That's what she said: An analysis of wordplay and innuendo in *The Office*

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Practicum

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January, 2013
1. Introduction

Puns have been recorded as a humoristic device since the time of Homer in the 8th century B.C. (Shaw, 1905), and the study of puns and wordplay in general has been of interest to linguists for centuries. However, most scholars have, so far, focused on a monolingual analysis, while the challenges of rendering wordplay in another language have, sadly, received considerably less attention. For centuries the consensus has been that wordplay was simply untranslatable (Delabastita, 1993:173-177) due to its reliance on the structural properties of a specific language. Whenever an analysis of translated wordplay was attempted, it usually focused on languages of close etymological proximity, so a contrastive analysis of distant languages might further illuminate whether the mechanisms of wordplay are really transferrable.

Even fewer studies have explored how the particular characteristics (such as length constraints and visual contexts) of audiovisual translation can cause some translation strategies for rendering wordplay to be unusable. The study of audiovisual translation is surprisingly recent (with Gottlieb declaring it "a new University discipline" in 1992), but it has steadily gained in popularity during the 21st century and today it is the "most dynamic and fastest developing trend within Translation Studies" (Orero, 2004). One of the major changes in the field is the recent emergence of fansubs, subtitles made by fans who usually do not have a professional translation background. Many times, the fansub is the first contact the audience has with a subtitle in their language, since the fansubs are usually available before the professional subtitles are released, and they can popularize certain set phrases before professional translators can have their say (Ferrer-Simó, 2005). As the popularity of this new type of subtitling increases, it is important to include it in the analysis of audiovisual translation strategies and to assess its quality.
This study attempts to determine to what extent wordplay tends to be neutralized due to translational challenges, and analyse and compare the translation strategies used in both commercial subtitles and fansubs when confronted with wordplay. Due to the absence of formal restrictions and the familiarity of the fansubbers with the source material, fansubs are expected to retain more wordplay than professional subtitles.

2. Corpus description and methodology

*The Office* is an American sitcom broadcast by the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) TV channel. It is an adaptation of a previous British series of the same name, created by Ricky Gervais and broadcast by the BBC. It was adapted for American audiences by Greg Daniels. The show depicts the day-to-day work of the office employees of the fictional Dunder Mifflin Paper Company in Scranton, Pennsylvania. It is shot in a fake documentary ("mockumentary") style, with a single-camera setup and without a studio audience or a laugh track. The show debuted on NBC on March 24th, 2005. Since then, it has aired 190 episodes and is currently in its 9th, and last, season. *The Office* has received critical acclaim and four Primetime Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Comedy Series in 2006. The series became the highest-rated scripted series on NBC during its second season, and entered syndication in 2007. (IMDB)

The seasons chosen for this analysis were seasons 2 and 3, since the wordplay innuendo density is greater in those particular seasons. Both the transcripts for the original English version and the Spanish fansubs were obtained from the webpage www.tvsubtitles.net, accessed on January 2013, while the professional subtitles were obtained from the Spanish edition of the DVD (ISBN:B0053C9C22/B0053C9NYO). The original English transcripts were uploaded by the Catch-22 Team (of French origin), and some typos
were corrected by the researchers after checking them against the original dialogue. Both Spanish versions of the subtitles are presented untouched. Fansubs were uploaded by ArgenTeam (of Argentinean origin), so particular issues related to the Spanish geographical variety are taken into account. The most popular website for Spanish fansubs (at the time of this study, www.subtitulos.es according to Marcos (2012)) did not yield any results for seasons 2 and 3 of *The Office*. Professional subtitles were translated by Xosé Castro, as documented in the database www.eldoblaje.com, although no translator credit is found in the DVD materials.

The analysis of wordplay is narrowed to just one particular type of recurring joke: the use of the catchphrase "That's what she said" to signal a double-entendre or innuendo. This catchphrase has been wildly popularized by the show, to the extent that many consider it originated with its main character. This, however, is not true, as the team behind Tv Tropes has found instances dating from 1992 with that exact same wording, and variations such as "As the actress said to the bishop", used to the same effect, dated before that. They note that the phrase is used

> to take a perfectly innocent phrase [...] said by one person and then
> irk that person by turning it into an innuendo. It's also interesting to
> note that it pretty specifically keeps to what she said with its uses
> leaning towards things a woman would say in response to a man's
> actions or physical attributes. (Tv Tropes)

Therefore, the actual double-entendre is not contained within the catchphrase, which serves merely as a marker, but in the punning sentence(s) immediately before. For the purposes of this study, both the translation of the punning sentence and of the catchphrase were analysed.
The analysis is based on the descriptive classifications of the types of wordplay and of the specific translation strategies for wordplay made by Delabastita (1996:128), comparing how the professional subtitles and the fansubs have solved the linguistic challenges presented by punning innuendo and which of the proposed strategies are most used. The quantitative analysis of the proportion of double-entendres maintained in each of the Spanish versions will inform a qualitative analysis, centred on the overall humorous effect the solutions offered might have on the Spanish audience.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1. Translating humour

The most widely accepted and thorough definition of wordplay was made by Delabastita:

"Wordplay is the general name for the various textual phenomena in which structural features of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a communicatively significant confrontation of two (or more) linguistic structures with more or less similar forms and more or less different meanings. [Furthermore,] the pun contrasts linguistic structures with different meanings on the basis of their formal similarity." (Delabastita, 1996:128, emphasis original).
Raphaelson-West (1989:132) classified humour and jokes in terms of their shared elements as:

- Universal jokes (mostly physical humour like pratfalls, which are easy to "translate")
- Cultural jokes (which usually rely on stereotyping, and can be substituted by similar stereotypes of the target culture if necessary)
- Linguistic jokes (which involve wordplay and are considered the most difficult to translate).

Within linguistic jokes, Delabastita (1996:128) classified them according to their formal mechanisms as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homophony = pronunciation ≠ spelling</th>
<th>Homography ≠ pronunciation = spelling</th>
<th>Homonymy (or polysemy) = pronunciation = spelling</th>
<th>Paronymy ≠ pronunciation ≠ spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Horizontal</strong> (same word)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vertical</strong> (different word)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Classification of humour (Delabastita, 1996:128)
Thus, double-entendre is a horizontal wordplay based on homonymy or polysemy, where the coexistence of two possible meanings (one innocent and one sexual) of a single word is exploited with a humorous intent. In the case of *The Office*, this double meaning is highlighted by the catchphrase "That's what she said".

3.1.1. General strategies for the translation of humour

Humour is one of the central elements of many films and entertainment shows, and its linguistic devices have been extensively analysed from several angles, but "it has rarely been systematically studied as a specific translation problem" (Spanakaki, 2007).

Of all possible types of humour, wordplay in particular has historically been considered untranslatable. In fact, Shröter (2010) and Delabastita (1993:173-7) point out that untranslatability seems to be the defining characteristic of wordplay, because its very nature relies on the exploitation of the linguistic structures of the language in which it is produced. Since different languages have different meaning/form distributions (Delabastita 2004:601) and the target language is probably built upon different linguistic structures, a formal translation equivalence, based on a literal word for word translation that retains all the same meanings, is usually impossible. However, Delabastita notes that wordplay might be recreated in another language and keep the same formal structures if both source and target language are historically related, if the wordplay is based on interlingual borrowings common to both languages, or if the joke is rooted in extralingual reality (Delabastita 1996:13).

Other authors, such as Bellos (2011) and Vandaele (2011), prefer to focus on the notion of translation in order to solve the untranslatability problem. Wordplay translation becomes possible if what we consider an appropriate translation is not based on formal and structural similarities, but in recreating the overall effect of the original.
3.1.2. Dynamic translation

Dynamic equivalence, or functional equivalence, is based on what Nida (1964) denominates "the principle of equivalent effect". The main goal of this type of translation is to (re)create the same relationship between the target audience and the target text that the source audience had with the source text, if necessary at the expense of altering the literal information contained in the original.

This emphasis on effect seems particularly relevant when dealing with the translation of humour, since Kerbrat-Orecchioni's (1981) defines humour as any text whose pragmatic perlocutionary or intended effect is laughter, while Veiga (2009) states that audiovisual humour translation competence depends on Humorous Complicity, which "stretches the boundaries of the Cooperative Principle as it was presented by Grice (1989) [and] implies that, besides the recognition and identification of humorous utterances, the translator has to (re)create the same perlocutionary effect as conveyed by the original". Thus, laughter is the intended effect to be (re)created by a dynamic translation of humour.

This is especially true of entertainment with a laugh track, where the pre-recorded audience reaction signals the presence of jokes. If the joke or wordplay is lost in translation, the pre-recorded laughter will appear completely incongruous. In the case of the present corpus, *The Office* does not have a laugh track; still, all instances of double-entendre wordplay are signalled by the catchphrase "That's what she said", so omission techniques can be problematic.

However, a dynamic approach to translating humour is not devoid of problems. Some authors, like Von Stackelberg (1988: 12), question whether "the translator [should] be allowed to make us laugh at his own ideas rather than at those of the author", and others, such as
Munday (2008:43), have questioned the possibility of measuring effect. Vandaele (2002:150) points out that "the appreciation of humor varies individually" and, therefore, the translation of jokes depends on the individual translator's ability to recognize them as such in the original text. Moreover, appreciating humour and being able to produce it are two different skills, and translators may feel unable to reproduce a joke, even if they are able to recognize it.

In order to ascertain the validity of a translation focused on effect, the reactions of both the source and the target audience should be objectively measured. However, Luque (2003) has noted that there has been very little investigation into how translated texts are received and perceived. It would be extremely interesting to investigate the viewer responses to the material analysed in this corpus, but unfortunately it is outside the scope of this study.

3.1.3. Specific strategies for the translation of puns

Delabastita (1996) insists that puns are textual phenomena requiring a textual solution, and that translators can find an adequate technique to translate wordplay if they focus on the textual function of the pun within the text.

He proposed the following techniques for translating wordplay, from most formally conservative to least:

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{PUN} \Rightarrow \text{PUN} \quad \text{Pun in the source text is rendered as pun in the target text} \\
\quad \quad - \text{Identical: Keeps the same references as in the original} \\
\quad \quad - \text{Unidentical: Substitutes one or more of the references for punning ones in the target language} \\
\text{PUN ST} = \text{PUN TT} \quad \text{Pun in the source text is copied into the target text}
\end{array}
\]
- Direct copy: Without translation (normally used for third languages)
- Transference: Adapts the mechanisms of the pun (homonymy, polysemy, etc.) into the target language in a literal fashion

**PUN ⇒ RELATED RHETORICAL DEVICE** Pun is substituted by a "punoid", based on another rhetorical device (repetition, alliteration, rhyme, referential vagueness, irony, etc.), aimed at maintaining the (humoristic) effect of the source text

**PUN ⇒ NON PUN** Pun in the source text is rendered as non-pun

- Non-selective: Both meanings from the source text are translated, but the result in the target language is not a pun
- Selective: Only one of the meanings is rendered in the target text
- Diffuse paraphrase: The whole punning passage is changed beyond recognition

**NON PUN ⇒ PUN** Source text neutral material is rendered as a pun in the target language (possibly as compensation for puns not rendered as puns elsewhere in the text, to keep an overall dynamic translation)

**PUN ⇒ ZERO** Pun is omitted or ignored

**ZERO ⇒ PUN** Addition of completely new text, containing a pun

**EDITORIAL TECHNIQUES**: Use of footnotes, endnotes, comments in translator's forewords, etc. to explain the double meaning

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Table 2. Translation Methods of Puns (Adapted from Delabastita, 1996:134)
Since transferring all aspects of a pun (form, content and references) might be challenging, the translator is forced to make choices about which relevant features of the wordplay to prioritize and keep, and which aspects can be sacrificed (Hervey & Higgins, 1992). In the case of subtitling, these challenges are greater, since the very nature of audiovisual translation and its constraints make it impossible to resort to some of the translation strategies previously described (for instance, the visual context can make it impossible to omit a pun altogether, the presence of a laugh track can make it difficult to add a pun elsewhere to compensate, and character restrictions in subtitles make it impossible to use footnotes or expanded explanations).

3.2. Constraints and limitations of subtitling

Díaz-Cintas (2003:195) describes subtitles as:

Written text, usually at the bottom of the screen, giving an account of the actors’ dialogue and other linguistic information which form part of the visual image (letters, graffiti [and] captions) or of the soundtrack (songs).

Gottlieb (1992:162-163) identifies the following characteristics of subtitles:

- written (changes the channel from auditive to readable)
- additive (material is added to the original image)
- immediate (flowing alongside the original image without audience control)
- synchronous (simultaneous with the original image)
- polymedial (with two parallel channels, the original audio and the written subtitle, conveying the information)

In audiovisual materials, context is created through four channels of discourse: image, dialogue, written text and music/sound effects. Gottlieb (1997:210) remarked that "the intended effect of wordplay can accordingly be conveyed through dialogue (incl. intonation and other prosodic features), through dialogue combined with non-verbal visual information, or through written text on the screen". A particular obstacle for subtitlers might be the presence of visual puns, since the original visual channel cannot be modified. A visual pun is produced when the unexpected semantic layer (or second meaning) is present in the image. This can be a challenge, since the translation of the original dialogue must correspond with both the semantic content of the original and the visual image, which might invalidate some otherwise acceptable punning translation options in the target language (Gottlieb 1997:189).

Gottlieb (1992:162-163) also notes how the change from spoken language to a written subtitle usually entails condensation, reduction, and the elimination of spoken language features such as pauses, interruptions, unfinished sentences etc., since the average viewer can only read 145-180 words per minute (Díaz-Cintas, 2007). Spanakaki (2007) observes how several qualitative and quantitative changes, such as simplifying vocabulary and syntax, merging short sentences or neutralizing marked speech, are routinely made in subtitling to increase readability.

Due to time and length constraints, translators must focus on rendering the most informative elements of the original dialogue (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2007:63-64), but this condensation can be problematic. If subtitled humour has to be rendered in fewer words than in the source dialogue, the outcome of the pun might be affected (Veiga 2009:158) and some valid translation techniques might be unusable. Gottlieb (2004:57) says that the subtitle "has
to sound right, yet be endowed with the same semantic and deictic power as the lines spoken
[which is] probably the most challenging hurdle in subtitling wordplay".

Today, new varieties of subtitles (such as the fansubs) that do not seem to have as
many formal constraints are becoming more and more popular.

3.3. Fansubs

Initially, a fansub (a portmanteau of the words "fan" and "subtitled") was "a fan-produced,
translated, subtitled version of a Japanese anime programme" (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz, 2006).
However, nowadays the term refers to any subtitle for any film or television show that is
translated by fans and distributed through alternative channels without profit.

Fansubs are usually available just hours after the show has originally aired in the
source country, so avid target audiences opt for downloading them instead of waiting for an
official translation. Thus, these subtitles are usually the first contact the foreign audience has
with a show. This can even impact the choices available for commercial translators, since
many times the fansub translation of some nicknames, catchphrases, place names or other
linguistic devices can become so popularized that the target audience demands they be kept in
the official translation (Ferrer-Simó, 2005).

Despite their increasing popularity and their possible influence on professional
translation, "this phenomenon seems to have passed unnoticed to the academic community
and there are very few studies about this new type of audiovisual translation" (ibid.).

3.3.1. Differences between commercial subtitles and fansubs
Fansubs are considered a "hybrid" form that incorporates techniques from conventional subtitling for the hearing, subtitling for the deaf and the hard-of-hearing and subtitling for video games. They are less dogmatic and more formally innovative, but they have fewer quality checks along the process (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz, 2006).

The following chart compares the formal characteristics of commercial subtitles and fansubs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Fansubs</th>
<th>Commercial subtitles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue</td>
<td>Extracted from audio or translated from original language transcripts.</td>
<td>Dialogue lines provided by the studio.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to images (video)</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Not usually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character constraints</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes. Up to 37-39 characters per line, depending on studio (Díaz-Cintas, 2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line constraints</td>
<td>Up to 4 lines per subtitle. Can include translator notes and extra information on the upper-right-hand corner of the screen.</td>
<td>Up to 2 lines per subtitle. No translator notes or extra information allowed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation by translator</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proofreading</td>
<td>Not always.</td>
<td>Usually, although some studios skip it due to costs (Díaz-Cintas, 2001:81).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edition</td>
<td>Yes. Image titles (letters, signs, etc.) are modified and translated.</td>
<td>Yes. Image titles (letters, signs, etc.) content appears in subtitle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardcoded subtitles.</td>
<td>Not usually. Subtitles are a separate file.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality check</td>
<td>Not always.</td>
<td>Always.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline</td>
<td>Not official, although fansubbers strive to have them ready hours after original airtime.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Internet downloading.</td>
<td>Official distribution channels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Comparison of commercial subtitles and fansubs (Adapted from Martínez (2010) based on initial classifications by Ferrer-Simó (2005). Translation mine.)

As can be seen from the comparison, fansubs do not have as many formal restrictions as professional subtitles. However, most translators of fansubs lack a linguistic background and might not be aware of many translation strategies that might be useful for challenging texts.
Several fansubbers have mentioned wordplay specifically as one of the major challenges to their translations (Marcos, 2012).

4. Analysis and discussion of results

From Delabastita's classification of translation techniques described above, only four were used in the subtitles in the corpus. When discussing meanings, all straight meanings are from the OED, and all punning meanings are from Urban Dictionary.

4.1. Pun to pun. Identical references

Most of the results in the corpus belong to this category. Although English and Spanish are etymologically quite different, it seems that, in the case of punning innuendo, both languages resort to very similar imagery, as can be seen in Examples 4, 5 and 18 of the corpus, among others. In Example 4, "You really think you can go all day long?", meaning "try not to use the catchphrase all day" and "perform sexually all day" is translated as "¿Cree que podrá aguantar todo el día?" (fansub) and "¿Podrás aguantar todo el día?" (DVD), which keep both exact same meanings.

4.2. Pun to pun. Unidentical references

Interestingly, this translation technique was only used in the professional subtitles. While fansubs tend to be more literal in their approach, and even prefer to render some puns as non-puns in order to keep a more literal meaning, the professional subtitles resort to Spanish punning innuendo on occasion, most notably in Example 16 of the corpus, where "Let's just
blow this party off" (meaning "decline an invitation", but also "perform oral sex to") is rendered as "No tengo el cuerpo para fiestas" in Spanish, shifting the references to "not want to go" and also "not want to have sex". The overall effect of a sexual innuendo is achieved via a pun with a Spanish expression. The fansubs, however, rendered this particular wordplay as a selective non-pun, "Al diablo la fiesta", where only the straight meaning of "not attending" is kept.

4.3. Pun to non-pun. Selective reference

Whenever the translators are unable of rendering both meanings of the innuendo, they surprisingly opt for a more literal translation that retains only the non-sexual meaning instead of substituting puns for a more dynamic humorous effect, despite the non-punning utterance being followed by a catchphrase ("Eso dijo ella" or its variations) used specifically to signal a double-entendre, as seen in Examples 1, 3 and 11 in the corpus, among others. In Example 3, "Wow, that is really hard", the pun is based on the polysemy of the word "hard", as both "requiring a great deal of endurance or effort" and "erect". Both the fansub translation "Vaya, eso sí que es cruel", and the DVD translation "Es muy dificil" however, translate this as a selective non-pun, rendering the non-sexual meaning. This makes the catchphrase incongruous in context, and alters the effect on the target audience.

4.4. Visual puns

Despite being a challenging aspect of audiovisual translation, in the case of the present corpus, visual puns actually seemed to be easier to translate, since they relied on allegedly punning, unheard dialogue, which the target audience could imagine as they wished, and only
the catchphrase needed to be translated, as seen in Example 16 of the corpus, where the implied double entendre is whispered in the main character's ear and unheard by the audience.

4.5. Ambiguous puns

Two instances of wordplay were rendered in a manner that makes it difficult to determine whether the target sentence retains the innuendo. In Example 2 of the corpus, the sentence "My mother is coming" is translated as "Viene mi madre" (fansub) / "Es que viene mi madre" (DVD). In Panama, Mexico and Puerto Rico, "venirse" is considered slang for "having an orgasm", exactly like the English verb "to come". However, the Spanish slang verb is a pronominal form, which is not the one used in any of the subtitles, and Spanish audiences outside of the aforementioned countries will presumably be oblivious of the slang use of the verb, thus making this a non-pun. Example 15 in the corpus ("I want you to think about it long and hard" = "Piénsalo un rato largo y bien a fondo" / "Una reflexión "larga y profunda") makes content explicit, substituting the English "it" (which is kept ambiguous on purpose for a punning meaning) with "un rato" and "una reflexión", respectively, thus lessening the punning effect. The double entendre is not lost completely, since the adjectives "largo y bien a fondo" and "larga y profunda" retain some double meaning (in the professional subtitles, highlighted by the use of quotation marks), but the full impact of the original is not achieved.

4.6. Catchphrase

Although the catchphrase "that's what she said" is not wordplay per se, its use was popularized by the series, and its translation merits some discussion. The fansubs try to keep a consistent translation of the catchphrase throughout episodes of the same season, although
they change the translation (from "Eso es lo que dicen todas" to "Eso dijo ella") between season 2 and season 3. The professional subtitles, however, translate the catchphrase in 8 different ways:

Dijo ella.
Eso es lo que dijo ella.
Eso me ha dicho ella.
Eso ha dicho ella.
Eso mismo dijo ella.
Eso dijo ella.
Eso decís todas.
Eso decimos todas.

This lack of consistency is problematic, since it makes it quite difficult to identify the utterance as a recurring catchphrase and it lessens the effect.

Also, the change from singular to plural is quite interesting, since it seems to indicate a shift of focus from what one hypothetical sexual companion ("she" / "ella") might say, to what all women ("dicen todas") might say.

The Final tally of translation resources is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEATURE</th>
<th>FAN SUB</th>
<th>DVD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL PUNS:</td>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>13/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENTAGE</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-pun, selective:</td>
<td>5/16 (31.25%)</td>
<td>4/17 (23.52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pun, identical:</td>
<td>7/16 (43.75%)</td>
<td>6/17 (35.29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Count 1/16 (%)</td>
<td>Count 2/17 (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pun, visual:</td>
<td>2/16 (12.50%)</td>
<td>2/17 (11.76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puns, ambiguous:</td>
<td>2/16 (12.50%)</td>
<td>2/17 (11.76%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puns, unidentical:</td>
<td>0/16 (0%)</td>
<td>3/17 (17.64%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total puns:</td>
<td>11/16 (68.75%)</td>
<td>13/17 (76.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-value (Fisher exact test) &gt; 0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Corpus results
5. Conclusions

The results of the analysis show that, contrary to expectations and despite having more formal restrictions than the fansubs, professional subtitles actually keep more wordplay in the target language, and use more diverse translation techniques.

Even if the samples analysed in the corpus did not yield a significant difference (68.75% for fansubs vs. 76.4% for professional subtitles, p-value (Fisher exact test) > 0.05), it is notable that a linguistic background and translation training can compensate for a lack of formal freedom. Even so, the commercial subtitles did not try to keep a consistent translation for the innuendo-signalling catchphrase (that's what she said), while the fansubbers, probably being more familiar with the source material, tried to keep it consistent throughout episodes. Another surprising result was the fact that, in this particular corpus, visual puns actually facilitated the translation process instead of making it more difficult.

In the case of the corpus analysed, all of the punning innuendo in the source language was signalled by the presence of a catchphrase, so the puns lost in translation (31.25% for fansubs and 23.6%) leave an important gap for the target audience. This "negative punning balance" (Marco, 2010:276) might affect the way the audience perceives the material.

However, the corpus analysed contains a limited number of examples, and the effect of the translation in the target audience has not been measured. A more comprehensive analysis would be needed, since "a comprehensive description and objective comparison of language-play quality is a rather hopeless endeavor unless one develops methods to deal with the contributing factors [chiefly] the actual effect that the language-play has on all those who come across it" (Schröter, 2010:148).
6. Appendixes

The appended files include:

- Excel file with detailed corpus analysis
- Compilation video of all "That's what she said" puns throughout the entire series of *The Office*
- Compilation written table of all "That's what she said" puns throughout the entire series of *The Office*
- Video files of the episodes analysed in the corpus
- English transcripts of the episodes analysed in the corpus
- Spanish fansubs of the episodes analysed in the corpus

Since the professional subtitles were hardcoded in the DVD, it was impossible to provide a full transcript of all the episodes, so only the relevant dialogue is transcribed and included in the excel corpus analysis.
7. References


Vandaele, J. (2002). "Introduction: (Re-)Constructing Humour: Meanings and Means". In *The Translator*, Volume 8, Number 2. Special Issue: Translating Humour (pp. 149-172).


