Vdovenko.

⁶³ Cf., however, Boyd (1990: 197, with reference to Weaver 1964), who claims that the translation by Nabokov “has been rated the best translation of the book into any language” and Karlinsky (1970: 314): “[Nabokov’s translation] is by far the best one that exists in Russian”. Cf. Demurova 2003 for a general presentation of Nabokov’s translation, and Vid 2008 for a discussion of its “domestication” strategies.

translation clearly requires a wider linguistic perspective; that is, the comparison and analysis of similarities and differences between translations into several languages.⁶⁴ As I have tried to show in the present article, the Russian translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* do not constitute an isolated phenomenon, but are connected with other translations of the same text into other languages, and with the general development of translation strategies and translation norms. The reeling and writhing goes on!

⁶⁴ Cf., for example, Capitano 1983, who presents a comparative analysis of the translation of the ST poems into Russian and Italian.

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⁶⁵ Other translations into Russian were, unfortunately, unavailable for the present investigation and include the anonymous *Sonja v carstve diva*, published in Moscow in 1879, as well as translations by A.N. Roždestvenskaja (1908–1909), M.P. Čechov (1913), V.É. Orel (1988), Ju. Chazanov (2006), cf. <http://www.wonderland-alice.ru/translations>, Rušajlo 1991, Weaver 1964: 60–61, 130–132.

⁶⁶ The electronic version of Nesterenko's translation used for the present article was last modified in January, 2001.

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Appendix: the source texts

- I. However, it was over at last, and they sat down again in a ring, and begged the Mouse to tell them something more.

“You promised to tell me your history, you know,” said Alice, “and why it is you hate—C and D,” she added in a whisper, half afraid that it would be offended again.

“Mine is a long and a 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?” And she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking, so that her idea of the tale was something like this:

[Carroll 2001: 34]

- II. “You are not attending!” said the Mouse to Alice, severely. “What are you thinking of?”

“I beg your pardon,” said Alice very humbly: “you had got to the fifth bend, I think?”

“I had *not*!” cried the Mouse, sharply and very angrily.

“A knot!” said Alice, always ready to make herself useful, and looking anxiously about her. “Oh, do let me help to undo it!”

“I shall do nothing of the sort,” said the Mouse, getting up and walking away. “You insult me by talking such nonsense!”

“I didn’t mean it!” pleaded poor Alice. “But you’re so easily offended, you know!”

(Carroll 2001: 35f)

- III. “When we were little,” the Mock Turtle went on at last, more calmly, though still sobbing a little now and then, “we went to school in the sea. The master was an old Turtle—we used to call him Tortoise—”

“Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn’t one?” Alice asked.

“We called him Tortoise because he taught us,” said the Mock Turtle angrily. “Really you are very dull!”

“You ought to be ashamed of yourself for asking such a simple question,” added the Gryphon; and then they both sat silent and looked at poor Alice, who felt ready to sink into the earth. At last the Gryphon said to the Mock Turtle “Drive on, old fellow! Don’t be all day about it!” and he went on in these words:—

“Yes, we went to school in the sea, though you mayn’t believe it—”

“I never said I didn’t!” interrupted Alice.

“You did,” said the Mock Turtle.

“Hold your tongue!” added the Gryphon, before Alice could speak again. The Mock Turtle went on.

(Carroll 2001: 100–101)