FACULTY OF ARTS AND PHILOSOPHY

Queering Translation

AN EVALUATION OF THE STRATEGIES USED IN THE DUTCH TRANSLATION OF *GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER*

Word count: 19,203

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A dissertation submitted to Ghent University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Translation

Academic year: 2023 – 2024

GHENT UNIVERSITY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people:

My promotor, Brecht de Groote, for his invaluable feedback and guidance throughout this two-year process.

My family – mama, papa and Stijn – for their unconditional support, for providing me with a peaceful and loving home, and for still playing taxi with their adult daughter who is too scared to drive a car.

My friends, for the meals we shared, the movies we watched, the nights we spent discussing both our dissertation topics and our acquaintances' life choices, the letters we exchanged, and the badminton games we won.

Silke Eloot, who did, after all, write this entire dissertation and who feels comfortable mentioning herself in the acknowledgements on the grounds that no one will read them.

ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* and its Dutch translation by Lette Vos are investigated from the perspective of queering translation, a field of study situated at the intersection of queer theory and translation studies. This study adopts the ideological stance that translation can be considered queer praxis and argues that a successful translation faithfully transfers queer content without flattening, altering or censoring the source text's discourse. The current focus in the queering translation field is on the descriptive comparative analysis of source and target texts. While this study follows suit, it breaks new ground by shedding light on the translation strategies used. 144 fragments containing queer references are extracted from *Girl, Woman, Other*. Through the analysis of the source text fragments and their respective translations, the following ten strategies are identified: omission, addition, literal translation, borrowing, transposition, abstraction change, adaptation, paraphrase, description, and combination. For each strategy, five sample fragments and their translations are investigated to determine which strategies lead to satisfying results. The findings reveal that each of the ten strategies has its advantages and limitations, and its efficacy varies according to the context in which it is used. Therefore, this study offers additional guidelines for each strategy, as well as an overview of the discourses on queerness in *Girl, Woman, Other*. The ultimate aim of this dissertation is that its results provide guidance on how to identify and adequately translate the discourses on queerness in literary works, and can serve as a starting point for those translating the queer.

Keywords: queering translation, queer praxis, translation strategies, literary translation

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1: INTRODUCTION

Bernardine Evaristo's novel *Girl, Woman, Other* was published in 2019 and won the Booker Prize in the same year, making Evaristo the first black woman to receive this prestigious literary accolade (O'Connor, 2019). The novel's narrative weaves through the lives of twelve characters, most of whom are black women and many of whom are queer. The characters' diversity allows Evaristo to explore themes such as identity, gender, class, race, ethnicity, migration and sexuality from different points of view, resulting in an intersectional and intergenerational perspective on those topics. Dialogue and narration are intertwined, and different discourses are highlighted throughout the novel. Its Dutch translation *Meisje, vrouw, anders* has had a mixed reception. On the one hand, translator Lette Vos was nominated for the *Europese Literatuurprijs*, a prize awarded by the Dutch Foundation for Literature to translators who have provided an "excellent translation" of a novel written in the language of one of the member states of the Council of Europe (Europese Literatuurprijs - Reglement, n.d.). On the other hand, she faced scrutiny on the online literary platform *De Reactor* for inaccuracies in her translation (Van der Voorn, 2023). *Girl, Woman, Other*'s subject matter and shifting point of view result in various discourses on queerness. Additionally, the mixed response to its translation hints to the use of translation strategies that have led to successful results, as well as those that have not accurately conveyed the nuances of the source text. The aim of this study is to investigate the strategies used in the Dutch translation of language related to queerness in *Girl, Woman, Other*, and to determine which strategies lead to satisfying results in what circumstances.

In this study, translation will be approached from a queer perspective. After having intended to provide a definition for *queer,* this perspective and its constructivist context will be elucidated in the literature review. A discussion on the social construction of queerness is not only necessary to outline the framework of queer theory, but also forms an essential part of the nature versus nurture discussion that is reflected in many of the discourses present in *Girl, Woman, Other*. Therefore, the literature review also delves into the counterargument that posits queerness as an innate, biological factor. The purpose of including both perspectives is not to participate in the debate between these two approaches, but rather to point out its existence and the presence of adherents to both stances, the understanding of which will be fundamental when translating (and investigating translations of) discourses relating to queerness. Furthermore, the literature review will explore the queering translation field, which lies at the intersection of translation studies and queer theory. The concept of queering translation will be examined, and its scope and objectives will be defined. The most important areas of research within queering translation will be

determined, highlighting the significance of descriptive translation analyses in exposing heteronormativity within source and target texts and cultures, as well as focusing on translation issues, shifts and strategies that occur when translating the queer. Additionally, translation will be positioned as a form of activism, or praxis. It will be argued to encompass more than mere acts of communication, and to have additional political and performative functions. Translators, therefore, are potential agents of activism, and can actively challenge heteronormativity and promote inclusive perspectives. This study is motivated by the ideological stance that translation is praxis and can be employed as a form of queer activism. Therefore, the study aspires to establish a starting point for those translating language related to queerness who want to do so without censoring or altering the source text's discourse.

The prevailing emphasis in existing research within the domain of queering translation centers on descriptive translation analysis and translation critique. While this paper will follow suit and comparatively analyze the discourses in both the source text – Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* – and its Dutch translation, it aims to push the boundaries further by delving into the specific translation strategies employed by Lette Vos and evaluating their effectiveness in varying contexts. Through this approach, it attempts to provide not only an overview of potential translation strategies, but also guidance on navigating the complexities of translating queer content.

This master's dissertation is a continuation of the bachelor's dissertation I submitted in the academic year of 2022-2023. Consequently, parts of this introduction and the literature review have been carried over and can be found in both dissertations.

2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: A DEFINITION OF QUEER

The term *queer* has had an evolving history, and has been used in a variety of ways over time (Baer & Kaindl, 2018; Montschenbacher & Stegu, 2013). Originally, the word was used as a derogatory term for people who engaged in non-heteronormative behavior. However, the term has since been reclaimed as a positive means of self-identification, as was the case when it was used in activist slogans during the AIDS crisis: "We're here, we're queer!" (Baer & Kaindl, 2018). *Queer* is "often used as a synonym for *gay* or *lesbian*, but may also denote any nonnormative experience or expression of sexual desire" (Baer & Kaindl, 2018, p. 2). That means that the term can be used to describe a wide range of identities and experiences, including but not limited to those who identify as bisexual, pansexual and asexual. In short, not considering gayness and

straightness binary opposites can be described as queerness, too. Furthermore, the concept of queerness is not limited to sexual orientation or identity, but can also be applied to gender identity and expression. Queer theory has expanded the view on gender: the focus has shifted from a binary male/female perspective to a broadened understanding of gender (von Flotow, 2010). Transgender people, who identify with a different gender than the one they were assigned at birth, are also considered a part of the queer community, as well as people who identify as non-binary or genderqueer. *Non-binary* and *genderqueer* are umbrella terms for all gender identities that do not fit within the traditional binary understanding of male and female, such as agender (people who do not identify as any gender), mixed gender (people who combine features associated with different gender identities at the same time), gender fluid (people whose identity may vary over time or in different contexts), and many more identities (Richards et al., 2016). The number of gender identities and the terms used in reference to them can be a source of confusion and discussion both within and outside the queer community, as reflected in some of the discourses in *Girl, Woman, Other*. Yet, the wide variety of terms for queer gender identities may be explained by the fact that genderqueer and non-binary individuals challenge the societal norms and expectations associated with gender, seeking to express their identities authentically and affirming their unique experiences. A person's gender identity is deeply personal, and a term that resonates with one individual's experience may not resonate with that of another. Often, the acronym LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual) is used in reference to the queer community.

Queer theory, then, is a critical framework that aims to expose and disrupt dominant cultural ideals of normalcy around gender and sexuality. It introduces a constructivist perspective on social phenomena, and questions notions of identity, power and domination (Ranjan, 2019). Montschenbacher and Stegu (2013) argue that queer studies and theory are different from gay and lesbian studies in the sense that the focus in gay and lesbian studies lies on exposing heterosexism and homophobia from a standpoint of protecting human rights, whereas queer theory is concerned with the deconstruction of heteronormativity – i.e. all mechanisms that promote heterosexuality as the norm – and binary ideas on gender and sexuality. Queer theory can therefore include the study of cis and heterosexual identities from a non-normative perspective (Montschenbacher & Stegu, 2013).

2.1.1: The biology of sexuality

The previous paragraph outlines that queer theorists adopt a constructivist stance, and posit that gender and sexuality are socially constructed. Yet, this is not a belief held by all researchers. Some voices contend

that biological factors play a defining role in shaping queerness. LeVay and Hamer (1994) argue that human sexual orientation is significantly impacted by genetics and brain development. LeVay studied the volume of a cell group called INAH3, which is located in the medial preoptic region of the hypothalamus and was found to be twice the size in men's brains compared to women's, and two to three times bigger in straight men's brains than in homosexual men's (LeVay, 1991, as cited in LeVay & Hamer, 1994). However, the sexuality of only six of the sixteen men LeVay considered to be straight was confirmed, and the sexuality of the six women included in the study was unknown. Furthermore, sexual orientation being the result of structural brain differences is only one of three possible connections between brain structure and sexual orientation. It is possible that the brain developed in a certain way as a result of one's sexuality, or that there is no causal relation at all (LeVay & Hamer, 1994). Hamer investigated the possibility of a genetic component influencing homosexuality, and focused on a specific region of the X chromosome known as Xq28. He discovered that 33 out of the 40 pairs of homosexual brothers he studied shared the same DNA sequences in this region (Hamer et al., 1993, as cited in Hamer & LeVay, 1994). A study by Rice et al. (1999, as cited in Brookey, 2001) attempted to replicate Hamer's study with a larger sample audience, but its results did not coincide with those of Hamer's research and did not support the existence of the so-called gay gene. A large-scale study conducted by Zietsch et al. (2019) included over 400,000 subjects and could not define a single gay gene either, but rather suggested that homosexuality is influenced by many genes. The researchers identified five loci – i.e. positions on chromosomes – that can be linked to same-sex sexual behavior, but also advocate for further investigation into the interaction between genetics and socio-cultural factors.

The idea that sexuality is biologically based and that queer people are, in other words, *born this way*, is an often used argument by gay rights advocates because it seems to prove that one's sexuality is not a choice, but rather a congenital quality (Brookey, 2001; Bennett, 2014). The argument states that queer people do not merely choose to partake in sexually deviant behavior and contradicts discourses centered on the perversity of homosexuality (Bennett, 2014). Yet, a biological argument can also be considered problematic. Brookey calls into question what the implications might be of linking gay rights to scientific research and asks: "what happens to the argument when the research is rendered obsolete?" (Brookey, 2001, p. 171). Furthermore, Brookey (2001) points out that Hamer and LeVay's research questions were based on the preconception that homosexual men are effeminate. Not only do their studies reflect stereotypes on homosexuality and masculinity/femininity, but they also perpetuate them.

Although a case could be made for certain biological factors correlating with queerness, it is untenable to argue that one's identity is solely determined by brain structure and genetics. The following section will delve into the cultural constructedness of queer identities.

2.1.2: The construction of queerness

The present paper adopts a queered perspective on translation, and the main focus of this subsection will be on how language and discourse help shape identity in order to later illustrate the importance of translating said language and discourse. According to Foucault, sexuality is regulated and controlled by various power structures and institutions. Knowledge about sexuality is produced by institutions and shapes how certain sexual behaviors are perceived. For example, the term *homosexuality* emerged in the 19th century after psychiatrist Carl Westphal introduced it as a medical category. Before that, the terms used to describe sexuality were based on sexual behavior rather than sexual identity. Due to the labeling of homosexuality as a pathology, the concept shifted from being linked solely to specific behaviors to being intertwined with an individual's identity and essence. Homosexuality became a fundamental aspect used to understand a person's character and actions. Thus, homosexuals became perceived as a distinct category of individuals (Foucault, 1978). The perception of heterosexuality as an identity trait did not come into being until later, as the concept of heterosexuality gained its significance through the simultaneous acknowledgment and marginalization of homosexuality (Sedgwick, 1991). Categorizing certain behaviors or identities as normal and others as disordered legitimizes the regulation and control of those behaviors. Discourses on what is normal and what is not, are internalized and reproduced by individuals, and those who do not adhere to social norms risk punishment or exclusion. Yet, discourses can also expose the power structures in play and challenge them. The introduction of homosexuality as a medical condition enabled individuals to advocate for themselves in the same words used to subject them to control (Foucault, 1978). Similar to the way discourse on gay genes is used to legitimize homosexual identities, the pathologization of homosexuality introduced the notion that homosexuality was not a choice. The nature versus nurture debate is ubiquitous in *Girl, Woman, Other*, and the idea that his homosexuality is both determined by genetics and psychology is reflected in Roland's discourse.

Amidst these discussions on how identities are constructed, one should not forget that cis-gendered homosexual men are not the only topic of interest. In the 1970s, the lesbian feminist movement arose. Within its framework, there was a belief that gay men and lesbians had fundamentally different experiences and identities, with little common ground between them (Sedgwick, 1991). Lesbians who had become

involved in gay liberation groups separated from their male counterparts due to the latter's prevalent sexist beliefs (Chenier, 2015). Lesbian feminists assert the central significance of lesbians and lesbianism within the feminist movement, and highlight how women can challenge patriarchy by redirecting their focus away from men, establishing connections with other women, and valuing women independently of male influence. They argued that women's autonomy is hindered as long as they seek validation from men (Chenier, 2015). While acknowledging that sexual attraction to women cannot be enforced politically, lesbian feminists promote lesbianism as a political stance. A woman who actively chooses to abstain from sexual activity with men and prioritizes connections with women can therefore be considered a political lesbian, even if she is not sexually attracted to women (Chenier, 2015). In *Girl, Woman, Other*, Dominique and Nzinga move to a wimmin's land, a lesbian commune where lesbian separatism is practiced to the extreme. The emergence of lesbian feminism and political lesbianism sharply contrasts the gay gene discourse and other biological arguments, because it promotes the idea that sexuality can be a conscious choice or even a political stance, rather than solely a congenital factor.

Although bisexuality is often overlooked in analyses of social construction, its inclusion in research helps illustrate how identities are discursively established (Callis, 2009). In the early 20th century, bisexuality was scientifically categorized as a transitional phase, rather than a sexuality in itself. Freud, for example, assumed that infants were born bisexual and would later develop into homo- or heterosexuals (Freud, 1962, as cited in Callis, 2009). Because bisexuality was not medicalized in the same way as homosexuality, bisexuals were not able to appropriate medical discourse to form an identity movement. Callis argues that, instead, "bisexual identity politics grew from dissatisfaction with the gay and lesbian movement" (2009, p. 225). Furthermore, the lack of medical terminology and legitimization has led to uncertainty regarding what it means to be bisexual (Callis, 2009).

Another relevant field of study is gender. The distinction between sex and gender is often made in feminist theories that argue that sex is biologically categorized whereas gender is culturally constructed. Authors making the distinction believe that chromosomal sex is the foundational biological framework upon which the social construct of gender is built (Butler, 1990; Sedgwick, 1991). Butler disagrees and argues that sex is a constructed category as well and that the notion of what male and female sex entails, is shaped by scientific and historical discourses. Gender is not simply a cultural counterpart to the biological concept of sex. Rather, it is the discursive and cultural mechanism through which the idea of a natural, prediscursive sex is constructed and solidified. In other words, gender plays a crucial role in framing and defining what is

considered natural or innate about sex before cultural influences come into play (Butler, 1990). According to Butler, gender does not refer to what one inherently possesses, but to what one does. It is performed through various repeated acts over time (Butler, 1990). Those acts may or may not be associated with certain gender roles, whose norms are dictated by society. The prevailing societal norms and power structures that shape gender and sexuality are reflected in the heterosexual matrix, which relies on a binary understanding of gender and expects individuals to conform to masculine or feminine norms based on the sex they were assigned at birth, one of those norms being sexual attraction to the opposite sex (Butler, 1990). Heteronormativity and gender binaries are reflected in and reinforced through language. That means that not only queer identities are constructs, but heterosexual and cis-gendered identities are, too. Furthermore, Sedgwick points out that, without the notion of gender, the concepts of homo- or heterosexuality would not exist (1991).

2.1.3: Intersectionality

Baer and Kaindl's groundbreaking book *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer* (2018) stands out as one of the first comprehensive publications on the queering translation field and contains discussions on a variety of topics and languages, which shows the amplitude and multiplicity of this field of study. This breadth of discussion is important because it reflects the complexity of queer identities and experiences, which are shaped by a range of factors beyond just sexuality and gender. Furthermore, each character in *Girl, Woman, Other*'s uniquely defines their own identity. It is essential to note that there is no such thing as a universal queer identity and that other factors, including class, ethnicity, religion, gender and able-bodiedness impact on one's identity as well. Intersectionality is an often-used term to refer to that idea. The term was introduced in 1989 by Crenshaw, who focused on the intersection of race and sex in antidiscrimination law cases in which the discrimination of black women was not recognized as such if the defendant was not found to discriminate against white women or black men (Crenshaw, 1989). Crenshaw argues that discrimination should not be approached from a "single axis-framework" which tends to look at one aspect of a person's identity at a time, in isolation from other aspects, but rather from an intersectional framework which takes into account the multiple aspects of one's identity:

> Consider an analogy to traffic in an intersection, coming and going in all four directions. Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars traveling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them. Similarly, if a Black woman is harmed

> because she is in the intersection, her injury could result from sex discrimination or race discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 149).

Intersectionality can be used when describing all the ways in which different forms of oppression intersect and interact with one another. For instance, queer individuals who belong to marginalized ethnic groups may experience different forms of discrimination than those who belong to dominant ethnic groups. Von Flotow raises the question of whether the discourse regarding gender and translation reflects that intersectionality well enough (von Flotow, 2010). One's consciousness of gender and sexuality does not make one immune to colonial stereotyping, nor does queerness necessarily equal class conscience or understanding of disabilities. While using a queering approach to reveal the societal structures which are reinforced and shaped by translation practices, it is paramount to keep in mind that those societal structures go beyond gender and sexuality only. In light of these complexities, queering translation studies must take an intersectional approach that considers the various factors that shape individuals' experiences and identities.

2.2: THE INTERSECTION OF QUEER THEORY AND TRANSLATION STUDIES

Although the relevance of queer theory is interdisciplinary, its concepts and instruments have not been implemented in translation studies by many theorists (Baer & Kaindl, 2018). Von Flotow argues that there are a variety of ways in which gender questions are relevant to translation and translation studies. Societal and political views on gender are not only revealed by the micro-analyses of translations, but also by the macro-analyses of translation phenomena, such as production, the popularity of certain works and their translations, and the identity of authors and the translators of their work (von Flotow, 2010). The same may be said about views on sexual identities. In short, queering translation can expose the ways in which dominant models and concepts of translation are not neutral, but rather reflect the normative values and interests prevalent in society, through the analysis of both the translated products and the production process. Additionally, translation studies can contribute to queer interests as it "can exaggerate, highlight, displace, and queer normative expectations across genders and cultures as well as languages" (Bermann, 2014, p. 292). Furthermore, sexuality is an important element of everyone's identity and daily life. Literature depicts daily life; as such translating sexuality is unavoidable (Santaemilia, 2014). It is, therefore, evident that research at the intersection of sexuality and translation is beneficial to all translators, and that attention for non-normative identities is required as part of this effort.

Not only does queering translation reveal a culture's view on gender and sexual identities, it also explicitly sheds a light on the queer, which is often structurally and institutionally censored (Baer & Kaindl, 2018), ignored or flattened (Démont, 2018). It is occupied with the multi-layeredness and non-cisheteronormativity of the text and the means of translating that into the target language and culture.

2.2.1: On translating *queer* and *translation*

One important area of research is how culture-specific terms relating to queerness are to be translated into another target culture. The modern western understanding of queer identities and the labels that are used to refer to those identities may not be equivalent to the understanding of those identities in the past or in other cultures. Micro-level research shows that *camp* language use – i.e. queer-coded argot often used for gay self-identification – cannot be translated without difficulty, as each culture and period has its referents as well as its own understanding of what queerness is. Therefore, the *camp* language used as a referent to gay identity is dependent on the culture and period (von Flotow, 2010). In other words, a lack of contextual knowledge can lead to mistakes in a translation. Démont discusses one example of this type of contextual mistranslation, using Gualardia and Baldo's research on *bear* culture. In an American context, *bears* reject beauty standards and stereotypical images of gay men. The Italian *orso* seems to be a good equivalent at first glance, but is associated with the *commedia all'italiana*, a movie genre exclusively starring heterosexual, chauvinist machos. The term *orso*, therefore, implies internalized homophobia and chauvinism, and is not equivalent to the English word *bear* (Gualardia & Baldo, 2010, as cited in Démont, 2018). Spurlin (2014) argues that in postcolonial cultures, terms that relate to same-sex desires and practices may be discursively inscribed in the indigenous language and are, as such, shaped by the cultural, historical, and political context in which they are used. The meaning of the terms is contingent on the discursive practices of the culture in which they are used. Therefore, the terms may not have equivalents in modern European languages. The same is true for concepts originated in western cultures. The word *queer* itself is not necessarily translatable into non-western and non-Anglophonic cultures, as it is meant to be a rejection of the heterosexual/homosexual binary, which is in itself not a universal phenomenon (Motschenbacher & Stegu, 2013). However, that does not mean that concepts of queerness do not exist in non-western societies, they are simply differentially inscribed (Spurlin, 2014). As there is no universal understanding of *queerness*, a more nuanced and context-specific approach is needed to understand the complexities of non-normative expressions of gender and sexual identity in other cultural or historical contexts. Currently, queer studies may be influenced by Anglophonic perspectives, according to Spurlin, who encourages translation studies to challenge those biases and to contribute to a more inclusive and

diverse understanding of queerness (2014). *Translation*, much like queerness, is not a universally interpreted concept, either. That the western European concept of using translation as a means of intercultural communication and transfer of ideas does not automatically apply to non-western cultures, can be derived from the words used to describe translation. For instance, the Arabic term *tarjama* originally meant *biography*, suggesting the translator's role as a narrator who can shape and frame the narrative. The term also encompasses the meaning of *definition*, particularly relevant to Greek scientific and mathematical texts, which were supplemented by Syriac and Arabic translators with their own culture's concepts and frameworks. In Igbo, the words for translation emphasize storytelling, underlining the translator's option to change the form of the text rather than strictly reconstructing it. The Chinese phrase *fan yi* is associated with embroidery, the source text being seen as the front of the embroidered work and the target text as the back, implying that the original and the translation are different sides of the same text but are not not expected to be entirely equivalent to each other. These examples demonstrate that translations across languages have distinct semiotic associations that are significantly different from the English word *translation* and its counterparts in other Indo-European languages (Tymoczko, 2006).

2.2.2 Approaches to translating the queer

The fact that terms and concepts which refer to queerness are not easily translated invites the translator to engage with empty spaces and implies a variety of possible techniques one can apply when translating those terms and concepts. Démont argues that there are three approaches: whereas a (1) *misrecognizing* translation disregards a text's queerness and a (2) *minoritizing* translation diminishes or flattens a text's queerness, a (3) *queering* translation acknowledges and converts the multi-layeredness of the queer text (Démont, 2018).

A misrecognizing translation can be exposed by comparing the original text to its translation and can therefore also be corrected easily. It is important to note that according to some, the translator has an ethical obligation to the original author as well as to the reader of the translated text to transmit a text's queerness (Démont, 2018). However, Giustini (2015) points to historical instances where translators have censored queer features in literary translations of, for example, Sappho and Simone de Beauvoir. In the case of the latter, over ten per cent of the content of her original French manuscript of *Le deuxième sex* was not translated into English, and the translator omitted references to women's historical, scientific and literary achievements, as well as mentions of lesbianism (Giustini, 2015). Von Flotow also points to the censorship in English translations of de Beauvoir's work, stating that the translations make "her work

appear confused, conventionally patriarchal, and unpalatable" (von Flotow, 2010, p. 131). Although the misrecognition of queer subtext in translation may not always occur as a result of the translator's intentions to censor queer identities but rather of the translator's lack of knowledge of queer language or heteronormative world view, the result of it remains the same: the loss of the meaning intended by the original author and the erasure of queer identities.

Démont's queering translation approach consists of two steps: analyzing queer texts and their existing translations, and developing techniques in order to recreate the queerness in the target language (Démont, 2018). The analysis of texts and their translations is also valued by von Flotow, who calls attention to how translations "key cultural texts", such as the Bible and the Quran, impact socio-political views on gender (von Flotow, 2010). Revisions, re-translations and critiques of those key-cultural texts are important, as gender and queerness are social and political categories whose status and perception are both reflected and impacted by the discourse in the target language, thus also in the translations of texts. Those social and political categories, in turn, define one's role in society, meaning that translations are paramount in determining society's view on queer people and gender minorities.

Démont links the queering mode of translation to Venuti's *foreignizing* approach, which resists the dominance of the target language and culture over the source text. A queering approach goes beyond a foreignizing approach, though, by not striving to provide a definitive translation and offering commentary that highlights the text's potential for multiple interpretations. In essence, a queering mode of translation seeks to honor the complexity and richness of a text, and to resist any attempts to simplify or tame its meaning. It encourages readers to engage with a text in a way that embraces its ambiguities and invites multiple perspectives (Démont, 2018).

2.2.3: Interlinguistic differences

Another difficulty when translating literary texts that deal with gender and sexuality is the presence of interlinguistic differences. One example is the presence or absence of grammatical gender. Santaemilia illustrates this, comparing several Spanish translations of an erotic text, originally written in English. The phrase *all of us* does not refer to any specific gender in English, but in Spanish, a choice between *todos* and *todas* is to be made (Santaemilia, 2005, as cited in Santaemilia, 2014). Even though this example was used in research on whether a translator was female or not, and the results of that study showed that there were few differences between male and female translators (Santaemilia, 2005, as cited in Santaemilia, 2014), it

can still be viewed as a relevant example phrase in the sense that it shows how grammatical gender questions call for (a sometimes biased) interpretation of the translator. An example of a queering solution to the issue of grammatical gender can be found in de Lotbinière-Harwood's translation of feminist and lesbian author Nicole Brossard's work. Feminization (or re-gendering) strategies, such as referring to English nouns with the pronoun *she* instead of *it*, or translating the French *amante* to *shelove*, are applied to help the audience identify the lesbian aspects of the text in a target language that does not normally allow the reader to do so (de Lotbinière-Harwood, 1995, as cited in Giustini, 2015).

2.3: PRAXIS

As seen in the title of this paper, *queer* can be used as a verb. That means *queering* is something that can be *done*, a choice that is made by a researcher or translator to reject and resist heteronormativity. Queering is a powerful tool for questioning and challenging dominant models; in the present paper, that dominant model is translation studies. Queer theory reveals the historical context and socio-political impact of heteronormativity in translation, and seeks to provide and promote a framework that actively resists a heteronormative approach in translation studies and practice. So, queering refers to queer praxis, to applying theoretical knowledge to one's actions. It is a means of combining the personal with the political, and can, therefore, be described as a form of activism. In the introduction to their book *Queering Translation, Translating the Queer*, Baer and Kaindl argue that theory, practice and activism are closely related to each other in both translation studies and queer theory (2018). They add that activism may be seen "as a special form of practical application, which combines the theoretical insights of queer theory and post-structuralist translation theory with the aim of imagining a future for queer writing" (Baer & Kaindl, 2018, p. 7). In queer linguistic theory, post-structuralism refers to a framework in which identity is understood to be shaped through language, rather than simply reflected by it (Motschenbacher & Stegu, 2013). Tymoczko points to the emergence of descriptive translation studies in the 1970s and 1980s as an important factor in recognizing translation as a form of activism. The analysis of translations and translation practices has revealed that translation shifts are not only caused by linguistic or even cultural differences, but also by larger historical and geopolitical contexts. The fact that a translator can make the artistic or ideological choice to omit or alter certain parts of a text, or to add elements to the text they are translating, confirms that translation has more than a merely communicative function (Tymoczko, 2006).

Santaemilia stresses the rhetorical and ideological implications of translating sex-related language. Sexual acts cannot be translated without also reflecting the translator's point of view on societal standards regarding gender, sexuality and sexual behavior. There are many rules and conventions that indicate what sexual behavior is socially acceptable. Remarkably, the same can be said about translation practices; some translation strategies are seen as more acceptable than others. Combining the fields of translation theory and the study of sexual behavior in a discussion raises questions about what conventions are dominant, what actors define the acceptability of certain sexual identities and expressions, or the correctness of particular translation strategies, what role censorship plays, et cetera (Santaemilia, 2014). The translator's choices affect the message that is conveyed, and have an impact on the way readers perceive the text's ideas about sexual identities, sexual behavior, and societal moral norms. Moreover, translating a text with references to sexuality requires the translator to navigate cultural and linguistic differences, which can reveal the biases and values of both the source and target cultures. As such, the act of translating sexual content can be seen as a political act because it involves negotiating cultural and ideological differences, and can shape how readers perceive those differences.

According to von Flotow, theoretical questions regarding gender and translation can both be derived from and applied to translation praxis. Although von Flotow's work is centered around gender and translation, it is also relevant to queering translation, as people whose gender identities and expressions deviate from the cis normative standard belong to the queer community. Queer theory has broadened the view on gender, no longer focusing on male and female as its two main categories, but shifting the focal point to gender performance (von Flotow, 2010). Therefore, gender and its performativity, and its relation to translation, are key aspects in queering translation as well.

2.4: ABOUT *GIRL, WOMAN, OTHER* AND ITS DUTCH TRANSLATION

Bernardine Evaristo's eighth novel *Girl, Woman, Other* was translated into Dutch by Lette Vos and De Geus bv. This translation was nominated for the *Europese Literatuurprijs* (European Literature Prize) in 2021, an award granted by the Dutch Foundation for Literature. According to the foundation's website, the award "honors the Dutch translation of a novel, which is considered an example of excellent translation" (*Europese Literatuurprijs - Reglement*, n.d.). In light of her nomination, Vos published an essay in which she addresses how she approached the translation of gender neutral personal pronouns and motivates her choices by referring to research conducted by *TNN* (Dutch Transgender Network), and her colleague Tia Nutters.

Furthermore, she urges translators to make consistent and well-considered decisions when translating non-binary characters (Vos, 2023). This call for consistency may, however, be read as ironic, as Vos was criticized in a review published by *De Reactor* for misgendering a non-binary character twice (Van Der Voorn, 2023). The reviewer suggests that Vos as a translator does not relate well enough to the novel's characters and is, as a result, not always able to unproblematically or correctly translate cultural references made. This remark does not only concern queer language, but also Vos' ethnicity. According to the review, a white translator may not always appropriate the language used by black authors. However, this raises the question whether it would be acceptable for a translator to radically alter a text's discourse in order to avoid using controversial language and consequently intervene in the author's intended message. The reviewer does not seem to think so; they cite Spivak, who emphasizes the importance of accurately reflecting the cultural context in which the source text was written in the translation (2005, as cited in Van Der Voorn, 2023). One potential solution could involve selecting translators who share similar identifying characteristics with the author of the source text. Yet, implementing this requirement would present several challenges: Which characteristics should take precedence? Should texts remain untranslated if suitable translators who match the author's profile cannot be found? Who translates texts featuring multiple characters with diverse traits?

In 2019, Bernardine Evaristo said she believes that authors should be able to write beyond their own culture (Soave, 2019), so she may not worry about her translator's identifying traits as much as *De Reactor*'s reviewer does. Yet, if translation is praxis and can serve as a means for activism, it can also be employed to censor the meanings intended by the source text author. Queer content has often been and continues to be censored (Baer & Kaindl, 2018; Giustini, 2015; Von Flotow, 2010). If censorship or misrepresentation of the characters' identities is not the translator's objective, a deep-seated knowledge of queer identities and the discourses surrounding queerness in both source and target culture is paramount. It can be argued that, therefore, translators should know their fields of expertise and not take on challenges if they do not have sufficient knowledge of the matter at hand and are, consequently, unable to provide a competent translation. Correct representation of minorities in literature matters and translation shifts can have a significant impact on how groups of people are portrayed. A translation that is both praised and criticized provides an interesting starting point to explore which strategies effectively represent source culture in the target language and which translation choices lead to discursive shifts.

3: METHODOLOGY

This study aims to investigate the translation of queerness in Lette Vos' Dutch rendition of Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other*. The methodology is designed to address the following research questions:

> Q1: What discourses are present in Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* and in its Dutch translation?
> Q2: Which translation strategies did Lette Vos employ for references to queerness in her Dutch translation of *Girl, Woman, Other*?
> Q3: In which cases are the strategies used successful?
> Q4: Can these strategies provide a starting point for other literary translations with queer references?

First, a comparative reading of the original text and its translation is conducted to identify references to queerness in the source text and detect the strategies employed to render them into Dutch. Simultaneously, a systematic log is maintained, documenting source sentences containing a queer reference, their corresponding target sentences in the translation, and the strategies applied by Vos. This log serves as the foundation for subsequent analysis. A total of 144 instances of queer references are investigated and through comparison of source and target sentences, 10 distinct translation strategies are identified and categorized. In the search for appropriate and commonly-used terminology for these strategies, it became apparent that no single taxonomy provided a comprehensive overview of all strategies employed by Vos. Consequently, the terminology used to describe the strategies incorporates terms introduced by Baker (1992, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005), Chesterman (1997, as cited in Owji, 2013), Nida (1964, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002), and Vinay & Darbelnet (1958, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002). Some strategies are found in multiple taxonomies developed by the aforementioned researchers, whereas others are only included in one taxonomy. The definition and scope of each term will be provided at the beginning of every new subsection within the results section. Five examples are selected for each identified strategy to form a representative sample, except for *description*, of which only two examples could be found. The selection aims for a balanced representation of queering, minoritizing, and misrecognizing translations, as defined by Démont (2018), facilitating an examination of the efficacy of each strategy. The criterion used to measure the success of each strategy will be the discourse present in the source and target language. If the meaning of the source text is carried over into

the target text without Vos having altered, flattened, or censored the queerness from the original version, the translation will be considered successful. The discussion in the results section will delve into the discourse present in both source and target languages, and elucidate why certain strategies result in changes to the discourse while others do not. Furthermore, an overview of the recurring discourses on queerness in the analyzed sample sentences will be added to equip translators with the knowledge to identify these discourses. Drawing from the analyzed data, general translation advice will be synthesized to provide guidance for translators grappling with queerness in literary texts, and potentially serve as a framework for future translations with similar themes.

4: RESULTS

4.1: STRATEGIES

Through the comparison of queer language found in the source text and its corresponding translation, the following ten translation strategies were identified:

1. Omission
2. Addition
3. Literal translation
4. Borrowing
5. Transposition
6. Abstraction change
7. Adaptation
8. Paraphrase
9. Description
10. Combination

4.1.1: Omission

Mona Baker's taxonomy of translation strategies (1992, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005) lists translation by omission as a possible approach to translation, especially in situations where there is no equivalence at word level between source and target text. Baker specifies that this strategy is acceptable when the omitted words are not "vital to the development of the text" (Baker, 1992, p. 40, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005, p. 298).

In the following two instances, a word or phrase is omitted without changing the meaning of the sentence in the context of the novel:

Example 1a
EN: who needs enemies when your life partner undermines you on a regular basis? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 44)

NL: als je partner je voortdurend de grond in boort heb je geen vijanden meer nodig (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 54)

Example 1b
EN: Bibi said the old people at the care home accepted her as a human being, you're our Bibi and we love you, they'd witnessed her transition to female (Evaristo, 2019, p. 322)

NL: Bibi zei dat de oudjes in het tehuis haar gewoon als een mens behandelden, je bent onze Bibi en we houden van je, ze hadden haar transitie meegemaakt (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 351)

In example 1a, Yazz, a young heterosexual woman who is the daughter of a lesbian woman and a homosexual man, judges the way her godfather Sylvester treats his (male) partner Curwen. The phrase *life partner* was translated into Dutch as *partner*, while a more accurate equivalent would have been *levenspartner*. Yet, the omission of the first part of this compound noun does not cause a significant difference between source and target text. The source text of example 1b specifies that Bibi has transitioned to female, whereas this information is omitted in the translated text. This might have been problematic, considering one may also transition to something other than female. However, in the pages preceding and following this sentence, Bibi shares the story of her transition in detail, and both source and target text mention multiple times that she has transitioned to female, making it possible for target text readers to interpret that the character is referring to her transition to female without the translation of this one sentence explicitly saying so.

In some instances, the translator has opted to omit elements that were more crucial to the reader's understanding of the text.

Example 1c
EN: gotcha, so here goes: women are designed to have babies, not to play with dolls, and why shouldn't women sit with their legs wide open (if they're wearing trousers, obv) and what does mannish or manly mean anyway? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 320)

NL: helder, komt-ie: vrouwen hebben de mogelijkheid om kinderen op de wereld te zetten, maar zijn niet verplicht om met poppen te spelen, en waarom zouden vrouwen niet wijdbeens mogen zitten (zolang ze een broek aanhebben natuurlijk), en wanneer ben je überhaupt 'mannelijk'? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 349)

Example 1d
EN: @transwarrior was initially used to chart their journey from tomboy to non-binary, these days they use it more widely for general trans issues, gender, feminism, politics (Evaristo, 2019, p. 333)

NL: in eerste instantie gebruikte hen @transwarrior vooral om de weg van tomboy naar non-binair in kaart te brengen, tegenwoordig is het een algemener platform voor allerlei kwesties rondom trans-zijn, gender en feminisme (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 363)

Example 1e
EN: For the sisters & the sistas & the sistahs & the sistren & the women & the womxn & the wimmin & the womyn & out brethren & our bredrin & our brothers & our bruvs & our men & out mandem & the LGBTQI+ members of the human family (Evaristo, 2019, dedication)

NL: no translation

Example 1c illustrates that the translator's choice to translate *mannish or manly* to just '*mannelijk'* changes the text's meaning. Whereas *manly* and *mannelijk* are near-equivalents, *mannelijk* does not carry the same derogatory meaning that *mannish*, an adjective used in reference to women who are not considered feminine, does. This sentence forms a part of a chat message that Bibi addresses to Megan (later: Morgan), who struggles with femininity. The omission of *manly* (NL: manachtig) flattens the notion that not only men are subjected to society's views on masculinity. The last element of the juxtaposition of *trans issues, gender, feminism, politics* in example 1d is not translated into Dutch. The source text implies that the four topics are somehow related to each other, by omitting *politics* (NL: politiek), the translator removes the notion that trans issues, gender and feminism are political issues. The novel's dedication (example 1e) was not

translated into Dutch and, therefore, not included in the translated version published by De Geus. Contrarily, the acknowledgements at the end of the source text could also be found in the target text. On the one hand, the many near synonyms and (meaningful) spelling variations in the dedication result in great difficulty for the translator, considering the lack of equivalent terms in Dutch. On the other hand, by entirely omitting the dedication, target texts readers miss out on information about whom the novel is written for and from which perspective the author has written it.

The previous examples show that omission as a translation strategy seems to only work if the intended meaning can easily be extracted from context. When that is not the case, however, it can lead to a flattened translation. Another outcome can be that omission completely erases a text's queerness. The choice for omission is, therefore, not merely technical or convenient, but also ideological and sometimes violent. As a result, translators should be wary of opting for omission as a strategy when their goal is not to actively censor a text, as it may lead to what Démont (2018) calls a misrecognizing translation.

4.1.2: Addition

Translators may in some instances decide to add meaning to the target text that is not present in the source text. Nida (1964, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002) argues that additions may be necessary to structurally adjust a text to the target language's norms or to achieve more semantic or communicative equivalence between source and target text. Additional elements may sometimes be explained as a means of compensation. Vinay & Darbelnet (1958, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002) define compensation as the procedure of adding an informational or stylistic element to the target text that already occurred in the source text but could not be reproduced in the same place in the translation.

Example 2a
EN: how many were there? one hundred, another fifty? surely not more than that? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 21)

NL: hoeveel vrouwen had ze versleten? honderd, honderdvijftig? heel veel meer toch niet? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 29)

In example 2a, *how many* is translated to *hoeveel vrouwen* (EN: how many women). The addition of *vrouwen* as well as the pronoun *ze* (EN: she, in reference to Amma) results in a target sentence that more explicitly describes Amma's sexual relations as lesbian than the source sentence. Elsewhere on the same

page, *woman* is translated to *iemand* (EN: someone, see example 6a). That in itself would have resulted in a flattening or misrecognizing translation, had it not been compensated by example 2a.

Example 2b
EN: even though Lakshmi is approaching sixty, her chosen lover, male or female, remains in the 25-35 range, at the upper end of which the relationship ends
when Amma calls her on it, she comes up with a reason *other* than that they're no longer quite so impressionable, fresh-faced and taut-skinned (Evaristo, 2019, p. 29)

NL: ook al loopt Lakshmi tegen de zestig, haar partners – m/v – zitten altijd in de leeftijdscategorie tussen 25 en 35, en zodra ze de bovengrens naderen kunnen ze hun biezen pakken
als Amma haar daarop aanspreekt, wijt Lakshmi het altijd aan iets anders dan het feit dat haar lovers gewoon niet meer zo beïnvloedbaar, fris en strak zijn (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 37)

The translation of example 2b replaces the personal pronoun *she* with a personal name to help clarify that it is Lakshmi who "finds a reason", and not Amma. The addition of the loan word *lover* towards the end of the translated sentence compensates for the use of *partner* as a translation of *chosen lover* in the beginning of the sentence.

Not all additions are compensations, they may also be used to disambiguate the source text's meaning.

Example 2c
EN: she argued it was her right to be directing at the National and it was the theatre's job to make sure they attracted audiences beyond the middle-class day-trippers from the Home Counties, reminding him this included his parents, a retired banker and homemaker from Berkshire, who came to London for its culture, parents who supported him, even when he came out as a teenager (Evaristo, 2019, p. 33)

NL: ze zei dat ze zelf mocht weten of ze een stuk wilde regisseren bij het National Theatre en dat het hún taak was om te zorgen dat het publiek niet alleen uit gegoede dagjesmensen uit Londen en omgeving bestond, waarbij ze hem er nog even fijntjes op wees dat zijn eigen ouders, respectievelijk gepensioneerd bankier en huisvrouw uit Berkshire, tot die categorie behoorden, en ook naar Londen kwamen om cultuur te snuiven, ouders die hem altijd hadden gesteund, zelfs toen hij als tiener uit de kast kwam (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 42)

Amma is talking to her friend Sylvester, who condemns her for directing a play in an established and prestigious theater because he feels she is betraying her activist values. In English, the expressions *come out of the closet* and *come out* can be used interchangeably. In Dutch, however, the addition of *de kast* (EN:

the closet) in example 2c is necessary to convey the meaning of someone telling their parents that they are gay. The expansion in the target text was, therefore, necessary to maintain the same discourse.

In other instances, expanding the target text to disambiguate the meaning may also lead to discursive differences between source and target text.

Example 2d
EN: Megan replied that she was working it out, taking her time, she'd recently been taken aback when she came across hundreds of genders on the internet, that, annoyingly, complicated the matter (Evaristo, 2019, p. 323)

NL: Megan antwoordde dat ze er nog mee bezig was, dat ze het rustig aan deed, ze was laatst een beetje geschrokken toen ze op internet las dat er honderden verschillende genderidentiteiten bestaan, daar werd het tot haar ergernis allemaal nog ingewikkelder van (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 352)

Example 2e
EN: Megan said in which case demanding gender-neutral pronouns for herself from people who'd no idea what she was going on about also seemed utopian (Evaristo, 2019, p. 327)

NL: Megan zei dat het in dat geval ook onhaalbaar leek om van mensen die geen flauw benul hadden wat genderdysforie was te verwachten dat ze haar aanspraken met genderneutrale voornaamwoorden (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp.356 - 357)

The translation of *hundreds of genders* to *honderden verschillende genderidentiteiten* (EN: hundreds of different gender identities) in example 2d represents a significant shift in Megan's discourse. As Megan transitions to Morgan in chapter four, they also progress from someone with ignorant attitudes towards trans issues to a trans rights activist. Their discourse changes along with their point-of-view and understanding of trans issues. Example 2d is found halfway through Megan/Morgan's subchapter, in a period where they are actively researching and exploring their identity. Evaristo's choice for *hundreds of genders* reflects their frame of mind during this phase, as it expresses an understanding of gender beyond the traditional binary understanding of male and female, and denotes that there are many distinct categories of gender without going into much detail about how it is constructed. Vos' addition of *identiteiten* (EN: identities) produces a more nuanced discourse that is not yet representative of the character's current attitude, as the use of *genderidentiteiten* transfer the sentence's focus from the number

or categorization of genders to the variety of individual experiences and self-perceptions of gender. In example 2e, *people who'd no idea what she was going on about* is translated to *mensen die geen flauw benul hadden van wat genderdysforie was* (EN: people who had no idea what gender dysphoria was), even though closer equivalents are available (for example, *mensen die geen flauw benul hadden van waar ze het over had*). Throughout Megan/Morgan's subchapter, their experience of gender dysphoria is described but never explicitly given that name. The translation disambiguates what may be meant with *what she was going on about*, but from the context it is unclear whether Megan is even referring to gender dysphoria or merely stating that other people might not understand the use or purpose of gender neutral pronouns. Consequently, the addition of semantic elements in example 2e results in a translation that is noticeably more straightforward, but not necessarily in line with what Evaristo was hoping to convey.

Examples 2a and 2b suggest that addition is an acceptable strategy when it is used as a compensation for omission or substitution elsewhere in the text. It can help maintain certain stylistic or informational elements that could not be translated into the target language elsewhere and could be a valuable tool to preserve the source text's queer connotations. Furthermore, addition is sometimes used to disambiguate a text's implications, as illustrated in examples 2c, 2d and 2e, although it is not always advantageous to do so, as it increases the risk of altering the source text's intended discourse.

4.1.3: Literal translation

Translation strategies are often considered a solution to equivalence problems (Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005). Yet, literal translation, a strategy which relies on equivalence between the two languages, is included in this list of procedures to illustrate that it is indeed possible to find target language equivalents to queer speech in certain cases, and that, therefore, it is not always necessary to opt for more complex solutions. According to Vinay & Darbelnet, literal translations are adequate if the source and target language are structurally, lexically and morphologically alike (1958, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002).

Example 3a
EN: she found sanctuary in chat rooms with other young outsiders as pissed-off as she was, discovered the trans world, engaged in conversations with people on the trans spectrum (Evaristo, 2019, p. 318)

NL: (...) zocht ze haar heil in chatrooms met andere jonge buitenbeentjes die net zo pissig waren als zij, ontdekte daar de transwereld, ging gesprekken aan met mensen die binnen het transspectrum vielen (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 347)

Example 3a illustrates how certain terminology can be translated word-for-word without a loss of meaning. *Trans world* and *trans spectrum* are translated verbatim to *transwereld* and *transspectrum*, with the exception of a spelling adaptation to conform the terms to Dutch spelling standards. A translation where two or more elements are translated literally and kept in the same order, is sometimes called a loan translation. Describing example 3a as a loan translation would, however, suggest that the words' origins are English, while etymologically, *trans* and *spectrum* are Latin loan words that are commonly used in both English and Dutch.

In some instances, larger phrases or even entire sentences may be translated literally. This strategy may be useful when very specific discourse is employed in the source text that is otherwise difficult to paraphrase.

Example 3b
EN: the lesbian radical feminists wanted their own quarters away from the non-lesbian radical feminists, also self-governed by a co-op
the black radical lesbian feminists wanted the same except with the condition that no whiteys of any gender were allowed inside (Evaristo, 2019, p. 18)

NL: de lesbische radicale feministen wilden aparte vertrekken, gescheiden van de niet-lesbische radicale feministen, ook met een eigen collectief bestuur
de zwarte radicale lesbische feministen wilden hetzelfde maar dan onder voorwaarde dan hun territorium verboden was voor witte mensen, ongeacht hun geslacht (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 26)

Example 3c

EN: she worked as an administrator in a care home after getting a degree in Cultural Studies in Sussex, chosen to be as far away from her parents as possible who really didn't *get* that she was a girl in a boy's body (Evaristo, 2019, p. 322)

NL: (...) na haar studie cultuurwetenschappen in Sussex was ze aan de slag gegaan als systeembeheerder in een verzorgingstehuis, ze had ervoor gekozen om zo ver mogelijk bij haar ouders vandaan te gaan wonen, want die begrepen gewoon niet dat ze een meisje in een jongenslichaam was (translation by Vos & De Geus, 2020 p. 350)

Example 3d

EN: so this Yazz came rushing up at the end of the class to exclaim that the lecture (lecture?) was mind-blowing, and she was thinking of becoming non-binary as well, how *woke* was that? she said excitedly, like she was going to embark on a trendy new haircut

NL: die Yazz vloog na de lezing op hen af en begon te tetteren dat ze zo onder de indruk was van het college (college?) en dat ze zelf ook overwoog om non-binair te worden, hoe 'woke' is dat? vroeg ze opgewonden, alsof ze zich een trendy nieuw kapsel ging laten aanmeten
(translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 369)

In example 3b, a word-for-word translation of the phrases *lesbian radical feminists*, *non-lesbian radical feminists* and *black radical lesbian feminists* is necessary, not only to maintain the rhythm of the sentence, but also (more importantly) because *radical feminist* is a fixed expression. Radical feminists, or RadFems, seek to abolish patriarchy and consider women-only spaces an important means to achieve their goal (Hanisch et al., 2013). Furthermore, they distance themselves from a gender/sex distinction (Sedgwick, 1991) and argue that women's oppression is rooted in their reproductive abilities (Hanisch et al., 2013). Consequently, many radical feminist groups exclude transgender women from their activities, which has led to criticism and conflict between RadFem groups and transgender activists (Hanisch et al., 2013). Lesbian radical feminists groups expand on RadFem ideals by additionally incorporating the values of political lesbianism. If the word order of *lesbian radical feminists* changed, *radical* would modify a word other than *feminists* and the collocation's meaning would be lost or altered. The Dutch equivalents *radicaal feminisme* and *lesbisch radicaal feminisme* appear in the same word order and carry the same ideological meanings as their English counterparts. In example 3c, Bibi is said to have experienced being a girl in a boy's body, this is an often-used phrase within the trans community that expresses the idea that one's gender does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth based on their corporeal features. This allegory is often used to help others understand the profound sense of incongruity that many transgender people

experience. The verb *was* is essential to the sentence's meaning, because it articulates that Bibi sees being female as an established part of her identity, it could therefore not be replaced with *feel* or *want to be*. The phrase *girl in a boy's body* is translated verbatim to *meisje in een jongenslichaam*, the word *was* is also used in the Dutch sentence, but was moved to the back because subordinate clauses in Dutch have the following structure: subject, object, verb. In contrast to Bibi saying that she *is* a certain gender, Yazz in example 3d tells Morgan she is considering *becoming* non-binary. According to Morgan, Yazz is coming from a place of ignorance and misunderstands that a certain gender identity is something you may adopt on a whim. In this sentence, *becoming non-binary* is translated to *non-binair worden*. Again, the word order is changed to adapt the sentence to Dutch grammar norms, but the words are kept together and translated literally, and the source text's discourse is maintained in the target text.

Opting for a literal translation may also provoke a connotative shift in some instances.

Example 3e
EN: Nzinga hit the road, hired herself out to women's communities on the Eastern seaboard, recovered emotionally, had a couple of relationships that ended badly when people revealed their true selves, decided to go searching for a true soul sister, which took years (Evaristo, 2019, p. 92)

NL: Nzinga ging op pad, verhuurde zich aan vrouwencommunes langs de hele oostkust, herstelde van haar emotionele schade, had een paar relaties die steeds slecht afliepen zodra de ander haar ware aard liet zien, dus besloot ze op zoek te gaan naar een echte zielsverwant, wat jaren duurde (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 106)

The translation of *women's community* to *vrouwencommune* is straightforward, but might not render the same meaning. Typically, a women's community (also called womyn's land, wimmin's land or women's land) is a rural commune inhabited by lesbian separatists (Archibald, 2021). They are a manifestation of lesbian radical feminism and are mainly located in the United States. The Dutch translation merely suggests that Nzinga, a lesbian housebuilder, traveled to communes inhabited by women, without specifying these women's sexuality or the ideological foundation of those communities.

From these examples, it can be concluded that literal translation of phrases can be adequate, and sometimes even preferable, especially when the word order and exact word choices have implications that synonyms or paraphrases cannot convey. Yet, fixed expressions may sometimes hold particular

interpretations that are not maintained by a word-for-word translation, in which case an alternative strategy may be more appropriate.

4.1.1: Borrowing

Borrowing refers to the adoption of a word from one language into another (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002). In her taxonomy, Baker uses the term "translation using a loan word" for this phenomenon (1992, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005). Loan words may either be "pure" - i.e. unaltered, or "naturalized" - adapted to the target language's spelling norms (Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002).

Some loan words are already commonly used in the target language and may consequently be copied into translations.

Example 4a

EN: Shirley doesn't meet many new people, her social circles are from university and fellow teachers, whereas Amma makes new friends from the arty world practically every day, who also become Shirley's friends, of sorts
mostly gay, and while she doesn't get it or like it, she finds their unconventionality interesting enough to enjoy their company (Evaristo, 2019, p. 233)

NL: bovendien
leert Shirley weinig nieuwe mensen kennen, haar sociale kring bestaat uit vriendinnen van de universiteit en haar collega-leerkrachten, terwijl Amma in het kunstwereldje praktisch elke dag nieuwe vrienden ontmoet, waar Shirley dan indirect ook mee bevriend is
de meeste zijn gay, en hoewel ze het niet snapt en maar raar vindt, boeit hun excentriciteit haar voldoende om met hen om te willen gaan (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp. 256 - 257)

Example 4b

EN: films like *Pink Flamingos*, starring the great drag queen, Divine, *Born in Flames, Daughters of the Dust, Farewell My Concubine,* Pratibha Parmar's *A Place of Rage* and *Handsworth Songs* by the Black Audio Film Collective (Evaristo, 2019, p.31)

NL: films als *Pink Flamingos*, met in de hoofdrol de geweldige dragqueen Divine, *Born in Flames, Daughters of the Dust, Farewell My Concubine, A Place of Rage* van Pratibha Parmar en *Handsworth Songs* van het Black Audio Film Collective (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 39)

Shirley is a middle-aged, heterosexual woman. Her friend Amma is a lesbian, and even though she likes Amma, she harbors prejudiced notions about gay people, which are expressed in example 4a. The word *gay* is borrowed in the translation and even though the denotation of the word is discernibly the same in both English and Dutch, the use of it may not be. According to an article in popular linguistic journal Onze Taal, the use of English loan words and even complete English sentences is popular among young gay men who are native speakers of Dutch (Leufkens, 2022). It is seen as a means of self-identification and expresses kinship with international role models (Vriesendorp, n.d., as cited in Leufkens, 2022). The question is whether a Dutch-speaking middle-aged woman with conservative attitudes towards homosexuality would opt for the word *gay* to describe her friend's friends. A Dutch equivalent like *homo* or *homoseksueel* may be more suitable for Shirley's discourse.

In example 4b, *drag queen* is naturalized to *dragqueen*. *Dragqueen* is an often-used loan word due to the absence of a native equivalent. While some might use *travestiet* (EN: crossdresser), it is essential to note a distinction between the two terms: a crossdresser typically adopts a gender expression incongruent with their gender identity in private or domestic settings, whereas a drag queen performs to entertain an audience (çavaria, n.d.). Therefore, borrowing the word *dragqueen* is the most appropriate option in the context of Divine. Moreover, the movie titles are all borrowed, which is necessary because no official Dutch translations of the titles are available and fabricating them would hinder the readers' understanding of the movies Amma en Sylvester watched together.

Some loan words are less commonly used by general speakers of the target language but are frequently adopted by queer people.

Example 4c
EN: *they* were the butch ones, she was not, and even if she was (she'd never felt the need to categorize herself) it was clear American butches totally outclassed British butches in the Butch Universe Dominique felt quite femme beside them (Evaristo, 2019, p. 96)

NL: zij waren butch, Dominique niet, en zelfs als ze dat wel was geweest (ze had nooit de behoefte gevoeld om zichzelf in een hokje te stoppen), dan was het duidelijk dat Amerikaanse lesbiennes qua butchheid een stuk hoger scoorden dan Britse
vergeleken met hen voelde Dominique zich zowaar femme (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 110)

Example 4c reflects Dominique's thoughts after she has moved to a women's land in the United States alongside her girlfriend Nzinga to work as a housebuilder. She realizes she does not enjoy manual labor and believes she was not built for it, unlike Nzinga and her other coworkers. She feels her coworkers are more butch than she is. *Butch* and *femme* are labels used to describe gender identities and/or expressions within the queer, and more specifically lesbian, community. Butch lesbians typically renounce stereotypically feminine appearances or behaviors, often embodying traits traditionally associated with masculinity or engaging in activities aligned with male roles. Conversely, femme lesbians typically embrace more stereotypically feminine physical traits or behaviors, aligning with activities traditionally associated with women or the conventional female role (Smith et al., 2010). No native equivalents for these terms exist in Dutch, and as a result, *butch* and *femme* have been adopted by Dutch-speaking queer people, which can be deducted from their inclusion in a glossary of queer terms published by Dutch online magazine *De Correspondent* (Peters & Borrel, 2016). Even though the word *butch* occurs four times in the source sentence, it is only borrowed twice in the source text. The second time, it is substituted by *lesbiennes* (EN: lesbians), a hypernym that may, in this case, be used to disambiguate that butches are, indeed, lesbians. This alteration helps clarify to the target audience that *butch* is a lesbian-specific term but also leads to a discursive difference between source and target text, more so because the third *butch* is omitted and the fourth adapted by the translator, resulting in a translation that suggests that Dominique thinks that (all) American lesbians are more butch than (all) British lesbians, whereas in the source text, she only reflects on how she feels the American butches are more butch than the British butches.

Some loan words are adopted even though they are not commonly used by either general speakers of the target language or the queer community within the target audience.

Example 4d
EN: she was a zami, a sexy sistah, an inspiration, a phenomenon
Dominique wanted to curl into this woman and be looked after by her (Evaristo, 2019, p. 78)

NL: ze was een zami, een sexy sistah, een bron van inspiratie, een fenomeen
Dominique zou het liefst dicht tegen deze vrouw aan kruipen en zich door haar laten verzorgen
(translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 91)

Example 4e

EN: fancy me bumping into *Mx* Morgan Malinga! how cool is that? all the way from *oooop North, wey aye, man,* I bet you love being in London, are you going to move down? you so belong here, everyone will love you, wasn't the play great? have you met my mum? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 339)

NL: wat een toeval dat ik *Mx* Morgan Malinga hier zomaar tegenkom! dat is toch te cool voor woorden? en helemaal uit het hoge noorden, nounou, ik durf te wedden dat je het geweldig vindt in Londen, heb je al verhuisplannen? je hoort hier echt thuis, iedereen loopt hier met je weg, joh, vond je het toneelstuk niet geweldig? heb je mijn moeder al ontmoet? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp. 370 - 371)

In example 4d, Dominique is musing on her new, American girlfriend. She looks up to Nzinga, who assumes a more dominant position in their relationship than Dominique's previous girlfriends did. In the Dutch translation, *zami* is borrowed to describe Dominique's perception of Nzinga. *Zami* is patois for *lesbian*, stemming from the French phrase *les amies* (Chinosole, 1990, as cited in Pearl, 2009). On the same page in the novel, Dominique likens Nzinga to Audre Lorde (Evaristo, 2019, p. 78), who explores her journey to self-discovery, particularly in terms of her identity as a black lesbian woman in *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Lorde defines *zami* as a "Carriacou name for women who work together as friends and lovers" (Lorde, 1982, p. 223, as cited in Pearl, 2009, p. 299). No native Dutch equivalent can both express affection between black lesbian women and honor the character's fondness for Lorde's work. Therefore, borrowing *zami* is the only strategy that fully captures the multiplicity of the source text without flattening or over-explaining it. A disadvantage of borrowing the term may be that the target audience does not understand its meaning. However, it is possible that not all source text readers are familiar with Lorde's oeuvre or the use of the Caribbean word *zami*, either. Example 4e depicts Yazz and Morgan's meeting at the opening night of Amma's new theater play. Yazz is enthused by Morgan's gender-free identity and approaches it as if it were an exciting novelty (also illustrated in example 3d). In example 4e, she addresses Morgan with the gender-neutral honorific *Mx*. Considering the informality of her language in the rest of the sentence, she likely only adds the honorific to illustrate she is aware of gender-neutral language and feels Morgan's gender identity is peculiar enough to emphasize it. In Dutch, an established gender-neutral honorific does not exist yet. Generally, *Dear Mx Malenga* in a letter or email addressed to a non-binary person would be translated to *Beste Morgan Malenga* (EN: Dear Morgan Malenga) or *Beste M. Malenga* (EN: Dear M. Malenga, M being Morgan's initial), or the honorific and name would be replaced by a more general term, for example: *Beste klant* (EN: Dear customer) (Verreycken, 2024). In other words, there is no native equivalent for *Mx*, but its omission would not convey Yazz's attitude towards Morgan's non-binarity

accurately. Dutch-speaking readers are familiar with English honorifics such as Mr. and Mrs. and may also be able to deduce the meaning of *Mx*. The translator has italicized the honorific to signal that the term is borrowed.

The previous examples demonstrate that borrowing can lead to satisfying results in the target text, especially if there is no native equivalent available and the loan word is already commonly used in the target language. If the loan word has a native synonym, the translator should reflect on who uses which variant and why before determining which one best captures the intended discourse intended of the source text author. Borrowing a term that is not frequently used by the general public of the source culture will invite the target audience to engage with the text in a manner similar to how readers engage with the original text.

4.1.5: Transposition

A transposition is a change of word class (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002). In some instances, a word belonging to one grammatical category is translated by a word belonging to another category to ensure a more natural-sounding sentence in the target language.

Example 5a
EN: the gay guys wanted anti-homophobic legislation enshrined into the building's constitution, to which everyone replied, what constitution? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 18)

NL: de homo's wilden een verbod op homofobie in de grondwet van het pand opnemen, waarop iedereen vroeg: welke grondwet? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 25)

Example 5b
EN: she was like a dancer, compact, toned, it was hard to tell she'd once been male (Evaristo, 2019, p. 324)

NL: ze had het lijf van een balletdanseres, klein en strak, het was bijna niet te zien dat ze ooit een man was geweest (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 354)

Example 5c

EN: soon there'll be no need for proper critics, the so-called 'experts' who've been running the show since forever, most of them here in London, it's all about the democratization of critical opinion, the papers say, and that includes someone like Morgan whose tweets get more readers than the proper critics (Evaristo, 2019, p. 333)

NL: binnenkort zijn echte recensenten overbodig, de zogenaamde 'deskundigen' die al sinds jaar en dag de dienst uitmaken, veelal vanuit Londen, volgens de kranten is er sprake van democratisering in de kunstkritiek en dat geldt dus ook voor iemand als Morgan die met haar tweets meer lezers bereikt dan een echte recensent (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 363)

In example 5a, *gay guys* is transposed to just a noun, *homo's*. This choice can be justified by various explanations. Firstly, the translation of *guys* may lead to some difficulty. *Homokerels* is not as frequently used as *homomannen* (EN: gay men), but *guys* and *men* do not have the same connotation; the former is appropriate for a more informal register than the latter. Secondly, the Dutch noun *homo* usually only refers to men, unlike the English *gay* that is used to describe both men and women. In English, the noun *homo* as a shortened word for *homosexual* is mostly used as a slur (Boswell, 1994). In Dutch, however, it can be used as both a neutral and a derogatory term, depending on the context and similar to the use of *gay* in English. In example 5b, the adjective *male* is translated by an article and a noun: *een man* (EN: a man). *Male* could be translated to *mannelijk* in Dutch, but that would lead to ambiguity because, in addition to *male*, which can refer to either gender identity or biological sex, *mannelijk* could also mean *masculine*, which is used more often to describe gender expression. In 5b, Morgan and Bibi meet face-to-face for the first time after having connected in an online chatroom. Whereas Morgan is still exploring their identity, Bibi is comfortable with hers and has transitioned to female. Morgan describes Bibi's appearance and relates that it would be difficult for other people to notice that she is transgender. In this context, using *een man* more precisely conveys the intended meaning of *male* compared to the more ambiguous adjective *mannelijk*. 5c exemplifies the difficulty of translating the English *whose* into Dutch. One option is *van wie* (EN: of whom), but using *van wie* may not always lead to a natural-sounding target sentence. A closer equivalent to *whose* is *wiens/wier*, but those pronouns cannot be used in this context because they are gendered in Dutch, and *whose* is used in reference to a non-binary character. In an attempt to bypass the difficulties of translating *whose*, Vos has translated the relative pronoun with a possessive pronoun: *Morgan die met haar tweets meer lezers bereikt* (EN: Morgan who, with her tweets, gets more readers). This choice is deeply problematic considering Morgan no longer uses she and her as pronouns at this stage of the novel. In this misrecognizing

translation, the translator disregards and erases Morgan's gender-free identity and imposes normative language use that they no longer subscribe to upon them.

Crossed transposition occurs when one linguistic element is transposed into the word class of another, and vice versa (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1958, as cited in Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002).

Example 5d
EN: but she'd learned her lesson and wasn't short of attention; groupies queued up for Amma and Dominique as the main players of Bush Women Theatre
everyone from baby dykes in their late teens to women who could be their mothers (Evaristo, 2019, p. 20)

NL: maar ze had haar lesje geleerd en had qua aandacht niks te klagen; de idolate fans stonden in de rij voor Amma en Dominique, de spilfiguren van Theatergroep Bush Women
van puberpotjes die net uit de kast waren gekomen tot struise dames die hun moeder hadden kunnen zijn (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 27)

Example 5e
EN: when Yazz talks about her unusual upbringing to people, the unworldly ones expect her to be emotionally damaged from it, like how can you not be when your mum's a polyamorous lesbian and your father's a gay narcissist (as she describes him), and you were shunted between both their homes and dumped with various godparents while your parents pursued their careers? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 52)

NL: als Yazz anderen over haar ongebruikelijke thuissituatie vertelt, verwachten de bekrompener types altijd dat ze er emotioneel door beschadigd is, tja, dat kan toch eigenlijk niet anders als je moeder een lesbienne is die aan polyamorie doet en je vader een narcistische homo (haar eigen woorden) en je voortdurend heen en weer wordt geschoven tussen hun twee huizen of bij een van je vele peetouders wordt gedumpt terwijl je ouders zich op hun carrière richten? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 63)

In example 5d, *baby dykes in their late teens* is translated to *puberpotjes die net uit de kast waren gekomen* (EN: teenage dykes who had just come out of the closet). *Baby dykes* are young, lesbian women who have recently started identifying as such. There is no native Dutch equivalent, so the translator has changed the word order to convey the full meaning of *baby dyke* in the target text. Additionally, *in their late teens* is converted to *puber* to avoid excessive postmodification. In example 5e, *polyamorous lesbian* is translated to *lesbienne die aan polyamorie doet* (EN: lesbian who does polyamory). The reasoning behind this

transposition is unclear; the closer equivalent *polyamoreuze lesbienne* would not alter the phrase's meaning. The source text's use of *polyamorous* indicates that that is something one can be, without specifying whether that is by choice or by nature. The target text rather portrays Amma's polyamory as a conscious series of actions, resulting in a discursive difference between source and target text. Another example of crossed transposition in 5e is the translation of *gay narcissist* to *narcistische homo*. Here, *gay* is transposed to a noun and *narcissist* to an adjective, which has no impact on the meaning of the sentence.

These examples indicate that it is possible and sometimes necessary to use transposition to produce a more natural-sounding text in the target language. It is, however, crucial to ensure that the discourse of the source text is faithfully conveyed in the target text, especially when dealing with (grammatical) gender, which may be inherent to the word classes being transposed. Furthermore, a crossed transposition can shift the focus from one element to another, resulting in discursive differences between source and target text.

4.1.6: Abstraction change

An abstraction change occurs when the target text's meaning is either more general or more specific than the source text's (Chesterman, 1997, as cited in Owji, 2013). Mona Baker distinguishes between two strategies: translation by a more general word, and translation by a less expressive word (Baker, 1992, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005). In the following examples, Vos opts for translating by a more general word.

Example 6a

EN: if she slept with a woman more than two or three times, they usually went from attractively independent to increasingly needy
within the space of a *week* (Evaristo, 2019, p. 21)

NL: als ze meer dan twee of drie keer met iemand naar bed ging, veranderden haar veroveringen vaak binnen een week
van lekker onafhankelijk in steeds aanhankelijker (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 28)

Example 6b
EN: she admitted to herself that she had been hungry for a long time, had ignored it because she would never consider taking on another husband
to replace someone irreplaceable was impossible
this was different, Omofe was a woman (Evaristo, 2019, 180)

NL: ze moest erkennen dat ze al heel lang een hunkering had gevoeld, die ze had genegeerd omdat ze er niet aan moest denken om te hertrouwen
je kon een onvervangbaar iemand niet vervangen
dit was anders, Omofe was een vrouw (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 199)

Example 6c
EN: they're leaning on the wall overlooking the River Thames outside the crowded after-party of *The Last Amazon of Dahomey* at the National Theatre, written and directed by none other than Amma Bonsu
the legendary black dyke theatre director (Evaristo, 2019, p. 329)

NL: hen leunt buiten op het muurtje met uitzicht op de Theems op de drukbezochte afterparty van *De laatste amazone van Dahomey* bij het National Theatre, met script en regie van niemand minder dan Amma Bonsu
de legendarische zwarte lesbische regisseuse (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 358)

Example 6d
EN: this isn't her milieu at all so she declined Freddy's invitation to 'do the rounds and get to know the lesbian thespians' (Evaristo, 2019, p. 417)

NL: het is niet haar soort mensen, dus ze heeft Freddy's uitnodiging om 'even een rondje te lopen en kennis te maken met de lesbische toneelwereld' afgeslagen (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 454)

In example 6a, *a woman* is translated to *iemand* (EN: someone). This shift would have erased the fact that Amma, the character to whom this is in reference, exclusively sleeps with women, had it not been compensated by example 2a. 6b regards Bummi, a Nigerian woman who starts her own cleaning company after her husband's death and starts a passionate affair with Omofe, one of her employees. The source fragment says that Bummi *would never consider taking on a new husband*, but in the target fragment she would never consider *om te hertrouwen* (EN: getting married again). The clue of the source fragment is that Bummi did not want a new husband, but now she has an affair with a woman, which is different from being with a man. In the target language, it is implied that Bummi would not consider marrying anyone, but Omofe

is a woman and it is not possible for Bummi to marry a woman. Bummi is religious and regularly goes to church, so it is plausible that she would deem it impossible to marry a woman. Even though Vos' approach slightly differs from Evaristo's, both source and target text express that Bummi makes a distinction between her marriage with her late husband and her affair with Omofe – and by extension between heterosexual and homosexual relationships. Example 6c is narrated from Morgan's perspective, who is invited to the premiere of Amma's play. They describe Amma as *the legendary black dyke theatre director*. The word *dyke* is a derogatory term for lesbians which has been reclaimed as a self-identifying label. Although this reclamation stirred up controversy within the lesbian community, much of the debate surrounding it has now subsided (Edwards, 2020). Even though Morgan is not a lesbian – they are in a relationship with a woman, but describe themselves as pansexual in example 10c–, they still use *dyke*, not with the intention of reviling Amma, but rather to express kinship with her. In the Dutch translation, the more general *de legendarische zwarte lesbische regisseuse* (EN: the legendary black lesbian director) is used because the Dutch equivalent *pot* could not premodify *regisseuse*. As a result, the translation cannot transfer the specific connotation of *dyke* without any further interventions of the translator. Example 6d recounts Carole's presence at the opening night of Amma's play. Her husband Freddy feels more at ease at the event and wants to mingle with the other attendees. He describes them as *lesbian thespians*, considering this rhyme cannot be transferred to Dutch, the more general *lesbische toneelwereld* (EN: lesbian theater scene) is used. Even though *thespian* is more specific than *toneelwereld*, and a stylistic element is lost in the translation, this choice does not significantly affect the discourse present in the target fragment.

It is also possible to use a more concrete term in the translation.

Example 6e
EN: (...) nor does he give a fig about Amma's sexuality, his Great Aunt Myrtle was in the closet, according to him (Evaristo, 2019, p. 234)

NL: (...) en het zal hem een worst wezen of Amma lesbisch is, volgens hem zat zijn oudtante Myrtle haar hele leven in de kast (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 257)

In example 6e, *Amma's sexuality* is translated to *of Amma lesbisch is* (EN: whether Amma is a lesbian). Even though the target fragment more specifically defines Amma's sexuality as lesbian than the source fragment, this particularization does not change the text's meaning, because it is well-established that Amma's

sexuality refers to her being a lesbian and this fragment is told from Lennox' perspective. He is Shirley's husband and has more progressive, open-minded views on Amma's sexuality than Shirley. The use of a more concrete term might have changed the discourse if Lennox were actively trying to avoid calling Amma a lesbian in the source text, but that is not the case.

These fragments exemplify that abstraction changes can sometimes lead to successful translations. However, generalization may lead to a minoritizing target text, because it does not always successfully convey all nuances present in the source text. Similar to additions, particularizations can introduce information that is not present in the source text. As such, it is important to keep in mind the author's intended discourse. Compensation may help prevent a flattening translation.

4.1.7: Adaptation

An adaptation involves replacing an element specific to the source culture with a word or phrase that is more familiar to the target text readers (Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002). In Baker's taxonomy, this phenomenon is called *translation by a cultural substitution* (Baker, 1992, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005). Despite the discrepancy in denotation between the source and target text elements, the translator aims to achieve a similar impact on the target audience.

Example 7a

EN: Dad has no time for 'the fairies' and laughs at all the homophobic jokes comedians make on telly every Saturday night when they're not insulting their mother-in-law or black people (Evaristo, 2019, p. 12)

NL: papa heeft niks met 'nichten' en lacht op zaterdagavond om alle homograppen op tv als de cabaretiers even een ander mikpunt kiezen dan hun schoonmoeder of de zwarte medemens (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 19)

Example 7b

EN: the last time they visited, GG said she'd changed her will and left it to Morgan on the understanding it's kept in the family, invite all your non-binding people to come and stay and be themselves if you like, and when you die, you can pass it on to the family member most likely to look after it (...) (Evaristo, 2019, p. 331)

NL: bij hun laatste bezoek vertelde GG dat ze haar testament had laten aanpassen en de boerderij aan Morgan nalaat op voorwaarde dat die het huis in de familie houdt, voor mijn part nodig je al je onbinaire vrienden uit om hier lekker zichzelf te komen zijn, en als jij doodgaat kunt je het weer nalaten aan een familielid van wie je denkt dat hij of zij er het beste voor zal zorgen (...) (Translated by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 361)

Example 7a describes the attitudes of Amma's father Kwabena. Amma resents her father's sexist and homophobic beliefs, which he harbors despite being a socialist. Kwabena uses the term *fairies*, a derogatory term typically associated with gay men and their perceived effeminacy (QueerMap, n.d.). Some gay men have reclaimed the term for in-group use, but it is still considered a slur when used by others. A literal Dutch translation of *fairy* would be *fee*, but that word does not convey the homophobic connotations of *fairy*. Instead, the translator uses *nichten* (EN: cousins, specifically female cousins). In the 1700s, *nicht* served as a coded reference to people who engaged in sodomy (Spiegel Historiael, 1982, as cited in Joustra, 1988). It is both used as a derogatory term by homophobes and a self-identifying reclamation by gay men (Joustra, 1988). In other words, *nichten* and *fairies* fulfill similar discursive purposes in Dutch and English, and the adaptation helps the target audience understand Kwabena's homophobic tendencies. In example 7b, Morgan's great-grandmother GG has decided to leave her farm to Morgan when she dies, because she believes it is important to keep the estate in the family and does not trust her other relatives. GG is supportive of Morgan but does not comprehend their gender-free identity. As a result, she calls Morgan's friends *your non-binding people*, instead of *non-binary people*. Although the malapropism expresses GG's lack of understanding of the subject, she also states that the *non-binding people* can be themselves and stay at the house after she passes. In the translation, GG speaks of *onbinaire vrienden* (EN: unbinary friends) instead of *non-binaire vrienden*. The wordplay is adapted to Dutch to convey a similar effect.

In other instances, adaptations may have a greater impact on the character's discourse.

Example 7c
EN: they discussed the best gender-neutral alternatives such as ae, e, ey, per, they, and tested each word to see if the words tripped off the tongue or tripped over it, ditto with the alternatives to his and hers: hirs, aers, eirs, pers, theirs and xyrs (Evaristo, 2019, p. 328)

NL: ze bespraken de beste genderneutrale alternatieven voor aanspreekvormen, zoals ij, ie, nij, die, qij en hen en probeerden alles uit om te voelen of het woord makkelijk van de tong rolde of juist haperde, hetzelfde met de alternatieven voor zijn en haar: 'r, ner, dies en hun (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp. 357 - 358)

Example 7d
EN: there'll be more to come on that score: Unmissable! A tour de force! Go see, transgirls, transboys, ladyboys & butchies, all the queers & all the queens & the intersectional warriors out there and all my fellow non-binary darlings #africanwomenshistory4everyone (Evaristo, 2019, p. 334)

NL: er komt nog meer in die trant: MIS HET NIET! Wat een meesterwerk! Gaat dat zien, transmeiden, transjongens, travo's en trava's, lesbo's, homo's en alle strijders daartussenin, en natuurlijk al mijn lieve non-binairgenootjes #africanwomenshistory4everyone (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 364)

Example 7e
EN: of course, Amma replied, how could I forget? just look at us, the original riot *grrrrls* or is it *gurls* now? Yazz will know (Evaristo, 2019, p. 432)

NL: natuurlijk, antwoordde Amma, dat vergeet ik nooit! moet je ons nou zien, de eerste echte relnichten, of eigenlijk relpotten, haha (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 470)

In example 7c, Morgan and Bibi are exploring gender-neutral pronouns to determine which pronouns Morgan might want to start using for themselves. The neopronouns *ae, e, ey, per, they* and *hirs, aers, eirs, pers, theirs and xyrs* are all used in English. For some people, they provide a way to affirm a non-binary or genderqueer identity that does not fit within the binary framework of male or female. Others may use neopronouns as a form of self-expression or to challenge societal norms around gender (Andrew, 2023). This fragment was included in the essay Vos wrote about her translation of *Girl, Woman, Other*. She writes: "It was not only a matter of coming up with a satisfying, consistent translation for 'they' and 'their', but I also had to find (or fabricate) various alternatives that could or could not be used in non-binary Dutch" (Vos, 2023, p. 3, translated from Dutch). As a result, *ij, ie, nij, die, qij en hen* and *'r, ner, dies en hun* are used in

the translation. The most commonly used gender-neutral pronouns in Dutch are the personal *hen* and *die* and the possessive *hun* and *die(n)s*. Dutch neopronouns include *xij, fij* and *ey* (Netwerk Diversiteit en Inclusie, n.d.). Vos' decision to invent pronouns instead of researching established alternatives can be considered questionable at best. In a review published in *De Reactor*, Van Der Voorn points out that the fabrication of neopronouns by the translator implies that they are a fictional phenomenon in the Dutch-speaking community (2021). Consequently, readers unfamiliar with neopronouns prior to reading this novel are deprived of the opportunity to acquaint themselves with authentic Dutch neopronouns. This approach not only risks marginalizing existing forms but also hinders readers' broader understanding and acceptance of evolving language dynamics in Dutch. Example 7d is a tweet uploaded by Morgan, in which they promote Amma's new theater play. Many of the terms they use to address their followers are adapted in the translation. *Transgirls* and *transboys* are translated literally, but there is little denotative equivalence between source and target text in the rest of this sentence. In the source text fragment, *ladyboy* refers to Southeast Asian transgender women and is mostly used in the context of cabaret shows, sex tourism and pornography (Käng, 2016). Whereas *butchies* is directed at butch, or 'masculine' lesbians, *queens* are flamboyant or effeminate gay men (Montclair State LGBTQ Center, n.d.). The *intersectional warriors* Morgan addresses could either be the people who relate to multiple identifying labels, or individuals who advocate for intersectionality. Morgan also mentions their *fellow non-binary darlings*. With this tweet, they attempt to mobilize large parts of the queer community to buy tickets for Amma's play. The Dutch adaptation addresses *travo's* and *trava's*, both abbreviations for *travestiet* (EN: crossdresser), *lesbo's*, an abbreviation for *lesbienne* (EN: lesbian), *homo's* (EN: gays, gay men), *alle strijders tussenin* (EN: all warriors in-between) and Morgan's *lieve non-binairgenootjes* (EN: dear non-binary fellows). The translation strategy used for *lieve non-binairgenootjes* is a transposition, but all other terms are adapted. Despite the discrepancy in denotation, these adaptations may still have a similar connotative effect. Morgan is not addressing any specific individuals, so the translation does not misrepresent anyone's identity. Yet, *homo's* and *lesbo's* are less specific terms that are more subjected to out-group use than *queers* and *queens* and may therefore not have the same effect on the tweet's audience that is meant to be attracted to a play because a fellow queer person is recommending it. Additionally, Morgan's call to intersectionality disappears in the translation. In example 7e, Dominque and Amma reminisce about their past. Amma says they were *the original Riot Grrrrls*. Riot Grrrl was a revolutionary feminist movement within the punk scene that emerged in the 1990s and manifested itself in new bands and self-published zines (Rosenberg & Garofalo, 1998). Amma and Dominique liken themselves to the Riot Grrrls because of their activist past, in which they rebelled against institutionalized sexism and racism in the theater world. Amma then jokes that

a more popular spelling of *girl* might now be *gurl*, but that she would have to verify with her daughter, Yazz. In the Dutch translation, Amma says they were the first real *relnichten*. *Rel* is equivalent to *riot*, *nicht* is used to refer to gay men (see example 7a). *Relnichten* typically refers to flamboyant gay men, but can also be used in reference to troublemakers who willingly seek conflict. Amma then jokes that they are, in fact, *relpotten* (EN: riot dykes). Although the translation does not include a hint to the feminist punk scene, this adaptation still conveys the idea that Amma and Dominique were rebellious and anti-establishment and adds a reference to their queerness.

Adaptation serves as a valuable tool for translators seeking to evoke a certain effect on the target audience, especially when alternative methods fall short. Nevertheless, it is crucial to initially consider the desired effect of the source text's author on the audience and to reflect on what repercussions the adaptation of queer references might have on the text's discourse. While effective in enhancing reader comprehension in broader contexts, adapting specific references to individuals' identities carries risks, because understandings of and language relating to queerness vary culturally.

4.1.8: Paraphrase

When confronted with a word or phrase whose meaning cannot be transferred through literal translation, a translator may resort to paraphrasing and attempt to articulate the essence of the source text in different words or constructions. Baker distinguishes between paraphrases using a related word and paraphrases using a non-related word (1992, as cited in Aguado-Giménez & Pérez-Paredes, 2005). In the following example, the translator paraphrases using a non-related word.

Example 8a

EN: many a night out ended in tears with Georgie saying she was too ugly to pull, which wasn't true, they all endlessly reassured her how attractive she was, although Amma considered her more Artful Dodger than Oliver Twist (Evaristo, 2019, p. 30)

NL: stapavondjes eindigden er geregeld mee dat Georgie in tranen beweerde dat ze te lelijk was om aan de vrouw te komen, wat niet waar was, ze stelden haar keer op keer gerust dat ze hartstikke knap was, al vond Amma haar meer het type Artful Dodger dan Oliver Twist (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 38)

Amma's friend Georgie struggles with her self-image and often states that she is *too ugly to pull*. The Dutch equivalent of *pull*, *trekken,* does not refer to attracting or seducing women and is, therefore, not used in the translation. A paraphrase using a related word would be possible (*te lelijk om in trek te zijn*, for example), but instead, Vos favors a paraphrase using a non-related word: *te lelijk om aan de vrouw te komen*. This is a twist on the more common *aan de man komen*, a phrase that expresses that someone, usually a woman, manages to start a relationship with a man, even though she was not expected to. *Man* is adapted to *vrouw* (EN: woman) because Georgie is a lesbian. Consequently, the target sentence more explicitly describes Georgie's sexuality than the source text, but that does not provoke any discursive differences between source and target text, because the context of the novel confirms that Georgie is exclusively interested in *pulling* women.

In other instances, Vos employs paraphrases, even though equivalent expressions are available in Dutch.

Example 8b
EN: occasionally a resident is forced to leave over unsanctionable behaviour such as violence or theft, if a woman goes straight and wants relationships with men, she has to leave, if she's celibate, she can stay, once we had a woman who turned and was caught sneaking men on to the property at night she had to go (Evaristo, 2019, p. 88)

NL: af en toe moet een bewoonster gedwongen vertrekken vanwege ontoelaatbaar gedrag als geweldpleging of diefstal, als een vrouw toch heteroseksueel blijkt en met mannen naar bed wil, moet ze weg, maar als ze celibatair leeft, mag ze blijven, we hebben ooit een vrouw gehad die na haar ommezwaai werd betrapt toen ze 's nachts mannen het terrein op smokkelde/die had hier niks meer te zoeken (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 101)

Example 8c
EN: Tayo and Wole returned from Nigeria after several years, transformed into civilized teenagers who were angry with their father for only visiting them twice and at their mother for her betrayal (Evaristo, 2019, p. 180)

NL: na een paar jaar kwamen Tayo en Wole terug uit Nigeria als beschaafde tienerjongers die boos waren op hun vader omdat hij maar twee keer op bezoek was gekomen en op hun moeder omdat ze hen had besodemieterd (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp. 199 - 200)

Example 8d

EN: her mother was unthinkingly repeating patterns of oppression based on gender, one example was that Megan preferred wearing trousers as a child, which she found more comfortable than dresses, she like the look of them, liked having pockets to put her hands and other things into, liked looking like her brother Mark who was three years older
wearing trousers really shouldn't have been an issue for a girl born in her time, but her mother wanted her to look cuter than she already was
like the cutest of the cutie-pies (Evaristo, 2019, pp. 307 - 308)

NL: haar moeder verviel onbewust in onderdrukkingspatronen op basis van geslacht, om een voorbeeld te noemen: Megan droeg als kind liever broeken omdat ze vond dat die lekkerder zaten dan jurken en leuker stonden, bovendien vond ze het fijn om zakken te hebben waar ze haar handen of andere dingen in kon stoppen en zag ze er graag hetzelfde uit als haar drie jaar oudere broer Mark
broeken dragen had voor een meisje van haar generatie echt geen probleem moeten zijn, maar haar moeder wilde per se dat ze er nog schattiger uitzag dan ze al was
om op te eten zo schattig (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 335)

Example 8e

EN: Mum dotes on Bibi, of course she does, she's *feminine* (Evaristo, 2019, p. 334)

NL: mama is gek op Bibi, uiteraard, want die gedraagt zich wél vrouwelijk (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 364)

Example 8b delineates the rules of Spirit Moon, the women's land Nzinga and Dominique moved to. The commune's owner Gaia explains that women who *go straight* can stay on the property if they are celibate, but are not allowed to bring men to Spirit Moon. Gaia's discourse reflects that she, a political lesbian separatist, believes that women can choose whether they engage in sexual relationships with men. According to her, becoming a lesbian is an activist and political choice. After having made that choice, it is also possible to become straight again. In this sense, sexuality is something you do, rather than a congenital part of who you are. In the target text, *go straight* is translated to *heteroseksueel blijkt* (EN: turns out to be heterosexual). This translation misrepresents Gaia's viewpoints on lesbianism, separatism and feminism, because it no longer identifies sexuality as an activist choice, but rather as a predetermined factor. This discursive shift could have been avoided if a closer equivalent, such as *hetero wordt* (EN: becomes straight), had been used instead. Example 8c's source text does not include a reference to queerness. Yet, one is introduced in the source language as a result of paraphrasing. *Angry (...) at their mother for her betrayal* is translated to *boos (...) op hun moeder omdat ze hen had gesodemieterd* (EN: angry at their mother because

she had fucked them over). *Sodemieteren* is a much stronger verb than *betray*, and, more importantly, literally translates to *sodomize*. The word originates from the biblical city of Sodom, known for its immoral behavior, including homosexual acts and bestiality (Taaladviesdienst Onze Taal, 2005). The Dutch term *sodomie* and the verb derived from it conflate homosexuality and bestiality and are rooted in a judgmental Christian perspective. The archaic use of the term as a synonym for homosexual acts is deeply ingrained in homophobia and the normalization of what society deemed as acceptable sexual behavior versus what it considered deviant. *Betray* could simply have been translated to *verraden* and the discourse would not have changed, whereas paraphrasing with *sodemieteren* adds homophobic subtext in a place where it is not intended by Evaristo. In example 8d, *oppression based on gender* is translated to *onderdrukkingspatronen op basis van geslacht* (EN: oppressive patterns based on sex). Substituting *gender* with *sex* is unnecessary, considering the word *gender* exists in Dutch. Furthermore, gender and sex are not synonymous, especially not to Megan/Morgan, who later transitions to gender-free. Example 8e refers to Morgan's mother who treasures femininity and tried to force it upon Morgan when they were young (see example 8d). According to the source text, Morgan's mother adores their trans female girlfriend Bibi, because *she's feminine* (*feminine* italicized). However, the target text recounts that the reason Morgan's mother dotes on Bibi, is that *zij gedraagt zich wél vrouwelijk* (EN: she *does* behave feminine). Whereas the source text describes Bibi's femininity as an inherent quality, something that she is, the target text implies that it is something she performs or does. In other words, there is a significant difference between the source and target texts' discourses, the former centering on Bibi's gender identity, the latter on her gender expression. This discursive shift would have been avoided if *is feminine* had been translated literally to *is vrouwelijk*.

Based on the previous examples, it can be concluded that paraphrasing proves beneficial in instances where direct translations are not available in the target language. Nevertheless, if close equivalents exist, paraphrasing carries the risk of significant alterations in discourse, particularly concerning themes such as nature versus nurture, identity versus expression, and being versus performing.

4.1.9: Description

In the following two instances, a description is added to a term that the target audience may not know otherwise.

Example 9a
EN: the middle-aged Amma sometimes feels nostalgic for her younger days, remembers the only time she and Dominique went on a pilgrimage to the legendary Gateways
hidden down a Chelsea basement in the last years of its fifty-year existence (Evaristo, 2019, p. 22)

NL: nu ze op middelbare leeftijd is, denkt Amma soms met weemoed terug aan haar jonge jaren, bijvoorbeeld aan die ene keer (meteen ook de laatste keer) dat Dominique en zij op bedevaart gingen naar de Gateways
verstopt in een kelder in Chelsea, ergens tegen het einde van het vijfenvijftigjarig bestaan van het legendarische lesbocafé (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 30)

Example 9b
EN: Nzinga was a builder of timber houses on 'wimmin's lands' in the 'Dis-United States of America' where she'd lived since she was five and her mother, tiring of Nzinga's father who flitted between various women in England and the Caribbean, fell for a handsome ex-Forces man via correspondence (Evaristo, 2019, p. 77)

NL: Nzinga bouwde houten huizen op 'vrouwenland', lesbische communes in de ‘Verdeelde Staten van Amerika' waar ze op haar vijfde was gaan wonen toen haar moeder, die genoeg had gekregen van Nzinga's vader, die in Engeland en de Cariben van de ene vrouw naar de andere fladderde, via een uitgebreide briefwisseling verliefd werd op een knappe ex-militair (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 89)

In example 9a, *het legendarische lesbocafé* (EN: the legendary lesbian bar) is added to describe Gateways. In example 9b, *‘wimmin’s lands’* is translated literally, but without spelling alteration, to *‘vrouwenland’*. Without further explanation, it would be unclear that these lands are inhabited by separatist lesbians (as was the case in example 3e). Therefore, *lesbische communes* (EN: lesbian communes) was added. After having provided this explanation once, the translator could have used *vrouwenland* instead of *vrouwencommune* in example 3e to convey that the text was referring to lesbian communes without having to specify it with an additional description a second time.

Only two descriptions could be identified throughout Vos’ translation of *Girl, Woman, Other*. Although they provide the reader with additional information, they can also disrupt the rhythm of a text. Furthermore, this approach can lead to a translation that is more definite and normalized than intended by the source text author.

4.1.10: Combination

The aforementioned nine strategies often occur in combination with each other. The following examples consist of longer sentences in which various strategies are employed by the translator and are included in this section to consolidate the points made above.

Example 10a

EN: feminism is so herd-like, Yazz told her, to be honest, even being a woman is passé these days, we had a non-binary activist at uni called Morgan Malenga who opened my eyes, I reckon we're all going to be non-binary in the future, neither male nor female, which are gendered performances anyway, which means your *women's* politics, Mumsy, will become redundant, and by the way, I'm humanitarian, which is on a much higher place than feminism
do you even know what that is? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 39)

NL: het feminisme is een vorm van kuddegedrag, zei Yazz laatst, eerlijk gezegd is het zelfs best wel uit om een vrouw te zijn, er kwam een non-binaire activist op de uni spreken, Morgan Malenga, die heeft mijn ogen echt geopend, volgens mij zijn we in de toekomst allemaal non-binair en niet meer mannelijk of vrouwelijk, want dat is in feite ook maar een construct waar we in meespelen, wat betekent dat jouw vrouwenpolitiek algauw achterhaald zal blijken, mammie, en ik ben sowieso een humanist, wat heel ver boven het feminisme uitstijgt
weet jij überhaupt wel wat dat inhoudt? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp. 48 - 49)

Example 10a's strategies include literal translation, omission, addition, transposition and paraphrase: *Non-binary activist* is translated literally to *non-binaire activist*, this is possible because the words are lexically equivalent and occur in the same order in both languages. *Going to be* is omitted in the translation of *I reckon we're all going to be non-binary in the future*. This omission ensures a more concise translation without changing the discourse because the target text includes the word *toekomst* (EN: future). The words *niet meer* (EN: no longer) are added to *neither male nor female.* This leads to the implication that nowadays, many people identify as male or female, which is not explicitly added by Yazz in the source text but does not lead to a significant discursive shift. The translation of *gendered performances* to *construct waar we in meespelen* (EN: a construct in which we participate) involves an omission as well as a transposition and a paraphrase. The omission of *gendered* is compensated by *dat*, a demonstrative pronoun whose antecedent is *mannelijk of vrouwelijk [zijn]* (EN: [being] male or female). *Performance* is transposed to the verb *meespelen* (EN: participate) and part of its meaning is paraphrased with *construct*. Despite the discrepancy between source and target text in terms of word choice, both fragments revolve around the idea that

gender is socially constructed rather than biologically determined. This sentence presents considerable risks of flattening and misrecognizing translation, but the translator has been able to avoid potential pitfalls through a wide variety of strategies, resulting in minimal discursive discrepancies, barring the mistranslation of *humanitarian* to *humanist*.

Example 10b

EN: genders like trans female or trans male and non-binary made sense to her, and she come accross non-binaries in other countries like the Hijras of India and the Two Spirits of Native Americans, others were total head fucks like quivergender - gender whose intensity fluctuates, polygender - identifying as multiple genders, or staticgender - like fuzzy television static and how can your gender change multiple times a day as the synchgenders claim? Bibi, by the time I finished travelling into the batshit-crazy end of the Transgenderverse I was stressed with a capital S, I call it the Transloonyverse, lock'em up and throw away the keys LOL!! (Evaristo, 2019, p. 323)

NL: met genders als transvrouw of transman en non-binair kon ze uit de voeten, en ze ontdekte dat in andere landen ook non-binaire bevolkingsgroepen bestonden, zoals de *hijras* in India en de *two-spirits* bij verschillende inheemse stammen in Amerika, andere vond ze vreselijk verwarrend, zoals *quivergender* - als je gender schommelt qua intensiteit, *polygender* - als je je met twee of meer genders identificeert of *'ruisgender'*- zoals ruis op de radio, en hoe kun je meerdere keren per dag van gender wisselen zoals *synchgenders* beweren? Bibi, toen ik eenmaal aan de knettergekke kant van het genderspectrum was beland, schoot ik ronduit in de stress, ik noem het het transgekkenhuis, sluit ze op en verstop de sleutel HAHA!! (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, pp. 352 - 353)

The strategies adopted in example 10b are literal translation, transposition, addition, borrowing and adaptation. *Genders like trans female or trans male and non-binary* is translated literally to *genders als transvrouw en transman en non-binair*, the spaces between *trans* and *vrouw/man* are omitted in accordance with the Dutch spelling norms. *Non-binaries* is transposed to an adjective because its use is not common as a noun in Dutch. *Bevolkingsgroepen* (EN: populations) is added to make the sentence grammatically sound. The following terms are borrowed: *hijras, two-spirits, quivergender, polygender, synchgenders*. The source text includes descriptions of these terms, hence borrowing them does not hinder the target text's comprehensibility. Conflictingly, *staticgender* is translated literally to *'ruisgender'*. Whereas the English term *staticgender* is genuinely used by some, the translation *ruisgender* is one of Vos' fabrications and does not refer to identities existing outside of this novel, resulting in a connotative shift. Although Morgan is ridiculing the existence of such a wide variety of gender identities, the addition of quotation marks presents the word itself as a caricature and results in a target text that is even harsher

than the source text. *Transgenderverse* and *transloonyverse* are adapted respectively to *genderspectrum* (EN: gender spectrum) and *transgekkenhuis* (EN: trans madhouse). *Transgenderverse* signifies the multitude of existing identities, but its scope is limited to trans people. The term's use could also imply that many of those identities are alien to Morgan, and are situated in their own universe. Even though *genderspectrum* refers to an array of gender identities, the term's use is not limited to trans identities. Accordingly, the translation does not include the implication that Morgan feels the identities they just described belong to their own category. -*Verse* is not included in the adaptation of *transloonyverse* because it is also omitted in *genderspectrum*, but *transgekkenhuis* does equate the myriad of identities to madness in a similar fashion to the source text. Whereas some of the strategies employed by Vos in example 10b are effective in conveying the discourse present in the source text, others provoke discrepancies in the source and target text's meaning.

Example 10c

EN: gender-free means I identify as neither male nor female, I also identify as pansexual, which means I'm attracted to individuals on the male-female-trans spectrum, although my long-term partner is a trans-female and I'm not trading her any time soon, not that it's any of your business who I sleep with, if you really must know, I'm spoilt for choice, all bases are covered, yeh, I've got it made, peeps! (Evaristo, 2019, p. 336)

NL: gendervrij betekent dat ik me noch als man noch als vrouw identificeer, ik ben daarnaast panseksueel, wat betekent dat ik op mensen val binnen het hele man-vrouw-transspectrum, al heb ik nu al een hele tijd een relatie met een transvrouw op wie ik nog lang niet ben uitgekeken, maar als je het echt zo nodig wilt weten, ik heb meer dan genoeg keuze, ik kan alle kanten op, mensen, ik heb het eigenlijk behoorlijk goed voor elkaar! (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 367)

In example 10c, Morgan is giving a guest lecture at a university, during which they talk about their identity and transition. The translation strategies used are literal translation, transposition, paraphrase and omission. *Gendervrij* is a literal translation of *gender-free*, excepting the adaptation to the Dutch spelling norms. Both terms are used in their respective languages and carry the same denotation. *Neither male nor female* is transposed to *als man noch als vrouw* (EN: neither as a man, nor as a woman) to bypass the ambiguity of *mannelijk* (EN: male, masculine) and *vrouwelijk* (EN: female, feminine) (see example 5b). *I also identify as pansexual* is paraphrased to *ik ben daarnaast ook panseksueel* (EN: I am also pansexual), even though *identify* is translated to its equivalent *identificeer* right before. It is possible that Vos wanted to avoid the repetition of *identificeer*, but this paraphrase induces a slight semantic shift. Whereas *identify* means

that Morgan thinks they are pansexual and relates their personal experience to pansexuality as they understand it, *am* is more definitive and less nuanced. *A trans-female* is translated literally to *een transvrouw*. In this case, the translation from *female* to *vrouw* is not a transposition, because *female* is used as a noun in the source text. *Not that it is any of your business who I sleep with* is omitted in the translation. This results in a flattened source text, that does point out that Morgan and Bibi are in a romantic relationship, but erases the fact that Morgan specifies that their relationship is also sexual. Whereas literal translation and transposition lead to satisfying results in example 10c's translation, the use of paraphrase and omission results in a minoritizing translation.

Example 10d
EN: in any case, neither his blackness nor his gayness are the result of conscious political decisions, the former is genetically determined, the latter is psychically and psychologically pre-disposed (Evaristo, 2019, p. 415)

NL: hoe dan ook, dat hij zwart en homo is, is geen van beide een bewuste politieke keuze geweest, het eerste is genetisch bepaald, het andere komt door allerlei neurologische en hormonale factoren (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, p. 451)

Example 10d is told from the perspective of Yazz' father, Roland. Being an academic and TV personality, he is often expected to be a spokesperson for black and gay people, a position he does not feel comfortable with. *His blackness nor his gayness* is transposed to *dat hij zwart en homo is* (EN: that he is black and gay), likely because there is no Dutch noun that could express the meaning of *blackness*, and transposing both words to adjectives helps maintain the parallelism present in the source text. *Psychically and psychologically pre-disposed* is paraphrased to *komt door allerlei neurologische en hormonale factoren* (EN: is caused by all kinds of neurological and hormonal factors). Roland believes that homosexuality is influenced by biological and psychological factors. From his perspective, homosexuality is not a choice, but rather an innate aspect of his identity determined by his brain structure. His discourse is akin to the gay gene discourse that posits genetics as an important determinant of sexuality. Additionally, Roland's description of his sexuality as *psychologically pre-disposed* brings to mind the pathologization of homosexuality that took place in the 19th century. Both the introduction of homosexuality as a pathology and the emergence of scientific research suggesting sexuality is congenital presented an opportunity for gay rights activists to argue that homosexuality was not a choice and to advocate for gay rights. With *neurologische en hormonale factoren*, the gay gene discourse is reflected in the translation, but the reference to the pathologization of

homosexuality is left out. As such, this combination of transposition and paraphrasing is only partly successful in transferring Roland's discourse in example 10d.

Example 10e

EN: and another thing that bugs me are the trans troublemakers, you should have seen the stick I got when I announced my festival was for women-born-women as opposed to women-born-men, I was accused of being transphobic, which I'm not, I'm absolutely not, I have trans friends, but there is a difference, a man raised as a man might not feel like one but he's been treated as one by the world, so how can he be exactly the same as us? (Evaristo, 2019, p. 437)

NL: en wat ik ook irritant vind zijn die moeilijke transtypes, je moest eens weten wat een gezeik ik over me heen kreeg toen ik aankondigde dat mijn festival bedoeld was voor als-vrouw-geboren vrouwen en niet als-man-geboren vrouwen, ik werd uitgemaakt voor transfoob, en dat ben ik niet, echt totaal niet, ik heb vrienden die trans zijn, maar er is een verschil, een man die als man is opgegroeid hoeft zich misschien geen man te voelen maar hij is wel altijd zo behandeld, dus kan hij toch nooit precies worden als wij? (translation by Vos & De Geus bv, 2020, p. 477)

In example 10e, Dominique engages Amma in a discussion about her trans-exclusionary radical feminist beliefs. Dominique hosts women-only events and has faced backlash for not welcoming trans women at her festival. Her statements echo those commonly spewed by RadFems, for example by Hanisch et al. (2013), who argue that their biological sex is the primary basis for male oppression and exclude trans women from their definition of women. Vos employs paraphrasing, transposition and literal translation in this fragment. *Trans troublemakers* is both transposed and paraphrased to *moeilijke transtypes* (EN: difficult trans characters). *Transtypes* transfers the alliteration present in the source text, the adjective *moeilijke* is added to express the meaning of *trouble*. A transposition is used to translate *women-born-women* into Dutch, because the addition of *als* is necessary to form a grammatically sound phrase: *als-vrouw-geboren vrouwen* (EN: women-born-as-women). The same is true for *women-born-men*. *Transphobic* is translated literally to *transfoob*. *Trans friends* is transposed to *vrienden die trans zijn* (EN: friends who are trans), which may be longer than the closer equivalent *transvrienden*, but carries the same meaning. Finally, *so how can he be exactly the same as us?* is paraphrased to *dus kan hij toch nooit precies worden als wij?* (EN: so he can never become exactly like us, right?). It is a slippery slope to confuse *be* and *become* when translating discourse on transgender issues, because the choice for either verb reflects the speaker's view on the innateness of gender identity versus the construction of it. In the source text, Dominque refers to the life of the transgender women up until now and states that they differ from cis women because they have been

treated differently by society. In the target text, Dominique rather states that trans women will never become the same as cis women because they will have been treated differently, even after transitioning. Yet, in this instance there does not seem to be a major discursive difference between source and target text fragments, because Dominique's conclusion remains that she will not accept transgender women as women, no matter how long ago they transitioned. In this example, Dominique's trans-exclusionary radical feminist views are successfully conveyed by the combination of paraphrasing, transposition and literal translation.

4.2: DISCOURSES

The individual analysis of each fragment in the previous section sheds light on the efficacy of the translation strategies used, but also creates a rather fragmented picture of the characters' discourses. Below, the recurring discourses on queerness in the analyzed fragments are detailed in a more schematic overview. The aim of this synthesis is to clarify the various points of view on certain themes and to help translators identify these discourses on queerness in other literary works.

1. Transition from A to B

Morgan's chapter recounts the story of their transition from female to gender-free. Additionally, their partner Bibi has transitioned from male to female. Both Morgan and Bibi present their transition as transitioning from one gender identity, to another (in examples 1b, 1d and 5b). This suggests that their views on transition align with the constructivist belief that gender identity is socially constructed and can change overtime. Morgan's story also illustrates that transition does not only occur from male to female, or vice versa, but can also signify a transition to a gender-free identity. Morgan and Bibi both consider non-binary identities to be encompassed within the broader category of transgender identities.

2. Identity versus expression, or being versus doing versus becoming, or nature versus nurture

In *Girl, Woman, Other*, a distinction between gender/sexual identity and expression is often made (for example by Bibi in 1c). Whereas the verb *be* indicates sexuality or gender is an innate part of someone's identity, the verbs *do* and *behave* suggest that identity is created by repeated performative acts. Substituting one verb for another can, therefore, result in significant discursive discrepancy between source and target text (see examples 5e and 8e). Akin to *do*, the verb *become* presents sexuality and gender

identity as dynamic and variable traits. It is not only used by Yazz, who considers non-binarity a fashionable yet activist stance (examples 3d and 10a), but also by lesbian separatists who believe lesbianism can be a political act that serves as a means to decentralize men and abolish patriarchy (3e, 8b, 10e). In contrast, Roland views his sexuality as biologically and psychologically predisposed, rather than a choice he made (example 10d). Interestingly, Bibi introduces the idea of being a girl in a boy's body and with that, and states that her gender identity is unchanged, that she has always been female. This belief may contrast with the constructivist implications of her mentioning she has 'transitioned to female' (example 1b), but illustrates that individuals may adopt discourses that originate in both sides of the nature versus nurture dichotomy. This is also proven by Dominique, who carries political lesbian and trans-exclusionary radical feminist beliefs. On the one hand, she adheres to the idea that it is possible to *become* a lesbian. On the other hand, she does not believe that transgender women are the same as cisgender women because she does not think one can fully *become* female (example 10e).

3. A myriad of identities

The multi-perspective approach of *Girl, Woman, Other* offers insight into the queer community's diversity; each character experiences and describes their sexual and gender identity differently. Furthermore, the wide variety of terms individuals may use to self-identify is reflected in Evaristo's dedication (example 1e). The multitude of gender identities is especially highlighted in Morgan's discourse (examples 2d, 3a and 10b).

4. Homophobia, cis-heteronormativity and transphobia

Queerphobia manifests itself in various ways throughout the novel. Evaristo illustrates that even Kwabena, who considers himself progressive, is homophobic and resorts to slurs that equate homosexual men with effeminate qualities (example 7a). Homophobic discourse often stems from stereotypical gender norms and prejudiced views on homosexuality; whereas slurs directed at gay men often paint them as effeminate (fairy), those directed at lesbians often label them as mannish (dyke). Moreover, homophobia is not always overt, it can also be expressed more subtly, or through microaggressions. Shirley, for example, does not "like or get" the sexuality of her gay friends (example 4a). Additionally, queerphobia is not only present in straight or cis people; queer people themselves grapple with internalized homo- and transphobia. For instance, Bummi does not value her relationship with Omofe the same way she does her relationships with men because of the heteronormative beliefs ingrained in her (example 6b). Morgan initially ridicules the diverse spectrum of gender identities within the trans community but undergoes a transformation upon

recognizing their own ignorance, ultimately embracing a gender-free identity. Furthermore, some queer people hold prejudiced and bigoted opinions about other parts of the community. Despite being a lesbian, Dominique harbors transphobic sentiments rooted in radical feminism, leading her to exclude trans women from women-only gatherings under the pretext that they do not align with her definition of womanhood (10e).

5. References to queer culture

Throughout their chapters, Amma and Dominique make references to Divine, the writings of Audre Lorde, queer cinema, the Riot Grrrl movement, and queer and lesbian bars in London. They identify themselves with these cultural phenomena and cite them as sources of inspiration (examples 4b, 4d, 7e).

6. Self-identification through slang and the reclamation of slurs

One important aspect of *Girl, Woman, Other* is that the characters employ slang as a tool for self-expression and -identification. This includes specific in-group terminology such as the butch/femme dichotomy (examples 4c and 7d), as well as reappropriated slurs which, while derogatory when used by people outside the community, are adopted by queer people as a reclamation of their own identities, a subversion of social norms and a statement of pride (see examples 5d, 6c, 7d and 10c).

7. Social norms for those with non-normative identities

Even though many of the characters in *Girl, Woman, Other* portray non-normative behavior, they still internalize specific ideals of queer relationships and behavior, and project those onto their friends and acquaintances. The topics of dispute include age differences within relationships (example 2b), collaborations between queer activists and established institutions (example 2c), and polyamory versus monogamy (examples 5e and 6a). The existence of these discussions proves that being queer is not a homogenous experience, and that rejecting certain societal norms can still involve the internalization of others.

5: CONCLUSION

One initial requirement for a translation that effectively captures the discourses present in the source text without minoritizing or misrecognizing them, is to be deeply familiarized with said discourses. This entails understanding the reasoning behind characters' beliefs, the context that shaped those beliefs, and how those beliefs are reflected in the characters' speech or the narration. Moreover, discourses reflected in narration and dialogue are determined by the author, who, in turn, has their own beliefs and is impacted by prevalent norms in the source culture. This does not necessarily mean that the author's beliefs are identical to the characters' – a wide variety of discourses on queerness is present in *Girl, Woman, Other*, on account of the various perspectives from which it is told. Evaristo does not explicitly favor certain perspectives over others, but rather allows characters from diverse backgrounds to engage with one another, which results in an interplay of contrasting discourses throughout the novel.

In total, 144 references to queerness were identified throughout *Girl, Woman, Other*. It is important to note that the discussion above only includes the discourses present in the 47 fragments analyzed in this dissertation. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that not all the novel's discourses on queerness are included above. Furthermore, *Girl, Woman, Other* explores topics other than queerness that would also lend themselves to research on how the discourses related to them are translated, such as social class, racism, migration and feminism. Further research could either delve into the translation of those topics in *Girl, Woman, Other*, or compare its discourses on queerness to those present in other literary works.

The results section of this study consists of an extensive discussion of each of the ten strategies employed by Lette Vos in her Dutch translation of *Girl, Woman, Other*. From the analyses, the following two key points can be established. Firstly, each translation strategy can yield both satisfactory and problematic outcomes. Secondly, the efficacy of these strategies hinges on their ability to faithfully transpose the discourse of the source text into the target language. By way of conclusion, the table below provides an overview of the strategies and provides general guidelines on the contexts in which they lead to successful source text fragments, and those in which they are better avoided.

Strategy	General guidelines
Omission	When omitting information, compensation elsewhere in the text or the presence of context clues is necessary to avoid a minoritizing or misrecognizing translation.
Addition	Addition can be used by means of compensation or disambiguation, but adding information that is not present in the source text may result in an altered discourse.
Literal translation	Literal translation is possible if the source and target language are structurally, lexically and morphologically alike. Fixed expressions that occur in both source and target language are best translated literally, especially if the word order is relevant to their meaning. A literal translation of a fixed expression that does not occur in the target language, leads to a loss of meaning. The verbs *do, be* and *become* are preferably translated literally, because their substitution significantly alters the speaker's discourse.
Borrowing	If no native equivalents are available, borrowing may help convey connotations that are otherwise lost in translation. If native equivalents are available, but the borrowed term is also commonly-used in the target language, it is important to determine which variant best suits the speaker's discourse.
Transposition	Transpositions can help adapt the text to the target language's grammar norms and introduce sentence structures that are more natural to the target audience. This strategy's risks include a shift in the sentence's focus and the introduction of word classes with gendered implications, such as personal pronouns.
Abstraction change	Generalizing or specifying information can lead to discursive shifts if the target text is either more ambiguous or more definite than the source text, but can also be functional if no exact equivalents are available and the loss of meaning is compensated elsewhere.

Adaptation	Adapting a culturally specific element to one familiar to the target audience aims to evoke a comparable impact on the target readers as the source text does on its own audience. This approach proves more successful in broader contexts compared to translating language that specifically refers to an individual's identity.
Paraphrase	Paraphrasing is advantageous when direct equivalents are unavailable in the target language. However, when close equivalents exist in the target language, paraphrasing may significantly alter the text's discourse, especially regarding themes like nature versus nurture, identity versus expression, and being versus performing.
Description	Adding descriptions may provide the target text audience with background information, but could also disrupt the text's flow or result in a translation that does not invite its readers to engage with its ambiguity, while the source text does.
Combination	The aforementioned strategies may also occur in combination with each other, in which case the recommendations made for each strategy still apply.

This study aimed to offer translators a starting point for approaching the translation of literary works containing references to queerness. The guidelines presented above can serve as such. However, additional strategies may exist beyond those extracted from the translation of *Girl, Woman, Other* from English to Dutch, particularly considering different language pairs and intertemporal translation. It would be insightful for future research to explore how the following factors influence translation strategies for queer content:

1. *Greater linguistic differences between source and target text*

Dutch and English both belong to the Germanic language family. Their linguistic similarities facilitate literal translations. However, literal translation may not be as effective for language pairs consisting of languages from different linguistic families. Furthermore, Dutch speakers' familiarity with the English language may result in comprehension of loan words among the target audience. Would borrowing still lead to successful target texts if the target audience were unfamiliar with the source language? It would be worthwhile to investigate whether dissimilar language norms, for example in terms of grammatical gender or the use of

pronouns, bring about unwelcomed disambiguation or flattened translations. A glance at the title of the Spanish translation of *Girl, Woman, Other* illustrates how differing norms can lead to translation challenges. The Spanish title is *Niña, Mujer, Otras*. Whereas the English *Other* is not a gendered word and can, therefore, be used in reference to Morgan, who does not identify as a girl or a woman, or to the male supporting characters in *Girl, Woman, Other*, the Spanish *Otras* specifically refers to women. In other words, the investigation of the translation of Evaristo's work into other languages may lead to additional insights into the adequacy of each strategy and elaborate on how linguistic differences between source and target text affect the strategies' efficacy.

2. *Cultural or temporal disparities in understanding queerness*

Although *Girl, Woman, Other* includes storylines on the topic of migration, most of the novel is set in Great Britain. Consequently, a predominantly western perspective on queerness is often maintained throughout the novel. This perspective is also familiar to Dutch-speaking audiences in the Netherlands and Belgium. As a result, few references to queerness in the fragments analyzed in this dissertation posed significant challenges due to fundamentally different understandings of what *queerness* entails in the source and target culture. Yet, cultural differences could be identified in some instances. The phenomenon of wimmin's lands, for example, does not exist in the target culture, and thus created a challenge to the translator. Societies with different social norms for gender and sexuality may have an entirely different view on queerness and use other terminology to describe non-normative experiences. In other words, our understanding of queerness differs culturally. The same can be said for different time periods; what is considered "normal" today may not have been in another era. Therefore, future research could explore to what extent discrepancies in the target and source audiences' understandings of sexuality and gender identity influence the impact of the translation strategies used. Which strategies can bridge significant cultural and temporal differences without altering the source text's discourse, and which ones lead to inaccurate portrayals of queerness in other cultures and time periods?

3. *The translator's intent*

The focus of this paper was on the faithful transmission of queer references, based on the assumption that this was Vos' intent in her translation of *Girl, Woman, Other*. However, some translators might not aim to convey the source text's discourse accurately. Instead, they might intentionally censor or alter the queer connotations present in the source text. Conversely, a queering translation may also involve challenging heteronormativity by rewriting or retranslating texts that do not yet contain references to queerness. This

raises several interesting research questions: What strategies are used by translators who choose to censor, alter or add queer connotations? In what ways does the translator's intent determine the strategies employed? And what impact do these strategies have on the target audience's reception of the translated text?

While there is room for further expansion of the guidelines presented in this dissertation and further research may lead to more a more nuanced view on translation strategies, the hope is that it offers insight into how word choice shapes meaning, how discourse reflects and shapes ideology, and the importance of the translators' understanding of different discourses on gender and sexuality when translating texts with queer references. Translators play a significant role in the representation of queer identities in the target culture. Their work can help introduce new and diverse concepts of queerness, and challenge the heteronormative perspectives that prevail in both source and target cultures. Translation is not a neutral process but one with ideological implications; a poor translation can result in the censorship or misrepresentation of queer identities, even if that is not the translator's intent. When translations fail to capture the nuanced expressions of queer identities, they risk erasing important aspects of the original work's meaning and the lived experiences of queer people. It is, therefore, crucial to aim for translations that fully reflect the complexity and richness of queer source texts. This means paying close attention to the subtleties and layered meanings and striving to preserve them in the source text. Moreover, conscientious translation practices ensure that the nuanced voices of queer authors are heard and preserved across languages and cultures. Queering translation practice does not only honor the original work but also supports the ongoing fight for queer visibility and rights. In essence, translation as queer praxis is about more than just linguistic fidelity; it is about respect, representation, and the active promotion of diversity and inclusion.

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