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Transferring British Culture In Dutch Subtitles: The Translation Of Realia In *Yes, Minister*

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ABSTRACT

In deze masterproef wordt de vertaling van cultuurgebonden elementen, ook 'realia' genoemd, onderzocht in de ondertitels van de Britse serie *Yes, Minister*. Daarbij wordt zowel naar de categorieën van verschillende types realia gekeken als naar de vertaalstrategieën die gebruikt zijn om die categorieën over te brengen in de ondertitels. Het onderzoek gebeurt bottom-up: er worden dus geen vooraf bepaalde classificaties gebruikt, maar de verschillende categorieën en strategieën die in het corpus geobserveerd kunnen worden, vormen de basis voor de classificatie. Uit de data kwamen drie algemene categorieën van realia naar voren, met in totaal 31 subcategorieën, en negen vertaalstrategieën. Realia die naar elementen uit de geografie, het dagelijkse leven of cultuur verwijzen, worden vaak zonder verandering behouden in de ondertitels. Realia die naar de overheid verwijzen, worden het vaakst met 'official equivalents' (Pedersen 2005, 2007) vertaald, waaruit blijkt dat de Britse en Nederlandstalige culturen genoeg op elkaar gelijk om ze met elkaar gelijk te stellen. Ook worden veel elementen helemaal niet in de ondertiteling weergegeven, vooral in het geval van aansprekingen. In het algemeen heeft de ondertitelaar geen zuiver brontaalgerichte of doeltaalgerichte methode gebruikt, maar een middenweg. Door de twee culturen gelijk te stellen, kunnen 'official equivalents' gebruikt worden, waarbij de verschillen tussen de twee culturen niet meer belangrijk zijn. De verdeling van de vertaalstrategieën over de verschillende categorieën laat zien dat de ondertitelaar beïnvloed is door de zeven factoren die Pedersen (2010) noemt. Omdat de tekstuele factor ook van belang bleek, kan die als achtste aan de lijst toegevoegd worden. De meesterproef bevat ook een praktische opdracht: een aflevering zelf ondertitelen. De ervaring die daarbij werd opgedaan, lijkt de theorie te bevestigen.

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1. INTRODUCTION

According to Pedersen (2010), the question of whether a translator should employ a target-oriented or source-oriented approach becomes most relevant when considering the translation of culturally bound references, or 'realia'. It is namely this translation feature which will exhibit the largest difference in effect on the reader between using one or the other. The subtitler is a specific type of translator, and so it would seem that this question applies equally to both the subtitler and the 'regular' translator. However, according to Pedersen (2010), for subtitlers the choice is in many cases made by the medium. Subtitlers must produce a fluent translation which does not pose any problems for the target audience, as the viewers do not have a chance of rereading the translation. This is what makes the study of realia in subtitles interesting and what has inspired this dissertation.

The following research question will be answered in this dissertation: Which types of references have been translated using which translation strategies in the subtitles of the British political satire *Yes, Minister*? In other words, how have they been translated, if at all? To answer this question, first a literature review is presented of the relevant areas of study within Translation Studies. In chapter two, the different aspects of the field of subtitling and the larger area of audiovisual translation are explored. The third chapter presents the existing literature on realia and their translation, both within audiovisual translation and in 'normal' translation. The different classifications for categories of realia as well as translation strategies that have been proposed in the literature are described and compared. Some theoretical problems regarding realia are also discussed. Chapter four presents the different approaches to translational equivalence. For the remainder of this dissertation, Toury's (1995) descriptive equivalence is used. The next chapter presents the research question. Chapter six presents the methodology employed, presenting first the corpus that is studied, which is composed of the first season of *Yes, Minister* and the Dutch professional subtitles created for the DVD release. The second part of the methodology describes the method of analysis of the data. The results of this analysis are presented in chapter seven, in which first the different observed categories of realia types are presented, and then the observed translation strategies are listed. Chapter eight discusses these results, in terms of which translation studies are used for which realia types, as well as the explanations for this distribution. It also describes the equivalence relation between the source and target texts, and considers which factors may have influenced the subtitler in the subtitling process on the basis of the seven factors listed by Pedersen (2010). The ninth chapter reports on the practical part of the dissertation: subtitling an episode of *Yes, Minister*. The final chapter concludes the dissertation with a summary and other concluding remarks.

2. SUBTITLING AND AVT

2.1. WHAT IS SUBTITLING?

Most viewers intuitively know what subtitling is: it is a way specific way of translating what is being said on screen – it does not replace the spoken original, but is added visually in writing. Díaz Cintas gives an academic definition: “subtitling consists in rendering in writing the translation into a TL of the original dialogue exchanges uttered by different speakers, as well as of all other verbal information that is transmitted visually ... or aurally” (2010:344). This definition confirms our gut feeling that it indeed concerns a form of translation. Subtitling has in fact not always been acknowledged as such, as it – and indeed the larger field of audiovisual translation (AVT) as a whole – is a ‘constrained’ type of translation (see below for a discussion of the relevant constraints). There are so many non-linguistic factors influencing the translator’s decisions that the process was not considered to be a form of translation any more. Today, translation encompasses more than just transposing (written) linguistic material from one language to another. Díaz Cintas also confirms that subtitling is something that is added to the original words and images; in his words, it is a “supplement” (2010:344).

2.2. WHAT IS AUDIO-VISUAL TRANSLATION (AVT)?

Subtitling is thus part of audiovisual translation (AVT), an umbrella term for all forms of translation that have more than one relevant way of transmitting information (‘modes’ or ‘channels’). In other words, AVT is multimodal. The single mode in ‘normal’ (i.e. prototypical) translation is purely verbal as it is only concerned with written language. Multimodal forms of translation also transmit information through (a) non-verbal channel(s), typically visual (the images on the screen) and aural (sounds) in nature. Remael (2010) notes that there is often a combination of written and spoken language in multimodal translation, such that its verbal channel contains both visual and aural elements and thus becomes hybrid.

For a long time the field of AVT was left largely unexplored within Translation Studies. It is only in the last twenty years that it has received considerable attention and become a more central research field (Remael 2010, Díaz Cintas 2010). As with all fields of study, defining the object of research is the first hurdle to overcome at the beginning of research on a particular topic. At the outset, it was not entirely clear what the name of the field that we now call AVT should be – thus began the search for a name that should include all possible types of multimodal translation but no

more than that, so that it also excludes all other forms. Remael (2010) reviews the different names that have been used to describe the field:

- The term *film translation* (or *cinema translation*) covers the area that is perhaps best-known for being multimodal (or at least most wanted among translators). However, it does not include anything outside of a movie theatre such as programmes shown only on television (the news, talk shows, documentaries, etc.). The term is clearly too narrow to be used for the entire field.
- *Screen translation* is a much broader term than *film translation*: it is not restricted to one type of broadcast but instead includes any programme on any type of screen. However, it does not include multimodal translation that is not broadcast on a screen (e.g. surtitling in live stage performances). Remael (2010) also notes that *screen translation* also includes localisation which she argues can be, but isn't necessarily, multimodal.
- The term *media translation* (or *multimedia translation*) also includes multimodal translation that is not necessarily broadcast on a screen. It emphasizes the fact that nowadays there are many different types of multimodal media.
- *Media accessibility* is used to include and emphasize the use of multimodal translation to help the (partially) deaf and blind. In this case, the multimodal original is rendered unimodal: for the hearing-impaired, all sounds (including noises in the background) are represented visually; for the visually impaired, all images are described or 'translated' into sounds.
- Eventually *AVT* became the most common and most useful term, covering the correct range. The term is broad enough to include all types of translation, irrespective of the media type and without putting too large an emphasis on a particular aspect of the field.

As the terms used become broader and broader, the limits of the field become more and more fuzzy. Zabalbeascoa (2008) provides a schematic overview of the field of audiovisual communication (all of which can be translated) that is useful for classifying different types of AVT (see Figure 1). He proposes two intersecting axes that together map the field. One axis ranges from aural to visual, the other from verbal to non-verbal. Note that the first contains two modes (visual *and* aural, ranging from 'more aural and less visual' to 'less aural and more visual'), whereas the second only contains one (verbal, ranging from more to less verbal). The cross can be used to describe (all) AVT types by placing them anywhere on the graph. It does not only indicate the type of AVT but also whether a type is more prototypical or more peripheral by being situated closer or further away from the centre – and thus accounts for the fact that the field does not have clear boundaries.

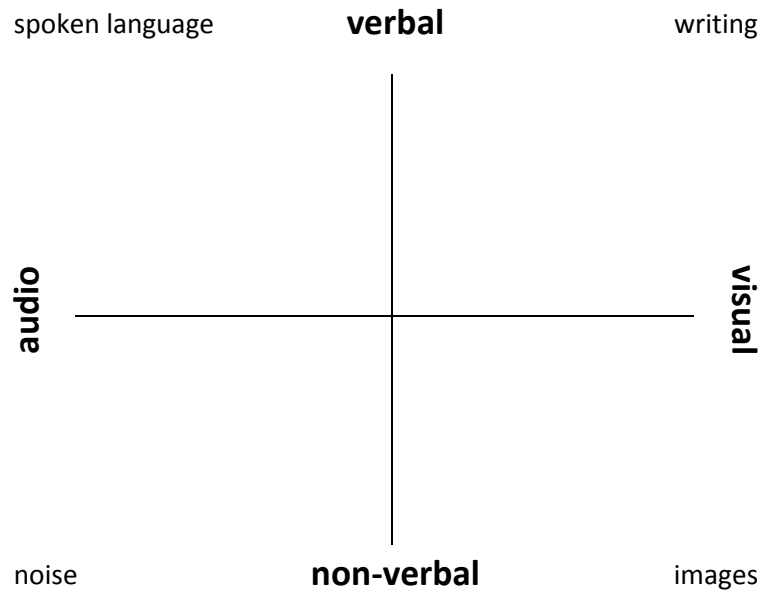


Figure 1. Zabalbeascoa’s axes mapping the audiovisual field, adapted from Zabalbeascoa (2008:26)

The four outside corners of the cross single out the four main components in audiovisual communication (Zabalbeascoa 2008, Gottlieb 1997). Signs that are entirely audio-verbal are the words uttered on or off screen (or whichever medium is used if not a screen), i.e. the spoken language involved; visual-verbal signs are written words we see on the screen; audio-non-verbal signs are all non-linguistic noise, i.e. sounds that are not uttered by a speaker; visual-non-verbal signs are all the ‘normal’ images, i.e. anything visual that is not a written character.

It is not surprising that the four components are in the periphery of the cross, as it is not usual for one component to appear on screen without any of the other components. For example, subtitles are purely visual-verbal signs, and although generally they are very common, they will rarely appear on a blank screen, without accompanying images or sounds. Remael (2010:13) notes that “the different sign systems interact and together constitute the audiovisual text, a structure that is more complex than the simple summation of its parts”.

2.3. TYPES OF AVT

Most people have heard of subtitling or dubbing (or both), the most common types of AVT, but very few people know the newer variants. If they do know any other variants, they often do not realise that it is in fact a form of (audiovisual) translation.

Perhaps the best known ‘smaller’ type of AVT is voice-over, often used in interviews during news reports and in documentaries. Like dubbing, the translation is presented aurally to the viewer, but

unlike dubbing, the original soundtrack is not entirely erased (Díaz Cintas and Orero 2010). The original voices remain present at full volume for a few seconds before the translation begins and they remain audible in the background during the translation.

Another new type of AVT is subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing. As the name suggests, it is concerned with producing subtitles specifically for people with a hearing impairment, adding in writing extra information such as relevant non-verbal sounds and who is speaking. On the one hand, the result is a translation that allows the hearing impaired to get a more complete representation of the original. On the other hand, this group is known to have reading difficulties (de Linde and Kay 1999), which makes a screen full of rapid written information counterproductive.

Another form of help to people with an impairment is audio description. It is aimed at the blind and visually impaired and as such it is the opposite of subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing. The dialogue in the aural channel is supplemented with a description of all relevant visual images through spoken language or other sounds in order to present the hearer with a fuller representation of the original. Related to audio description is audio-subtitling, which is an aural translation based on subtitles instead of the full spoken original (Remael 2010).

Surtitling is a form of AVT used in theatres for live stage productions. The translation is presented on a screen which is usually above the stage (hence the name) during the performance to allow the viewers to understand what is being said. It is often used in opera productions as it can be very difficult to understand the libretto of an opera, even in a language that viewers know well.

Last, video game localisation is a very new type of AVT. Although some games are mostly visual with little aural support (e.g. Tetris), many games have a strong audio-verbal component (as in any role-playing game) which can be very similar to films and that needs to be translated appropriately. The translation may combine subtitling and dubbing in all possible ways: they are sometimes both used at the same time, at other times only subtitling or only dubbing may be used, depending on what type of stage the user is in. For example, in an action stage it is likely that characters will only be dubbed to avoid cluttering of the screen; important instructions may be both dubbed and subtitled to maximise intelligibility; cut scenes (short film-like sequences in which the story lines are developed but during which there is usually no active game play) may only be subtitled.

2.4. TYPES OF SUBTITLES

As new types of AVT are often based on older variants, it is not always clear whether a particular new type should be regarded as a new domain in AVT or whether it is still part of the older domain. For example, it is not clear whether subtitles for the hard of hearing is a new field within AVT or

whether it is simply a new variant of subtitling. Likewise, the types of subtitles identified here may be regarded as new forms of AVT.

Typically, subtitling is concerned with the transfer of the original source language to a different target language or in other words interlingual transfer (Díaz Cintas 2010). Two other types of transfer in subtitles exist as well (Díaz Cintas 2010): intralingual subtitles render speech in writing in the same language (or a different variety of the same language); bilingual subtitles, as the name suggests, render in writing the translation of the source language into two different target languages.

Subtitles we see on television and at the cinema cannot be removed from the screen. They are there by default, not by the viewer's choice. Such subtitles, which until recently were the only type available, are called open. With the advent of DVD technology, the internet and digital television, it became possible for the viewer to add subtitles if he or she wishes to. In this case, subtitles may be added optionally and are called closed. In many cases (though not all), it is also possible to choose the language of the subtitles.

Subtitles can also be classified by the time of translation. Many programmes use subtitles that have been prepared in advance, in which case the translator has finished subtitling the programme before it is broadcast. In live subtitling, however, the translation is created during the broadcast. Due to their immediate nature, live subtitles may somewhat lag behind the spoken original. Semi-live subtitles are also created during broadcasting but give the translator a limited interval time before broadcasting.

All subtitles that are broadcast on television and in cinemas have been created by professional subtitlers and translators. However, an entire online community of non-professional 'translators' exists, the members of which create their own subtitles – a practice named fansubbing (or fandubbing in the case of dubbing). They mostly translate material for which there is no professional translation available (yet).

2.5. HISTORY OF SUBTITLING

The origin of subtitles lies in cinema. Silent films were no problem for a large, multilingual audience – the images mostly spoke for themselves and very little language was involved (though intertitles sometimes needed to be translated). When films with sound were introduced in the 1920s, films were not the same any more for all viewers. Language became much more prominently present, meaning that not everyone understood a (monolingual) film any more. Films needed to be translated from then on. The first solution that film makers came up with to overcome this problem was to make different versions of the same film from scratch in different languages (Remael 2010),

but this method proved unsuccessful (Tveit 2009). Soon the original images were left intact, replacing only the soundtrack (as in dubbing) or adding a written translation on screen (as in subtitling).

Nowadays, the whole subtitling process is entirely digitised: nothing but a simple computer (with subtitling software) is required to make subtitles. In the early days of subtitling, the process was quite different. Everything was done manually; the translations were stamped onto the original film roll or on a separate roll projected at the same time as the original (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998). It was a laborious, frame-by-frame job in which mistakes could not be corrected and timing of the subtitles could not be determined very precisely. Unsurprisingly, the process was soon at least partly taken over by machines – and results greatly improved accordingly (Ivarsson and Carroll 1998).

2.6. SUBTITLING VERSUS DUBBING: AN UNRESOLVED DEBATE

The age old debate on whether subtitling or dubbing is better than the other has still not been resolved – and it probably never will be. Indeed, the proponents of each method are convinced of its superiority over the other. In fact, whether some countries almost exclusively use one or the other is actually due to different traditions (Remael 2010) rather than one being better than the other. In the early days of sound films one method was chosen depending on the country's needs; its inhabitants then simply grew used to it.

Both subtitling and dubbing have their advantages and disadvantages (summarised in Table 1 below). As neither is a perfect solution, some call one or the other 'the lesser of two evils' (Tveit 2009). It is interesting to note that all of the arguments complement each other: what is an advantage to subtitling is a disadvantage to dubbing and vice versa (Gambier 2008). For a more detailed discussion, see Tveit (2009).

One of the most important advantages of subtitling – especially for broadcasting stations – is that it is relatively cheap. Only one person, the subtitler, carries out the entire task. In dubbing, however, many more people are involved: they include at least a translator, one actor (often more) and a sound technician, who all need to be paid for their services. As a result of the fact that more people are involved, dubbing also takes longer to complete than subtitling. The translation needs to be completed before the text can be rehearsed and recorded, all of which takes time. The text to be subtitled is often not translated in advance, but at the same time that the subtitles are being created.

Another important advantage for the viewers is that subtitles do not spoil the effect of the original soundtrack, as it is left intact. There is a sense of authenticity to it that is lost in dubbing, in the latter case perhaps mostly due to the asynchrony of lip movements between source and target language. The solutions (using words that are phonetically similar to the original, digitally changing the lip movements) are often difficult to implement and do not entirely solve the problem.

A smaller advantage of subtitles is their pedagogical value. While it is not very likely that anyone will learn a new language solely based on a soundtrack in that language and its subtitles, exposure to the source language has been shown to be beneficial to language students (Tveit 1987, in Tveit 2009). Dubbing cannot aid language learning in this way.

Subtitling thus also has its disadvantages. For one thing, it is very easy to spot mistakes in them (if you know the source language) – something that easily annoys viewers. Moreover, passages that are difficult to translate or even close to being untranslatable (most often humour) may lead the subtitler to drop some elements in the translation, which is not likely to go unnoticed by the audience. Unlike subtitles, dubbing can hide mistakes in the translation and it need not include all the untranslatable elements that the original has; the audience will probably never know. The constrained nature of subtitling entails a loss of information. In many cases and especially when speaking rates are high, the subtitler needs to make a choice regarding which elements to include and which to drop in the translation. Dubbing is much less constrained and can match the speed of the original; therefore, much less information is lost.

Even countries with a strong subtitling tradition typically dub children's programmes for the simple reason that small children cannot read. Even though educated adults may have very high reading skills, there are many groups of people who do not – be it because of age or education constraints or any form of impairment. Many programmes need to cater for the entire (adult) population. Their readability should therefore not exceed the skills of the slowest readers. However, fewer characters appearing on screen for a longer time mean a further loss of information in the subtitles. Dubbing evades this problem altogether.

It is very difficult to convey natural speech in subtitles. In this respect, subtitles are no different from other forms of writing. Written language and spoken language are stylistically different, but the latter can convey meaning through tone of voice, which the former cannot. Although the original soundtrack may provide some clues, nuances are often lost. The same applies to dialects and sociolects, which are more difficult to translate in writing and therefore often replaced by standard language in subtitles. Dubbing allows a much more precise intonation pattern and can retain dialectal and sociolectal features.

Lastly, proponents of dubbing find that subtitles invade the image. They can take up considerable space on the screen, reducing the image and sometimes hiding essential elements.

Subtitling		Dubbing	
Pro	Con	Pro	Con
Cheap(er)	Mistakes are obvious	Mistakes go unnoticed	More expensive
Fast(er)	Loss of information	No loss of information	Takes longer
No loss of authenticity	Viewers' reading skills	No reading skills required	Loss of authenticity
Pedagogical value	Loss of dialect & sociolect	No loss of dialect & sociolect	No pedagogical value
	Invade image	Image not invaded	

Table 1. The advantages and disadvantages of subtitling and dubbing.

2.7. THE SUBTITLING PROCESS AND ITS CONSTRAINTS

The process of creating subtitles can be broken down into several main parts. Not everyone agrees on what these major parts are or in which order they should be executed; Sanchez (2004) reviews different methods. Most views contain at least the following parts in one form or another.

The most obvious element that the creation of a subtitle contains is the translation, the actual transfer of the text from the source language to the target language, usually on the basis of a written dialogue list. The text also needs to be divided into subtitle units: those sentences or parts of sentences that will form a subtitle are separated. This step can be done with the original or the translated text and is sometimes carried out at the same time as the translation. Sanchez (2004) calls this step 'adaptation'. 'Spotting' is the technical term used for determining the in and out times of the subtitles, or, in other words, when the subtitles appear and disappear from the screen. After the subtitles have been made, they must be checked for mistakes and if necessary corrected. This is done by watching the audiovisual text with the new subtitles as they would appear on a viewer's screen, which is why Sanchez (2004) uses the term 'simulation'.

The issue of constrained translation revolves around the necessity to squeeze in a lot of information in a limited time and space. Words should appear on screen long enough so that they can easily be read (but not too long, so that they cannot be read twice) but they should also aim to contain *everything* that has been said. In many cases and especially with high speech rates this is practically impossible. The result will almost always be a loss of information in the subtitles. Díaz Cintas (2010) even argues that reduction is the subtitle's main translation strategy, but he also notes the importance of retaining any vital information.

To increase the space dedicated to vital information, redundant words and phrases as well as words of which the meaning is very obvious are often completely dropped in the translation. For example, repetitions, names and short greetings may be left out. However, the latter cannot always be omitted as these elements may convey important information in some cultures. In Japanese, for instance, terms of address are socially very important and should be included in the translation.

Frequently the reduction of redundant information is still not enough to fit the translation on the screen, thus requiring larger parts of text to be deleted. The subtitler must then determine which elements of the original will or will not be represented in the subtitles.

The limited time and space available also entail another constraint in subtitling that is not present in most other forms of translation. Subtitles must appear on screen in synchrony with the dialogue, leaving little space in between. This means that there is no space to add a justification for the choices made and the strategies employed, nor for any other explanatory notes; in Díaz Cintas's terminology, it is impossible to add "metatextual devices" (2010:346).

It is thus the technical constraints that entail the linguistic constraints. The subtitler handles both, turning his job into a technical as well as a linguistic challenge. The technical rules that define what subtitles should look like depend for a large part on the specific client who ordered them – different broadcasting stations have different formats – but they never differ greatly (many viewers do not even notice that some subtitles look different from others). They basically involve the following general constraints (based on Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007):

- A (professional) subtitle may only be one or two lines long. Amateur subtitles are sometimes three to even four lines long, but they generally take up too much space on a screen, covering up a large part of the image. A maximum of two lines is a compromise between the necessity to represent most of the verbal information on the one hand and keeping the image as visible and uncluttered as possible on the other hand.
- Subtitles always appear at the bottom of the screen and are displayed horizontally. There are some exceptions: subtitles may sometimes be displayed at the top of the screen if otherwise they hide credit titles, especially if the client requires those to be legible. Subtitles in languages that traditionally have a vertically aligned script may be displayed vertically to one side of the screen. Whether horizontal subtitles are aligned to the left of the screen or centred depends on the preference of the client; both are common.
- The 'six second rule' determines that a subtitle containing two full lines should appear on screen for six seconds. That is the average amount of time that the average reader needs to read a two-line subtitle completely but without re-reading it. The maximum length of each line depends on the broadcasting medium (cinema screens are proportionally larger than television screen and thus allow for more characters per line), the client's requirements and viewers' reading skills. The maximum length per line can therefore vary from anything between 33 to 43 characters (or 66 to 86 for two lines), with an average length of 37 characters on television and 40 characters on a cinema screen.

- Most subtitles are shorter than two full lines. The maximum amount of characters for shorter subtitles is determined by viewers' reading speed, measured in characters per second (cps) or sometimes in words per minute (wpm). The traditional speed of 12 cps is based on the six second rule with 37 characters per line, which is rather slow. Young, educated viewers who have high reading skills may require a faster reading speed of up to 14 cps, allowing more words and therefore more information per subtitle. The precise reading speed depends on the assignment and on the client's requirements.
- A subtitle should appear at the exact moment that a person starts speaking. In technical terms, each frame is connected to a small sound segment. The length of a sound segment is equal to the amount of time that the frame appears on screen (1/24 or 1/25 seconds depending on the amount of frames per second used). The frame corresponding to that sound segment in which a person starts speaking is the first frame in which the subtitle must appear.
- A subtitle need not disappear at the exact moment that a person stops speaking but may remain on screen a little longer to allow the viewer to finish reading it if the context allows it – i.e. if there is no new subtitle that should appear at that time. Subtitles may remain on screen during a shot change (a change of position of the camera within a scene), but not during a scene change (a change between one scene and the next). Very short subtitles should remain on screen long enough for the eye to both register it and read it and therefore longer than its reading speed technically requires. For example, assuming a reading speed of 12 cps (with 24 frames per second), a subtitle that is three characters long should technically appear for only six frames or 0.25 seconds, which flashes by too quickly. The amount of time that it should appear depends again on the client's requirements but it is often at least one second.
- There should always be a couple of blank frames in between subtitles in order to allow the eye to register the change of subtitles. If one subtitle appears in the frame after the previous one has ended, then the eye is not likely to have noticed the change to a new subtitle. Thus there should at least be two or three frames with no subtitles in between the end of one subtitle and the start of the next.
- Within each subtitle, each semantic or syntactic unit should be placed as a whole on a line whenever possible. For example, on the one hand there should not be a line break between an adjective and the noun it modifies as they form a whole. On the other hand two different sentences within one subtitle should be placed on different lines (if there is enough space) because they are two separate units.

- Each subtitle should be “semantically self-contained and come across as a coherent, logical and syntactical unit” (Díaz Cintas 2010:345). In other words, each subtitle should form a comprehensible whole. After all, in most cases viewers do not have the option to go back and re-read a subtitle, so it should not strike them as odd. Indeed, the best subtitles are sometimes considered to be those that are read but otherwise go by unnoticed.

These rules are increasingly becoming guidelines; their limits are being stretched further and further. Such changes are influenced by both technological advances and social changes. For instance, it is now possible to use proportion lettering (in which thinner letters like ‘i’ take up less space than wider letters like ‘m’) which generally allows more letters in the same amount of space than mono-spacing (in which all letters are equally wide). Nowadays more people have enjoyed a higher level of education than when subtitles were first commercially introduced, as a result of which the average reading speed has increased (and is still increasing), permitting the use of longer, more elaborate subtitles.

2.8. RESEARCH ON SUBTITLING

Research on subtitling can cover any of its aspects: from the professional environment of the subtitler to the subtitling software to the translation (as an end product) to its reception by viewers. All of these areas are fruitful, but there is a particular interest for the translation process because of its constrained nature within subtitling. As Gambier (2008) notes, this trend has been around since even before the boom of the past twenty years, but he also indicates that most of these studies have one large shortcoming: they only focus on the linguistic aspect of the process, i.e. the transfer from oral to written language, without considering any of the other (e.g. visual, social, etc.) aspects. For research focussing on the linguistic aspect, see for example Bogucki (2009) on (errors in) fansubbing and Mattsson (2009) on the translation of discourse particles in subtitles. For research that takes non-linguistic aspects into account, see for example Mereu (2011) on censorship in audiovisual texts in the context of fascist Italy and Perego (2009) on the translation of meaning that is encoded in the visual channel. Another smaller but still popular field of study is the translation of humour in subtitles, as in AVT (indeed, not just subtitling) verbal humour is often inextricably connected to the visual image. This often happens through word play in the source language, but the same word play may not be available in the target language (Delabastita 1994). The subtitler must come up with a verbal solution that still fits the image (and the time available), if that is at all possible.

3. REALIA

3.1. WHAT ARE REALIA?

The term *realia* is Latin for ‘real things’ (Leppihalme 2011:126). Realia are words (or other segments of speech) that refer to elements in a specific culture, or, as Díaz Cintas and Remael define them: “extralinguistic references to items that are tied up with a country’s culture, history, or geography” (2007:200), but as Grit (1997 notes, the term is also used to refer to the culturally bound items themselves rather than the words that refer to them. A definition that highlights the problems caused by realia in translation is given by Leppihalme: “concepts which are found in a given source culture but not in a given target culture” (2011:126). In other words, realia refer to elements for which there is no equivalent in other languages spoken in different cultural communities. They are thus the result of differences between cultures (which are extralinguistic) and so should not be confused with differences between languages and language systems (which are intralinguistic).

The term *realia*, introduced by Florin (1993), is only one of many terms used to refer to this specific phenomenon. Other terms used in the literature include *culture-bound problems* (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993), *culture-specific items* (CSIs) (Franco Aixelá 1996), *allusions* (Leppihalme 1997), *extralinguistic cultural references* (ECRs) (Pedersen 2005, 2007, 2010), *culture-specific references* (Ramière 2006), and *culture-bound terms* (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007). Some differences between the terms may exist, mostly depending on the author’s concept of what constitutes reality (Leppihalme 2011) and how the author defines culture, but in many cases the terms are practically synonymous.

Thus, someone who is not a part of a specific cultural community will not understand a cultural reference to an item within that community, even if they speak the same language. Note, though, that ‘items’ need not be physical and that a ‘culture’ or ‘cultural community’ need not necessarily be tied to an entire country (see Duranti 2008 for a discussion of the notion of culture). The opposite and naïve view that language, nation and culture *do* coincide has been termed ‘homogenisation’ by Blommaert and Verschueren (1998).

Obvious examples of realia are references to a community’s cultural heritage. For instance, on 5 and 6 December, the Low Countries celebrate the name day of the patron saint of all children; more commonly known as *Sinterklaas* in Dutch or *Saint-Nicolas* in French. Although a major winter holiday in these countries, it is not widely known in other countries. Even though a reference to this holiday in a source text can be translated literally to *Saint Nicholas* in English, the English target culture will not be likely to understand the reference, simply because they do not know the holiday and the story

behind it. In this example, the cultural community (the Low Countries) is not bound by borders but encompasses the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and parts of northern France. The fact that at least two different main languages (and even more regional varieties such as Luxembourgish) are spoken in it shows that culture-bound references are not restricted to a particular language, but to a particular cultural community and the language(s) spoken in it.

3.1.1. TRANSCULTURALITY

As Leppihalme (2011) notes, the notion of realia is in fact not clearly delimited, but has fuzzy boundaries. Just like all linguistic material, realia in one language can be borrowed by another language. The users of that second language may then become increasingly familiar with the concepts behind the borrowings as those words and phrases become more and more widespread in that language. The borrowed concepts are then no longer bound to a single culture. One of the first to note this is Leppihalme (1997). She studies the translation from English into Finnish of what she calls *allusive names*, which are also culturally bound items. She observes that there is an overlapping part between the two cultures at hand, because cultures do not exist in complete isolation. Instead, in the entire Western culture, there is some common cultural knowledge such as biblical names. She represents this overlap graphically in a diagram:

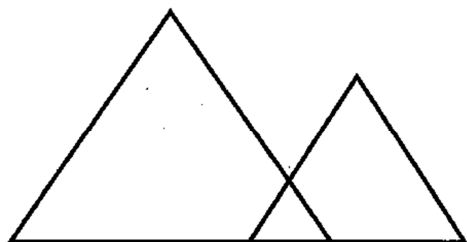


Figure 2. Overlapping cultures as represented by Leppihalme (1997:80)

In Figure 2, the larger triangle (on the left) represents the English names – and by extension, Anglophone culture; the smaller triangle (on the right) represent the Finnish names – and by extension, Finnish culture. The English triangle is larger because the Anglophone culture is both geographically and demographically larger than Finnish culture. The small triangle in the middle represents the overlap between the two cultures, or, in other words, it represents those names that are known in both cultures. Pedersen (2010) recognises that this model accurately describes the fact that cultural items can transcend cultural borders (which he terms ‘transculturality’). However, he also criticises the model, as the overlap focuses on the names that are shared in *both* cultures – while in the case of translation, it is only items from the source culture that matter, as the source text will not normally contain elements from the target culture. Also, Pedersen (2010) argues, even within the

overlap of both cultures, there is no equal distribution between the two cultures. There are many more English elements that are known in Finnish culture than vice versa, though the model cannot represent this difference.

Pedersen (2005) elaborates Leppihalme's (1997) model. Unlike Leppihalme (1997), Pedersen (2005) developed his model specifically to describe transculturality in AVT, though it can in fact also be used more generally for any type of translation. He also takes a slightly different perspective so as to account for the directionality of cultural transfer in translation (i.e. from source culture to target culture and not the other way around). He simply does not include target culture items; instead, although he does not explicitly mention this, his three types of cultural items are all source culture items, which may or may not be known in the target culture. He also represents his model in a diagram:

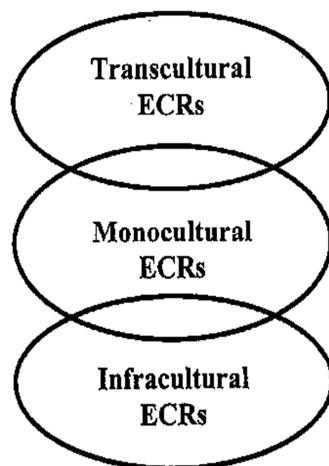


Figure 3. The three levels of transculturality by Pedersen (2010:73)
ECR = extralinguistic cultural item

The top ellipse in Figure 3 represents those cultural items from the source culture that are also known in the target culture, which Pedersen (2005) names 'transcultural', precisely because these items transcend cultural borders. It is the broadest level, meaning that items of this type are the most widely known. Pedersen (2010) argues that this level does not pose any translation problems, because the item can be retained mostly unchanged in the translation while its meaning remains accessible to the target audience. The middle ellipse represents those cultural items that are known to the source culture audience, but not to the target culture audience. As they only belong to one culture, Pedersen (2005) names them 'monocultural'. The items in this level are less widespread than transcultural items. According to Pedersen (2010), this is the only level that really poses a translation problem, requiring the translator's mediation to ensure that the item's meaning becomes accessible to the target audience. Lastly, the bottom ellipse represents those cultural items from the source culture that are in fact little known even within the source culture. Pedersen (2005) named them

'microcultural', but this term perhaps implied too strongly that the item would be part of a subculture, which need not be the case, and so Pedersen (2010) has renamed the elements at this level as 'infracultural', which focuses more on the fact that these elements can simply be lesser known in the general culture. This level is the narrowest, meaning that its items are the least well known. According to Pedersen (2010), these elements do not cause translation problems because the source text must somehow also introduce these items so as to ensure that the source audience knows what they are, which the translation can simply retain, in most cases.

Pedersen explains that the three levels overlap "to illustrate that transculturality is a fuzzy feature" (2010:73). Although he seems to be right about the fact that transculturality indeed has fuzzy boundaries, the graphic model does not reflect this. The model instead suggests that there are some items that fall in both categories (so that such an item can be labelled as being both transcultural and monocultural, for example), and some items that only fall in one (so that such an item can be labelled as only monocultural, for instance). What Pedersen (2005, 2010) wishes his model to show is that items can be transcultural, monocultural or infracultural to different degrees. This can be represented more effectively by using a continuum ranging from most transcultural over monocultural to most infracultural rather than three separate levels with overlapping fields.

3.2. RESEARCH ON REALIA

Even within the AVT domain, which has such prominent non-verbal channels of communication, usually only references made in the oral dialogue (and their subtitled or dubbed translations) are studied. However, Pettit (2009) rightly notes that references need not be verbal but can also be transmitted through the visual mode (e.g. gestures and other types of body language). Also, research on realia (both within AVT and in 'normal' translation) tends to be rather fragmented, with many authors providing their own classifications. Still, all classifications fall within one of two perspectives. On the one hand, authors can base their categorisation on the type of reference used in the source text, while in a second line of approach a reference is categorised based on the translation strategy employed by the translator to render the item in the target text. While some studies only deal with one of the perspectives, the two are certainly not mutually exclusive but in fact complementary. Using both gives a fuller picture of what happened to which types of references in the translation.

3.2.1. CLASSIFICATIONS OF TYPES OF REALIA

One of the reasons why each study provides its own classification is that many of the texts studied in them have different thematic topics. A study on the realia in a war story would, for instance, need to classify many more items regarding military ranks than a romantic comedy, which will contain more socio-cultural items. It is logical that each study focuses on the more detailed classification of the types of realia that occur frequently in the studied text. Likewise, it would not be very useful to provide a detailed classification of a type that barely occurs in the text. Moreover, as Leppihalme (2011) observes, it is almost impossible to provide an exhaustive classification. There is one drawback to this. While most studies do not try to provide a detailed exhaustive classification, they do try to cover the entire field (to make sure that the realia outside of the text's main theme are also covered), though thereby making their classification more general overall and so reducing the level of detail for the items that do fall within the main theme. This section will describe some of the classifications provided in the literature. Classifications that are similar will be dealt with together.

3.2.1.1. NEDERGAARD-LARSEN (1993), FLORIN (1993), GRIT (1997) AND RAMIÈRE (2004)

Four classifications have (approximately) the same major categories. Nedergaard-Larsen (1993), Florin (1993) and Ramière (2004) distinguish between geographical, historical, social and cultural realia, though Florin (1993) names the last two of these 'social-territorial' and 'ethnographic' respectively, and Ramière (2004) and Grit (1997) both combine these two into one 'socio-cultural' category. These categories are all relatively straightforward: geographical realia are references to places and other elements of our surroundings (*Afsluitdijk*, example from Grit 1997:189), historical realia refer to people and events in the past (*Karel de Grote*), social realia refer to elements from society (*hippie*, example from Florin 1993:124) and cultural realia refer to elements from cultural life (*Sinterklaas*). Grit (1997) adds three more categories to his taxonomy: public institutional realia, which refer to elements in the public sector (*Rijkswaterstaat*), private institutional realia, which refer to the private sector (*Sainsbury's*) and units, which are measurements (*inch*). These are all very broad categories, but out of the four taxonomies only Nedergaard-Larsen identifies subcategories within these general categories.

Within the geographical realia, Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) identifies four subcategories. The first is 'geography', which contains references to our natural surroundings (*Mount Kilimanjaro*). Secondly, there is 'meteorology', which contains references to the climate (*bora*). The third subcategory is 'biology', which contains references to flora and fauna (*llama*). The last subcategory is 'cultural geography', which contains references to regions, towns and streets (*Groenplaats*). There are three subcategories within historical references: 'buildings' (*Arc de Triomphe*), 'events' (*bataille de Verdun*)

and ‘people’ (*Karel de Grote*). The category containing references to society has five subcategories, the first of which is ‘economy’, which refers to trade and industry (*CEO*). The second is ‘social organisation’, which refers to authorities and the judicial system (*Supreme Court*). Thirdly, ‘politics’ contains references to state management (*Republican*). The fourth subcategory is ‘social conditions’, which refers to both living conditions and subcultures (*yuppie*). Lastly, ‘customs’ contains references to any way of life regarding family relations, housing, transport, food, and clothing (*sombrero*). The last main category, cultural realia, contains four subcategories. ‘Religion’ is the first and includes references to religious places, rites and people (*Buddha*). The second is ‘education’ and refers to anything associated with instruction (*baccalauréat*). Thirdly, ‘media’ contains references to the press, television and radio (*BBC*). The last subcategory, ‘culture’, contains all other cultural references, ranging from literature to restaurants to sports. Grit’s (1997) private institutional and public institutional categories would fall within Nedergaard-Larsen’s (1993) social category, under ‘economy’ and ‘politics’. Interestingly, although Nedergaard-Larsen’s taxonomy is rather detailed, it does not include a category for measurements, which Grit does include.

Nedergaard-Larsen (1993)	Florin (1993)	Grit (1997)	Ramière (2004)
Geographical	Geographical	Geographical	Geographical
Geography, Meteorology, Biology			
Historical	Historical	Historical	Historical
Buildings, Events, People			
Social	Social-Territorial	Socio-Cultural	Socio-Cultural
Economy, Social organisation, Politics, Social conditions, Customs		Private institutional,	
		Public institutional	
Cultural	Ethnographic	Socio-Cultural	Socio-Cultural
Religion, Education, Media, Culture		Units	

Table 2. Schematic overview of the taxonomies given by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993), Florin (1993), Grit (1997) and Ramière (2004).

3.2.1.2. VLACHOV AND FLORIN (IN VERSTRAETE 2004)

One of the most detailed taxonomies of the types of realia is given by Vlachov and Florin (in Verstraete 2004). The classification was developed in the 1970s for realia in general translation. It distinguishes between three main categories, each of which is each further subdivided into several smaller categories. All the examples in this section are taken from Vlachov and Florin (in Verstraete

2004); the English labels of the categories are taken from Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) who re-quoted (and incorrectly referenced) this taxonomy.

The first main category contains any item that is geographical in nature, meaning that these items refer to the natural (or man-made) surroundings that we live in. It is further divided into three subcategories, of which the first is ‘physical geography’. These refer to both landscapes (*savannah, fjord*) and meteorological conditions (*tornado*). The second subcategory is ‘geographical objects’, which is similar to the first category. However, the first only contains elements that are naturally present in the surroundings, whereas the second only contains man-made elements such as a *polder*. The last subcategory is ‘endemic animal and plant species’, which is self-explanatory. Examples are *koala* and *sequoia*.

The second main category is ethnographic and contains any element that pertains to human life except for any socio-political items, which make up the third main category. The ethnographic elements are subdivided into five smaller categories, the first of which is ‘daily life’. It contains references to food and drinks (*spaghetti, whisky*), shops (*trattoria*), clothing (*kimono, sombrero*) and housing (*igloo*). The second is ‘work’ and contains references to jobs (*gaucho*), tools (*machete*) and other related items (*gilde*). The third subcategory is rather large and is called ‘art and culture’, which contains references to music and instruments (*blues, tamtam*), dance (*twist*), religion, worship and rituals (*Ramadan, shaman, synagogue*), games (*domino*), and mythology (*Sinterklaas*). Fourth, there is ‘descent’, which contains all elements referring to peoples and heritage (*Basque, Cockney*) and lastly, the fifth category contains ‘measures’ of all kinds (*feet, dollar*).

The third main category contains all references to social and political life. Its first subcategory is ‘administrative or territorial units’ such as county, and also includes different types of residential areas (*bidonville*) and smaller structural units (*boulevard, arrondissement*). The second category contains references to ‘institutions and functions’, which contains most of the political references (*Reichstag, sheriff*). Thirdly, there are the references to ‘socio-cultural life’, which includes groupings of people (*Ku Klux Klan*), social services (*the Red Cross*), education (*college, campus*), social class (*paria*) and symbols (*Union Jack*). The last subcategory contains all ‘military institutions and objects’: divisions (*squadron*), weapons (*Kalashnikov*), uniforms (*kepi*) and ranks (*marshal, paratrooper*).

Vlachov and Florin in Verstraete (2004)		
Geographical	Ethnographic	Socio-political
Physical geography	Daily life	Administrative or territorial units
Geographical objects	Work	Institutions and functions
Endemic animal and plant species	Art and culture	Socio-cultural life
	Descent	Military institutions and objects
	Measures	

Table 3. Schematic overview of the taxonomy given by Vlachov and Florin (in Verstraete 2004).

3.2.1.3. LEPPihalme (1997)

Leppihalme (1997) has an entirely different approach. Her allusions are often related to humour in translation, but she explicitly mentions that her classification also includes non-humorous allusions. She does not classify them according to the field that they belong to, but by allusion types, largely on the basis of how well known the allusion is in its culture. The example sentences mentioned below are all taken from Leppihalme (1997:10-11). The allusions in these sentences are underlined.

Only the first category, ‘allusions proper’, can be further subdivided. The allusions in this category are well known in their culture, but are not normally used as allusions. This category groups together ‘proper name allusions’, which contain a proper name, and ‘key-phrase allusions’, which do not contain any proper names. An example of the former type is *Think I’ve become a Raffles in my old age?* ; an example of the latter is *Apparently taxis all turn into pumpkins at midnight*. Both categories can be further divided into allusions that are ‘regular’, so that it appears unchanged to the shared cultural knowledge, and allusions that are ‘modified’, so that it appears with a small change but is still recognisable as an allusion. An example of the latter is *to pee or not to pee* which is a slightly changed version derived from Shakespeare’s famous *to be or not to be*.

The second category is ‘stereotyped allusions’. Unlike allusions proper, they are often used as allusions. They may have become clichés and the cultural knowledge behind the allusion may even have faded from the cultural community’s shared memory. An example of such an allusion is *We were ships that pass in the night*.

The third category contains allusions that have “a more marginal character” (Leppihalme 1997:11). There are two of such allusion types; first of all, the semi-allusive comparisons, in which the allusion itself may be well known, but its ties with its original meaning have become looser. An example is *Like the land of Oz, technology has good and bad witches*. The second of this allusion type are eponymous adjectives, which are proper names that are used as adjectives, such as *Orwellian images*. There are some exceptions to this category: fixed combinations of eponymous adjectives and nouns are not included in this category (for example, *a Pavlovian response*), nor are lexicalised eponyms (in which the eponym is often no longer recognised) such as *Casanova*.

Leppihalme (1997)			
Allusions proper		Stereotyped allusions	Semi-allusive comparisons & eponymous adjectives
Proper name allusions			
regular	modified		
Key-phrase allusions			
regular	modified		

Table 4. Schematic overview of the taxonomy given by Leppihalme (1997).

3.2.2. CLASSIFICATIONS OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR REALIA

Like the classifications of types of realia, many studies in the literature looking at strategies for translating realia provide their own classification. However, unlike the classifications of types, it does make sense to classify translation strategies exhaustively, because the number of strategies – although perhaps large – is not endless. Indeed, many quite detailed classifications have been proposed. This is certainly positive for the theoretical side of things, but is sometimes difficult to execute practically, as in many cases a translation has combined more than one strategy for a single item (though some authors acknowledge this and/or even include this in their classification [Grit 1997, Pedersen 2010]). Again, the most similar classifications are dealt with together in this section.

3.2.2.1. WHAT IS A 'STRATEGY'?

Before going on to describe the different classifications of translation strategies, it is useful to consider what is really meant by the term 'strategy'. Translators and translation scholars may intuitively know what it means, but although it is used throughout Translation Studies, it has slightly different meanings due to influences from different disciplines in different branches of Translation Studies. Gambier (2010) recognises three main 'uses' for the term in the field. First of all, under the influence of linguistics, a strategy refers to procedures that describe how the linguistic material was manipulated when shifting from one language to another. This is how the concept is understood in the classic texts by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Nida (1964) and more recently Chesterman (1997). The second view is more cognitive in nature and regards a strategy as an operation in the mind of the translator to overcome some translation problem. Strategies in this case describe what happens during translation seen as a decision-making process (Levý 1967/2000). It is this concept of strategies that is at hand in this thesis, as it studies how the problem of realia is overcome in subtitles. The third concept identified by Gambier (2010) is more general and pertains to all of the strategies involved in producing a translation. This ranges from the strategies used to learn more on the subject of the source text in the preparatory stages to determining how the completed translation is to be delivered to the client.

3.2.2.2. GRIT (1997), TOMASZKIEWICZ (IN PETTIT 2009) AND DÍAZ CINTAS & REMAEL (2007)

Even though the three classifications are similar, they were not all designed to describe the same kind of translation. Grit (1997) describes strategies that are used for the translation of cultural items in translation in general, whereas Tomasziewicz (in Pettit 2009) and Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) designed theirs specifically with regard to subtitling. Despite this difference, the taxonomies of Grit (1997) and Tomasziewicz (in Pettit 2009) nevertheless are almost identical, although they use

different names for the different strategies. The classification by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) shows more differences with the first two. Grit (1997) will hereafter be referred to as “Grit”, Tomasziewicz (in Pettit 2009) as “Tomaszkiewicz” and Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) as “Díaz Cintas and Remael”.

There are three strategies that all three of the taxonomies share. First of all, an item can be reproduced in the target text without changing anything to it. For example, the name *Brad Pitt* can be reproduced in the target exactly as *Brad Pitt*. Grit calls this ‘retention’, Tomasziewicz calls it ‘borrowing’, and Díaz Cintas and Remael call it a ‘loan’. Secondly, the item can be translated literally. The items that are translated with this strategy are usually phrases. The result of the translation is a corresponding phrase that contains words of the target language but those words are not usually combined in this way. The meaning of the target phrase may or may not immediately be transparent to the reader. For example, in translating from Dutch to English, it is immediately clear what the *Royal Dutch Meteorological Institute* (for *Koninklijk Nederlands Meteorologisch Instituut*) is by combining the meaning of the individual words, but *States-General* (for *Staten-Generaal*) requires some more explanation for an English reader to understand it (examples taken from Grit 1997:45). Both Grit and Tomasziewicz call this strategy ‘literal translation’; Díaz Cintas and Remael call it a ‘calque’. The third identical strategy consists of simply not reproducing the item at all in the target text. All three taxonomies refer to this strategy as ‘omission’.

There are three strategies that are *almost* the same across the three classifications. First, an item can be translated by using a hyperonym, that is, a more general term. *Sarong* can for instance be translated as *a dress*. This is what Grit calls a ‘translation of the core meaning’ and Tomasziewicz names ‘generalisation’. Díaz Cintas and Remael have included this strategy in what they call ‘explicitation’, which does not only consist of using a more general term, but also a more specific term (a hyponym) in the translation. The second strategy is to use a target language (and culture) word that is more or less equivalent to the source item. In other words, the source item is replaced by a target item that has approximately the same meaning. In Grit’s terms, this is ‘approximation’, in Tomasziewicz’s words, it is ‘equivalence’. The third strategy involves replacing a source item with a target item that has the same function. The difference with the previous strategy is that here the meaning of the target item will be further removed from the source item. As Grit says, it is mostly the function of the original that is retained, rather than its meaning. An example is to translate the Dutch *Partij van de Arbeid* with *Labour Party* in English (Grit’s example, 1997:46). Both Grit and Tomasziewicz term this strategy ‘adaptation’. Díaz Cintas and Remael combine this strategy and the previous one under the name ‘transposition’ and so do not make the distinction between retaining the function or the meaning of the item.

One strategy is not included in the classification by Díaz Cintas and Remael, but it is present in the other two. This strategy consists of rendering an item in the target text with a paraphrase that explains the item's meaning (usually in more words than the source item). For example, *hagelslag* can be paraphrased as *chocolate sprinkles*. Grit has named this strategy 'definition'; Tomasziewicz calls it 'explication'.

The remaining strategies are each only mentioned in one of the three taxonomies. A simple strategy that is only mentioned by Tomasziewicz is 'replacement with deictics', whereby an item is replaced with a personal pronoun. This is only possible if the item has already been introduced previously or if it is clear from the visual picture what is being referred to. An example is to translate *Brad Pitt has six children* with *He has six children*. Díaz Cintas and Remael have included in their classification a strategy named 'lexical recreation'. It is used when the source text contains a neologism and consists of creating a (analogous) neologism in the target text. Another strategy that they mention is 'compensation', by which a translator makes up for the loss of meaning in one part of the translation by elaborating another part. As this normally involves adding elements to the source text, this strategy is in fact part of the 'addition' strategy. The name of the latter strategy speaks for itself: the translator adds something in the translation that was not included in the source. An example is the translation of *the chair* in English, referring to the chair used for executions, with *la silla eléctrica* ('the electric chair') in Spanish (example from Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007:207). The last strategy that only Díaz Cintas and Remael include is 'substitution'. It consists of using a target language item for reasons of space: when the source item could in principle be reproduced identically but the time and space constraints of subtitling do not allow it, a shorter target language item may be used. An example is using *stew* instead of *goulash* (example from Díaz Cintas and Remael: 204). Finally, only Grit includes a separate 'combination' category to describe the fact that some translations are the result of more than one strategy.

Grit (1997)	Tomaszkiewicz (in Pettit 2009)	Díaz Cintas & Remael (2007)
retention (handhaving)	borrowing	loan
literal transation (leenvertaling)	literal translation	calque
omission (weglating)	omission	omission
translation of the core meaning (kernvertaling)	generalisation	explicitation
approximation (benadering)	equivalence	transposition
adaptation (adaptatie)	adaptation	
definition (omschrijving)	explication	
	replacement with deictics	
		lexical recreation
		compensation
		addition
		substitution
combination (combinatie)		

Table 5. Schematic overview of the taxonomies given by Grit (1997), Tomasziewicz (in Pettit 2009) and Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007).

3.2.2.3. FLORIN (1993), FRANCO AIXELÁ (1996) AND PEDERSEN (2007)

The taxonomies by Florin (1993) and Franco Aixelá (1996) were designed with general translation in mind, whereas that by Pedersen (2005, 2007) was created specifically for the analysis of subtitling. Yet all three of the classifications are based on a dichotomy between items that have been largely preserved without changes to them in the target text and items that did undergo changes in the translation. The categories are respectively labelled ‘transcription’ and ‘substitution’ by Florin (1993), ‘conservation’ and ‘substitution’ by Franco Aixelá (1996) and ‘minimum change’ and ‘intervention’ by Pedersen (2007). Each author has a different sub-classification of these two main types. The three classifications will hereafter be referred to as “Florin”, “Franco Aixelá” and “Pedersen” respectively.

Concerning the first type, Florin does not elaborate much. He just points out that the retention of the item may involve some small changes due to differences in the target language’s writing system. For instance, the name of a person of the source culture may have been written in a Roman alphabet, but will need to be rendered phonetically if the language of the target text uses a Cyrillic alphabet. Florin calls this type of transfer ‘transliteration’; Franco Aixelá calls it ‘orthographic adaptation’. The latter has included a separate strategy for retaining an item without changing its orthography, namely ‘repetition’. Both strategies are included in Pedersen’s ‘retention’. Franco Aixelá and Pedersen also distinguish strategies for rendering an item in more natural terms in the target language, without losing the foreign meaning. Pedersen makes a distinction between ‘official equivalents’, which are standard translations of a particular item, and ‘direct translations’, which result in a calque. Franco Aixelá groups these two together under the name ‘linguistic (non-cultural)

translation'. Interestingly, Florin regards calques as a strategy that does change the item and therefore classifies it in the 'substitution' half of his taxonomy, under the name of 'neologisms'. A last type of strategy is defined by Franco Aixelá. By using a 'gloss', the translator retains the item as it is, but adds a short explanation (usually a paraphrase) to explain its meaning to the reader. This can either happen in the text itself ('intra-textual') or in a footnote below the text ('extra-textual').

Concerning the second type of the dichotomy, Florin provides a more detailed subclassification. Other than the neologisms mentioned above, he also identifies 'approximate translations', which consists of using a more general term for the item in the target text. Franco Aixelá calls this 'universalization' (which can be 'limited' or 'absolute' depending on whether any of the foreign colour is retained), Pedersen terms it 'generalisation'. Florin also identifies a strategy by which the item is replaced by an equivalent from the target culture. The original item is completely substituted by another item, though the latter has a similar meaning and function in the target culture. Florin calls these substitutions 'analogues', Franco Aixelá terms the strategy 'naturalization' and Pedersen names it 'substitution'. Sometimes, a translator cannot substitute one item of the source culture for another in the target culture, and the translator must resort to a 'description' in Florin's terms or a 'specification' in Pedersen's terms, paraphrasing the item. Unlike Franco Aixelá's glosses, here the source item is completely replaced by the paraphrase. An item can also completely be omitted in the translation. This is what Franco Aixelá calls 'deletion'. Interestingly, Pedersen classifies 'omission' outside of the change-no change dichotomy as a category of its own. Florin mentions a strategy that is not present in the other two taxonomies: 'contextual translation', whereby the entire context of the item is adapted and as a result the target item bears (almost) no resemblance to the source item, even though they likely have the same function. Franco Aixelá also mentions two strategies that the other two do not include: 'autonomous creation', which inserts a cultural item that was not present in the source text, and 'synonymy', by which an item is changed or omitted solely due to stylistic considerations in the target text.

Florin (1993)	Franco Aixelá (1996)	Pedersen (2005, 2007)
<i>transcription</i>	<i>conservation</i>	<i>minimum change</i>
	repetition	retention
transliteration	orthographic adaptation	
	linguistic (non-cultural)	official equivalent
	translation	direct translation
	gloss	
<i>substitution</i>	<i>substitution</i>	<i>intervention</i>
approximate translation	universalization	generalization
analogue	naturalization	substitution
description		specification
	deletion	(omission)
contextual translation		
neologisms		
	autonomous creation	
	synonymy	

Table 6. Schematic overview of the taxonomies given by Florin (1993), Franco Aixelá (1996) and Pedersen (2005, 2007).

3.2.2.4. NEDERGAARD-LARSEN (1993), LEPPihalme (1997) AND GOTTLIEB (2005)

Leppihalme (1997) has designed a taxonomy for the analysis of any text type, whereas Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) and Gottlieb (2005) created theirs specifically for the analysis of subtitles (though Nedergaard-Larsen also notes that her classification could also be used for other text types). Despite their different goals, the three classifications are quite similar. The three studies will hereafter be referred to as “Nedergaard-Larsen”, “Leppihalme” and “Gottlieb”.

There are three strategies that all three taxonomies share and that are more or less identical. The strategy whereby an item is reproduced without changes in the target text is called ‘identity’ by Nedergaard-Larsen and ‘retention’ by both Leppihalme and Gottlieb. Leppihalme also distinguishes a separate strategy for reproducing an item unchanged but with the addition of an explanation in the target text. This is ‘retention with explanation’. Another strategy is to completely delete an item. Nedergaard-Larsen and Gottlieb refer to this as ‘omission’, Leppihalme names it ‘total omission’, as she also includes a strategy whereby the item is deleted, but the item’s meaning is still transferred in some other way, which she names ‘omission with sense transfer’. The last strategy that the three share is to completely replace an item of the source culture with an item of the target culture, called ‘replacement by TL [target language] element’ by Leppihalme and ‘substitution’ by Gottlieb. Nedergaard-Larsen, however, divides this strategy into two substrategies: ‘paraphrase’, which rephrases the meaning of the source item with words that are not realia; and ‘adaptation’, which replaces a source element with a target element that is (more or less) equivalent to the source item.

There are also some strategies that are shared by only two of the three classifications. Nedergaard-Larsen distinguishes between producing calques (resulting in phrases that do not exist in

the target language), which she calls ‘imitation’ and producing literal translations (resulting in existing words or phrases), which she calls ‘direct translation’. These two are grouped together under the name ‘literal translation’ in Gottlieb’s taxonomy. Another strategy is making explicit what is implicit in the source text, which is what Nedergaard-Larsen names ‘explicitation’ and what Gottlieb calls ‘specification’. For example, translating the French *secrétaire d’Etat* with *low-ranking minister* reveals the lower rank of the person involved in comparison with a ‘regular’ minister (example taken from Nedergaard-Larsen 1993:220). Lastly, Leppihalme and Gottlieb both include a strategy whereby a source item which is unknown to the reader is replaced by a more general item from the source culture which is also known in the target culture. This strategy is called ‘replacement by SL [source language] element’ and ‘generalisation’ respectively.

Nedergaard-Larsen (1993)	Leppihalme (1997)	Gottlieb (2005)
identity	retention	retention
	retention with explanation	
paraphrase	replacement by TL element	substitution
adaptation		
omission	total omission	omission
imitation		literal translation
direct translation		
explicitation		specification
	replacement by SL element	generalization
	omission with sense transfer	

Table 7. Schematic overview of the taxonomies given by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993), Leppihalme (1997) and Gottlieb (2005).

3.2.2.5. CHOOSING A STRATEGY

Determining which strategy will be used when translating depends on several factors. According to Pedersen (2005), there are seven such factors that influence the decision making process which he observes in his own data and are therefore specifically related to subtitling. The first factor that he identifies is transculturality. The more an item is known in both cultures, the more likely it is that it will be copied without changes or with little changes (such as a literal translation). The more an item is known only in the source culture, the more mediation is necessary, requiring a more elaborate strategy. The second factor that Pedersen (2005) identifies is extratextuality. An item may be either text-internal, meaning that it only exists in the text at hand, or it may be text-external, whereby it exists in the culture outside of the text. Text-internal items require less explicative translation strategies, because the item does not need to make sense outside of the text. Thirdly, the centrality of reference is an important factor that influences translation strategies. The more central an item is to the text as a whole or a specific part of the text, the more it needs to be clarified; the more

peripheral it is, the more it can be omitted without losing vital information. The fourth factor, intersemiotic redundancy, is of no importance outside of AVT. If one of the non-verbal channels of communication in AVT already clarifies what an item refers to, the subtitles need not do so any more and so a strategy can be used that does not require a long rewording. This factor is related to the next: the co-text (the rest of the translation) may already contain the item. If so, it need not be explained a second time and so a more direct strategy may be used. Sixth, there are media-specific constraints. Due to the time and space constraints of subtitling, one strategy may simply be impossible to use and so the translator must resort to another strategy. Also, an item that is presented in the visual channel of communication cannot be omitted as easily as one that is only mentioned in the dialogue. The last strategy that Pedersen (2005) identifies is paratextual considerations, which mostly consist of the instructions given to the translator. They influence the choice of strategy from outside rather than within the text and can have a more global effect on strategies used. If, for example, the translator is formally required to be a mediator, he will use more strategies that allow him to explain the realia. If he is required not to interfere, he will retain most of the items unchanged.

3.3. THEORETICAL PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO REALIA

The notion of realia may seem relatively straightforward, but in fact it is not entirely unproblematic. Two issues will be dealt with here, the second of which goes back to a core debate in Translation Studies, namely that of the notion of equivalence, which merits a separate section. Lastly, that issue is also related to the notion of false friends in a separate section.

The first problem concerns certain intralinguistic elements such as idioms, metaphors and dialectal forms. These are not considered to be realia, even though they can be “culturally determined” (Leppihalme 2011:127). Indeed, these elements can carry significant cultural value and can sometimes even be a greater source for communicating culture than realia. For example, in the *Yes, Minister* series, it is not only the British setting (and the references to it) that contributes to the series’s Britishness. The characters’ ways of speaking – both their accents and their vocabulary – is also a large contributing factor. This is exemplified by the fact that even people who do not know any of the British realia, (or, even, people who do not know what living in Britain is like), still recognize the Britishness of the series. It must therefore be kept in mind that realia are certainly not the only source of cultural notions – not just in audiovisual texts, but in any text type.

Secondly, the fuzzy boundaries of realia and the fact that there are fuzzy boundaries between cultures are not a bad thing as such. Indeed, they reflect the dynamics of the real world. What makes it problematic is that it also blurs the distinction between what constitutes a ‘normal’ word, which is

not culturally bound, and what constitutes a culturally bound item. Take, for example, the translation strategy that Pedersen (2007) calls 'official equivalents'. To him, these are standard, 'official' translations of culturally bound items, which are often the equivalent given in bilingual dictionaries. This works for proper names: to use his example, *the Statue of Liberty* is always translated as *Frihedsgudinden* in Danish (Pedersen 2007:36). However, words that are not proper names are more problematic. As Pedersen (2007) himself notes, some of such items may have more than one dictionary translation and so there is not one single standard translation. Moreover, even if there is just one official equivalent, it may not carry the entire same meaning as the source item (unlike official equivalent proper names, which always refer to the same entity). For instance, Pedersen (2007:37) gives the example of the official equivalent of *second lieutenant* in Swedish, which is *fänrik*. The two are not likely to carry exactly the same meaning, simply because the two military ranking systems to which they belong are likely to differ, meaning that the ranks probably do not have exact equal status, and that a *second lieutenant* and a *fänrik* may have different duties. Indeed, Pedersen (2007) mentions that these are cases of cultural substitution. The question then arises as to what degree two concepts must be the same – or, in fact, different – in different cultures to be considered as (two distinct) culturally-bound items, rather than different words for the same concept. But the same question arises in Translation Studies with regard to 'normal' words: to what degree can translations of a source text word retain the exact same meaning of that source word?

4. EQUIVALENCE

The notion of realia and translation is very much based on the notion of equivalence. It specifically depends on the adopted definition of equivalence, though this very issue does not seem of much concern to modern scholars of realia, who jump straight away to examining realia without determining what they consider equivalent. The discussion of equivalence is, however, a fundamental issue in Translation Studies, and revolves around the question of whether there can ever be real equivalence. As Jakobson (1959/2000:114) says: “Equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language.” The discussion divides those who believe that two words in different languages can have the same meaning versus those who believe that the meanings of two words in different languages will always be somewhat different, by virtue of belonging to different languages, which is also what proponents of the debate on linguistic relativity claim (Sapir 1929, Whorf 1956). According to this view, each language determines the way its speaker experiences the world so that speakers of different languages have different experiences of the same world. As a result, the words that speakers of different language use to describe their world are essentially different. In the words of Sapir: “No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached” (1929:209). This is related to the notion of translatability. If two words can have the same meaning (which linguistic relativity rejects), they are translatable; but even if two words cannot have the exact same meaning, these meanings may be considered ‘close enough’ for the words to be considered translations of one another.

4.1. EARLY DEBATE ON EQUIVALENCE

One of the first to address the issue of equivalence is De Saussure (1972), whose theory of signs laid the foundations of the study of semiotics. In this theory, the linguistic sign is made up out of the *signifié* and the *signifiant*, which are inextricably linked to each other. The *signifié* is the meaning or the concept of the sign, whereas the *signifiant* is the linguistic material used to represent this concept in a language. A *signifiant* can be a word, but also a larger unit like a phrase. The *signifié* is not bound to one (or more) language(s), but is an abstract concept instead. Each *signifiant*, however, is a concrete part of a language. As a result, a single *signifié* is (or can be) tied to several *signifiants* in different languages. According to this theory, translation happens as follows. The translator starts with a *signifiant* in the source language, to which he links a source *signifié*. He then checks whether there also exists a *signifiant* in the target language for this particular *signifié*. If so, the two *signifiants*

share a *signifié* and are equivalent, and thus translations of each other. (this what Van Leuven Zwart calls an architranseme). If the source and target signifiants do not share a *signifié*, they are not equivalent and one cannot be used as the translation of the other.

While a very influential theory, it is not without flaws, though these may at least in part be due to the fact that the theory was the basis for structural linguistics and not translation (studies). First, the theory does in fact not tell the translator whether two words in different languages are equivalent. It only gives the necessary conditions for two words to be considered equivalent: namely, that they share a *signifié*. But when is that the case? That is something that the theory does not address, though it does seem to assume that most translation is not problematic, and therefore that sharing a *signifié* is the 'default' for *signifiants*, so that most 'normal' words have equivalents in other languages. Secondly, for other theorists like Benjamin (1923/2000), the traditional theory of De Saussure is too restricted to the realm of the sign and lacks focus on the objects that words and phrases refer to.

Benjamin (1923/2000) places much more emphasis on the referential aspect of words and their meanings. He distinguishes between the "mode of intention" and the "intended object" (1923/200:18), which are similar to though not the same as De Saussure's (1972) *signifié* and *signifiant*. Benjamin explains these concepts with an example: it is the mode of intention that causes the words *pain* and *Brot* to be different things to a Frenchman and a German respectively, but their intended object – that which the words refer to – is the same. In simpler terms, the mode of intention is the different words in the different languages (cf. *signifiant*) and the intended object is that which is intended (cf. *signifié*). An important difference, however, is that Benjamin does not start from the idea that translation is about transferring the same *meaning* of a word or phrase. To him, equality of meaning is impossible: "all individual elements of foreign languages—words, sentences, structure—are mutually exclusive" (1923/2000:18); so he discards it altogether out of principle. Whereas proponents of linguistic relativity only reject *full* overlap between the meanings of two words in different languages, Benjamin goes even further, by rejecting *any* overlap between these words. His concepts of mode of intention and object of intention are therefore to be understood referentially, without taking meaning into account. Yet despite rejecting equivalence of meaning, Benjamin does not reject translatability. In fact, his famous essay is a preface to a collection of poems that he translated. What a translation really is about, according to Benjamin, is its being a sign of the distance that a (target) language must still cover to reach 'pure language'. All languages converge to this pure language. It is a single language, similar to the first language spoken in the story of the Tower of Babel, but with the important exception that pure language is a prospective concept. Thus, languages do not go back to pure language, which has not yet been, but they aspire to

achieve it in the future. A translation is then a glimpse of a language's journey towards pure language.

There are two main drawbacks to Benjamin's theory – though proponents of his view would see them as advantages. First of all, Benjamin's theory is very philosophical and thus far removed from translation practice. It tends to be restricted to abstract terms that are hard to apply in practice. Indeed, according to Benjamin, a theory need not even be readily applicable in practice. Secondly and relatedly, the theory completely de-subjectivises translations. They are not made, which would imply human activity, but they arise and have a life, which Benjamin explicitly mentions should not be understood metaphorically. Translatability is also not a quality of humans, but of a translation itself; whether or not humans have the capacity to translate a text, the text itself has the property of being translatable. This de-subjectivation is in complete opposition to the recent interest in Translation Studies for the role of the translator and the social context in which translations are made. This new angle acknowledges that translations cannot come about without human intervention. Humans thus have a great impact on translations and should therefore not be ignored in any translation theory.

4.2. STRICT VERSUS TRANSLATION EQUIVALENCE

The above discussion is largely based on equivalence as a strict concept, whereby there can (De Saussure 1972) or cannot (Benjamin 1923/2000) be complete overlap between the meanings of words in different languages. This strict concept was propagated further in the second half of the 20th century by formal linguists who studied translation and equivalence from the point of view of the exact sciences. They attributed logical and mathematical properties to language, and as such described equivalence as a relation of identity. According to Van den Broeck (1999:212) and Vandeweghe (2005:72), this means that equivalence as a mathematical relation should be symmetrical and transitive. Symmetry implies that if the relation $A \rightarrow B$ holds, then the relation $B \rightarrow A$ also holds. Transitivity implies that if the relations $A \rightarrow B$ and $B \rightarrow C$ hold, then the relation $A \rightarrow C$ also holds. Both Van den Broeck (1999) and Vandeweghe (2005) show that this cannot be true in translation for two reasons. First of all, mathematical relations are reversible, while translations are not. Both authors illustrate this with a simple experiment. If even a simple text is translated by several translators, the resulting translations will almost never be the same. When these translations are then translated back into the source language, it is highly unlikely that any of the back-translations are identical to the original source text of the experiment. Van den Broeck therefore calls translations "irreversible" (1999:213). Vandeweghe (2005) also gives a second reason. The mathematical relations also imply that there can only be one translation for each source text,

because target texts should be mutually equivalent (and therefore identical) if they are both equivalent to the source text. This claim is clearly not borne out in reality. Another drawback to this approach that both authors mention is that it is limited to the lexical or at most to the phrasal level. Individual words or sentences are denotational (Vandeweghe 2005:73) and restricted to conceptual aspects of meaning (Van den Broeck 1999:212). However, translation does not just bear on words and sentences, but on entire texts, whereby all aspects of meaning and connotations become relevant. In short, the strict definition of equivalence is untenable and must be replaced by a more flexible notion.

Jakobson (1959/2000), who was in fact a linguist in the tradition of De Saussure, already acknowledges that true synonymy is impossible, both within a single language and in translation across languages. He thus rejects strict equivalence: “there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code-units” (1959/2000:114). The English word *cheese*, to use Jakobson’s example, is not entirely equivalent to the Russian word *syr*, because while the former includes cottage cheese, the latter does not. However, any language can explain the meaning of any word, even if the concept that a foreign word refers to is unknown to a particular speech community. Therefore, translation (in general) is still possible, because utterances are not generally translated by transposing separate linguistic units from one language to another, but by transferring the message: even if one cannot translate with true equivalents, it is still possible to render the same meaning with other linguistic material in a target language.

Jakobson (1959/2000) thus does not believe in untranslatability. He does, however, make one exception. In cases where not just the meaning but also the form of the message matters – most prominently in poetry – he admits that translation is not possible, or at least very difficult. Even if the meaning of a poem can be transferred, its formal features (such as rhyme) often cannot, because different languages use words that are formally different. In addition, there may be cultural aspects associated with these formal features, as Jakobson shows is the case with grammatical gender: the Russian word for ‘death’ is masculine, but the German word is feminine (1959/2000:237). Using the masculine word in a translation of a German poem that depicts death as a woman would be rather odd, to say the least.

Writing from a different linguistic point of view, Catford (1965), adopts a functional perspective (in contrast with Jakobson’s 1959/2000 Structuralism). In this view, language (and thus translation) cannot be studied without taking its context into account. With regard to equivalence, he notes that strict equivalence is impossible, but that “the SL and TL items ... can function in the same situation” (1965:49). Translation is thus not about choosing a target word (or larger segment, as Catford does not restrict his theory to the lexical or phrasal level) with equivalent meaning, but a word that denotes the more or less same referent and so can be used in the same situation as the source word.

His term 'translation equivalence' is to be understood in this light. He defines it as follows: "Translation equivalence occurs when an SL and a TL text or item are relatable to (at least some of) the same features of substance" (1965:50). Catford (1965:51) illustrates this referential equivalence in translation with an example of colour terms. English colour terms do not correspond one-to-one with Navaho colour terms. Navaho only has one word (*doot'iž*) where English uses two (*green* and *blue*). Still *doot'iž* may be used as a translation equivalent for *green* (and vice versa) when both can be used to refer to the same substance, namely a particular colour in the world, despite the fact that the individual words have different meanings (*doot'iž* being much broader than *green*).

Despite translation equivalence, Catford (1965) posits that there are also two types of untranslatability. Linguistic untranslatability arises when formal features of the source language do not have a functional equivalent in the target language, because the two languages are different. This type of untranslatability is relative: languages are more different than they are similar and so in most cases, a translation equivalent can more or less readily be found. To Catford, problems only arise when ambiguity is a relevant functional feature of the source text (for example, in word play). In such cases, the target language may not possess the same ambiguity and so there is no translation equivalent available. Cultural untranslatability, on the other hand, occurs when a source situational feature is absent in the target culture. These are *realia*, although he does not name them as such. Again, untranslatability is not absolute and may be overcome with translation equivalents.

4.3. TYPOLOGIES OF EQUIVALENCE

Over the years, different types of equivalence have been suggested in the literature from different perspectives. One of the most famous typologies was given by Nida (1964/2000), who distinguishes two main types of equivalence. In formal equivalence, the translator tries to transfer the message from the source text as closely as possible in the target text. Thus the translator pays attention to both form and content of the original, trying to match them in the target text. Nida mentions gloss translations as extreme examples of formal equivalence (1964:159). In dynamic equivalence, the translator tries to formulate the message of the source text in the most natural way possible for the target language. He also domesticates foreign elements from the source text, rendering them understandable to a target audience that has no knowledge of the foreign culture. In short, dynamic equivalence can be described as retaining the same "effect" on the reader by using different linguistic material. The two main types of equivalence are not rigid and mutually exclusive, but they are two poles of a continuum. Nida thus rejects the terms 'free' and 'literal' translation from traditional theories, stating that there are in fact many more ways of translating that can be located between these two. Three factors determine where on the continuum a translation will be situated:

the content of the source message, the function that the source author intended for his text, and the target audience.

Kade (1968) distinguishes between four types of equivalence. The first is one-to-one equivalence, which indicates a complete overlap between a source language item and a target language item. In other words, this is strict equivalence as discussed above. However, this total equivalence is rather exceptional and often restricted to technical terms and names (Vandeweghe 2005). Moreover, in contrast with the linguistically oriented approaches discussed above, Kade (1968) does not list this as the only type of equivalence. The second type is one-to-many equivalence. This type of equivalence occurs when there are multiple possible target items for a single source item. The third type of equivalence is one-to-part-of-one equivalence, whereby a target item only covers part of the meaning of a source item. It may seem similar to the second type, but differs from it. This is best explained by an example: while the English word *heaven* designates only part of the meaning of the German word *Himmel* (which also encompasses the English word *sky*), the English word *voltage* is not a part of the German word *Spannung* – rather, the German word has several different meanings, for each of which a different English word (*voltage*, *tension*, *suspense*, among others) exist (example taken from Snell-Hornby 1988/1995:20). In the former case (one-to-part-of-one), the two English words together make up the meaning of the German word, but in the latter (one-to-many), the English words do not ‘add up’ to meaning the German word. The last type of equivalence that Kade proposes is nil equivalence. It occurs when there is no target item for a particular source item, or in other words, when the source item is a culturally bound item. The main drawback of this quantitative typology is that it is a lexical approach that does not extend to the textual level, which is also relevant in translation (Kenny 2009).

A qualitative typology of equivalence was drawn up by Koller (1989). He posits that equivalence is a relation between a source and a target text. Without additional qualification of equivalence by his five types, equivalence is “vacuous” (1989:99). The first of his five types of equivalence is denotative equivalence, whereby the source and target items refer to the same extra-linguistic referent. Secondly, connotative equivalence occurs when the words in the target text “[trigger] the same or similar associations in the minds of native speakers of the two languages” (Kenny 2009:97) with respect to register and other aspects of style. In the third type of equivalence, text-normative equivalence, target words are used in the same context as their source language equivalents and target texts and text types are used in the same situations as their source texts and text types. The fourth type is pragmatic equivalence. Since it occurs when the target text is tuned to the target audience, it is the same as Nida’s (1964) dynamic equivalence. The fifth and last type of equivalence is formal equivalence, which according to Munday (2008:47) is not the same as Nida’s (1964) formal equivalence. Koller’s formal equivalence relates to the “formal-aesthetic” (1989:100) features of the

source text such as textual and stylistic characteristics and word play. Not all types of equivalence can be realized to the same degree in a translation, so the translator must make choices. To do this, he must first analyse the source text, then from this analysis he can determine “a hierarchy of values to be preserved in the translation” (1989:104), from which he can then deduce which equivalence types prevail over others.

4.4. EQUIVALENCE AS A DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPT

Toury (1995) advocated a descriptive approach to equivalence. Unlike the previous theories described here, his is developed specifically within Translation Studies. He adopts a retrospective approach, defining translation in terms of equivalence, whereas others in the field (try to) define equivalence before they define translation. Rather than debating whether equivalence is at all possible, Toury (1995) makes equivalence a given: he defines equivalence as the relationship between two texts of which one (the target) is seen as a translation of the other (the source) in a given cultural community. His concept of equivalence is thus based on what can be observed and whatever it is that is considered as equivalence in a particular community. This relationship between source and target will help reveal the norms that are at play in a particular community. Toury’s opponents argue that his reasoning is circular, because it can be reduced to saying that ‘equivalence is what it is’ (Pym 1992). However, he really merely pushes the boundaries of empiricism with his equivalence postulate: what can be observed to be the case counts more than what is theorized to be the case.

Van den Broeck (1999) rejects the term ‘equivalence’ but in the same vein as Toury uses a descriptive concept to characterize the relationship between source and target texts, which he bases on Wittgenstein’s family resemblance. To Wittgenstein, the meaning of a word is not fixed, but it is determined in the different situations it is used (Van den Broeck 1999:214). The different meanings are all related and share features with each other, but there is no single feature that recurs for each case. This can also be applied to translation, according to Van den Broeck (1999). The features of source and target texts can all descriptively be observed and listed. If, to use Van den Broeck’s example, there are five features that can be described for five translations of a single source text, it may happen that only four out of five of these features is present in each of the translations, and, moreover, that the missing feature is different for each translation (1999:214). In this case, each translation shares different features with the source text, but they are still regarded as translations and so as being similar to the source text. Indeed, according to Van den Broeck, any translation of a source text is similar to the source text because it shares some features with it (and with other

translations of the same text), but not all features, and there is no necessary single feature that all translations share with their source (or with each other).

4.5. CONCLUSION

The debate on equivalence has been a long and hard in Translation Studies and related disciplines. In fact, the notion has become so theoretical and abstract that it has become empty. Some researchers, such as Hermans (1999) would therefore prefer to discard it altogether. Yet despite heavy criticism on the theoretical notion of equivalence, it is still used in practice by translators and in translator training to discuss the transfer from a source text to a target text. As Baker puts it in the introduction to her book: “Like the division of language into discrete areas, the term equivalence is adopted in this book for the sake of convenience – because translators are used to it rather than because it has any theoretical status” (1992:5-6).

To conclude this section, we can say that even though true equivalence, whereby a word in one language means exactly the same as a word in another language, is impossible, translation is not. In fact, translation happens all the time, and most of the time successfully so, thereby showing that untranslatability is not an issue in many cases. Equivalence has become a “negotiable entity” (Kenny 2009:97) which depends on the context and the specific source and target items involved. In the remainder of this thesis, Toury’s (1995) view will be adopted, and thus whatever appears as equivalent in the data will be treated as such.

5. RESEARCH QUESTION

It is the constrained nature of subtitling that makes the study of cultural references interesting. The translation cannot be accompanied by a gloss or footnote explaining the reference, as is possible in most forms of 'normal' translation (e.g. literature, books, etc.). The subtitler finds himself in between two cultures, trying to represent one in the other but with very little space to do so. In Holmes' (1976/2010) terms, he must make a choice between naturalising or adapting the target text to the viewers on the one hand and exoticising or keeping the original references of the source text on the other hand; or, in Venuti's (1995) terms, he must choose between domesticating and foreignising the translation. In the first case, the subtitler changes the elements to something that is known to the viewers, thus making it more accessible and understandable; in the second, he copies the elements as they are in the original. But when is one or the other strategy employed? How much can (and does) the subtitler safely assume that his audience will be familiar with? Where should (and does) he draw the line? All of these questions boil down to the following main research question:

Which types of references were translated using which strategies? In other words, how have they been translated, if at all?

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1. CORPUS

The corpus that was analysed is based on the entire first season of the British series *Yes, Minister*. This season contains seven episodes that are each approximately thirty minutes in length. The first half of the corpus consists of the spoken dialogue of the original material. As the transcript of the dialogue and the English DVD subtitles were not available, the episodes needed to be transcribed into a full script. English fansubs found on the internet (at <http://subscene.com/english/Yes-Minister-The-Complete-Series/subtitle-131509.aspx>) formed the starting point for this script (as no official English subtitles exist), which was elaborated based on my own understanding of the dialogue. The second half of the corpus consists of the Dutch professional subtitles that were made for the DVD set containing seasons 1 and 2 (released in Belgium and the Netherlands in 2003), though of course only the subtitles for season 1 were used. These subtitles were extracted from the DVD with Optical Character Registration using the SubRip software (available at <http://www.videohelp.com/tools/Subrip>). As the corpus contains both the original and the translated versions of the same text, it can be considered as a unidirectional, bilingual parallel corpus (Laviosa 2010:84). The entire corpus, including both the original dialogue and the Dutch subtitles, is provided in Appendix B (available on the CD-ROM).

6.1.1. YES, MINISTER

Yes, Minister is a British comedy programme of the BBC, broadcasted from 1980 to 1984. From 1986 to 1988 its sequel, *Yes, Prime Minister* was broadcasted. It is a political satire written by Anthony Jay and Jonathan Lynn and it is inspired by the political goings on and real politicians' experiences at the time; some of the story lines in the series are even based on their true stories. The series soon became very popular both in and outside of the UK, which gave rise to adaptations of some episodes for radio broadcasting, a stage play and a book based on the original script.

The series is particularly interesting for research on translation and subtitling for two reasons: first, the main and most important feature is the dialogue as the story is told almost exclusively through the interaction between characters. Often the setting – while important for the general characterization of the series – plays no significant role in the development of the storyline. Second, the series is the British comedy par excellence for any study on culture-bound references because it is set in such a specific, very British environment that is completely different from (almost) all other countries and is therefore filled to the brim with such references (as is evidenced by the long list of

terms on the series' official website at <http://www.yes-minister.com/database.htm>). Much of the word play and other aspects of the verbal humour are also based on these references. The viewer may need to know who or what a certain person, political instance or place is in order to understand why making a certain comment about or mentioning him or it is funny. Therefore, it is interesting to examine how the subtitler has tried to keep the same effect and thus exactly how these items have been translated and subtitled.

6.1.2. MAIN CHARACTERS

The series revolves around three main characters. It follows the newly appointed Minister Jim Hacker as he tries to reform his department and implement his political party's policies. His Permanent Secretary Humphrey Appleby will have none of the Minister's changes and by all means wants to keep things as they are instead. Trapped in the middle of these two is the Minister's Principal Private Secretary Bernard Woolley who wants to be loyal to his Minister, but whose boss is the Permanent Secretary.

Jim Hacker MP (whose full name, including all of his titles, is 'The Right Honorable James Hacker, Lord Hacker of Islington KG, PC, BSc'), played by Paul Eddington, is the Minister for Administrative Affairs, as appointed by the Prime Minister in the very first episode of the series. He is not very single-minded: he tends to change his mind about his views on topics and he is easily influenced by his Permanent Secretary Humphrey Appleby. However, he does become handier at playing tricks himself throughout the series. Jim Hacker is also a little naïve, but although he wants to bring good change to the people, he also wants to simply look good to the people (at which he often fails).

Sir Humphrey Appleby (whose full name is 'Sir Humphrey Appleby GCB, KBE, MVO, MA (Oxon)'), played by Nigel Hawthorne, is the Permanent Secretary to the Minister. He wants to keep control of the department and therefore also get the Minister to implement his own policies and ideas rather than the Minister's own policies. As such, he is manipulative, but also extremely eloquent (he is fluent in Latin and becomes famous for his long speeches in the series) and very intelligent, which both come in handy to twist any situation to his advantage. He is also somewhat elitist, looking down on those with a lower education.

Bernard Woolley (who does not appear to have any titles), played by Derek Fowlds, is the Principal Private Secretary to the Minister and subordinate to the Permanent Secretary. He seems to be the most 'normal' character of the three. He is smart – though not quite as intelligent as Sir Appleby – and often likes to show his knowledge off by pointing out any mistakes. He has a lot of common sense and, more than the other two men, he has a real sense of conscience. Of the three, he is the most responsible one.

6.1.3. SETTING AND THEME

The series is mostly set inside the department of Administrative Affairs at Whitehall in London (*Yes, Prime Minister* is set inside 10 Downing Street). Even though these physical settings exist, the department itself, as well as all of the characters, are entirely fictional. They were nevertheless very recognizable and relevant at the time – and perhaps now still despite the series being 30 years old. There are two reasons for this: first of all, despite the very specific setting, there is something universal to the general storyline of a bureaucratic system that sabotages any political progress. This universality appeals to citizens of all societies, not just British citizens. Secondly, the political affiliation of the characters is never mentioned. The writers have made sure that all characters (and the minister's policies) could fit in both the Labour and the Conservative parties, making the setting slightly more general. In fact, they aim to show the worst of both sides and politics in general, especially the public's general feeling that politicians are always lying and trying to pass whatever laws are best for themselves instead of the people.

6.1.4. EPISODES

There is no developing storyline that connects the episodes in the first season. Instead, each episode has its own storyline, which is independent of the other episodes. As a result, each episode can be viewed separately and still easily be understood. The only exception is perhaps episode 1, in which the characters are introduced. This information is assumed to be known to the viewer in all of the other episodes. As there is no single storyline in the entire season, a short overview of the plot in each episode is given in Appendix A.

6.2. METHOD OF ANALYSIS

To analyse the data in the corpus, I first marked the realia in the source script in **red font**. In some cases, I was not sure whether an item was indeed a cultural bound item. To resolve these problems, I consulted the Internet as well as dictionaries (most notably the online Van Dale) to determine whether the concept at hand is also known in the target culture, and if so, to what degree it is known and whether there is a target language word for it. Some items that look like realia are in fact fictional items, which do not exist outside of the series. Loponen (in Leppihalme 2011) calls these items 'irrealia'. These items were also included in the analysis because the target audience (and sometimes also the source audience) may not realise that these items do not exist outside of the series. An example of such an item is a fake name of a government building.

Next, in a first stage of comparison between source and target texts, I indicated the target text translations of the source cultural items (again, if there was a translation at all), also in **red font**. The

next stage of comparison consisted of extracting the realia and their translations from the texts and sorting them in different ways. First of all, I registered the “types”, “tokens” and “type/token ratio” (Munday 1998:546; Laviosa 2010:81) of realia in the source text. That is, I recorded the number of *different* realia (the types) that occur in the individual episodes as well as in the entire season. I also recorded the number of times that *each* cultural item occurs in the text (the tokens), also both in the individual episodes and in the entire corpus, to get an indication of the variation of cultural items in the text. If the same concept was referred to with different words in the source language, these different words were considered as one type only. For example, the British head of state could be referred to as *the Queen* or *Her Majesty*, but these all refer to the same person and so are treated as belonging to a single concept. Secondly, I classified the source items into thematically coherent categories. I used a bottom-up approach to do so: I did not try to fit the realia into any already existing categories from the literature, but instead tried to discern categories *from the data*. The reason for this is that ‘pre-made’ categories can obscure patterns in the data and that these categories may not be ideally suited for this specific text with its specific setting. Only if we look at the data first can we discover what is really there, instead of ‘imposing’ a theory or a classification on the data – or as Geertz puts it: “what generality [a study] contrives to achieve grows out of the delicacy of its distinctions rather than the sweep of its abstractions,” (1973:25). I did use category names from other classifications to label the groups of realia, but only where this was still possible after having organized the data first. The analysis of realia categories is provided in Appendix C on the CD-ROM.

The third and last stage of the analysis consisted of mapping the source elements onto the target elements (cf. the second step in Toury’s [1995] three-stage methodology). In other words, at this stage I analysed the translation strategies that were used by the translator. The *individual* instances (tokens) of the realia were considered because one occurrence of an item may have been translated differently from another occurrence of the same concept. One element of the source language may thus have more than one “possible translation” in the target language (Aijmer, Altenberg and Johansson 1996, Barlow 2008). In such cases where there were indeed more than one instances of an item, the relative use of different strategies is compared. As for the classification of realia types, I used categories that have already been described in the literature whenever this was possible. Again the data dictated the classification: instead of making the data fit the classification, the classification was adapted where necessary to accommodate findings from the data that do not fit neatly into the categories extant in the literature. The analysis of translation strategies is provided in Appendix D; the analysis of translation strategies arranged per type of realia is given in Appendix E. Both appendices are provided on the CD-ROM.

7. RESULTS

This section will report on the findings of the analysis. It will present the categories for types of realia and translation strategies that were found in the corpus data. A limited number of examples from the corpus is given for each category by way of illustration. Before presenting the different categories, a short overview of some general findings is given.

7.1. SOME GENERAL FINDINGS

A quick general analysis of the source text shows that there are 1350 instances, or tokens (Munday 1998, Laviosa 2010), of culturally bound items in the entire corpus. As many of these occur multiple times both within a single episode and across episodes, the number of tokens is not equal to the total number of different realia that occur in the text (the types, Munday 1998, Laviosa 2010), which is much lower at 223. The type/token ratio (TTR, Munday 1998) is also quite low at 0.17. This would mean that there is not much variation and thus that each item occurs many times. However, this figure could have been slightly skewed by the numbers of a single item that occurs far more often than any other item: the word ‘minister’ covers 439 instances of the total number of tokens. When we remove this one item from the type/token ratio, it increases to 0.24. While this number is higher, it is still rather low, indicating that there is relatively little variation. This is probably due to the fact that the series contains many recurring characters and general themes. The same is true for the individual episodes. Note that the total number of types is not the sum of the numbers of types for episodes, because some items are repeated across episodes.

	Number of types	Number of tokens	Type/token ratio	Adjusted TTR
Episode 1	77	251	0.30	0.41
Episode 2	57	170	0.33	0.46
Episode 3	52	159	0.33	0.46
Episode 4	34	183	0.18	0.29
Episode 5	50	242	0.20	0.29
Episode 6	31	158	0.20	0.36
Episode 7	43	187	0.23	0.33
Total	223	1350	0.17	0.24

Table 8. Number of types and tokens as well as type/token ratio observed for each analysed episode and the total corpus. The adjusted TTR does not take the instances of the word ‘minister’ into account.

7.2. CLASSIFICATION OF TYPES OF REALIA

Section 3.2.1.1 pointed out that some studies which present classifications of types of realia (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993, Florin 1993, Grit 1997 and Ramière 2004) identify four major categories that may or may not be further subdivided. These major categories are historical, geographical, social and cultural in nature. The present study found realia that fit into three out of these four categories: the geographical, social and cultural categories are identified, but no realia that fall within the historical category were found. These three categories can be further subdivided, resulting in a rather detailed taxonomy. The geography category contains five smaller categories, namely 'places', 'streets', 'buildings', 'metonyms' and 'nature'. Society contains four subcategories that can each be subdivided even further. The first main social category is 'government', which contains the nine subcategories of 'departments', 'public sector', 'other governmental authorities', 'political figures', 'civil service', 'international politics', 'legislation', 'military terms' and 'general political terms'. Secondly, the category 'daily life' can be divided into four smaller categories: 'food and drinks', 'transport', 'measurements' and 'shops'. The third social category is 'private sector' and contains only two subcategories: 'jobs' and 'companies'. Lastly, 'organisations' contains the three subcategories 'charities', 'societies' and 'unions'. Culture contains eight subcategories: 'media', 'culture and literature', 'descent', 'sports', 'events', 'famous figures', 'decorations', and 'education'. Note that this classification is only exhaustive within the context of this corpus. Other categories could be added if a different corpus were used or if the corpus were enlarged. An overview of the categories is provided in Table 9.

Geography	Society				Culture
	Government	Daily life	Private sector	Organisations	
Places	Departments	Food and drinks	Jobs	Charities	Media
Streets	Public sector	Transport	Companies	Societies	Culture and literature
Buildings	Other governmental authorities	Measurements		Unions	Descent
Metonyms	Political figures	Shops			Sports
Nature	Civil service				Events
	International politics				Famous figures
	Legislation				Decorations
	Military terms				Education
	General political terms				

Table 9. Classification of realia types that are found in the corpus.

7.2.1. GEOGRAPHY

This category contains all references to the surroundings that we live in, both natural and man-made. It is similar to most general categories of geographical items found in the literature (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993, Florin 1993, Grit 1997, Ramière 2004, Vlachov and Florin [in Verstraete 2004]) though the subcategories are rather unlike any of the other classifications.

Its first subcategory is 'places', containing both place names and names for regions (example 1). The second subcategory, 'streets', contains not only to references streets (example 2) but also to anything that makes up the structure of a village, town or city, such as bridges and squares (example 3). Thirdly, 'buildings' self-evidently contains names of buildings. An example is given in 4. The fourth geographical category, 'metonyms', contains names for places that in fact do not refer to a place, but rather to an authority which is located in that place (example 5). They have been classified in the geographical rather than the governmental category because they seem purely geographical at first, and because the authorities have become inextricably linked to their locations. Moreover, although she does not mention them in her classification, Nedergaard-Larsen deals with a similar case in one of her examples ("a street name referring to a ministry", 1993:229), treating it as a type of street rather than as a political term. Lastly, the subcategory 'nature' refers to anything in the surroundings that is not man-made (example 6). The corpus contains only two different realia of this last type.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Newcastle [Episode 4] | 4. Holyrood Palace [Episode 2] |
| 2. 3 to 17 Beaconsfield Street [Episode 3] | 5. Brussels [Episode 5] |
| 3. Sackville Square [Episode 3] | 6. Clyde [Episode 2] |

7.2.2. SOCIETY

This very broad category contains references to social life in all of its aspects. It is not surprising that this is (by far) the largest category that is observed in this corpus, as it contains most elements from the setting of the series. It combines elements of Vlachov and Florin's classification (in Verstraete 2004), covering almost their entire 'socio-political' category (with the exception perhaps of its subcategory 'socio-cultural life') as well as some elements of their 'ethnographic' category. The present taxonomy of social elements is also very similar to Nedergaard-Larsen's (1993) social category, though the subcategories are somewhat different in both classifications.

7.2.2.1. SOCIETY: GOVERNMENT

'Government' is the largest subcategory of the entire corpus with 1059 tokens and 96 types, which is again of no surprise: it covers the main theme and many elements from the setting of the series. It contains any reference to an element which is in any way related to government and politics. This category is termed 'politics' by Nedergaard-Larsen (1993), though her category is perhaps somewhat narrower, with fewer subcategories, than the present 'government' category. Many of the subcategories given here are more detailed categories that could together make up Vlachov and Florin's (in Verstraete 2004) 'administrative or territorial units' and 'institutions and functions'.

The size of this category explains the large number of subcategories that can be found in it. The first is 'departments', which contains references to ministries, as in example 7. Secondly, references in the 'public sector' indicate government businesses and public services (example 8). Grit (1997) includes this as a separate main category in his classification, on the same level as social realia. The present study found that the two are in fact not equally broad and so the narrower 'public sector' was placed within the broader social category. The third subcategory contains all other governmental agencies that do not fall under the first two subcategories. They are generally agencies with a political purpose and can range from very general terms (example 9) to very specific terms (example 10). 'Political figures' contains the functions of people who are involved in the government's business (example 11), with the exception Civil Servants. The latter belong to the next subcategory, which contains all references to the Civil Service and is thus not limited to people, though most elements in it are in fact people (example 12). Sixth, 'international politics' contains terms that refer to international authorities and political concepts (example 13). The seventh subcategory is 'legislation' and contains only two different items, which are both names of laws (example 14). 'Military terms' refer to rankings and divisions of the army (example 15). This category is the same as Vlachov and Florin's (in Verstraete 2004) 'military institutions and objects'. The last category contains all political terms that do not fit in any other category (example 16). Most of those are general terms.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 7. The Foreign Office [Episodes 1, 2, 5] | 12. Returning Officer [Episode 1] |
| 8. Inland Revenue [Episode 3] | 13. NATO [Episode 5] |
| 9. Parliament [Episodes 1, 3, 5, 6, 7] | 14. Scotland Act 1978 [Episode 2] |
| 10. Public Accounts Committee [Episode 1] | 15. Royal Navy [Episode 3] |
| 11. Minister [All episodes] | 16. Election [Episodes 1, 2, 4, 6, 7] |

7.2.2.2. SOCIETY: DAILY LIFE

The second category within the social category is 'daily life'. The name of this category is taken from Vlachov and Florin (in Verstraete 2004), as it contains the same type of references. Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) names this category 'customs'. It contains all references to objects and customs that we encounter in our daily ways of life. In this corpus, four subcategories make up this social category. The first is 'food and drinks', which does not only contain references to meals but also to sweets and all types of drinks. An example is given in 17. The second subcategory is 'transport', which in this corpus only contains references to stations and airports (example 18). Third, 'measurements' contain foreign units of measure. These include not only units for dimensions (example 19), but also monetary units. The last subcategory within 'daily life' is 'shops', containing department stores, supermarkets and specialist shops (example 20).

17. Haggis [Episode 2]

18. Euston [Episodes 1, 3]

19. Two feet [Episode 2]

20. Harrods [Episode 7]

7.2.2.3. SOCIETY: PRIVATE SECTOR

The third social category is the 'private sector'. It roughly corresponds with what Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) terms 'economy', though her category is broader. It is also the same as what Grit (1997) calls 'private institutional' realia. As for elements from the public sector, he includes this as a separate category. Again, the present study found that rather it is part of the larger social category as it is much narrower. Indeed, this category is rather small in the present corpus, containing only 15 tokens and 7 types. Still, it can be divided into two subcategories: 'jobs', which contains all references to functions within private businesses (example 21), and 'companies', which contains all references to the businesses themselves (example 22).

21. Deputy chairman [Episode 7]

22. British Leyland [Episode 3]

7.2.2.4. SOCIETY: ORGANISATIONS

'Organisations' is the fourth and last subcategory within the social category. This subcategory is most unlike any category in the literature. It has a vague resemblance to Vlachov and Florin's (in Verstraete 2004) 'socio-cultural life' because the latter contains groupings of people, but it also contains many other elements (such as symbols and education) that are not included in 'organisations'. The category in the present classification contains references to different kinds of (non-commercial) organisations as well as the people who are associated with them. The first subcategory is 'charities', which contains references to those organisations that are dedicated to a good cause (example 23). 'Societies' are the second type of organisation. These have a leisurely or social purpose (example 24). The last kind of organisation is 'unions', which contains references to anything that is related to trade unions (example 25).

23. St. John's ambulance [Episode 7]

24. The Athenaeum [Episode 2]

25. TUC [Episodes 2, 7]

7.2.3. CULTURE

The third main category that was observed in the corpus is culture. It is similar to most general categories of culture in the literature (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993, Florin 1993) and also includes many cultural elements from classifications that combine social and cultural realia into one category (Grit 1997, Ramière 2004). Many of the subcategories of Vlachov and Florin's (in Verstraete 2004) 'ethnographic' and 'socio-political' categories that did not fall under the present social category are found in this cultural category.

Although this category may seem rather large in terms of the number of subcategories, it is in fact rather small in terms of the total number of types (34) and tokens (67) contained in the category as a whole. The average number of tokens per subcategory is low at only just over 8. The first subcategory is 'media' and is almost identical to Nedergaard-Larsen's (1993) 'media' category, though her category includes all types of media, while the specific instances found in this corpus only pertain to the written press (example 26). The second category is 'culture and literature', which contains references to literary works (including poetry), biblical references and songs (example 27). Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) includes these types of references in her general 'culture' subcategory. The third subcategory is 'descent', by analogy with the category of the same name of Vlachov and Florin (in Verstraete 2004). It contains all references to peoples and their origins (example 28). The fourth category, 'sports', only contains two (different) tokens; they are both references to football

teams. One of them is given in example 29. The next category is ‘events’ and contains references to historical events. There are only two types in this category, of which one is given in example 30. Sixth, ‘famous figures’ refers to prominent people, including both fictional characters, historical and contemporary figures (example 31). The seventh category, ‘decorations’ contains honours and awards and is also very small with just three types. One is given in example 32. The smallest category of the entire corpus is ‘education’, with just one type (which has two tokens). It refers to an academic institution (example 33). Vlachov and Florin (in Verstraete 2004) include this type of reference in their ‘socio-cultural’ category (which is more social in nature), while Nedergaard-Larsen (1993), like the present study, classifies it as a cultural category.

26. The Guardian [Episode 6]

27. Catch 22 [Episode 6]

28. Celtic [Episode 2]

29. Liverpool [Episode 1]

30. Watergate [Episode 7]

31. Freddy Laker [Episode 2]

32. KBE [Episode 2]

33. LSE [Episode 2]

7.3. CLASSIFICATION OF TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

In the literature on translation strategies for realia (described in section 3.2.2) many different terms are used for strategies that are often either identical or at least quite similar. On the basis of the present corpus, a new classification is drawn up that incorporates elements from the existing taxonomies wherever possible. Nine strategies were observed: ‘official equivalent’, ‘omission’, ‘generalisation’, ‘specification’, ‘use of deictics’, ‘paraphrase’, ‘retention’, ‘literal translation’, and ‘substitution’. As for the classification of realia categories, the present list of strategies is only exhaustive for the corpus used and may well be adjusted when a different corpus is used, or when the corpus is enlarged. Some of the studies in the literature rank their strategies from more source-language oriented to more target-language oriented (Pedersen 2005), but as Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) notes, the same translation strategy need not always have the same foreignizing or domesticating effect. Rather, the effect depends on the specific instance at hand. For this reason, such a general ranking was not drawn up for the present classification.

7.3.1. OFFICIAL EQUIVALENT

The first strategy that is present in the corpus is the use of an ‘official equivalent’. This strategy has been suggested and described by Pedersen (2005, 2007) (see sections 3.2.2.3 and 3.3). Despite the fact that two similar concepts in different cultures may not be exactly the same or that more

than one possible translation may exist for a single concept, official equivalents are widely used in this corpus: it is the second most common strategy at 468 instances (which accounts for 34.7% of the entire corpus). Indeed, the differences may be so small or irrelevant for the plot that this “is probably not something that worries the average viewer” (Pedersen 2007:38). Two examples of this strategy are given in 34 and 35 (in which a is the original utterance and b is the translation given in the subtitles; relevant realia and their translations are marked in bold italics).

34. a. Did you know Martin’s got the ***Foreign Office***, Jack’s got ***Health*** and Fred’s got ***Energy***?

b. Martin krijgt ***Buitenlandse Zaken***, Jack ***Volksgezondheid*** en Fred ***Energie***.

[Episode 1]

35. a. Would you say that ***the minister*** is starting to run the department?

b. Heeft ***de minister*** de touwtjes in handen?

[Episode 6]

7.3.2. OMISSION

The most common translation strategy in the entire corpus is ‘omission’. This strategy is present in almost all of the studies in the literature and most also use the name ‘omission’, which is why this term is used in the present classification. There are 509 instances of ‘omission’, which accounts for 37.7% of all translations. It is generally assumed that around one third of the information is omitted in subtitles (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007) – or, as Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) sees it, around two thirds can be expressed. The results of the analysis confirm this: approximately one third of the realia was omitted in the subtitles. Two examples of ‘omission’ are given in 36 and 37 below.

36. a. ***Minister***, it is not possible.

b. Dat kan niet.

[Episode 4]

37. a. But can a 74 million ***pound*** building project on a nine ***acre*** site in the middle of a city, be swept under the carpet?

b. Een project van 74 miljoen in het centrum veeg je niet onder het tapijt.

[Episode 7]

7.3.3. GENERALISATION

The third strategy consists of using a more general term (a hyperonym) in the translation for the specific item used in the original dialogue. It is named ‘generalisation’ in analogy with the categories of strategies given by Tomaszekiewicz (in Pettit 2009), Gottlieb (2005) and Pedersen (2005, 2007). Other classifications may use a different name for the strategy (Grit 1997 uses ‘translation of the core meaning’ [kernvertaling]) but these are all less transparent terms. Two examples are given in 38 and 39.

38. a. We're not putting him up for *the Athenaeum*.

b. We dragen hem niet voor bij *een academie*.

[Episode 2]

39. a. Humphrey Appleby here. Mr. Hacker's *Permanent Secretary*.

Met Humphrey, Mr Hackers *secretaris*.

[Episode 6]

7.3.4. SPECIFICATION

The opposite strategy of ‘generalisation’ also occurs in the corpus. ‘Specification’ consists of using a more specific term in the translation than in the source text, making the translation more explicit than the source text. Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007) combine this strategy with the previous strategy into one, but since the two strategies can clearly be distinguished in the corpus, they are both treated separately in the present classification. The term ‘specification’ is also used by Gottlieb (2005). Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) uses ‘explicitation’, but that term shows less clearly that the opposite of ‘generalisation’ is concerned. Examples 40 and 41 are instances of ‘specification’.

40. a. But surely open government demands that we should include our colleagues, as well as our friends in *Fleet Street*.

b. Open regeren vereist dat we onze collega's en *de pers* inlichten.

[Episode 1]

41. a. All hell's broken loose at *Number Ten*.

b. De hel is losgebroken bij *de premier*.

[Episode 1]

7.3.5. USE OF DEICTICS

The fifth translation strategy consists of using deictics (pronouns and other anaphora) in the translation instead of the lexical item that is used in the source text. Only one of the classifications in the literature includes this strategy: Tomasziewicz (in Pettit 2009) names it 'replacement with deictics'. This strategy is not very frequent (45 cases or 3.3%) but it is not the least common strategy and should not be neglected, as most existing classifications do. Two examples of the 'use of deictics' are presented in 42 and 43.

42. a. Moreover, Buranda is essential to **the government's** African policy.

- **The government** doesn't have an African policy.

b. Het gaat om **ons** Afrikaanse beleid.

- **We** hebben geen Afrikaans beleid.

[Episode 2]

43. a. Badgers are very plentiful all over **Warwickshire**.

b. Er zijn **daar** dassen in overvloed.

[Episode 6]

7.3.6. PARAPHRASE

The sixth strategy, 'paraphrase', is present in many existing classifications, but it has a different name in most of these: description (Franco Aixelá 1996), definition (Grit 1997), specification (Pedersen 2005, 2007), and explication (Tomasziewicz, in Pettit 2009). Only Nedergaard-Larsen (1993) also uses the term 'paraphrase'. In all of these cases, the source element is described in the target text, which seems to be captured best and most transparently with this last term. Two examples are given in 44 and 45.

44. a. **Scotch on the rocks**, please.

b. **Een whisky met ijs**.

[Episode 5]

45. a. He's anxious to find another appointment. A chairmanship of a **quango**, for instance.

b. Hij zoekt een nieuwe functie bij een **semi-overheidsinstelling**.

[Episode 7]

7.3.7. RETENTION

The next strategy is ‘retention’. It is mentioned in all existing classifications and most also use this term (Grit 1997, Leppihalme 1997, Pedersen 2005, 2007, Gottlieb 2005), which is why it is used here. Some classifications make a distinction between using a source element in its original form and making some minor orthographic adjustments (Florin 1993, Franco Aixelá 1996), but both are included in this one strategy in the present classification. Two examples of ‘retention’ are given in 46 and 47 below.

46. a. We do not admit that **MI6** exists.

b. We geven niet toe dat **MI6** bestaat.

[Episode 3]

47. a. We’re going to **Paris**.

– No, I’m going to **Swansea** and **Newcastle**.

b. Gaan we naar **Parijs**?

– Nee, ik ga naar **Swansea** en **Newcastle**.

[Episode 4]

7.3.8. LITERAL TRANSLATION

Many existing classifications include a strategy whereby a word is translated literally (or phrases are translated word for word). This strategy, ‘literal translation’, is also found in the present corpus. Some have a different name for it, such as calque (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007) or ‘direct translation’ (Pedersen 2005, 2007) but many also call it a ‘literal translation’ (Grit 1997, Tomasziewicz [in Pettit 2009], Gottlieb 2005). Examples 48 and 49 are instances of this strategy.

48. a. How many **red boxes** have they given you home tonight?

b. Hoeveel **rode dozen** heb je?

[Episode 4]

49. My daughter’s about to get page one of the Sun and probably **page three** as well...

M’n dochter komt op de voorpagina en op **pagina 3**...

[Episode 6]

7.3.9. SUBSTITUTION

The last strategy is also the least common strategy, occurring only 6 times (0.44%) in the whole corpus. It consists of replacing a source element either with a different element from the target culture. Pedersen (2005, 2007) also names this strategy 'substitution', but other studies have all used different terms. The strategy is sometimes used to make a joke work, that would otherwise be lost if the original item was kept. 'Substitution' is illustrated in examples 50 and 51.

50. a. Yes, my Minister is concerned that the government will have egg all over its face.

Scotch egg, presumably.

b. De minister is bang dat hij een uitglijder in de **Schotse modder** maakt.

[Episode 2]

51. a. But Scotland's so remote.

- Not all that remote. It's that pink bit about **two feet** above Potters Bar.

b. Schotland is zo over weg.

- Dat valt wel mee. Het is die roze vlek, een **halve meter** boven Potters Bar.

[Episode 2]

7.3.10. COMBINATION OF STRATEGIES

In some cases, more than one strategy was used to translate a single item. Many studies mention that the combination of strategies occurs in their data, but only Grit (1997) includes a separate category for it. Although in the present study more than one strategy is sometimes used, there is no separate category included here. The reason for this is that such a category does not reveal anything about the particular strategies involved in each case. Therefore, an item that has been translated using more than one strategy is classified here under the dominant strategy. For instance, in some cases 'generalization' and 'paraphrase' are used together, as is the case in example 52. *De studio* is more general than *Broadcasting House*, because the former could be any studio whereas the latter specifically refers to the BBC studio. However, the translation also paraphrases the original, as it explains what *Broadcasting House* is. Still the translation seems to be more of a generalisation than a paraphrase, because the fact that the original refers to the BBC has been left out. A true paraphrase would probably have been *de studio van de BBC*.

52. a. I'll be about an hour, I don't want to be late at **Broadcasting House**.

b. Ik blijf niet lang, ik wil op tijd naar **de studio**.

[Episode 7]

8. DISCUSSION

8.1. USE OF THE TRANSLATION STRATEGIES

The observed translation strategies were not distributed equally over the different categories of realia that were observed in the corpus. This section will give an overview of which strategies were predominantly used for which categories, as well as provide some possible explanations for the patterns that were found. For reasons of space, only the general categories of realia types are described (as well as the four subcategories in the main social category), though their subcategories are referred to when necessary. Some examples are given as a means of illustration.

8.1.1. GEOGRAPHY

Despite the fact that this category contains (almost) only names of places, which do not have a translation, eight different translation strategies have been used in this category. However, as we might expect, by far the most common strategy is 'retention', with 83 out of 138 (60.1%) of all instances. As names usually do not have a translation, they are often copied in the translation, especially when a transcultural (Pedersen 2005, 2010) item is concerned. In example 53, Jim Hacker is questioning Sir Humphrey on the different ways that the government spends money on administration, to figure out where he can cut down on unnecessary expenditures. They start by discussing the purpose of different government buildings. By announcing this, the viewer knows that what follows is the name of a building, and the average Dutch-speaking viewer will probably have enough knowledge of the English language to understand that what follows is the address of that building. This allows the subtitler to keep the original names, which also adds (British) local colour to the translation.

53. a. Let's start with the buildings. ***Chadwick House, West Audley Street.***

b. Eerst de gebouwen. ***Chadwick House, West Audley Street.***

[Episode 3]

The second most frequent strategy is 'omission'. In most cases, this strategy has been used where the item in question is not relevant to the plot, when it has already been mentioned before and it is largely redundant or simply due to restrictions on time and space. In example 54, Jim Hacker and Sir Appleby are discussing where the Queen is to meet a visiting head of state. These visits normally take place in London, but Hacker would like this visit to take place in Scotland instead. Because he already mentioned Scotland, the reference to the Queen's residence in Edinburgh does

not add anything to the conversation for the Dutch-speaking viewer, who has probably not heard of this particular palace before. The dialogue is also rather rapid in this conversation, so other elements are prioritized.

54. a. The visit shall take place in Scotland, at **Holyrood Palace**.

b. De president kan haar in Schotland komen bezoeken.

[Episode 2]

The strategies that are less frequently used in this category are not necessarily less interesting than the two most common strategies. Two strategies are worth discussing further: 'generalisation' and 'specification'. The former strategy has often been used when the original items are not relevant to the plot and/or when an item is monocultural (Pedersen 2005, 2010). Example 55, which is Jim Hacker's reply to a trade union representative's request for a Birmingham allowance, shows a combination of these two: although *Manchester* and *Plymouth* are known in the target culture, *Chipping Sodbury* may not be. The three towns and cities are irrelevant to the plot and could easily be replaced by different place names in the original. As the utterance is rather long, there is also not enough space to fit all three place names in the subtitle, so the subtitler has resorted to a single general phrase that encompasses all three items. However, despite being irrelevant to the plot, the last of the three place names has a comical ring to it and so in fact does more than just convey the name of a town. By mentioning this town, Hacker emphasizes that all trade unions in all towns in the country, no matter how small, will want an allowance if Birmingham gets one. This specific nuance is not conveyed (though it is implicit) by using 'generalisation' in the translation. Only a 'substitution' with a similar place name from the target culture could convey precisely the same meaning, but that could create a credibility gap. A credibility gap may appear when an element from the target culture is used in subtitles even though it would not be logical for that element to be used in the context of the source culture (which, due to the visual component, always remains present) (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993, Pedersen 2007).

55. a. No, I'm sorry. I really don't see how I can. I mean, before I knew

where we were, we'd have a **Manchester** allowance, a **Plymouth** allowance, a **Chipping Sodbury** allowance...

b. Het kan echt niet. Voor je het weet, willen **alle steden** subsidies.

[Episode 7]

The strategy of 'specification' has been used for many instances of the 'metonymy' subcategory. These references are often relevant for the plot, but unknown to the target audience (unless it is already clear from the preceding dialogue), which is why the subtitler makes explicit what is implicit in the original reference. In example 56, for instance, Sir Appleby announces a new development to the storyline. As the prime minister is mad at Jim Hacker, threatening to fire him, this reference is clearly relevant. Because of this, the subtitler must ensure that the target audience understands what is going on. To achieve this, he has used a more specific translation.

56. a. Oh I'm sorry to burst in, but all hell's just broken loose at **Number Ten**.

b. De hel is losgebroken bij **de premier**.

[Episode 1]

Other than the strategies of 'retention', 'omission', 'generalisation' and 'specification', the following strategies were used: 'use of deictics', 'literal translation', 'official equivalents' and 'substitution'.

8.1.2. SOCIETY

The category containing references to social realia is too large to discuss in its entirety. The subcategories 'government' and 'daily life' are dealt with separately, whereas the 'private sector' and 'organisations' subcategories are dealt with together because they are both small and because very similar patterns are observed in both of them.

8.1.2.1. SOCIETY: GOVERNMENT

As the 'government' subcategory of the main social category is the largest of all, it is perhaps not surprising that all of the nine strategies are observed in it. They are, however, not all equally common, with a range of just one instance for 'substitution' to 442 instances of 'official equivalents'. The latter category is the most frequently used, but omission has almost exactly the same number at 441 instances. Together, 'official equivalents' and 'omission' account for 83.1%.

'Official equivalents' are used particularly often in the subcategories 'departments', 'other governmental authorities' and 'political figures'. These categories contain the basic elements of the British political institutions and the different functions within it. The fact that 'official equivalents' have been used so widely in the translation shows that the source and target political systems are similar enough for many of the elements in them to be equated without creating a credibility gap (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993, Pedersen 2007). This does not seem to be the case here, as the differences

between the source and target cultures are minimal. Moreover, the general theme of the series (see section 6.1.3) is universal and ‘overrules’ the differences between different political systems. An example is given in 57. Here, Sir Appleby reprimands Bernard Woolley for not keeping the minister occupied with useless things. The translation of *the House of Commons* as *het Lagerhuis* does not make the joke less effective (at least for a Dutch audience, which seems to have been the target audience). The general purposes of the two instances are similar enough for the meaning of the original utterance to be transferred successfully. This is also a typical example of the universality of the theme: only the fact that the civil service deems *the House of Commons* or *het Lagerhuis* useless matters – the specifics of their precise nature is irrelevant.

57. a. APPLEBY: Make sure he spends more time where he can't get under our feet and can't do any damage.

WOOLLEY: But where?

APPLEBY: Well, ***the House of Commons***, for instance.

b. APPLEBY: Zorg dat hij niet zo vaak hier is.

WOOLLEY: Waar dan wel?

APPLEBY: In ***het Lagerhuis***, bijvoorbeeld.

[Episode 6]

‘Omission’ is the most common strategy in the ‘political figures’ subcategory, and is used particularly often with the realia type ‘minister’ (318 out of 331 instances or 96%). In many cases, the original item is used to address the minister. Terms of address are often omitted in subtitles because they are often redundant: it is usually clear from the visual channel who is being addressed (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007). In addition, a minister is addressed with *excellentie* in Dutch (in other words, *excellentie* is the ‘official equivalent’ of *minister* in such cases), which is a rather long word to incorporate in the limited time and space of subtitles. While it is sometimes used in the subtitles, more often than not it can easily be omitted. In example 58, the dialogue is not very fast-paced and Bernard Woolley’s utterance is not very long, so there is enough time to include the form of address in the translation. In example 59, however, this is not possible. Jim Hacker is being interviewed on television; both the interviewer and Hacker have a rather high speech rate. As the dialogue only takes place between these two people, the term of address is redundant and is omitted so that other more important information can be expressed.

58. a. I'll just fetch your boxes, **Minister**.

b. Ik haal uw dozen, **excellentie**.

[Episode 1]

59. a. Encouraging, **Minister**. Why did you not say so in the first place and put people's minds at rest?

b. Dat klinkt bemoedigend. Waarom heeft u dit niet eerder gezegd?

[Episode 4]

In the subcategory 'civil service', the strategy 'generalisation' is worth mentioning. For names of civil service functions, it is the most common strategy. For instance, three different types of assistants are all translated as *assistent* and four different types of secretaries are translated as *secretaris*, among other generalisations (example 60). In these cases, the subtitler probably either did not find the distinctions between the many functions important enough to render these in the translation (or, at least, he/she did not give this information priority over other information), or did not have enough space to represent these differences. While on the one hand it is true that the differences are in many instances not of crucial importance to the storyline, on the other hand the many different administrative functions typify the intricate bureaucracy of the civil service. This characterisation is not insignificant for the genre of the political satire and contributes to the general theme and feel of the series. That being said, it is still true that a number of different functions have been rendered in subtitles, so the characterisation is definitely not completely lost.

60. a. This is Mr Lloyd Pritchard, **Assistant Private Secretary**.

b. Dit is Lloyd Pritchard, m'n **assistent**.

[Episode 1]

Lastly, the strategy 'use of deictics' merits our attention. It is present in many of the subcategories, though it never represents a very large proportion of the total number. Despite this, it is generally an effective strategy to transfer meaning in a condensed form without great losses. In one particular case (example 61), however, the use of a pronoun in fact provides too much information. *PM* is translated twice: once with an 'official equivalent' (*premier*) and once with a personal pronoun. The latter is in fact also an explicitation, as the element is not overtly repeated in the original dialogue. Personal pronouns and names are carefully avoided in the original text with respect to the prime minister, to avoid choosing sides between different political parties. In most cases when the subtitler had no other choice, the male personal pronoun was chosen. In this particular instance, however, the feminine pronoun has been used, which leaves no doubt about

who it refers to: Margaret Thatcher, the only female PM the UK has ever had, who was prime minister at the time the series was aired. The masculine pronoun, while more explicit than *premier*, at least does not target one particular person, which is more in line with the series' satirical intentions.

61. a. But you said only yesterday that a plan to abolish the department had been put up, and the **PM** was smiling on it.

– No, smiling at it! Smiling at it, not on it.

b. Er was toch voorgesteld om het ministerie op te heffen? En de **premier** was er blij mee.

– Nee, **ze** moest erom lachen.

[Episode 5]

8.1.2.2. SOCIETY: DAILY LIFE

The most common strategy in the social subcategory 'daily life' is 'retention'. It is most often used in the subcategory 'measurements', and particularly for the translation of 'pounds'. In all cases, the amounts mentioned are very large, so even when the target audience does not know what the exact value of these amounts is in the national currency, it will be clear that very large amounts of money are concerned. For instance, in example 62, Sir Appleby makes explicit what the business offer of a visiting African president really means for the British government and he naturally expresses this in pounds. Translating it with *pond* does not result in a loss of information, as it will still be clear to the Dutch-speaking viewer that what the president's offer is unreasonable. Moreover, if the subtitler had wanted to substitute it with a local currency, he/she would have had to choose between *euro*, *gulden* and *frank*, all of which may create credibility gaps (Nedergaard-Larsen 1993, Pedersen 2007).

62. a. He's asking for a free gift of fifty million **pounds**.

b. Hij vraagt 50 miljoen **pond** cadeau.

[Episode 2]

The strategy of substitution is only used six times in the entire corpus, but three of these instances are found in the 'daily life' category. It concerns instances where the subtitler had no other option than to use a different element in the translation, because otherwise some information and/or a joke would have been lost. An example is given in 63. The African president of the previous

example is threatening to make a positive reference to Scottish independence (from the UK) in a public speech that the Queen will also attend, which would gravely embarrass both her and the government. Sir Appleby refers to this in example 63, with a play on words in the second part of his utterance. Since the idiom in the first part cannot be translated while retaining the element of eggs, the reference to *Scotch egg* cannot be kept either. Instead, the subtitler has created a very similar kind of word play using a different element, though the new element is arguably more general and not a true culturally bound element.

63. a. My Minister is concerned that the government will have egg all over its face.

Scotch egg, presumably.

b. De minister is bang dat hij een uitglijder in **Schotse modder** maakt.

[Episode 2]

Other strategies that are observed in this category are ‘omission’, ‘paraphrase’, ‘specification’ and ‘official equivalent’.

8.1.2.3. SOCIETY: PRIVATE SECTOR AND ORGANISATIONS

In both the ‘private sector’ and ‘organisations’ subcategories of the main social category, there is great variability in the strategies used, despite their small size. They only contain 35 tokens in total, but these are translated using six different strategies per category. Both contain instances of ‘omission’, ‘official equivalents’, ‘retention’, ‘paraphrase’ and ‘generalisation’. In addition, ‘substitution’ occurs in the ‘private sector’ category and ‘specification’ occurs in ‘organisations’. Generally an ‘official equivalent’ is used when there is one available in the target culture. When there is no such equivalent, names and functions have been translated with ‘paraphrase’, ‘generalisation’, ‘retention’ or ‘omission’ depending on how important the item is in a particular case, as well as on how well known the item is in the target culture. For example, (*trade*) *union* has consistently been translated with its Dutch ‘official equivalent’ *vakbond*, as in 64. In example 65, however, no equivalent exists. The item has been translated with a combination of ‘paraphrase’ and ‘generalisation’. It is part of an enumeration by Bernard Woolley of the many meetings in Jim Hacker’s agenda during his first week as a minister. As with many of the realia in other categories, the specific body that the item refers to is not very relevant; what is relevant here is that it is part of an enumeration of boring appointments. The item itself is thus not very important and it is not well known either, but it cannot be omitted as the enumeration remains relevant.

64. a. Won't you be holding discussions with *the unions* first?

b. Praat u niet eerst met *de vakbonden*?

[Episode 3]

65. a. A deputation from the *British Computer Association*,
ten thirty Tuesday morning,...

b. Een afspraak met de *computervereniging*...

[Episode 1]

8.1.3. CULTURE

Again, as in the other categories, almost all of the translation strategies were noted in the cultural category. The only strategy that was not used is 'substitution'. The most common strategies are 'retention' and 'omission' with 20 instances each, which together account for 59.7% of the total. Most instances of 'retention' are names – not only of people, but also of things (both material and immaterial). These cannot be translated and are in many cases transcultural. As Pedersen (2005, 2007) notes, such items can easily be copied in the translation as they pose no problems of intelligibility for the target audience. Some of the items, however, might in fact be more monocultural in nature and thus more problematic when they are retained in their original form (Pedersen 2005, 2007). In example 66, Jim Hacker, Sir Humphrey, some other ministers and their permanent secretaries begin to despair over the situation in which the visiting African president is threatening to make an embarrassing speech. Sir Appleby first compares the situation to the sinking of the *Titanic*, which is clearly a transcultural item and can easily be retained in the subtitles. Next, he mentions the Christian hymn *Abide with Me*, which is a more monocultural item. Many viewers in the target audience may not recognise it as such, and they might not realise that this song was played by the *Titanic*'s band as the ship was sinking. Thus, without additional information, they might not be able to successfully link the two items and understand the full comparison, and so this reference might be lost on them.

66. a. HACKER: Humphrey, you're paid to advise me, advise me!

APPLEBY: This is not unlike trying to advise the Captain of the *Titanic* after he's struck the iceberg.

HACKER: There must be something we can do.

APPLEBY: Hmm, we could sing *Abide with Me*?

b. HACKER: Je moet me advies geven.

APPLEBY: Advies aan de kapitein van de *Titanic* nadat hij op de ijsberg is gelopen.

HACKER: We kunnen vast wel iets doen.

APPLEBY: *Abide with me* zingen.

[Episode 2]

The strategy ‘omission’ does not pose any intelligibility problems, as in most cases the omitted items are not relevant to the storyline or to any jokes. One specific case, given in example 67, is worth discussing in more detail. Jim Hacker’s daughter Lucy is angry at her father because he has decided to implement a large plan to save Britain’s natural heritage, though at the cost of a local nature reserve. As a result of this plan, the badger colony in the reserve will most probably not survive. In her rage, Lucy compares her father and the extermination of badgers to Hitler and the extermination of the Jewish people. This utterance is not subtitled at all, because swear words and taboo words come across more strongly in writing than in speech, so the reference would become too explicit if it were included in the subtitles. Still, the aural reference is probably not lost on the target audience, as it is a transcultural item (Pedersen 2005, 2007).

67. a. The masterplan, *mein Führer*? The end justifies the means?

b. [N/A]

[Episode 6]

In most cases the strategy ‘literal translation’ does not pose a problem, in this category as well as in others, because they are normally used in such a way that the meaning of the translation is immediately transparent. In these cases, ‘literal translations’ are an efficient method to transfer the meaning of a source item. In this category, however, two instances of ‘literal translation’ merit our attention. In example 68, Jim Hacker’s daughter is about to hold a nude protest vigil to save the badgers of the previous example. This is obviously something that would attract a lot of attention from the media, specifically the tabloids. Hackers alludes to this by mentioning the tabloid newspaper *the Sun*. As his daughter is planning to be nude during the protest, Hacker also refers to his daughter being on *page 3* – the page which contains a picture of a topless model in some British tabloids. The name of the newspaper and perhaps even the fact that it is a tabloid might be known to the target audience, but since no Dutch or Flemish newspapers have a section that is similar to the Sun’s page three, it is unlikely that this particular concept is known. Translating it literally as *pagina 3* therefore probably does not make the original reference clear. It also does not help that the reference to the newspaper has not been retained, which makes the link with tabloids vaguer in the

translation. However, the subtitler probably did not have enough space to transfer the full meaning of both *the Sun* and *page three* and was therefore forced to use a less felicitous translation.

68. a. Oh, marvellous, my daughter's about to get page one of the Sun,
and probably **page three** as well, and all you can do is think of the files.
b. M'n dochter komt op de voorpagina, en op **pagina 3**
en jij gaat dossiers bekijken.

[Episode 6]

Another case of 'literal translation' is found in example 69. Jim Hacker is promoting a project of cooperation between the government and the private industry on the radio. Everyone except for him, however, knows that the private investor has important financial problems and so that the project is doomed to fail. A trade union representative, who also participated in the broadcast, talks to Hacker about this afterwards. He quotes the example below, which are four lines from the poem *The Charge of the Light Brigade* by Lord Tennyson, though he has inserted Hacker's name in it. The poem tells the story of a battle in the Crimean war, in which six hundred British soldiers did not stand a chance against the Russian army. By quoting these lines, the representative implies that the current situation will similarly ruin the minister. While the reference is most probably not known by the target audience, unlike in the previous example the 'literal translation' here manages to transfer the general meaning the original reference, namely that of a dead-end situation. Moreover, the viewers may infer from the use of figurative language that the original reference is probably a literary work, even if they do not know which precise one is concerned.

69. a. ***Cannons to the right of him, cannons to the left of him,
into the valley of Death rode Mr. Hacker.***
b. ***Kanonnen links en kanonnen rechts en zo reed Mr Hacker z'n einde tegemoet.***

[Episode 7]

8.2. EQUIVALENCE

In chapter 4, after discussing the various approaches to translational equivalence, we chose to adhere to Toury's (1995) descriptive view on equivalence, rather than to predetermine equivalence as the other theories do. With respect to realia, the relation of equivalence that can be observed between this translation and its source is not strict: the target elements need not be the exact same as their corresponding source elements, either denotatively or connotatively. Their relation of equivalence is thus relative. They do not share all features, but in many cases only the main, most

important features. As equivalence is a given for Toury (1995), it holds for all elements of the target text (or, indeed, of any target text which is considered a translation). However, in this specific corpus, the observed relation of equivalence is perhaps best exemplified by the many 'official equivalents' that are used. Indeed, even their name refers to the fact that the elements might not be strictly equal, but that they are considered equivalent either way. With respect to denotative and connotative meaning, the specifics do not seem to matter: as long as the translation serves the same purpose of characterising the political satirical theme of the series, they are considered equivalent. Thus the translation is a functional equivalent that is determined by the text genre. However, this functional equivalence is not achieved through domestication. The British and Dutch-speaking cultures merely seem to have been treated as largely equivalent, rather than that the target culture completely substitutes the source culture. This is again illustrated by the large number of 'official equivalents', which treat many elements from both cultures as (functionally) equivalent, as well as by the very low number of 'substitutions' in the translation.

8.3. INFLUENCES ON STRATEGY CHOICES

In section 3.2.2.5, the seven different factors as proposed by Pedersen (2005) were described that influence the translator's (and specifically the subtitler's) choice of which translation strategy to employ. These would all be considered textual-linguistic norms in Toury's (1995) model, because they govern the choice of which specific linguistic material is used in the translation.

The first of Pedersen's (2005) factors, transculturality, clearly has an influence in the present corpus, as has already been demonstrated in the previous sections. Pedersen's (2007) claims that monocultural items pose more translation problems, requiring more explanations than both transcultural and infracultural items, is quite clearly borne out here. This is most clearly the case for geographical and cultural items, many of which are names that are rendered in the subtitles by using 'retention', but also for the items that have been translated by using 'official equivalents' in the 'government' category, many of which are considered transcultural.

The second factor, extra-textuality, treats irrealia somewhat differently from realia: the latter need to make sense outside of the text, while the former do not. Accordingly, Pedersen (2005) claims, irrealia often do not pose a translation problem. This seems to be true in the present corpus: geographical text-internal items have often been translated by using 'retention', while text-internal items from other categories are often transferred by using 'generalisation' without losing very much (or, indeed, any) information, as for instance in example 65 above.

Centrality of reference, the third factor, also has quite a clear influence in the present corpus. When an item is peripheral to both the macro- and microstructure of the text, it is often omitted as

Pedersen (2005) predicts. The opposite is also largely true: items that belong to the central subject matter (in this case: items from the 'government' category) are often translated with 'official equivalents'. However, Pedersen (2005) also predicts that 'retention' is used in many of these cases, which is not true, though this is possibly due to the fact that many 'official equivalents' are readily available. Though Pedersen (2005) does not mention this explicitly, his prediction also seems to imply that items that belong to the central subject cannot easily be omitted. This is not the case here, as the proportion of 'omission' is almost identical to that of 'official equivalents' in the 'government' category. However, this might have to do with the next two factors. For each element, the translation is namely influenced by *all* factors at the same time, and not just one.

The fourth factor is that of intersemiotic redundancy. As the speech rate is generally rather high in the examined series, the subtitler's choices seem to have been greatly influenced by this factor. Many terms of address are omitted – not only in cases where the translation is a long word, as in example 58, but in many other cases as well. Moreover, the strategy 'use of deictics' is used often when an important element cannot be translated with a lexical item due to reasons of space, but it also cannot be omitted because of its importance.

The influence of the co-text, which is the fifth factor, can also be observed in the corpus. In many cases, an item is mentioned multiple times in a single conversation. As it is then clear from the preceding dialogue what the subject of conversation is, items do not always need to be repeated but are often omitted. In other cases, the co-text may explain the reference, as for instance in example 61 above, so that many items can be retained or translated literally.

The large proportion of 'omission' in the entire corpus suggests that the media-specific constraints, the sixth factor, have indeed played a significant role in the translation process. Still despite the rather high speech rate in the series, the 'omission' rate is only marginally higher than the average of one third (Pedersen 2005, Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007). Moreover, we cannot verify whether the omissions are due to a lack of time and space or whether some subtitles could perhaps have been translated more elaborately but were not due to the influence of other factors.

The influence of the last factor, the paratextual considerations, is perhaps more difficult to assess. As we do not know what the subtitler's instructions were (or if there were any at all), it is difficult to observe which influence they may have had on the manner of translating. Pedersen (2005) also notes that textual elements such as the genre are also included in this factor and these, as already shown above, clearly do have an influence: the translator has in many cases adjusted the translation to the genre of political satire. Because of the importance of textual rather than only paratextual elements, it might be useful to consider these as a separate factor of influence, adding them as an eighth factor to Pedersen's (2005) list.

8.4. THE SUBTITLER AS A CULTURAL MEDIATOR

As Pedersen (2010) notes, a translator does not only transfer linguistic elements from one language into another, but he/she is also a cultural mediator, trying to make the audience of the target culture understand (references to) the source culture. Unlike a 'regular' translator, the subtitler only has limited time and space available to achieve this, and must take the transient nature of subtitles into account. Subtitles must thus be as fluent as possible, as viewers often do not have the option of rereading the translation. In addition, the subtitler must understand the references made in the source text, assess how well known they are in the target audience and decide which translation strategy most effectively renders a fluent translation that is also easy to understand in terms of the realia used in the source text, all within the often limited time available to translate the entire text. As Pedersen says, "[t]hus the subtitler has to balance the audience's need to understand the ST message, including 'accessing' cultural items, within the restrictions imposed by the constraints of the medium" (2010:70). This is not easy for a series like *Yes, Minister*: there are many references, some of which may be more difficult to understand than others, and many references are probably not known equally well by all viewers of the target audience, so that determining the most fluent strategy is not always easy.

In general, the subtitler has not employed a strictly foreignising or domesticating strategy to achieve understandable and fluent subtitles. Rather, by equating the two cultures, 'official equivalents' could be used in many instances, taking up a middle ground between a target-oriented and source-oriented approach. In this way, the translation does not copy the elements directly from the source text, but the elements were not substituted with elements that only belong to the target culture either. Rather, the 'official equivalents' could be applied to both cultures. This is not possible in many other translations in which the source and target cultures may not be as similar as the British and Dutch-speaking cultures are. The extensive use of 'official equivalents' would probably not be possible, if *Yes, Minister* were subtitled for example into Swahili.

By using many 'official equivalents', the subtitler has probably also tried to achieve the same textual effect on the target audience. If the translation indeed has the same effect as the original, the target audience must indeed have considered the 'official equivalent' and its source item as being equal – or, rather, the target audience has not noticed a difference between them. However, although translators and subtitlers often aspire to achieving the same effect, they cannot know what the effect of their translation will be while they are translating. That is something we can only observe afterwards.

9. THE PRACTICAL SUBTITLING ASSIGNMENT

As a part of this thesis project, I also subtitled one episode of *Yes, Minister* myself (which can be found in Appendix F on the CD-ROM). This chapter reports on my personal experience with this practical assignment and, more specifically, on how practical subtitling relates to the theory and analysis presented in the previous chapters. After introducing the episode, the discussion is divided into the technical dimension of subtitling on the one hand, and the linguistic dimension on the other hand, following Díaz Cintas's (2010) dichotomy.

9.1. THE COMPASSIONATE SOCIETY

The episode that I chose to subtitle is the first episode of the second season of *Yes, Minister*, entitled *The Compassionate Society*. The reason I chose this episode is that, unlike the first season (which I used for the analysis), I was not familiar with the existing Dutch subtitles of the second season and so I was not influenced by these professional subtitles when subtitling the episode myself. I made the translation after I had read about subtitling and its constraints, but before I had analysed the data from the first season of the series. Thus, even though I had a broad idea of what the results of the analysis might be, I did not know what the real results would turn out to be.

The Compassionate Society revolves around two issues. First of all, the biggest issue is St. Edward's Hospital. Jim Hacker finds out that the building works of this new hospital were completed over a year earlier already and that there are 500 administrative staff working there, but that there are no medical staff or patients. Hacker immediately wants to replace most of the administrative staff with medical staff, but Sir Humphrey will have none of it. Hacker gives Sir Humphrey the task of convincing the trade unions that the ancillary administrative staff must be fired in order to employ medical staff. However, instead of doing so, Sir Humphrey moves a red hot activist to the relevant trade union, who calls out a large strike to prevent any redundancies. The second, initially less important issue concerns a thousand Cuban refugees. Hacker must find a place to house these refugees, but he has no money to do so. Eventually, Hacker comes up with a plan that kills two birds with one stone: since St. Edward's Hospital cannot house any patients, it can house the Cuban refugees. The administrative staff are not fired, but can stay on to care for the refugees.

9.2. THE TECHNICAL DIMENSION

Considering the technical side of things, i.e. handling the subtitling software and working with the technical constraints, two points are worth noting. First of all, it was difficult to maintain a consistent reading speed at approximately 10 or 11 characters per second (cps). Since the series often has a high speech rate, many elements had to be omitted in order not to exceed this speech rate, but sometimes this was impossible and as a result the reading speed was slightly higher at 12 or even 13 cps. In many of these cases, however, only one or two characters made the difference between a reading speed of 11 and one of 12 cps. Furthermore, when the subtitled video was shown to some viewers from the target culture for feedback, none of them remarked that the subtitles disappeared too quickly. This also seems to confirm that the average reading speed is increasing (see section 2.7).

Secondly, spotting the subtitles was generally not a problem except when there was an overlap between turns by different speakers (for example, when one speaker interrupts another). In these cases, there can be no blank frames in between subtitles and a new subtitle cannot coincide with the beginning of the new speaker's turn as is required. To try and solve this, the two turns were included in a single, two-line subtitle where possible.

These technical difficulties are mostly due to the fact that I had only very little experience with the practice of subtitling and the subtitling software, as I had only had a single lesson on the matter. As it is impossible to include more than just the basics of subtitling in this lesson, learning how to overcome more advanced problems would require following a more elaborate course on subtitling.

9.3. THE LINGUISTIC DIMENSION

Concerning the linguistic side of subtitling, several aspects attracted my attention. The first thing that struck me is that realia need not be problematic in the translation. Sometimes, the most difficult part of the translation is in fact finding out what an item refers to. Once the meaning of an item is clear, it is often not very difficult to either decide to omit the item when that is possible, or to rephrase the sentence without the specific cultural item while keeping the same overall meaning. It quickly became clear that 'generalisation' allows for a concise translation that retains at least the gist of the original without having to omit the source item altogether. I also noticed that I used many 'official equivalents', though that might be the case because I was already familiar with the professional subtitles of the first season to some degree. This might have influenced me and confirmed my gut feeling that the viewers do not notice the small differences between the source items and the translations that are used to represent them, as Pedersen (2007) also claims. This is also supported by the fact that none of the viewers that gave me feedback remarked that these were

in fact different items. Also, I noticed that sometimes footnotes would come in very handy if a subtitler were able to insert them. This would sometimes allow for a more accurate translation without losing any information. However, as it is not possible, 'generalisation' with some loss of detail is sometimes the only option. A last remark with respect to realia is that, despite the fact that one can only estimate, it is not as difficult to judge which source items the target audience does or does not know. This is no different than making such judgements for 'normal' translation, with which I have much more experience than with subtitling. The only added difficulty is that the space in which the item can be rendered in the translation is much more restricted in subtitling than in 'normal' translation.

When subtitling the episode, it quickly became clear that rendering humour is often more difficult than rendering cultural items. Still, rendering humour turned out to be the most difficult in cases where it depended on the understanding of realia. The most pertinent case is provided in example 70, which is Sir Humphrey's reply to a trade union representative who has just asked if Jim Hacker will not cause any trouble to their plans. The joke is based on the expression *he doesn't know his arse from his elbow*, in which *arse* and *elbow* have been replaced with the realia *ACAS* and *NALGO*. The comical effect arises both from the literal meaning of the sentence (namely that the minister has no clue about trade unions) as well as from the fact that Sir Humphrey almost said *arse*, which is out of character for such a sophisticated person. The corresponding Dutch phrase to *he doesn't know his arse from his elbow* is *hij kent er de ballen van*, but this sentence does not allow for any elements to be substituted: for example, *hij kent er de bonden van* would probably strike the viewer as odd rather than funny. Therefore, it was not possible to maintain this aspect of the comical effect and a more general translation was necessary.

70. The minister doesn't know his ACAS from his NALGO.

As it is such an integral part of the subtitling process, 'omission' attracted my attention. As I was not used to having to work with constrained translation, I noticed that I still tried to include as much as I could in the translation and subsequently that I sometimes found it rather difficult to choose which elements, other than terms of address and repetitions, to omit. As a result, concise translations that contain all of the information (or at least, all of the general information) were preferred over longer translations in which some elements are kept in more detail whereas some were dropped entirely. Yet it was noted by most viewers (who were not familiar with the constraints of subtitling) that some elements were dropped, but none of them reported that crucial elements were missing. One viewer did notice that the subtitles probably contained more information than average. Thus, though the strategy 'omission' was rather frequently used, the average rate of

'omission' in my translation is probably lower than is generally assumed in subtitling theories (Díaz Cintas and Remael 2007).

One last point can be made with respect to register. In many cases, it is said that rendering speech in writing is not easy because of differences in style between the two modes. However, the characters' register in *Yes, Minister* is rather elevated, which is closer to writing than lower registers. This made it much easier to render the speech in writing while keeping the same effect.

To conclude, we can say that the biggest problems in the entire subtitling task were caused by technical inexperience with the subtitling practice. With respect to the linguistic dimension, most of my personal impressions seem to confirm the theory on realia and subtitling in general. However, I may have been influenced by the theory, which I was familiar with before starting the task, even if I did not know what the results of the analysis would be.

10. CONCLUSION

This dissertation has looked at the translation of culture-bound references. More specifically, it has looked at how these realia are rendered in the subtitles of the first season of the British political satire *Yes, Minister*. The research was carried out using a bottom-up approach: the data provided the categories for the classification of realia types as well as for the different strategies employed in the translation, rather than imposing predetermined classifications on the corpus.

The results showed that there are three main categories for realia types: geographical, social and cultural references, which can each be subdivided into smaller categories of one or more levels. The references to elements of a social nature are by far the most abundant, which is not surprising as this category contains all references to the government, the main subject of the series. The results also showed that there are nine different strategies that the subtitler has employed to render these realia in the subtitles. 'Omission' and 'official equivalents' are by far the most common translation strategies overall.

With respect to which types of references were translated predominantly with which strategies, we can say first of all that all main categories (as well as the first level social categories) in fact contain almost all translation strategies. However, the strategies are not equally distributed over the different categories of realia types. Geographical realia, social realia referring to 'daily life' and cultural realia are most often translated with 'retention' as many of these references contain names, which cannot be translated. Social realia of the 'government' subcategory are most often translated with 'official equivalents' and 'omission'. The former strategy shows that elements from the different cultures are similar enough to be equated. The small differences that exist between the source and target elements are insignificant to the general theme of the series. The latter strategy is mostly employed with terms of address, which are redundant in many cases. References to the other two social categories are translated with an 'official equivalent' when there is one available.

This distribution of translation strategies shows that the subtitler was influenced to different degrees by the seven factors that Pedersen (2005) lists. The most important of these seem to have been transculturality, centrality of reference and intersemiotic redundancy. Moreover, the genre of the series seems to have played a significant role as a textual factor, which was suggested as an eighth factor.

In terms of foreignisation or domestication, the subtitler seems to have chosen a middle ground. By equating the source and target cultures, which are similar enough to do so, the subtitler can use many 'official equivalents'. This way, the subtitles can be both fluent and understandable to the

target audience. However, although the subtitler has probably tried to keep the same effect in the subtitles to the target audience as the source text has to its source audience, we cannot say anything about the effect of the subtitles from the text only. This would have to be examined in more detail in a study that also consults informants from the target culture.

This dissertation also included a practical assignment. The impressions from the subtitling practice seem to confirm the theory in most cases, but it must be noted that the theory had been read before starting the practical assignment, and therefore the theory may have been a factor of influence on the practice.

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APPENDIX A: EPISODE SUMMARIES

OPEN GOVERNMENT

As James Hacker settles into his new department, he is determined to make it more transparent to the public. Sir Humphrey Appleby, a fervent proponent of cover ups, wants to change Hacker's mind by teaching him a lesson. He makes sure that Hacker 'accidentally' stumbles across an invoice for a very large order of American computers for use by the civil service. Hacker is outraged about the fact that these computers are American and not British, and so sends the invoice to be published in the press. He does not know, however, that the PM is planning to make an important trade and defence agreement with the American government. Publishing the invoice puts the Americans in a bad light and will make the PM's agreement fall through. When Hacker realises that this may cost him his job, he suggests that the whole thing should be covered up instead of published. At this point, it transpires that the invoice has in fact not reached the press because of a 'mistake' by Appleby, solving the crisis.

THE OFFICIAL VISIT

The president of Buranda, a small African country that used to be a British colony, is scheduled to visit the UK. He must meet with the Queen, who will be in Scotland at that time and will need to travel to London— an administrative problem that Hacker's department must solve. Hacker arranges for the meeting to take place in Scotland, to which Appleby is opposed. Just before the visit, there is a coup d'état in Buranda. Appleby suggests that the visit be cancelled, as the British government know nothing about the new president. Hacker, however, is determined go through with the visit, as there are three Scottish by-elections coming up that would be influenced in his favour if the visit happens. When the new president arrives, it turns out that it is Charlie, one of Hacker's old university friends. Charlie threatens to mention Scottish independence in his speech at the meeting with the Queen. Hacker and Appleby try to persuade Charlie to change his speech. The latter will only do so in exchange for a very large and cheap loan in favour of Buranda and at the expense of the UK. Hacker and Appleby finally agree to this deal, despite its corrupt nature.

THE ECONOMY DRIVE

The department of Administrative Affairs is accused of wasting government money due to its inefficiency. Hacker wants to slim down the civil service in an attempt to save money, but is told by Appleby that this is impossible. Hacker orders a study to find out where there is waste and sends his political advisor Weisel on a search for possible cutbacks. The latter is spied on by Appleby, who then has an explanation for all the waste that Weisel reports. Appleby suggests that instead they should cut back on their own expenses to set an example for the public, to which Hacker agrees. The result is chaos at the department, which in turn results in Hacker accidentally telling the representative of the Civil Service Transport Union that all of its members will lose their jobs. A large strike ensues, and on top of that the press announces that 400 people were hired to carry out Hacker's study. To solve the situation, Appleby proposes to get rid of a large number of fake jobs that no one is actually doing.

BIG BROTHER

During a televised interview, Hacker only gives meaningless answers that make him sound like a civil service spokesman. As his wife reminds him that evening, Hacker is a minister and does not need to bow down to the civil service; instead, he can do whatever he likes. Hacker confronts Appleby with his new enthusiasm and his wishes to make changes, but Appleby insists that there are too many problems of all sorts involved and that his plans are not feasible. Hacker later runs into his predecessor, who tells him which tricks Appleby uses to stall any changes and that the bulk of all the work was already done under the previous government. Even though Hacker can now use this to his advantage, Appleby still refuses to do any work. In a new televised interview, Hacker tells the public that the civil service has promised to implement the changes, and that Appleby will be fired if they do not. Appleby now has no choice but to comply and pretends to work hard on the new policy. Hacker then exposes Appleby's lies by reading out the exact same text that Appleby supposedly wrote that night, but which had in fact been written years earlier.

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

In an attempt to reduce wasting money, Hacker wants to fire 200.000 Civil Servants. At a Cabinet meeting, Appleby finds out that the PM is intending to carry out that plan, but by closing the Department of Administrative Affairs altogether. Hacker and Appleby must now work together to save their department. On top of this, the department's last main job is the implementation of the Europass (a European identity card), a job that no other department wants. Via the Foreign Secretary, they find out that the only reason that the PM supports the Europass is to get a prestigious NATO prize. With this information, they threaten the PM's Office to inform the other Members of Parliament about the PM's real reasons for supporting the Europass, which would cost him his prize. The Department of Administrative Affairs is saved in return for its silence.

THE RIGHT TO KNOW

Hacker has defended a project that will remove the protected status of a nature reserve. While he has assured the public that there will be "no loss of amenity", in reality it turns out that the reserve's badger population will probably not survive if the reserve is no longer protected. Hacker is furious that he was not informed about this sooner and demands to be informed of everything that goes on in the department. Appleby, however, thinks that "there are some things that it is better for a minister not to know", because it allows Hacker to state his case more fervently. When Hacker's daughter finds out about her father's plans, she decides to stop the project by organising a nude protest vigil to save the badgers. Just before she can make her plans known to the press, Appleby convinces her not to go ahead with the protest. He tells her that the department's files state there is in fact no badger colony in the reserve, but that there are thousands of rats instead. Hacker suspects that Appleby has made this story up, but this time he does not want to know the truth, so that he remains confident about his plans in front of his daughter.

JOBS FOR THE BOYS

The government and private industry are cooperating on a building project. Appleby and Hacker's predecessor have arranged the partnership with a private investor, but it now appears that the financial partner is about to go bankrupt. The only way to save the deal is by convincing a bank to take over the private investor's contract. Hacker, however, has no knowledge of the imminent bankruptcy and praises the project in a radio interview. Meanwhile, the bank hesitates about taking over the contract. The bank's director, however, is looking to serve on a quango which is within Hacker's gift. The latter does not realise the importance of getting the bank director appointed and refuses to do so. Appleby then tells him about the investor's financial problems, but Hacker's financial advisor Weisel points out that the crisis is not Hacker's fault, but his predecessor's. Unfortunately, Hacker has praised the project on the radio and is therefore committed to it. Hacker then agrees to appoint the bank director, much to the dissatisfaction of Weisel, who is opposed to this type of corruption. However, when Hacker and Appleby propose for him to serve on a superquango which would require him to travel all over the world, Weisel happily accepts.