

Wordplay

In brief



SPA [Juego de palabras](#)

◀ origins

Wordplay mainly refers to the creation of double meanings or ambiguity through the deliberate exploitation of homonymy or polysemy, of words, and, by extension, to non-verbal or multimodal textual elements. It can also be more broadly defined as the playful use of words, [verbal wit](#), or in relation to [punning](#), the usually humorous use of a word in such a way as to suggest two or more of its meanings or the meaning of another word similar in sound. Applied to a single word the concept would include such devices as [Spoonerisms](#) or [malapropisms](#); it can be the defining feature of certain texts or text types, as in the case of the [limerick](#). Certain forms of wordplay are not necessarily humorous, such as [palindromes](#), [anagrams](#) and [acrostics](#), and are not witty *per se* unless the author can tie in an interesting or funny idea, connotation, occasion or form of presentation.

◀ other names

Although wordplay has gathered consensus as a blanket term for all kinds of verbal wit there are several other similar, often overlapping, terms.

[Innuendo](#): (the making of) a remark or remarks that suggest something sexual or something unpleasant but do not refer to it directly. An innuendo involves saying something which is polite and innocent on the surface, but indirectly hints at an insult or rude comment, a dirty joke, or even social or political criticism. Innuendos are commonly used in everyday conversation as a socially acceptable way to be critical, mean, sexual, humorous, or even flirtatious. The word innuendo comes from the Latin phrase “innuere” meaning to “make a sign to” or “nod to.”

[Malapropism](#): the intentionally or unintentionally humorous misuse or distortion of a word or phrase especially: the use of a word sounding somewhat like the one intended but ludicrously wrong in the context (Merriam Webster), as in “Jesus healing those leopards”.

[Pun](#), often used as a synonym for wordplay. Puns involve a witty combination of different words (with different meanings) with similar or identical sounds or spellings (homonyms). Their play on

words also relies on a word or phrase having more than one meaning (polysemy). Puns are generally intended to be humorous, but they can have a serious purpose as well in literary works.

Spoonerism. According to Merriam Webster, it is a transposition of usually initial sounds of two or more words (as in tons of soil for sons of toil). William Archibald Spooner, a British clergyman and educator, who lived from 1844 to 1930, often had to speak in public, but he was a nervous man and his tongue frequently got tangled up. He would say things like “a blushing crow” when he meant “a crushing blow.” Spooner’s letter reversals became the stuff of legend and undoubtedly gave his listeners many a laugh. By 1900 his name had inspired the term spoonerism, which lives on to this day.

Witticism: *a remark that is both clever and humorous, according to the [Cambridge dictionary](#).*


abstract

Wordplay, or punning, refers to textual items that deliberately use (in production or reception, or both) linguistic phenomena such as homonymy, polysemy, and other formal coincidences of language to create double meaning, often with an important humorous component. Wordplay requires [metalinguistic awareness](#) and a sense of the arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified. There is linguistic observation, in noticing lexical and morphological coincidences, and there is often a playfulness in presenting casual coincidences as causal relationships. Because wordplay is rooted in the specific forms of a given language (its morphology and its lexical patterns) it is difficult to reproduce in other languages which have different sets of signifier/signified relationships, and any equivalence is indeed sheer coincidence. The idea of playing with words can extend to many figures of speech used in pursuit of forms of expression that are new, creative, fun, striking, innovative, etc. such as acrostics, metaphors, neologisms, alliterations, allegories, and paradoxes. They help to produce new associations and metalinguistic awareness and encourage multiple interpretations. Ambiguity and nonunivocal textual meanings, including hermeneutics, constitute a focus of translational thinking; however, punning has been considered a minor topic for two main reasons: a lack of interest for a device often seen as marginal and inconsequential, and the impression that the task is, too often, impossible. The most prominent scholar to study wordplay translation is Delabastita (1993, 1994, 1996, 1997), attempting, as he does, to propose answers to these and other issues. He studies wordplay translation in relation to canonical literature as represented by Shakespeare, bringing respect and appreciation for punning. Furthermore, he develops the idea of translatability, proposing that it might be a question of degrees of difficulty in finding a solution to each problem posed by wordplay. He proposes a typology of solutions as the result of his rich theoretical work within descriptivism. The topic of wordplay translation is very much alive today due to the proliferation of the device and related research in media translation, advertising, and social networks.



Patrick Zabalbeascoa Terran

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Entry



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Introduction

Wordplay is another way of saying playing with words, meaning experimenting with the potential of their forms of expression, and exploiting coincidences of pronunciation and spelling, or certain grammatical quirks, for purposes of textual production or [interpretation](#), or both, in an exercise of metalinguistic awareness on either end. On the other hand, playing is linked to the idea, not so much of experimenting and exploiting, but of having fun. Thus, wordplay can be used as a synonym of punning for [humoristic](#) purposes, or with a humoristic component, even though the exploitation of double meaning need not be humoristic in all cases. What distinguishes punning from mere homonymy or polysemy is a conscious intent to produce or read deliberate ambiguity into a text or expression. This is how we manage to distinguish puns from other types of ambiguity, especially when it is unintended or extremely hard to avoid without resorting to alternative means of expression that give the appearance of jargon or mathematical or some other formal language. [Legalese](#), for example, endeavours to be clear and unequivocal, fully aware that this not always attainable. However, when ambiguity in these instances is not avoided, we do not claim to have found a case of punning. The same kind phenomenon can be seen in typically scientific, technical, or religious discourse, with the exception of resorting to conceptual metaphors or symbolic language, used in an effort to transmit complex or abstract ideas. As for the general principle of [metaphorical expression](#), double meaning is triggered quite straightforwardly when the literal meaning and the metaphorical meaning of an expression or idiom are both conveyed or plausible (e.g., I smell a rat). This kind of expression is sometimes disambiguated by the speaker with the terms “literally” and “metaphorically (speaking)”, although the term “literally” is also somewhat mistakenly used as a kind of intensifier (e.g., “I can literally smell a rat” vs. “I’m literally starving”).

Punning, then, refers to double meaning, deliberate ambiguity, a conscious exploitation of coincidences and illogical traits of natural language and grammar, lexico-semantic and morphophonological, spelling, and graphemic systems of verbal expression for each language, and even language combinations (bilingual puns), codeswitching, creoles, and any forms of language variation, including the idiosyncrasies of each language community.

Punning is usually assumed to be a humorous, rhetorical device. However, mere lexical coincidence hardly seems a sufficient condition, it has to be deliberate. It must be an instance of [wit](#), either in its

creation or interpretation. However, puns are not necessarily humorous, for instance in certain forms of advertising discourse—and their techniques for product naming—or for mnemonic purposes, exploiting the coincidence of form or sound to create associations that help to remember things that might be difficult to remember otherwise, like formulas or rules. Example 1 offers a sample of a mnemonic rule

Example 1

VIP (Very Important Person)
is an aid to remember the formula for electric power
 $V \cdot I = P$ Voltage • Intensity (current) = Power

Wordplay is interesting within translation studies because it challenges certain approaches and proposals that are traditionally accepted as axiomatic. Punning, as a problem within translation, does not fit in with the idea that translation is about rendering (the meaning of)

a (verbal) message in a different language, assuming that information conveyed in one language can be conveyed in another, using the particular forms of expression of the target language. A serious challenge arises when the information to be rendered includes ideas or (metalinguistic) observations, indirectly (e.g., by allusion or irony) expressed, about coincidences in or the arbitrary nature of a language's lexicon, pronunciation, or spelling, given that these coincidences are not shared crosslinguistically, except by chance, like the double meaning of positive in English and the same double meaning for the Spanish word *positivo* (example 5: *The best way to excel at sports is to stay positive*). The traditional translational approach is to look for an interpretation of the source text (T1), as a whole and its constituent elements, as a basis for rendering that meaning in the translated version (T2). A prototypical characteristic of wordplay is that it “plays” with double meanings, i.e., more than one interpretation, or its priority is not the transmission of information, and what matters is the form, the wording, and meaning is subordinated to the author's (or the reader's) priority to expose the discovery of newly found coincidences or apparent incongruities in their language, or new ways to express them, or new communicative situations where they can be exploited. Linked to this type of complication is the fact that wordplay is closely related to joking, i.e., the opposite of expressing an idea in earnest, as an expression of the truth through a univocal relationship between words and their meanings, as one expects to find in the Bible, a business contract, a news agency report, a legal brief, a national anthem, an obituary, an instruction manual, and so many other types of communication that translation theory tends to reflect upon. The challenge involved in translating wordplay, therefore, consists of the dilemma of translating according to the same criteria as might be used for the abovementioned text types, or taking a different wordplay-specific approach, or to overcome the dilemma and search for a broader approach towards all translation, one that would account for all (or, at least, many more) types of translation challenges.

This dilemma—or a reluctance to admit its existence—leads many to claim that wordplay, especially witty punning, is impossible to translate. In settings and periods where the “impossibility of translation” is a popular claim, wordplay is presented as the ultimate proof. When the untranslatability camp becomes less influential, especially among scholars following James S. Holmes' (1972) call for

a more empirical approach, then punning remains as a more isolated, nuanced, or exceptional case of untranslatability, once it has been more broadly accepted that translatability is the norm, if only because of the overwhelming amount of empirical evidence of existing translations.

One could argue that puns are not particularly important as a literary or rhetorical device, and one could argue that punning and its study is or should be marginal. One could also argue the opposite: puns are found in vast range of different communicative situations and text types, in practically all ages, and as a literary device it is used by great writers, like the Spanish poet Quevedo, who is credited with inventing the most popular kind of pun in the Spanish language; or Shakespeare, a prolific master punster. Today, puns are frequently found in advertising, politics, social media, headlines, films, series, videogames, as well as their traditional habitat, in literature.



Advertisement of The Economist. Visual pun in advertising

Three additional considerations can be made:

- Punning, like humour, can be an additional feature of a word or words that already display some other rhetorical device or figure of speech.
- Punning can probably be created on almost any word(s), even those that do not *a priori* seem to have more than one meaning, simply by virtue of the possibility an author has of creating new meaning for word, as a case of neologism, personal style, idiolect, or by some other means.
- Intertextuality (allusion, parody, quotation, and so on, see example 5) is a strong source of compound or multiple layers of meaning, so it is important to consider in any analysis of punning

Within Translation Studies, one could argue that empirical studies of this phenomenon can help to reveal different cases and problems of translation in a more integrated approach, less charged with prejudice, and this is precisely the point of theorising: to integrate, to establish a common denominator, and offer simple, not simplistic, explanations, rooted in reality, aiming ultimately for well-argued predictions, not an ideal that is impossible almost by definition.

If the translation of wordplay is not impossible, or if we leave aside the whole issue of impossibility for a moment, to explore other angles, we might find two translation terms, one key, as is difficulty; the other more controversial, though no less crucial, as is creativity, both closely related in all likelihood, and both a matter of degree.

Example 2

traduttore traditore (translators are traitors)

Example 2 could be presented as a very easy translation because it involves simply transcribing the Italian words, untouched, or as so difficult to translate that it is usually left untranslated, in Italian, like so many Latin words and phrases borrowed into the English language (e.g., *vice versa*). The advantage of leaving the phrase

untouched in many countries is that it acquires an international flavour, one might say universal, and this could be unfortunate if it were to be seen as supporting a negative, or even impossibilistic, discourse about translation. Maybe this universalising goal is a factor to be taken into account as it is used in countries like Spain in its Italian form even when it can be translated quite straightforwardly with hardly any loss of wordplay or aphoristic effect.

Before Holmes' (1972) research proposals for studying translations and related phenomena, translation theory was seen as something entirely devoted to criticising translations and to proposing a valid translation method, a set of techniques and strategies, within the boundaries of translation proper, beyond which one would find other sorts of versions, freer ones, more adapted to specific goals or audiences, less faithful, more creative, less literal. The formula for the method was envisioned as facilitating a mechanical, objective translation, as the ideal of sworn translation, or analogous to the ideal of blind justice. The result of translating should not depend on who was doing it, but on the excellence of the method applied and loyalty to T1. It is no surprise that this vision of the theory and practice of translation barred any path leading to considerations of creativity, and by extension, translator authorship. Failure to actually produce a universally convincing method is what has led to an unfair criticism of translation as being inevitably unfaithful or disloyal or simply impossible (Marco 2010: 270, quotes the case of Rabadán 1991 as a case in point). However, there are too many cases where there is an obvious need for the translator to intervene, not as a whim or subversion, but out of a sense of coherence, consistency, aesthetics, loyalty to the commission, the intended T2 function(s), among other sound reasons. Puns, therefore, are included in working out an answer to questions like: In what cases can we say that translation is impossible? What factors are at play for a given translation to be more difficult than another? When is creativity justified and to what extent can certain textual elements be changed?

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Delabastita's contribution

Dirk Delabastita is a key scholar in the field of pun translation and he leads the way for many later studies on the subject. Below is a brief account of his most salient ideas.

Firstly, Delabastita (1994) highlights the important relationship between punning and ambiguity, as special challenges for the theory and practice of translation. He is also among those who question the impossibility, by definition, of pun translation. He insists on taking into account puns created deliberately and those that might be considered “no pun intended”. Although Delabastita defends the benefits of descriptivism as a research method for translation studies, he also appreciates contributions from [poststructuralism](#) and its insistence on the open, elusive nature of textual meaning; i.e., to what extent can we be sure to have found the definitive meaning of T1, or T2, and what is the nature of the interpretive process? In texts written centuries ago, for example, the problem lies in double meaning being impossible to appreciate from a present-day perspective as originally designed because language and its words have changed their forms and usage, some have disappeared and others have appeared at a later date.

Delabastita's classification of possible solutions for pun translation is widely accepted and quoted in later studies (Díaz Pérez 2008 and 2014, Klitgård 2005, Marco 2010, among many others).

1. *PUN L1* → *PUN L2*: the T1 pun is translated into the main language of T2, as a pun, which may be more or less different from the original wordplay in terms of formal structure, semantic structure, or textual function.
2. *PUN* → *NON-PUN*: the pun is rendered by a non-punning phrase which may salvage both senses of the wordplay but in a non-punning conjunction, or select one of the senses at the cost of suppressing the other; it may also occur that both components of the pun are translated 'beyond recognition'.
3. *PUN* → *RELATED RHETORICAL DEVICE*: the pun is replaced by a wordplay-related rhetorical device (repetition, alliteration, rhyme, vagueness, irony, paradox, etc.) aiming to recapture the effect of the T1 pun.
4. *PUN* → *ZERO*: the portion of text containing the pun is simply omitted.
5. *T1 PUN* → *T2 PUN*: the T1 pun is reproduced, and possibly its immediate environment, without actually 'translating' it from L1 to L2.
6. *NON-PUN* → *PUN*: a pun is introduced in T2 positions where T1 has no wordplay, as compensation, or for any other reason.
7. *ZERO* → *PUN*: totally new textual material is added in T2, with wordplay and with no apparent precedent or justification in T1 except as compensation for a pun in a different part of the text.
8. *EDITORIAL TECHNIQUES*: explanatory footnotes or endnotes, comments provided in forewords, the 'anthological' presentation of different, supposedly complementary solutions in T2 to the same T1 problem, and so forth.

These types of solutions can also be combined in a variety of ways; e.g., a pun is suppressed (pun → non-pun) with a footnote explaining what was left out and why (editorial technique).



These categories are very similar to the options proposed by Toury (1995) for the translation of metaphors. All one has to do is change the word pun for metaphor, and categories 1, 2, 4 and 7, coincide exactly. The only difference is that Toury distinguishes two categories for Delabastita's first option: (i) T1 metaphor → *same* metaphor in T2; (ii) T1 metaphor → *same type of* metaphor in T2. Furthermore, Toury has only one category for metaphor → non-metaphor, covering Delabastita's categories 2 and 3 for puns, provided we accept that they both share the feature of resulting in non-puns. Two conclusions can be drawn from this. First, Delabastita seems to accept that puns can never be rendered as exactly the same pun when translated,

Non-verbal puns

although he does admit a spectrum of degrees of difference from the T1 pun as legitimate translations, and second, there is an impression that Toury's (1995) approach, for metaphors, can be applied to puns, and in all likelihood to many other translation problems and challenges. Zabalbeascoa's (2004 and 2008) proposal consists of proposing types and subtypes of solutions for each translation problem, inspired by Toury's model, and it intends to move towards greater abstraction and generalization for translation's most complicated problems, including, of course, puns and wordplay. In his proposal, Zabalbeascoa tackles an issue pointed out but not resolved by Delabastita. How to solve the dilemma of applying multiple predefined categories of a rhetorical device (metaphor, rhyme, paronymy, irony, malapropism, intertextuality) as proposed by experts in each one of these disciplines or to find a simpler, more agile typology, albeit less detailed?

Delabastita criticises some classifications for making superfluous distinctions and for overlooking the important ones. According to Delabastita, predefined categories and characteristics are problematic for research when they are incapable of showing up relevant tendencies in translations. As an example of this, he offers a specific treatment of “indecent” (sic.) puns in translations, an unforeseen category in previous more extensive typologies. Zabalbeascoa proposes a binary tree structure, adaptable to the most relevant, useful typology for each case, with more or fewer types and subtypes as required.

A limitation of Delabastita’s proposal is that it seems restricted entirely to interlinguistic translations L1→ L2, apparently not taking into account multilingualism and multimodality in T1 or T2, two features that have drawn considerable interest in recent times (Sato 2019). This means that T1 can display puns in a language other than L1, or based on bilingual puns, or images that point to the intended ambiguity of certain words, or purely non-verbal puns. Puns that intend to reflect situations of exile or other forms of linguistic or cultural displacement, within cosmopolitanism and multilingualism constitute a topic of interest for the translator Susan Jill Levine (1991). Delabastita (1994) claims that important factors are: (i) a translator’s capacity to exploit available linguistic devices and the room allowed by the text to manoeuvre; and (ii) translated puns must be evaluated by assessing the global impact of T2 as a whole, as a unit. The critic or scholar must acknowledge and appreciate personal ability, expressive creativity, the capacity to solve problems that come with composing translations, and that priority must be given to pragmatic factors. This approach is picked up by other experts, like Marco 2010 and Lladó 2002.

Example 3

Super Caley go ballistic, Celtic were atrocious! (The Scottish Sun, February 2000)



Real headline with wordplay that was a big hit

On ambiguity, Delabastita defends the importance of distinguishing functional ambiguities (intended) from the non-functional, which should normally be amended. Moreover, he stresses that this is no easy task and depends a lot, if not entirely on the reader’s perception or interpretation. The evidence of historical texts and diachronic studies shows that it is impossible to reach a point of interpretative compromise. We might add that it is necessary to distinguish the cases where translators do not reproduce a pun because they believe that the ambiguity must be amended from the ones where they simply do not see more than one meaning. There is yet another case that Delabastita does not mention, which can appear quite frequently among junior or distracted

translators, and that is an inability to see that the precise choice of wording in a given order, as composed by the author, in certain situations does not respond entirely to criteria of informational efficacy between signifiers and signified but is, rather, totally conditioned by an initial goal of creating double meaning, often including a less obvious reading than a literal interpretation of the semantic value of the words used.

If someone were to ask, “How do you translate ‘ballistic’ here (example 3)?” that would mean they had not grasped the premise on which the word ‘ballistic’ was chosen, i.e., the whole headline must work as a paronymy of supercalifragilisticexpialidocious, an invented word made up by a fictional character, Mary Poppins.

Delabastita also acknowledges cultural factors such as acceptability and frequency of use of puns in the social context of each translation and these factors could justify avoiding punning (in T2) to the same degree (as in T1). In other words, for example 3, the news of the unexpected victory of Caley over Celtic could be translated with no wordplay if one considers that in the context in which T2 is to be published it would go against the norm to resort to double meanings when informing about sports results. Even so, knowing that the T1 headline is composed according to how well it can be read as a paronym still entails that the lexicosemantic value of words like ‘ballistic’ cannot be taken literally as if the T1 author did not have the paronym as a main criterion.

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¶ Diversity and complexity of the issue

Example 4

War does not determine who is right. Only who is left.

Example 4 poses doubts that condition its translation, and such questions can crop up when translating many other puns:

- Is the pun meant to be humorous and if so is humour a priority? Is it important for the statement to be conveyed humorously regardless of the device employed?
- Is the content unimportant and what really matters is the author’s intention to convey a double meaning with the word ‘left’? Is it mainly or solely a case of metalinguistic awareness of a certain English homonym?

Example 5

The best way to excel at sports is to stay positive.

- Does the author intend to express the message in a way that will have an impact on the recipient? Is any way allowed as long as impact is achieved? Must the idea be kept with a memorable style even if it is not a pun? Is it an aphorism? Does it have a mnemonic quality about it?
- Does it have an (important) ideological component?



Lance Armstrong meme.

Does it lean towards pacifism or defend preparing for war? Or does it invite doubt and deeper thought on the issue?

- Does it matter that it has been attributed to Bertrand Russell, even though we cannot be sure?

Example 4 is interesting because all of these questions can be answered equally plausibly in the affirmative or in the negative. Finding the solution in T1 → T2 translation requires an approach based on answering the above questions one way or another, and giving priority to certain features over others.

Example 5 is the verbal component of a meme showing the face of cyclist [Lance Armstrong](#) in his prime, the very picture of strength and energy, some time before he fell from grace to infamy as the result of a doping scandal. It shows how there is no pun (intended) in the quote in its original context; but there is one when published years later, by whoever published it, knowing what the public now know about the cheat and confident of how they are going to interpret it this time around. It also stands out as a good example of a pun that can be translated (from English into Spanish) without any loss or changes to the pun. It seems that when puns are directly translatable as the same puns, it is thanks to the property of isomorphism, and they are not the ones that call for creativity and daring in translation production nor their reception.

Example 6 is an 'indecent' pun, following Delabastita's terminology, if we interpret the presence of the word 'cherry' as a crude, albeit covert, reference to a woman's hymen. It is important and illustrative for the follow-up questions raised by the question, What causes explain this pun being translated literally, resulting in *PUN* → *NON-PUN*?

- Is it due to the impossibility of retaining the pun? Are there any compensatory alternatives that can reflect the character's intention and personality by using such an expression?

- Is it due to some factor related to the translator, like (in)competence or oversight, method, ethics, sense of duty or loyalty?
- Is it due to some labour or social factor, like censorship, ideology, prudishness?
- Is it due to a global interpretation of the film or [Nabokov's](#) novel, on the theme of Lolita as nymphet, temptress, leading men to their doom, part of an impossible love story, as opposed to other possible readings, with a firmer textual grounding whereby the man uttering these words, among other 'indecentcies' is a horrible villain and Lolita a blameless victim?

Example 6 – [Lolita](#) (Kubrick 1962)

The vulgar allusion of the male

Charlotte — What was the decisive factor? My garden?

Humbert — I think it was your cherry pies. [translated literally]

character (villain or not) to Lolita's hymen is of capital importance for the audience to get a better idea of the rest of the film. It is not a priority to translate the T1 pun as the same play on words, but it does seem essential to reflect somehow or other that the male character is conveying quite clearly what his predatory intentions are towards Lolita, confident that her mother is not going to grasp the covert meaning because it is too outlandish to even contemplate, but he has no interest in actual cherry pies, which he has not seen or tasted and there is no textual evidence to make his declared interest in them plausible. He simply latches onto something she said and brings about a Freudian slip of sorts, belying his predatory designs on the poor girl. The interpretation that there is a lewd pun is reinforced by the cinematic detail of having the camera linger leeringly on Lolita's face for a revealing amount of time as the words are uttered.

Marco (2010) makes a valuable contribution by relating translation techniques with the factors that might have been at play, and among them he highlights the character and values of the translator, the target audience, and stylistic and genre criteria.

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Research potential

Puns are drawing considerable attention for methodology and research in traditional areas like literature, but also in others, like audiovisual and multimodal translation, and related varieties, like video games and advertising, and even in natural language processing and [machine translation](#). They are also of interest to interpreting studies, very much in need of more research in all of its aspects. Punning is an important aspect, for example, in advertising and in political discourse, and there is a need to find out more about the effect of globalization, social media, online pay per view audiovisual content, and even online distance work and education. Among such areas of research interest one that stands out as a dominant form of punning is the [meme](#) (understood as amusing captioned picture or video), which, by definition, is verbal only in part, whereby the other part is an image or an important aspect of paralinguistic features, or design elements, especially orthotypographical. Furthermore, the study of punning and its translation is the object of research for related disciplines, such as literary studies, linguistics, pragmatics, and media studies.

The study of wordplay translation is based primarily on descriptivist methods, in the wake of Delabastita's steps, and it may also include contributions from linguistics and pragmatics, as shown by Yus (2020), or literary studies, as shown by Lladó (2002), Marco (2010) and Klitgård (2005 and 2018), or cinematography, shown by Martínez-Tejerina (2016). All scholars seem to agree that it is essential to look at puns, as much as possible, in their context, in the translated text as a whole, and in combination with other stylistic and expressive factors, and not in isolation. Lastly, it is necessary to acknowledge the important contribution of quantitative empirical and corpus studies. Marco's (2010) research, for instance, covering a large, varied corpus, provides evidence of 32% of T1 puns translated as puns in T2, of one type or other (Delabastita's category 1) not including other types of solutions like transcription and other rhetorical devices (Delabastita's categories 3 and 5). The percentage may not seem very high but it is certainly large enough to show that wordplay translation is far from impossible, not only as a theoretical statement but backed up with empirical data.

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Créditos



Patrick Zabalbeascoa Terran

Full professor at Pompeu Fabra University, in Barcelona. His research interests include translation theory and the translation of humour, multilingualism in fiction and audiovisual translation. His publications include:

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