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**"Yass girl. Spill the tea. Throw some shade." Translation procedures used in the translation of drag and gay vocabulary in RuPaul's Drag Race via subtitling**

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**“Yass girl. Spill the tea. Throw some shade.”**

Translation procedures used in the translation of drag and gay vocabulary in RuPaul’s

Drag Race via subtitling

MA Thesis

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## 1. Introduction

USA reality competition television series *RuPaul's Drag Race* has seen a rise in popularity since it first aired in 2009. Through its popularity, audiences got to know the art of *drag* better, or perhaps even encountered it for the first time. Today, one can watch the show on several platforms in several countries. This global interest causes the need to translate the series' English language into other languages. Here is where the translation of slang and vocabulary that is specific to a certain group comes into play. How do we transfer this language in such a way that is understandable and perhaps relatable in another language?

In this thesis, I look at the Dutch *Netflix* subtitles of *RuPaul's Drag Race's*. By looking at three episodes and selecting language that is specific to the *drag* community or the gay community, which are inextricably linked to each other, I look at the procedures used for these translations and attempt to answer the question: what patterns are visible in the Dutch *Netflix* subtitles of US reality TV show competition *RuPaul's Drag Race* and the translation procedures used to transfer *drag* and gay language? We might also get a better understanding of the experience that a viewer of *RuPaul's Drag Race* using the Dutch subtitles might have and how this experience might differ from someone who watches the show in its original language.

In the literature chapter I first discuss the concept of audiovisual translation and constraints on the act of subtitling. I will then focus on *drag*, its relation to the gay community, gay and *drag* language, and how it is translated.

In the methodology chapter, I discuss the translation procedures used as a framework for the analysis chapter. I elaborate on the concept and contents of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, the selection of terms for analysis and *Netflix* subtitles.

In the results and discussion chapter I present an analysis of the *drag* and gay language used in *RuPaul's Drag Race*, its Dutch translations, and translation procedures used, its patterns and implications.

Lastly, a number of three appendices are added consisting of a list of *drag* and *RuPaul's Drag Race* terminology used for the selection of the analyzed language in the discussion and analysis chapter.

## 2. Literature

In this chapter I discuss existing literature on audiovisual translation (henceforth: AVT), *drag* culture and language. The first section is dedicated to AVT: what is AVT, what is subtitling and what is the concept of constraint translation? The second section elaborates on *drag* culture: what is the art of *drag*, the history of *drag* and what defines *drag queens*? I discuss gay slang as well as language specific to the *drag* community: what are the characteristics of this slang and how can we analyze this language? The last section looks at the translation of gay and *drag* language, and its difficulties in relation to both linguistics and the gay community as a minority.

### 2.1. Audiovisual translation

According to Remael (2010: 12), the three main modes of AVT are dubbing, subtitling and voice-over. Dubbing is the act of replacing the spoken text in the original media with another spoken text, (Munday, 2016: 278), voice-over is the act of laying audio on top of the original audio, and subtitling is the adding of a text on the screen. In the case of intralingual subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, the subtitles might be in the show's original language (Remael, 2010: 12), and might include descriptions of elements outside of the spoken words (Remael, 2010: 14). Another type of subtitling is bilingual

subtitling, which provides simultaneous subtitles in two languages (Munday, 2016: 278). In this thesis I focus on interlingual subtitling, which is the translation of an orally spoken text into a written text, where the written translation is shown over the original audiovisual footage. Remael and Diaz Cintas define subtitling as:

“a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavors to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like), and the information that is contained in the soundtrack (songs, voices off).” (2014: 8)

This definition makes evident what makes subtitling a mode of AVT; the combination of spoken word, the images seen on screen and the subtitles. Gottlieb (1994) calls subtitling a form of *diagonal translation*. Whereas other types of translation are often horizontal and one-dimensional, for instance moving from written text in the source language (SL) to written text in the target language (TL), *diagonal translation* deals with movement from spoken language in the SL to written language in the TL.

In addition, AVT has to take into account several different elements. Chaume (2004) calls these elements verbal elements, as opposed to non-verbal elements. Both verbal elements and non-verbal elements can consist of audio channels or visual channels, which are in turn both represented by different semiotic codes. Verbal elements refer to linguistic codes (e.g. dialogue), paralinguistic codes (e.g. accents), literary and theatre codes (e.g. plot and narrative), and graphic codes (e.g. written street names and



menus). Non-verbal elements are sound and arrangement codes (e.g. sound effects), musical codes and paralinguistic codes (e.g. pauses and coughing), iconographic codes, photographic codes (e.g. colors), scenographic codes, film codes (e.g. editing), kinesic codes (e.g. gestures), proxemic codes (e.g. movements), and dress codes (e.g. hairstyles). Gottlieb (1997) makes a similar division, but one that consists of four different semiotic channels: verbal audio (e.g. dialogue); non-verbal audio (e.g. background music); verbal video (e.g. captions); and non-verbal video (e.g. montage). These various elements impact the field of AVT and the ways in which the process of AVT might differ from what is deemed to be the *traditional form* of translation, e.g. the translation of written text into written text.

The presence of audio and visuals does not only necessitate the aforementioned diagonal way of translating but also poses several other issues, coined under the concept of *constrained translation*. The first scholar to address the constraints put on the translator by AVT as *constrained translation* was Titford (1982). It was later elaborated on by Mayoral, Kelly and Gallardo (1988). They discuss how the various forms of communication that are involved in AVT, especially referring to non-linguistic elements, i.e. the involvement of audio and visual elements in subtitling, constrain the translator. They, however, argue that non-linguistic elements should be taken into account during translation since they form a part of the meaning that should be transferred. On the other hand, the translation of these additional non-linguistic elements might create a translation that produces what they call *noise* in the target text (TT). When, for instance, background elements are added to the subtitles, it adds *noise* to the translation of purely the spoken source text (ST). Other constraints are related to, for instance, time and space (Remael &

Diaz Cintas, 2014: 57). Reduction and condensation are often necessary to fit the written language on screen (Gottlieb, 1994: 115), which might lead to a loss of information. In addition, the translator does not only need to pay attention to the translations, but also to the text composition and timing and editing of the text in order to achieve a synchronization of text and audio (Diaz Cintas, 2010: 364). The presence of video and audio might cause difficulty in regards of, for instance, background noise or other acoustic elements that have to be taken into account for the message of the ST to be properly conveyed (Gottlieb, 1994: 106). Accents and non-standard speech might pose a problem when these are important to the narrative, but difficult to convey via subtitles (Diaz Cintas, 2010: 364). In addition, there is a difficulty coined *cultural discount* (Wasko, 2003: 176), which refers to the fact that certain cultural elements might not be understood by the target audience, and that the translator has to transfer these elements in a certain way for them to be understood by the TC.

Regardless of whether they are related to linguistic elements or technology, it is important to keep in mind that subtitling is subject to; time and space constraints, which limit options of explicitation; difficulty in translating slang and community-specific language; the concept of *diagonal translation*; and the existence of several linguistic, audio and visual elements that need to be taken into account.

## **2.2. Drag and queer culture and translation**

As Gottlieb (1994: 106) mentions, one of the constraints that subtitling deals with is the transference of dialects, sociolects and other types of specific language. How does a

translator transfer the language that is specific to a certain region, group or people, for instance *drag queens* from the USA, into another language that might not have the same connection to this region or group? This thesis focusses on language that is specific to the *drag* community, including an overlap with the gay community. In order to be able to look at the translation of the language that is specific to this community, first we have to consider what this language specifically entails and its context within the *drag* community.

### 2.2.1. *Drag*

The definition that Cambridge Dictionary offers for *drag* is “the activity of dressing in clothes of the opposite sex, especially of a man dressing in women’s clothing, often for humorous entertainment” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). Other terms that refer to a similar act are *transvestites*, men who likes to dress up as a woman, would like to pass as a woman, but do not wish to actually undergo surgery in order to physically transition into a woman; *male actresses* who use “a real disguise, who project authentic female characters rather than male-designed fantasy types (...)” (Baker, 1995; 17), and *female impersonators* or *cross-dressers*, a more generally used terms for men who dress up as women (A guide, 2015). The word *drag* originated in the theatre scene, and might possibly have first referred to the dragging of dresses on the ground (Baker, 1995).

Because the topic of this thesis is the reality TV show *Rupaul’s Drag Race* (Drag Race) and the performers on this show refer to themselves as *drag queens*, this is the preferred term for this thesis. Since *drag queens*, including those on *Drag Race*,

commonly refer to themselves and each other using female pronouns, I use she/her pronouns to refer to people in female drag as well.

*Female impersonators* have been around for centuries and across nations and cultures: from actors in plays to cross-dressing men associated with religion (Zervigon, 2002). This tie to religion could be seen in Christianity, when only men were allowed to partake in religious plays (Baker, 1995: 26). In a later period, during the era of the British Elizabethan theatre in the 16th and early 17th century, women were still not allowed to partake in plays (Cartwright, 2020). And not only in the West were women not allowed to appear on stage for a fairly long period of time due to an association with prostitution, in Japan this was also the case (Baker, 1995: 67). *Drag* has thus been around for a long time and is connected to different origins. In the next sections I will discuss the modern concept and origin of *drag*, with a focus on its relation to the gay community.

### 2.2.2. *Drag and queerness*

It is impossible to consider modern *drag* culture without its connection to gay culture. Taylor and Rupp (2003) even define *drag queens* as “gay men who dress and perform as, but do not want to be, women or have women’s bodies”, (2003: online excerpt)<sup>1</sup> including homosexuality as an integral component of *drag*. They quote a *drag queen* who states that *cross-dressers* are straight and *drag queens* are gay. Baker (1995) explains that both drag and queen are associated with gay vocabulary and thus with what one could call gay culture. This might be one of the reasons why some people reject the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/731588.html>

term *drag queen* and would rather use *female impersonator*: *drag queen* “seems to be making a statement about the sexuality of the performer” (Baker, 1995). Older definitions of *drag*, like that from the 1906 Manual of Psychiatry (Rogues De Fursac) include homosexuality as a part of *drag*. But even today, Cambridge Dictionary defines *drag queen* as “a man, often a gay man, who dresses as a woman for entertainment” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). The concept of *drag* thus has a particular relationship with the gay community.

Being homosexual is, however, not a prerequisite for *drag*. There have appeared *drag queens* on *Drag Race* who identify as straight, bisexual or who do not want to label their sexuality. And as we can see in the history of *drag* — men playing female characters in plays — homosexuality was not an inherent part of *drag*, since men also portrayed women due to religious reasons (Baker, 1995: 26).

Where then does this relationship between the gay community and *drag* come from? It is true that the majority of the contestant on *Drag Race* in fact identify as homosexual, with sexuality being a much-discussed topic on the show. Many elements of the show also refer to sexuality, and homosexuality in particular. Traditionally, a relationship can be observed between *drag queens* and gay bars (*InQueery*, 2018). It was here where *drag queens* performed. The 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City against the New York City police, related to their harassment against gay men and *drag queens* who visited a bar called the Stonewall Inn (Baker, 1995: 199), showcase the aggression and oppression towards this group. New York City can be considered the birthplace of modern *drag* and it was a largely African American population there that started it, with modern *drag* characteristics originating in so-called *balls*: events where *drag queens*

walk down runways in a competition about the best *drag* (Lawrence, 2013). These *balls* offered a safe space for *drag queens* and gay people (Baker, 1995: 3).

The harassment that this group of people experienced and still experience today shows how both the gay community and the *drag* community are minority groups, specifically targeted for their identity that differs from the status quo, namely heterosexuality. This identity related to sexuality is in part related to the act of *drag*. The fact that gay people fall outside of what is considered to be the norm regarding sexual identity, namely heterosexuality, is something that is expressed through *drag* and its relation to gender roles; removing oneself from the constraints of masculinity (Baker, 1995: 258) and heterosexuality (Butler, 1993). By not conforming to these roles, by playing with gender through the act of *drag* and by dressing up like a woman while not being one, existing and accepted gender roles are challenged and gay people are given the opportunity to create their own queer gender identity. Like often discussed in feminist discourse, by, for instance, Millet (1970), femininity is a masquerade: it is not tied to biology but in fact something that we ourselves create. The way *drag* portrays certain gender roles and femininity is something that already occurred when *drag* did not have this connection to the gay community. Men in plays over-emphasized acts related to womanhood, such as child-birth or female sexuality because “one of the drag queen’s function has been to confront those female mysteries which exclude and so intimidate men, creating in them fear, uncertainty and a sense of apartness” (Baker, 1995: 29). Women were not involved in these female roles played by men, causing this portrayal of women to originate in how men see and approach femininity.

The portrayal of over-emphasized and stereotypical forms of femininity is called *camp*, which is related to elements that Babuscio calls, “those elements in a person, situation, or activity that express, or are created by, a gay sensibility” (1977: 20). He argues that the relationship between homosexuality and *camp* is one in which being a homosexual is not a prerequisite for being *camp*, but in which it does highly influence its four basic features. These features are irony, aestheticism, theatricality and humor. We can recognize these features in *camp* related to *drag*. We can see the theatricality in the over-the-top ways in which *camp drag* expresses the previously mentioned gender identity: by being over-the-top it is made clear to the audience that the performance is in fact that: a performance. Friedman and Jones describe *drag queens* as “having on grand wigs, lots of makeup, boas, a lot of jewelry, pronounced breasts and hips with the pads they add to look more like a woman” (2011: 89). By adding humor to this performance, it is made clear: I am not being serious, and I am not trying make people think that I am a woman. I am a man dressed up as one, through which I flip conventional gender constructs. One example Friedman and Jones give is that of a *drag queen* using a bra pad to wipe her face (2011: 89). This is something which commonly does not happen in real life, but it combines over-the-top humor with an emphasis on femininity, through the use of a bra.

However, despite what one might believe when looking at these portrayals of gender, it is not a *drag queen*’s goal to mock women. As Friedman and Jones (2011) discuss, they imitate women: they do not consider themselves women, but rather members of the *drag* community. The *drag queens* who they interviewed emphasize that they do not mean to be offensive towards women, but rather respect and love them. A

quote by RuPaul on people who might be offended by *drag queens* and their portrayal of women states that: “The Irish drag queen Rory O’Neill, aka Panti Bliss, once told me that when he puts on his heels and his hair, he isn’t impersonating a woman, he’s using tools traditionally seen as feminine to express himself.” (Smith, 2019). This, again, ties in with the idea that *drag* is a way for people to express their own relationship with sexuality and gender.

#### 2.2.4. *Drag culture*

The *drag* scene consists of several different types of *drag queens* and sub-cultures, of which not necessarily all are fully related to the traditional concept of *camp*. Schacht (2005) makes a distinction between four different types of female *drag*. The first are *high brow female impersonators*, who are *female impersonators* in the context of formally organized venues, and only dress up for formal functions and shows. They originated in the Imperial Court System, one of the largest *LGBTQI+* organizations in the world, founded in San Francisco in 1965. *Female illusionists* are *female impersonators* who look realistically female and might undergo plastic surgery to allude to this female illusion. They often only perform songs by female artists and adopt a hyper-feminine demeanor. It is possible that a larger part of this group actually consists not of men, but of transgender women who might be along different stages of physically transitioning and express this female identity through *drag*. *Professional glamour queens* are almost always associated with gay clubs and bars and portray an idealized, hyper-feminine image. They usually perform in *drag* as a side job and are mainly attracted to the act of



performing. The last category that Schacht discusses, *professional camp queens*, represents *drag* in the context of over-exaggeration and humor. They are usually not concerned with portraying a realistic image of femininity and act more as comedians. Zervignon (2002) describes the difference between *low camp* and *high camp*. *Low camp* focusses more on making fun of certain styles or media. There is a more serious element to it, in that the humor used poses gender critique, however, the biggest goal is to entertain. *High camp*, on the other hand, focusses on being more serious, and is based on an idealization of, for instance, famous diva's that are popular within the gay community.

The *drag queens* who compete on *Drag Race* do not belong specifically to one of these groups. Whereas some of them identify with the concept of *camp* in relation to humor and over-exaggeration, others lean more towards the glamorous concept of *high camp*. Due to the fact that the art of *drag* can be closely related to one's own personal relationship with gender and sexuality, it seems plausible that not everyone fully identifies with only one of the discussed categories.

#### 2.2.5. *Drag and queer slang*

Despite the fact that differences are present within the *drag* community, it is a community built on shared values, ideas and a mostly shared identity. One connecting element is the way that *drag queens* talk and the language that they use. Simmons, (2014) defined a *drag queen* speech code, which links their language to certain values and habits. Based on his analysis, a number of characteristics and behaviors that he believes to be true for the *drag* community are defined. For instance, looking *fishy*, meaning

looking feminine. Being humble and not complaining and resisting negativity are also characteristics. Other characteristics are related to the *drag* community as a tight-knit community where values of sisterhood are regarded as being very important. Through the use of supportive language, it becomes clear that it is expected of a *drag queen* to not only show respect to other *drag queens*, but also to help and support them, which Simmons argues might originate from the fact that the *drag* community consists of people who belong to a minority group.

As Stanley states “homosexual slang is a conscious acquisition on the part of the speaker; it acts as a signal of members within the group and as a method of unifying the members” (1970: 55). In addition, “specialized vocabulary is developed by the members” (1970: 47). Hayes, (1976) who coined the term *gayspeak*, talks about three settings in which what he calls gay communication occurs; the secret setting, in which gay people want to avoid (stereo-) typical language that would emphasize them being gay; the social setting, in which gay people can openly express their sexuality through language; and the radical-activist setting, in which gay people are “usually highly political and freely expressive about their identity” (1976: 257). Regardless of the setting, a conscious or unconscious choice is made about specific language-use in relation to the group that a person belongs to. When the first slang language, *Polari*, got adopted by the gay community (*Polari*, n.d.), it was still illegal to be a homosexual in both England and the United States (Rasmussen, 2017). Language used by a marginalized group that faces oppression might answer the necessity of protection from the current status quo: this is why people in the secret setting might say: “Is he?” Instead of “Is he gay?”, as they might not feel comfortable with explicitly stating their sexuality (Hayes, 1976: 257).

When analyzing gay slang, it is important to keep in mind where gay and *drag* slang comes from. With the modern *drag* scene mainly originating from the African American community, a lot of *drag* slang in fact originated in the language of black *drag queens* (Pandell, 2018) (*Words*, n.d.).

In addition, its vocabulary did not stay within the community. Artists like Madonna popularized *drag* elements such as the art of *vogueing*; a certain style of dancing which originated during *drag balls* in the 70s in New York City. Certain slang, such as *to spill the tea*, *gagging* and *shade* (see appendix B), did not stay within the gay or *drag* community and are now commonly used on the internet (Goodman, 2018). This popularization might have positive effects; for instance, what Mentele calls *positive cultural fusion* (*The history*, n.d.), i.e. a better understanding of a minority group, and possibly even more acceptance. On the other hand, there could also be negative effects, such as an incorrect use of slang language by people who do not know about its origins in the same way people from the gay and *drag* scene do (Pandell, 2018).

Overall, a few characteristics can be defined about gay slang, which Harvey (1998) calls *camp traits*. This *camp talk* is related to the *campness* discussed in the previous section. The first characteristic Harvey mentions is the use of feminine language, for instance, referring to a male using female pronouns or the use of terms like *oh my*, which is considered to be feminine and also ties in with the *camp trait* to sound like a Southern Belle; a typical white woman from the US south.

*Register-mixing* is also a characteristic of *camp talk* (Harvey, 1998), which is the act of switching formality and informality and using either one in a context in which it would normally not be used. Other characteristics are language that references sexual

activity, the use of French (which is often considered to be a feminine language), and references to media portraying gay stories or stories that are popular amongst gay people. The last characteristic that Harvey mentions is what he calls *ambivalent solidarity*, or *cattiness*: acting mean towards other members of the same group, while it is often unclear whether this cattiness is an act or not. Words like *bitch*, for instance, can be used within the gay community with both a negative and a positive connotation. These are often words that are commonly used to refer to women, such as *bitch* and *whore*.

Stanley (1970) discusses methods of formation of gay slang. *Compound formations* combine two words, of which one is often the word *queen*, e.g. *drag queen*. *Rhyme compounds* are words such as *kiki*, a get-together. *Exclamations* are, for instance, *Oh my* or *Are you ready?*. *Give him the clap!* is a *pun*, where the word *clap* refers both to applause and to the STI gonorrhoea. In her questionnaires, Stanley only came across one *blend*, a word that combines two other terms: *bluff*, a combination of *butch* and *fluff*, which refers to someone who can play both an aggressive and a passive role. Stanley also states, based on her questionnaires, that within the gay community, (black) humor and sexual innuendos are clearly present.

We can link some of these linguistic characteristics to the concept of *camp*. The use of (black) humor and puns can be linked to the *camp* characteristic of humor. Over-exaggerations and exclamations can be linked to theatricality. Using words like *bitch* and *whore*, as well as sentences that are considered to be feminine like *Oh my*, relate to *drag's* performance of gender and femininity: the language further strengthens the exaggeration of the femininity portrayed through visual elements like clothing and make-up.

It is, however, important to define the language and slang discussed in this thesis as *drag* slang or *drag* language. Considering *LGBTQI+* language as a topic in the context of this thesis would be too broad a subject. To only focus on existing gay slang would be to ignore slang that is specific to *drag* and *Drag Race*. Barrett, (2017) among others, argues that *drag queens* are a unique speech community. For this reason, the methodology chapter contains an elaboration on the selection of analyzed terms for this thesis.

We should also stay aware of the fact that slang found in media might not portray a realistic image of the actual practical use of this slang. We cannot say whether this is the case for all language in *Drag Race*, but we should stay aware of the fact that the scope of this thesis is too small to focus on the use of the language used in *Drag Race*, outside of the TV show.

#### 2.2.6. Translation of drag and queer slang

As discussed in section 2.1, one of the main issues regarding subtitling is the interaction between the visual and the verbal. A translation that does not line up with what is seen on screen might cause loss. As previously discussed, slang used within the gay and *drag* community is not without meaning and is a part of the identity of this community. This is why it is important to look at how this language is transferred into other languages.

The translation of gay language might lead to different outcomes. Adail Rodrigues Júnior (2004) states that the translation of what he calls *gay texts* can lead to two things: it either disseminates anti-biased ideas or it helps to broaden understanding of

new sexual behaviors in the target culture (TC). Whether we can currently still call homosexuality new sexual behaviors is debatable, however, in the case of *drag* culture it is not difficult to argue that the majority of the general public is not highly familiar with it. When elements related to *drag* culture are transferred, a TT might broaden the understanding of the TC on this topic. What might also happen when translating the language of a minority culture, Venuti (1996) argues, is that a text is rewritten in order to better fit the dominant, or major culture, leading to a heterogeneity of minority cultures: what differentiates the language from a minority group from other languages is removed and reduced to the language of the dominant culture.

Translation can be a tool to look at the dominant cultures mentioned by Venuti, and their relationship with minority cultures. Studying what happens in translation reveals elements of the TC and how they approach elements from the source culture (SC). In his article, Júnior (2004) claims, based on Fairclough (1992), that even small shifts in a translation can indicate ideological and political trends in a TC. It is possible that ideas within a TC are not the same as those of the SC, which might also apply to ideas and values related to the gay community, possibly leading to the removal of gay language or context via the process of translation. Harvey (1998) looked at the translation of an English literary text into French. In the translation, a lot of the gay context in the ST is diminished and omitted. Harvey argues that this is because of France's stance on homosexuality: the translator produced a translation that matches the view on homosexuality of the TC. And since the TC view on homosexuality would be a negative one compared to that of the SC, gay slang is altered in order to neutralize the ST. Ranzato calls this "translating homosexual into heterosexual" (2013: 377). She argues that the

translations of *gayspeak* from English into an Italian dub, that of the mini-series *Angels in America*, are influenced by “bias and preconceptions of a culture, the Italian, which has opened up to homosexual themes much more slowly than the AngloSaxon world” (2013: 382). In addition to omission and neutralization, the Italian dubs turn positive depictions of homosexuality into negative ones. In one example she discusses, the original line *I promise to sit with my legs apart*, which jokes about the way men sometimes sit with their legs spread apart, is translated into *I promise not to walk wiggling my ass* (2013: 381). This line refers to stereotypical ideas on how gay men walk, thus changing the line’s meaning into something with a negative connotation in relation to gay people. The TC’s approach and stance on certain elements can thus play an important role in how a text is translated. Harvey mentions how the “existence, nature and visibility of identities and communities predicated upon same-sex object choice in the target culture” (1998: 296) plays a role, as well as the sexual orientation of the translator, and this person’s relationship with gay culture. Harvey also mentions the gay objectives: whether the translation is intended to be a part of a specific gay list of novels. Rittmayer’s (2009) ideas on the translation of slang largely overlap. She also mentions censorship from the client or translator, a word that matches the previously discussed omission and neutralization of gay language.

In addition to a possible removal or change of the gay context due to a TC’s or translator’s views on the gay community, it is also possible that there is simply no equivalent in the TL of a term in the SL (Rittmayer, 2009). In addition, it is important to pay attention to whether vocabulary in one language and gay context carries the same meaning in another language and gay context. As Harvey (1998) argues, *camp* language

does not necessarily carry the same meaning within different contexts. One example of an English term that knows no equivalent in the Italian language is given by Ranzato (2013). In one translation of spoken text in the mini-series *Angels in America*, the word *butch* - in the article defined as a masculine and aggressive type of lesbian - is translated using the word *omosessuale*, meaning homosexual. In this case, the translation of the word is not related to the TC or the translator's personal opinions, but rather to the fact that the Italian language simply does not contain an equivalent of the word *butch*.

And not only across languages, but across time can the meaning of words change as well, a development that does not necessarily occur the same way in different cultures. In the past, the word *queer* was considered to be a pejorative word. In her 1970 article, Stanley shows that several participants in her questionnaire on homosexual slang considered the word *queer* to have a strong negative connotation, one related to distaste or disgust and used as an insult. Currently, the term *queer* is used by a lot of people who don't identify with gender and sexuality norms, such as gay people and transgender people, to describe themselves. The connotation of the term has thus changed from a negative one to a positive one. In their article on the Brazilian Portuguese subtitles of *Drag Race*, Tavares and Branco (2021) discuss how the translator used the Brazilian Portuguese *biba* as a translation for *queer*. As opposed to *queer*, *biba* is considered to be pejorative. The article mentions that the translator could have used the term *LGBTQ+*, as it conveys the general meaning of *queer*. Unclear is whether there is no exact equivalent of *queer* in Brazilian Portuguese, or whether the translator had a reason to not opt for a possible equivalent. In any case, it is near impossible to use a term whose connotations went through the exact same changes as the connotations related to *queer*. People who



identify as *queer* in Brazil might not have exactly the same experiences as *queer* people from the USA. Were the translator to use a Brazilian Portuguese equivalent of *queer*, this word might not have carried the same connotations as the use and progression of the word in American English. Were the translator to use the word *queer*, the target audience in Brazil might not attach the same connotations to the word as people from the US do.

The connotations attached to terms and their relation to the gay and *drag* community and its language is important to these communities. The translation of this language can enrich the target audience's understanding of these communities, but might also be omitted or neutralized, based on the TC, the TL or the translator.

Hardly any substantial research on the translation of *drag* or gay language into Dutch has been done yet. Therefore, no examples of existing procedures used and generalizations of translation into the Dutch language in relation to *drag* and gay language can be provided.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

In this literature chapter I first looked at the field of AVT. Translating spoken text into written text, coined *diagonal translation* by Gottlieb (1994), poses its constraints on the medium, which can be related to language, elements outside of the spoken text and technology.

I have also looked at *drag* culture and its history: what started as a necessity related to the fact that women were not allowed to participate in (religious) plays, transformed into the gay community embracing *drag's* portrayal of gender roles and

femininity to shape their own gender and sexual identity. This self-expression in relation to homosexuality, is what we call *camp*: a behavior and way of expressing oneself through humor, irony, theatricality and aesthetic.

Out of a position as a minority and oppressed group, the need for a shared language exists. In the case of what we call *camp* language, related to both homosexuality and drag, this slang expresses itself in elements like humor, puns, *register-mixing*, over-exaggeration and feminine language.

When translating gay slang, several issues might occur. It is possible that a term does not have an existing equivalent in the TL, an equivalent in the TL might have different connotations, or the translator neutralizes or omits language related to gay slang. How certain terms are translated might reveal the TC's or translator's stance on issues related to the gay community. How gay slang is translated might also have its impact on a TC in an educational context.

In the methodology section I further elaborate on the framework for the analysis, translation procedures, *RuPaul's Drag Race*, *Netflix* and the selection of terms for analysis.

### 3. Methodology

My research question is what patterns are notable in the translation procedures used for the English to Dutch *Netflix* subtitles of *drag queen* competition reality TV show *RuPaul's Drag Race*. In this methodology chapter, I first discuss the research methods used. In the second section, I discuss the concept of translation procedures and the translation procedures that form the framework of this thesis. I discuss *RuPaul's Drag Race* in the third section. The fourth section is about subtitling in relation to *Netflix*. In the fifth section I elaborate on the selection of analyzed terms.

#### 3.1 Field and analysis

In this thesis, I undertake a textual analysis of a ST and a TT and attempt to analyze and discuss patterns in the translation procedures used. This type of research belongs to the field of descriptive translation studies. Coined by Toury (1995), descriptive translation studies consists of three phases: Situating the text within the TC system; a textual analysis of the ST and TT, comparing the two in “coupled pairs”, looking at corresponding segments; and generalizations. This is relevant to my study because I create a comparison of a ST and a TT. I have looked at three different episodes of *RuPaul's Drag Race* on *Netflix* and have selected language that is related to the *drag* community, based on a list of online dictionaries and glossaries. I have created a list of the language that occurs, with its Dutch translations and the translation procedures used. Putting language from the ST and the TT next to each other, I have created these

corresponding segments, after which I discuss generalizations based on these comparisons. Based on these generalizations, I can answer the question what patterns are visible in the translation procedures used.

Due to the fact that this thesis focusses on a collection of selected language, this study concerns qualitative research, defined by Bryman and Bell as “a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (2007: 28), as opposed to quantitative research. This thesis does not focus on general patterns that apply to all *RuPaul’s Drag Race* content created, rather the analysis and discussion chapter will focus on notable results in translation procedures used in a total of three episodes. I look at second episodes only, because the first episodes might have a different structure, being season-openers. I look at different seasons, namely 7,8, and 9 to look at possible translation differences between seasons, and to cover a longer time-period. I specifically focus on relevant terms, ignoring the dialogue that does not involve gay slang, *drag* slang or language specific to *Drag Race*.

### **3.2 Translation procedures**

Whenever a translator translates, decisions have to be made on how to approach certain translations. Even though different terms are used to refer to these approaches (e.g. strategies, procedures, techniques) and differences might exist in what these terms refer to, for instance, a bigger focus on the overall text or on smaller segments, they are all concerned with how a text is translated and the decisions a translator makes during this process.

As a framework for this thesis, Newmark's 1988 taxonomy is used, consisting of what he calls translation procedures. His taxonomy consists of procedures that are applicable to smaller segments of a texts, down to the word-level. These procedures are useful in the context of this thesis, as the focus of the analysis section lies on the translation of sentences and smaller units. I will, however, add one procedure to his list, which I will elaborate on later.

Newmark discusses 17 different translation procedures. These are;

- Transference: this procedure uses a word from the SL in the TT without adapting or changing it. This procedure is used in the case of, for instance, names of people, companies and institutions, and geographical names (1988: 81);
- Naturalization: this procedure takes a word from the SL but changes its pronunciation and morphology to that of the TL, e.g. the translation of the English *performance* into the German *performanz* (1988: 82);
- Cultural equivalent: this procedure translates a word that is specific to the SC into a word that is specific to the TC, but where the two words carry a similar meaning. E.g. the translation of the German *Abitur* into the English "*A*" level. Both words refer to high school exams, however, both terms are used specifically in their respective cultures (1988: 82);
- Functional equivalent: this procedure translates a word from the SL that is part of the SC and neutralizes or generalizes this word in the TT, e.g. the translation of the Polish *Sejm* (part of the Polish parliament) into the English *Polish parliament* (1988: 83);

- Descriptive equivalent: this procedure translated a word from the SL into the TL using several words, explaining the meaning of the word, e.g. the translation of the Spanish *machete* (a type of knife) into the English *Latin American broad, heavy instrument* (1988: 83);
- Synonymy: this procedure uses an equivalent from the TL in order to translate a word from the SL, and is used when there exists no clear one-to-one equivalent between the two languages, and the word is not important, e.g. the translation of the English *fussy* into the French *difficile* (difficult) (1988: 84);
- Through-translation: this procedure entails the literal translation of common collocations, names of organizations, the components of compounds and perhaps phrases. It can also be called calque or loan translation. E.g. the translation of the English *European Cultural Convention* into the French *Convention Culturelle europeene* (1988: 84);
- Shifts or transpositions: this procedure entails changing the grammar of a word in the SL when translating it into the TL, for instance from a noun into an adjective or from singular into plural, e.g. the translation of the English singular noun *furniture* into the French plural noun *des meubles* (1988: 85);
- Modulation: this procedure entails changing the viewpoint, perspective or category of thought of the ST, for instance, translating one part for another, e.g. translating the English *from cover to cover* into the French *de la premiere a la derniere page* (from the first to the last page). These sentences carry the same meaning, but refer to different parts of a book (1988: 88);

- Recognized translation: for this procedure, an official or generally accepted translation of an institutional term is used to translate a word from the SL into the TL, e.g. the Dutch *rechtsstaat* (a state with a constitution) into the English *constitutional state* (1988: 89);
- Translation label: for this procedure, a provisional translation which can later be discreetly withdrawn is used, usually when it concerns the translation of a new institutional term (1988: 90);
- Compensation: for this procedure, a loss of meaning in part of a sentence is compensated in another part or contiguous sentence (1988: 90);
- Componential analysis: this procedure entails splitting up a lexical unit into its sense components, e.g. the word *boy* consists of the sense components *human*, *young* and *male* (1988: 90);
- Reduction and expansion: for this procedure, there is either something added to or partly removed from the ST (1988: 90);
- Paraphrase: this procedure entails the amplification or explaining of the meaning of a culture-related word, in more detail than is the case with a descriptive equivalent (1988: 90);
- Couplets: this is not a specific procedure, rather the combination of multiple procedures for one translation (1988: 91);
- Notes, additions, glosses; these are not specific procedures, rather the cultural, technical or linguistic additional information that is added to a text, for instance, via notes within a text, at the bottom of a page, at the end of a chapter or in a glossary at the end of a book (1988: 91).

Newmark's taxonomy is an extensive one. I, however, argue that one element is missing, which I will add based on a taxonomy by Baker (1992): the omission of a word from the ST, and thus not translating it at all.

In addition, this thesis will not take into consideration the translation procedure of modulation. As Newmark states, "the general concept, since it is a super-ordinate term covering almost everything beyond literal translation, is not useful as it stands. (Newmark, 1988; 88). Modulation can refer to several different procedures in itself, and very commonly occurs. Since it is probable that the occurrences of modulation do not substantially add to the discussion of culture-related terms itself and that it will cloud the other translation procedures, this procedure will be ignored. The same counts for the use of couplets.

### **3.3 RuPaul's Drag Race**

*RuPaul's Drag Race* (Drag Race) is a reality competition TV show, produced in the United States by *World of Wonder* and *Logo TV network*. Its first season aired in 2009 and the show is broadcast in several countries. At the time of writing this thesis, 13 regular seasons have aired, as well as 6 *All Stars* seasons. In these All Stars season, competitors from previous seasons return. Over the past few years, installments of *Drag Race* have been produced in other countries, namely Chile, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Spain, Italy, the Philippines and the Netherlands (*RuPaul's*, n.d.).



In every season, nine to fifteen *drag queens* compete for the title of the best *drag queen* (queen) of that season. A jury judges the contestants based on challenges and their overall performance. Every week, one of the contestants has to leave the competition, until one *queen* is crowned the winner of that season. The host and creator of the show, as well as the main judge, is RuPaul, a famous American *drag queen*. The jury also consists of one of RuPaul's best friends Michelle Visage, as well as a number of recurring judges and a different guest judge each week (*RuPaul's*, n.d.).

The majority of the episodes of *Drag Race* consist of one smaller challenge, the *mini-challenge*, and a main challenge, the *maxi-challenge*. These challenges mostly consist of elements related to acting, comedy, musical, dancing, singing and fashion.

Regular episodes start off with the remaining *queens* in the *Werk Room* (see appendix B). This is the area in which they have to prepare for the challenges. RuPaul enters the *Werk Room* and the *queens* compete in a *mini-challenge*. A *mini-challenge* might consist of, for instance, the *queens* performing a short skit. The winner of the *mini-challenge* might win a prize or an advantage in the following *maxi-challenge*. After the *mini-challenge*, RuPaul reveals what that week's *maxi-challenge* is. This might be a musical that the *queens* have to perform, a comedy show that they have to create, or an outfit that they have to make. The viewer sees the *queens* preparing for that challenge, and eventually the challenge itself. Each episode ends with a *runway*, during which the *queens* have to showcase an outfit with matching hair and make-up, with a different theme each week. After the challenges and *runway*, the judges give their critiques and feedback, and reveal who they consider to be the best and worst performing contestants, winner, and bottom two of that week. The two *queens* that are in the bottom two of the

week have to compete in a *lip-sync-for-your-life*. This is a performance where the two *queens lip-sync* to a famous song. After this *lip-sync*, one *queen*, the one who is deemed to have given the worst performance, is sent home.

The show contains a large number of recurring elements. For instance, a challenge in which the *queens* have to create their own outfits from non-conventional materials, and a challenge called the *snatch game* (see appendix B), in which the contestants have to impersonate famous people through drag.

In addition, a number of elements related to queer culture and sexuality are frequently present in large parts of the show. Acting and musical challenges, for instance, often contain references to famous singers who are generally popular within the gay community, such as Mariah Carey, as well as movies and TV shows that are popular within the gay and *drag* community. Assistants in the show, the *pit crew* are men in underwear. Not only in the challenges, but also while the *queens* are preparing and practicing, certain elements are often present, such as conversations amongst contestants about their coming out and their experiences with their sexuality.

### **3.4 Netflix**

*Netflix* is a US company that was founded in 1997. It started as a company that rented DVD's via mail but slowly transformed into a streaming website where people can watch movies and TV shows. In 2021, the platform surpassed 200 million members worldwide (*About*, n.d.).

A lot of shows on *Netflix* offer subtitles in several different languages, which the viewer can select themselves. The translators who work on *Netflix* content do not directly work for the company itself, but rather for listed companies and *Netflix* preferred partners (Doherty, 2020). *Netflix* offers a list of these preferred fulfillment partners on their website (*Netflix*, n.d.). In order to improve the quality of the subtitles and creating a clearer database of all of the translators who work for *Netflix*, the company started developing the *HERMES test* in 2017: a subtitling and translation test and indexing system (Fetner & Sheehan, 2017). This system, however, got shut down in 2018 because the response was too high and because *Netflix* did prefer to work with local partners after all (Bond, 2018). The company offers several style guides on their website, with general requirements for subtitling in different languages (*Timed*, n.d.). In a 2017 blog post they mention, however, that the partners that they work with “recruit, qualify and measure their subcontractors (translators) differently, so it’s nearly impossible for Netflix to maintain a standard across all of them to ensure constant quality at a reliability and scale we need to support our constant international growth.” (Fetner & Sheehan, 2017). It thus appears that *Netflix* has tried and failed to create a process in which the company recruits, trains and uses its own translators, and still works with outside partners, of which they cannot always guarantee good quality. It also makes it more difficult for the viewer to know exactly for which company a translator works. In the case of *Drag Race*, episode 2 of season 7 does not offer the name of the translator nor the company that the translator works for. For episodes 2 of season 8 and 9, the names of the translators are given (Ingeborg Rulkens and Judith Mulder respectively), but this does not tell the viewer

anything about the company that they work for, and the recruitment process for and standards asked of the translator.

### **3.5 Selection of terms**

Due to the format of the *Drag Race*, a number of lines recur in almost every episode. Appendix A shows a list of those that are related to *drag* and gay slang, which I have compiled by looking at a number of episodes and selecting lines and terms that recur in every episode. Appendix B shows a list of sayings, lines and terms that I have compiled using a number of online lists, glossaries and dictionaries related to *drag* and *Drag Race*. Appendix C shows a list of terms that are not present in appendix A and appendix B, but that are deemed relevant to the topic of this thesis, due to their relation to gay culture, *drag* culture or *Drag Race*, and that appear in the *Drag Race* episodes used for the corpus.

In the next chapter I will first discuss the structure of that chapter, after I will present my analysis and discussion.

## 4. Analysis and discussion

In this chapter, I present an overview of the language in *Drag Race* that I have analyzed, its Dutch translations, and the *translation procedures* used. First, I present 3 tables, one table per episode, that contain language from 3 different episodes from 3 different seasons of *Drag Race*. Before presenting each table, I will elaborate on the number of subtitles per episode, the number of analyzed language and the number of each translation procedure used. Due to the fact that certain speeches are translated using more than one translation procedure, the combined percentages of each translation procedure used do not add up to 100%. In the tables I include the timecode, the original speech, the Dutch *Netflix* subtitles, the translation procedure used and notes wherever I deem it necessary to elaborate on the context of the language or translation procedure. Due to the fact that *Netflix* only displays the amount of time the viewer has left on each episode and

not the amount of time the viewer has watched, I present the timecodes in the same manner. For clarity purposes, I have combined instances per episode where the same speech is translated using the same subtitle. In the discussion section, I discuss the translation procedures used, possible implications and patterns we can observe.

## 4.1 Analysis

### 4.1.1 Table 1

In the following table, I discuss the language related to *drag* culture used in episode 2 of season 7 of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, their Dutch translations, and translation procedures used. In this episode, the *queens* first compete in a the *mini-challenge*: they are given 15 minutes to get into their *drag* outfits. While they are being blown on with leaf blowers, they have to pose. RuPaul then explains what the *maxi-challenge* of that week is going to be. In this challenge, the *queens* have to perform a combination of spoken word and a *lip-sync*, while portraying air hostesses. The *queens* are divided up into two teams, led by the two winners of the *mini-challenge*. The two teams then discuss the challenge, divide the roles, and practice the choreography. We then see the *queens* preparing their outfits and chatting. In the second section of the episode, RuPaul introduces the judges of the week, after which the two teams perform. The theme of the *runway* of this episode is *Jet Set Eleganza*, meaning outfits and looks related to airports and flying. After the *runway*, the *queens* receive their feedback from the judges. The worst and best performing contestants

of the week are revealed, and the bottom two contestants compete in the *lip-sync-for-your-life*, after which one *queen* is sent home.

In this episode, 81 speech instances related to *drag* language occur, out of a total of 606 subtitles (13.3%). Of these speech instances, the translation procedures used are: 27 transferences (33.3%), 20 functional equivalents (24.4%), 17 literal translations (20.8%), 13 equivalents (16.1%), 7 omissions (8.6%), 2 paraphrases (2.5%), 2 transpositions (2.5%), 1 incorrect translation (1.2%), 1 naturalization (1.2%) and 1 is not related to a translation procedure (1.2%).

| <b>Timecode</b> | <b>Speech</b>                              | <b>Translation</b>                       | <b>Translation procedure</b>       | <b>Notes</b>   |
|-----------------|--|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 38:53           | Werk Room                                  | Het atelier                              | Functional equivalent              | Omission of the <i>drag</i> term <i>werk</i> (see appendix B). |
| 38:39           | (Was it nerve-racking) doing the lip-sync? | (Was het zenuwslopend om) te playbacken? | Literal translation                |  |
| 38:20           | Lip-sync                                   | Playbackronde                            | Literal translation                |  |
| 38:24           | Condragulations, girl.                     | Gefeliciteerd, meid.                     | Functional equivalent + Equivalent |  |

|  |                                   |                          |                         |   |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 38:16<br>38:03<br>37:20<br>35:55<br>35:43<br>34:43<br>33:21<br>21:55<br>20:41<br>19:15 | Girl                              | Meid                     | Equivalent              |   |
| 38:08  | I'm getting boy.                  | Dit is te jongensachtig. | Paraphrase              | <i>I'm getting</i> (see appendix C). The translator interpreted the original speech to mean that <i>getting boy</i> is considered to be something negative. |
| 35:54  | You shady.                        | Shady                    | Omission + Transference |   |
| 35:30  | Oh girl                           | Meid                     | Omission + Equivalent   |   |
| 35:30  | She done already done had herses. |                          | Omission                | See appendix A  |
| 35:26  | Hey fly girls.                    | He, meiden.              | Omission + Equivalent   | <i>Fly</i> refers to the theme of the episode, which is flight attendants.  |



|                                 |   |  |                       |   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|---|
| 35:24                           | America's next best drag superstar                      | Amerika's nieuwe drag-superster                  | Literal translation   |   |
| 35:22                           | Work the runway.  | Over de catwalk lopen.                           | Functional equivalent | Neutralization of <i>work</i> (see appendix B).   |
| 35:21                           | (...) show me some sass.                                | (...) wat pit laten zien                         | Functional equivalent |   |
| 35:18                           | Then I'll bump your booty up from coach to first class. | Dan upgraden we je van economy naar first class. | Functional equivalent | Omission of the use of the word <i>booty</i> , neutralized into <i>upgraden</i> .   |
| 34:59<br>32:31<br>04:23<br>0:24 | Condragulations   | Gefeliciteerd                                    | Functional equivalent | See appendix A. Omission of the word <i>drag</i> , thus removing the original pun.  |
| 34:57                           | (...) you need to give face face face.                  | (...) wil ik jullie gezichten zien.              | Incorrect translation | The ST and TT have different connotations: <i>To give face</i> refers to showing a beautiful look. <i>Wil ik jullie gezichten zien</i> means to literally see one's face. |
| 34:52                           | While the pit crew blows you.                           | Terwijl de Pit Crew jullie een blowjob geeft.    | Paraphrase            | In the ST, the word <i>blow</i> is used as a pun, referring both to oral sex, and the fact that the <i>queens</i> are blown on  |

|       |  |  |                       |   |
|-------|--|--|-----------------------|---|
|       |  |  |                       | with a leaf-blower during a challenge. In Dutch, a direct translation of this pun is not possible. The translator opted for a reference that explicates the pun about oral sex, assuming that the Dutch viewer knows the meaning of the term <i>blowjob</i> . |
| 34:45 | Oh, pit crew.                          | Oh, Pit Crew.                                | Transference          |   |
| 34:30 | You have 15 minutes to get into drags. | Jullie hebben 15 minuten om je om te kleden. | Functional equivalent | Simplifies <i>getting into drag</i> into <i>omkleden</i> (getting dressed).   |
| 33:47 | Who wants to get blown first.          | Wie wil als eerste?                          | Omission              | Omission of the word <i>blown</i> , a pun that refers both to oral sex, and the fact that the <i>queens</i> are blown on with a leaf-blower during a challenge.   |
| 33:42 | Pit crew                               | Pit Crew                                     | Transference          |   |
| 33:30 | Gone with the weave.                   | Gone with the weave.                         | Transference          | This pun takes the movie-title <i>Gone with the wind</i> , changing wind into <i>weave</i> ; a type of hair extension.  |

|   |                                     |                                       |                       |  |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 32:26   | Get ready for a lip sync-a-palooza. | (...) wordt een playback-extravaganza |                       | Use of a cultural term from the SL in the TT to replace another cultural term from the SL. <i>Palooza</i> (see appendix C) and <i>extravaganza</i> (see appendix B) can both be used to emphasize a statement or to make something sound more fun. |
| 32:10<br>17:39<br>17:32<br>16:58<br>13:12<br>12:02<br>12:02 | Glamazonian<br>Airways              | Glamazonian<br>Airways                | Transference          |  |
| 30:47<br>29:49<br>3:11                                      | Lip sync                            | Playbacken                            | Literal translation   |  |
| 29:52   | Cute                                | Leuk                                  | Functional equivalent |  |
| 29:29   | Padded ass                          | Dikke kont                            | Functional equivalent |  |
| 28:23   | Lip syncing                         | Geplaybacked                          | Literal translation   |  |

|                         |   |                                      |                                    |   |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
|                         |   |                                      |                                    |   |
| 27:32                   | This is my gig.                         | Dit is mijn ding.                    | Functional equivalent              |   |
| 26:35                   | Charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent. | Charisma, uniekheid, durf en talent. | Literal translation                |   |
| 25:26<br>20:45<br>13:24 | Bitch                                   | Bitch                                | Transference                       |   |
| 21:30                   | Fashion girl                            | Modemeid                             | Literal translation                |   |
| 18:32                   | Extra padding for your pleasure.        | Extra rondingen voor uw comfort.     | Functional equivalent              |   |
| 17:50                   | Lip sync extravaganza                   | Playback extravaganza                | Literal translation + Transference |   |
| 17:03                   | Hunty                                   | Schat                                | Functional equivalent              | <i>Hunty</i> (see appendix A) combines honey and <i>cunt</i> (see appendix A), whereas <i>schat</i> is general Dutch. |

|                                       |                   |                       |                                     |  |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 14:33                                 | Padded asses      | Kontopvulling         | Literal translation + Transposition | Change from adjective + noun to noun.  |
| 12:27                                 | Oh, girl          | Meid, toch            | Functional equivalent               |  |
| 12:19                                 | Drag mom          | Dragmoeder            | Literal translation                 |  |
| 11:52                                 | Bitches           | Bitches               | Transference                        |  |
| 11:48                                 | Work it, bitch.   | Werken, bitch.        | Literal translation + Transference  | Despite the fact that the verbs <i>to work</i> and <i>werken</i> are equivalents, in this context <i>werken</i> does not carry the same connotation as <i>work it</i> (see appendix B) and simply translates to <i>to work</i> . |
| 11:30                                 | Category is (...) | De categorie is (...) | Literal translation                 |  |
| 11:30<br>9:29<br>8:31<br>7:22<br>6:57 | Jetset eleganza   | Jetset eleganza       | Transference                        |  |

|                  |  |  |   |   |
|------------------|--|--|---|---|
| 6:04             |  |  |   |   |
| 5:52             |  |  |   |   |
| 5:33             |  |  |   |   |
| 09:58 -<br>09:55 | Ladies, you represent the top and bottoms of this week.      | Dames, jullie behoren tot de beste en de slechtsten van deze week. | Functional equivalent                       | In the SL, <i>top</i> and <i>bottom</i> refer to both the best and worst performing <i>queens</i> of the week, and to sexual positions during sexual intercourse (see appendix A). The terms <i>top</i> and <i>bottom</i> exist and are used in the TL, but in the TT the translator opted for a translation that does not maintain the second connotation. |
| 09:04 -<br>09:01 | I don't think the look particularly says "Jet Set Eleganza". | Ik vind dit niet echt een jetset-eleganzalook.                     | Functional equivalent<br>+<br>Transposition |   |
| 7:12             | Clocked.   | Goed gezien.   | Functional equivalent                       |   |
| 7:06             | While you untuck backstage (...)                             | Terwijl jullie backstage ontspannen (...)                          | Functional equivalent                       | Meaning of <i>untucked</i> (see appendix B) is removed, literal meaning is maintained (see appendix A).   |
| 5:52             | Girl   |  | Omission                                    |   |
| 5:38             | Camp factor  | Camp factor  | Transference                                |   |

|      |                        |                          |                                      |   |
|------|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 3:15 | Lip sync for your life | Playbacken voor je leven | Literal translation                  |   |
| 2:32 | I am working it.       |                          | Omission                             |   |
| 1:41 | Shantay you stay.      | Shanté, jij blijft.      | Naturalization + Literal translation | Spelling of <i>shantay</i> changed into Dutch spelling. |
| 0:54 | Now, sashay away.      | Sashay nu maar weg.      | Transference + Literal translation   |   |

#### 4.1.2 Table 2

In the following table, I discuss the language related to *drag* culture used in episode 2 of season 8 of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, their Dutch translations, and translation procedures used. This episode starts with the *mini-challenge*. The contestants have to give a short dance performance to one of RuPaul's songs. RuPaul then announces the two winners of the *mini-challenge* and explains what the *maxi-challenge* is going to be. For this challenge, the *queens* are divided up into two teams, led by the winners of the *mini-challenge*. They have to perform a lip-sync and dance performance that parodies *Pitch Perfect*, a musical movie about acapella singing groups. We see the *queens* discussing the roles and choreography for the challenge, including irritations and quarrels. The contestants then practice the choreography, after which we see them preparing their outfits and chatting. In the second section of the episode, RuPaul introduces the judges of

the week, after which the two teams perform the song they have practiced. The theme of the *runway* of this episode is *Movie premiere realness*, meaning outfits and looks that one would wear to a movie premiere. After the *runway*, the *queens* receive their feedback from the judges, after which the worst and best performing contestants of the week are revealed. The bottom two contestants compete in the *lip-sync-for-your-life* after which one *queen* is sent home.

In this episode, 103 speech instances related to *drag* slang occur, out of a total of 991 subtitles (10.4%). Of these speech instances, the translation procedures used are: 32 functional equivalents (31.2%), 30 transferences (29.4%), 22 literal translations (21.3%), 14 transpositions (13.5%), 11 equivalents (10.6%), 6 translation from pun to pun (5.8%), 5 incorrect translations (4.9%), 4 omissions (3.9%), and 2 paraphrases (1.9%).

| <b>Timecode</b> | <b>Speech</b> | <b>Translation</b> | <b>Translation procedure</b> | <b>Notes</b> |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 58:25           | Girl          | Meid               | Equivalent                   |              |
| 57:43           |               |                    |                              |              |
| 57:08           |               |                    |                              |              |
| 55:48           |               |                    |                              |              |
| 45:59           |               |                    |                              |              |
| 40:59           |               |                    |                              |              |
| 28:40           |               |                    |                              |              |
| 26:58           |               |                    |                              |              |



|       |                              |                              |                       |  |
|-------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 58:15 | Too real.                    | Zo spannend.                 | Functional equivalent | <i>Spannend</i> specifically refers to something being exciting, thrilling or scary. <i>Real</i> takes on a meaning that is a bit broader. In the context of this episode, it is used to refer to the elimination of a <i>queen</i> . The exact meaning here is up for interpretation; it could refer to the <i>queen</i> finally realizing that she is partaking in a competition, it could refer to her being scared, or it could be used as a general exclamation without a specific meaning. |
| 57:52 | (...) lip sync for your life | (...) playback voor je leven | Literal translation   |  |
| 57:27 | Were you gagged?             | Was je verbijsterd?          | Functional equivalent | <i>To gag</i> can refer to multiple different interpretations of shock (see appendix B) and could thus be translated using several generally-used Dutch words, e.g. <i>verbaasd</i> , <i>verbijsterd</i> , <i>verrast</i> . Using <i>verbijsterd</i> , the translator has  |

|                  |  |   |                       |  |
|------------------|--|---|-----------------------|--|
|                  |  |   |                       | removed <i>gagged</i> from its specific context within <i>drag</i> slang.  |
| 56:53            | Salty                                      | Zuur                                    | Equivalent            | Even though <i>salty</i> (see appendix B) and <i>zuur</i> (sour) carry two different literal meanings, they are used within similar contexts. <i>Salty</i> meaning to feel angry or resentful about something, and <i>zuur</i> referring to a feeling of annoyance or frustration. |
| 56:46 -<br>56:44 | Right now, Laila is just giving entourage. | En Laila is nu niet meer dan entourage. | Functional equivalent | <i>It's giving</i> (see appendix B) is translated using the more neutral <i>is</i> .   |
| 55:45            | She done already done had herses.          | Dat was allang bekend.                  | Incorrect translation | This speech occurs when the <i>queens</i> are discussing who they think the prettiest person in the room is. One of the <i>queens</i> uses this catchphrase (see appendix A) just to be funny, but the translator opted to translate it as a response to the conversation.         |
| 55:44            | Oh girl                                    | Oh meid                                 | Equivalent            |  |
| 55:43            | She done already done had herses.          | Zij heeft haar beoordeling al gehad.    | Incorrect translation | This sentence (see appendix A) is used as a funny exclamation and has no specific meaning in the context of  |

|                                  |                          |                     |                                       |  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
|                                  |                          |                     |                                       | the show. It has an elaborate backstory which is impossible to transfer via subtitling. The translator made a loose interpretation here, but one that has no connection to the ST.               |
| 55:38<br>45:28<br>39:36<br>24:57 | Bitches                  | Bitches             | Transference                          |  |
| 55:36                            | True or falsetto.        | Waar of griet waar. | From punt to pun                      | Where the ST creates a pun by combining <i>true or false</i> and <i>falsetto</i> , the translator created a Dutch pun by combining <i>waar of niet</i> (true or false) with <i>griet</i> (girl). |
| 55:17                            | Okurr.                   | Ja?                 | Functional equivalent + Transposition |  |
| 54:40                            | Pit crew                 | Pit crew            | Transference                          |  |
| 54:30                            | Get into quick drag.     | Kleed je snel aan.  | Functional equivalent                 |  |
| 53:56                            | The cha cha bitch fight. | De chachawedstrijd. | Functional equivalent                 |  |
| 53:42                            | Bitch                    | Bitch               | Transference                          |  |

|                         |   |   |   |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 46:29<br>44:38<br>15:39 |   |   |   |   |
| 52:06                   | Work!   | Dans!                                       | Functional equivalent                       | <i>Work</i> is often used by <i>queens</i> when they are watching another <i>queen</i> do something that they are excited about. In the context of this scene, one in which a <i>queen</i> is dancing, the translator opted for a translation applicable to the specific context of this scene. |
| 51:37 -<br>51:34        | Special shout out for serving Frida Kahlo realness. | Mijn complimenten voor je Frida Kahlo-look. | Omission + Functional equivalent            | Omission of the word <i>realness</i> , as well as changing <i>servng</i> into the word <i>look</i> .  |
| 50:58                   | An all dancing, an all lip syncing extravaganza.    | Een dans- en playbackspektacel .            | Literal translation + Functional equivalent |   |
| 50:50<br>50:21          | Dragappella   | Dragappella                                 | Transference                                | Combines <i>drag</i> and <i>acapella</i> .  |
| 50:46<br>25:43          | Bitch perfect                                       | Bitch perfect                               | Transference                                | Combines <i>bitch</i> with the movie title <i>pitch perfect</i> .   |

|  |   |                                      |                       |   |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| 50:22<br>45:22<br>43:09<br>39:39<br>33:44<br>25:21 | Lady bitches                            | Lady bitches                         | Transference          |   |
| 50:12<br>41:36<br>37:04<br>31:17<br>25:13          | Shady bitches                           | Shady bitches                        | Transference          |   |
| 49:48  | It doesn't get shadier than this.       | Louche dan dit wordt het niet.       | Functional equivalent | <i>Shady</i> and <i>louche</i> carry the same meaning in the context of being untrustworthy. <i>Shady</i> has, however, a broader meaning (see appendix B). |
| 49:10  | Charisme, uniqueness, nerve and talent. | Charisma, uniekheid, durf en talent. | Literal translation   |   |
| 47:17  | Lip-sync battle                         | Playbackwedstrijd                    | Literal translation   |   |
| 47:15  | Lip sync                                | Playbacken                           | Literal translation   |   |

|   |                               |                           |                                       |   |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 45:40   | But I'm like, a comedy queen. | Maar ik ben heel geestig. | Functional equivalent + Transposition | <i>I am a comedy queen</i> refers to someone focusing mainly on comedy in their overall performance as a <i>drag queen</i> . The translator chose to translate this simply using <i>geestig</i> (funny). This removes the aspect of this person being funny in relation to their performance in <i>drag</i> .<br><br>Transposition of noun ( <i>comedy queen</i> ) into adjective ( <i>geestig</i> ). |
| 43:27   | Hey, kitty girls.             | Dag, meiden.              | Omission + Equivalent                 | <i>Kitty girls</i> is often used by RuPaul to refer to other <i>queens</i> and is a reference to one of his songs. <i>Kitty</i> is omitted here.  |
| 42:55   | Lip-sync challenge            | Playbackwedstrijd         | Literal translation                   |   |
| 42:54<br>42:50<br>32:09<br>31:49<br>31:32<br>3:55 | Lip sync                      | Playbacken                | Literal translation                   |   |

|       |  |  |  |  |
|-------|--|--|--|--|
| 41:32 | Are there any shady bitches in this group?   | Zitten er wel louche bitches in deze groep?                    | Functional equivalent + Transference     | <i>Shady</i> and <i>louche</i> carry the same meaning in the context of being untrustworthy. <i>Shady</i> , however, has a broader meaning (see appendix B). In this episode, during a challenge, the <i>queens</i> are split into two groups, one of which is called <i>the shady bitches</i> . This speech is a reference to that name. In this context, the word <i>shady</i> thus refers to the general use of the word <i>shady</i> , and not specifically the connotation untrustworthy. |
| 41:24 | I enjoy being a country queen.   | Ik ben de koningin van het platteland.                         | Incorrect translation                    | <i>Country queen</i> refers to a <i>drag queen</i> who grew up in the country-side. The TT refers to a <i>queen</i> being a (literal) (royal) queen of the countryside.  |
| 40:04 | If at any time during this competition you feel the need to get something off your chesticles. | Als jullie tijdens de wedstrijd iets van het harige hart moet. | Functional equivalent + From pun to pun. | The ST contains a pun that combines <i>chest</i> with <i>testicles</i> . It is not possible to use a literal translation to transfer this pun into Dutch. The translator opted for using <i>harige hart</i> (hairy heart). This is not an existing   |

|                |                                |                     |                                     |  |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
|                |                                |                     |                                     | collocation in Dutch. It is, however, possible that the translator chose this translation to refer to a hairy chest or other body part.  |
| 39:56<br>32:27 | The shade tree                 | De bitchboom        | Functional equivalent               | <i>Shade</i> (See appendix B) does not have the exact same meaning as to <i>bitch</i> , as <i>shade</i> can be interpreted in different ways. However, using <i>bitchboom</i> , the meaning does come across. <i>The shade tree</i> is a room in which the <i>queens</i> can gossip and complain about other <i>queens</i> or things that happen during the competition. The translator possibly opted for the word <i>bitch</i> due to its alliteration with the word <i>boom</i> (tree). |
| 38:56          | Lady bitches                   | Vrouwelijke bitches | Literal translation + Transference  |  |
| 33:50          | And I want to do it with drag. | En als travestiet.  | Literal translation + Transposition |  |



|       |                                  |                              |                                       |  |
|-------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 31:14 | Shady ladies                     | Shady ladies                 | Transference                          |  |
| 30:01 | Not only are you super gay (...) | Je bent supervervwijfd (...) | Functional equivalent                 | Translating <i>gay</i> into <i>verwijfd</i> could be considered offensive in Dutch, since <i>verwijfd</i> means effeminate and is often used within a negative context. It is, however, used in the context of a <i>queen</i> talking about her experiences with being bullied for her sexuality.  |
| 29:51 | And now finally with drag (...)  | En als travestiet (...)      | Literal translation + Transposition   |  |
| 29:08 | I'm gagging.                     | Hilarisch.                   | Functional equivalent + Transposition | In this context, <i>gagging</i> could be interpreted in different ways. One <i>queen</i> , named Acid Betty, is telling another <i>queen</i> , Kim Chi, how she was flirting with her one time, to which Kim Chi replies that she thought that Acid Betty was just being friendly. The reply <i>I'm gagging</i> , said by Acid Betty, could be interpreted as her finding that hilarious, but it could also be |

|       |  |  |                                       |   |
|-------|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
|       |  |  |                                       | interpreted as her being shocked or amazed. The translator interpreted Acid Betty's comment to mean that she thought what Kim Chi had said was funny.   |
| 27:17 | I will never read another queen on tv again. | Ik zal nooit meer iemand op tv oordelen.         | Functional equivalent                 | <i>Read</i> (see appendix B) is translated using the more generally used term <i>oordelen</i> .   |
| 27:10 | Lace front                                   | Lace front                                       | Transference                          |   |
| 26:07 | Where my girls ladies or shadies?            | Waren de dames elegant of louche?                | Functional equivalent + Transposition | <i>Shady</i> and <i>louche</i> carry the same meaning in the context of being untrustworthy. <i>Shady</i> , however, has a broader meaning (see appendix B). <i>Ladies</i> is translated into <i>elegant</i> , interpreting ladies as elegant women. <i>Ladies</i> is possibly translated into <i>elegant</i> because girls is already translated into <i>dames</i> . |
| 25:42 | In a dragapella lip-sync extravaganza.       | In een spectaculair dragapella playbackoptreden. | Functional equivalent + Transposition | The word <i>extravaganza</i> is translated into the more generally used <i>spectaculair</i> and changed from part of a noun into an adjective.  |

|       |   |                                  |  |  |
|-------|---|----------------------------------|--|--|
| 25:28 | Dragapellagroups                              | Dragapellagroepe<br>n            | Transference<br>+ Literal<br>translation |  |
| 25:17 | Ki-Ki   | Feestje                          | Functional<br>equivalent                 | A <i>ki-ki</i> is a party (see appendix B).<br>The word <i>feestje</i> does have the same meaning. It is, however, a generally used term and not a <i>drag</i> or <i>gay</i> specific term.  |
| 25:18 | I thought I<br>smelled out of<br>tuna fishes. | Ik dacht al dat ik<br>iets rook. | Functional<br>equivalent                 | The original pun in the ST, which combines <i>out of tune</i> with <i>tuna fish</i> (see appendix B), is neutralized in the TT, which simply refers to a bad smell.  |
| 25:00 | Sashay away.                                  | Huppel op.                       | From pun to<br>pun                       | <i>Sashay away</i> (see appendix A), is translated into <i>huppel op</i> , which combines <i>hoepel op</i> , meaning to go away or get lost, and <i>huppelen</i> , meaning to skip or prance. The translator possible opted for the use of the word <i>huppelen</i> , since it is sometimes associated with <i>gay</i> people, although often in a negative context. |

|       |                                       |                               |                                       |   |
|-------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| 25:00 | Category is (...)                     | De categorie is (...)         | Literal translation                   |   |
| 19:43 | Category is, movie premiere realness. | De categorie is filmpremière. | Literal translation + Omission        | Omission of <i>realness</i> (see appendix A).   |
| 19:14 | Bob the drag queen                    | Bob de travestiet             | Literal translation                   | <i>Travestiet</i> is a possible translation of <i>drag queen</i> , however, in this context <i>Bob the drag queen</i> is the name of a <i>queen</i> . The line that follows in <i>Not Bob the chiropractor</i> ( <i>Niet Bob de chiropractor</i> ). It is possible that the translator chose to translate part of this <i>queen's</i> name in order to maintain this joke.    |
| 19:11 | Afro she better don't.                | Beter geen afro.              | Transposition + Incorrect translation | <i>Oh no she better don't</i> is one of RuPaul's catch-phrases. Because <i>oh no</i> , rhymes with <i>afro</i> , the ST is a pun using this catch-phrase, as this was said to a <i>queen</i> wearing an afro wig. The ST is not meant to be offensive and does not literally mean that the <i>queen</i> shouldn't have worn an afro. It is literally translated into Dutch as |

|       |  |   |                                 |  |
|-------|--|---|---------------------------------|--|
|       |  |   |                                 | <p><i>beter geen afro</i>, but because RuPaul's catch-phrase does not exist in Dutch, the context of the ST is lost, and one might even argue that the TT could come across as a negative comment towards afros.</p>   |
| 17:57 | Yes, Marilyn.  | Net Marylin.  | Functional equivalent           | <p><i>Yes</i> (see appendix B) can be used to emphasize a positive statement. This is said to a <i>queen</i> whose look resembles Marilyn Monroe. <i>Yes, Marilyn</i> could be interpreted as the judge liking the way the <i>queen</i> looks, but it could also be interpreted as her simply saying that she looks like Marilyn Monroe. In this context, <i>Net Marylin</i> has the same meaning.</p> |
| 17:46 | (I know some) Bitch (is gonna want to buy it off of me). | (Er is vast ) Iemand die hem van me wil overkopen (...) | Functional equivalent           |  |
| 17:34 | She's been read.   | Ze gaat ervan blozen.                                   | From pun to pun + Transposition | <p>This is said to a <i>queen</i> wearing a red outfit. <i>Read</i> (see appendix B), its meaning not related to the outfit, is</p>  |

|       |   |  |  |   |
|-------|---|--|--|---|
|       |   |  |  | used because <i>red</i> and <i>read</i> sound the same. In Dutch, this pun is removed and changed into <i>Ze gaat ervan blozen</i> (It is making her blush).<br>Transposition from passive to active.   |
| 17:16 | I chose this delicate looking flower fantasy. | Ik heb gekozen voor verfijnde bloemen.   | Omission                               | The word <i>fantasy</i> (see appendix B) is omitted.  |
| 16:35 | I'm gonna serve these bitches up.             | Ik laat die bitches een poepie ruiken.   | Functional equivalent + Transference   | Transference of <i>bitches</i> . <i>Serve</i> is translated into <i>een poepie laten ruiken</i> , which is a speech not related to <i>drag</i> .  |
| 16:06 | Serving legs, neck, arms, thighs.             | Je ziet haar benen, nek, armen en dijen. | Functional equivalence + Transposition |   |
| 15:44 | Fierce  | Opvallend                                | Functional equivalence                 | Used by a <i>queen</i> to refer to a headpiece that she is wearing. In the context of this headpiece, which is eye-catching, the translation <i>opvallend</i> is an equivalent. <i>Opvallend</i> , however, does not have the exact same meaning as <i>fierce</i> (see appendix B). |

|       |  |   |                                       |   |
|-------|--|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| 15:20 | Tonight I am serving (...)                           | Mijn look is geïnspireerd op (...)              | Incorrect translation + Transposition | <i>Serving</i> (see appendix B) refers to a more general relationship between what someone is wearing and what it looks like, e.g. <i>she is serving glamorous</i> . It does not necessarily imply that someone is directly inspired by something, as the TT does.  |
| 14:42 | Drag daughter  | Dragdochter                                     | Literal translation                   |   |
| 14:05 | You represent the tops and the bottoms of the week.  | Jullie waren deze week het best en het slechts. | Functional equivalent                 | In the SL, <i>top</i> and <i>bottom</i> refer to both the best and worst performing <i>queens</i> of the week, and to sexual positions during sexual intercourse (see appendix A). In the TL, the terms <i>top</i> and <i>bottom</i> are used, but in the TT the translator opted for a translation that does not hold this second connotation. |
| 12:45 | (How do you say) <i>sissy that walk</i> (in Korean). | (Hoe zeg je) “loop verwijfd” (in het Koreaans). | Functional equivalent                 | Even though both <i>sissy</i> and <i>verwijfd</i> mean effeminate and are usually used as an insult, <i>sissy that walk</i>   |

|       |  |  |                                       |  |
|-------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
|       |  |  |                                       | refers to a RuPaul song, and is used in the show in a positive manner to refer to a way of walking. In Dutch, the term <i>verwijfd</i> does not carry this same positive connotation.                            |
| 11:56 | You're giving me Sheryl Lee Ralph realness.    | Ik vind dat je nu op Sheryl Lee Ralph lijkt.                       | Functional equivalent + Transposition | Transposition from active to passive.  |
| 10:50 | I have an issue with your padding.             | Het viel me vorige week ook al op dat je je kont niet goed opvult. | Paraphrase + Transposition            | <i>Padding</i> (see appendix B). <i>Je kont opvullen</i> (stuffing / padding your ass) adds an extra explanation without using a specific <i>drag</i> term.  |
| 9:55  | While you untuck backstage (...)               | Terwijl jullie achter de schermen alles weer losmaken (...)        | Paraphrase                            | While <i>untucking</i> (see appendix B) is a specific <i>drag</i> term for removing one's <i>tuck</i> (see appendix B), <i>alles weer losmaken</i> uses the more literal description of setting something loose. |
| 8:34  | And as far as the performance goes, she really | En tijdens het optreden maakte ze de andere                        | Functional equivalent                 |  |



|      |                                     |  |                                       |   |
|------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
|      | slayed the other girls.             | meiden keihard in.                               |                                       |   |
| 6:45 | Your movie premiere eleganza.       | Jullie elegante look voor een premiere.          | Functional equivalent + Transposition | Changes <i>eleganza</i> from a noun into an adjective.  |
| 6:26 | Condragulations                     | Proficischat                                     | From pun to pun                       | Where the ST combines the words <i>congratulations</i> and <i>drag</i> , the TT combines the words <i>proficiat</i> (congratulations) and <i>schat</i> (dear). <i>Schat</i> is a term that is often used by people in the gay scene to refer to each other. |
| 4:44 | Lip-sync performance                | Playbackoptreden                                 | Literal translation                   |   |
| 4:24 | (...) lip-sync for your life.       | (...) playback voor je leven.                    | Literal translation                   |   |
| 1:27 | I must ask you both to sashay away. | Ik moet jullie allebei vragen om op te huppelen. | From pun to pun                       | <i>Sashay away</i> (see appendix A), is translated into <i>huppel op</i> , which combines <i>hoepel op</i> , meaning to go away or get lost, and <i>huppelen</i> , meaning to skip or prance. The translator possible opted for the use                     |

|  |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  |  | of the word <i>huppelen</i> , since it is sometimes associated with gay people, although often in a negative context. |
|--|--|--|--|---|

#### 4.1.3. Table 3

In the following table, I discuss the language related to *drag* culture used in episode 2 of season 9 of *RuPaul's Drag Race*, their Dutch translations, and translation procedures used. This episode starts with the *queens* in the *Werk Room* (see appendix B) discussing what happened in the previous episode and the fact that a contestant from the previous season has returned for this season. RuPaul enters the *Werk Room* and introduces the *maxi-challenge* of the week. This challenge consists of a cheerleading competition between two teams, with the *queens* having to portray different personalities. We see the *queens* discussing the roles and choreography for the challenge, including irritations and quarrels. The contestant then go to a cheerleading practice, after which we see them preparing their outfits and chatting. In the second section of the episode, RuPaul introduces the judges of the week, after which the two teams perform their cheerleading routine. The theme of the *runway* of this episode is *White party realness*, meaning looks that are predominantly white. After the *runway*, the *queens* receive their feedback from the judges, after which the worst and best performing contestants of the week are

revealed. The bottom two contestants compete in the *lip-sync-for-your-life* after which one *queen* is sent home.

In this episode, 62 speech instances related to *drag* slang occur, out of a total of 646 subtitles (9.6%). Of these speech instances, the translation procedures used are: 22 functional equivalents (35.7%), 10 literal translations (16.1%), 9 transferences (14.5%), 7 equivalents (11.2%), 7 omissions (11.2%), 4 translations from pun to pun (6.5%), 3 transpositions (4.8%), 2 incorrect translations (3.2%), and 1 a paraphrase (1.6%).

| <b>Timecode</b>   | <b>Speech</b>                                 | <b>Translation</b>                                    | <b>Translation procedure</b> | <b>Notes</b> |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|--------------|
| 38:43   | Sis   | Zus   | Literal translation          |              |
| 38:59<br>31:56<br>31:02<br>25:14<br>24:53<br>24:06<br>22:17 | Girl  | Meid  | Equivalent                   |              |
| 38:27<br>24:34  | (We've got this) bitch.<br>(You crazy) bitch. | (Oh nu dat) wijf er (is).<br>(Je bent gestoord) wijf. | Literal translation          |              |

|       |   |  |                          |  |
|-------|---|--|--------------------------|--|
| 37:17 | She done<br>already done<br>had herses. | Ze heeft al gedaan<br>wat ze moest doen. | Incorrect<br>translation | This sentence (see appendix A) is used as a funny exclamation and has no specific meaning in the context of the show. It has an elaborate backstory which is impossible to transfer via subtitling. The translator made a loose interpretation here, but one that has no connection to the ST.   |
| 36:44 | I am gagged.                            | Ik ben sprakeloos.                       | Functional<br>equivalent | <i>To gag</i> (see appendix B) can refer to different intense emotions, such as surprise and happiness, but almost always refers to one being shocked by something. This speech is said by a <i>queen</i> when famous actress Lisa Kudrow enters the <i>Werk Room</i> as a surprise. <i>Ik ben sprakeloos</i> (I am speechless) is thus a loose translation of the feeling of shock that is represented by the word <i>gag</i> . |
| 36:10 | Werk Room                               | Werk Room                                | Transference             |  |
| 35:20 | The sassy<br>comebacks.                 | De energieke<br>aanmoedigingen.          | Incorrect<br>translation | <i>Sassy comebacks</i> is probably said by RuPaul to refer to the <i>sassy</i> (see appendix B) way in which   |

|                         |   |   |                                       |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|
|                         |   |   |                                       | cheerleaders talks to each other during cheer battles, as we can see during the challenge when the contestant talk to each other in a competitive and provocative way. <i>Energieke aanmoedigingen</i> (energetic cheers) does not carry the same feeling as <i>sassy</i> evokes in the ST. |
| 35:18                   | The death drop splits.  | Hoe ze in de spagaat vallen.  | Functional equivalent + Transposition | <i>Death drop</i> (see appendix B) is incorporated in the TT by adding <i>vallen</i> (falling). A <i>death drop</i> is, however, a specific way of dropping oneself onto the floor and is thus not fully represented in the TT.<br><br>Transposition from noun into verb.                   |
| 35:11                   | You'll be competing in the biggest, baddest cheer battle in herstory. | Doen jullie mee aan de grootste, mooiste cheerleadingstrijd aller tijden. | Functional equivalent                 | <i>Herstory</i> (see appendix B) combines <i>history</i> with <i>her</i> . In Dutch, this pun is lost, but the meaning is maintained.   |
| 33:19<br>25:07<br>19:42 | Glamazons   | Glamazons   | Transference                          |   |

|                |                                |                         |                       |  |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 19:20<br>16:42 |                                |                         |                       |  |
| 32:39          | Sassy                          | Plagerig                | Functional equivalent |  |
| 31:32<br>19:35 | Sassy                          | Vrijpostig              | Functional equivalent |  |
| 30:56<br>24:04 | Girl                           |                         | Omission              | <i>Girl</i> might be omitted due to space constraints. The translator possibly expects Dutch people to recognize the word <i>girl</i> when they hear it in the ST and to know its meaning.   |
| 30:31          | Bitch                          | Bitch                   | Transference          |  |
| 28:08          | Bitch, I am scared of heights. | Ik heb hoogtevrees man. | Functional equivalent | In the ST, <i>bitch</i> is used to emphasize the rest of the sentence. In the TT this is changed into <i>man</i> (man), which is used to emphasize a sentence in the TL, however, with no connection to the <i>drag</i> community. |
| 27:41          | Werk room                      | Werk room               | Transference          |  |
| 25:29<br>17:50 | Bitch                          |                         | Omission              | <i>Bitch</i> might be omitted due to space constraints. The translator possibly expects Dutch people to recognize the  |

|       |  |   |                       |  |
|-------|--|---|-----------------------|--|
|       |  |   |                       | word <i>bitch</i> when they hear it in the ST and to know its meaning.   |
| 24:30 | Drag mom   | Drag-moeder   | Literal translation   |  |
| 20:01 | It smells like queen spirit. I am actually, literally gagging. | Het barst hier van de queens. Ik kan het bijna niet meer aan. | Functional equivalent | The pun it <i>smells like queen spirit</i> , which combines the <i>Nirvana</i> song-title <i>smells like teen spirit</i> with <i>queen</i> , is not translated with a pun, but loosely translated into stating that there are a lot of <i>queens</i> . The second sentence takes the <i>drag</i> slang <i>to gag</i> (see appendix B) but uses it in the literal sense of the word, referring back to <i>smell</i> in the previous sentence. In the TT, this second sentence is also loosely translated into a more general sense of not being able to handle something. |
| 19:44 | Cheer battle extravaganza                                      | Spectaculaire cheerleading-wedstrijd                          | Functional equivalent |  |

|       |  |                                   |  |   |
|-------|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| 19:20 | Got our tucking panties on.            | Wij hebben speciale broekjes aan. | Functional equivalent                    | <i>Tucking panties</i> refer to panties with the specific purpose of <i>tucking</i> (see appendix B). <i>Speciale broekjes</i> (special panties) has a more general meaning and does not specify that the panties are used for <i>tucking</i> . |
| 19:16 | Our wigs are unclockable.              | We zijn niet te stoppen, hoor.    | Functional equivalent                    | <i>To clock</i> (see appendix A).   |
| 19:12 | Work it, work it.                      | Geef alles, geef alles.           | Functional equivalent                    | A possible meaning of <i>work it</i> (see appendix B) is <i>giving it one's all</i> . <i>Work it</i> is thus translated into the more neutral <i>geef alles</i> (give everything).  |
| 18:00 | Gag, big girl.<br>Come on, bitch, yes. | Ja, dikkerd. Kom op, meid, jawel. | Functional equivalent                    |   |
| 17:37 | She came to slay.                      | Ze gaat als een malle.            | Functional equivalent                    |   |
| 16:09 | Category is (...)                      | De categorie is (...)             | Literal translation                      |   |
| 16:08 | White party realness.                  | Een echt wit feest.               | Transposition<br>+ Functional equivalent | Changes <i>realness</i> from a noun to an adjective.  |



|       |                               |                          |                                      |  |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 15:56 | Hungry hungry<br>hip pads.    | Lekkere heuppads.        | Functional<br>equivalent             | The original speech is a reference to the board game <i>hungry hungry hippos</i> . Since this board game does not have the same name in Dutch, the translator probably opted for a loose interpretation of hungry and went with the translation <i>lekker</i> (tasty). |
| 15:47 | I'm serving<br>glamour.       | Ik kom met<br>glamour.   | Functional<br>equivalent             |  |
| 15:34 | I'm serving you<br>chocolate. | Ik geef je<br>chocolade. | Functional<br>equivalent             |  |
| 14:51 | No, bitch.                    | Maar nee.                | Omission                             | Omission of the word <i>bitch</i> , compensated by adding <i>maar</i> (but).   |
| 14:41 | Campy                         | Kitscherig               | Literal<br>translation               |  |
| 13:15 | Rock-'n-roll<br>extravaganza  | Rock-'n-roll look        | Functional<br>equivalent             |  |
| 13:04 | Glamazonian                   | Glamazonian              | Transference                         |  |
| 13:02 | Big tuna fish                 | Een grote tonijn         | Literal<br>translation +<br>Omission | <i>Big tuna fish</i> literally translates into <i>een grote tonijn</i> , since the Dutch language generally does not add -fish when mentioning a specific type of  |

|       |   |   |                       |  |
|-------|---|---|-----------------------|--|
|       |   |   |                       | fish. The connotation of the word <i>fish</i> (see appendix B) is lost.  |
| 11:14 | They way you pad is glorious.                   | Je gebruikt de pads zo mooi.                        | Transposition         | <i>Pad</i> is changed from a verb into a noun.   |
| 11:00 | Comedy queen                                    | Komische queen                                      | Literal translation   |  |
| 9:20  | While you untuck backstage.                     | Terwijl jullie backstage alles loshalen.            | Paraphrase            | While <i>untucking</i> (see appendix B) is a specific <i>drag</i> term for removing one's <i>tuck</i> (see appendix B), <i>alles weer losmaken</i> uses the more literal description of setting something loose. |
| 9:14  | Just between us squirrel friends                | Even onder ons.                                     | Omission              | Omission of <i>squirrel friends</i> (see appendix A).  |
| 8:59  | I think she needs to have some kind of padding. | Ze heeft alleen wat opvulling nodig.                | Functional equivalent |  |
| 7:45  | You did clock her on her nude shoes.            | Je sprak haar wel aan op nude schoenen.             | Functional equivalent | <i>To clock</i> (see appendix A).  |
| 5:03  | And in white, you got read for being too blue.  | En in het wit krijg je rood omdat je te blauw bent. | From pun to pun       | Said to a <i>queen</i> who is partly wearing blue, even though she was supposed to wear an all-white outfit. <i>Read</i> (see appendix B) is not used in its original  |

|      |  |   |                     |  |
|------|--|---|---------------------|--|
|      |  |   |                     | meaning here, but used because it sounds like <i>red</i> , making the ST a red, white and blue pun. In the translation, this is changed into another pun, using <i>krijg je rood</i> (you receive red), referring to a red card. |
| 4:33 | Lip sync performance                                 | Playbacknummer  | Literal translation |  |
| 4:17 | The time has come for you to lip sync for your life. | Het moment is nu daar dat jullie gaan playbacken voor je leven. | Literal translation |  |
| 1:58 | Shantay you stay.                                    | Jij bent top.   | From pun to pun     | <i>Shantay you stay</i> (see appendix A) is translated into <i>jij bent top</i> , which both means <i>you are great</i> , and refers to a person who <i>is a top</i> during sexual intercourse (see appendix B).                 |
| 1:45 | Sashay away.   | Jij huppelt op.   | From pun to pun     | <i>Sashay away</i> (see appendix A), is translated into <i>huppel op</i> , which combines <i>hoepel op</i> , meaning to go away or get lost, and <i>huppelen</i> , meaning to skip or prance. The                                |

|      |                 |              |                 |  |
|------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|--|
|      |                 |              |                 | translator possibly opted for the use of the word <i>huppelen</i> , since it is sometimes associated with gay people, although often in a negative context.  |
| 1:15 | Condragulations | Proficischat | From pun to pun | Where the ST combines the words congratulations and <i>drag</i> , the TT combines the words <i>proficiat</i> (congratulations) and <i>schat</i> (dear). <i>Schat</i> is a term that is often used by people in the gay scene to refer to others. |

#### 4.1.4 Summary of tables

In total, 2243 subtitles are present in the three analyzed episodes, of which 246 (11%) contain analyzed language. The translation procedures used are:

- 74 functional equivalents (30.3%)
- 66 transferences (27%)
- 49 literal translations (20%)
- 31 equivalents (12.7%)

- 19 transpositions (7.8%)
- 18 omissions (7.3%)
- 10 translations from pun to pun (4.1%)
- 8 incorrect translations (3.2%)
- 5 paraphrases (2%)
- 1 is not related to a translation procedure (0.4%)
- 1 naturalization (0.4%)

## 4.2 Discussion

In the following section, I will discuss each observed translation procedure used, in order of highest quantity, and patterns that occur. In the last two sections I will discuss the use of outdated terms, and differences in translation procedures used for the same ST.

### 4.2.1. Functional equivalent

Most prominent are functional equivalents, with a total of 74 instances. In most instances, the meaning of the ST is transferred via a translation that is not specific to *drag* or gay culture. *Hunty* (see appendix B) is translated into *schat* (darling); *clocked* (see appendix B) into *goed gezien* (well observed) and *shady* (see appendix B) into *louche* (a generally used translation of *shady*). Sometimes, several different meanings can be attributed to a term, especially ones that are used as an exclamation. The term *gagged* (see appendix B),

for instance, is in once instance translated into *verbijsterd* (bewildered), while in another it is translated into *hilarisch* (hilarious).

One of the consequences of using functional equivalents is a loss of meaning from the ST. As discussed in the literature chapter, it is important to look at the translation of slang and minority languages, as the language often plays a part in the identification and community-building of a group. The neutralization of this language could lead to a heterogeneity of minority cultures: what differentiates the language of a minority group from other languages is removed and reduced to the overall known and accepted language of the dominant culture (Venuti, 1996). We could argue that the frequent use of functional equivalents could lead to a different viewing-experience for the TC, as opposed to the SC, as a viewer who perhaps does not speak English might be unaware of the meaning, or even simply the existence, of cultural elements of the *drag* community that are expressed through language. As discussed in the literature chapter, slang can form an inherent part of a minority group and the transference of this language can broaden the general public's knowledge on minority cultures (Adail Rodrigues Júnior, 2004). When this transference does not occur, an important part of the *drag* community is not transferred via translation and will thus not be presented to the TC.

#### 4.2.2. *Transference*

Transference occurs in 66 instances. This large number can be largely attributed to the fact that words such as *lady bitches* and *shady bitches* in season 8, episode 2 occur a total of 13 times. Transference might be used for different reasons. For terms such as *lace*

*front* (a type of wig in which hair is attached to a sheer lace base) there exists no Dutch translation. It is possible that the translator(s) did not opt for a descriptive equivalent due to space constraints, and thus chose to transfer the term.

For the translation of the singular noun *bitch*, either *wijf* (2 times) or a transference of *bitch* (10 times) is used. In the two instances where *wijf* is used in episode 2, season 9, it directly refers to someone, while in 1 other instance in that episode it is transferred, where it is used to emphasize a sentence. Even though *bitch* is originally an English word, it is also widely used in the Netherlands. For this reason, the translator might have chosen to simply transfer the word, assuming that Dutch people would recognize it when they hear it in the ST. It is also possible that when *bitch* is used to emphasize a statement, it can easily be omitted or transferred because it does not add concrete meaning to a sentence, whereas with the two instances of *bitch* being translated into *wijf*, it is an inherent part.

Certain words and terms that are frequently used in the show are also transferred. *Werk Room* is transferred (1 time), as well as *pit crew* (4 times). It is possible that the translator opted to transfer these terms because they refer to set, physical elements in the show. The same thing occurs with song titles or names given to teams, such as the previously mentioned *lady bitches* and *shady bitches*, as well as *Glamazonian airways*.

The use of transference leads to two things. Through transference, content from the ST, and in this context *drag* language, is maintained. This way, more of the original content of the show is shown to the viewer who does not speak English. On the other hand, the meaning of these transferred elements is not transferred to the TT. The pun in *Werk Room* (see appendix B) is shown to the viewer when it is transferred, as opposed to

when it is translated into *het atelier* (the workshop), however it is probable that this way, the viewer who does not speak English is not aware that a pun is being made.

#### 4.2.3. Literal translation

Literal translations are not present in Newmark's translation procedure taxonomy. However, a total of 49 literal translations occur, of which the majority concern translations that do not involve specific cultural elements that might pose an issue for the translator. *Lip-sync* is a term that is inherently connected to the *drag* scene, due to the fact that most *queens'* performances consist of *lip-syncing*. It is, however, a word that also exists outside of *drag* vocabulary. In all instances (25 times), it is translated using a form of the Dutch verb *playbacken*. The same procedure occurs for the translation of *category is (...)* (4 times) and *Charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent* (1 time). *De categorie is (...)* has the exact same literal meaning as *Category is (...)*. The English term originated in the *ball* scene in New York, an origin that is impossible to transfer via subtitles. This origin is, however, also not made clear in the ST. The same goes for the translation of *Charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent*; the abbreviation of this saying is *cunt* (see appendix A), however this is not made apparent in the ST, which causes the Dutch literal translation *Charisma, uniekheid, durf en talent* to carry the exact same literal meaning. When an English-speaking viewer, with no background knowledge on *drag*, hears *Category is*, they will not automatically be aware of this saying's origin, similar to the Dutch-speaking viewer being unaware of it when it is translated into *De categorie is*. In these cases, the translator thus opted for maintaining the literal meaning over maintaining



origin. However, despite the fact that the origin of such terms is also not made clear in the ST, a certain loss does occur here. Terms such as *category is*, ones with an origin that is important to the origin of modern *drag*, are lost in the TT when they are translated and not transferred.

#### 4.2.4. Equivalent

Exact equivalents occur a total of 31 times. Aside from one instance, where *salty* is translated into *zuur*, all of the occurrences regard the word *girl* and its translation into *meid*. At first glance, this translation seems a literal one. In every instance of the use of the word *girl*, however, the translation *meid* is used, despite the fact that, for instance, *meisje* is also an equivalent. The word *meid*, however, is one that is often used by members of the gay community to address each other (Mantel, 2018). This might make the use of *meid* a conscious one that aims to transfer the meaning of *girl* into a word that is used within a similar context in the TC.

Due to the fact that, aside from one instance, equivalents are used for the translation of one term, a broad conclusion on the use of equivalents is a difficult one to make. As for the translation of *girl* into *meid*, we cannot be fully certain that this translation was a conscious act by the translator. It is possible that the Dutch-speaking viewer does not actively notice this translation, as *meid* seems to be a logical translation of *girl*. It is also possible, however, that viewers who are familiar with the use of *meid* in the TC do notice how it is used and this way feel that the TT matches the content that they are watching in relation to the gay community.

#### 4.2.5. Transposition

Transpositions occur a total of 19 times. In only one instance it is not used in combination with another procedure. *The way you pad is glorious* is translated into *Je gebruikt je pads zo mooi* (You use your pads so beautifully), changing pads from a verb into a noun. In all other instances, transposition is used in combination with another translation procedure. It is impossible to draw conclusions from the use of transpositions in relation to the cultural context of *drag* language, as the occurrence of transpositions is not necessarily related to the translation of culture-specific words and is difficult to avoid in the translation of any text.

#### 4.2.6. Omission

A total of 18 omissions occur, where either the whole or a part of the ST is not translated. In the case of *girl* and *bitch* (both 3 times), it is possible that the translator did not translate these words because they are often added to a sentence without adding any additional meaning and are used as an emphasis. The omission of, for instance, the *oh* from *oh girl* and using the translation *meid*, might be due to time constraints. As with *girl* and *bitch*, the Dutch viewer does not need a subtitle of *oh* to hear *oh* in the ST and recognize it.

In other cases, it is possible that the translator opted to omit something due to the fact that the time constraints put on subtitling offer little space for explicitation. *She done*

*already done had herses* is omitted once, is a sentence that does not carry a specific meaning in the context of the show, and knows an elaborate backstory (see appendix A). For this reason, it is probable that the translator decided to ignore this speech.

One of the consequences of omitting elements, is that the meaning of the ST is not completely transferred to the TT. Translating, for instance, *Hey fly girls* into *He meiden*, thus omitting *fly*, does not let the viewer know that the ST contains a pun, as the creation of a new pun might. Omitting words such as *girl* and *bitch* might not remove the meaning of uttered sentences in the ST, and the Dutch viewer might recognize those words in the spoken ST, but it does remove certain SC, and possibly makes the TT a bit more neutralized and flat.

#### 4.2.7. Puns

A total of 10 creations of TL puns occur, which is a specific procedure that does not match one of Newmark's procedures. As discussed in the literature chapter, humor and puns form an important element of the *drag* and *camp* character. The difficulty with translating puns is that a literal translation might not work due to differences between the SL and TL. Aside from the use of paraphrasing or equivalents, a pun is created in the TL (10 times) to translate a pun in the ST. The term *chesticles* is translated into *harige hart*. The ST combines the words *chest* and *testicles*. As with a lot of the analyzed language, including references to *top* and *bottom* (see appendix A), this pun references male anatomy and sexuality. The Dutch words for *chest* and *testicles*, namely *borst* and *testikels*, do not allow for the creation of a similar pun. Instead, the translator opted for

*harige hart* (hairy heart). This is not an existing collocation in the Dutch language, however, it is possible that the translator chose this translation to maintain a reference related to a hairy body part. 2 times, *Sashay away* is translated into *Huppel op* and *Shantay you stay* into *Jij bent top*. These two translations rhyme, and in addition, they both add a gay context. The *top* in *Jij bent top* refers to a certain role during sexual intercourse. *Huppel op*, which combines *hoepel op*, meaning to go away or get lost, and *huppelen*, meaning to skip or prance, uses the word *huppelen*, which is often associated with gay men, albeit in a negative context.

The translation of a pun from the ST with a pun in the TT does remove the original pun, sometimes causing a loss of words that are specific to *drag* language. However, aside from one instance, that of the translation of *She's been read* into *Ze gaat ervan blozen*, this procedure maintains the meaning of the ST. *Huppel op* might not have exactly the same literal meaning as *sashay away*, but it is made clear to the viewer that the contestant who this is said to has to leave to competition. In addition, the creation of a new pun maintains the previously discussed *drag* and *camp* element of humor, an element which is also very apparent in *Drag Race*. Through the creation of puns that have a connection with the TC in relation to the gay and *drag* community, such as *huppel op*, the language from the ST is not neutralized.

#### 4.2.8. *Incorrect translation*

Whether it can be expected of every translator who works for *Netflix* to have a large knowledge on the content that they are translating is debatable. Whether mistakes in translations stem from time constraints, pressure on the translator or a lacking amount of knowledge would deem further research. As discussed in the methodology chapter, *Netflix* translators do not work directly for *Netflix* and it is unclear how someone got selected to translate a show. In the analyzed content, 8 translation errors occur. (...) *you need to give face, face, face*, for instance, is translated into (...) *wil ik jullie gezichten zien*. The original speech and the Dutch translation have different connotations. *To give face* (see appendix C) refers to showing a beautiful look, while (...) *wil ik jullie gezichten zien* means to literally see one's face. In addition to a loss of the original meaning of the ST within the SC, incorrect translations also offer the viewer incorrect information about the ST. This way, elements of the show are not properly conveyed.

#### 4.2.9. Paraphrase

Only 5 instances of paraphrasing occur. It commonly neutralizes and explicates the ST. When one of the judges says *I'm getting boy* to one of the *queens*, it is not literally stated that this is a something negative, however, it is implied. In the translation, this implication is explicated through the translation *Dit is te jongensachtig* (This is too boyish). In most cases of the use of paraphrasing, it is used to explain something to the viewer that might not be understood via a literal translation.

Through the use of a paraphrase and explication, the meaning of the ST is maintained. In addition, the ST is explained to the viewer in such a way that they better

understand the context of what is said in the ST than they would with the use of, for instance, a literal translation.

#### 4.2.10. Other

In 1 instance, no specific translation procedure as discussed by Newmark, and no literal translation or pun, is used. *Get ready for a lip sync-a-palooza* is translated as (...) *wordt een playback-extravaganza*. Here, the translator used a word from the SL to translate another word from the SL. It is possible that the translator chose this option because both words carry similar meanings (see appendix B & C), and *extravaganza* is used quite often in the show. This way, the viewer might understand the TT better, while a relation to the SC is maintained.

#### 4.2.11. Naturalization

Naturalization is used only in one instance, when *shantay* is translated into *shanté*. Both *shantay* and *shante* are used in *Drag Race*, and there is still debate on where the word originated. It is possible that the translator opted for a slightly different spelling that better matches the Dutch pronunciation.

#### 4.2.12. Outdated terms

Aside from the translation procedures used, it can be argued that the connotations attached to certain words in the ST were not properly transferred. *Sissy that walk* (see appendix C) is used in the show in a positive manner to refer to a way of walking. In Dutch, however, the term *verwijfd* does not carry this same positive connotation. In certain instances, *sashay away* is translated into *huppel op*. *Huppel op* combines *hoepel op*, meaning to go away or get lost, and *huppelen*, meaning to skip or prance. The translator possibly opted for the use of the word *huppelen* due to its association with gay people. It is, however, not always used within a positive context, often referring to the way gay men supposedly walk as being a negative thing.

As discussed in the literature chapter, words do not always go through the same changes in different TCs. *Sissy* and *verwijfd* originally carry the same connotation, that of an insult used towards gay people. However, in *Drag Race*, *sissy that walk* has taken on a positive connotation and has been, in a sense, reclaimed. Using *verwijfd* as a translation is similar to what Ranzato (2013) discussed as turning positive depictions of homosexuality into negative ones. While some viewers might not mind and might like the creative new pun of *huppel op*, others could possibly negatively react to the use of outdated, negative terms such as *verwijfd*, in the context of a TV show such as *Drag Race*, which aims to celebrate all forms of gender and sexuality.

#### 4.2.13. Differences

Occasionally, different translations are used for the same ST. In season 7, *Werk Room* is translated into *Het atelier* (1 time), while in season 9 it is transferred (2 times). In season 7, the pun *condragulations* is translated into *gefeliciteerd* (5 times), a functional equivalent, while in season 8 and 9 it is translated into *proficischat* (4 times), a Dutch pun. Different translation procedures are thus used for the same speech. This shows that the translation procedures used do not fully depend on the SL, ST, TL and TC, otherwise the same or similar speeches would be translated the same way. It is possible that different seasons of a show on *Netflix* are not translated by the same translator, as is the case with season 8 and 9 of *Drag Race*. Especially when dealing with culture-related terms and slang, it is possible that the preference of the translator plays a part in the way certain elements are translated, for instance when it comes to translating puns.



## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1 Conclusion

In the analysis and discussion chapter I have looked at patterns in the translation procedures used for the English into Dutch translations of language specific to the *drag* and gay community in *RuPaul's Drag Race*. In this concluding chapter I first discuss the overall findings from the analysis and discussion chapter and answer my research question. In the second section I will discuss limitations and recommendations.

A total of 10 different translation procedures used have been observed, with one instance of a translation not related to a translation procedure. We can observe the following patterns. A lot of functional equivalents (74) occur which might lead to a loss of the connection that the ST has with the SC and neutralizes *drag* language. Transference also occurs rather often (66). With words such as *bitch*, the translator can presume that the TC will understand its meaning. Other terms that maintain the ST when they are transferred, however, but might not be understood by the TC. A total of 49 literal translations occur. These often maintain the literal meaning of the ST, and might be understandable to the TC, but also possibly cause a loss of meaning due to the TT not having the same connection to the origin of the term as in the ST. A total of 31 equivalents occur, however 30 of those concern the translation of *girl* into *meid*. A smaller number of omissions occur, a total of 18. These omissions do sometimes concern unimportant exclamations, but can also cause a loss of meaning when it causes the TT to

not completely transfer the meaning of the ST. Only a total of 10 uses of a pun in the TT to translate a pun in the ST occur. Despite the fact that it changes the meaning of the ST and might cause potential loss, it does maintain the camp and *drag* characteristic of humor and causes a less neutralized TT than when functional equivalents are used, especially when the pun in the TT references gay or *drag* elements from the TC. Only 5 paraphrases occur. It is probable that this is caused by the difficulty of using explicitation in subtitling. Whenever a paraphrase is used however, it maintains and explains the meaning of the ST. Incorrect translations and outdated terms also occur. These incorrect translations offer the viewer the wrong information about the ST, while the outdated terms offer translations that do not match the connotations in the ST, and could possibly be offensive. In addition, a number of identical ST items are translated using different translation procedures. As discussed in the methodology chapter, it is unclear for what companies the translators work and how they are recruited. It is possible that these differences in translation procedures used can be attributed to different translators opting for different procedures. Where one translator might prefer creating an entirely new pun in Dutch, another translator might prefer to maintain as much of the original speech as possible. The translations do thus not fully depend on the SL, ST, TL and TC.

Some of the ST language and its relation to *drag* language is maintained through the creation of new puns and paraphrases. However, taking into account the use of functional equivalents, transferences that might not be understandable for the TC, literal translations that do not maintain meaning, omissions, and even the occurrence of incorrect translations, it is possible that the viewing experience of a viewer using the Dutch subtitles on *Netflix* differs from that of a viewer who does not use these subtitles.

Through the modification and removal of terms that are specific to the *drag* and gay community, a part of the identity of those communities is possibly removed. As discussed in the literature chapter and discussion section, slang can form an inherent part of a minority group. When terms that identify and express cultural elements are omitted or neutralized, the viewer who uses subtitles and perhaps does not speak English, might be unaware of a lot of meaning, or even simply the existence, of cultural elements related to the *drag* community that are expressed through language.

## **5.2 Limitations**

As discussed in the methodology chapter, the analysis in this thesis is a qualitative one. Due to the scope of this thesis, we cannot derive major generalizations from the analyzed content. In order to determine whether the observed patterns in this thesis are applicable to *Drag Race* as a whole, further research is required.

It is also crucial to stay aware of the fact that the scope of this thesis does not reach further than the TV show *RuPaul's Drag Race*. We cannot conclude that the language in *Drag Race* is identical to that of members of the *drag* community in general. Studies have been done on the language that gay people use, as well as the language that *drag queens* use (e.g. Harvey, 1998; Hayes, 1976; Simmons, 2014; Stanley, 1970). Despite the fact that the drag language used in this TV show has its ties to the gay community, hence its discussion in the literature section, they are not identical.

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## Appendix A

| Speech                             | Notes  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| America's next best drag superstar | Used to refer to the winner of the season.   |
| Category is...                     | Said by RuPaul before the <i>runway</i> , stating what the theme of that week's <i>runway</i> is.  |
| While you untuck backstage         | Said by RuPaul to the contestants when the judges are going to discuss that week's performances and the <i>queens</i> get to wait backstage. <i>Tucking</i> (see appendix B) is the act of pulling back and taping one's genitals in a |

|   |   |
|---|---|
|   | way that the illusion of not having male genitals is created. <i>Untucking</i> (see appendix B) is the act of removing this illusion and used in this context to refer to the act of relaxing.  |
| Now just between us squirrel friends                          | Said by RuPaul when the judges discuss that week's performances. <i>Squirrel friends</i> (see appendix B) sounds like girl friends, but squirrel also refers to the way squirrels tuck away nuts, as in the act of <i>tucking</i> away one's genitals.                      |
| You represent the tops and the bottoms of this week           | Said by RuPaul to the best and worst performing candidates of that week's episode. The use of the words <i>top</i> and <i>bottom</i> is a pun referring to the concept of <i>tops</i> and <i>bottoms</i> in relation to sexual intercourse(see appendix B).                 |
| Shantay you stay  | Said by RuPaul to the contestant that survived that week's <i>lip-sync</i> and gets to stay in the competition. (see appendix B)  |
| Sashay away   | Said by RuPaul to the contestant that did not survive that week's <i>lip-sync</i> and has to leave the competition. The term is a play on words, referring to the ballet term <i>chassé</i> (a series of gliding steps), meaning to strut / move / prance. (see appendix B) |
| Con-drag-ulations, ladies                                     | Said by RuPaul to the <i>queens</i> who made it through to the next episode. Combines the words <i>drag</i> and congratulations.  |
| Con-drag-ulations, you're the winner of this week's challenge | Said by RuPaul to the winner of that week's episode. Combines the words <i>drag</i> and congratulations.  |
| My queens   | Often used by RuPaul to refer to the contestants.   |



|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>She done already done had herses</p> | <p>Said by RuPaul before he makes a video announcement to the <i>queens</i> about that week's theme. In an episode of <i>Drag Race</i>, RuPaul explains how the phrase originates from an experience that she had when going to a fast-food restaurant, when a waitress said this phrase to a customer that came to pick up the wrong order. Within the context of <i>Drag Race</i> and when the sentence is said, it does not carry an exact meaning connected to what is happening at that moment. It is used as a funny and random sentence (Francisco Wiesner, 2017).</p> |
|---|---|

List of terms and saying that occur in most episodes of *RuPaul's Drag Race*

## Appendix B

| Speech             | Notes  |
|--------------------|--|
| All Tea, All Shade | Used when someone says something mean to someone else and might mean it. Disrespect, but with a possible undertone of sarcasm. |
| Bar Queen          | Refers to a <i>queen</i> who only performs in smaller bars. Meant as an insult.  |
| Beat (One's Face)  | The act of applying make-up. Refers to the way <i>queens</i> dab a sponge, brush or make-up cushion on their face.             |
| Bitch              | Often used by <i>queens</i> to either refer to each other, or to emphasize a statement, e.g. Bitch, you do not look good.      |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Boots                                  | Used to emphasize a statement, e.g. She looks good, boots.   |
| Bottom                                 | Refers to a man who is a <i>bottom</i> during sexual intercourse with another man, i.e. on the receiving end. Also refers to the contestants who performed the worst during an episode of <i>Drag Race</i> and are in danger of being sent home. |
| Boy name                               | A <i>queen's</i> real, given name they use when they are not in <i>drag</i> , as opposed to their <i>drag</i> name.  |
| Breeder                                | Negative term for a heterosexual person, referring to the fact that heterosexual people can have sexual intercourse for reproductive reasons.  |
| Busted                                 | Looking bad and messy. As opposed to <i>Dusted</i> .   |
| Butch Queen                            | A masculine-looking queen.   |
| (Serving) Cakes                        | Butt cheeks. Serving cake refers to showing off one's butt cheeks.   |
| Camp / Campy                           | The act of over-the-top <i>drag</i> .  |
| Charisma, Uniqueness, Nerve and Talent | The four traits that a successful queen should possess, according to RuPaul. Its acronym is <i>C.U.N.T.</i>  |
| Clock                                  | Noticing or pointing out something that is wrong with someone (personality-wise or appearance-wise).   |
| Come Through                           | Used as a positive exclamation to show that someone likes something, i.e. when a <i>queen</i> walks on stage and other <i>queens</i> are excited about their outfit or performance, they might yell <i>come through</i> .                        |
| Condragulations                        | Combination of <i>drag</i> and congratulations. Used to congratulate someone on, for example, an achievement on <i>Drag Race</i> .   |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Crusty                | Looking bad. Similar to <i>Busted</i> .   |
| Cunt(y) / C.U.N.T.    | Someone who looks good. Derived from the term <i>cunt</i> , an offensive term that refers to vaginas. For the acronym C.U.N.T., see <i>Charisma, Uniqueness, Nerve and Talent</i> . |
| Death Drop            | A dance move where the performer falls onto the floor, on their back, with one or two legs underneath them. Originated in the <i>vogue</i> dance scene.                             |
| Drag Daughter         | <i>Queen</i> who is guided by another <i>queen</i> , who acts as a <i>Drag Mother</i> .   |
| Drag King             | Person who dresses up as and impersonates a man.  |
| Drag Mother           | <i>Queen</i> who guides another <i>queen</i> as a, more experienced, mentor.  |
| Drag Sister           | Used for two or more queens with the same <i>Drag Mother</i> .  |
| Drag Queen            | Person who dresses up as and impersonates a woman.  |
| Dusted                | Looking good. As opposed to <i>Busted</i> .   |
| Eleganza Extravaganza | Used to express high levels of elegance. Extravaganza is used to emphasize a statement.   |
| (Drag) Family         | A family of <i>queens</i> that might consist of several combinations of <i>Drag Mothers, Drag Daughters</i> and <i>Drag Sisters</i> .   |
| Fantasy               | Added to emphasize part of one's performance or look, e.g. I am feeling this glamorous fantasy look I am wearing.   |
| Feeling My Oats       | Enjoying the way you yourself look, which usually means you look <i>fishy</i> .   |
| Feeling The Fantasy   | Way to express that you feel positive about yourself and what you are doing.  |

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Fierce           | Way of referring to something positive, i.e. someone's look or performance. e.g. She looks so good, she looks fierce.  |
| Fish / Fishy     | Looking feminine. Refers to the scent of a vagina.   |
| For The Gods     | Way of emphasizing something is done well, e.g. she is dressed for the gods.   |
| Gag(ging)        | A reaction as a result of something shocking. Might also refer to someone liking something, e.g. She looks so good I am gagging. Can also be used as a general statement towards something big, i.e. being amazed by something.    |
| Gig              | A job, usually referring to a performance. Also used to refer to being good at something or liking something, e.g. Oh, we have to put together a glamorous look? That's my gig.  |
| Girl / Gurl      | Way of emphasizing a statement, e.g. gurl, she looks so good. Also used to refer to other <i>queens</i> .  |
| Giving (Me Life) | <i>Giving</i> ; Way of saying that you look like something. Can also be used in the context of explaining the theme or connotation of something, e.g. it is giving haute couture. <i>Giving me life</i> ; really liking something. |
| Glamazon         | Combines glamorous and Amazon. Refers to someone who is glamorous and self-confident.  |
| Henny            | Alternative way of saying honey. Either to refer to someone, or to emphasize a statement.  |
| Herstory         | History, replacing his with hers.  |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| House                        | Similar to a <i>Drag Family</i> . Might consist of, for example, a <i>Drag Mother</i> with several <i>Drag Daughters</i> , with <i>Drag Daughters</i> of their own.   |
| How's Your Head              | A line which originates from the movie <i>Elvira: Mistress of the Dark</i> . The question is asked to people who seem to have hurt their heads, however, the response is expected to be <i>I haven't had any complaints</i> , referring to the act of oral sex, commonly dubbed as <i>giving head</i> . |
| Hunty                        | Similar to the words honey and <i>henny</i> . A combination of honey and cunty.   |
| Kai-Kai                      | The act of sex between <i>queens</i> .  |
| Ki-Ki                        | A get-together, gossip, chatting, party.  |
| Let Them Have It             | Refers to how other people should be impressed by you.  |
| Library                      | Refers to a place where <i>queens</i> go to <i>read</i> each other.   |
| Lip-Sync For Your Life       | The <i>lip-sync</i> at the end of each episode of <i>Drag Race</i> , that determines which <i>queen</i> is going to be sent home that week.   |
| Mama (Mamma / Momma / Mawma) | Either used to refer to someone else, or to emphasize a statement.  |
| Mug                          | Someone's face.   |
| No Tea, No Shade             | As opposed to <i>All Tea, All Shade</i> . Something mean might be said, but with no intended disrespect.  |
| Okurr                        | Used to emphasize a statement. Commonly a positive one.   |
| Padding                      | Foam or sponge that is placed on the body to create a traditionally feminine body shape.  |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Paint / Painting               | Doing one's make-up.  |
| Party City                     | Refers to Halloween costume stores in the USA. Used as an insult towards a queen's outfit.  |
| Pit crew                       | A number of assistants on <i>Drag Race</i> . Commonly men in underwear.   |
| Read (For Filth)               | To insult or judge someone. Possibly with a sarcastic / loving undertone.   |
| Real(ness)                     | Refers both to being honest and being authentic. Is also used in the context of what someone is showing regarding a look or performance, e.g. she is showing cheerleader realness.  |
| Salty                          | To feel angry or resentful about something.   |
| Sashay Away                    | Line that RuPaul says to the contestant that is eliminated from the competition after the <i>lip-sync-for-your-life</i> . The term is a play on words, referring to the ballet term <i>chassé</i> (a series of gliding steps), meaning to strut / move / prance.  |
| Serve                          | Refers to what a <i>queen</i> is presenting / how she presents herself, e.g. she is serving glamour.  |
| Serving Fish                   | Looking <i>fishy</i> and feminine.  |
| Shade / Shady / Throwing Shade | Insulting / criticizing someone / being blunt / acting untrustworthy. Is sometimes used in a sarcastic manner, in a situation where the person does not mean actual harm to the person they are shading. Can also be used as a reaction to someone being criticized, e.g. Did you see the way she reacted to her look, the shade. |
| Shady Bitch                    | Someone who acts <i>shady</i> .   |

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|------------------------------|--|
| Shantay, You Stay            | Line that RuPaul says to the contestant that is not eliminated after the <i>lip-sync-for-your-life</i> .   |
| Sick'nig / Sickening         | Used to describe something positive, e.g. Your make-up looks sickening.  |
| Slay                         | Used as a verb, meaning to do well. Also used to emphasize a statement.  |
| Snatch Game                  | A challenge that appears in every season of <i>Drag Race</i> . The name is a play on words, referring to a US game show called <i>Match Game</i> , but replacing Match with <i>Snatch</i> , a slang term for vagina.                     |
| Snatched                     | Can be used as a more general term for something looking good. It can also refer to a small-waist. <i>Wig snatched</i> , is used to convey a positive feeling about something, e.g. She looks so good, she is snatching wigs.            |
| Squirrel Friends             | Play on words of the word girl friends. Squirrel refers to the way squirrels tuck away nuts, as in the act of <i>tucking</i> away one's genitals.  |
| The House Down               | Used to emphasize a statement, e.g. She can perform the house down.  |
| (Spilling Tea) T / Tea / Tee | Derived from the word truth. Refers to gossip, telling someone about gossip.   |
| Top                          | Refers to a man who is a <i>top</i> during sexual intercourse with another man, i.e. on the giving end. Also refers to the contestants who performed the best during an episode of <i>Drag Race</i> and are through to the next episode. |
| Tuck                         | The act of pulling back and taping one's genitals in a way that the illusion of not having male genitals is creating.  |

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|---------------------|--|
| Untuck              | The act of removing one's <i>tuck</i> . Also said by RuPaul referring to the queens going backstage to wait for the judge's critiques and that week's results. |
| Werk / Work (it)    | To give it your best. To do well. Often said or yelled by <i>queens</i> when another <i>queen</i> is doing something that they are excited about.              |
| Werk Room           | The room that the contestant of <i>Drag Race</i> practice and get ready in.<br>Combines Work Room with <i>Werk</i> .   |
| Yasss (Queen) / Yes | General exclamation of excitement or emphasis, e.g. yasss, gurl, werk.   |

List of compiled online lists, glossaries and dictionaries related to drag and Drag Race terms and sayings, retrieved from the following list;

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Downey, S.A. (2014, February 19). *RuPaul's Drag Race vocabulary guide*. Retrieved from <https://www.sarahadowney.com/post/rupaul-s-drag-race-vocabulary-guide>



Michaels, B. (2018, October 13). *All the Drag Queen Terminology You've Always Been Curious About*. Retrieved from <https://www.ranker.com/list/drag-queen-terminology/brandon-michaels>

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*RuPaul's Drag Race Dictionary*. Retrieved from [https://rupaulsdragrace.fandom.com/wiki/RuPaul%27s\\_Drag\\_Race\\_Dictionary](https://rupaulsdragrace.fandom.com/wiki/RuPaul%27s_Drag_Race_Dictionary)

*RuPaul's Drag Race terminology*. Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RuPaul%27s\\_Drag\\_Race\\_terminology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RuPaul%27s_Drag_Race_terminology)

Wang, K. (2018, June 25). *Drag Vocab and How You're Already Using It*. Retrieved from <https://www.listenandlearnusa.com/blog/drag-vocab-youre-already-using/>

## **Appendix C**

Speech

Notes

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Chesticles             | A pun used in the context of (getting something of your) chest. Combines chest and testicles.   |
| (...) eleganza         | <i>Eleganza</i> (see appendix B) used to emphasize something, often in the context of looks, e.g. she is showing us movie premiere eleganza.  |
| (...) girl             | Added to a noun or adjective for emphasis when describing oneself, e.g. I am a fashion girl, I am a comedy girl.  |
| To give face           | In the context of <i>drag</i> , to give face refers to showing a good look, especially focused on make-up ( <i>Face</i> , 2015).  |
| Glamazonian airways    | The title of season 7, episode 2. Takes the word <i>glamazon</i> (see appendix B) and turns it into a fake airline name.  |
| Gone with the weave    | A pun that combines the movie title <i>Gone with the wind</i> with <i>weave</i> , a fake piece of hair that is attached to one's own hair.  |
| I'm getting            | Used to emphasize someone's opinion about a performance or look, e.g. <i>I'm getting boy</i> ; in the context of thinking someone looks too masculine.  |
| (A) Palooza            | A party. Also used to emphasize something ( <i>-palooza</i> , n.d.) ( <i>A-palooza</i> , n.d.).   |
| Sass(y)                | To be rude or cheeky. It is a commonly used word but is used often in <i>Drag Race</i> .  |
| (...) she better don't | <i>Oh no she better don't</i> is one of RuPaul's catch-phrases and also the title of one of her songs. It is often used in puns by adding funny and rhyming words to the sentence. Commonly does not have a specific meaning but is used to emphasize part of someone's look or performance, e.g. <i>Afro she better don't</i> , which refers to someone wearing an afro. |

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Sis             | Often used by <i>queens</i> to either refer to each other, or to emphasize a statement, e.g. Sis, you do not look good.         |
| Sissy that walk | The title of a song by RuPaul. Used to refer to a certain way of walking. It has a positive connotation.                        |
| (...) queen     | Added to a noun or adjective to emphasize what type of <i>queen</i> someone is, e.g. I am a fashion queen, I am a comedy queen. |

List of terms not present in appendix A and appendix B. Compiled on the basis of analyzed episodes.