

SUBTITLING SOLUTIONS **FOR HUMOUR**

An analysis of the Dutch subtitles of the sitcom

'The Big Bang Theory' by novices

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the Dutch subtitles by seven novices in a case study: the data comprise six humorous elements extracted from the situational comedy *The Big Bang Theory* and two questionnaires filled in by the novices before and after the subtitling activity. The analysis focuses on the solutions used for humour by means of a new classification of subtitling solutions, which categorises the subtitling solutions of five other classifications with Pai's (2020) macro-strategies. Additionally, the mean success rate of the humour transfer is calculated by the evaluations of the researcher and three other analysts. Moreover, this paper examines factors that might influence the subtitler's decisions, such as the humour category, the subtitles' restrictions in time and space, and the creativity of the subtitler. The results show that the solutions that belong to the *preservation* strategy are predominant in the Dutch subtitles. However, the solutions from the *transformation* and *reduction* strategies were adopted almost equally frequently. Regarding the humour transfer, the evaluations reveal a mean success rate of almost 63%, which illustrates the challenge humour may pose to subtitlers, especially novices. (180 words)

Keywords: subtitling, humour in subtitling, subtitling solution, The Big Bang Theory.

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List of abbreviations

AVT: Audiovisual Translation

ECR: Extra-linguistic Culture-bound Reference

GTVH: the General Theory of Verbal Humour

KR: Knowledge Resource

HE: Humorous Element

ST: Source Text

TS: Translation Studies

TT: Target Text

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The world we know today is immensely different from the world in the previous centuries. Profound changes have occurred in all areas of life, however, the invention of the Internet has had the most far-reaching consequences. This invention has created countless companies, inspired life-changing innovations and resulted in billions of people using the Internet on a daily basis. The Internet made the world a smaller place and enabled people from different countries to communicate with each other on a whole new level: from conversing on social media to organising online conferences and so on. However, communication requires being able to understand each other to be successful. That caused for the job of translators and interpreters to become of paramount importance.

Within Translation Studies, humour translation is widely known to be a major challenge. According to Chiaro (2008, p.570), the reason for this is because it “manifestly touches upon the most central and highly debatable issues in TS, those of equivalence and translatability”. Furthermore, many scholars have considered the translation of humorous instances such as wordplay untranslatable, yet it is translated on a regular basis (Chiaro, 2008). What remains, however, is the complexity of humour translation, which will be addressed in section 2.2. According to Vandaele (2002, p.150), humour translation is often experienced as “qualitatively different from ‘other types’ of translation”. He explains that statement by means of four arguments: (1) the perception of a humorous text by the audience (laughter, smiling) differs considerably from other texts, (2) evidence has shown that understanding and producing humour are two distinct skills (cf. Ruch, 1998), (3) humour appreciation varies on an individual level: the translator may find a joke very funny or not really. In the latter case, (s)he has to make a decision: (s)he either translates the ‘bad joke’ or opts for a ‘better’ joke, (4) the translator might be overwhelmed by the joke, which “may hinder analytic rationalization” (Vandaele, 2002, p.150). Three of the four arguments point out that both the translator’s skills as their comprehension and appreciation of humour play an important role in the perceived effect of the target text. Other scholars, such as Gottlieb (1992) and Chiaro (2008), have also drawn attention to the influence of the translator. Therefore, section 2.1.2 will discuss the translator’s role.

Before the 21st century, translation scholars suggested a range of solutions to convey humour in written texts. Humour in multimedia texts, by contrast, received very little attention. However, in the last two decades, awareness was raised by scholars such as Zabalbeascoa (2005), Vandaele (2002, 2010) and Chiaro (2005), who inspired many fruitful studies to combine Humour and Translation Studies. These studies often applied existing translation

solutions and afterwards created their own classification, mostly based on existing ones, to solve the issues they encountered. Consequently, a wide array of translation solutions exist today to deal with humorous elements in all modes of texts. However, “there is no systematic recipe that can be followed in all cases to produce a successful translation” (Georgakopoulou, 2009, paraphrased in Geoghegan, 2019, p.78). In other words, as each source text is different, the required translation solutions may strongly vary (Geoghegan, 2019). Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to attempt to provide an overview of available solutions for humour that translators can rely on. Importantly, this study focuses on subtitling solutions, because the constraints inherent in subtitling combined with the complexity of humour translation are often one of the most difficult challenges subtitlers face. Furthermore, because humorous instances occur regularly in audiovisual texts, it is “one of the most active and dynamic areas in the study of audiovisual translation” (González Vera, 2015, p.123). Therefore, section 2.1.1 will concentrate on subtitling and explain its constraints.

In this study, an experiment was conducted, in which seven novices subtitled a fragment from the situational comedy ‘The Big Bang Theory’ from English to Dutch. This dissertation now focuses on answering the following research questions and sub-questions:

1. What is the frequency of the subtitling solutions in an experiment in which seven novices subtitle a humorous fragment from English to Dutch?
2. What is the success rate of the humour transfer in the Dutch subtitles by the novices?
3. To what extent do the working context of the subtitler, his/her creativity and the humour category play a role in the subtitling process?
 - a. To what extent do the technical restrictions inherent to subtitling influence the subtitlers’ decisions?
 - b. To what extent does the humour category influence the subtitlers’ decisions?
 - c. In which level of creativity do the subtitlers categorise themselves?

This paper is organised as follows. The next chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study and contains four parts. The first part addresses the characteristics of subtitling within Audiovisual Translation (AVT) and creativity in subtitling. Secondly, an introduction to humour in subtitling is offered, including its difficulties and a key humour theory: Attardo and Raskin’s (1991) General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH), followed by Asimakoulas’ (2005) and Alharthi’s (2016) applications of this theory to subtitling. The second part also explains Martínez-Sierra’s (2006) categories of humour, which are adopted for the identification of

humorous elements in the fragment examined. Then, 2.3 summarises classifications of subtitling solutions frequently used in audiovisual case studies and a new classification is proposed, which is used for the analysis of the results. The fourth part of chapter two provides background on the sitcom from which a fragment was extracted for the experiment. Chapter four then presents the results of the experiment, while chapter five critically discusses the results and gives suggestions for further research. Lastly, chapter six concludes this paper.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter provides a theoretical framework, which forms the foundation of the experiment in this study. The first section addresses the general features of subtitling as a mode of Audiovisual Translation (AVT) and the role of creativity in subtitling. Then, the second section discusses humour in subtitling, while section three presents an overview of solutions for humour in subtitling, as well as a new classification of subtitling solutions.

2.1 Audiovisual Translation (AVT)

This section discusses the characteristics of subtitling, situated in the field of Audiovisual Translation, as well as the creativity of subtitlers.

2.1.1 Subtitling in AVT

Until the 20th century, translation scholars have mainly focused on the translation of written literature. However, since the invention of the television and the Internet, digital content has been rapidly produced and still grows with substantial numbers every day. Consequently, within Translation Studies, a new branch started to develop: Audiovisual Translation (AVT). AVT is “an umbrella term referring to a wide range of practices related to the translation of audiovisual content” (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018, pp. 2-3). In the past, a number of terms have been used to refer to the translation of audiovisual products, such as screen translation and multimedia translation. However, in this dissertation, Audiovisual Translation (AVT) will be used because it seems to be most widely accepted and used by scholars.

The practice of AVT began when the first films were broadcast on television. Even the silent films were translated, because they contained intertitles that needed to cross interlingual borders (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007). But ever since the film industry introduced sound productions and talking films in the 1920s, “the spoken word [has become] an inseparable ally of the image” (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018, p.6) and new translation solutions have been developed to reach new audiences. Consequently, Audiovisual Translation has slowly grown

apart from the main domain of Translation Studies and today, it is a consolidated field of research (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018).

The first methods explored to translate audiovisual content were multilingual versions, subtitling and dubbing (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018). The first method, however, was abandoned in the mid-1930s while the other two are still commonly used (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018). This dissertation focuses on subtitling, which is considered:

a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavours to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack. (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007, p.8)

Laver and Mason (2018) note that the term *subtitling* is generally used in Ireland and the United Kingdom, whereas *captioning* is preferred in Canada, the United States, Australia and New-Zealand. There are two main modes within subtitling: interlingual and intralingual (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020). This dissertation only concerns the former mode, which refers to subtitles that convey the original content into another language. Intralingual subtitles, by contrast, convey the original content in the same language.

Audiovisual Translation (AVT) both as a profession and as a research field was relatively unexplored until the mid-20th century. Before that, small studies were occasionally published in translation journals and magazines. According to Baños and Diaz-Cintas (2018), *Le sous-titrage de films* by Laks (1957) is the first pioneering work from the late 1950s. In 1987, the first conference on Dubbing and Subtitling took place in Stockholm. After that, the research field of AVT has sparked more interest and inspired many scholars to conduct studies. Baños and Diaz-Cintas (2018, p.7) enumerate the following early studies: Pommier (1988), Luyken et al. (1991), Ivarsson (1992) and Ivarsson and Carroll (1998). From the 1990s onwards, the research field has rapidly developed. Today, AVT is an extensively researched discipline by scholars all over the world in many languages and cultures. Its evolution also includes the organisation of conferences and the development of university curricula specialising in AVT, which all point out its academic recognition and promising future.

From a present-day perspective, the daily habits of people around the world involve consuming a large amount of audiovisual content: from following the news on television or online, being active on social media to watching films and series at home. And because of the Covid-19 pandemic, people spend more time online than ever. This puts more pressure especially on streaming platforms such as Netflix, because users constantly want to watch new films, series

and other programmes. Despite the rise of translation memories and Computer-Assisted Translation tools, those streaming services still mainly depend on translators (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018). However, projects like SUMAT, an online service for SUBtitling by MACHine Translation (European Commission), are slowly integrating those tools in the AVT process (Baños and Diaz-Cintas, 2018).

Most translational issues in AVT are similar to those in written texts, but “multiplied several times” (Chiaro, 2008, p.590). This is because the visuals cannot be changed, therefore, they restrict the possibilities within translation enormously. This limitation combined with the appearance of humour in the source text often causes subtitlers to experience considerable difficulty. In what follows, the characteristics of subtitling are discussed.

On the one hand, subtitles are subject to a number of limitations. First, the temporal limitation involves three aspects (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017): (1) the subtitles remain on screen for a limited amount of time (between one and six seconds), (2) the subtitles should be in accordance with what is said in the original dialogue, and (3) the subtitles must be in synchrony with the original dialogue and the visuals. Baños and Díaz-Cintas (2018, p.11) add that the original dialogue and the assumed viewers’ reading speed could cause the temporal restriction to vary, but “being able to read 160 words per minute (wpm) or 15 characters per second (cps) is considered to be standard”. A second restriction is the limited space that is available for text on screen. Generally, a maximum of two lines is permitted, which each may contain “between 35 and 42 characters in the case of Latin-based alphabets, Arabic and Cyrillic languages” (Baños and Díaz-Cintas, 2018, p.10). A third limitation, according to Seghers and De Clerck (2017), involves the change of mode (from speech to a written text), which often results in the omission of lexical items. Fourthly, voice overlapping – “when two or more relevant messages are heard simultaneously” (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017, p.33) - may force the subtitler to choose between the messages or to omit elements from the source text.

Moreover, what happens on screen plays a crucial role and the subtitler is expected to maintain the connection between the subtitles and the images (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007). On the one hand, non-verbal aspects such as facial expressions or gestures are of vital importance in audiovisual humour (Bucharia, 2017), because the viewers expect the subtitles to help them understand what they see. For the same reason, on the other hand, graphic and sound elements (e.g. a written message on screen) can impose a restriction on the subtitler as well. Nevertheless, both the soundtrack and the image can occasionally help the subtitler to convey the message (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007).

On the other hand, subtitles are subject to three kinds of 'manipulation' (Diaz-Cintas, 2012; Dore, 2019). First, 'technical manipulation' is the adaptation of the source text to the spatio-temporal restrictions of subtitling (Diaz-Cintas, 2012). Secondly, Dore (2019) suggests that, depending on the function of the target text (TT), the content may be manipulated by norms in the target culture. Consequently, this 'functional manipulation' may influence the translator's decisions (Dore, 2019). However, Hickey (1998) argues that "interventionist actions in the TT can be justified by the fact that they are intended to retain the perlocutionary effect of the ST" (paraphrased in Dore, 2019, p.63). Dore adds that functional manipulation can coincide with 'ideological manipulation', e.g. the modification of a humorous instance that is built upon a taboo topic. Nevertheless, Chaume (2012) argues that instances of political, religious and sexual censorship in AVT rarely occur today.

2.1.2 Creativity in subtitling

This section explains why the subtitler plays a crucial role in the success or failure of the target text. First, creativity and then other factors related to the subtitler are examined, which are pivotal to take into account when analysing the target text.

Contrary to many studies in the previous century, which focused more on absolute fidelity or equivalence to the source text, the past decades of Translation Studies have shown an increased interest in creative translation. However, while creativity is often investigated in written translation, mainly literary translation, it is believed that creativity in subtitling would be equally or even more worthy to research due to its restrictions in space and time. That subtitling is inherently creative is confirmed in Van Doorslaer (2018, p.145), who states that subtitling, a constrained form of translation, forces the subtitler to become a rewriter: "(s)he does not longer copy (in another language) but produces a text (thus becoming a writer) within the new target text situation" (own translation). The concept that translators and subtitlers may function as a 'co-author' of the target text has also led to the introduction of the term 'transcreation' by Sattler-Hovdar (2016), which was then accepted by Schreiber (2017) (paraphrased in Bayer-Hohenwarter & Kußmaul, 2020, p. 317).

Although this dissertation attempts to investigate data on the subtitlers' perceived level of creativity through the questionnaires (cf. Methodology), that barely scratches the surface of research possibilities. Therefore, awareness is raised so that future studies may conduct more in-depth studies on creativity in subtitling.

In addition to creativity, a number of other factors at play are discussed in what follows. First and foremost, translators and subtitlers tend to keep their translations as close as possible to the source text, certainly when they encounter difficulties, to avoid criticism (Zabalbeascoa, 1996). Consequently, this strategy may affect the success of the target version humour (Zabalbeascoa, 1996). Secondly, Vandaele (2002, p.150) points out that understanding and producing humour are “two distinct skills” so that the translator’s sense of humour may determine whether they spot a humorous instance. This is confirmed in Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p.221), because when the subtitler cannot rely on a dialogue list, “detecting humour in the original will largely depend on the subtitlers’ personal sense of humour, their cultural background and world knowledge”. Furthermore, if they manage to spot the humour, a certain level of skill is required to successfully convey it (Vandaele, 2002). Asimakoulas (2005, p.840) agrees that the translator’s skill and creativity play an important role, as well as “lack of talent/experience, insufficient training or working conditions”. Thirdly, linguistic competence obviously is of paramount importance and requires the translator or subtitler to have mastered source and target language. Simultaneously, Martínez-Sierra (2006) draws attention to the translator’s knowledge of both source and target culture. More specifically, he connects the translation’s success or failure with the translator’s ability to identify intercultural barriers and adapt the content to the target audience (Martínez-Sierra, 2006).

To conclude, both the subtitler’s individual skills as well as contextual factors (e.g. the working conditions) play a decisive role in the perceived effect of the target text. With regard to the education and training of future translators and subtitlers, Hubscher-Davidson’s (2006) research on personality in translation hopes to bring awareness of the influence of personality on translation as well as to inspire teachers to encourage students to search for creative solutions. Bayer-Hohenwarter & Kußmaul (2012, 2020) agree that translational creativity can be taught and learnt, and add that stimulating students to be creative will help them excel at their jobs. Moreover, training good translators and subtitlers is important “to recognize, evaluate and appreciate human peak performance in times when the creative cognitive abilities of translators are challenged by the digital revolution” (Bayer-Hohenwarter & Kußmaul, 2020, p.321).

2.2 Humour in subtitling

The introduction below first discusses what humour translation is, then the debate concerning (un)translatability and equivalence, followed by the particular difficulties that make humour in subtitling a challenge. Then, 2.2.2 presents Attardo and Raskin’s (1991) ‘General Theory of

Verbal Humour' and Attardo's (2002) parameters of humour, followed by two applications of the former to subtitling: 'the Humour Translation Model', designed by Asimakoulas (2005) and 'A Model of Analysing and Subtitling Humour' by Alharthi (2016). Lastly, 2.2.3 explains the classification of humour categories by Martínez-Sierra (2006), which was adopted in the experiment conducted.

2.2.1 Introduction

Firstly, it is important to recognize how humour works. A number of humour theories, such as superiority and incongruity theories (Vandaele, 2002), attempt to describe the mechanisms of humour, but humour remains a complex and tricky concept to define. Therefore, as this paper's purpose is not to write a new humour theory, the six humorous elements in the corpus are classified in accordance with the humour categories by Martínez-Sierra (2006) (cf. section 2.2.3). Nevertheless, an extensive summary on humour theories can be found in Raskin (1985). Overall, this paper acknowledges that humour is often the manifestation of "[creating] something new (a quip) by making unexpected, but clever, links between disparate, seemingly incongruous ideas" (Bell, 2015, p.129). However, despite incongruities and their resolution, it is also recognised that the use of linguistic patterns such as rhyming can contribute to the creation of humour, which implies that humour is "inherently creative" (Bell, 2015, p.129).

Another important concept for this paper is humour translation itself. The Dictionary of Translation and Interpreting (Laver and Mason, 2018, p.58) defines it as "a field of translation in which the perlocutionary effect (for example making readers or hearers laugh or smile) outweighs other considerations". This definition will be adopted in this dissertation, because it correctly points out the primary intention of humour, namely amusing. Furthermore, humour in subtitling can only be considered successful when the target text is perceived as humorous, hence the functional approach is of utmost importance. Vandaele (2002, p.156) agrees with this operating definition, however, he reminds scholars and translators that "[the] conceptual structure [of humour] is 'double' (what causes humour and the humorous effect), and that its meaning is potentially 'multiple' (further effects of the humorous effect)".

It is important to mention that in this dissertation, the term 'humorous element' is preferred over 'joke', because a joke can contain more than one element. Additionally, the evaluation of humour transfer from ST to TT uses the term 'humorous load' when multiple mechanisms create humorous element together so that the transfer is assessed by means of three degrees: 'Transfer', 'Partial transfer' and 'No transfer'. From now on, those degrees are called 'labels'.

The use of the labels are illustrated by an example from the corpus evaluated by the researcher, namely Humorous Element 6:

00:02:59:18 (Susan) *Randall's in between jobs.*

00:03:02:04 (Randall) *And court appearances.*

	Participant 4	Participant 5	Participant 6
Dutch subtitle	Randall zit nu tussen twee jobs in. - En rechtszaken.	Randall zoekt werk. - En gerechtigheid.	Randall heeft even geen werk. - Wel een strafblad.

Table 1. Example extracted from the corpus.

The humorous load in Humorous Element 6 is mainly built by the parallelism of the two answers, which formulate the reason for Randall's unemployment in two opposing ways, i.e. euphemistically and directly. Moreover, given the fact that Randall had just managed to escape a difficult question regarding his activities by redirecting it to his mother, it is unexpected and therefore also comical that Randall himself reveals something about his criminal past. In the first translation, the literal translation has allowed the structure to remain intact, thereby transferring the humour successfully. Consequently, this subtitle has been labelled 'transfer'. The second subtitle, however, shows a shift in perspective, so that it can be interpreted as if Randall has to appear in court for a righteous reason, not for criminal actions. Therefore, the contrast between the two items disappears and this subtitle has been labelled 'no transfer'. Lastly, in the third subtitle, the content has been paraphrased and therefore preserved in a broad sense, but the original humorous load is partly lost. Consequently, this subtitle has been labelled 'partial transfer'.

Low (2011) points out that successful humorous elements consist of 'preparation' and 'delivery'. On the one hand, the *preparation* or *set-up* "prepares the joke by un-preparing the audience, in fact by putting us off our guard", by building "a mental structure" in the target audience's head, which is then destroyed by the punchline (Low, 2011, p.69). The *delivery*, on the other hand, has an immediate influence on the translation because it relies on *comic timing* (Low, 2011). In a 'knock-knock joke', for example, four lines precede the punchline, so that a successful translation implies the preservation of that structure (Low, 2011). It could be argued that a translation rendering the content of the humour but not the structure is still partly humorous.

Two of the most fiercely debated topics in Translation Studies and Audiovisual Translation are (un)translatability and equivalence. For decades, scholars have debated whether perfect

equivalence between source and target text is possible (Bucharia, 2017). Although translation scholars are quite divided on this topic, most scholars acknowledge that “formal equivalence is sacrificed for the sake of dynamic equivalence” (Chiaro, 2008, p.571) and that translation often requires linguistic compromises. Consequently, it can be observed that a functional approach is generally preferred and adopted.

When it comes to humour in translation, failure can easily be spotted when no one laughs (Vandaele, 2010), in contrast to other types of translation. Why humour poses a challenge to many translators can be summarized into two main reasons: language and culture (González Vera, 2015). First, scholars point out linguistic denotation and connotation as primary causes for the perceived ‘untranslatability of humour’ (Vandaele, 2010). On the one hand, denotation can cause problems when the humorous element involves a unique concept, e.g. ‘Oxbridge’, which is a contraction of ‘Oxford’ and ‘Cambridge’ (Vandaele, 2010), two university cities in England. Connotation, on the other hand, can be problematic when the same concept has different values in source and target language (Vandaele, 2010). For example: in France, addressing a cab driver with ‘Monsieur’ is very common because it is formal and polite at the same time, whereas the English ‘Sir’ has the value of being overly polite or even ironical to address a cab driver in America (Eco, 2001, paraphrased in Vandaele, 2010). Therefore, denotation and connotation may complicate translation. Secondly, the structure of languages (e.g. syntax, word order) may differ considerably, which also forms a potential obstacle.

Humour and culture clearly share a strong connection, because humour is often based on concepts that are well-known only within a particular culture, for example, stereotypes. It follows that the target audience requires implicit knowledge to be able to understand and appreciate the humour (Vandaele, 2010). Consequently, the translator is expected to carefully match the knowledge of the target audience with the presupposed knowledge embedded in humorous instances. However, this is no easy task at all, because a whole range of group- or culture-specific “rules, expectations, solutions and agreements on social play”, e.g. taboo topics (Vandaele, 2010, p.149) are to be taken into account. Due to its notorious difficulty, translating culture-bound elements in humour has grown to be the topic of many recent studies, such as Dore (2019) and Geoghegan (2019). Despite its complexity, however, humour is systematically translated (Chiaro, 2008). In addition, Jankowska (2009) claims that, “with the right translation methods, humour can in fact overcome both linguistic and cultural barriers” (paraphrased in Geoghegan, 2019, p.5).

As in written literature, successfully rendering humour into subtitles remains a major challenge. From the previous section, it can be deduced that humour in audiovisual translation, such as

subtitling, often requires a different approach than humour in written literature. The technical restrictions in time and space can namely cause the humorous load of the source text to be partially or completely lost. Moreover, “the polysemiotic character of film narrows down the translation options”, because what the audience can see and hear also plays a significant role in subtitling (Jaki, 2016, p377). In addition, Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) consider canned laughter a constraint, because the target audience will expect humour in the subtitles. When they fail to be humorous, the audience might feel like something is missing (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007).

Earlier in this section, it is illustrated that constructions linked to a specific language or culture were considered as potentially problematic. However, humour that builds upon linguistic variation (e.g. mocking a character who speaks with a particular accent) could be easier to subtitle, because “linguistic variation tends to be eliminated as a rule” (Díaz-Cintas and Remael, 2007; paraphrased in Bucharia, 2017, p.437). Nevertheless, successfully conveying humour into subtitles often remains challenging. Consequently, many studies have aimed to design solutions specifically for humour in subtitling. Section 2.3.1 presents a literature study of those solutions.

2.2.2 The General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH) and its application

Within Descriptive Translation Studies, scholars aim to research whether and how source text elements are translated into the target text. However, especially when it comes to humour translation, various contextual factors have to be taken into account. Vandaele (2010, p.151) states: “a descriptive comparison between a source and target text will not see humor as a homogeneous category (that what caused laughter) but will study its specific cognitive, emotional, social and interpersonal aspects”. Therefore, scholars search ways to understand the mechanisms and creation of humour. Several scholars attempted to categorize humour types in taxonomies, such as Martínez-Sierra(2006) and Zabalbeascoa (1996). Attardo and Raskin (1991), by contrast, focused on the cognitive components and developed the General Theory of Verbal Humour (GTVH), which has become one of the most influential linguistic theories of humour. In what follows, this theory is discussed in detail.

The GTVH is an extension and revision of Raskin's (1985) Semantic Script-Theory of Humour and is developed for the analysis of humorous texts. More specifically, the GTVH allows one to identify the differences between a translated humorous element and the original (Attardo, 2002). It should be noted that the GTVH refers to 'a joke', but in this dissertation, the term 'humorous element' is preferred over 'joke' (cf. previous section). According to the GTVH, each humorous element consists of six parameters or Knowledge Resources (KR) that are considered requirements for a humorous text (Attardo and Raskin, 1991). The Knowledge Resources are organised in a hierarchal structure (cf. Figure 1 below). The KR at the top of the structure is 'Script Opposition'. A script is "a cognitive structure internalized by the speaker which provides the speaker with information on how the world is organized, including how one acts in it" (Attardo, 2002, p.181). The main hypothesis of Script Opposition says that an element becomes humorous when two conditions are met: (1) the humorous element refers fully or partially to two different scripts (2) the two scripts are in opposition (Attardo, 2002). The second Knowledge Resource is 'Logical Mechanism', i.e. "how the two scripts are brought together" (Dore, 2019, p.25). Examples are a juxtaposition, a false analogy or a vicious circle (cf. Attardo, 2002, p.180 for a non-exhaustive list). The next KR in the hierarchy is 'Situation', which refers to the topic and/or 'props' of the joke such as the participants and the objects. After Situation comes the 'Target' or the butt of the humorous element, followed by the 'Narrative Strategy', i.e. the textual presentation of the humour in the form of a dialogue, a narrative, a riddle, and so on. Lastly, the sixth KR, 'Language', concerns the verbalization of the humorous element. It should be noted, however, that not all humorous elements have a target or victim. Examples of 'victimless' humour are "child-like humor, such as toilet humor, or intellectual games, such as riddles" (Zabalbeascoa, 2005, p. 193).

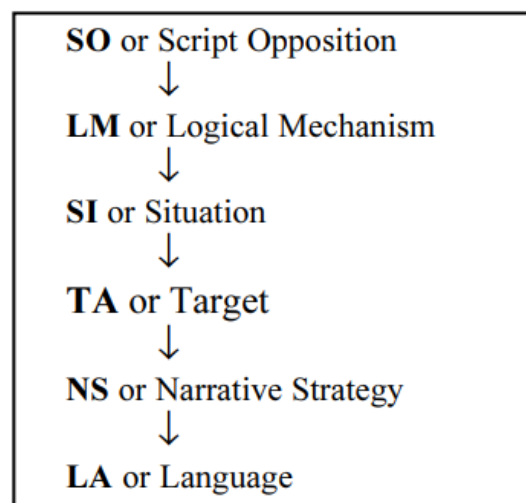


Figure 1. Hierarchical organisation of the Knowledge Resources by Attardo (2002).

Attardo (2002) believes that, in an ideal translation, all KRs except Language remain the same. He admits, however, that the hierarchy of the six KRs can vary and that finding target language equivalences for all KRs “may be utopian” (2002, p.184).

By means of the hierarchal structure, Attardo and Raskin (1991) aimed to create a tool with which the translator can analyse the similarity between the translated joke and the original so that (s)he can “adjust his/her/its translation strategy accordingly” (Attardo 2002, p.192). Moreover, the hierarchy has been empirically verified, i.e. the higher the number of parameters shared, the greater the similarity between the original and translated joke (cf. Ruch, Attardo and Raskin, 1993).

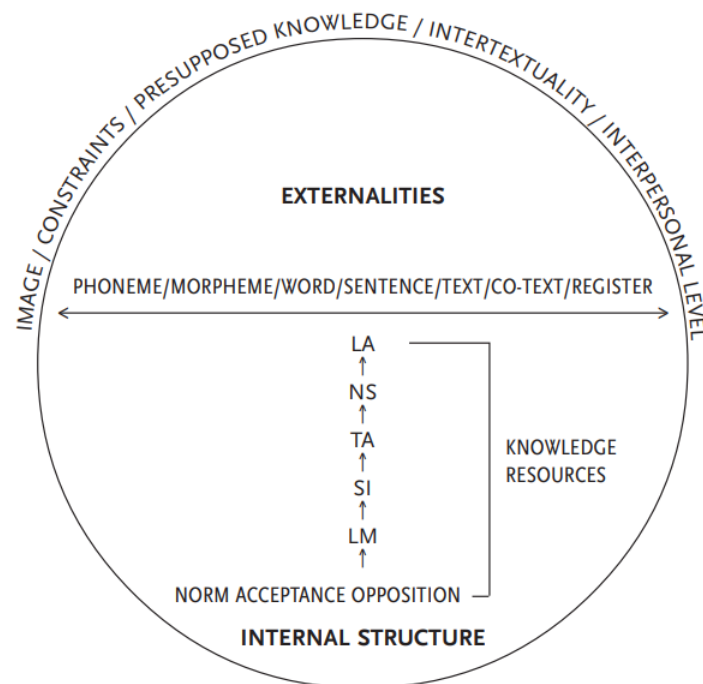
Alharthi (2016) points out two advantages of applying the GTVH and Attardo’s (2002) model in his audiovisual study on humour: 1) the theory was useful to carry out an in-depth analysis on the humorous instances in the source text, so that the differentiation between different types of humour was facilitated, 2) the theory proved to be reliable to compare the source and target versions of the humorous instances to establish the differences and is applicable to all types of humour.

A number of weaknesses are also identified by Alharthi (2016): 1) the theory is complicated and not practical for the analysis of large amounts of data because all KRs have to be determined for each humorous instance, 2) the theory is linguistic, which means that it does not consider non-linguistic aspects such as the visuals, which in turn makes it less reliable for analysing subtitles, 3) the theory does not take into account ECRs, 4) the theory does not include external factors of humour, such as intertextuality and media-specific constraints, 5) the theory allows to recreate the source humorous instance based on the KRs, but that may not always coincide with the translation’s or subtitles’ purpose, which can aim to recreate the humorous effect rather than the content.

The GTVH has received a fair amount of criticism in other studies as well, e.g. the theory “lacks a direct connection with translation” (Pai, 2020, p.141). More specifically, Attardo and Raskin (1991) do not explicitly provide translation solutions connected to the six KRs in the GTVH. Attardo (2002) does illustrate how translators may use the theory by discussing the translation heuristics of each parameter, but he does not offer any straightforward translation solutions.

Consequently, scholars who wish to apply the GTVH mostly *add* a set of translation solutions in their studies. Asimakoulas (2005), for example, offers such a framework that includes solutions for the subtitling of humour based on the GTVH’s parameters. It should be noted that Asimakoulas (2005) adjusted the parameter ‘Script Opposition’ into ‘Norm Opposition’ or

'Norm Acceptance'. These terms have broadened Attardo's (2002) 'Script Opposition' (SO), because the latter does not sufficiently include the social and cognitive expectations involved in the mechanism of humour (Asimakoulas, 2005). 'Norm Opposition', by contrast, includes cognitive as well as social incongruities, e.g. a humorous element that breaks with established social conventions (Asimakoulas, 2005). 'Norm Opposition/Norm Acceptance' in relation to films can be considered a way to convey humour from the director/screenplay writer to the audience (Asimakoulas, 2005). Asimakoulas also adds several external factors to his theoretical framework, resulting in this model (2005, p.825):



Key: LM=Logical Mechanism, SI=situation, TA=Target, NS=Narrative Strategy, LA=Language.

Figure 2. Humour Translation Model by Asimakoulas (2005).

Through the externalities, which represent the contextual variables in films, this model can be used to compare a translated humour segment to the original in a detailed way. For instance, Seghers and De Clerck (2017) applied this model to analyse source and target segments in their corpus-based study. The externalities, as offered by Asimakoulas (2005, pp. 826-827), are the following:

- Image: refers to the other factors at play while watching a film or series, e.g. objects that are present.

- Constraints: refers to the technical constraints inherent in the audiovisual medium, linguistic constraints and established cultural conventions.
- Presupposed Knowledge: refers to “all sorts of knowledge that the audience might need in order to understand the humour of the text segment” (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017, p.28).
- Intertextuality: refers to connections between textual elements, either internal (within the same text) or external (with other texts), e.g. allusions, parody.
- Interpersonal level: refers to “personal relationships that are in play in a given situation” (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017, p.28).

Lastly, the model represents the different levels that form the parameter Language: phoneme, morpheme, word, sentence, text, co-text and register. From the Humour Translation Model, Asimakoulas (2005, p.827) infers a mini-theory of equivalence: ideal subtitles “reflect as closely as possible the structure of the original humorous sequence, taking into account contextual variables and using the appropriate language”. However, this theory is not absolute and the structure of humorous sequences can vary in subtitles (Asimakoulas, 2005).

By comparison, Alharthi (2016) has proposed a model for humour in subtitling (cf. Figure 3) by adding on Attardo’s (2002) and Pedersen’s (2005) parameters, and mainly aims to scrutinise Attardo’s (2002) KRs and the translation heuristics proposed (cf. Alharthi, 2016, pp. 185-188). Additionally, Asimakoulas’ (2005) external factors were extended by the following:

- Asimakoulas’ (2005) *Intertextuality* is elaborated by *Extratextuality of language-based humour*, which refers to the (non-)existence of the source term outside the source text (Alharthi, 2016).
- Asimakoulas’ (2005) *Image* is extended to *Intersemiotic redundancy/cohesion*, because subtitles interact with other channels as well, such as the soundtrack (Alharthi, 2016).
- *Priority of humour* and *centrality of the joke* are added to the list of external factors.

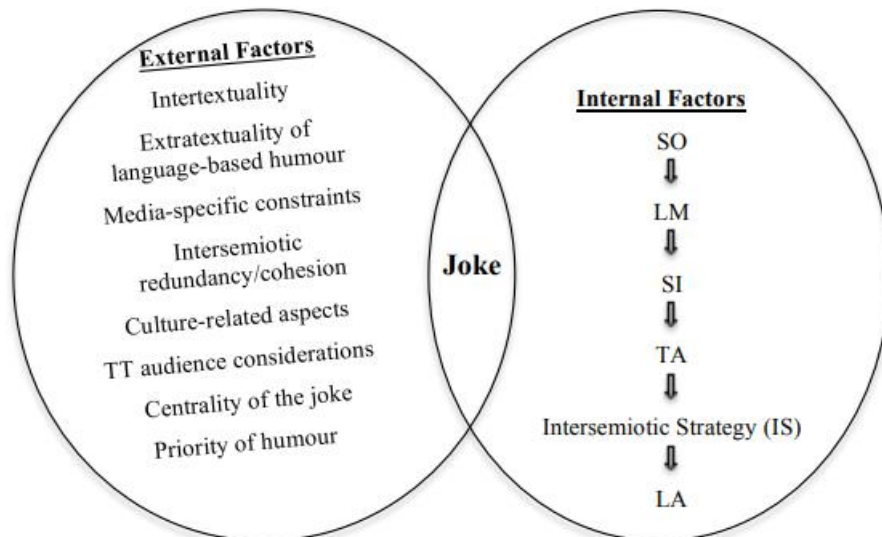


Figure 3. A Model of Analysing and Subtitling Humour by Alharthi (2016).

Contrary to Asimakoulas (2005) and Attardo (2002), Alharthi (2016) designed a complementary classification of solutions for humour, which is further explained in section 2.3.

2.2.3 Categories of humour

This section presents the approach by Martínez-Sierra (2006) to divide humour in different categories based on the features causing them to be humorous. The categories were designed to attempt to help the translator or subtitler choose a suitable solution (Zabalbeascoa, 1996), therefore, the analysis in section 5.4 closely examines the relations between the humour categories and the subtitling solutions chosen.

First, a comparison was drawn between the classifications of humour categories frequently adopted by audiovisual case studies on humour. It was seen that the classifications by Delabastita (1996), Dynel (2009) and Spankaki (2007) were sometimes used (Ajabbad, 2019; González Vera, 2015; Rahmawati, 2013), as well as newly proposed classifications (Alharthi, 2016; Gottlieb, 1997). However, a tendency was observed in the work of Geoghegan (2019), McKenzie (2019), Micolčić (2021) and Tu (2020), who all decided to use the classification by Zabalbeascoa (1996) or one that builds on his categories, such as Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2007) and Martínez-Sierra (2006). Because Martínez-Sierra's (2006) categories seem to be the most widely accepted, they are used to classify the humorous elements examined in the experiment. The classification consists of eight categories, of which many can occur explicitly or implicitly, as well as acoustically or visually (Martínez-Sierra, 2006).

1. *Community-and-Institutions Elements* are based on features that are culture-specific.

Example: “[Situation] Homer has been abducted by aliens. He witnesses how two aliens adopt the appearance of two well-known American politicians. [...] Homer: [screaming in terror] Oh, no! **Aliens**, bio-duplication, **nude conspiracies**... Oh my God! **Lyndon LaRouche** was right!”(Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.290)

2. *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* refer to humorous elements relying on topics that are preferred to make jokes about in a certain community. These topics are not exactly culture-bound but rather acquired and shared by a community over generations.

Example: “[Situation] Lisa has been transported to a mini-world she has created. The mini-world’s leader welcomes her. Leader: Welcome to our world, most gracious Lisa. Lisa: Your world is incredible. **And you speak English!**” (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291)

3. *Linguistic Elements* depend on linguistic features to create a humorous effect.

Example: “(which follows the previous one): Leader: Welcome to our world, most gracious Lisa. Lisa: Your world is incredible. And you speak English! Leader: We have listened to you speak since the dawn of time, oh Creator. And we have learned to **imatoot you exarktly**” (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291)

4. *Visual Elements* can occur in two types: “Firstly, purely visual elements refer to what one sees on the screen while watching for instance a situational comedy” (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017, p.20). Secondly, a combination of a linguistic and visual element occurs where the linguistic element is conveyed visually (Zabalbeascoa, 1996).

Example type 1: “[Situation] Homer is trying to escape from the aliens. He reaches the space ship’s cockpit. We can **see** and hear how he hits the control panel in his attempts to start the engine” (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291)

Example type 2: “An **image** of a grizzly bear sitting next to a wooden hut with the caption ‘I built this with my **bear** hands’. In this case the visual element is the image of the bear, while the linguistic element is the wordplay that relies on the polysemous nature of the word ‘bear’ ” (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017, p.20)

5. *Graphic Elements* are based on a written message on screen.

Example: “[Situation] Two aliens are about to attack the White House. In front of the president’s residence we see a banner. On the banner we **read** that this is the day the president takes office. **Inauguration Day**” (Marínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291)

6. *Paralinguistic Elements* use paralinguistic features of the voice such as intonation, rhythm or tone to create humour.

Example: “An element is found in the first example noted (above). Homer: [**screaming in terror**] Oh, no! Aliens, bio-duplication, nude conspiracies... Oh my God! Lyndon LaRouche was right!” (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291)

7. *Non-Marked (Humorous) Elements* refer to humorous elements that do not easily fall into one of the above-mentioned categories.

Example: “[Situation] The Simpson family starts searching for Bart’s wicked twin brother who poses a threat to them. Homer orders everybody to search some specific place. When he turns to his son Bart, his command is: Homer: Bart, you stay home and tape the hockey game” (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291)

8. *Sound Elements* are based on what can be heard, such as special effects.

Example: “This is evident in the situation referred to in Visual Elements (above), where we could see and **hear** how Homer hits the space ship’s control panel. A second later, we can also hear the **noise** of the ship’s engine starting” (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.292)

It should be noted that this study concentrates on humorous elements with verbal humour as the main component. As a result, humorous elements that completely rely on the visuals or the soundtrack were not included in the analysis, as that is not within the scope of this study.

2.3 Subtitling solutions

This section first discusses this dissertation’s preferred use of the term ‘solution’ and then presents an overview of subtitling solutions used in previous audiovisual studies on humour. Then, a new classification is proposed, which summarises a selection of subtitling solutions that scholars have designed over the years.

2.3.1 Literature study

Some terminology used within Translation Studies has been borrowed from other disciplines. According to Gambier and Van Doorslaer (2010), some terms are often used without careful consideration of their exact meaning and therefore, they are sometimes incoherent or used

inaccurately. The following paragraph examines the meaning and use of these terms in relation to translation: 'method', 'strategy', 'solution', 'tactic' and 'technique'.

In Translation Studies, *strategy* seems to be used as a synonym for a range of other terms, such as *technique* and *method* (Gambier and Van Doorslaer, 2010). Gambier and Van Doorslaer (2010) points out that *strategy* covers everything before, while and after translating (e.g. receiving instructions from a client and delivering the assignment). Pym (2011) agrees that *strategy* refers to how the translator manages a particular task to achieve its purpose, while Molina and Albir (2002) consider this the translation *method* (e.g. a literal translation). That macro-textual plan is influenced by norms prior to the translation process, e.g. the function of the target text (Gambier and Van Doorslaer, 2010). *Tactic*, by contrast, is used to indicate the choices the translator makes locally and is therefore controlled by the translator only (Gambier and Van Doorslaer, 2010). Examples are in-text or out-of-text solutions (e.g. to add a footnote). Gambier and Van Doorslaer (2010) and Pym (2011) also state that translation *solutions* refer to the result of the translator's work, i.e. what (s)he has produced to solve a problem. This concept corresponds with Molina and Albir's (2002) viewpoint of translation *techniques*.

From the above, it is clear that scholars are divided regarding the definition and use of terms such as *strategy* and that further research is needed for clarification (Gambier and Van Doorslaer, 2010). In this dissertation, however, the set of definitions by Gambier and Van Doorslaer (2010) and Pym (2011) is adopted because both researchers have extensively examined these ambiguous terms to clarify them for other scholars and translators. In addition, they seem to generally agree. Especially the term *solutions* is most relevant in this paper and will therefore be used in accordance with their interpretation. In what follows, the use of different classifications of subtitling solutions is compared.

Throughout the past centuries, a range of scholars have developed classifications of translation solutions for written literature (cf. Chesterman, 2000 for an overview). However, the rise of audiovisual media has caused translators to adjust their translation solutions, because different media have different aspects to take into account (e.g. the influence of the visual dimension, cf. section 2.1.1). In subtitling, solutions as condensation and omission are frequently adopted to be in synchrony with the dialogue (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020). Nevertheless, various other solutions for subtitling exist.

In this study, a classification that summarises five existing classifications for subtitling is proposed in the next section. However, first, recent case studies on the use of subtitling

solutions for humour are examined to compare their classifications and the similarities and differences to the classification proposed.

Overall, it is clear that two scholars are well-regarded on the subject of (humour in) subtitling and therefore frequently cited for their classifications, namely Delabastita (1993, 1996, 1997) and Gottlieb (1992, 1997). In the classifications by Delabastita (1993, 1996, 1997), which focus on wordplay, an interesting evolution can be seen: in his earlier research on the translation of wordplay in Shakespeare's work (1993, cited in Asimakoulas, 2005, p.827), he proposed seven solutions:

- 1) "Pun rendered as pun: the ST pun is translated by a TL pun;
- 2) Pun rendered as non-pun: a non-punning phrase which may retain all the initial senses (non-selective non-pun), or a non-punning phrase which renders only one of the pertinent senses (selective non-pun), or diffuse paraphrase or a combination of the above;
- 3) Pun rendered with another rhetorical device, or punoid (repetition, rhyme, referential vagueness, irony etc.);
- 4) Pun rendered with zero pun (total omission, or avoidance strategy, so to speak);
- 5) ST pun copied as TT pun, without being translated;
- 6) Addition: a compensatory pun is inserted where there was none in the ST (possibly making up for strategy where no other solution was found);
- 7) Editorial techniques: footnotes, endnotes, comments in translator's forewords etc."

Later, in his research in 1996, he divided the sixth solution of *addition* (see above) into two types: 1) to add a new pun in the ST where there was none, 2) to add new content to the ST in the form of wordplay. Furthermore, he decided to divide the first solution (see above) into two in 1997, resulting in nine solutions in total. The first type would replace the ST pun with another in the TT, e.g.

If it wasn't for me they'd be eggsicles.

Zonder mij waren het nu ei-pegels/ei-lollies (Gribomont, 2013, p.14)

The second type preserves the content of the ST pun and adopts a similar structure where possible, e.g.

Stupidissimo

Idiotissimo (Verbruggen, 2009-10, p.24)

Those classifications by Delabastita (1993-96-97) have been adopted in the case studies by Asimakoulas (2005), Gribomont (2013), McKenzie (2019), Mikolčić (2021) and Štefanac (2016). Remarkably, Gribomont (2013) used a combination of three classifications: Delabastita (1993-97), Veisbergs (1997) and Gottlieb (1997). These are the ten solutions¹ proposed by the latter in the light of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Ghassemiazghandi and Tengku-Sepora, 2020): expansion, paraphrase, transfer, imitation, transcription, dislocation, condensation, decimation, deletion and resignation.

She concluded, however, that because Gottlieb's (1997) solutions were designed for subtitling in general², contrary to Delabastita (1993-97) and Veisbergs (1997), they were perceived to be incomplete and less practical than the other two. Veisbergs' (1997) classification, by contrast, was designed for idioms and contains solutions that mainly correspond to Delabastita's (1997). Consequently, she considered a number of Gottlieb's solutions redundant (cf. Gribomont, 2013, p.17), while the classification in the next section presents the different names for the same solution as synonyms. In a considerable number of other case studies on humour in subtitling, however, the classification by Gottlieb (1992) was used (Ghaemi and Benyamin, 2011; Ghassemiazghandi and Tengku-Sepora (2020); Hosseinnia, 2014; Rahmawati, 2013; Seghers and De Clerck, 2017). Also in this dissertation, his classification (1992) is included, because Gottlieb's (1997) solutions for wordplay were perceived to be not specific enough for the identification of the subtitling solutions. Moreover, similar to Delabastita's (1993-96-97) evolution, it is believed that dividing solutions into more specific ones can help pinpointing the exact solution adopted by the subtitler and gain a better insight in the process. For that reason, this study's classification did not include Chiaro's (2010) four general solutions for humour in subtitling as well. Nevertheless, her solutions were used in Tu (2020). The latter, however, found three solutions used by the subtitler in addition to Chiaro's (2010).

Additionally, a number of case studies adopted the classifications by Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2014-20) (Geoghegan, 2019) or Pedersen (2005) (Ajabbad, 2019; Alharthi, 2016), and because the case studies successfully applied those classifications to humour in subtitling, their solutions were included in this dissertation as well (cf. Appendix 1). Firstly, it should be noted that their subtitling solutions were designed for culture-based humour (Diaz-Cintas and

¹ These solutions have been included in the classification proposed in the next section. Therefore, their definitions and examples can be found in Appendix 1.

² Gottlieb's solutions presented in Gribomont (2013) completely correspond to those from his earlier work in 1992. However, although Gribomont (2013) refers to 1997, those solutions cannot be found in that work. Instead, Gottlieb's (1997) article contains five solutions designed for wordplay so that Gribomont's (2013) results may have been different if those solutions had actually been adopted.

Remael, 2007) or extra-linguistic culture-bound references (ECRs) in subtitling (Pedersen, 2005). However, Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2007, 2020) acknowledge that the subtitling solutions for cultural references are similar to those for humour, as language and culture-based humour are not always easily distinguished. Furthermore, Alharthi (2016, p.180) states that Pedersen's (2005) classification "proved to be reliable [...] when dealing with most types of humour". Nevertheless, Alharthi (2016) proposes additional solutions in a new classification, building upon Pedersen's (2005) seven solutions for ECRs. Secondly, the subtitling solutions by Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2007, p.202) were reorganised and added one solution so that the classification consists of nine solutions in Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020). That version has been used in the classification proposed in the next section.

Lastly, also the classifications by Dore (2019) and Pai (2020) were selected for this study's classification. Dore (2019) attempted to include humour theories in her classification, which can be used for both subtitling and dubbing, while Pai (2020) composed his classification by consolidating six others, such as Gottlieb (1992) and Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). Pai's (2020) work was especially interesting because he categorises the solutions by means of three orientations as well as five macro-strategies. There is a chance that these strategies overlap, but they are adopted because they may provide a useful structure for the subtitler.

In conclusion, it can be seen that the classifications discussed above are all applicable to humour in subtitling. They may use different names or descriptions, but the concepts behind them mainly correspond. Consequently, the classification proposed in the next section attempts to summarize them. Overall, only the two types of *addition* solutions (Delabastita, 1996-97) were found in the other classifications that are not included in this study's classification. Although Pai (2020) puts forward the solution 'punning', it is not clear whether the pun is already present in the source text or introduces new content.

2.3.2 Classification of subtitling solutions

In this section, a new classification is presented that builds upon the classification by Pai (2020, p.144), which is illustrated in Table 2. More specifically, Pai's macro-strategies are used in Table 3 to categorise the solutions by Alharthi (2016), Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020), Dore (2019) and Gottlieb (1992) alongside Pai's solutions (2020). In Appendix 1, the solutions are explained per category and accompanied by an example.

<i>Orientations</i>	<i>Macro-strategies</i>	<i>Micro-strategies</i>
Minimal-change (source language-oriented)	Preservation	(1) Transfer, (2) Literalness
	Transformation	(3) Transposition, (4) Modulation, (5) Zooming, (6) Patterning
Interventional (target language-oriented)	Expansion	(7) Explicitation, (8) Elaboration, (9) Dramatisation, (10) Bridging
	Adaptation	(11) Equivalence, (12) Refocusing, (13) Distortion, (14) Punning
Alternative (medium-oriented)	Reduction	(15) Condensation, (16) Removal, (17) Decimation, (18) Dilution, (19) Prefabrication, (20) Waiving

Table 2. The proposed taxonomy of subtitling solutions by Pai (2020).

In the table below, the macro-strategies by Pai (2020) were used to create five categories. The subtitling solutions from the classifications were then appointed to a category in accordance with their orientations (Pai, 2020): source or target language-oriented, or medium-oriented. For example: the solution 'neutralisation' belongs to 'preservation', because it prioritises the preservation of the source content over the humour transfer. By contrast, 'equivalence' is categorised as 'adaptation' due to its orientation towards the target audience.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution
Preservation (source language-oriented)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calque, direct translation or literalness - Imitation, loan or retention - Literal translation or transference - Neutralisation - Transfer
Transformation (source language-oriented)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modulation or refocusing - Paraphrase - Patterning or (cultural) substitution - Transposition - Zooming
Expansion (target language-oriented)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addition or elaboration - Bridging, expansion or specification - Compensation - Dramatisation - Explicitation
Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dislocation - Distortion - Equivalence or official equivalent - Euphemism

(target language-oriented)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generalisation - Lexical (re)creation - Punning - Transcription
Reduction (medium-oriented)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Condensation - Decimation - Deletion or removal - Dilution - Omission - Prefabrication - Resignation - Waiving

Table 3. Subtitling solutions in the five classifications.

Although it is possible to adopt the solutions in every situation (Pym, 2016), Pym formulates three principles that are involved while selecting a translation solution, which could be applied to subtitling as well. First, subtitler effort plays a role because the subtitler will choose a solution that requires the least effort and has the desired effect (Pym, 2016). However, Pym (2016, p.237) remarks that “experienced [subtitlers] use automatized or semi-automatized solutions that require minimal effort, partly because their [subtitler] effort has been expended in their training or early experience”. Secondly, subtitler effort and the degree of credibility risk should be in balance (Pym, 2016). In other words, the higher the credibility risk of the subtitling, the more effort the subtitler should make to select a solution (Pym, 2016). If there is a minimal credibility risk, the subtitler is advised to choose an easy solution (Pym, 2016). Thirdly, the solution adopted should reduce the effort of the target audience to understand the subtitling (Pym, 2016).

Alternatively, Zabalbeascoa (2005, pp. 186-187) proposes a non-exhaustive list of ten variables that are to be taken into account in the selection of a translation or subtitling solution:

- a) “the language(s)/culture(s) one is translating from (including all aspects of language variation, such as dialects and registers)
- b) the language(s)/culture(s) one is translating into
- c) the purpose(s) and justification(s) for the existence of the translated version
- d) the nature of the text, including parameters such as textuality, genre, style and discourse
- e) the intended recipient(s), what they are assumed to be like
- f) the client(s) or translation initiator(s), their needs and demands
- g) the expectation(s) for the translated text and prejudice towards translations and translators

- h) the translator(s): human (individuals or teams), fully automatic, or computer assisted
- i) the conditions in which the task is carried out (deadline, materials, motivation, etc.)
- j) the medium, mode and means of communication: oral, written, audiovisual, private, mass media, etc''

Zabalbeascoa (1996) proposes two additional procedures before selecting a solution, the first being the localisation and categorisation of humorous instances in the source text. The second procedure includes three 'planes of priorities' to help prioritising: a humorous element is placed on (1) a vertical scale of importance: ranging from top to low priority or something in between, (2) a horizontal scale of importance: is the humour important for the text as a whole or used locally, and (3) a scale of equivalence-non-equivalence: is the translation expected to be faithful or are translators allowed to replace a humorous element by another.

Therefore, when it comes to establishing the importance of the humour transfer, the ten variables listed above can provide help to the translator or subtitler. Ghaemi and Benyamin (2011), who investigated the subtitling solutions for humour in five films, concluded that especially the genre is believed to play a decisive role, as they found the genre to strongly influence the subtitler's chosen solutions.

Chapter three: Case study 'The Big Bang Theory'

This chapter first provides some background information on the situational comedy 'The Big Bang Theory', from which a fragment was extracted to examine in the experiment. Then, the second section contains an overview of studies that examined its subtitles.

3.1 Background

The Big Bang Theory is an American situational comedy (sitcom), which was released in 2007 and created and produced by Warner Bros Television and Chuck Lorre Productions. The sitcom consists of twelve seasons and revolves around the lives of seven friends, who live in Pasadena, California. The four male protagonists are Leonard, Sheldon, Rajesh and Howard, all of whom work at the California Institute of Technology and are characterized as geeks. When Penny, an attractive woman, moves into the apartment across Leonard and Sheldon's, they create various comical situations in which their tendency to use (scientific) terminology clashes with common social and conversational behaviour (Kratochvílová, 2014). Humour is inherent to sitcoms like *The Big Bang Theory* because it often is a vital aspect of the storyline and the characters, and therefore vital for the series' success to render into subtitles (Ruiz, 2017). For

that reason, this series was chosen for the corpus of this study. The fragment examined is extracted from the first episode of season ten, when Leonard and Penny's families meet each other on their wedding day. More specifically, the fragment revolves around the insecurities of Penny's mother, who is afraid that the recent criminal past of Penny's brother Randall will cause Leonard's family to regard them poorly. Therefore, the topic of alcohol and drugs is attempted to be avoided.

3.2 Literature study

Over the past decade, *The Big Bang Theory* has been the object of many studies, because the series is "rich in themes of various kinds, such as theoretical physics and science, relationships, different cultures, everyday life and humor" (Kratochvílová, 2014, p.32). Furthermore, Van Hove, De Clerck and Vandepitte (2018) argue that the sometimes specialized vocabulary poses an additional challenge for the subtitler, which is why they investigated the Dutch subtitling of scientific terms in the series. Other than that, the subtitles have been examined on various linguistic levels: Ruiz (2017) has broken down the Spanish subtitles into phraseological units for analysis and Quintero Quiñones (2019) compared its subtitles of two varieties of Spanish.

Moreover, recent studies show an increasing interest in the reception of subtitling and/or dubbing and the rising trend of amateur subtitling. Kratochvílová (2014) conducted a reception study and interviewed three subtitlers to compare *The Big Bang Theory's* official Czech subtitling and dubbing, as well as their amateur subtitles from the Internet, while Orrego-Carmona (2016) used eye-tracking and questionnaires to examine the Spanish (non-)professional subtitles of the series.

Lastly, some studies on subtitling *The Big Bang Theory* built upon translation or humour theories such as Cao, Mansor, Ang and Ujum (2022), who described the Chinese subtitles from the perspective of the Eco-translatology theory, and Seghers and De Clerck (2017), who combined Attardo's (2002) parameters of humour and Asimakoulas' (2004) model to create charts for their analysis.

A number of case studies on *The Big Bang Theory*, however, have mainly chosen the sitcom for the subtitling of humour. In what follows, an overview³ is given with regard to their methods and results. It is clear that the case studies have corresponding goals, namely mapping the challenges of humour in subtitling by identifying the solutions adopted and/or calculating the overall success rate of the humour transfer. However, they strongly differ in

³ It should be noted that the case studies by Jaki (2016) and Wang (2014) examined other audiovisual material in addition to *The Big Bang Theory*, so that their conclusions can be compared to this study only to some extent.

their choice of humour categories and classification of subtitling solutions, which is unsurprising but still allows for a few patterns to be drawn.

The first pattern can also be observed in other audiovisual studies on humour (cf. section 2.2), namely that the classifications of humour types by Zabalbeascoa (1996) and Martínez-Sierra (2006) (based on Zabalbeascoa, 1996) are frequently selected as a foundation for the analysis (Çakıroğlu, 2020; Gadže, 2016; Seghers and De Clerck, 2017; Zolczer, 2016). Štefanac (2016), by contrast, used the categories of verbal humour found on write-out-loud.com and two case studies did not specify the classification used (Jaki, 2016; Wang, 2014). Contrary to the others, Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020) did not classify the humorous elements at all, as the primary focus was on sarcastic expressions.

Secondly, the subtitling solutions in the case studies were identified in accordance with different existing classifications, among which Molina and Albir's (2002) in Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020), a combination of Belz' (2008) and Delabastita's (1996) in Jaki (2016), a combination of Delabastita's (1996) and Spankaki's (2007) in Štefanac (2016) and Antonini's (2005) in Zolczer (2016). Seghers and De Clerck (2017) used the strategies based on Attardo's (2002) parameters of humour, while the classifications were not specified in Çakıroğlu (2020), Gadže (2016) and Wang (2014). Those classifications were designed in different periods of time and sometimes with a different goal: Belz (2008) established solutions specifically for subtitling, whereas Molina and Albir's (2002) originated from written forms of translation and Delabastita's (1996) focused on the translation of puns. Although this study lacks of space to thoroughly compare all those classifications, it is very likely that the majority of the solutions coincide but are given a different name (cf. section 2.3.1).

With regard to the results of the case studies on *The Big Bang Theory*, the humour transfer was assessed in Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020), Seghers and De Clerck (2017) and Štefanac (2016), who found successful transfers in approximately 94%, 88% and 81% of the cases respectively. Çakıroğlu (2020) also states that the subtitles had been overall successful but does not provide an exact success rate. Seghers and De Clerck (2017) suggest that the protagonist Sheldon's humour, which often builds upon science and cultural references, had affected the degree of difficulty, as they found that "Sheldon was involved in 21 of the 42 segments that suffered a partial or complete loss of the humorous effect" (p.64). Moreover, their findings point out that the success rate was considerably influenced by the humour category, with Linguistic Elements as the most challenging category (Seghers and De Clerck). Štefanac (2016) concludes that the abilities of the subtitler also affect the success rate to some extent, as the subtitler's sense of humour, in addition to the linguistic and cultural knowledge

of the source text, can influence his/her ability to improvise when subtitling problems are encountered. The importance of the subtitler's sense of humour is confirmed in Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020), however, it is pointed out that also the subtitling solutions chosen "extremely affects the translation quality" (p.400). That conclusion gives rise to a comparison of the subtitling solutions adopted in the above-mentioned case studies in what follows.

As the subtitling solutions in this study are categorised in Pai's (2020) five macro-strategies (cf. section 2.3.2), the results of the case studies have also been converted to the macro-strategies used in this study in order to facilitate the comparison. Unfortunately, some studies did not include details with regard to the subtitling solutions used, which only allows for tentative conclusions. On the one hand, the target-oriented strategy *adaptation* was mainly adopted by the subtitlers in Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020) and Çakiroğlu (2016), of which the latter added that the solution *substitution* was predominant. On the other hand, Gadže (2016) found both *adaptation* and *preservation* as recurrent strategies, while Jaki's (2016) and Wang's (2014) results showed that *preservation* took the upper hand. Lastly, Štefanac (2016) revealed that more than 2/3 of the puns were subtitled to a pun in the target language, but it is not explained whether the source content was changed so that both *preservation* and *adaptation* could have been the subtitler's strategy. She also draws attention to the *reduction* strategy, which was adopted in circa 20% to leave the puns out of the subtitles (Štefanac, 2016). A high number of *neutralisations* was found in Jaki (2016) as well. From those results, it seems that subtitlers tend to opt for a preservation and/or adaptation strategy, while (partial) loss of the source content is not excluded.

Finally, the case studies' conclusions point out several factors to have influenced their results. Firstly, as "culture is an integral factor in humor translation", Gadže (2016, p.41) states that the challenges encountered were posed by the characteristics of the source and target language and culture, and secondly, by the (un)translatability of some English phrases and American culture-specific items. This was confirmed in Wang (2014, p.280) and Jaki (2016): in some cases, "linguistic and cultural gaps" or the dependence on the source language's linguistic features caused the humour transfer to be unsuccessful. Last but not least, it is also acknowledged that technical constraints of the AVT mode have influenced the subtitling of humour to a considerable extent (Jaki, 2016; Seghers and De Clerck, 2017; Zolczer, 2016).

Chapter 4: Methodology

In this chapter, it is explained how the data were collected in section 4.1 and how they were analysed in section 4.3. Furthermore, the hypotheses are formulated in section 4.2.

4.1 Data collection

In this dissertation, the results of an experiment on the subtitling of humour are presented. The corpus of this study comprises the subtitles by seven Master of Translation or Multilingual Communication students at Ghent University, who were asked to subtitle a two-minute humorous fragment from English to Dutch. The students are Dutch native speakers, who had the same introductory sessions to subtitling with the programme 'FAB Subtitler' and who completed one or two internships during which they subtitled a film to Dutch, which makes them subtitling novices. The students were asked to fill in a questionnaire before and after their subtitling activity so that their reflections on the subtitling process and their decisions could be examined more closely. The students were allowed to translate from home with the FAB Subtitler Demo, which contributes to the ecological validity of the data. The fragment was selected from the sitcom *The Big Bang Theory* (see section 3.1) by means of the following criteria. The fragment

- 1) comprises twenty or fewer subtitles, as the FAB Subtitler Demo is limited to produce twenty subtitles;
- 2) contains at least three humorous elements;
- 3) contains humorous elements belonging to different humour categories, including the category Linguistic Humour;
- 4) does not require much context to understand the situation without knowing the sitcom.

In what follows, the contents of the questionnaires are discussed, the analysis of which can be found in section 5.5. It should be noted that the analysis was limited to the data in direct connection with the research questions of this study.

In the questionnaire before the subtitling activity, the students were asked three questions. The first question regarded the experience they had with subtitling fragments from a humorous film or series. The options were 'never', 'once', 'twice', 'three times' or 'more than three times'. In the second and third question, the students were asked to indicate their answers on a five-point Likert scale. The second question addressed to what extent they attach importance to fidelity to the source text as opposed to adaptation to the target audience in order to determine their coordinating subtitling strategies (source or target text-oriented). Lastly, the third

question asked the students to reflect on their creativity in case they encounter an issue during subtitling. The five possible levels of creativity ranged from '(very) low' to '(very) high'.

The questionnaire after the subtitling activity went more in-depth on the six Humorous Elements analysed in this study and factors that might have influenced their subtitling decisions. In the first part, the questions regarded the working context of the participants. More specifically, it was asked to what extent the temporal and spatial restrictions had a perceived effect on their decisions. Those two questions were answered by means of a Likert scale with five levels of influence (very little influence – little – neutral – high – very high influence). Moreover, the students were asked whether they experienced restrictions imposed by the target language and if so, they were asked to provide the corresponding passages in the subtitled fragment. Additionally, the students indicated on a five-point Likert scale how difficult they found the fragment. Then, the questions in the second part focused on the six Humorous Elements separately. These three questions were repeatedly asked for each Humorous Element:

1. How did you subtitle the following Humorous Element? Explain your solution briefly.
2. On a five-point scale, how difficult do you rate the subtitling of this Humorous Element?
3. On a five-point scale, how creative do you rate your own solution?

4.2 Hypotheses

In what follows, hypotheses on the research questions and their sub-questions (cf. chapter one) are formulated. With regard to the first research question on the frequency of certain subtitling solutions, a hypothesis is constructed using Pai's (2020) five macro-strategies, on which this study's classification of subtitling solutions is based (cf. section 2.3.2).

Recent case studies on the subtitling of humour in animations for children, films or series other than *The Big Bang Theory*, such as Ghaemi and Benyamin (2011), Hosseinnia (2014) and Mikolčić (2021) observed that the macro-strategy of *preservation* was used by subtitlers the most, ranging from about 40% (Hosseinnia, 2014) up till 67.5% of the cases (Ghaemi and Benyamin, 2011). Furthermore, the results of these studies showed that not only the *preservation* strategy was adopted: the Croatian subtitles of the American series *Friends* showed *transformation* solutions in more than a third of the cases analysed (Mikolčić, 2021). The results of Rahmawati (2013), in which the Indonesian subtitles of the animation film *Rio* are investigated, even observed a higher number of *transformation* (40%) than *preservation* solutions (31%). However, in comparison to studies on humour in *The Big Bang Theory*, a

slightly different pattern can be seen. While the results in Jaki (2016, p.376) described the number of *literal translations* as “strikingly high”, Gadže (2016) and Štefanac (2016) also found *adaptation* to be significantly recurrent. Moreover, Çakiroğlu (2020) and Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020) pointed out that *adaptation* solutions such as *substitution* were adopted more than *preservation* solutions, up till almost 80% of the humorous segments analysed in Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020).

Therefore, the majority of the subtitling solutions in this small-scale corpus study are hypothesised to belong either to the macro-strategy of *preservation*, such as *literal translation*, or belong to *adaptation*. Overall, a variety of subtitling solutions is expected as well. It should be noted that the technical restrictions such as spatial constraints will certainly cause the subtitler to render the source content more concise or even omit some elements (those solutions belong to the macro-strategy of *reduction*), but it is hypothesised that *reduction* will not be resorted to in more than 25% of the cases.

Research question two regards the general success rate of the humour transfer in the subtitles, which has been determined by three analysts and the researcher of this study. Although research on *The Big Bang Theory* sometimes focuses on different humorous devices such as sarcasm (Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa, 2020), their results put forward very high success rates, ranging from 81% (Štefanac, 2016) to 94% (Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa, 2020). Therefore, it is hypothesised that at most, a fourth of the cases analysed will have lost the humorous load partially or entirely in subtitling.

Sub-question one of research question three investigates to what extent the novices indicate to have been influenced by the technical restrictions inherent to subtitling (cf. section 2.1.1). The questionnaire comprises two questions regarding the technical restrictions; one in relation to the spatial constraints and the other in relation to the temporal constraints. As previous research has illustrated that subtitlers have to comply with both temporal and spatial restrictions (cf. section 2.1.1), the subtitlers are hypothesised to be highly influenced by them, and the spatial restrictions are expected to exercise more influence. Consequently, the subtitlers are likely to opt for the strategy of *reduction* in a fourth of the cases at most.

Sub-question two of research question three investigates to what extent the humour category influences the chosen subtitling solutions. Linguistic Elements are hypothesised to be the most difficult humour category to subtitle, because they are based on the linguistic structure of the source language, which requires a similar linguistic structure in the target language to be rendered successfully. Raphaelson-West (1989) confirms that cultural and universal jokes

would be easier to translate than linguistic jokes and Tu's (2020) analysis shows that almost half of the Linguistic Elements analysed suffered a partial or complete loss of humorous effect.

With regard to the subtitling solutions used for Linguistic Elements, previous studies reveal different results. Çakıroğlu (2020) examined humorous elements, which largely depended on linguistic elements and found that the most recurrent solution, *substitution* (belongs to the macro-strategy of *adaptation*), caused the humour to be transferred successfully. Mikolčić's (2021, p.37) results, by contrast, displayed *transformation* and *neutralisation* of the humour as the main solutions for "language-dependent jokes". Additionally, Gadže (2016) pointed out that Linguistic Elements are usually translated by means of a literal approach even though the humour transfer is not always successful.

For this study, however, the subtitling solutions for Linguistic Elements are hypothesised to be mainly translated literally because English and Dutch both belong to the Germanic part of the Indo-European language family, and "the similarity of polysemous relationships across different languages, and possibly even across language families, is greater than has usually been recognized in the discussions on pun translation" (Schröter, 2010, p.143).

Apart from Linguistic Elements, two other humour categories have been identified and examined in this study, namely Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements and Paralinguistic Elements. Given the nature of the latter category, which has to be taken into account in dubbing rather than subtitling (cf. section 2.2.3), no hypothesis can be constructed regarding the subtitling solutions. However, previous findings suggest that Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements have been often translated literally (Mikolčić, 2021; Tu, 2020). Furthermore, in this study, *preservation* is hypothesised to be the main strategy for that humour category as well, because the Dutch audience is likely to be familiar with the topics on which the humour is frequently based in American situational comedies.

Finally, sub-question three of research question three regards the subtitlers' creativity, more specifically, their perceived level of creativity while subtitling. Similarly to the first sub-question, the questionnaire provided a five-point Likert scale, on which the novices assessed their own creativity before they started subtitling the fragment. It is hypothesised that the novices are likely to not assess themselves as (very) highly creative, even though that they are expected to use a variety of subtitling solutions (cf. hypothesis of research question one), which illustrates their abilities to creatively search for different solutions. This ability is considered necessary, as the subtitling of humour is often regarded as a challenge, which "invariably tests [the subtitler's] capability for finding creative solutions" (Spankaki, 2007, p.1). That has also

been confirmed by Štefanac (2016) and Zolczer (2016), according to whom humour translation in subtitling requires both a sense of humour and a high level of creativity in order to adjust and successfully transfer the humorous load from one culture to another.

4.3 Data analysis

To answer the research questions, the elicited data were analysed in four major steps. In the first step, the six humorous elements examined were categorized by means of the six humour categories of Martínez-Sierra (2006), which have been explained in section 2.2.3. Overall, the analysis in chapter three revealed that two humorous elements can be categorised as Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements, another two are Linguistic Elements and two elements are a combination of categories (called 'Complex Humorous Elements' from now on).

Secondly, the subtitling solutions adopted were labelled according to the classification proposed in this study (cf. section 2.3.2), which builds upon Pai's (2020) five macro-strategies to summarize five classifications of subtitling solutions: Alharthi (2016), Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020), Dore (2019), Gottlieb (1992) and Pai (2020). An overview of the various subtitling solutions per category, accompanied with examples, can be found in Appendix 1.

The third step of the analysis regards the transfer of the humorous load from the original dialogue to the Dutch subtitles. In an approach similar to that adopted by Seghers and De Clerck (2017), who examined the humour transfer from English to Dutch in *The Big Bang Theory*, the labels 'transfer', 'partial transfer' and 'no transfer' were used to indicate whether the humour transfer was successful. The three labels were illustrated with an example in section 2.2.1 (p.).

However, in this study, the act of evaluating the humour transfer was carried out cautiously, as individuals can perceive humour differently (Tu, 2020). Therefore, three Dutch native speakers, whom were familiar with the series *The Big Bang Theory*, were asked to evaluate the humour in the subtitles by applying the three labels discussed above and adding a brief explanation. Consequently, the analysis in this study can provide an interesting overview of multiple perspectives on the humour transfer. More specifically, in the results chapter, mean success rates are compared by means of a mathematical formula, in which 'No transfer' is equal to 0 points, 'Partial transfer' is equal to 1 point and 'Transfer' is awarded 2 points.

In the fourth and last step of the analysis, the subtitling solutions and their evaluations, in addition to the data obtained from the questionnaires, were compared in search of correlations and tendencies, e.g. which macro-strategy has been used the most to subtitle a certain humour category.

Chapter five: results

This chapter presents the results of the experiment conducted. In step one of the analysis, six humorous elements were identified in the fragment examined. Step two comprises the evaluation of the humour transfer from the perspectives of the researcher and three analysts, who applied 'Transfer', 'Partial transfer' or 'No transfer' to every subtitled humorous element. As a result, mean success rates can be compared. Thirdly, the participants' subtitling solutions were identified by the researcher, of which the definitions and examples are provided in Appendix 1.

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 display the results of steps two and three of the analysis structured per humour category: the *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* and the *Linguistic Elements* respectively. Then, the complex humorous elements, which belong to more than one category simultaneously, are discussed in section 5.3, while section 5.4 summarises the tendencies observed. Finally, the data from the questionnaires are presented in section 5.5.

5.1 Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements

As section 2.2.3 illustrated, *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* are based on topics that are typical for a certain community to mock (Martínez-Sierra, 2006). In the fragment examined, Humorous Elements 4 and 5 were categorized as *Community-Sense-of-Humour*, which is illustrated in what follows. For Humorous Element 4, the Dutch subtitles and their evaluations can be found in Appendix 3 (p.76), while the individual explanations by the researcher and the three analysts are annexed on pages 84-85, 89-90, 93-94, 98.

Humorous Element 4

00:02:45:11 (Randall) *We are not white trash.*

This humorous element belongs to the category of *Community-Sense-of-Humour* because, according to the researcher and the three analysts, the expression 'white trash' is used as an insult and therefore very odd and unexpected to say when introducing yourself. Analyst 2 adds that the statement is humorous because Randall expresses precisely that with which Randall's mother does not want to be associated. The researcher and all analysts agree that the racial component ('white') strongly contributes to the humorous effect, so that a successful humour transfer includes that component as well.

Additionally, analyst 1 points out a difference between 'uitschot' (backtranslation: trash) and 'tuig' (scum) in the humour transfer, the latter of which is considered too literal and, consequently, does not convey an idiomatic translation. That view is not shared by the researcher, who believes both terms are accurate to convey the connotation of 'trash', as the Dutch dictionary *Van Dale* lists them as synonyms. Interestingly, analyst 3 draws attention to the subtitlers that use 'blank' (backtranslation: Caucasian) instead of 'wit' (white), the former of which is considered less correct to address skin colour today. Therefore, analyst 3 has labelled the subtitles containing 'blank' as 'partial transfer' (PT), whereas the subtitles with no reference to skin colour at all have been evaluated as 'No transfer'. That suggests that this analyst regards the racial aspect as the humour's main component, whereas the researcher and the other analysts appear to consider the humour's core to be the expression 'to be trash'. In total, the Dutch subtitles of this humorous element received scores ranging from 0 to 6 (cf. Appendix 3), which were added up and show a low mean success rate of 27/56 or 48.21%.

With regard to the subtitling solutions, participant 5 conveyed the expression in a very literal sense (categorized as the subtitling solution 'calque'), which is very likely to confuse the audience and therefore impedes the transfer of humour. Participants 2, 3 and 7 translated the expression literally by means of a term with the same connotation and preserved the racial component. The other three participants (1, 4 and 6) translated the expression with an idiomatic term ('marginalen', backtranslation: marginals) that is slightly more general than the literal translation, but omitted the reference to race so that the source content is partly lost. In conclusion, the humour transfer in participants' 2, 3 and 7 subtitles were evaluated as the most successful.

Humorous Element 5

00:02:53:09 (Beverly) *So what do you do for a living?*

00:02:56:05 (Randall) *Mommy, you want to take this one?*

Humorous Element 5 (HE5) can be categorized among *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements*, because the humour is perceived to revolve around the question being passed onto the mother. The researcher adds that this is unexpected, because adults usually answer questions themselves. Therefore, the researcher and analyst 2 indicate that the act of passing the question is considered most important to the humorous effect, and the precise words used have little influence on the transfer. Analyst 3, however, attaches great value to the words

used because Randall is perceived to pass the question quite helplessly. That is why analyst 3 considers the subtitles by participant 4, for example, less successful because the answer is turned into a statement instead of a question. Firstly, analyst 1 points out that the shortened answer by participant 6 (backtranslation: Mommy, please?) leaves too much room for interpretation. Secondly, analyst 1 claims that a literal translation with the Dutch verb 'nemen' (backtranslation: take) results in an expression that sounds unnatural and can confuse the audience. In conclusion, this humorous element was evaluated by means of scores ranging from 4 to 8, which resulted in the highest success rate of all humorous elements examined: 76.79%.

With regard to the subtitling solutions, participant 7 translated the content literally to preserve the humour, whereas five participants rendered the content more concise. Three of them, participants 2, 3 and 5, used 'antwoorden' or 'vertellen' (backtranslations: to respond, to tell), which are more explicit verbs. A minor syntactic restructuring was seen in the subtitles by participant 5, who moved the addressing to the end. In addition, participant 4 changed the perspective of the answer to a statement, and participant 6 left out a number of words, which were considered quite important to the meaning of the question by some analysts. In conclusion, the humour transfer in participants' 2 and 3 subtitles were evaluated as the most successful, very closely followed by the subtitles of participant 1.

5.2 Linguistic Elements

In this category, the humorous elements are "based on linguistic features" for their effect, e.g. homophony (Martínez-Sierra, 2006, p.291). In the fragment examined, Humorous Elements 1 and 3 were categorized as *Linguistic Elements*, which is explained in what follows. The Dutch subtitles and their evaluations can be found in Appendix 3 (p.77-78), while the individual explanations by the researcher and the three analysts are annexed on pages 85-87, 90-91, 95-96, and 99-100.

Humorous Element 1

00:02:00:05 (Susan) *See what happens if you work hard.*

00:02:02:18 (Randall) *Hey, she just sells drugs. I had to make 'em.*

Humorous Element 1 (HE1) can be categorized among *Linguistic Elements*, but from the humour transfer evaluation, the analysts and the researcher seem to have interpreted the components of the humorous load differently. While the researcher values the pun in Randall's answer as a significant part of the humour, only analyst 2 acknowledges that in his evaluation

with the label 'Partial transfer' wherever the pun has not been translated. However, all three analysts and the researcher recognize the contrast between Randall and Penny as the most important part of the humour. Moreover, the humour is perceived to be successful only when the second line implies that Penny's job is easier than Randall's by including 'gewoon' (backtranslation: just) in the Dutch subtitles. Therefore, all three analysts and the researcher also consider Susan's description of Penny's job as 'hard work' as a part of the humorous load, because it links the statement with the answer. The evaluation of the subtitles for Humorous Element 1 resulted in scores ranging from 2 till 6, which reveals a very low mean success rate of 44.64% for the humour transfer.

With regard to the subtitling solutions, the analysis shows that participant 3 retained both the source structure and the pun by translating literally with the Dutch word 'pillen' (backtranslation: pills). Participants 5 and 6 partly modified the source structure and preserved the pun. However, participant 6 omitted the contrast between Randall and Penny, consequently losing that part of the humour. The solution 'waiving', rendering only a part of the humorous load, was identified four times because the participants (no. 1, 2, 4 and 7) chose the translation 'drugs', which has no double meaning in Dutch. Interestingly, participant 1 pointed out that linguistic issue in the explanation of his/her subtitling solution in the questionnaire. In addition, the subtitles of participant 1 were perceived to recreate the humorous load of the pun by slightly adapting the source content, but the contrast between brother and sister was omitted, consequently losing part of the humour. In conclusion, the humour transfer in participant's 7 subtitles were evaluated as the most successful, very closely followed by the subtitles of participant 6.

Humorous Element 3

00:02:29:14 (Susan) *Why did you have to go to jail?*

00:02:31:07 (Randall) *It's called getting caught, mother.*

In this humorous element, the analysts and the researcher agree that the humour revolves around Randall's literal response to Susan's rhetorical question, which has a comical effect. More specifically, he gives a sarcastic answer instead of an explanation for committing the criminal activities for which he has been convicted. In addition, analyst 3 attaches some value to the presence of 'mother' in the subtitles as a means to stress the sarcasm. Interestingly, while the researcher and analyst 1 evaluate the change of perspective in the answer from 'Dat heet betrapt worden' (backtranslation: It's called getting caught) to 'Ik werd betrapt'

(backtranslation: I got caught) as equally humorous, analysts 2 and 3 evaluate it as badly transferred. In general, the subtitles for this humorous element were given rather high scores ranging from 4 till 7, resulting in a success rate of 71.43%.

With regard to the subtitling solutions, the data show that five participants translated the humorous element literally to preserve the effect, two of whom (no. 4 and 5) changed the perspective from passive to active voice, and participant 3 left out the reference to Susan ('mother'). This omission can be seen in the subtitles by participant 6 as well, who changed the perspective in the answer and chose a Dutch verb with a slightly more explicit meaning (replacing 'getting caught' by 'getting arrested'). Furthermore, participant 1 also omitted 'mother', changed the perspective and even added a pun in the answer: 'iemand snappen' can mean 'to understand someone' as well as 'to get caught'. In conclusion, the humour transfer in participants' 2 and 4 subtitles were evaluated as the most successful, very closely followed by the subtitles of participants 3 and 7.

5.3 Complex Humorous Elements

In the fragment examined, Humorous Elements 2 and 6 each fall into two different categories, which is explained in what follows. The Dutch subtitles and their evaluations can be found in Appendix 3 (p. 78-79), while the individual explanations by the researcher and the three analysts are annexed on pages 87-88, 91-93, 96-97, and 100-101.

Humorous Element 2

00:02:06:20 (Susan) *Okay, that's enough. No more drug talk for the rest of this trip.*

00:02:11:01 (Wyatt) *I'll drink to that.*

Humorous Element 2 (HE2) can be categorized among *Linguistic Elements*, because it is perceived to be built by irony: the reference in the second sentence refers to a kind of drugs (alcohol), which is ironic because the first sentence was an order not to talk about drugs anymore. This interpretation has been confirmed in the labels ('Transfer', 'Partial transfer' or 'No transfer') given by the researcher as well as the three analysts, despite that analyst 3 does not explicitly acknowledge that in the explanation accompanying his labels. Furthermore, this humorous element belongs to *Community-Sense-of-Humour* because it refers to the drinking culture that is present in America but also in Europe. With regard to the evaluation, it can be observed that the three analysts do not approve of the Dutch idiomatic expression 'Santé' (backtranslation: Cheers) to subtitle 'I'll drink to that'. The researcher, by contrast, considers that to be an acceptable solution because it still contains a reference to drinking alcohol,

although slightly more implicitly. The mathematical formula revealed points ranging from 3 till 8 (the latter of which is the maximum number of points), which resulted in a mean humour transfer of 71.43%.

With regard to the subtitling solutions, six participants translated the content literally to preserve the humorous load. One of them, participant 5, used the more specific verb 'toosten' (backtranslation: 'to toast') instead of 'drinken' (to drink), which is slightly less common in this context Dutch but that does not affect the humorous load. Additionally, participant 1 condensed the content by translating with a Dutch idiomatic expression (solution *prefabrication*): 'Santé' (backtranslation: 'Cheers'). In conclusion, the humour transfer in participants' 6 and 7 subtitles were evaluated as the most successful, very closely followed by the subtitles of participant 4.

Humorous Element 6

00:02:59:18 (Susan) *Randall's in between jobs.*

00:03:02:04 (Randall) *And court appearances.*

Humorous Element 6 (HE6) can be categorized among *Linguistic Elements*, as the syntactic structure in the second sentence is a variation on the expression 'to be in between jobs'. Furthermore, the volume of Randall's voice (a whisper) contributes to the humorous load so that HE6 also belongs to the category *Paralinguistic Elements*. However, this aspect was not confirmed by the three analysts because it is not visible in the subtitles.

Nevertheless, it can be seen that the syntactic structure is considered the foundation of the humour, as all three analysts and the researcher evaluate the subtitles, which deviate from that structure, as unsuccessful. The researcher adds one more perceived component of the humour: the irony of Randall who reveals something about his criminal status himself, which his family attempts to hide desperately. According to analyst 1, it is important to subtitle 'two' in the answer, because otherwise, it can be interpreted in two ways: Randall has multiple cases to attend or has to attend court multiple times for the same case. In addition, the researcher and analysts 1 and 2 noticed the different translations of 'court appearances', some of which are incorrect, such as 'rechtbankbezoekjes' (backtranslation: visits to court). This seems to not have influenced the general humour transfer, however, according to the explanations by analysts 1 and 2 (cf. Appendix 5). By contrast, analyst 3 considers an incorrect translation of 'court appearances' to have a minor influence on the transfer. Moreover, turning the term 'court appearances' into a diminutive ('rechtbankbezoekjes') is less humorous,

according to analyst 3. To conclude, this humorous element has been awarded scores widely ranging from 0 to 7 with a mean success rate of 64.29%.

With regard to the subtitling solutions, five participants translated the source content literally and preserved the humour. By contrast, participant 6 paraphrased the content and preserved it in a broad sense, but the humorous load is partly lost. Moreover, participant 5 shifted the perspective and added new content, so that it seems as if Randall has to appear in court for a righteous reason, not because he is a criminal. In conclusion, the humour transfer in participants' 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 subtitles were evaluated as the most successful.

5.4 Overall tendencies

The analysis has revealed patterns in relation to two aspects of the data: the humour transfer, and the subtitling solutions and the macro-strategies to which they belong.

The humour transfer

	Transfer	Partial transfer	No transfer	Total (in points)	Total (%)
HE1	5	15	8	25/56	44.64%
HE2	18	4	6	40/56	71.43%
HE3	17	6	5	40/56	71.43%
HE4	6	15	7	27/56	48.21%
HE5	19	5	4	43/56	76.79%
HE6	15	6	7	36/56	64.29%

Table 4. The humour transfer evaluation per label.

This table depicts the evaluations by the researcher and the three analysts for each humorous element. This overview allows for a comparison between the humorous elements by means of the mathematical formula used to convert the labels 'Transfer', 'Partial transfer' and 'No transfer' to two, one or zero points respectively. As a result, the second to last column provides a total number of points on the denominator 56, as there are seven participants and per participant, the three analysts and the researcher could together award a maximum of eight points. In general, the total scores of Humorous Element 1 and 4 stand out. The subtitles of those humorous elements scored very poorly in the evaluation, as the data show that three quarters of the points in total were obtained from the label 'Partial transfer'. Additionally, the subtitles of both humorous elements were evaluated more frequently with 'No transfer' than 'Transfer'. By contrast, the subtitles of Humorous Element 5 seemed to transfer the humour the best of all humorous elements examined.

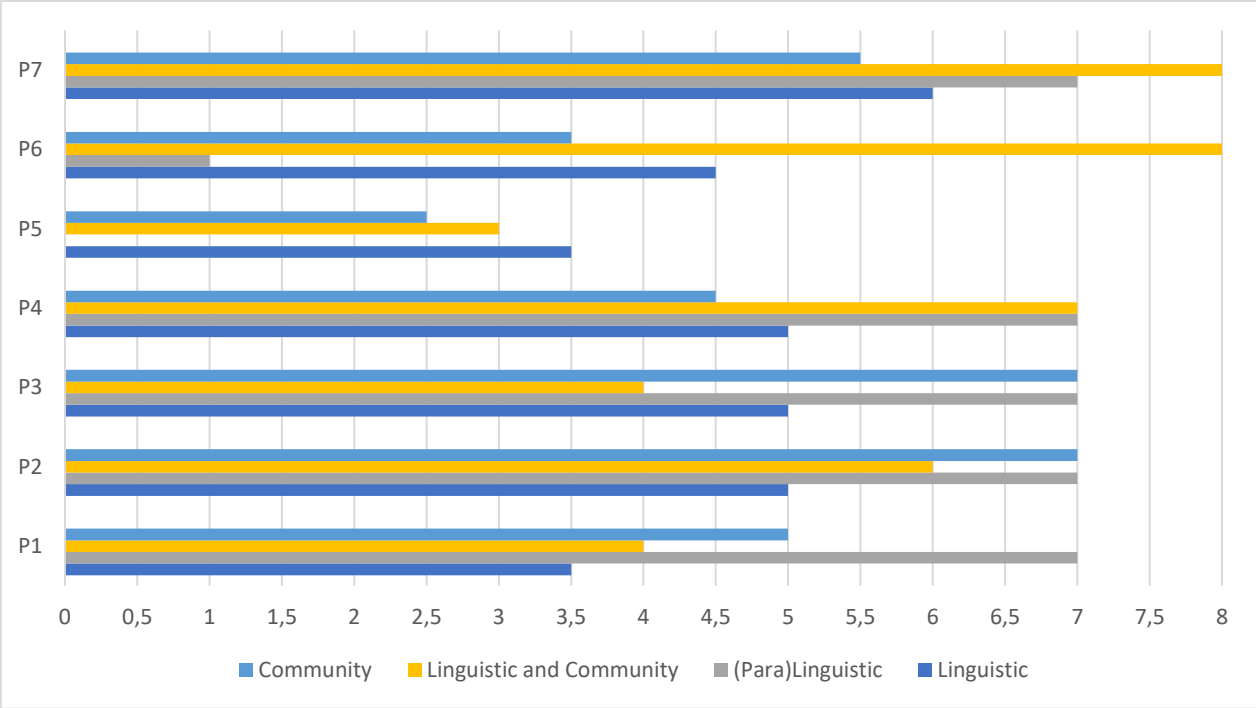


Diagram 1. Evaluation humour transfer per humour category and participant.

This diagram visualises the results of Table 5 below, which represent the evaluation of the humour transfer per humour category and per participant. The data marked red signify that a number of points was given below 50% of the maximum number of points. On the one hand, none of the categories stand out in the humour transfer evaluation. As observed in the previous table (no. 4), the subtitles for one *Linguistic Element* (HE1) and one *Community-Sense-of-Humour Element* (HE4) were evaluated with the poorest number of points. Therefore, it can be assumed that the poor scores by the evaluators have reduced the mean success rates of

their humour categories, resulting in mutually similar scores: 58.04% and 62.50% respectively. On the other hand, the data in Table 5 also depict the evaluations per participant, which reveals the following:

- The evaluations resulted in total scores per participant ranging from 31.25% till 79.17%.
- Participant 5 received less than half of the maximum points for every humour category, resulting in the lowest score, while participants 2 and 7 were evaluated the highest with 77.08% and 79.17% respectively.

The sum of all subtitles evaluated equals this experiment's total success rate of 62.80%, which did not support the expectations, as it was hypothesised that maximum 25% of the humour would be lost. However, it allows for other conclusions to be drawn in chapter five.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Total
Linguistic (HE1 and HE3)	3,5	5	5	5	3,5	4,5	6	58.04 %
(Para)Linguistic (HE6)	7	7	7	7	0	1	7	64.29 %
Linguistic and Community-Sense-of-Humour (HE2)	4	6	4	7	3	8	8	71.43 %
Community-Sense-of-Humour (HE4 and HE5)	5	7	7	4,5	2,5	3,5	5,5	62.50 %
Total	58.33 %	77.08 %	72.92 %	68.75 %	31.25 %	52.08 %	79.17 %	62.80 %

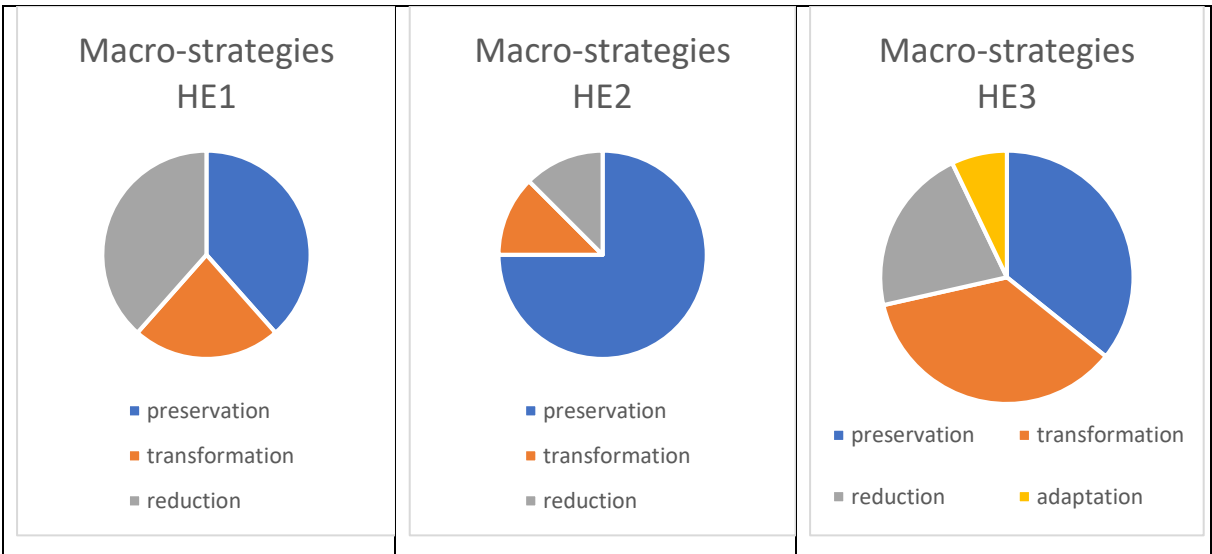
Table 5. Evaluation humour transfer per humour category and participant.

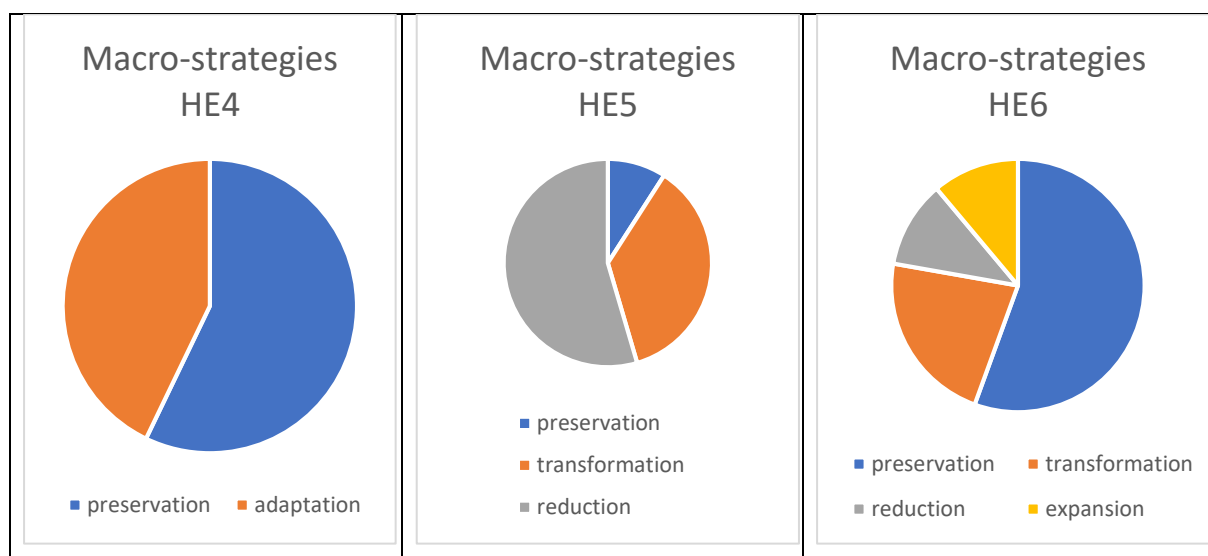
In Table 21 in Appendix 5, the evaluations were categorised per analyst. The scores for each humorous element were added up, resulting in the denominator 12 because the analyst could

give a maximum of two points to the six humorous elements. From these data, it can be seen that the researcher continuously awarded the subtitles a very high number of points, whereas analyst 3 tended to give very low to average scores. Analysts 1 and 2, by contrast, evaluated the subtitles with rather average scores, which resulted in total success rates of 63.10% and 58.33% respectively.

The subtitling solutions and macro-strategies

On the one hand, patterns can be seen in the variety of subtitling solutions adopted for the *Linguistic Elements* as opposed to those for the *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements*. In the subtitles of the *Linguistic Elements*, 'literal translation' and/or 'modulation' was chosen by minimum one participant for each humorous element. It should be noted that 'modulation' was mostly adopted in combination with another solution. Similarly, however, the solution 'literal translation' was chosen at least by one participant for all *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements*. With regard to the variety of the macro-strategies, it can be seen in Diagrams 2 till 7 that the strategy 'preservation' has been adopted in all six humorous elements, and the strategies 'transformation' and 'reduction' were chosen in five out of six humorous elements. However, the solutions 'addition', 'decimation', 'paraphrase', 'punning', 'transposition' and 'waiving' only occurred in the subtitling of the *Linguistic Elements* (HE1, HE3 and H6) and in HE2, which is a combination of *Linguistic* and *Community-Sense-of-Humour*. This suggests that the category *Linguistic Elements* is more likely to require creativity rather than choosing a *preservation* solution, which can sometimes result in an alteration of the humorous load. In turn, this supports the finding that the *Linguistic Elements* were more difficult to subtitle.





Diagrams 2 till 7. The macro-strategies per humorous element.

On the other hand, patterns were observed in the frequency with which the solutions were adopted. In total, the participants used fourteen different subtitling solutions, of which the frequency is displayed in Table 6. In 18 subtitles, a combination of two solutions was adopted and in 2 subtitles, three solutions were simultaneously adopted. The most recurrent solution by far was 'literal translation', which was adopted in 38% of the subtitles examined. The second most frequent solution was 'modulation', which occurred in one out of six subtitles. The frequency of the subtitling solutions was also analysed in relation to Pai's (2020) five macro-strategies, which reveals the following results⁴:

- The *preservation* solutions 'calque' and 'literal translation' were opted for in 17/42 subtitles (40.48%).
- The *transformation* solutions 'modulation', 'paraphrase', 'transposition' and 'zooming' were opted for in 15/42 subtitles (35.71%).
- The *expansion* solution 'addition' was opted for in 1/42 subtitles (2.38%).
- The *adaptation* solutions 'equivalence' and 'punning' were opted for in 4/42 subtitles (9.52%).
- The *reduction* solutions 'condensation', 'decimation', 'deletion', 'prefabrication' and 'waiving' were opted for in 16/42 subtitles (36.36% or a bit more than 1/3).

⁴ It should be noted that the sum of these results equals more than 100% because in 18 subtitles, 2 solutions were chosen and in 2 other subtitles, 3 solutions were chosen.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Number of subtitles	Percentage
Preservation	Calque	1/42	2.38%
	Literal translation	16/42	38.09%
Transformation	Modulation	7/42	16.66%
	Paraphrase	2/42	4.76%
	Transposition	1/42	2.38%
	Zooming	5/42	11.90%
Expansion	Addition	1/42	2.38%
Adaptation	Equivalence	3/42	7.14%
	Punning	1/42	2.38%
Reduction	Condensation	5/42	11.90%
	Decimation	1/42	2.38%
	Deletion	4/42	9.52%
	Prefabrication	1/42	2.38%
	Waiving	5/42	11.90%

Table 6. The subtitling solutions and their frequencies.

Lastly, the solutions adopted by the participants were reduced to the coordinating macro-strategies to examine whether they corresponded to the macro-strategy indicated in the questionnaire, which the participants filled in before they started subtitling. The results showed that, on the one hand, five participants (participants 1 up and till 5) had ranked the preservation of the source content as equally important as the adaptation for the target audience. Presumably, these participants would mainly choose solutions that belong to those two macro-strategies. However, from the data in Diagram 8, it can be observed that they used a variety of solutions across three or even four strategies. This finding suggests that they tended to consider a range of options depending on the context. Participants 2, 3 and 4, however, showed a clear preference for 'literal translation', whereas participant 5 mainly chose solutions from the source-oriented strategies 'preservation' or 'transformation'. Participant 1, by contrast, differentiated between solutions from four macro-strategies but *reduction* was part of the main subtitling strategy in almost 50% of the cases. On the other hand, participants 6 and 7 had ranked the preservation of the source content as slightly less important than the adaptation to the target audience. Participant 6, in fact, tended to restructure the source content (strategy *transformation*), which could suggest that (s)he valued optimal readability higher than the source structure. In addition, participant 6 chose for a (minor) *reduction*

solution in four out of six humorous elements. Lastly, participant 7 had a distinct preference for the strategy 'preservation'.

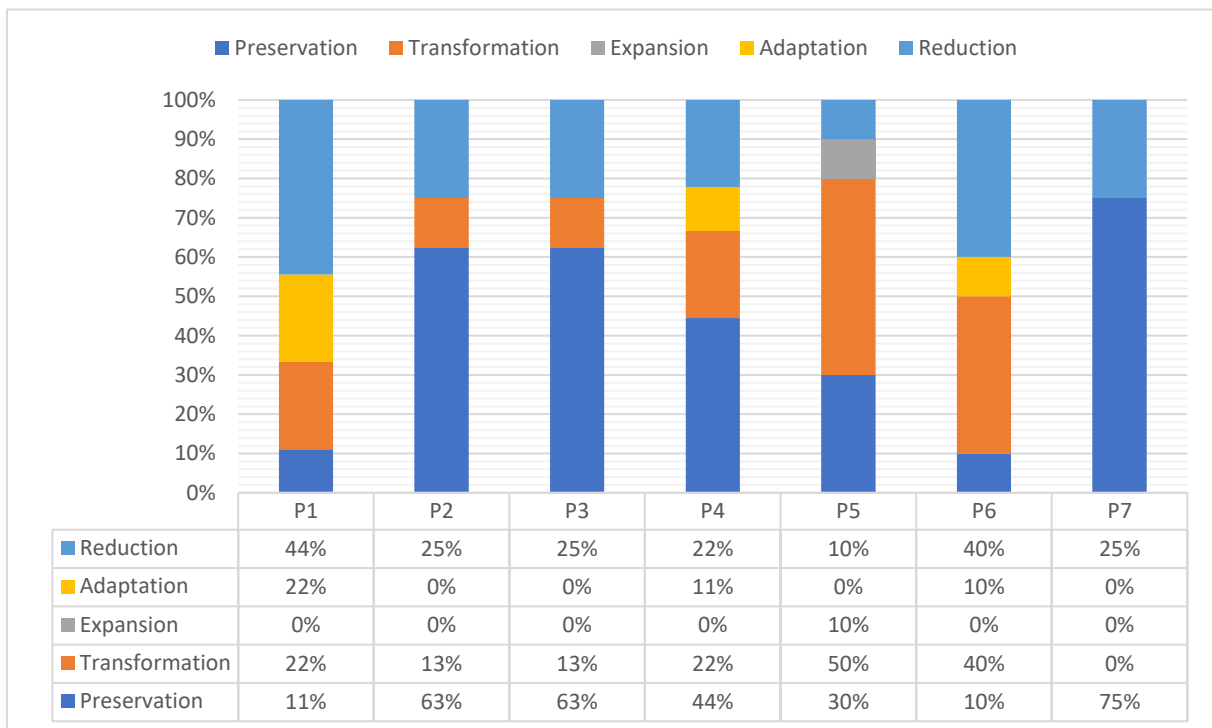


Diagram 8. Macro-strategies per participant.

In brief, four out of seven participants (no. 2, 3, 4 and 7) showed a clear preference for the macro-strategy 'preservation' to subtitle the six humorous elements. Another two participants (no. 1 and 6) differentiated between all four macro-strategies but had a clear tendency to render the content more concise, and participant 5 tended to either preserve or restructure the source content. The analysis also revealed that all participants rendered the source content more concise or omitted part of the content in one to four out of six humorous elements. Although being inherent to subtitling, it was observed that participants 1 and 6 reduced words and/or content more frequently (four times) than the others (once or twice).

5.5 Data from the questionnaires

In what follows, the data obtained from the questionnaires before (1) and after (2) the subtitling activity are presented.

From the evaluations per participant depicted in Table 5 (cf. section 5.4), it can be seen that some mean scores correlate with the experience as indicated by the participants in the questionnaires. All participants have more or less the same amount of general subtitling experience, as they all have subtitled one or two films before during their internships. However,

in the questionnaire, the participants were asked to indicate what experience they had with subtitling humour. The answers revealed that participant 1 subtitled humorous elements more than three times before this experiment, while participants 2, 3 and 4 have done so once and the other three have never done it before. That information may shed light on some of the evaluations. More specifically, participants 5 and 6, who had indicated never to have subtitled a fragment from a sitcom before, obtained the lowest evaluations. That suggests that humour is especially challenging for novices. Furthermore, participants with some experience (no. 2, 3 and 4) showed evaluations ranging from almost 70% till almost 80%, which confirms that experience contributes to better results. However, participant 1, who indicated to have considerable experience with subtitling humour, was evaluated rather poorly with an average evaluation of about 58%. Interestingly, one of participants (no. 7) who did not have any experience with subtitling humour at all, managed to obtain the best evaluation of the seven participants with nearly 80%.

However, it can be seen that the amount of experience does not necessarily influence the perceived difficulty of subtitling humour (cf. Tables 46 and 48 in Appendix 6). Participant 1 has the most experience with subtitling humour and rated the difficulty of the fragment as 'neutral', while the three participants with no experience at all (no. 5, 6 and 7) also rated the fragment 'neutral' or 'easy' to subtitle in general. Participant 2 indicated the difficulty level 'easy' on the five-point scale as well, whereas the other two participants with some experience (no. 3 and 4) found the fragment rather 'difficult'.

Table 48 also depicts the participants' answers in relation to each of the humorous elements. The answers '(very) difficult' have been marked red, while the answers '(very) easy' are marked green so that, on the one hand, a possible correlation between the perceived level of difficulty and the humour transfer evaluations is revealed. In the previous section, the evaluations by the analysts pointed out Humorous Elements 1 and 4 to have received the lowest number of points, which corresponds to the perceived level of difficulty, because both humorous elements were marked with the levels '(very) difficult' by four out of seven participants.

On the other hand, the participants' answers per humour category lead to the following observations:

- 1) The subtitlers perceived the Humorous Elements from the category *Linguistic Elements* (HE1 and 3) to be rather difficult, as half of the answers were 'difficult' or 'very difficult'.

- 2) Almost 80% of the answers for the *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* indicated the difficulty levels 'easy', 'neutral' or 'difficult', which makes the mean level rather 'neutral'.
- 3) All participants marked HE6 (*(Para)Linguistic Elements*) as either 'neutral' or 'difficult', with a slight preference for the former level (two answers more).
- 4) All participants marked HE2 (*Linguistic and Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements*) as either 'neutral' or 'difficult', with a slight preference for the latter level (two answers more).

In an attempt to map the subtitlers' perceived level of creativity, the questionnaire included a five-point Likert scale, of which the answers are displayed in Table 49 (cf. Appendix 6). The answers '(very) low' have been marked red, while the answers '(very) high' are marked green so that two trends were detected. Firstly, the perceived levels of creativity the participants awarded themselves before the subtitling activity reflect one 'neutral', five 'high' and one 'very high' answers. Secondly, the participants' ratings of their own subtitles' creativity (questionnaire 2) show a minor trend as well. The largest number of answers rating 'high' (four out of seven participants) were seen for the *(Para)Linguistic Elements* (HE6), whereas both *Linguistic Elements* (HE1 and 3) received three 'low' ratings, as well as three 'neutral' ratings and one 'high'. For HE1, that is unsurprising, as the three 'low' ratings were awarded by the participants who did not render the English pun. The reason for the trend in HE3, by contrast, is not clear. Further research could extend this analysis to a comparison between the perceived levels of creativity and the subtitling solutions used, but that is not within the scope of this study.

Another question in questionnaire 2 asked the participants to express on a five-point Likert scale to what extent the spatial restrictions had had an influence on their subtitling decisions. Two participants (no. 5 and 7) indicated 'very low' or 'low' influence, one of whom remarked that the temporal restrictions were more challenging. However, two participants (no. 1 and 2), who indicated 'neutral' influence, pointed out that subtitling required rendering the source content more concise, e.g. with shorter words, and sometimes leaving a part out. Moreover, it was confirmed by the three participants (no. 3, 4 and 6) who indicated 'high' influence that subtitling is a matter of choosing and therefore losing. Finding synonyms, shorter constructions or replacing names with personal pronouns have been mentioned as possible solutions to deal with the spatial restrictions. In addition, a recurrent comment by the participants reveals that they were focused on selecting the most important source content to convey. Remarkably, five participants (no. 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7) indicated to have experienced a 'very low' influence by the

temporal restrictions. Only one of the two other participants (no. 1 and 4), who indicated 'high' influence, explained that the subtitler tends to use less words and deviate from the source content in order to comply with the temporal restrictions. From these data, it can be concluded that the technical restrictions certainly make subtitling more complicated than non-audiovisual translation.

Lastly, although the results for this experiment are specific for the language pair examined, English and Dutch, it is useful to point out some restrictions imposed on the subtitlers by the target language itself, mostly due to semantic differences. Those differences can appear in the form of phrasing issues, for example, or other connotations. According to the questionnaire, the following terms or expressions were perceived to limit the participants' options in Dutch:

- court appearances
- drugs
- I'll drink to that
- to be in between jobs
- white trash

Similar to the results of Seghers and De Clerck (2017), linguistic issues have reduced the humour transfer in a number of subtitles, so recognizing the differences between the source and target language is important not only to subtitlers, but also to researchers who attempt to gain a better insight in the reduced quality of some subtitles.

Chapter 6: Discussion

In this chapter, the results of this experiment are reflected upon in relation to the hypotheses formulated in chapter three. This was the hypothesis for the first research question:

The majority of the subtitling solutions are hypothesised to belong either to the macro-strategies of *preservation* or *adaptation*. In addition, it is hypothesised that *reduction* will not be opted for in more than 25% of the cases. A variety of subtitling solutions is expected as well.

Overall, two out of three expectations turned out to be correct, as the *preservation* solutions were adopted in 17 out of 42 subtitles (40.48%), which constitutes the majority. Remarkably, both the *reduction* and *transformation* solutions closely follow with about 36%. As a result, the hypothesis was incorrect with regard to the *reduction* strategy. However, an array of solutions was indeed adopted. In total, fourteen different solutions from all five macro-strategies were identified and the participants chose a combination of two solutions in eighteen subtitles and three solutions in two subtitles.

The results for this research question coincide with those of, for example, Ghaemi and Benyamin (2011) and Hosseinnia (2014), who found a majority of *preservation* solutions, in addition to Mikolčić (2021) and Rahmawati (2013), who also found *transformation* solutions in 30 to 40% of the cases analysed. Interestingly, the results contrast with several previous case studies on *The Big Bang Theory* that identified *adaptation* as a frequent or predominant strategy, such as Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020). Jaki (2016) and Wang (2014), however, who investigated *The Big Bang Theory* in addition to another sitcom or film, showed the subtitler's tendency to choose for *preservation* as well. Unfortunately, a comparison with the case studies concerning the *reduction* strategy is restricted to Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa's (2020) results, because the other researchers did not provide details on the frequency of the subtitling solutions used. Consequently, only a clear contrast can be seen between Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020), who found about 7% *reduction* solutions, and the subtitles in this study, of which 36% (partly) contain a *reduction* solution. Regarding the variety and (frequent) combination of subtitling solutions, Alharthi (2016) and Tu (2020) identified several cases in which more than one solution was adopted as well.

Secondly, the hypothesis for the second research question regarding the humour transfer:

It is hypothesised that at most, a fourth of the cases analysed will have lost the humorous load partially or entirely in the Dutch subtitles.

The hypothesis turned out to be correct for only two out of seven participants (no. 2 and 7), as they received different mean success rates ranging from 31.25% till 79.17%. However, the evaluations indicate a general success rate of about 63%, which strongly contrasts with the very high success rates in other studies on this sitcom, such as Anggraini, Nababan and Santosa (2020) and Štefanac (2016).

The third research question consists of three sub-questions regarding: a) the influence of the technical restrictions of subtitling, b) the influence of the humour category on the subtitling decisions, and c) the subtitlers' perceived level of creativity.

- a) The subtitlers are hypothesised to be highly influenced by them, and the spatial restrictions are expected to exercise more influence. Consequently, the subtitlers are likely to opt for the strategy of *reduction* in a fourth of the cases at most (cf. hypothesis of research question one).

From the data in the second questionnaire, the influence by temporal restrictions of subtitling was experienced as 'very low'. Additionally, the overall level of influence was lower than that by the spatial restrictions (3x 'high', 2x 'neutral', 2x '(very) low') so that the last part of the hypothesis is still correct. The high influence of the spatial restrictions is also seen in the subtitling solutions used: more than a third of the subtitles rendered the source content more concise or omitted content when necessary. Those results correspond to Jaki's (2016, p.376) findings, which indicate that technical restrictions "occasionally constitute a problem in subtitling humour". That is confirmed by Tu (2020), who states that especially spatial constraints are likely to influence the decisions subtitlers make. Moreover, Seghers and De Clerck (2017) found that temporal and spatial restrictions were the reason for partial loss of the humour effect in three segments examined in *The Big Bang Theory*.

With regard to the second sub-question on humour categories, this hypothesis was reinforced:

- b) For this study, the subtitling solutions for both the *Linguistic Elements* and *Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* are hypothesised to mainly preserve the source content (macro-strategy *preservation*). No hypothesis was formulated for the *Paralinguistic Elements*, as this category is not noticeable in this mode of AVT.

Overall, the hypothesis was incorrect. Although the solution 'literal translation' has been chosen at least once in each humorous element, the strategy of *preservation* did not take the upper hand in the subtitling of the *Linguistic Elements* nor the *Community-Sense-of-Humour*. The findings indicate that an equal number of *preservation* and *reduction* solutions were used in HE1, while *preservation* and *transformation* solutions occurred equally frequent in HE3.

However, the hypothesis regarding *the Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements* turned out to be correct for two out of three elements that belong to that category (including the complex Humorous Element 2). In the third *Community-Sense-of-Humour Element* (HE5), the strategy of *reduction* was found to be predominant.

Finally, the hypothesis for the third and last sub-question:

- c) It is hypothesised that the novices are likely to not assess themselves as (very) highly creative, even though that they are expected to use a variety of subtitling solutions (cf. hypothesis of research question one), which illustrates their abilities to creatively search for different solutions.

Contrary to the hypothesis, the participants tended to rank their own levels of creativity rather high, which corresponds to the variety of subtitling solutions they adopted and the tendency to combine solutions within one subtitle. Further research could extend this analysis to a comparison between the perceived levels of creativity and the subtitling solutions used, but that is not within the scope of this study.

As this study analysed a rather small corpus, the findings cannot be generalised. Further research may compare the subtitling of humorous elements within (a) full episode(s) of any sitcom, film or even comedy shows. Furthermore, the six humorous elements examined only belonged to three different humour categories, so that a larger corpus may cover a wider range of categories and possibly other combinations of categories to compare. While this study applied the eight humour categories by Martínez-Sierra (2006), further studies may use a different classification, such as Spankaki's (2007).

With regard to the subtitling solutions, the classification was restricted to the solutions by Alharthi (2016), Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020), Dore (2019), Gottlieb (1992) and Pai (2020). Consequently, the use of other classifications may lead to different results. For example, section 2.3.1 pointed out that the classification may include two types of 'addition', in line with Delabastita's (1996-97) solutions for wordplay. Alternatively, Low's (2011) eight solutions specifically designed for humour in translation might be interesting to draw comparisons with.

Accordingly, the experiment conducted may be set up differently to achieve different results, for example, the subtitlers may be restricted to a certain amount of time to complete the subtitling, as is often the reality. Moreover, the data from experiment may be extended by a larger number of subtitlers or the comparison of professional versus amateur or fan subtitling, such as Kratochvílová (2014). Similarly, the evaluation of the humour transfer may be carried out by a larger number of analysts, professional subtitlers or any type of reception study with

eye-tracking or questionnaires can bring different perspectives as well (see Orrego-Carmona, 2016).

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In this study, an experiment was conducted in which six humorous elements from an episode of the situational comedy 'The Big Bang Theory' were subtitled in Dutch by seven novices. Firstly, the subtitling solutions were identified and their frequencies were calculated in relation to their coordinating macro-strategies in accordance with Pai (2020). The results show that although the *preservation* strategy was predominant, the *transformation* and *reduction* strategies recurred almost equally frequently. The variety of fourteen subtitling solutions adopted by the subtitlers suggest that a certain level of flexibility and creativity are required to convey the source humour. The challenge of subtitling humour is confirmed by the overall success rate of 62.80% found in this study, which is the outcome of the humour transfer evaluations by three analysts and the researcher.

Additional data from two questionnaires revealed that experience with subtitling humour possibly contributes to better results, as participants with some experience received evaluations of 70 till almost 80%, while participants with no experience obtained the lowest evaluations of approximately 31% and 52%. By contrast, no clear influence of experience was found on the participants' perceived level of difficulty for the fragment examined. A correlation was revealed, however, between the perceived difficulty levels and the humour transfer evaluations: Humorous Elements 1 and 4 were experienced to be the most difficult and they received the lowest evaluations as well. Moreover, the questionnaires indicated that the characteristics of the target language and the technicalities inherent to subtitling make subtitling humour especially challenging.

Furthermore, the chosen solutions will strongly vary depending on the individual habits of translators, which leaves subtitling to be "unpredictable, subject to alternative decisions and open to retranslation or resubtitling" (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020, p.241). An additional important matter to bear in mind that no list of solutions can cover all possible scenarios, because subtitling solutions are context-bound (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020). Nevertheless, classifications of solutions may expand subtitlers' knowledge and help them to create subtitles suitable for the genre, the function of the target text and ultimately, the target audience.

However, people are confronted with humour at different moments, so that they develop opinions and make evaluations differently. Therefore, the analysis in this study was carried out by more than one person to attempt to provide a more nuanced view prior to drawing conclusions. Further research on humour transfer in subtitling are advised to adopt a similar approach in order to reach a consensus.

Lastly, although "humour can be considered as a talent-related skill, since it is neither learnable nor teachable" (Spankaki, 2007, p.3), translators and subtitlers are strongly advised to study how humour works and how it is created (Vandaele, 2002; Zabalbeascoa, 2005).

In conclusion, the classification in this study may be beneficial to subtitling novices and students who wish to reflect on their chosen solutions and look at alternatives (Pym, 2016). However, other factors are at play, such as contextual dimensions (Molina and Albir, 2002) and intersemiotic cohesion between the subtitles and the soundtrack or the images on screen (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020). Moreover, the subtitles have to comply with spatio-temporal constraints. Therefore, it is argued that "effective subtitling requires recognition of these constraints and understanding of the limitations" (Spankaki, 2007, p.11). If the subtitler also faces humour, it is advised to establish priorities before adopting a solution (Zabalbeascoa, 1996, cf. section 2.3.2). Overall, the subtitling process involves making choices and, with regard to humour, respecting the "delicate balance between maintaining the source-language core meaning and ensuring the correct understanding and appreciation of the humor by viewers" (Bucharía, 2017, p.438). Therefore, future studies on humour, especially in audiovisual translation, are strongly advised to also look beyond the target text in order to understand the bigger picture.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Definition of the subtitling solutions

Preservation solutions

- Calque (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020), direct translation (Alharthi, 2016) or literalness (Pai, 2020): "the literal translation of a foreign word or phrase; it can be lexical or structural (Molina and Albir, 2002, p.510).

- This example illustrates the lexical type (MOLINA AND ALBIR): *École normale* (French) ⇒ *Normal School* (English).
- Imitation (Gottlieb, 1992), loan (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020) or retention (Alharthi, 2016): to render a ST unit without any changes (Gottlieb, 1992). It is particularly used with proper names or greetings (McKenzie, 2019) and corresponds to borrowing.
 - Molina and Albir (2002): *Lobby* (E) ⇒ *Lobby* (Spanish) [pure]. *Meeting* (English) ⇒ *Mitin* (Sp) [naturalised]
- Literal translation (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020) or transference (Dore, 2019): to retain the original structure and translate the content literally (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020).
 - Dore (2019): to translate *cream puffs and puffs* (effeminate gay men) as *chicce* (sweets) and *checche* (effeminate gay men).
- Neutralisation (Dore, 2019): to preserve the ST meaning but remove the humour (Dore, 2019).
 - Seghers and De Clerck (2017, p.90): the Dutch subtitles translated *When I try to deceive, I myself have more nervous ticks than a Lyme disease research facility* literally, but omitted the pun because 'teek' has no double meaning in Dutch.
- Transfer (Gottlieb, 1992; Pai, 2020): Gottlieb (1992) refers to a complete and accurate translation of the source content, whereas Pai (2020) refers to a translation, which conveys both the content and the additional stylistic elements almost completely into the target text. This solution is related to dislocation (explained in adaptation solutions).
 - Pai (2020): the translation of the content and stylistics of a poem.

Transformation solutions

- Modulation (Pai, 2020) or refocusing (Pai, 2020): both terms refer to a shift in perspective/focus and are therefore labelled under modulation: "to change the point of view, focus or cognitive category in relation to the ST; it can be lexical or structural" (Molina and Albir, 2002, p.510).
 - This example illustrates a shift in focus (Pym, 2016): *His failure to feel excitement about...* (English) ⇒ *Er war gar nicht scharf darauf...* (German)⁵ [He was not at all keen on ...]
- Paraphrase (Alharthi, 2016; Gottlieb, 1992): to substitute a ST reference "either by removing [it], but keeping its sense (sense transfer) or removing its sense and replacing it with something that serves its purpose (situational paraphrase)" (Alharthi, 2016, p.43). Seghers and De Clerck (2017, p.32) state that paraphrase is used when "the phraseology of the original cannot be reconstructed in the same syntactic way in the target language".
 - Alharthi (p.81): *I'll bet you did*, which suggests the second meaning of the phrase *tied up* (having sex) was rendered into Arabic as بالتأكد! (backtranslation: surely!). In this case, the original wordplay is lost because "the homonymy meaning could not be achieved in Arabic".

⁵ Example from Neubert (1991, p.37), cited in Pym (2016, p.225).

- Patterning (Pai, 2020) or (cultural) substitution⁶ (Alharthi, 2016; Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020; Dore, 2019): to replace a ST reference with another that is known in the target culture (Alharthi, 2016: 'cultural substitution') (Pai, 2020). Sometimes, the spatial constraints force the subtitler to choose this solution (Pai, 2020). It may occur that the target reference does not correspond to the original content anymore. According to Pai (2020), this is called situational substitution. However, Dore (2019) regards substitution as the replacement of a ST pun with another rhetorical device (e.g. allusion, paradox).
 - Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p.212): the French *sauce hollandaise* is known as *hollandaisesaus* in Dutch.
- Transposition (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020; Pai, 2020): whereas Pai (2020) defines transposition as a change in grammatical category, Diaz-Cintas and Remael's (2020) definition is similar to substitution and adaptation. They see transposition as the replacement of a cultural reference by another (see the following example).
 - Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p.214) *a nickle for five cents*.
- Zooming (Pai, 2020): to use "a word at a higher or lower semantic rank to translate the ST" (Pai, 2020, p.144).
 - Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p.234): to translate *a little Prozac* [name of an anti-depressant] with *una pastilla* [a tablet] (backtranslation from Spanish).

Expansion solutions

- Addition (Alharthi, 2016) or elaboration (Pai, 2020): to deliberately add extra information in the translation (Alharthi, 2016). This solution is very similar to the next one.
 - Molina and Albir (2002): the use of footnotes.
- Bridging (Pai, 2020), expansion (Gottlieb, 1992) or specification (Pedersen, 2005): to add information to adequately convey the semantic content (Gottlieb 1992, paraphrased in McKenzie, 2019). It should be noted that, while Pedersen (2005) includes addition and explicitation as sub-types of specification, Alharthi (2016) sees them as independent solutions and excludes specification itself.
 - In this example, McKenzie (2019, p.234) replaced the cultural reference with one that conveys the political statement for the target audience: *Fantozzi: maglietta della "GIL"* [Italian] translated as *Fantozzi: 'Fascist Youth' t-shirt from the 1940s*.
- Compensation: to compensate the loss of information or a stylistic effect elsewhere in the target text (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1977; paraphrased in Molina and Albir, 2002).
 - De Clercq (2022): participant 1 did not reproduce the pun in Humorous Element 1, but made one in the subtitles of Humorous Element 3 where the source text did not include one.

⁶ Molina and Albir (2002) consider substitution a change from linguistic to paralinguistic elements (e.g. a gesture) or vice versa.

- Dramatisation (Pai, 2020): “enhancing the dramatic degree or strength of an action” (2020, p.145).
 - Pai (2020, p.151): *Look at those* [breasts] translated into Chinese with *Look at those two treasures* (backtranslation).
- Explication: “to introduce information from the ST that is implicit from the context or the situation” (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1977, paraphrased in Molina and Albir, 2002, p.501). This solution is the opposite of implicitation.
 - Vinay and Darbelnet (1977): *His patient* (English) ⇒ *Son patient / Son patiente* (French).

Adaptation solutions

- Dislocation (Gottlieb, 1992): to primarily convey other linguistic aspects that are embedded in the original content. Therefore, the target content may be modified because it is less important than the effect (McKenzie, 2019).
 - Gottlieb (1992): to convey rhyme and rhythm.
- Distortion (Pai, 2020): to render the original content as distorted information (Pai, 2020).
 - Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p.234): to render *What are you making a face for? He was the father of our country* as *Don't complain. It is our country's father* (backtranslation from Swedish).
- Equivalence (Dore, 2019; Pai, 2020) or official equivalent (Alharthi, 2016): Alharthi (2016) refers to the replacement of a cultural element with the version that is recognised in the target culture, which corresponds to cultural substitution (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020). Dore (2019) and Pai (2020), by contrast, consider equivalence finding an idiomatic equivalent for the ST unit, e.g. a fixed expression (Pai) or an equivalent pun (Dore), which corresponds to Alharthi's (2016) cultural substitution.
 - Molina and Albir (recognized target version): *They are as like [sic] as two peas* (English) ⇒ *Se parecen como dos gotas de agua* (Spanish).
- Euphemism (Alharthi, 2016): a type of substitution. It refers to rendering the original content with a more indirect word or phrase in the target text. It can be used when translating taboo expressions.
 - Alharthi (2016, p.75): a euphemism is used to translate an indirect reference to a female body part (*mulva-vulva*).
- Generalisation: to replace a term with a more general or neutral term (Molina and Albir, 2002). This solution is the opposite of particularization (Molina and Albir, 2002).
 - Vinay and Darbelnet (1977): *Guichet, fenêtre, devanture* (French) ⇒ *Window* (English)
- Lexical (re)creation (Alharthi, 2016; Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020): to invent a new word in the target language. It is often used to translate spoonerisms and catchphrases (Alharthi, 2016).
 - Diaz-Cintas and Remael (2020, p.226): to render the paronym *Biggus Dickus* as *Enormus Vergus* (French).

- Punning (Pai, 2020): to make a pun in the translation.
 - Chiaro (2008, p.591): to render *He's so dumb he thought that the Gettysburg Address was where Lincoln lived* as *He's so dumb he thought Piccadilly Circus was actually a circus* (backtranslation from Italian).
- Transcription (Gottlieb, 1992): to creatively rewrite the content because it is written in, for example, nonsense language that does not have much meaning (Gottlieb, 1992; Seghers and De Clerck, 2017).
 - Ghassemiazghandi and Tengku-Sepora (2020, p.949): the song *We go together* from the film *Grease* (1978) that contains phrases as *We go together Like rama lama lama ka dinga da dinga dong*.

Reduction solutions

- Condensation (Gottlieb, 1992; Pai, 2020): to render a translation unit more concisely for stylistic or grammatical reasons. It is often used in subtitling to omit redundant or unsubstantial information (McKenzie, 2019; Pai, 2020).
 - Molina and Albir (2002): *Yes, so what?* (E) ⇒ *¿Y?* (Sp)
- Decimation (Gottlieb, 1992; Pai, 2020): to remove (a number of) words that contain important information (Pai). It is used when the subtitles cannot retain all ST information (Ghassemiazghandi and Tengku-Sepora, 2020). Therefore, (partial) loss of content is likely. An example is difficult to provide because it is impossible to distinguish decimation from resignation without the subtitler's clarification (Seghers and De Clerck, 2017). However, in this study, the subtitlers' clarification was asked for in the questionnaires.
 - De Clercq (2022): participant 6 explained that his/her solution for Humorous Element 1 dropped a number of words, because the subtitle would have been too long.
- Deletion (Gottlieb, 1992) or removal (Pai, 2020): to remove (a number of) words that contain unimportant information or are redundant (McKenzie, 2019; Pai, 2020). This solution is considered a quantitative reduction, while the previous solution results in a reduction of semantic meaning (qualitative).
 - Alharthi (2016, p.107): to render *This is what I need, just what I need* as *This is what I need* (backtranslation from Arabic) to avoid repetition, but the irony is preserved.
- Dilution (Pai, 2020): very similar to generalisation (to replace a term with a more general or neutral term (Molina and Albir, 2002) and the opposite of dramatisation, "[to decrease] the dramatic degree or strength of an action" (Pai, 2020, p.145)⁷.
- Omission (Alharthi, 2016; Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020; Dore, 2019): to completely remove a reference (Alharthi) or pun (Dore). Omission can be resorted to "when the original reference is unknown to the target audience and the rest of the context is clear enough for the utterance to be understood, or when the target language simply does not have the corresponding term" (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020, p.216). It is used

⁷ A clear example of this solution could not be found in Pai (2020).

when unavoidable but may also be due to ideological conventions or restrictions on, for example, taboo or sensitive topics (Diaz-Cintas and Remael, 2020).

- Pym (2016): Translations of the *One Thousand and One Nights* almost never have exactly 1001 stories.
- Prefabrication (Pai, 2020): to use an idiomatic expression to condense the original content (Pai). In a broad sense, this solution may be related to generalisation. In China, this is preferred when translating content that involves the frame of death. The following example also corresponds to euphemism.
 - Pai (2020): a reference to the trench war in WWI is replaced by the Chinese phrase *to leave life and enter death*, which has a more positive connotation.
- Resignation (Gottlieb, 1992): to give up on the translation, because the source content is too difficult or impossible to convey (McKenzie, 2019).
 - Ghassemiazghandi and Tengku-Sepora (2020, p.954): to render *I'm scared of po-weece* with *I'm scared* (backtranslation from Persian) because the subtitler was unable to convey the same effect.
- Waiving (Pai, 2020): to translate only a part of the pun made in the ST. This solution may be related to Dore's (2019) substitution: the replacement of a ST pun with another rhetorical device.
 - Diaz-Cintas (2020, p.226): to translate *I was left for another man. A trainer named Dash. I was left for a punctuation mark* into *He has left me for another man. A trainer called Dash. He has left me for a detergent* (backtranslation from Italian).

Appendix 2

Link to the fragment (season 10, episode 1, 1 min 54 till 3 min 04):

[Penny's family visit California for her wedding || TBBT || S10E01 || the conjugal Conjecture - YouTube](#)

Transcript

Context: Penny and Leonard are getting married. Penny's parents and brother, and Leonard's parents have come to New York to meet each other for the first time. However, Penny's mother is worried that Leonard's parents will judge them on the family's past, especially Randall's time in prison for making and selling drugs.

Wyatt	So, how's the world of pharmaceuticals treating you?
Penny	Pretty good. I actually just got assigned a much better territory.
Susan	See what happens when you work hard?
Randall	Hey, she just sells drugs. I had to make `em.
Susan	Okay, that's enough. No more drug talk for the rest of this trip.
Wyatt	I'll drink to that.
Susan	Haven't you had enough?
Wyatt	Penny drinks more than I do.
Penny	Well, I learnt from the best.
Susan	Very nice, Wyatt. And you wonder why this one turned out the way he did.
Randall	See what I've gotta put up with.
Susan	What you've gotta put up with? Why did you have to go to jail?
Randall	It's called getting caught, mother.

Penny, Wyatt, Susan, Randall	Hey.
Wyatt	There he is.
Susan	Leonard, it's so nice to see you again.
Leonard	You too. Everyone, this is my mother Beverly.
Randall	We are not white trash.
Beverly	So what do you do for a living?
Randall	Mommy, you want to take this one?
Susan	Randall's in between jobs.
Randall	And court appearances.

Table 7. Transcript of the fragment examined.

Appendix 3

The analysis of the Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements

Humorous Element 4

00:02:45:11 (Randall) *We are not white trash.*

	Dutch subtitle	Subtitling solution(s)	Evaluations	Total points
Participant 1	R: We zijn geen marginalen.	Equivalence	3PT, 1NT	3
Participant 2	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Literal translation	2T, 2PT	6
Participant 3	R: Wij zijn geen wit tuig.	Literal translation	2T, 2PT	6
Participant 4	R: Wij zijn niet marginaal.	Equivalence	3PT, 1NT	3
Participant 5	R: We zijn geen bleke rotzooi.	Calque	4NT	0
Participant 6	R: Wij zijn geen marginalen.	Equivalence	3PT, 1NT	3
Participant 7	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Literal translation	2T, 2PT	6

Table 8. Dutch subtitles and their analysis for HE4.

Humorous Element 5

00:02:53:09 (Beverly) *So what do you do for a living?*

00:02:56:05 (Randall) *Mommy, you want to take this one?*

	Dutch subtitle	Subtitling solution(s)	Evaluations	Total points
Participant 1	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Mam, kan jij even?	Condensation	3T, 1PT	7
Participant 2	B: En wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, antwoord jij?	Condensation and zooming	4T	8
Participant 3	B: Wat doe je voor werk? - R: Mam, beantwoord jij deze?	Condensation and zooming	4T	8
Participant 4	B: Wat doe je voor de kost? - R: Mama, deze is voor jou.	Condensation and modulation	3T, 1NT	6
Participant 5	B: Hoe verdien jij geld? - R: Vertel jij het mama?	Condensation and zooming	2T, 1PT, 1NT	5
Participant 6	B: Wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, alsjeblieft?	Deletion	1T, 2PT, 1NT	4
Participant 7	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Ma, wil jij deze nemen?	Literal translation	2T, 1PT, 1NT	5

Table 9. Dutch subtitles and their analysis for HE5.

The analysis of the Linguistic Elements

Humorous Element 1

00:02:00:05 (Susan) *See what happens if you work hard.*

00:02:02:18 (Randall) *Hey, she just sells drugs. I had to make 'em.*

	Dutch subtitle	Subtitling solution(s)	Evaluations	Total points
Participant 1	S: Kijk, hard werken is belangrijk. - R: Ik moest mijn drugs ook nog maken!	Situational paraphrase and waiving	2PT, 2NT	2
Participant 2	S: Zie je wat hard werken oplevert? - R: Zij verkoopt drugs, ik moest ze maken.	Literal translation and waiving	3PT, 1NT	3
Participant 3	S: Zie je wel dat hard werk loont. - R: Zij verkoopt pillen, ik maakte ze.	Literal translation	1T, 2PT, 1NT	4
Participant 4	S: Zo kan het dus ook. - R: Zij verkoopt gewoon, ik moest de drugs maken.	Literal translation and waiving	3PT, 1NT	3
Participant 5	S: Hard werk wordt beloond. - R: Zij verkoopt de pillen die ik gemaakt heb.	Transposition	1T, 3NT	2
Participant 6	S: Zie je dat hard werk loont? - R: Ik maakte de pillen dan nog zelf.	Decimation and modulation	1T, 3PT	5
Participant 7	S: Zie, hard werken loont. - R: Ze verkoopt gewoon drugs. Ik moest ze maken.	Literal translation and waiving	2T, 2PT	6

Table 10. Dutch subtitles and their analysis for HE1.

Humorous Element 3

00:02:29:14 (Susan) *Why did you have to go to jail?*

00:02:31:07 (Randall) *It's called getting caught, mother.*

	Dutch subtitle	Subtitling solution(s)	Evaluations	Total points
Participant 1	S: Waarom zat je in de cel? - R: Ze hebben me gesnapt, snap je?	Deletion, modulation and punning	2T, 1PT, 1NT	5
Participant 2	S: Waarom ging je de gevangenis in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden, moeder.	Literal translation	3T, 1PT	7
Participant 3	S: Waarom moest je de bak in?	Deletion and literal translation	3T, 1NT	6

	- R: Dat heet betrappt worden.			
Participant 4	S: Waarom moest jij zo nodig in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Literal translation and modulation	3T, 1PT	7
Participant 5	S: Waarom zat je in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Literal translation and modulation	2T, 1PT, 1NT	5
Participant 6	S: Moest je nu echt naar de gevangenis? - R: Ik werd opgepakt.	Deletion, modulation and zooming	2T, 2NT	4
Participant 7	S: Hoezo moest je naar de gevangenis? - R: Het heet betrappt worden, ma.	Literal translation	2T, 2PT	6

Table 11. Dutch subtitles and their analysis for HE3.

The analysis of HE2 and HE6 (Complex Humorous Elements)

Humorous Element 2 (Community-Sense-of-Humour and Linguistic Elements)

00:02:06:20 (Susan) *Okay, that's enough. No more drug talk for the rest of this trip.*

00:02:11:01 (Wyatt) *I'll drink to that.*

	Dutch subtitle	Subtitling solution(s)	Evaluations	Total points
Participant 1	S: Genoeg, ik wil niks over drugs horen. - W: Santé!	Prefabrication	1T, 2PT, 1NT	4
Participant 2	S: We spreken niet langer over drugs. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Literal translation	3T, 1NT	6
Participant 3	S: Genoeg. Er wordt niet meer over pillen gepraat deze reis. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Literal translation	2T, 2NT	4
Participant 4	S: Stop ermee. Er wordt op reis niet meer over drugs gesproken. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Literal translation	3T, 1PT	7
Participant 5	S: Ophouden. Ik wil niks meer over pillen horen. - W: Daar toast ik op.	Literal translation and zooming	1T, 1PT, 2NT	3
Participant 6	S: Genoeg over drugs gepraat nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Literal translation	4T	8
Participant 7	S: Zo is het genoeg. Geen drugspraat meer vanaf nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Literal translation	4T	8

Table 12. Dutch subtitles and their analysis for HE2.

Humorous Element 6 (Linguistic and Paralinguistic Elements)

00:02:59:18 (Susan) *Randall's in between jobs.*

00:03:02:04 (Randall) *And court appearances.*

	Dutch subtitle	Subtitling solution(s)	Evaluations	Total points
Participant 1	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En tussen twee dagvaardingen in.	Literal translation	3T, 1PT	7
Participant 2	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Literal translation	4T	8
Participant 3	S: Randall zit tussen twee jobs. - R: En rechtszaalverschijningen.	Literal translation	4T	8
Participant 4	S: Randall zit nu tussen twee jobs in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Literal translation	3T, 1NT	6
Participant 5	S: Randall zoekt werk. - R: En gerechtigheid.	Addition and modulation	2T, 1PT, 1NT	5
Participant 6	S: Randall heeft even geen werk. - R: Wel een strafblad.	Paraphrase and waiving	1T, 2PT, 1NT	4
Participant 7	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtbankbezoekjes.	Literal translation	2T, 1PT, 1NT	5

Table 13. Dutch subtitles and their analysis for HE6.

Appendix 4

Frequency of subtitling solutions per participant

Participant 1

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as equally important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. Furthermore, it can be seen that this participant used a variety of solutions, which are categorized in four macro-strategies. Although this participant used a reduction solution in three out of six humorous elements, it is clear that (s)he considers a range of options depending on the context.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	0
	Literal translation	1
Transformation	Modulation	1
	Paraphrase	1
	Transposition	0
	Zooming	0
Expansion	Addition	0
Adaptation	Equivalence	1
	Punning	1
Reduction	Condensation	1
	Decimation	0
	Deletion	0
	Prefabrication	1
	Waiving	1

Table 14. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 1.

Participant 2

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as equally important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. However, it can be deduced that this participant has a tendency for the strategy 'preservation', because (s)he has adopted the solution 'literal translation' in five out of six humorous elements.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	0
	Literal translation	5
Transformation	Modulation	0
	Paraphrase	0
	Transposition	0
	Zooming	1
	Addition	0
Adaptation	Equivalence	0
	Punning	0
Reduction	Condensation	1

	Decimation	0
	Deletion	0
	Prefabrication	0
	Waiving	1

Table 15. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 2.

Participant 3

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as equally important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. However, it can be deduced that this participant has a tendency for the strategy 'preservation', because (s)he has adopted the solution 'literal translation' in five out of six humorous elements.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	0
	Literal translation	5
Transformation	Modulation	0
	Paraphrase	0
	Transposition	0
	Zooming	1
Expansion	Addition	0
Adaptation	Equivalence	0
	Punning	0
Reduction	Condensation	1
	Decimation	0
	Deletion	1
	Prefabrication	0
	Waiving	0

Table 16. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 3.

Participant 4

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as equally important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. Moreover, the solutions chosen indicate that the participant does tend to differentiate between four macro-strategies, revealing that (s)he easily adapts his/her methods to the context. However, it can be seen that (s)he had a preference for 'preservation', as (s)he translated four out of six humorous elements literally (sometimes in combination with another solution).

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	0
	Literal translation	4

Transformation	Modulation	2
	Paraphrase	0
	Transposition	0
	Zooming	0
Expansion	Addition	0
Adaptation	Equivalence	1
	Punning	0
Reduction	Condensation	1
	Decimation	0
	Deletion	0
	Prefabrication	0
	Waiving	1

Table 17. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 4.

Participant 5

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as equally important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. Furthermore, from these data can be observed that the participant differentiates between macro-strategies, which indicates that (s)he easily adapts his/her method depending on the context. However, (s)he tends to choose for a preservation or transformation solution.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	1
	Literal translation	2
Transformation	Modulation	2
	Paraphrase	0
	Transposition	1
	Zooming	2
Expansion	Addition	1
Adaptation	Equivalence	0
	Punning	0
Reduction	Condensation	1
	Decimation	0
	Deletion	0
	Prefabrication	0
	Waiving	0

Table 18. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 5.

Participant 6

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as slightly less important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. That is confirmed in his/her tendency to restructure the source content (macro-strategy 'transformation'), which could suggest that the participant puts the reading comfort of the target audience above the

source structure. In general, these data show that the participant does not adopt solutions that belong to one particular strategy, but easily adapts his/her strategy depending on the context. It can also be observed that (s)he resorted to reduction solutions in three out of six humorous elements.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	0
	Literal translation	1
Transformation	Modulation	2
	Paraphrase	1
	Transposition	0
	Zooming	1
Expansion	Addition	0
Adaptation	Equivalence	1
	Punning	0
Reduction	Condensation	0
	Decimation	1
	Deletion	1
	Prefabrication	0
	Waiving	1

Table 19. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 6.

Participant 7

In the questionnaire, this participant has indicated that (s)he ranks the source content as slightly less important to the needs of the target audience when subtitling. This participant has a clear preference for the strategy 'preservation', because (s)he has translated all humorous elements literally, sometimes in combination with a reduction solution.

Macro-strategy	Subtitling solution	Frequency
Preservation	Calque	0
	Literal translation	6
Transformation	Modulation	0
	Paraphrase	0
	Transposition	0
	Zooming	0
Expansion	Addition	0
Adaptation	Equivalence	0
	Punning	0
Reduction	Condensation	0
	Decimation	0
	Deletion	0
	Prefabrication	1
	Waiving	1

Table 20. Frequency of subtitling solutions used by participant 7.

Appendix 5: the humour transfer evaluation

Overview evaluation humour transfer (per analyst)

When the points awarded are below 50% of the maximum amount of points (12), the points were marked red. For practical reasons, the term 'participant' was abbreviated to 'P' in the whole appendix.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	%
Researcher	10	11	12	10	8	9	11	84.52%
Analyst 1	7	9	7	9	4	7	10	63.10%
Analyst 2	7	10	8	8	2	5	9	58.33%
Analyst 3	3	7	8	6	1	4	8	44.05%

Table 21. Overview evaluation humour transfer (per analyst).

Evaluation humour transfer by the researcher

HE4 and 5 (the Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements)

Humorous Element 4

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	R: We zijn geen marginalen.	Partial transfer	The content is conveyed by an idiomatic target language version, but does not render the racial aspect. Consequently, part of the humorous load is lost.
2	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Transfer	'uitschot' and 'tuig' seem the most literal but accurate terms to convey the connotation of 'trash'. Also the racial component has been preserved in Dutch as 'wit' or 'blank'.
3	R: Wij zijn geen wit tuig.	Transfer	'uitschot' and 'tuig' seem the most literal but accurate terms to convey the connotation of 'trash'. Also the racial component has been preserved in Dutch as 'wit' or 'blank'.
4	R: Wij zijn niet marginaal.	Partial transfer	The content is conveyed by an idiomatic target language version, but does not render the racial aspect. Consequently, part of the humorous load is lost.
5	R: We zijn geen bleke rotzooi.	No transfer	To translate 'trash' with 'rotzooi' is too literal. The source expression is meant in a(n) indirect/figurative way here. Also the subtitler's choice for 'bleek' differs in meaning and connotation from 'wit' or 'blank', which are preferred here.

6	R: Wij zijn geen marginalen.	Partial transfer	The content is conveyed by an idiomatic target language version, but does not render the racial aspect. Consequently, part of the humorous load is lost.
7	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Transfer	'uitschot' and 'tuig' seem the most literal but accurate terms to convey the connotation of 'trash'. Also the racial component has been preserved in Dutch as 'wit' or 'blank'.

Table 22. Evaluation and explanations for HE4 by the researcher.

Humorous Element 5

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	En waar werk jij? - Mam, kan jij even?	Transfer	The content has been conveyed more concisely (Mam, kan jij even overnemen/antwoorden?)
2	En wat voor werk doe jij? - Mama, antwoord jij?	Transfer	The content is translated more concise and more direct/specific ('antwoorden' instead of 'nemen')
3	Wat doe je voor werk? - Mam, beantwoord jij deze?	Transfer	The content is translated more concise and more direct/specific ('antwoorden' instead of 'nemen')
4	Wat doe je voor de kost? - Mama, deze is voor jou.	Transfer	The subtitler changes the perspective by formulating the answer as a statement instead of a question and renders the content more concise.
5	Hoe verdien jij geld? - Vertel jij het mama?	Transfer	The content is translated slightly more concise and more direct/specific ('vertellen' instead of 'nemen'), and the addressing is moved to the end of the sentence
6	Wat voor werk doe jij? - Mama, alsjeblieft?	Transfer	Removal of a number of words, but the content is still conveyed
7	En waar werk jij? - Ma, wil jij deze nemen?	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the content literally and preserved the humour.

Table 23. Evaluation and explanations for HE5 by the researcher.

HE1 and 3 (the Linguistic Elements)

Humorous Element 1

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	Kijk, hard werken is belangrijk. - Ik moest mijn drugs ook nog maken!	Partial transfer	The contrast between brother and sister, which partly carried the humour, is lost. Also the source pun is lost, but the subtitler decided to adapt the content so that the humorous load is recreated within the same context. In the

			questionnaire, the subtitler indicated that he had difficulty with the space available.
2	Zie je wat hard werken oplevert? - Zij verkoopt drugs, ik moest ze maken.	Partial transfer	Both the source content as the structure have been preserved in translation. However, the humorous load is partly lost, because the pun is not rendered in translation. It can be argued that the target audience will still understand the humour.
3	Zie je wel dat hard werk loont. - Zij verkoopt pillen, ik maakte ze.	Transfer	Both the source structure and the pun have been preserved.
4	Zo kan het dus ook. - Zij verkoopt gewoon, ik moest de drugs maken.	Partial transfer	The subtitler indicated that she did not find an equivalent pun in the target language, so that part of the humorous load has not been transferred.
5	Hard werk wordt beloond. - Zij verkoopt de pillen die ik gemaakt heb.	Transfer	The source content and the pun have been preserved, but the syntactic structure has been slightly changed (very close to literal translation).
6	Zie je dat hard werk loont? - Ik maakte de pillen dan nog zelf.	Partial transfer	The perspective has shifted from the contrast between brother and sister towards only the brother by omitting a number of important words. In the questionnaire, the subtitler indicated that she had difficulty with the space available.
7	Zie, hard werken loont. - Ze verkoopt gewoon drugs. Ik moest ze maken.	Partial transfer	Both the source content as the structure have been preserved in translation. However, the humorous load is partly lost, because the pun is not rendered in translation. It can be argued that the target audience will still understand the humour.

Table 24. Evaluation and explanations for HE1 by the researcher.

Humorous Element 3

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Waarom zat je in de cel? - R: Ze hebben me gesnapt, snap je?	Transfer	The subtitler has inserted a new pun in the second sentence and changed the perspective (passive to active).
2	S: Waarom ging je de gevangenis in?	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the humorous element literally and preserved the effect.

	- R: Dat heet betrappt worden, moeder.		
3	S: Waarom moest je de bak in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the humorous element literally and preserved the effect. The subtitling of 'mother' is missing, but that information can be considered redundant.
4	S: Waarom moest jij zo nodig in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the humorous element literally and preserved the effect. The perspective in the second sentence has been changed.
5	S: Waarom zat je in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the humorous element literally and preserved the effect. The perspective in the second sentence has been changed.
6	S: Moest je nu echt naar de gevangenis? - R: Ik werd opgepakt.	Transfer	The subtitler has chosen for 'opgepakt' instead of 'betrappt', the former of which has a different semantic value, namely getting arrested, whereas the latter is a literal translation of 'getting caught'. However, both terms imply that Randall did not stop voluntarily, but his illegal activities have been ended by the police.
7	S: Hoezo moest je naar de gevangenis? - R: Het heet betrappt worden, ma.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the humorous element literally and preserved the effect.

Table 25. Evaluation and explanations for HE3 by the researcher.

HE2 and HE6 (Complex Humorous Elements)

Humorous Element 2

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	Genoeg, ik wil niks over drugs horen. - Santé!	Transfer	The source phrase has been translated with a fixed expression in the target language.
2	We spreken niet langer over drugs. - Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Both the source content and the structure have been preserved in translation.
3	Genoeg. Er wordt niet meer over pillen gepraat deze reis. - Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Both the source content and the structure have been preserved in translation.
4	Stop ermee. Er wordt op reis niet meer over drugs gesproken. - Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Both the source content and the structure have been preserved in translation.

5	Ophouden. Ik wil niks meer over pillen horen. - Daar toast ik op.	Transfer	The Dutch verb 'toosten' is not at the same semantic level as 'drinken', as the former implies that the person who speaks is making a toast while the latter can be used in that way but also more generally.
6	Genoeg over drugs gepraat nu. - Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Both the source content and the structure have been preserved in translation.
7	Zo is het genoeg. Geen drugspraat meer vanaf nu. - Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Both the source content and the structure have been preserved in translation.

Table 26. Evaluation and explanations for HE2 by the researcher.

Humorous Element 6

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - En tussen twee dagvaardingen in.	Transfer	The subtitler has opted to translate the content literally, but made a small error in Dutch: 'dagvaarding' is a 'summons' rather than a court appearance. However, the transfer of humour is not affected by this.
2	Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - En rechtszaken.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the content literally and preserved the humour.
3	Randall zit tussen twee jobs. - En rechtszaalverschijningen.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the content literally and preserved the humour.
4	Randall zit nu tussen twee jobs in. - En rechtszaken.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the content literally and preserved the humour.
5	Randall zoekt werk. - En gerechtigheid.	No transfer	The humour is lost because of the shift in perspective and the addition of content: it seems like he has to appear in court for a righteous reason, not because he is a criminal.
6	Randall heeft even geen werk. - Wel een strafblad.	Partial transfer	The content has been paraphrased and therefore preserved in a broad sense, but the humorous load is partly lost
7	Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - En rechtbankbezoekjes.	Transfer	The subtitler has translated the content literally and preserved the humour.

Table 27. Evaluation and explanations for HE6 by the researcher.

Evaluation humour transfer by analyst 1

HE4 and 5 (the Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements)

Humorous Element 4

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	R: We zijn geen marginalen.	Partial transfer	The message itself translates really well but it leaves behind the racial part of the original wording. This leaves behind a bit of the picture the expression wanted to sketch of the family.
2	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Transfer	I believe this is the best way to translate the expression while staying faithful to the original expression and its meaning
3	R: Wij zijn geen wit tuig.	Partial Transfer	This translation just feels too literal. The words are correctly translated but the formed sentence doesn't feel like something a Dutch-speaking person would say aloud.
4	R: Wij zijn niet marginaal.	Partial Transfer	Idem Participant 1
5	R: We zijn geen bleke rotzooi.	No Transfer	The choice of words is poorly selected and changes the meaning of the sentence. It just leaves you confused of what it tries to say.
6	R: Wij zijn geen marginalen.	Partial transfer	Idem Participant 1
7	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Transfer	Idem Participant 2

Table 28. Evaluation and explanations for HE4 by analyst 1.

Humorous Element 5

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Mam, kan jij even?	Transfer	This translation is good.
2	B: En wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, antwoord jij?	Transfer	The translation works fine.
3	B: Wat doe je voor werk? - R: Mam, beantwoord jij deze?	Transfer	It's a good translation.
4	B: Wat doe je voor de kost? - R: Mama, deze is voor jou.	Transfer	The humour is well transferred. Changing the answer from a question into a regular sentence makes the translation feel a little bit disconnected.
5	B: Hoe verdien jij geld? - R: Vertel jij het mama?	Transfer	This is a good translation.
6	B: Wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, alsjeblieft?	Partial Transfer	The answer is shortened. While the meaning is preserved, it leaves too much room to interpret it in different ways.
7	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Ma, wil jij deze nemen?	No Transfer	The translation of the answer sounds a bit too literal and ends up with an expression we don't use in Dutch. It makes him look like he wants to pass

			something in the middle of the conversation. This confuses the audience, making them wonder if they missed something.
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Table 29. Evaluation and explanations for HE5 by analyst 1.

HE1 and 3 (the Linguistic Elements)

Humorous Element 1

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Kijk, hard werken is belangrijk. - R: Ik moest mijn drugs ook nog maken!	No Transfer	Susan just seems to make an general statement, not a complaint towards Randall. Also, the comparison with Penny's work got left away so the punchline doesn't work anymore (just selling <-> making AND selling)
2	S: Zie je wat hard werken oplevert? - R: Zij verkoopt drugs, ik moest ze maken.	No Transfer	The joke doesn't work well here if you don't already know their situation. Again, the full comparison got left away. Randall's point is about how Penny only had to sell drugs while he had to both make and sell them.
3	S: Zie je wel dat hard werk loont. - R: Zij verkoopt pillen, ik maakte ze.	No Transfer	Idem Participant 2.
4	S: Zo kan het dus ook. - R: Zij verkoopt gewoon, ik moest de drugs maken.	Partial Transfer	This translation comes close to the actual punchline but it comes with a hiccup in the setup. The joke is still there but Susan isn't mentioning hard work anymore, while Randall's point was that he was doing double of Penny's work.
5	S: Hard werk wordt beloond. - R: Zij verkoopt de pillen die ik gemaakt heb.	No Transfer	This translation is warping the meaning of Randall's line and thus kills the joke.
6	S: Zie je dat hard werk loont? - R: Ik maakte de pillen dan nog zelf.	Partial Transfer	The joke can be found in the translation but it leaves out the direct comparison. This way, many people might not realise there was a joke until they hear the laughing track.

7	S: Zie, hard werken loont. - R: Ze verkoopt gewoon drugs. Ik moest ze maken.	Transfer	This is a decent translation.
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Table 30. Evaluation and explanations for HE1 by analyst 1.

Humorous Element 3

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Waarom zat je in de cel? - R: Ze hebben me gesnapt, snap je?	Transfer	The participant translated the joke faithfully and turned it also into a pun. Whether it's an enrichment or a distraction from the original joke is debatable.
2	S: Waarom ging je de gevangenis in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden, moeder.	Transfer	It's well translated.
3	S: Waarom moest je de bak in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden.	Transfer	Well translated.
4	S: Waarom moest jij zo nodig in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Transfer	It's a great translation.
5	S: Waarom zat je in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Transfer	This is a good translation.
6	S: Moest je nu echt naar de gevangenis? - R: Ik werd opgepakt.	Transfer	This translation works because it still plays with Randall not having any choice.
7	S: Hoezo moest je naar de gevangenis? - R: Het heet betrappt worden, ma.	Transfer	The joke got translated well but it makes Susan look like she just found out that Randall had been sentenced into jail.

Table 31. Evaluation and explanations for HE3 by analyst 1.

HE2 and HE6 (Complex Humorous Elements)

Humorous Element 2

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Genoeg, ik wil niks over drugs horen. - W: Santé!	Partial Transfer	The joke here is how drugs shouldn't be mentioned anymore and Wyatt talks about drinking his beer, alcohol also being a drug. So the question here is how similar toasting is to "drug talk" than Wyatt literally say he's going to drink (alcohol). From both humouristic and linguistic perspectives, I think they pretty

			similar but it makes the joke easier to miss than in the original writing.
2	S: We spreken niet langer over drugs. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Susan's line got shortened but nothing important got lost.
3	S: Genoeg. Er wordt niet meer over pillen gepraat deze reis. - W: Daar drink ik op.	No Transfer	Here the mistake was made to translate "drugs" into "pillen". The joke here is how drugs shouldn't be mentioned anymore and Wyatt talks about drinking his beer, alcohol also being a drug. A portion of drugs can indeed be found in the form of pills but Wyatt's beer isn't one of them. Thus the joke got lost in mistranslation.
4	S: Stop ermee. Er wordt op reis niet meer over drugs gesproken. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	It's a good translation. The specification 'rest of the trip' got left out but that doesn't feel important here.
5	S: Ophouden. Ik wil niks meer over pillen horen. - W: Daar toost ik op.	No Transfer	Idem participant 3
6	S: Genoeg over drugs gepraat nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Idem participant 4
7	S: Zo is het genoeg. Geen drugspraat meer vanaf nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Idem participant 4

Table 32. Evaluation and explanations for HE2 by analyst 1.

Humorous Element 6

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En tussen twee dagvaardingen in.	Transfer	Although I think that 'dagvaarding' is not exactly the same as 'court appearance', the humour has been transferred.
2	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Partial Transfer	The joke translates kind of well but you can't discern from the original phrasing if Randall has multiple cases to attend or has to attend the court multiple times for the same case so I wouldn't use this phrasing.
3	S: Randall zit tussen twee jobs. - R: En rechtszaalverschijningen.	Transfer	Well translated.

4	S: Randall zit nu tussen twee jobs in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Partial Transfer	Idem Participant 2.
5	S: Randall zoekt werk. - R: En gerechtigheid.	No Transfer	Randall's line got changed and it results into the whole joke being changed.
6	S: Randall heeft even geen werk. - R: Wel een strafblad.	No Transfer	Idem participant 5.
7	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtbankbezoekjes.	Transfer	This is a decent translation.

Table 33. Evaluation and explanations for HE6 by analyst 1.

Evaluation humour transfer by analyst 2

HE4 and 5 (the Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements)

Humorous Element 4

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	R: We zijn geen marginalen.	Partial	There are two sides to this joke: the awkward opening where he opens the conversation by saying the thing his mother does not want to be associated with (we are not 'white trash') and the reference to the earlier joke 'what colour of trash would you have her believe?' at 1:48 (we are 'not white' trash). Without explicitly mentioning the color, you transfer at most the first aspect.
2	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Partial	While definitely better than the previous subtitle, as this also conveys the color aspect of the joke, 'white trash' just doesn't translate very well into Dutch because we have no really similar term for it ('marginaal' is maybe the most appropriate but doesn't mention color at all). It's a very American word describing one of their local stereotypes and you must know a bit about the background of this word to fully understand the joke they are making here.
3	R: Wij zijn geen wit tuig.	Partial	Same as 2.
4	R: Wij zijn niet marginaal.	Partial	Same as 1.

5	R: We zijn geen bleke rotzooi.	No Transfer	Poor choice of word, 'rotzooi' is a more literal translation of 'trash' and less applicable to a group of people.
6	R: Wij zijn geen marginalen.	Partial	Same as 1.
7	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Partial	Same as 2.

Table 34. Evaluation and explanations for HE4 by analyst 2.

Humorous Element 5

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Mam, kan jij even?	Transfer	The humour is completely contextual and not really dependent on the exact choice of words. He asks his mother to answer the question because he knows she wouldn't want him to tell the truth.
2	B: En wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, antwoord jij?	Transfer	Same as 1.
3	B: Wat doe je voor werk? - R: Mam, beantwoord jij deze?	Transfer	Same as 1.
4	B: Wat doe je voor de kost? - R: Mama, deze is voor jou.	Transfer	Same as 1.
5	B: Hoe verdien jij geld? - R: Vertel jij het mama?	Partial	The translation of R sounds more like he asks his mother to tell the truth rather than taking a tricky question and spinning it.
6	B: Wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, alsjeblieft?	Partial	The translation of R is less explicit, losing a bit the humour of him obviously passing a difficult question to his mother.
7	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Ma, wil jij deze nemen?	Transfer	Same as 1.

Table 35. Evaluation and explanations for HE5 by analyst 2.

HE1 and 3 (the Linguistic Elements)

Humorous Element 1

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Kijk, hard werken is belangrijk. - R: Ik moest mijn drugs ook nog maken!	No Transfer	Translation of R completely misses the joke where he compares P selling medical drugs to him selling illegal drugs.
2	S: Zie je wat hard werken oplevert? - R: Zij verkoopt drugs, ik moest ze maken.	Partial	Translation of R misses a bit the part where he says she 'just' sells drugs, implying it is easier to sell than to make them. Also the double meaning behind 'drugs' in English does not translate equally to Dutch, we probably wouldn't say she is selling 'drugs' in Dutch but in English this works just fine.
3	S: Zie je wel dat hard werk loont. - R: Zij verkoopt pillen, ik maakte ze.	Partial	Translation of R misses a bit the part where he says she 'just' sells drugs, implying it is easier to sell than to make them.
4	S: Zo kan het dus ook. - R: Zij verkoopt gewoon, ik moest de drugs maken.	No Transfer	Translation of S totally misses the 'hard work' aspect, which is the whole reason why R compares his work to this sister's. Also no comparison between the 'drugs' she sells and he made.
5	S: Hard werk wordt beloond. - R: Zij verkoopt de pillen die ik gemaakt heb.	No Transfer	Translation of R is completely inaccurate, the drugs he made are not the same she sells.
6	S: Zie je dat hard werk loont? - R: Ik maakte de pillen dan nog zelf.	Partial	Same as 3.
7	S: Zie, hard werken loont. - R: Ze verkoopt gewoon drugs. Ik moest ze maken.	Partial	The double meaning behind 'drugs' in English does not translate equally to Dutch, we probably wouldn't say she is selling 'drugs' in Dutch but in English this works just fine.

Table 36. Evaluation and explanations for HE1 by analyst 2.

Humorous Element 3

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
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1	S: Waarom zat je in de cel? - R: Ze hebben me gesnapt, snap je?	Partial	Statement of S is more like complaining about why things happened the way they did and less of a question directed towards R (hypothetical question). R's answer is supposed to be stupid and condescending, less of an actual explanation.
2	S: Waarom ging je de gevangenis in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden, moeder.	Transfer	Hypothetical question by S is correctly met with the sarcastic answer by R.
3	S: Waarom moest je de bak in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden.	Transfer	Same as 2.
4	S: Waarom moest jij zo nodig in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Partial	Sarcasm of R is not fully transferred.
5	S: Waarom zat je in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Partial	Same as 4.
6	S: Moest je nu echt naar de gevangenis? - R: Ik werd opgepakt.	No Transfer	Totally misses the sarcasm and the fact that R answers a hypothetical question.
7	S: Hoezo moest je naar de gevangenis? - R: Het heet betrappt worden, ma.	Partial	Same as 4.

Table 37. Evaluation and explanations for HE3 by analyst 2.

HE2 and HE6 (Complex Humorous Elements)

Humorous Element 2

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Genoeg, ik wil niks over drugs horen. - W: Santé!	Partial	The answer of W is supposed to be ironic: he drinks alcohol, which is a drug, to celebrate the no longer talking about drugs. Here the direct link between his answer and the previous statement is missing.
2	S: We spreken niet langer over drugs. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Drinking alcohol to celebrate avoiding the drugs topic is the precise irony that gets translated here.

3	S: Genoeg. Er wordt niet meer over pillen gepraat deze reis. - W: Daar drink ik op.	No Transfer	Poor choice of words: pills and alcohol are not directly related to each other, while drugs and alcohol are.
4	S: Stop ermee. Er wordt op reis niet meer over drugs gesproken. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Same as 2.
5	S: Ophouden. Ik wil niks meer over pillen horen. - W: Daar toost ik op.	No Transfer	Same as 3.
6	S: Genoeg over drugs gepraat nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Same as 2.
7	S: Zo is het genoeg. Geen drugspraat meer vanaf nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Same as 2.

Table 38. Evaluation and explanations for HE2 by analyst 2.

Humorous Element 6

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En tussen twee dagvaardingen in.	Transfer	Literally translates the joke including the 'in between' parallel
2	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Transfer	Same as 1, even though 'rechtszaak' is not a correct translation it still conveys the general message
3	S: Randall zit tussen twee jobs. - R: En rechtszaalverschijningen.	Transfer	Same as 1
4	S: Randall zit nu tussen twee jobs in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Transfer	Same as 1, even though 'rechtszaak' is not a correct translation it still conveys the general message
5	S: Randall zoekt werk. - R: En gerechtigheid.	No Transfer	The joke revolves around the 'in between' being applied to both jobs and court appearances. Here this is completely missing.
6	S: Randall heeft even geen werk. - R: Wel een strafblad.	No Transfer	Same as 5
7	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtbankbezoekjes.	Transfer	Same as 1

Table 39. Evaluation and explanations for HE6 by analyst 2.

Evaluation humour transfer by analyst 3

HE4 and 5 (the Community-Sense-of-Humour Elements)

Humorous Element 4

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	R: We zijn geen marginalen.	No transfer	No mention of the skin color, which is what makes it funny as they're all white.
2	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Partial transfer	'Wit' (literal translation of white) is the more correct way of addressing skin colour nowadays.
3	R: Wij zijn geen wit tuig.	Transfer	The translation is on point.
4	R: Wij zijn niet marginaal.	No transfer	Same as #1
5	R: We zijn geen bleke rotzooi.	No transfer	This translation does not sound idiomatic in Dutch.
6	R: Wij zijn geen marginalen.	No transfer	Same as #1
7	R: Wij zijn geen blank uitschot.	Partial transfer	Same as #2

Table 40. Evaluation and explanations for HE4 by analyst 3.

Humorous Element 5

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Mam, kan jij even?	Partial transfer	Beverly didn't ask where he works, it was a more general question.
2	B: En wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, antwoord jij?	Transfer	This translation is great, although #3 is the most fitting one in my opinion.
3	B: Wat doe je voor werk? - R: Mam, beantwoord jij deze?	Transfer	This translation is on point.
4	B: Wat doe je voor de kost? - R: Mama, deze is voor jou.	No transfer	In the translation, Randall tells his mother (statement), but in the source text, he asks it quite helplessly.
5	B: Hoe verdien jij geld? - R: Vertel jij het mama?	No transfer	Beverly's line was translated poorly, which caused a total loss of humour. And Randall's line is missing a comma.
6	B: Wat voor werk doe jij? - R: Mama, alsjeblieft?	No transfer	Randall didn't ask it as needy as it seems from this translation.
7	B: En waar werk jij? - R: Ma, wil jij deze nemen?	Partial transfer	Same as #1, and the translation of Randall's line is equally fine.

Table 41. Evaluation and explanations for HE5 by analyst 3.

HE1 and 3 (the Linguistic Elements)

Humorous Element 1

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Kijk, hard werken is belangrijk. - R: Ik moest mijn drugs ook nog maken!	Partial transfer	I'd use a different way of saying Susan's line in Dutch.
2	S: Zie je wat hard werken oplevert? - R: Zij verkoopt drugs, ik moest ze maken.	Partial transfer	Randall's line could be translated differently, it doesn't feel like it brings the whole message.
3	S: Zie je wel dat hard werk loont. - R: Zij verkoopt pillen, ik maakte ze.	Partial transfer	Same as #2.
4	S: Zo kan het dus ook. - R: Zij verkoopt gewoon, ik moest de drugs maken.	Partial transfer	Unfortunately Susan's line doesn't transfer the message perfectly, but the second line is translated very well.
5	S: Hard werk wordt beloond. - R: Zij verkoopt de pillen die ik gemaakt heb.	No transfer	The translation of Randall's line is not correct.
6	S: Zie je dat hard werk loont? - R: Ik maakte de pillen dan nog zelf.	Transfer	The translation is very good, but #7 is a little bit better in my opinion.
7	S: Zie, hard werken loont. - R: Ze verkoopt gewoon drugs. Ik moest ze maken.	Transfer	Perfect translation for these sentences.

Table 42. Evaluation and explanations for HE1 by analyst 3.

Humorous Element 3

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Waarom zat je in de cel? - R: Ze hebben me gesnapt, snap je?	No transfer	The translation of Randall's line is not correct.
2	S: Waarom ging je de gevangenis in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden, moeder.	Partial transfer	Susan's line was a rhetorical question, but it was translated into an actual question.
3	S: Waarom moest je de bak in? - R: Dat heet betrappt worden.	No transfer	Same as #2, and there's no word to stress the word 'mother' again.
4	S: Waarom moest jij zo nodig in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	Transfer	Great translation!

5	S: Waarom zat je in de bak? - R: Ik werd betrappt, moeder.	No transfer	Same as #2, but the translation of Randall's line doesn't transfer the same humour in Dutch.
6	S: Moest je nu echt naar de gevangenis? - R: Ik werd opgepakt.	No transfer	The translation of Susan's line has changed the meaning of the content to some extent and Randall's line has been translated too dry/literally.
7	S: Hoezo moest je naar de gevangenis? - R: Het heet betrappt worden, ma.	Partial transfer	Same as #2.

Table 43. Evaluation and explanations for HE3 by analyst 3.

HE2 and HE6 (Complex Humorous Elements)

Humorous Element 2

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Genoeg, ik wil niks over drugs horen. - W: Santé!	No transfer	Both lines don't transfer the humour.
2	S: We spreken niet langer over drugs. - W: Daar drink ik op.	No transfer	The translation of Susan's line
3	S: Genoeg. Er wordt niet meer over pillen gepraat deze reis. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Good translation, it also translates the temporal phrase.
4	S: Stop ermee. Er wordt op reis niet meer over drugs gesproken. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Partial transfer	Same as #3, except that the temporal phrase has been translated more general as the source text ('op reis' instead of 'op deze reis'), which reduces the humorous effect.
5	S: Ophouden. Ik wil niks meer over pillen horen. - W: Daar toost ik op.	Partial transfer	Same as #4.
6	S: Genoeg over drugs gepraat nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Same as #3.
7	S: Zo is het genoeg. Geen drugspraat meer vanaf nu. - W: Daar drink ik op.	Transfer	Same as #3, great translation.

Table 44. Evaluation and explanations for HE2 by analyst 3.

Humorous Element 6

P	Dutch subtitle	Humour transfer	Explanation
1	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En tussen twee dagvaardingen in.	Partial transfer	I don't feel like Randall's line was translated perfectly, but it still brings the message.

2	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Transfer	Great translation.
3	S: Randall zit tussen twee jobs. - R: En rechtszaalverschijningen.	Partial transfer	I feel like Susan's line is missing something.
4	S: Randall zit nu tussen twee jobs in. - R: En rechtszaken.	Transfer	Great translation, practically the same as #2.
5	S: Randall zoekt werk. - R: En gerechtigheid.	No transfer	Not the right translation.
6	S: Randall heeft even geen werk. - R: Wel een strafblad.	No transfer	Not translated correctly.
7	S: Randall zit tussen twee banen in. - R: En rechtbankbezoekjes.	Partial transfer	The last word from Randall's line shouldn't have been a diminutive.

Table 45. Evaluation and explanations for HE6 by analyst 3.

Appendix 6: additional data from the questionnaires

Experience with subtitling humour

P1	More than three times
P2	Once
P3	Once
P4	Once
P5	Never
P6	Never
P7	Never

Table 46. Experience with subtitling humour.

Subtitling priorities

	Fidelity to the source text	Adaptation to the target audience
P1	High	High
P2	High	High
P3	High	High
P4	High	High
P5	High	High
P6	High	Very high
P7	High	Very high

Table 47. Subtitling priorities.

Perceived level of difficulty overall and per humorous element

It should be noted that these data were obtained after the subtitling activity. The labels '(very) difficult' were marked red, while the labels '(very) easy' were marked green in order to facilitate the analysis.

	Overall	HE1	HE2	HE3	HE4	HE5	HE6
P1	Neutral	Neutral	Difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Easy	Difficult
P2	Easy	Very easy	Neutral	Easy	Very easy	Easy	Neutral
P3	Difficult	Difficult	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Difficult
P4	Difficult	Very difficult	Difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Difficult	Neutral
P5	Neutral	Difficult	Difficult	Very difficult	Very difficult	Easy	Difficult
P6	Neutral	Neutral	Difficult	Neutral	Difficult	Easy	Neutral

P7	Easy	Difficult	Neutral	Easy	Difficult	Neutral	Neutral
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Table 48. Perceived level of difficulty overall and per humorous element.

Self-reflection: creativity

It should be noted that these data were obtained after the subtitling activity, except for the 'overall' score, which was part of the questionnaire before the subtitling activity. The labels '(very) low' were marked red, while the labels '(very) high' were marked green in order to facilitate the analysis.

	Overall	HE1	HE2	HE3	HE4	HE5	HE6
P1	Neutral	Low	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
P2	Very high	Low	Neutral	Low	Low	Neutral	Neutral
P3	High	Neutral	Neutral	High	Neutral	Neutral	High
P4	High	High	Low	Neutral	High	Neutral	High
P5	High	Neutral	Neutral	Low	Neutral	Neutral	High
P6	High	Neutral	Low	Low	Neutral	High	High
P7	High	Low	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	High	Neutral

Table 49. Perceived level of creativity overall and per humorous element.

Perceived influence by technical restrictions

	Spatial restrictions	Solution applied	Temporal restrictions	Solution applied
P1	Neutral	Rendering the source content more concise, sometimes leaving a part out.	High	No answer.
P2	Neutral	Shorter words, focus on subtitling the most important source content.	Very low	No answer.
P3	High	Leaving less important content.	Very low	No answer.
P4	High	Replacing names with personal pronouns, shorter words (synonyms) and constructions.	High	Using a smaller number of words, and deviating a bit more from the source content.
P5	Low	Temporal restrictions were more pressing than spatial.	Very low	No answer.
P6	High	It is a matter of choosing (and losing).	Very low	No answer.
P7	Very low	No answer.	Very low	No answer.

Table 50. Perceived level of influence from the technical restrictions of subtitling.

Perceived restrictions by the target language

With regard to the comment by participant 5, I checked the English transcript but I did not find the second sentence (beginning with 'everyone') the participant refers to. Therefore, I will not include this comment in the main text.

P1	The word 'drugs' does not have a double meaning in Dutch.
P2	Answer 'no'.
P3	The word 'drugs' does not have a double meaning in Dutch.
P4	Yes, 'white trash' and 'pharmaceuticals'.
P5	To some extent, yes. The Dutch expression for 'I'll drink to that' and the sentence that begins with 'everyone' cannot be literally translated into Dutch.
P6	The Dutch term for 'court appearances'.
P7	Yes, 'white trash' and 'to be in between jobs'.

Table 51. Perceived restrictions by the target language.