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Viewers Perception of Subtitled Puns in How I Met Your Mother

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Citation

Zentveld, J. (2023). *Viewers Perception of Subtitled Puns in How I Met Your Mother*.

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



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Viewers Perception of Subtitled Puns in *How I Met Your Mother*

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January 1, 2023
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ABSTRACT

This study examines the reception by a Dutch target audience of subtitled puns in the American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* by expanding on the BA Thesis “Audiovisual Translation: Subtitling of Humour in *How I Met Your Mother*”. For this thesis, a questionnaire is conducted, asking questions about the participants’ viewing habits, their understanding of subtitles and puns, and finally their assessment of four short fragments. The translation strategies that are used in this study are omission, literal translation, and transposition. This reception study is substantiated by previous studies concerning translation strategies, different types of puns, and studies of the reception of subtitles. This is used to prove or disprove the hypothesis that a target audience will experience the most joy in puns that are subtitled using the transposition strategy, since this best conveys humorous instances both creatively and enjoyably. The participants’ answers are analysed and a conclusion is drawn, where recommendations to future subtitlers will be given to improve their subtitling process and enhance the audience’s enjoyment. Lastly, a guide for possible future studies will be implemented.

Keywords: *subtitling, puns, reception, translation strategies, How I Met Your Mother, questionnaire*

1. INTRODUCTION

It is the author's personal experience that subtitles can be both a blessing and a curse. They can help viewers in their understanding of a foreign language, but they can also impede the viewing experience if they do not live up to the audience's expectations. The so-called binge-watching environment that has emerged over the past years, in which audiences have resorted to the more available forms of online entertainment rather than the formerly more popular physical forms (Johnson, 2021: 4), has led to the increasing demand for the production of films and series, and their accompanying audiovisual aids. This ever-increasing clamour has led to tight deadlines, which results in hasty-produced subtitles, which in turn causes for viewers' complaints about the quality of such aids. Subtitles, the audiovisual aid this thesis is concerned with, can be inaccurate in conveying a similar message to their target audience, especially when humour is involved. The discussion of subtitles being either 'good' or 'bad', without considering any further challenges the subtitler has to deal with, has recently sparked attention through the widely popular Netflix series *Squid Game*. Released amid the COVID-19 pandemic, this show was highly criticised, especially due to the perception that Korean culture-specific elements were either mistranslated or omitted in the subtitles (Cho, 2021). This popular misconception, that the subtitles have to convey the exact meaning of their source, nullifies the challenges of the subtitling practice. These critical viewers do not comprehend the constrained environment in which a subtitler has to operate, leading to a large amount of conscious and unconscious decisions. These 'errors' in translation are often emphasised. However, this does not mean that subtitles take away from the experience of watching a film or series. On the contrary, it can convey a very similar degree of entertainment as the source, even if not all of the source elements are precisely translated.

This study draws upon publications conducted by previous scholars to research how an audience receives subtitles. This will be discussed by looking specifically at a Dutch audience who are asked to watch several English fragments, and answer questions about their reception of the accompanying puns. There have been several publications on the reception of subtitling (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón, 2016; Fox, 2018; Nikolić, 2018; Viens & Farrar, 2021), but these are usually limited to the reception of reading speed, subtitle placement, and subtitle layout, i.e., aspects that can be measured concretely. Its abstract counterpart, how people experience subtitles, has not been researched as much, especially not in combination with humour. Some publications *do* study the reception of humour in subtitles (Fuentes Luque, 2003; Schaufler, 2015; Hempelmann, 2014; Ibharm, Matalib & Ridzuan, 2019), but the language pair used for this thesis, English-Dutch, has not been researched sufficiently. There have been some publications on the translation of humour in Dutch (Pelsmaekers & Van Eesien, 2014), and the translation of humour as a whole (Zabalbeascoa, 2005; Chiaro, 2010, 2017; Vandaele, 2010), but there is still a lot to uncover in this field, mainly in combination with the audience's reception. It is also important to note that there has been plenty of research on strategies in audiovisual translation (AVT) (Lomheim, 1999; Gambier & Gottlieb, 2001; Chiaro, 2005; Schaeffer and Carl, 2013; Chesterman,

2019; Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021), which will form the basis of this study. Therefore, its research question is ‘How does a Dutch audience receive subtitled puns in terms of enjoyment?’. This question will be answered by conducting a questionnaire, in which a group of participants have to assess four fragments, each corresponding to a different translation strategy. The purpose of this thesis is to take the first steps in understanding if there is a strategy that is most enjoyed by the target audience and if this coincides with the strategies used by professional subtitlers. The hypothesis this study wants to confirm is that the target audience will experience more joy from the subtitles that convey a more elaborate and creative sense of the source dialogue than those that omit or translate them literally. If this is confirmed in this study, the findings can improve the subtitling practice, how subtitlers can translate puns in line with the audience’s expectations, and be a guide to future subtitlers.

By researching this, a conclusion can be drawn concerning the audience’s preferences in the subtitling of puns. Of course, subtitlers do not always have the freedom to translate most creatively and efficiently, mainly due to the constrained environment in which they have to operate. Despite these constraints, there are instances in which different strategies *can* be used, that might not be familiar to a professional subtitler, or do not fit in their unconscious process of producing subtitles.

This thesis will consist of a total of five chapters, including this Introduction. Chapter two, the Literature Review, discusses previous publications concerning the development of AVT, translation strategies, humour in translation, specifically puns, and the reception of AVT. This forms the theoretical basis of this study. Chapter three, the Methodology, presents how this study has been conducted, how the information has been gathered and how the results are analysed. Chapter four, the Analysis, discusses the results of the study and what can be drawn from them. The final chapter, the Conclusion, concludes what has been drawn from the study, makes a proposal for future subtitlers about the target audience’s main preference when subtitling puns, and seeks a way in which these preferences can be met.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This theoretical chapter focuses on previous publications that form the basis for the analysis of the collected data. It discusses the development of AVT, translation strategies specific to AVT, different types of humour, with the main focus on puns, and reception studies on AVT, specifically subtitling. This theoretical framework gives the reader insight into previous studies and why it is important to research the audience's reception of humour in subtitling, which is the focus of this thesis.

2.1 The Development of AVT

Even though AVT has been a topic of research for over thirty years, it has gained more attention and scholarly prominence due to the digitisation and the proliferation and distribution of audiovisual materials over recent years (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 1). For that reason, this area of study has seen a swift development, in which both its potential and, more prominently, its constraints are emphasised by several publications. To get a better understanding of this development and why subtitlers are tied to conscious and unconscious decisions in their subtitling practice, this section focuses on the challenges a subtitler has to deal with.

2.1.1 Development in AVT: Gradual Recognition

One of the most crucial evolutions that has changed the subtitling process is the digitisation of images, which started somewhat twenty years ago (Díaz Cintas, 2005: 19). This was not only beneficial for the subtitling practice but also for the viewers' experience. This digital development made the process more efficient, meaning that subtitlers can now work at a higher rate than, say, ten years ago. This digitisation is essential to comply with the ever-increasing production of films and series and the audience's expectation of fitting audiovisual translation. This evolution has helped to gain accessibility and has the potential to reach large audiences, nowadays mainly through television and streaming services (Díaz Cintas, 2012: 273). This need for availability has led to a transformation of its treatment in academic research. Consequently, AVT has evolved into an area of research that has gained a growing interest among translation scholars.

As a field of study, AVT has not yet been as established as other disciplines within Translation Studies (Gambier, 2021: 16). The main reason for this is that it is still regarded as a constrained form of translation, causing scholars to have a negative outlook towards this discipline. Although this has rapidly changed over the past years, many previous studies "have limited their focus to interlinguistic subtitling, in an attempt to achieve a global characterisation of AVT" (Gambier, 2021: 16). These studies usually date back to the very beginning of the discipline's research, and change over the years to a broader and more appropriate interpretation of AVT. Despite this shift, most studies still focus on the interlinguistic

aspect, which discusses the translation from oral to written form. These studies can be divided into two main focus points: case studies on subtitling, and studies on strategies used to make (conscious) subtitling decisions (Gambier, 2021: 18). These studies mainly accentuate the challenges a subtitler has to deal with. This section thus discusses these limitations, and why they apply to AVT.

2.1.2 Subtitling: Its Constraints

It is widely known amongst academic scholars within Translation Studies that AVT, and therefore subtitling, operates within an environment where constraints are prominent. The two main dimensions AVT is challenged by, are discussed in this section. These are spatial and temporal restrictions.

Spatial Constraints

This restriction contains two main components: the maximum number of lines and position onscreen, and the maximum number of characters per line (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 93-99). Certain overarching trends can be identified amidst the cultural differences in spatial parameters. In a broad sense, these trends apply to both English and Dutch subtitles, although they might differ per subtitling agency. What is unnegotiable in most productions is that the number of lines in interlingual subtitling is limited to a maximum of two (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 93). There are rare instances in which this rule is violated in either English or Dutch interlingual subtitling. The maximum number of characters per line differs between agencies. Some prefer no more than 35 characters per line, mostly subtitles that are produced for television, while others recommend a maximum of 42 characters per line, mostly applicable to streaming services (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 99). Subtitlers have to obey these directives, meaning that they only have a limited number of characters to work with. It is thus inevitable that subtitlers have to shorten their translation to make it appropriate for the limitations of the screen. Here, a subtitler makes conscious and unconscious decisions to produce a fitting translation that also complies with the principal grammar and syntax rules within the target language. The strategies that conform to these decisions will be discussed in the next section of this chapter, when discussing the different types of strategies available to the subtitler.

Temporal Constraints

The temporal dimension in which subtitlers operate also challenges them to make the right decisions to convey the essence of the source text. Three main components comprise this restriction: the duration of the subtitles, the subtitle display rate, and shot changes (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 102-116). The duration of the subtitles can be altered by spotting the subtitle events correctly, i.e., “deciding when a subtitle should pop up onscreen and when it should leave” (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 102). When spotting, the subtitler should be mindful that the events coincide with the film’s or series’ rhythm, considering pauses, interruptions, and other features characterising the original dialogue (Díaz Cintas &

Remael, 2021: 105). Because their duration onscreen should correspond with the length of the dialogue, longer dialogue is inevitably shortened in the subtitles, and short dialogue is combined. For subtitle events, there is usually a minimum and maximum duration that the subtitler should adhere to, which can alter between different agencies. The minimum time is generally considered to be no less than one second to avoid the subtitles flashing onscreen (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 106). The maximum duration can differ significantly between agencies, but most of them adhere to the so-called ‘six-second rule’. These durations can be seen as somewhat outdated because they might be too slow for contemporary, ‘trained’ viewers (Szarkowska & Bogucka, 2019: 101). Streaming services that expect their audience to have a faster reading competence may lower this duration to fit more information onscreen. Although these recommended limitations may differ, it is the subtitler’s task to adhere to these standards. For audiovisual media, a subtitler can choose to override these values by changing the in- and out-times of their subtitle events. This gives the viewer a more pleasant reading experience. Still, in ongoing dialogue, this is not always feasible.

The duration of subtitles coincides with the subtitle display rate, i.e., the characters per second (cps) or words per minute (wpm) a subtitler has to adhere to. These rates are calculated considering the original speech’s length and the viewers’ comfortable reading speed. According to Romero-Fresco (2015), ‘reading speed’ is not a fitting concept, since the audience is not only required to acquire information from the subtitles but also the (moving) images: the semiotic modes. The author of this thesis agrees with this observation, and will thus adhere to the term ‘viewing speed’ rather than reading speed. In the subtitling practice, this speed is a grey area. It is generally considered that adults have a viewing speed of 17 cps or 200 wpm, including spaces and punctuation marks. Children have a lower viewing speed, which is usually considered to be around 13 cps or 160 wpm (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 111). Both the viewing speed for adults and children can differ significantly between agencies, with some being more lenient than others concerning the exceedance of the maximum viewing speed. What most agencies *do* agree upon, is that there should be a short gap between the subtitles, usually of two or three frames, which makes the viewers aware that there is a switch between two consecutive subtitle events (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 113). These regulations are established to ensure a most-pleasant viewing experience for the audience, where they can watch a film or series without struggling to understand the subtitles.

The final component of this temporal constraint concerns shot changes. Robson argues that “if a caption remains on screen when the scene changes behind it, viewers will automatically start reading the caption over again, assuming that the caption changed with the scene” (2004: 184). So, according to him, a subtitler should avoid inserting subtitle events atop shot changes, although, in many instances, this is virtually impossible due to fast shot changes used by contemporary films and series. In these instances, this rule can, or even *should* be disregarded by the subtitler by inserting longer subtitle events that overlap shot changes. A rule that is more important for a subtitler to obey is the in- and out-time of a subtitle event, i.e., when a subtitle appears onscreen and disappears. The rule is that these times should

not closely follow or precede a shot change. When this does happen, it can create a flickering effect, annoying the viewer. The most common rule to avoid this is the 12-frame rule, “whereby when a subtitle finishes just before [or after] a shot change, the [in- and] out-time may be set either on the shot change, or at least twelve frames before [or after] the shot change” (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 115). The subtitles should always bring comfort to the eyes of the viewer, which is something the subtitler should observe when producing their subtitles.

It can be said that these limitations challenge the subtitlers in their subtitling process. They have to operate in a constrained environment, which does not automatically mean they cannot, using the right conscious and unconscious decisions, produce subtitles that help unfamiliar target viewers in their comprehension of the foreign language. The development of AVT, which makes it increasingly more accessible to an ever-growing audience, will continue when subtitlers, and their agencies, gain more knowledge about their subtitling practice, and the viewership’s expectations. This is what this thesis wants to uncover. The following section discusses different strategies a subtitler can, consciously or unconsciously, use in their subtitling process.

2.2 Translation Strategies in Subtitling

‘Translation strategies’ is an overarching term used in Translation Studies to define the conscious and unconscious decisions a translator can make. For the translation chosen for this study, it cannot be said with certainty if the subtitler was fully conscious of their decision-making, or if the decisions were made unconsciously. Experienced subtitlers are expected to make more unconscious decisions than novices, but the strategies belonging to those decisions will be similar. The strategies that are (mostly) used by subtitlers will be discussed below.

The classification of strategies can be confusing since different publications use different terminology to refer to them, even though they represent a similar approach. Several key differences can be distinguished when analysing those publications. One of the main differences exists between global and local strategies. Chesterman (2016: 88-89) provides the following description for these terms:

- *Global strategies*: these are applied in response to the question “how to translate this text or this kind of text”;
- *Local strategies*: these correspond to the question “how to translate this structure/this idea/this item”.

Here, the term ‘global strategies’ refers to strategies that are applied to the text as a whole. An example of this, given by Chesterman, would be the decision a translator makes about ‘how freely’ they can translate their text. When discussing subtitling, where creativity is needed to comply with the spatial and temporal limitations, it is expected that a subtitler is free in their translation process, using creativity to evade the spatial and temporal constraints. However, it is important that this liberty of translation

does not interfere with the audience's understanding, which is the first priority a subtitler has to align their decision-making with. Because the global strategies chosen by subtitlers are quite similar for each audiovisual production, this thesis will focus more on the local strategies. These focus on individual expressions of the source text that have to be translated, for instance words, phrases or grammatical constructions (Chesterman, 2016: 89). Because constraints interfere with the subtitler's decision-making, the most favourable strategies cannot always be chosen, as will be discussed further on in this section, where this thesis expands further on the individual strategies available to subtitlers in audiovisual translation.

Another distinction that can be made is between 'strategies' and 'procedures', respectively defined by Munday as "the overall orientation of a translated text, while the other is a specific technique used at a given point in a text" (2016: 24). Because these distinctions can be confusing when used interchangeably, and because they conflict with other terms in English (Gambier, 2010), this thesis will use only one term to describe the decisions made by the subtitler: translation strategies. These can create a form of equivalence between source and target text. They will be used consciously or unconsciously by the subtitler to generate a translation that is most desirable for the audience's understanding and appreciation of the target text. To avoid further confusion about the strategies' typology, two publications have been chosen to define the different strategies. These publications encompass the nine most-common strategies used by subtitlers in AVT, and thus suffice when analysing the audience's enjoyment of the chosen fragments. The first publication concerns the strategies in a broader sense, defined by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2021), some of which are based on earlier publications by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995). The other typology, discussed by Delabastita (1996), focuses specifically on strategies concerning the translation of puns, which is the main focus of this thesis. Both these typologies are discussed in this section since they can be combined to create a more specific notion of how the humorous instances in the assessed fragments have been translated for this study.

2.2.1 Translation Strategies: A Broad Typology

Díaz Cintas and Remael propose nine translation strategies, some of which are more significant for this study. The discussion below will illustrate why this is. The strategies they propose are (2021: 207):

1. Loan translation;
2. Literal translation;
3. Explication;
4. Substitution;
5. Transposition;
6. Lexical recreation;
7. Compensation;

8. Omission;
9. Addition.

This section will briefly discuss these strategies, combining them with instances in which they can be applied by the subtitler. In an earlier bachelor thesis (Zentveld, 2021) it was argued, based on the strategies posed by Díaz Cintas and Remael, that the most-used strategies in subtitling are omission and literal translation, mostly due to the constrained environment. A more creative but relatively less-used strategy is transposition. For this thesis, these opposites are further investigated to uncover which strategy is most enjoyed by the target audience. In this section, there is thus more emphasis on these three strategies, because they are used in the assessment of this study. To give a clear and complete illustration of the possible strategies used in subtitling, all nine strategies are briefly mentioned and explained.

Loan Translation

This strategy is closely related to the borrowing strategy proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 31) and is defined by Díaz Cintas and Remael as “a word or phrase being directly incorporated into the target language and text because both languages happen to use the exact same word” (2021: 207). This can only be used when the subtitler is sure that the vast majority of their viewership understands the translation. The audience can understand this either as a stand-alone word or phrase, or with the help of the scene’s context. ‘Strange’ translations of these terms can be annoying for a viewership that is familiar with the source language, so in those instances, this strategy should be avoided. The words and phrases this strategy can be best applied to are well-known brand names, names of foods and drinks, and technological terms.

Literal Translation

This strategy is described by Díaz Cintas and Remael as “a special type of loan, whereby the subtitler borrows the form of expression in the source language and renders each of the elements literally into the target language structure” (2021: 208). This works best when “translating between two languages of the same family, and even more so when they also share the same culture” (Vinay & Darbelnet, 1995: 34). The languages used for this thesis, English and Dutch, are both part of the West-Germanic language family and share a similar western culture. This strategy can thus be used by a subtitler when translating between these languages. This is best used in simple sentences or with short words and phrases. An example of such an instance would be:

English	I went	to the store	and bought	an apple.
Dutch	Ik ging	naar de winkel	en kocht	een appel.

Because English and Dutch have a similar sentence structure, where occasionally certain words have to be swapped around to adhere to the target's syntax, this strategy lends itself well to this language pair. However, it can also result in 'strange' translations, when a word or phrase is translated too literally, or even incorrectly. This can also be the result of so-called false friends, i.e., "words that seem to be the same, or at least very similar, in form and meaning, but, in reality, are not" (Domínguez & Nerlich, 2002: 1834). An example for English and Dutch would be *actueel* and 'actual'. The Dutch word means relevant or topical, which has hardly any resemblance to the English definition. The subtitler thus has to be mindful when using this strategy to avoid mistakes that can be identified by the target audience.

Although some flaws need to be considered by the subtitler, this strategy lends itself well to subtitling. It uses a limited number of characters and gets across the essence of the source to the target audience. As with loan translation, the subtitler has to be sure that the vast majority of their viewership is familiar with the translation, thus avoiding literally translating words and/or phrases that need further explanation. It can also result in strange translations that are syntactically and grammatically correct but can be perceived as too literal by the target audience.

Explicitation

This strategy is specified by Vinay and Darbelnet as "the process of introducing information into the target language which is present only implicitly in the source language" (1995: 8). Using this strategy, the subtitler makes the source more accessible to their target audience. This can be done with two main approaches (Díaz Cintas and Remael, 2021: 210):

- *Specification*, with the use of a hyponym; a word of more specific meaning, or;
- *Generalisation*, with the use of a hypernym; a word with a broader meaning.

Because of AVT's constrained environment, hypernyms are used far more often than hyponyms. A more general translation is more recognisable for the target audience, who are expected to have no preliminary knowledge of the source language and culture. Because this strategy, especially specification, produces longer sentences, a subtitler will try to avoid it as much as possible. However, in some instances, they are bound to use this strategy when no other options are available.

Substitution

This strategy is understood to be a variant of explicitation. It can be chosen by the subtitler when a longer term cannot be used due to constraints, even if it is familiar to the target audience (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 212). It is typical for subtitling since it allows the subtitler to use less space and time. In the definition given by Díaz Cintas and Remael, the use of this strategy is limited to culture-specific elements, although it can also be used for other elements. The shortening of subtitle events is a regularity in the subtitling practice, be it conscious or unconscious. By substituting longer elements with shorter ones, it does not change much about the meaning of the subtitles, but it *does* make it more comprehensive for the target audience.

Transposition

There is one primary definition given by Díaz Cintas and Remael concerning this strategy, which is that “a cultural concept from one community is replaced by a cultural concept from another” (2021: 213). It focuses mainly on elements that target audiences are not expected to understand. This can be the case when the source is discussing specific brands, names, phrases, or puns that are unfamiliar to the target audience. Examples of these instances are:

English	Boots	Captain Obvious	Bob’s your uncle
Dutch	Etos	open deur intrappen	klaar is Kees

How puns are translated using this strategy is discussed further on in this thesis. Using this strategy, a subtitler has a lot of freedom to express their creativity in the subtitles to get across the essence of the source. The only issue is that the constraints do not always allow for this strategy to be feasible. When a subtitler decides to use this strategy, it is expected that other elements have to be omitted. There will also be instances in which the creativity of the subtitler is not sufficient enough to produce a fitting equivalent, or the target language does not contain any words or phrases that fit the particular instance. In those cases, the subtitler has to resort to other strategies for their translation.

Another reason why this strategy can be difficult to implement, deals with the viewers’ comprehension of the source language. When they hear or see something familiar in the source dialogue, which is translated differently in the subtitles, it can come across as strange or annoying. Because subtitles are primarily produced for those who are unfamiliar with the source language and culture, this is less important to consider when translating puns, but more with famous brands or names that are easy to recognise by a widespread audience (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 213). The subtitler should thus consider if the element they translate is recognisable for their target audience, or that they will benefit from a more creative translation.

Lexical recreation

Díaz Cintas and Remael argue that lexical recreation, or the invention of a neologism in the target language, “may indeed be inevitable when the source text speaker makes up new words” (2021: 215). If a subtitler opts for this strategy, they have two options: they can create a non-existent neologism or look for a word or phrase that already exists in the target language which conveys a similar message. When this happens in subtitling, the subtitler will most likely put this element between brackets, to ensure that the viewer will not observe it as a typographical error (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 215). There will be instances in which the subtitler is unable to find a fitting equivalent in the target language, and thus resorts to a simpler, less neologistic-like word or phrase, that is better understood by their target audience. When a subtitler coins their own neologism, they have to be sure that the vast majority of their target audience understands it.

Compensation

This strategy entails “making up for a translational loss in one exchange by being more creative or adding something extra in another” (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 215). Although it lends itself to subtitling, it does pose some issues, especially concerning oral-visual cohabitation. When a viewer hears and recognises something that does not coincide with the subtitles, they might get confused or even annoyed. A challenge that is more humour-specific is that of the presence, or in this case absence, of the laugh track. If this is not present, then a viewer does not expect a humorous instance and might find it strange when there is one present in the subtitles. A subtitler should carefully consider when they can compensate for a translation loss and when this is not needed, or not possible.

Omission

This strategy is the most used one in subtitling, mainly because of the constrained environment the subtitlers have to operate in. Although it is omnipresent in the subtitling practice, it is also very undesirable, since the subtitler wants to convey a similar message as the source. However, in some instances it is unavoidable, either due to time or spatial constraints, or the target language not having a fitting equivalent for the subtitler to use (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 216). The most important aspect is that the subtitler has to assess if their omission does not impact their target audience’s comprehension. They have to be very careful in choosing the elements they want to omit, and which should remain in the subtitles to retain intelligibility for their viewers. There are two main levels, according to Díaz Cintas and Remael, on which a subtitler chooses to omit.

The first one is word level (2021: 162). According to Díaz Cintas and Remael, linguistic modifiers are one of the most-omitted elements in sentences. These modifiers, mostly adjectives and adverbs, do not include any essential information, and are thus one of the first words that a subtitler will choose to omit. There are instances in which the subtitler can be assisted by semiotic modes, for instance in the following example:

English Do you know where my blue coat is?

Dutch Weet je waar mijn [blauwe] jas is?

If the subtitler deems the characteristics of the coat to be unimportant to the understanding of the storyline, or they are shown onscreen, they do not have to use unnecessary space and time. Expletives and phatic expressions are also segments that are regularly omitted (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021: 163). When the subtitler believes that they do not contain any crucial information for their audience, they can choose to omit them. Between English and Dutch, one of the most-omitted expletives is ‘fuck(ing)’, which will either be omitted because the subtitler believes the viewers recognise and understand the word, or because it has no significance.

Clause/sentence level is the second level on which a subtitler can choose to omit certain elements (2021: 164). However, it is highly inadvisable because it will most definitely have an impact on the viewers' understanding. Omission at this level is mostly done when characters' speeches intervene with each other, and the subtitler has to choose which of the speeches is most important for the audience's understanding of the storyline. The omission of shorter clauses, or parts of sentences, is done more often by subtitlers, because it has less effect on the audience's comprehension. This also happens with humorous instances, especially puns, where the humour is omitted in the sentence for the sake of intelligibility. This takes away from the audience's experience, which will not be similar to the source audience. It is always the decision of individual subtitlers when to omit certain utterances, which means that there are no clear-cut benchmarks a subtitler has to adhere to.

Addition

This strategy is the opposite of omission, and thus also not often used by subtitlers because of the spatial and temporal constraints. Nevertheless, it is still an option that is available to subtitlers, mostly when translating culture-specific references, according to Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007: 207). For instance, when English speakers are discussing their politics and talking about 'Tories', a subtitler cannot expect that the majority of their viewership understands this reference. They might elaborate on it by stating that it is a member of the Conservative Party, which takes up more space and time, but helps the viewer in understanding the meaning of the term. The constraints do not always allow for this addition, so there are instances in which the subtitler has no other choice but to use a different strategy, maybe one that is not as suitable as this one, and may impede the audience's understanding.

2.2.2 Translation Strategies: A Humour-Specific Typology

Although the abovementioned strategies form the basis of the subtitler's decision-making process, the strategies discussed below focus more specifically on the humorous aspect. Although many scholars see wordplay or puns as untranslatable (Delabastita, 1996: 35), there are strategies that can be used to translate them. This does not mean that the ultimate purpose, finding a fitting equivalent for the target audience, is reached, but it does mean that the subtitler can convey a similar message and meaning to their viewership. Delabastita proposes seven different methods, as he calls them, a subtitler can opt for, each with different outcomes. He uses both the terms wordplay and puns, where puns can be seen as a form of wordplay. The strategies, as this thesis will call them, mentioned below are in capital letters because this is also the layout used in Delabastita's article (1996: 34):

PUN to PUN, where the source text is translated using a pun from the target language because there is an equivalent pun. This is the most favourable strategy because there is no loss in meaning for the target audience.

PUN to NON-PUN, where the pun is replaced by a non-punning translation because there is no equivalent in the target language. Here, the meaning of the source is still rendered.

PUN to RELATED RHETORICAL DEVICE, where the pun is replaced by another instance of wordplay, or a wordplay-related device, because the subtitler does not want to omit the humorous instance and can find a fitting replacement.

PUN to ZERO, where the subtitler chooses to omit the humorous instance, either because of the constraints or because they implement a fitting strategy. This is the least-favourable choice, but it is sometimes the only option a subtitler can use.

PUN equals PUN, where the subtitler expects their target audience to understand the source pun, so they feel no need to translate it. This is also non-favourable because a subtitler can never be sure that all of their viewers understand the source without a translation.

NON-PUN to PUN, where the subtitler introduces a pun when there is none in the source. The main reason for doing this is to compensate for an earlier loss so that the humorous effect of the source is still transmitted.

ZERO to PUN, where the subtitler introduces a pun as an entirely new textual element. This is not to compensate for an earlier loss or any other justification.

Although they are not all equally common or favourable in the subtitling of puns, these strategies *can* all occur. The broad strategies that will be assessed by the participants in this study, omission, literal translation, and transposition, can all be connected to these humour-specific strategies. Omission can be linked with PUN to ZERO and literal translation and transposition can both be linked with PUN to PUN. This is not to say that literal translation always results in an equivalent pun; in some instances, it can also be linked with PUN to NON-PUN.

What can be said from the discussion above, is that the subtitler has a broad variety of strategies at their disposal. They will choose them either consciously or unconsciously because not all subtitlers are actively aware of the available strategies, or do not have the time to consciously think about their decisions. The more experience a subtitler has, the less they have to reflect on the strategies they use, because unconsciously they use the strategies that best fit the subtitling instance, or so they are expected to. The use of strategies can also vary between different subtitlers because everyone has personal preferences that will always show through in their translations. The strategies a subtitler chooses are mostly connected to the temporal and spatial constraints they have to deal with, whereby they cannot always choose the most favourable strategy. This does not mean that the strategies chosen by the subtitler are the ones that are most enjoyed by their audience. Which of the strategies is most enjoyed will be discussed and analysed further on in this thesis.

2.3 Humour in AVT: The Pun

A subtitler will encounter numerous types of humour when translating films and/or series. Although present in many productions, there has not yet been a unanimous definition that encompasses what humour entails. The most common and most-used definition in Translation Studies is that of Vandaele, who defines humour as “that what causes amusement, mirth, a spontaneous smile and laughter” (2010: 147). This is mostly used in English-specific publications, and can thus not be used for all cultures. Because the Dutch culture, as a western culture, is quite similar to the English one, this definition *can* be used here, although it is still very abstract. When defining humour, it is better to look at different types of humour and how they are devised. This thesis focuses on the pun, a type of wordplay in translation first defined by Delabastita:

It is the general name for the various *textual* phenomena in which *structural features* of the language(s) used are exploited in order to bring about a *communicative significant confrontation* of two (or more) linguistic structures with *more or less similar forms* and *more or less different meaning*. (1996: 128)

Attardo elaborates on this definition by giving a more definitive explanation. He states that puns are a textual occurrence, “in which a sequence of sounds must be interpreted with a reference to a second sequence of sounds” (2018: 91). As with any type of humour, it is intended to bring joy to an audience. Both Delabastita and Attardo put puns in the textual perspective, however, these can also be spoken texts, as seen in audiovisual media. This type of humour is very much present in sitcoms, also in *How I Met Your Mother*, which thus lends itself well to the assessment of this type of wordplay. To give an evident illustration of the types of puns that can appear in such sitcoms, this section discusses Delabastita’s typology of puns (1996: 128). He states that there are four most commonly used types of puns: homonyms, homophones, homographs and paronyms. These are presented below and assisted by examples devised by the author of this thesis, which further clarify them. They are also translated by the author, using the different strategies that are assessed by the participants in the questionnaire, to show the level of equivalence the different strategies achieve.

2.3.1 Homonyms

These types of puns revolve around words or phrases that have an identical sound and spelling, but differ in meaning. This can be seen in the following example:

It is *pointless* to write with a broken pencil.

Here ‘pointless’ can mean both ‘having no purpose’ or ‘having no point (as in the writing part of a pencil)’. The following translations can be produced:

Omission	Het schrijven met een kapot potlood is nutteloos.
Literal translation	Het is puntloos om met een kapot potlood te schrijven.
Transposition	Het is niet onhandig om met een kapotlood te schrijven.

Both omission and literal translation get across the message, with omission completely neglecting the pun. Literal translation does incorporate a pun in their translation, but it can look rather unnatural to a Dutch audience. since *puntloos* is not a word that is much used in that language. They rather use *nutteloos*, which was chosen by the omission strategy. The transposition strategy incorporates the pun, combining the Dutch words *kapot* (‘broken’) and *potlood* (‘pencil’).

2.3.2 Homophones

These types of puns revolve around words or phrases that have an identical sound, but different spelling. This can be seen in the following example:

The guy whose left side was cut off is *all right* now.

The pun plays on the words ‘alright’, which is spelt slightly different from the version used here, referring to the right side of his body. The following translations can be produced:

Omission	Het gaat goed met de gast wiens linkerkant was afgehakt.
Literal translation	De gast waarvan z’n linkerkant was afgehakt is nu volledig rechts.
Transposition	De gast waarvan z’n linkerkant was afgehakt is nu op het rechte pad.

Here, the omission strategy gets across the message but completely neglects the pun. Literal translation also seems to ignore the pun and also lacks to get across the message, that the guy is alright. Transposition gets across the message, also incorporating the pun. It uses *op het rechte pad* (‘on the right track’) as a play on words with *rechter* (‘right side’).

2.3.3 Homographs

These types of puns revolve around words or phrases that have an identical spelling, but a different sound. This can be seen in the following example:

The *bass* is the most musical fish in the sea.

The pun plays on the word ‘bass’, which can be both a fish (pronounced: *bæs*, as in ‘man’) or a musical instrument (pronounced: *beɪs*, as in ‘face’). The following translations can be produced:

Omission	De baars is de meest muzikale vis in de zee.
Literal translation	De bas is de meest muzikale vis in de zee.
Transposition	Het is bijna barbaars hoe goed deze vis muziek kan spelen.

The omission strategy gets across the message but is oblivious to the pun. The literal translation is very strange because it is translated too literally. The translation could also replace *bas* with *baars* to make it more comprehensive. Transposition rearranges the entire sentence, including the pun, but slightly changes the meaning of the sentence.

2.3.4 Paronyms

These types of puns revolve around words and phrases that slightly differ in spelling and sound. This can be seen in the following example:

People who enjoy grammar have a lot of *comma sense*.

The pun uses the phrase ‘comma sense’ because grammaticians know a lot about commas, which sounds and looks like the phrase ‘common sense’. The following translations can be produced:

Omission	Mensen die van grammatica houden, hebben een gezond verstand.
Literal translation	Mensen die van grammatica houden, hebben veel verstand van komma’s.
Transposition	Mensen die van grammatica houden, hebben een punt.

Omission gets across the message but neglects the pun. Literal translation neglects both the pun and the meaning of the original sentence. Transposition incorporates the pun, using *punt*, which is a grammatical element. It does, however, slightly change the meaning of the sentence.

The main purpose of subtitles is to ensure that the target audience can understand a humorous instance without too much effort, meaning that they have to grasp it when first encountering it. Puns, or wordplay, are an element of speech which will not always be understood by the entire audience because it requires some form of linguistic skills. Thus, to ensure that the vast majority of viewers comprehend it, the subtitler will often choose to omit the humorous instance, for the sake of their understanding. This is not beneficial for the enjoyment of the fragment, since the part of the sentence that brings joy is omitted. Thus, as shown in the examples, subtitlers can also opt for a more creative option, which might slightly alter the meaning of the sentence, but might also be beneficial to the audience's enjoyment. It is, however, not always possible to incorporate this in the subtitles, either because there is no possible creative translation, or because there is no space or time for the solution. It also depends on the complexity of the pun, since more difficult puns require more difficult solutions. If these more creative solutions are indeed what the audience experiences as more enjoyable, will be assessed and analysed further on in this thesis.

2.4 Viewers' Reception of AVT

It is important to consider previous publications on the viewers' reception of AVT. As mentioned before, there has not yet been much research on the reception of humour in AVT, especially not in the language pair used for this study. This section will discuss the previous publications, making a distinction between the reception of AVT as a broad field of study and the reception of humour in subtitles, the area of research this thesis is concerned with. It will discuss the conclusions that were drawn from these studies, and if they can be beneficial for this study.

2.4.1 A Working Definition of Reception in Translation Studies: The Three R's

First, it is important to define the concept of reception, and why it is important to conduct such studies. Its importance is summarised by Gambier. He states that "very few studies have dealt with the issue of reception in screen translation, and even fewer have looked at it empirically, even though we continually make reference to readers, viewers, consumers, users, etc." (2003: 184). These viewers, according to Gambier, are always present but rarely directly addressed (2003: 184). They are the primary source of subtitle consumption and should be taken into account by the subtitlers when producing their subtitles. This lack of direct contact between the subtitler and the addressee makes it more difficult for subtitlers to cater to the audience's needs. It is therefore important that reception studies are conducted regularly, to increase the subtitlers' awareness of audiences' preferences. This can be done by studying the viewers' viewing habits, but also by analysing their preferences concerning specific elements. The latter is what this thesis wants to uncover.

For reception, there have been several definitions and explanations in Translation Studies that could potentially work for the study of reception in AVT, and would emphasise their importance. Brems and Pinto state that reception studies have in recent years shifted their focus from the text to the audience. Their bottom line is: “A text has no meaning without the contribution of the reader.” (2013: 142). This is also true for AVT, where the audience is the consumer of the subtitles, and should therefore be considered when producing them. This shift can also be seen in AVT, where the preference of the audience has been researched, mostly with consideration to its technicalities, for instance viewing speed and subtitle placement. This wider emphasis on the target, both its culture and its audience, has resulted in reception studies becoming a more primary form of research in Translation Studies.

For their working definition, Gambier and Di Giovanni (2018) propose three types of receptions that can be differentiated, their ‘three Rs’. They believe that the term ‘reception’ should be clarified so that a researcher can consider the differences (2018: 56). They propose the following types (2018: 57):

- *Response*, which mostly focuses on the legibility of subtitles, mostly in combination with the visual aspect. This concerns the technicalities, i.e., viewing speed and subtitle placement, and how viewers watch the subtitles (do they read it word-for-word, and do they even acknowledge the subtitles);
- *Reaction*, which is the type of reception that focuses mainly on the comprehension of the audience, i.e., to what extent they understand the event with the help of the subtitles. This part will be briefly assessed in the questionnaire to be certain that the participants can properly understand the excerpts;
- *Repercussion*, which focuses mainly on the viewers’ preferences, which is also the main focus of this study. This can be either specific to certain elements, such as humour or culture-specific elements, or the technicalities, e.g., if viewers prefer a higher viewing speed or a lower one.

Because the first R, ‘response’, has been a broad topic of research in AVT, and because streaming services have parameters that the subtitler has to comply with, this will not be assessed in this study. However, it will be briefly discussed further on in this section, to give clarity about this preference, and how the ideal technicalities have been arranged. This thesis will see reception studies as a way in which the researcher can investigate the audience’s preferences concerning a certain topic, in this case, the subtitling of puns. It focuses mainly on the last R, ‘repercussion’, while combining this with the audience’s ‘reaction’ to ensure that they are competent in analysing the chosen fragments.

2.4.2 Reception in AVT: Previous Findings

This section discusses previous findings on the reception of AVT, specifically subtitling. It includes publications that focus on the audience’s preferences concerning its technicalities, since that is the most-researched topic in AVT-reception studies. These quantitative reception studies form the basis of the subtitler’s subtitling process since they have to adapt to their audience’s preferences. This section also discusses the qualitative reception studies, and the audience’s preferences regarding humour-specific subtitles.

Quantitative Reception Studies: Preferred Parameters

As mentioned before, reception studies are principal in assessing the viewers' preferences, and therefore the parameters that subtitlers should abide by. This has only recently become a topic of research, mainly due to the previous lack of interest in this field of study, mostly because of its time-consuming and costly content, and the lack of technical equipment to accurately assert what the viewers want (Nikolić, 2018: 182). When it *is* researched quantitatively, the most-used technological instrument is eye-tracking, where the point of gaze, the point where someone is looking, or the motion of the eyes is measured (Nikolić, 2018: 186). This instrument is mostly used to establish the optimal subtitle presentation for the target audience, which includes viewing speed and the placement of the subtitles onscreen (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón, 2016). It is important to frequently assert these parameters, since the audience's comprehension will change regularly, mostly due to technological developments, and how viewers consume audiovisual media. This can mostly be attributed to streaming services, which are designed to create a binge-watching environment, which unconsciously 'trains' its viewers to watch subtitles at higher speeds (Viens & Farrar, 2021). Szarkowska even goes as far as saying that the reception studies that have been conducted a few years ago are now obsolete, and thus the need for new reception studies is urgent (2016: 3). It is thus difficult to propose a unanimous parameter when discussing viewing speed, since different audiences require different criteria. The viewing speed for viewers that use streaming services, the format that this thesis is concerned with, can be established at around 20 cps, which is significantly higher than the maximum viewing speed proposed for other formats, which is around 17 cps. In her study, where she compared fragments using a viewing speed of 12 cps and one of 20 cps, Szarkowska concluded that experienced viewers do not mind a higher viewing speed, and do not require more effort in processing the subtitles (2016: 27). This development in viewing speed can also be beneficial for subtitlers since the temporally constrained environment in which they have to operate will allow them to use more extensive subtitles than previously. Reception studies on this technicality are thus important to conduct regularly, and for different formats, since the experience of audiences, and their preferences, will change significantly from one period to another.

One parameter that most professional subtitling agencies agree upon is the positioning of the subtitles: either at the bottom or, when it overlaps with crucial textual information, at the top of the screen. These parts of the screen usually contain less action and important information for the viewers to comprehend (Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2007: 82). Another pivotal reason for this placement is the need for the subtitler's invisibility. A viewer should not notice the subtitles and read them almost unconsciously. Thus, the subtitler's task, according to Díaz Cintas and Remael is "to provide a translation that is written *a posteriori* on the original programme, flashes in and out at the bottom of the screen, but pretends not to be there" (2007: 40). Although this parameter is still abided by most professional authorities, there seems to be a change in the audience's preference regarding subtitle placement. However, only a limited quantity of research has been conducted concerning this parameter, since it is something that has not changed since the introduction of subtitles. Although there are no

technical limitations to producing more creative subtitles (Fox, 2018: 84), the placement of subtitles seems to stay true to its obsolete bottom positioning. In her study on integrated subtitles, which researched the comprehension of subtitles whose placement changed according to the moving images onscreen, Fox concluded that the participants enjoyed integrated titles, and “perceived a higher information intake and increased entertainment value” (2018: 193), compared to their experience with traditional subtitles. Because professional subtitling still preserves a somewhat outdated positioning, only non-professional fansubbing seems to diverge from this standard. The reception studies on this topic are limited, and it is thus expected that a transition in subtitle placement will not soon be incorporated into professional subtitling. It is thus important, as with reception studies on viewing speed, that the audience’s preferences regarding this parameter are researched regularly to acquire a better understanding of their desire.

On a broad scale, it can be said that the current parameters, as applied by streaming services, might be outdated. However, this can only be inferred when the number of reception studies regarding the technicalities of subtitling is increased, to get a better indication of the audience’s preferences. When more studies show an aberrant preference from their target audience, professional subtitling might change its parameters to increase their enjoyment.

Qualitative Reception Studies: Subtitles as a Transfer of Humour

It is expected that target viewers want to have a similar experience as those who understand the source without needing any subtitling. How this experience can be reproduced can vary between different types of films and or series. For instance, documentaries’ main focus is to convey information, romantic dramas will focus more on character development, and comedy films and/or series want to convey its humorous intentions. These differences are important to consider when addressing the target viewer, because we assume that they expect a certain transfer from the source into the subtitles. For this thesis, the transfer of humour in comedy series is the main focus point.

As mentioned in the section on humour, it is difficult to define the term, because people will have different notions as to what they deem to be funny. Hempelmann (2014) summarizes this difficulty in one sentence, saying that “a recipient may have the competence to identify a stimulus as potentially humorous but, because of some other factor, not appreciate the stimulus and ascribe funniness to it” (630). That is also why this thesis uses the terms ‘enjoyable/enjoyment’ rather than ‘funny/funniness’, because there are too many variables that decide whether or not an audience believes an instance to be funny. It also depends on the film and/or series the target viewer watches. If they watch something that is intended to be funny, in the case of this thesis a sitcom, they expect it to be funny because there is a stimulus that tells the audience that an instance is supposed to be funny, for instance a laugh track. They can feel as if they miss out on the enjoyment that a source audience *does* encounter. However, this does not mean that a target and source audience should be treated the same. What a source audience believes to be enjoyable can be utterly unenjoyable to a target audience, and vice versa. The correct use of

translation strategies that fit a certain culture can benefit the audience's enjoyment. To assert which strategy is most likely to achieve this enjoyment, reception studies should be conducted.

What is important to consider when analysing the audience's reception of humour is that enjoyment is closely linked to understanding. Schauffler mentions this in her study where she discusses the subtitling of wordplay. She states that the subtitler is usually torn between two choices: conveying the information needed to understand the scene, or conveying the humour, but not fully transferring the information (2015: 230). This is closely connected to the study conducted by Ibharrim et al. (2019), where they researched the subtitling of humour in the film *Deadpool*. They found that there is indeed a correlation between the two, stating that when a viewer understands a humorous instance, the type of humour being unimportant, they will automatically enjoy the humorous instance more (2019: 1290). Here, the subtitler's main task is to make their subtitles comprehensive, for them to be enjoyed by their target audience. There is a dilemma here, because the subtitler cannot always combine the two and has to choose an option that is most desirable for them, and which they believe is most desirable for their target audience. It is difficult to find a clear-cut solution for this dilemma, since the subtitler can only do so much in the constrained environment in which they have to operate. To assist the subtitler in their decision-making, it is important to conduct reception studies that research the audience's preferences, for this is a concept that is still largely unresearched in AVT.

However, there are publications that focus on the translation of audiovisual humour. Fuentes Luque is one of the scholars who believes that very few publications focus on the reception of humour in AVT, and mainly put their focus on theoretical or practical analyses (2003: 293). In his study, he conducts empirical research studying the reception of AV-translated humour. He did this by observing participants' reactions to a series of broadly humorous elements (2003: 296). One of the main conclusions he draws from his study, is that extreme literal translation, and thus believing that source and target viewers should be treated equally in terms of enjoyment, results in a distorted message. What should be used "is a more appealing array of colloquial registers typical of authentic contexts" (2003: 304). When subtitling humour, it is thus important to consider what the target audience expects, and find a fitting strategy. Which strategies can be best used, is still a topic of study that has been neglected by scholars, but this thesis *will* research.

On the one hand, it is evident what an audience expects from the translation of humorous instances in subtitling. They want to have a similar (humorous) experience as the source audience, and it is the subtitler's task to achieve that. Nevertheless, how this can be achieved, which strategies can be used by the subtitlers and what the audience's preferences are in specific genres of films and series remains rather unknown. This thesis seeks to form a basis for these types of reception studies, whereby the subtitler can choose their strategy more specifically to cater to the audience's preferences.

What can be said from previous publications is that the reception of subtitles is an area of study that has not yet been sufficiently researched. In recent years it has gained more attention from translation

scholars, but it is still meagre compared to other studies on AVT. When reception studies are conducted more frequently, and the preferences of the target audience can be understood more precisely, it can be beneficial for the subtitling process. There is especially a lack of qualitative reception studies, which can assist the subtitler in their subtitling process, resulting in subtitles that are more enjoyed by the target audience. This thesis wants to compose a proposal that can be used in future reception studies, and can contribute to a more efficient and suitable subtitling process.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter will explain in detail how this research has been set up and how it has been conducted. It will be divided into four sections, discussing the questionnaire, the fragments and strategies, the analysis and the participants. These different sections will be explained to justify the choices made by the author of this thesis. The study was designed to answer the research question ‘How does a Dutch audience receive subtitled puns in terms of enjoyment?’. The hypothesis, that the target audience will experience the subtitles that convey a more elaborate and creative sense of the source dialogue as more enjoyable than subtitles that omit them or translate them literally, will be either confirmed or not.

3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was conducted between the 30th of June and the 7th of August. The author has chosen this instrument of data collection to swiftly and precisely gather information from a diverse group of people. This was chosen rather than an interview, because this enabled the author to reach a larger quantity of people in a shorter period of time.

As with any study academic study, confidentiality is key. The participants were asked to answer questions about the purpose of the study and their understanding of their anonymity. By agreeing with these statements, they were guaranteed that their data will only be used for this study, and that their identity and personal data will not be revealed.

The questionnaire was conducted using Qualtrics. This tool allows for a clear set-up of questions, meaning that the participants will have no trouble answering them. There were a total of six sections with different multiple-choice and open questions. The first section concerned the background questions, asking the participants about their age, gender, educational level, and English and Dutch competence (5 questions). The second section asked about the participants’ viewing habits (7 questions). This section included questions about their use of subtitles and different genres of films and/or series they are most likely to watch. The third section asked the participants to assess a selection of puns (4 questions), drawing on the categories proposed by Delabastita (1996). Using short example sentences, as depicted below in Figure 1, the participants were asked to select the part of the sentence that represented a pun. It can therefore be said that if the participant correctly answers those questions, that they comprehend the puns and can accurately assess them.

Waar zit de woordspeling in de volgende zin: **De gevangene luisterde geboeid naar de rechter.**

- De gevangene
- Luisterde geboeid
- Naar de rechter
- Geen idee

Waar zit de woordspeling in de volgende zin: **De introvert, die niet tegen pijn kan, leidt niet graag.**

- De introvert
- Die niet tegen pijn kan
- Leidt niet graag
- Geen idee

Figure 1: Screenshot of questions 17 (homonym: *Where is the pun in the following sentence: **De gevangene luisterde geboeid naar de rechter***) and 18 (homophone: *Where is the pun in the following sentence: **De introvert, die niet tegen pijn kan, leidt niet graag***), illustrating the questions regarding the participants' understanding of puns.

The fourth section assessed the participants' interpretation of subtitles (6 questions). After watching a short fragment, from episode 1 of season 8 of the American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*, without any prior knowledge of the questions, the participants were asked to answer them to assert if they were able to interpret basic information from the subtitles. The questions asked the participants the colour of the subtitles, where they were positioned and other rudimentary questions about the fragment, as depicted below in Figure 2.

Naar welk land verhuisde Robin volgens de ondertiteling?

- Argentinië
- Brazilië
- Namibië
- Kaapverdië
- Een ander land, namelijk...

Wat vond Barney **dumb** volgens de ondertiteling?

- Dat hij meedeed aan Prijzenslag
- Dat Robin verhuisde
- Dat Ted een meisje niet kuste
- Dat Ted een tattoo nam

Figure 2: Screenshot of questions 25 (*To which country did Robin move, according to the subtitles?*) and 26 (*What did Barney describe as **dumb**, according to the subtitles?*), illustrating basic questions about the excerpt shown.

The fifth and final section was divided into four parts, consisting of 27 questions in total. The sections consist of general questions about their understanding of the scene and their enjoyment, but also

fragment-specific questions to assert if they fully understood the fragments and what their preferences were. Examples of both these types of questions are depicted below in Figure 3.

De ondertiteling was eenvoudig te lezen.

Helemaal mee eens

Mee eens

Neutraal

Mee oneens

Helemaal mee oneens

Ik vond dit fragment grappig als ik keek naar de ondertiteling.

Helemaal mee eens

Mee eens

Neutraal

Mee oneens

Helemaal mee eens

Waarom refereerde Lily toen ze het had over **an incredible journey**?

De film 'An Incredible Journey'

Dat het verhuizen een ongelooflijke reis was

Dat het leven een ongelooflijke reis is

Dit wordt niet duidelijk in de ondertiteling

Anders, namelijk...

Wat bedoelde Marshall met **How did you whisk her off her feet**?

Hij wil weten waarom Scooby snorharen heeft

Hij wil weten hoe Scooby Robin aan de lijn heeft gekregen

Hij wil weten hoe Scooby en Robin elkaar hebben ontmoet

Dit wordt niet duidelijk in de ondertiteling

Anders, namelijk...

Figure 3: Screenshots of general (left) and fragment-specific questions (right) 28, 29, 31 and 32. Left: *The questions were easy to read and I thought this fragment was enjoyable by looking at the subtitles.* Right: *What did Lily refer to when she was talking about **an incredible journey**? and What did Marshall mean with **How did you whisk her off her feet**?*

By asking these questions, it is expected that there will be a favour for one of the strategies that is used to translate the fragments. From the answers to all of these questions, results will be analysed and possibly categorised if there is a trend between their assessment and the background questions.

3.2 Fragments and strategies

For this study, fragments from the American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother* (2005-2014, created by Craig Thomas and Carter Bays) were selected. This sitcom revolves around its protagonist Ted, and his confidantes Barney, Marshall, Lily, and Robin, who tells his kids the story of how he met their mother. It can be categorised as a comedy series, and thus lends itself to the topic this thesis is concerned with. A total of four fragments were chosen from different episodes, which will be explained below. The episodes that were chosen are respectively episode 18 from season 6, episodes 1 and 3 from season 4, episode 6 from season 2 and episode 22 from season 9. The chosen fragments range in length, from 0:50 minutes to 1:56 minutes. The fragments do not only show the puns, the parts the participants are asked to assess, but also some footage to help them better understand their context. Each of the fragments emphasises a different strategy. The strategies used are omission, literal translation, and transposition. This categorisation, as mentioned in the Literature Review, is proposed by Díaz Cintas and Remael (2021: 207-217). The fragments express several puns, as categorised by Delabastita (1996: 128), which consist of homonyms, homophones, homographs and paronyms. The four fragments, their content and some examples of the puns will be described briefly.

The first fragment sees all of the characters discussing the behaviour of Robin's boyfriend Scooby, who, in their eyes, resembles a dog. They express this by using homonyms (for example 'shots' as in 'a small measure or serving of liquor' and 'vaccination for a dog', which is omitted in the Dutch subtitles) and homophones (for example 'paws/pause' and 'tail/tale', which are both omitted in the Dutch subtitles). The second fragment sees Robin presenting the news, using expressive paronyms (for example 'tooth/truth', translated in the Dutch subtitles as *tanden*, and 'molar bear/polar bear', translated in the Dutch subtitles as *melkbeer*) and a homonym ('scoop' as in 'a large ladle of ice cream' or 'information especially of immediate interest', translated in the Dutch subtitles as *schep*), which are very literally translated in the subtitles. The third fragment sees three of the main characters discussing Ted's pesky boss, using sexual homonyms (for example 'hard on him' as in 'difficult for him' and 'having an erection', translated in the Dutch subtitles as *dat hij stijfjes is*) to express his behaviour. These are translated using the substitution strategy. The final fragment, where three of the characters discuss Barney's wedding vows, uses a combination of the abovementioned strategies. Here the characters use paronyms (for example 'VowerPoint/PowerPoint', translated in the Dutch subtitles as *Geloftenpoint-presentatie* and 'involuntary/involuntary', translated in the Dutch subtitles as *geloft dat het vanzelf gaat*) to express their thoughts. The chosen subtitles were produced by the subtitlers of Disney. The fragments were captured using a screen-recording tool. Nothing was changed about the subtitles, and the participants were shown them within the questionnaire.

There was one main benchmark that was used to select the abovementioned fragments: the presence of the laugh track. *How I Met Your Mother*, unlike many other American sitcoms, was not recorded in front of a live studio audience. This means that it was included afterwards, recorded from people who watched the episodes at a later moment in time (Becker, 2008: 6). In this way, the editor could choose when to add the laugh track after the episode had already been recorded. This is thus a good indicator of when a scene was supposed to be 'funny', at least according to the editor and the writers of the shows. The presence of the laugh track is used in this study to pick the humorous instances. To deduct the number of fragments, the author then selected those where puns were mostly represented.

3.3 Analysis

After the study has been conducted, and the results have been gathered, they will be analysed. The results will be exported through Qualtrics, whereby a clear picture of the different answers given by the participants can be obtained. This quantitative data, e.g., the number of participants who gave a certain answer to a certain question will then be analysed qualitatively. This will be done by looking at the open questions that were answered by the participants, which asked them to name instances they enjoyed in the fragments. These instances correspond with the different strategies that were used by the subtitler, which means that they can be categorised. By analysing this, a conclusion can be drawn as to which of the strategies is most enjoyed by the participants, and which is least enjoyed. A final conclusion will

discuss if the most enjoyed strategy is also the most feasible one for subtitlers, and if the subtitling process can and should be altered or not.

By collecting and analysing the data, the hypothesis will either be confirmed or not, and the research question will be answered. Depending on the results, an explanation will be given as to why certain strategies are most enjoyed by the audience and if there is anything that can be changed in the subtitling process. If a fitting recommendation can be compiled that can assist subtitlers in their profession, and cause for a better viewing experience amongst the target audience, this will be presented.

3.4 Participants

The participants in this study were selected using several requirements. Their native language had to be Dutch, since the subtitles they had to assess are in this language as well. They also had to indicate that they watch films and/or series with subtitles, be it in Dutch or in English. By asking these questions, it can be said that they are used to subtitles and that they will be able to read and assess the fragments shown to them in the questionnaire. This competence will also be further asserted, as mentioned above, by asking them certain questions about subtitles and puns. If the participants do not meet these requirements, they are excluded from the study. Most important is that their anonymity and personal data will always be guaranteed, as mentioned in the Questionnaire-section of this chapter. The first questions they have to answer make sure that the participants understand the purpose of the study and that their anonymity will be guaranteed. If they do not agree with these statements, they will not be able to advance in the questionnaire.

A total of 35 participants answered this questionnaire. They were all native speakers of Dutch with different ages, genders, and educational backgrounds, which makes it a diverse group of people. Participants ranged from 19- to 60-year-olds. It is expected that this will not pose any difficulties for the assessment of the fragments and the puns, since understanding of them is also incorporated in the questionnaire. If there is a clear difference in the way older and younger participants assess the puns, this will be incorporated in the analysis.

Genderwise, there were 14 male participants and 21 female participants. Again, it is not expected that there will be a difference in the assessment between genders, but when this will be discerned from the analysis, it will be discussed.

Educational levels are more carefully controlled, because it can be expected that people with a higher educational level, and therefore an expected higher assessment and reading competence, comprehend the subtitled language better than those with a lower educational level. If this expected difference is accurate, it will be discussed in the analysis.

Overall, it is expected that the background questions do not pose many differences in the assessment of the puns in the fragments.

4. ANALYSIS

For this study, a questionnaire among a total of 35 Dutch-speaking respondents was conducted, asking them a variety of questions to answer the research question: ‘How does a Dutch audience receive subtitled puns in terms of enjoyment?’. This chapter will be divided into five sections: the participant’s profile, viewing habits, understanding of puns, understanding of subtitles and the assessment of the subtitled puns. Questions and answers that the author of this thesis deemed more important for the justification of the conclusion of this thesis, will be analysed and discussed in more depth. This will mostly concern questions affiliated with the final section, where the respondents were asked to assess four different fragments.

4.1 Participants’ Profile

For this study, a total of 35 respondents filled out a questionnaire, the questions and answers to which will be discussed in this analysis. The questions were asked in Dutch, because the questionnaire was conducted amongst a group of Dutch-speaking respondents, and are translated by the author of this thesis when mentioned in this chapter. Of these respondents, 14 identified as male and 21 as female, as can be seen in Table 1.

As what gender do you identify?	
Male	14
Female	21
Non-binary	0
Rather not say	0

Table 1: Participants’ gender identification

However, for this study there was no pronounced difference between the participants who identified as male and those who identified as female. Furthermore, the respondents were asked about their age, with the majority of respondents belonging to the age group of 19-30. It was already expected by the author of this thesis that the majority of respondents would be relatively young, since that is the age group expected to be most interested in audiovisual productions. The results of this question can be seen in Table 2.

What is your age?	
Younger than 18	0
19-30	21
31-40	1
41-50	3
51-60	8
61 or older	2

Table 2: Participants’ age groups

Again, there was no pronounced difference between the assessments of the different age groups. The fluency of languages, principally the languages important for this study (English and Dutch) were assessed. This was first done by asking the participants “Which language/languages do you speak fluently?”, the answers to this can be seen in Table 3.

Which language/languages do you speak fluently?	
Dutch	35
English	27
French	2
German	5
Spanish	1
Portuguese	0
<i>Other, viz. Italian</i>	1
<i>Other, viz. Vietnamese</i>	1

Table 3: Fluency of languages

The fluency of the languages this study is concerned with is most important here. Because of that, a follow-up question was asked about their knowledge of these two languages, the results of which can be seen in Tables 4 and 5.

How is your knowledge of the English language?	
100	3
97	2
91	1
90	3
88	1
85	3
81	1
80	4
75	4
73	1
72	1
70	3
69	1
65	1
61	1
60	1
57	1
50	1
40	1
28	1

Table 4: Knowledge of the English language

How is your knowledge of the Dutch language?	
100	21
95	4
92	1
90	2
85	1
82	1
80	3
70	2

Table 5: Knowledge of the Dutch language

The numbers in these tables are scores given on a scale from 1 to 100. As shown, all participants had an above-average knowledge (70 out of 100 or higher) of the Dutch language, and are thus expected to be able to understand the subtitles and assess them accordingly. For English, the scores were slightly lower, with 27 respondents saying their knowledge of the English language was above-average (again, 70 out of 100 or higher), which corresponds to the answers of the previous question. Because of these answers, it is expected that the majority of the participants is able to assess where humorous instances are present in the source, and where those instances should appear in the Dutch subtitles. Those who assessed their knowledge of the English language as average or below-average (69 out of a 100 or lower) are able to assess this with the use of the laugh track, as discussed by Becker (2008).

The last question of this section asked the participants about their level of education, by asking them about their highest completed level of education, the answers to which can be seen in Table 6.

What is your highest level of education?	
Primary education	0
Secondary education	4
MBO (senior secondary vocational education)	9
HBO Bachelor (higher professional education)	10
WO Bachelor (university)	7
WO Master (university)	4
PhD or higher	1

Table 6: Participants' level of education

As with the answers to the questions about the participants' gender and age, there was no pronounced difference between the participants' assessment of the puns. Therefore, the participants' answers in the following sections will not be analysed with reference to the abovementioned answers.

4.2 Viewing Habits

In this section, the participants were asked about their viewing habits. These questions were inquired to assert if the participants' habits would be sufficient to fill out the remainder of the questionnaire. If the participants had no experience in watching films and/or series with subtitles, the author of this thesis deemed them inadequate for this study, since they are not the addressed target audience. One of the most vital questions in this section was: "What type of subtitling do you mostly use when watching a film and/or series?". The answer to this multiple-choice question can be seen in Table 7.

What type of subtitling do you mostly use when watching a film and/or series?	
Subtitling in my native language (for example Dutch)	22
Subtitling in the source language (for example English)	12
I watch films and/or series without subtitles	1
I watch films and/or series with dubbing in my native language	0
I do not watch any films and/or series	0

Table 7: Participants' usage of subtitling and/or dubbing

Here, one participant answered that they do not use subtitles when watching a film and/or series. For this reason, that participant was excluded from this study, which means that the remainder of the analysis will include the answers of 34 participants. Those participants indicated that they use some type of subtitling when watching films and/or series, be it interlingual (22) or intralingual (12). This is an indication that they have experience with subtitling, and are thus expected to be adequate to understand and assess the subtitles presented to them in the fragments.

A follow-up question about the participants' viewing habits asked how often they watch films and/or series with any type of subtitling. The frequency in which they chose certain answers from this multiple choice question can be seen in Table 8.

How often do you watch films and/or series with subtitles?	
Daily	10
4-6 times per week	9
1-3 times per week	10
Less than once per week	5
Never	0

Table 8: Frequency of subtitle usage

This shows that the vast majority of respondents, 29 out of 34, use subtitles on a regular basis. Only 5 participants answered that they watch films and/or series with subtitling less than once a week, while none of the participants answered that they never use any type of subtitling, which is consistent with the previous question. Because of these answers, the author of this thesis felt no need to exclude anyone from the study. It is positive that all of the remaining participants have at least some experience in perceiving subtitles, and are thus expected to be able to comprehend and assess the fragments, and their accompanying subtitles, for this study.

Furthermore, participants were asked through which medium they watch films and/or series, to assess if the majority of them is familiar with the subtitling used in this study, i.e., subtitles from a streaming platform. The answers to this can be seen in Table 9. Notice that the frequency of answers given per option is higher than 34, since the participants were able to choose multiple options.

Through which medium do you mostly watch films and/or series?	
Streaming services (for example Netflix, Disney+)	29
Television	13
YouTube	10

Table 9: Choice of mediums

The vast majority of participants, 29 out of 34, answered that they use streaming services as a medium through which they consume audiovisual media. Thus, they are expected to be familiar with the subtitles provided by the services, which tend to have a higher viewing speed, as concluded by Szarkowska and Bogucka (2019). This does not necessarily mean that those who do not watch films and/or series through these services will have trouble understanding and assessing faster-paced subtitles, especially when they can revisit the fragments when they feel the need to.

Two other questions were asked to investigate if other variables had any influence on the way in which the participants assessed the fragments. This was also mentioned when discussing the different age groups, genders and educational levels. The first question asked the participants “Which genre(s) do you mostly watch?”. Here, they were able to choose from a series of pre-determined multiple-choice answers, devised by the author of this thesis, or fill in their own most-watched genre(s). If they wished, they could select multiple answers, which can be seen in Table 10.

Which genre(s) do you mostly watch? You can select multiple answers.	
Action	23
Documentary	21
Drama	18
Horror	5
Comedy	24
News	10
Reality	11
Romance	11
Sports	15
<i>Other, viz. Science fiction</i>	2
<i>Other, viz. Vlogs</i>	1

Table 10: Most-watched genres

What can be drawn from this table, is that most participants chose the comedy genre as one of their most-watched genres. Here, the question arose if those who did not select this genre assessed the fragments differently than those who did. However, there was no pronounced pattern in the answers of those who watch comedy films and/or series and those who do not. Therefore, the answers from this questions will not be analysed any further.

The second question asked the participants “Are you familiar with the show *How I Met Your Mother?*”. This was asked to determine if those who were familiar with the show, and thus are expected

to be familiar with its humour, might assess the fragments differently from those who were unfamiliar with the show. The answers to this multiple-choice question can be seen in Table 11.

Are you familiar with the show <i>How I Met Your Mother</i>?	
Yes, I have watched every episode	11
Yes, I have watched many episodes	6
Yes, I watch it every now and then	7
No, I have never watched it, but I have heard about it	7
No, I have never watched it and I have never heard about it	2
<i>Other, viz.</i> I have watched all of the episodes multiple times	1

Table 11: Familiarity with *How I Met Your Mother*

Here, a majority of participants, 25 out of 34, answered that they have watched the series. They are therefore expected to be familiar with the types of humour presented in the series, while the others, who indicated that they have not watched the series, are expected to be unfamiliar with the humour. However, there was again no pronounced difference in answers between these two groups, and therefore the answers to this question will also not be analysed any further.

The two remaining questions of this section asked the participants about the necessity and importance of subtitling. They were more specifically asked “If there were no subtitles, would you still watch films and/or series that are not in your native language?” and “What is your overall opinion on subtitling?”. The answers to these questions can be seen in Tables 12 and 13.

If there were no subtitles, would you still watch films and/or series that are not in your native language?	
Yes, but only in English	29
Yes, both in English as well as in other foreign languages	3
No	2

Table 12: Importance of subtitling for foreign films and/or series

What is your overall opinion on subtitling?	
Very necessary	6
Necessary	21
Neutral	7
Unnecessary	0
Very unnecessary	0

Table 13: Overall importance of subtitling

These questions do not have a direct correlation with the study presented in this thesis. However, it does show the importance of subtitling, and thus also the need for proper subtitles. These can be produced by studying the audience’s preferences, as will be done in this thesis.

Overall, this section serves as a discussion of the participants viewing habits and their view on the importance of subtitling. By this, one of the participants was excluded from the remainder of this study, and it was determined that there are no other variables to be considered when analysing the results. Furthermore, it showed the importance of subtitling, and thus the need for reception studies to explore the preferences of the target audience.

4.3 Understanding the Puns

For this study, it is important that respondents can recognise and understand the puns that are present in the fragments. If they are unable to correctly identify them, they might also be unable to properly assess them. For this reason, this questionnaire presented four different puns, devised by the author of this thesis, each corresponding with one of the puns discussed by Delabastita (1996). As mentioned before, these were homonyms, homophones, homographs and paronyms. From these types of puns, only homographs did not appear in the chosen fragments, but this type of pun was still chosen to evaluate if participants were able to recognise it. In the fragments that were asserted by the participants, there were 15 instances of homonyms, 5 instances of homophones and 8 instances of paronyms. The exact instances can be seen in Table 14.

Homonyms	Homophones	Paronyms
Shots	Pause (paws)	Tooth
Fetching	Tale (tail)	Derails
Playful	Whisk her (whisker)	Molar bear
Sit	Flee (flea)	Vow-za
Vetted	Rough (ruff)	VowerPoint presentation
Shed		Vow it's done
Hounding		Vow dare you!
Heel		Invowluntary
Incredible journey		
Labrador		
Scoop		
Testy		
Crotchety		
Hard on him		
Blow it		

Table 14: Different types of puns in the fragments

The corresponding fragments can be found in the Appendix, where the English source text and the Dutch subtitles are presented.

The difficulty of the puns devised for this section are principally identical and are expected to be understood by an audience that has sufficient knowledge of the Dutch language, since this is also the language in which the participants have to assess the puns in the fragments. It was distinguished in the first section that all of the participants had an above-average knowledge of the Dutch language, and thus it is expected that they are able to correctly identify the puns. The question for each of the puns was the

same: “Where is the pun in the following sentence?”, followed by a sentence containing one pun and four multiple-choice answers. The specific questions and the accompanying answers can be seen in Tables 15, 16, 17 and 18. Here, the correct answer is highlighted in green.

Where is the pun in the following sentence: <i>De gevangene luisterde geboeid naar de rechter.</i>	
De gevangene	0
Luisterde geboeid	34
Naar de rechter	0
No idea	0

Table 15: Identifying the pun: homonym. Translation: ‘The prisoner listened carefully to the judge.’

Where is the pun in the following sentence: <i>De introvert, die niet tegen pijn kan, leidt niet graag.</i>	
De introvert	1
Die niet tegen pijn kan	0
Leidt niet graag	32
No idea	1

Table 16: Identifying the pun: homophone. Translation: ‘The introvert, who couldn’t stand pain, does not like to suffer.’

Where is the pun in the following sentence: <i>De gelovigen kwamen naar de spa voor een massagebed.</i>	
De gelovigen	0
Kwamen naar de spa	1
Voor een massagebed	31
No idea	2

Table 17: Identifying the pun: homograph. Translation: ‘The religious people came to the spa for a massage table/mass prayer.’

Where is the pun in the following sentence: <i>De praatgrage man maakte per ongeluk van conserveren z’n beroep.</i>	
De praatgrage man	0
Maakte per ongeluk	3
Van conserveren z’n beroep	21
No idea	10

Table 18: Identifying the pun: paronym. Translation: ‘The talkative man accidentally made conservation his profession.’

A total of 136 answers were given by the 34 respondents, of which 119 answers were correct, which is 87,5 per cent of the total answers. From this, it can be said that the participants will be able to correctly identify the puns, and assess them accordingly. To further assess the participants’ competence in understanding the fragments, an adjacent section of questions was asked. This consists of questions relating to a short fragment from *How I Met Your Mother*, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

4.4 Understanding the Subtitles

In this section, the participants were asked to answer a series of questions concerning one short fragment from the first episode of season 8 of *How I Met Your Mother*, the transcript and Dutch translation of which can be seen in the Appendix. Here, Barney explains the premise of the show to his girlfriend Quinn in 52 seconds, which results in a fast-paced dialogue. In this section, there were four multiple-choice questions and two open questions where the participants had to give a short answer. The respondents were asked to watch the fragment only once, and had no preliminary knowledge of the fragment or the accompanying questions. The questions from this section were asked to assess the participants' comprehension of subtitling and their awareness of its presence.

The first question was a straightforward one that asked the participants "Did you understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles?". The answers to this question can be seen in Table 19.

Did you understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles?	
Yes	29
No	5

Table 19: Understanding of subtitles

Here, 29 of the 34 respondents answered that they were able to understand the fragment with the use of subtitles. It is expected that the lack of understanding by the remaining participants was due to the fast-paced dialogue of this fragment. This might have made it more difficult to understand, because the subtitler had to omit many instances to adhere to the viewing specifications. It is expected by the author of this thesis that the participants can comprehend slower-paced dialogue more easily, especially when they can re-watch it when they feel the need to. The fragments they had to assess, which will be discussed in the upcoming section, contain this slower-paced dialogue.

The remaining questions focused more specifically on the fragment itself, and the participants' comprehension of it. Two of the questions were directed at the participants' awareness of the subtitles, asking them "Where were the subtitles positioned?" and "What was the colour of the subtitles?". The answers to these questions can be seen in Tables 20 and 21. As in the preceding section, answers that were answered correctly will be shown in green.

Where were the subtitles positioned?	
At the bottom	12
At the top	22
On the left	0
On the right	0

Table 20: Positioning of the subtitles

What was the colour of the subtitles?	
White	33
Blue	1

Table 21: Colour of the subtitles

Here, the majority of participants, 55 out of 68, was able to correctly identify the colour and placement of the subtitles in this fragment. It is expected that the remaining respondents falsely identified the positioning of the subtitles, because they are used to the subtitles being at the bottom of the screen. For the fragments that they had to assess, the subtitles *were* positioned there.

The remaining three questions asked about the content of the fragments. The answers and the accompanying answers can be seen in Tables 22, 23 and 24. Of these, only the question in Table 24 was an open question, the other two were multiple-choice. For the question in Table 24, partially correct answers will be shown in orange.

To which country did Robin move according to the subtitles?	
Argentina	7
Brazil	25
Namibia	0
Cape Verde	0
Another country, viz. No idea	2

Table 22: First fragment-specific question

What did Barney think was <i>dom</i> according to the subtitles?	
His participation in the Price Is Right	2
The fact that Robin moved	1
The fact that Ted didn't kiss a girl	27
The fact the Ted got a tattoo	4

Table 23: Second fragment-specific question

Besides the names of the main characters (Ted, Barney, Robin, Lily and Marshall), name three other names that appeared in the subtitles.	
No idea	15
Quinn, Stella, Nora, Kevin	1
Nora	3
Kevin	2
Quinn, Kevin, Victoria	1
Victoria	3
Kelly	1
Quinn, Nora, Olivia	1
Kevin, Nora, Victoria	4
Victoria, Don, Nora	1
Quinn, Victoria	1
Max, Kevin	1

Table 24: Third fragment-specific question

For these questions, 58 of the answers were correct, 11 were partially correct and the remaining 34 were incorrect. These incorrect questions mostly resulted from the question in Table 24, which was a fairly difficult one, also considering the participants were only allowed to watch the fragment once.

From the answers given by the participants, the author of this thesis expects that the respondents can both comprehend and assess the fragments and the accompanying subtitles they were shown for this

study. There were no participants where a negative pattern could be detected, i.e., there were no participants who only gave incorrect answers. If there are negative patterns in the following section, this will be discussed. The final section of this chapter will focus on the fragments, the accompanying subtitles and the participants' assessment thereof.

4.5 Assessing Subtitled Puns – The Fragments

As mentioned in the Methodology, Chapter 3 of this thesis, participants were asked to answer questions concerning four different fragments from the American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*. For each fragment, the participants were asked if they understood the fragment with the help of the subtitles and if the subtitles were easy to read. If the participants answered that they could understand the fragments, and that they could read the subtitles effortlessly, it was assumed by the author of this thesis that they were able to properly assess the fragments. Unusual answers, i.e., answers that had no relation to the fragments, given by participants who indicated that they were unable to comprehend the fragments, were eliminated from the analysis. For each fragment, the participants were also presented with the following statement: "I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles." Here, they had to choose between five multiple-choice answers: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. These answers were used in the final analysis to determine the participants' enjoyment of the different fragments. Additionally, each fragment contained a fragment-specific question, evaluating the participants' enjoyment.

The fragments that the participants were shown, were selected because they show different types of puns, which were translated by the subtitler of the series using the three different translation strategies this thesis is concerned with: omission, literal translation and transposition. The hypothesis, drawn from studies conducted by Fuentes Luque (2003), Schauffler (2005), Hempelmann (2014), and Ibharrim et al. (2019), is that viewers would experience most joy in fragments that were translated using a strategy that conveys an elaborate and creative sense of the source dialogue, in this case transposition. It is expected that omission results in the least enjoyable viewing experience, since the puns are omitted from the subtitles. In this section, the four fragments are investigated, and the viewers' responses are analysed. The English transcription and the Dutch translation of each fragment can be found in the Appendix.

The first fragment, henceforth named Fragment 1, contained a variety of puns that were mostly omitted by the subtitler. One of the reasons for this can be the subtitler's inability to find a fitting equivalent in the target language, which is a legitimate possibility considering that the subtitler did not have much freedom because of the types of puns incorporated in this fragment. It revolves around one of the recurring characters, Scooby, who the others think resembles a dog. Therefore, the subtitler was limited because it is assumed that the audience expects the translated puns to relate to dog-like characteristics. To ensure that there were no unusual answers, the statements "I was able to understand

the fragment with the help of the subtitles” and “The subtitles were easy to read” were presented to the participants, the answers to which can be seen in Tables 25 and 26.

I was able to understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	12
Agree	15
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	0

Table 25: Understanding of the subtitles in Fragment 1

The subtitles were easy to read.	
Strongly agree	7
Agree	22
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree	0

Table 26: Readability of the subtitles in Fragment 1

From these answers, it can be said that 5 of the participants did not fully understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles. The 3 participants that answered ‘disagree’ on the second question were also included in these 5 participants. Of these respondents, there was only one participant that gave an unusual answer that did not relate to the fragment. Therefore, their answers concerning this fragment were omitted from the analysis.

For this fragment, and the other three, a question was asked to evaluate the participants’ enjoyment. This question, and the accompanying answers, can be found in Tables 27 and 28. In Table 28, the strategies that correspond to the words or phrases chosen by the participants are noted. Here, there are four options: omission, literal translation, transposition and other. This last category refers to instances in which participants chose words or phrases that were connected to humorous instances that appeared in the fragment, but did not correspond with a pun. It also refers to instances in which participants chose a word or phrase that was not intended to be humorous, or if the participants were unable to name any word or phrase. The words and/or phrases in Table 27 are coloured according to these categories: orange for omission, blue for literal translation, green for transposition and red for other.

Can you name <i>at least</i> one part of the fragment that you thought was enjoyable, considering the puns?	
Prijskaartje broek	2
Labrador	6
Hondenreferenties/woordspelingen	8
Scooby zit	1
Rough	1
Loslopen	4

Weggoaien van de sleutels	2
Paws	1
De woordspelingen in het Engels zijn grappig, maar in het Nederlands is het toch net een stuk minder	1
Hoe heb je haar aan de lijn gekregen	2
Nekvel	1
He's good at fetching things	1
Dat hij gekeurd moet worden via de vrienden maar ook via de dierenarts	1
Aan het lijntje houden	1
Or did you collar	1
Thank you for fetching the shots	1
Vanuit de ondertiteling weinig. De zin of ze gelijk een 'band' hadden was wel grappig, maar vergeleken met 'did you collar?' Is het niet grappig	1
Dat Robin zei dat ze hem bij zijn nekvel pakte	1
Aan de lijn	1
Op welke 'voet' hij met haar stond	1

Table 27: Fragment-specific answers for Fragment 1

Omission	0
Literal translation	10
Transposition	23
Other	5
Total	38

Table 28: Corresponding strategies for Fragment 1

In this fragment, the participants most frequently chose words and/or phrases that correspond with the literal translation and transposition strategies. The puns that were translated by the subtitle using the omission strategy, and thus did not have a humorous equivalent in the subtitles, were entirely neglected by the participants. For this fragment, transposition was chosen twice as much as literal translation, showing the participants' interest in more creative, and for them more enjoyable subtitles. The answers to the statement "I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles" can be seen in Table 29.

I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	3
Agree	10
Neither agree, nor disagree	9
Disagree	11
Strongly disagree	0

Table 29: Enjoyment of Fragment 1

The participants are divided about their enjoyment of this fragment. A small majority of 14 participants (strongly) agreed with the statement, while 11 participants disagreed with it. It is expected that those who did not experience the fragment as enjoyable, think this due to the omission of many of the puns.

The ones who (strongly) agreed with the statement are expected to say so because they focused on the puns that *were* conveyed in the subtitles, which were translated using either literal translation or transposition.

The second fragment, henceforth named Fragment 2, contained a variety of puns that were mostly translated by the subtitler using the literal translation strategy. It is expected by the author of this thesis that the subtitler chose this strategy to make the scene understandable for the majority of their target audience. If this is done, there is a possibility that humorous instances will be removed from the subtitles, as seen in the study conducted by Fuentes Luque (2003). This may also impact the audience's enjoyment. This fragment revolves around Robin's work as a news anchor, and her boss' tendency to insert puns in her script. Here, the participants were once again asked about their understanding of the fragment, the answers to which can be seen in Tables 30 and 31.

I was able to understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	11
Agree	13
Neither agree nor disagree	5
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	0

Table 30: Understanding of the subtitles in Fragment 2

The subtitles were easy to read.	
Strongly agree	11
Agree	20
Neither agree nor disagree	2
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

Table 31: Readability of the subtitles in Fragment 2

From these answers, it can be said that 5 of the participants did not fully understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles. The one participant that answered 'disagree' on the second question was also included in these 5 participants. However, of these respondents, there were no participants that gave an unusual answer that did not relate to the fragment. Therefore, none of their answers concerning this fragment were omitted from the analysis. The answers given by the participants concerning their enjoyment of Fragment 2 can be seen in Tables 32 and 33. In Table 33, the strategies that correspond to the words or phrases chosen by the participants are noted.

Can you name <i>at least one part of the fragment that you thought was enjoyable, considering the puns?</i>	
Molarbear	4
Etro news 1:00	1
Schokkende details/nieuws	3
Nog een schep van de ijscowagen met methlab	1
(Stay tuned for the full) scoop	6

Het fragment over de ijscoman	1
Schep (van de ijscoman)	3
Hoe ze inspeelde op het vallen van de letters en cijfers van het programma	1
Shocking (news)	2
The shocking tooth	2
(Shocking) details	4
Geen	2
Schokkende tanden	1
Melkbeer	2
Dat mensen geëlectrocuteerd waren en dat schokkend nieuws was	3
De grappige puns van de director	1
Een scoop en een schep ijs	1
You will know the tooth	1
Voor de schokkende details was grappig, omdat het dezelfde pun draagt als de gesproken punchline	1
Schokkend	1
Pandabeer had een tand..tooth...en werd molarbeer	1

Table 32: Fragment-specific answers for Fragment 2

Omission	0
Literal translation	35
Transposition	0
Other	9
Total	44

Table 33: Corresponding strategies for Fragment 2

In this fragment, the participants most frequently chose words and/or phrases that correspond with the literal translation strategy. This was also expected by the author of this thesis, because this was the most-used strategy for this fragment. From this, it is evident that the participants experience words and/or phrases translated using the literal translation strategy as enjoyable. Whether or not transposition has a similar effect will be discussed in the following paragraph. To conclude this section, the answers to the statement “I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles” can be seen in Table 34.

I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	5
Agree	11
Neither agree, nor disagree	11
Disagree	7
Strongly disagree	0

Table 34: Enjoyment of Fragment 2

Here, the majority of the participants answered that they (strongly) agree with the statement, and thus believe the fragment to be enjoyable. It is expected that this is because the puns were rarely omitted by

the subtitler, meaning that the target audience got a similar viewing experience as the source audience. If this is also true for the next fragment will be discussed below.

The third fragment, henceforth named Fragment 3, contained a variety of puns that were mostly translated by the subtitler using the transposition strategy. It is expected by the author of this thesis that this strategy was chosen by the subtitler because they were able to find an equivalent pun in the target language that they expected to be understood by the majority of the target audience. It is expected that the target audience will experience these subtitles as most enjoyable, if they recognise the puns. This fragment revolves around Ted's complaints about his boss, with many sexual references. The participants were asked about their understanding of the fragment, the answers to which can be seen in Tables 35 and 36.

I was able to understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	10
Agree	16
Neither agree nor disagree	5
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Table 35: Understanding of the subtitles in Fragment 3

The subtitles were easy to read.	
Strongly agree	11
Agree	19
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	0

Table 36: Readability of the subtitles in Fragment 3

From these answers, it can be said that 3 of the participants did not fully understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles. There was also one participant who disagreed with the statement "The subtitles were easy to read". However, of these respondents, none gave an unusual answer that did not relate to the fragment. Therefore, none of their answers concerning this fragment were omitted from the analysis. The answers given by the participants concerning their enjoyment can be seen in Tables 37 and 38. In Table 38, the strategies that correspond to the words or phrases chosen by the participants are noted.

Kunt u <i>minimaal één</i> deel van het fragment benoemen dat u grappig vond als het gaat om woordspelingen?	
Nee	6
Het mooie gebouw dat lijkt op een piemel	2
Penisreferenties	6
(We moeten het niet) verneuken	8
Testy	3
Hard (in it)	3
Stiff	1
(Don't) blow it	9

Stijf(jes)	3
Balorig	1
Dat Ted niet doorheeft dat hij de woordspelingen blijft maken.	1
Lullig	1

Table 37: Fragment-specific answers for Fragment 3

Omission	0
Literal translation	0
Transposition	37
Other	7
Total	44

Table 38: Corresponding strategies for Fragment 3

In this fragment, the participants most frequently chose words and/or phrases that correspond with the transposition strategy. This was also expected by the author of this thesis, because this was the most-used strategy for this fragment. This makes it evident that the participants experience words and/or phrases translated using the transposition strategy as enjoyable. In the last chapter, it will become obvious if there is a clear difference between the literal translation and transposition strategy. This will be discussed after analysing the final fragment. To conclude this section, the answers to the statement “I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles” can be seen in Table 39.

I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	5
Agree	14
Neither agree, nor disagree	6
Disagree	8
Strongly disagree	1

Table 39: Enjoyment of Fragment 3

Here, the majority of participants answered that they (strongly) agree with the statement, and thus believe the fragment to be enjoyable. Again, the puns were rarely omitted by the subtitler, and the puns had a fitting equivalent in the subtitles, which means that they had a similar experience as the source audience.

The fourth and final fragment, henceforth named Fragment 4, contained a variety of puns that were translated using a combination of the three strategies discussed in this thesis. It was chosen by the author of this thesis to decipher if there is a difference between the participants’ enjoyment of the different strategies. In this final fragment, it is expected that the subtitler has chosen translation strategies that they deemed suitable for the individual instances. By using these strategies, consciously or unconsciously, the humorous instances are either conveyed to the target audience, or omitted from the subtitles. It is expected that the participants experience more joy in those instances that are conveyed to them, than those that are omitted. This fragment revolves around Barney’s wedding day, where Lily and Marshall help him with his wedding vows, and subsequently produce several vow-related puns. Again,

the participants were asked about their understanding of the fragment, the answers to which can be seen in Tables 40 and 41.

I was able to understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	7
Agree	15
Neither agree nor disagree	5
Disagree	6
Strongly disagree	1

Table 40: Understanding of the subtitles in Fragment 4

The subtitles were easy to read.	
Strongly agree	9
Agree	16
Neither agree nor disagree	6
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	1

Table 41: Readability of the subtitles in Fragment 4

From these answers, it can be said that 7 of the participants did not fully understand the fragment with the help of the subtitles. The 2 participants that answered '(strongly) disagree' on the second question were also included in these 7 participants. Of these respondents, there were two that gave unusual answers that did not relate to the fragment. Therefore, their answers concerning this fragment were omitted from the analysis. The answers given by the participants concerning their enjoyment can be seen in Tables 42 and 43. In Table 43, the strategies that correspond to the words or phrases chosen by the participants are noted.

Can you name <i>no more than one part of the fragment that you thought was enjoyable, considering the puns?</i>	
Vowerpoint (presentation)	5
Canadese grappen	1
Geloft (het maar)	2
Tenzij je mollig wordt, in dat geval ben ik een Barney-vormig gat in de muur	2
Ik vond het niet/nauwelijks grappig (geen/nee)	7
Nee, ik vind de vertaling waardeloos	1
Dat het stel geloftendeskundigen waren	1
Vow dare you	6
Invowluntary	1
Alle woordspelingen met vow, (zoals vow dare you)	2
Laatste deel, daar sloegen de woordgrappen meer aan	1
Geen idee	1
I can show vow it's done	2
Dat ze het eigenlijk helemaal niet zo leuk vinden, maar hij toch door blijft gaan	1
Geloftenpoint Presentatie	1
Vowsy/vowza	2
In het Engels alle vow-puns, maar als ik geen kennis van de taal had gehad was dit een bijzonder droge sketch	1
Dat zijn geloftes eerst lief klonken maar toenemend slechter werden.	1

Table 42: Fragment-specific answers for Fragment 4

Omission	2
Literal translation	6
Transposition	14
Other	16
Total	38

Table 43: Corresponding strategies for Fragment 4

As with the first fragment, the participants mostly chose literal translation and transposition, with the latter being favoured. Again, omission was the least-favoured strategy. This outcome was also expected by the author of this thesis, because by using these strategies, the puns are conveyed in the subtitles. Although words and/or phrases relating to transposition are chosen more than twice as much as those relating to literal translation, it is evident that this latter strategy is also chosen by the participants as one which produces enjoyable subtitles. The combined answers of the four fragments will be discussed in the conclusion. This section will conclude with the answers to the statement “I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles”, which can be seen in Table 44.

I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles.	
Strongly agree	1
Agree	12
Neither agree, nor disagree	7
Disagree	8
Strongly disagree	5

Table 44: Enjoyment of Fragment 4

There is again a division between about the participants’ enjoyment of this fragment. 13 participants answered either ‘(strongly) agree’ or ‘(strongly) disagree’. The enjoyment is expected to be the result of several puns that were conveyed in the subtitles using the transposition strategy, while the displeasure is expected to be the result of those instances that were omitted in the subtitles. The total outcome of the statement “I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles” will be clarified in the conclusion.

5. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to research the audience's enjoyment of the translation of puns using different translation strategies. It was expected that the participants would experience the most joy when the puns were conveyed in the subtitles, thus giving the target audience a similar viewing experience as the source audience, as discussed by Schauffler (2005) and Hempelmann (2014). The subtitler should also produce subtitles that are widely understood by the target audience; if they do not understand them, they cannot experience any joy from it. This was also discussed by Fuentes Luque (2003) and Ibarim et al. (2019), who also stress the importance of avoiding excessive use of literal translation to avoid annoyance by the target audience. By conducting a questionnaire, and analysing it accordingly, the research question could be answered, which is: 'How does a Dutch audience receive subtitled puns in terms of enjoyment?'

This study conducted a questionnaire, where questions were asked concerning the participants' viewing habits, their understanding of subtitles and puns, and finally their assessment of four short fragments from the American sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*. The questionnaire, conducted using the online tool Qualtrics, was then analysed. The results of this analysis can be found in Chapter 4. From these results, a clear pattern can be discerned. The author of this thesis deliberately chose to use fragments that contained puns that were subtitled using translation strategies that oppose each other in their frequency of usage, as found in Zentveld's Bachelor Thesis (2021). Because of this, three strategies were researched in this study, and other strategies were ignored. Omission, literal translation, and transposition are the strategies that this thesis used in its research.

The assessment of the four fragments was analysed by combining the participant's choice of enjoyable words and/or phrases with the aforementioned translation strategies. The frequency in which these strategies were apparent in the participants' answers can be seen in Table 45.

Omission	2
Literal translation	51
Transposition	74
Other	37
Total	164

Table 45: Corresponding strategies for all fragments

Here, a clear pattern can be determined. The strategy that was mostly chosen was transposition, followed by literal translation and omission. From this, it can be said that the participants experienced the most joy from the instances in which words and/or phrases were translated using the transposition strategy, thus where the puns were conveyed in the subtitles. Instances that were subtitled using the omission strategy were, by far, the least chosen by the participants, and thus also least enjoyed by them. It has to be said that temporal and spatial constraints, as discussed by Díaz Cintas & Remael, 2021 (93-116), do not always allow the subtitler to use any strategy other than omission, particularly when the audience's

comprehension is sacrificed. Because of this, it is unfeasible that omission is eliminated as a translation strategy in subtitling. However, it is expected that there are plenty of instances in which the subtitler can use a translation strategy other than omission, but fails to use it. The exact reason for this, other than temporal and spatial constraints, is yet unknown, and can be an area of research for future studies.

Thus, for this study, transposition and literal translation were the most-favoured translation strategies, concerning the participants' enjoyment of the fragments. This can also be seen when combining the results of Tables 29, 34, 39 and 44, where the results to the statement "I think this fragment was enjoyable when looking at the subtitles" were noted. For the fragments where transposition and literal translation was most present, Fragment 2 and 3, corresponding to Tables 34 and 39, most participants '(strongly) agreed' with this statement. In both instances, 16 participants answered this. For the other two fragments, corresponding to Tables 29 and 44, there were 13 participants that answered that they '(strongly) agreed' with this statement. From this, it can be said that transposition should be the subtitler's first choice when, consciously, choosing a translation strategy to subtitle puns. However, the use of this strategy is not always achievable due to the constrained environment in which they have to operate, or other variables. Because instances that were translated using the literal translation strategy were also frequently chosen by the participants, it can be said that this strategy can also be used to convey humorous instances. This can also be connected to the study of Ibharam et al. (2019), who stated that comprehension will also result in the audience's enjoyment of subtitled puns. With this strategy, subtitlers are more capable to deal with temporal and spatial constraints, making it more efficient than transposition. However, as mentioned by Fuentes Luque (2003), these instances should not be translated too literally, since this can be annoying for the target audience. This should always be taken into account by the subtitler.

This study is limited because there are only three translation strategies that were researched: two of the most frequently used ones (omission and literal translation) and one that was far less used by subtitlers (transposition), according to Zentveld (2021). For future researchers, it can be beneficial to conduct studies using other translation strategies, and investigate the audience's reception of those. The method of study this thesis uses can also be applied to different types of humour and different language pairs, since puns are not the only type of humour that is omnipresent in films and/or series. It is important to research the audience's reception of those instances as well, to create a comprehensive guide for subtitlers. These subtitlers should be aware of the audience's preference, to create more enjoyable subtitles for their target audience.

To conclude, and to answer the research question: puns subtitled using the transposition strategy are experienced as most enjoyable by the Dutch target audience. It best conveys the puns, giving the target audience a similar viewing experience as the source audience. When the subtitler is unable to choose this strategy, either due to temporal or spatial constraints, or any other variable, they can also choose to translate the instances using the literal translation strategy, provided that there is no excessive

literalness. By doing this, and by creating awareness amongst subtitlers, the transfer of puns in subtitling can be enhanced, and the audience's enjoyment can be increased.

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APPENDIX

These are the English and Dutch transcripts for the fragments used for this study.

Abbreviations used:

B: Barney Q: Quinn
 L: Lily R: Robin
 M: Marshall S: Scooby
 N: Narrator T: Ted

S8E1, 11:30-12:37 (1:07 minutes)

English dialogue	Dutch subtitles
[B] I'm sorry I lied to you. I'll tell you everything. The whole story.	Sorry dat ik heb gelogen. Ik zal je alles vertellen.
[Q] Fine. You have one minute before I walk out that door.	Prima, je hebt één minuut voor ik wegloop.
[B] Um, it's, uh, kind of a long story, Quinn. Gonna take a little bit longer than a minute.	Het is een lang verhaal, Quinn. Ik heb wel iets langer nodig.
[Q] 52 seconds.	52 seconden.
[B] Seven years ago, when Marshall and Lily got engaged Ted saw Robin across a crowded room and I said, "Oh, yeah, you just know she likes it dirty."	Toen Marshall en Lily zich verloofden zag Ted Robin en ik zei: 'Dat is een stoute meid.
[B] But Ted really liked her so we played "Have you met Ted?"	Ted vond haar leuk. We speelden 'Ken je Ted al?'
[B] They went to dinner, he walked her home, shoulda kissed her, didn't, lame.	Ze gingen uit eten, maar hij kuste haar niet. Dom.
[B] So he stole a smurf penis, went back to her place, should've kissed her, didn't, lame.	Bij haar thuis kuste hij haar ook niet. Dom.
[B] He threw three parties, they kissed on the roof, but decided to be friends, lame, then Ted wanted to take Robin to a wedding.	Toen kusten ze, maar ze bleven vrienden. Ted ging naar een bruiloft.
[B] She couldn't go, he went alone and met Victoria, didn't kiss her either, lame, not a great closer, Ted.	Daar ontmoette hij Victoria, maar kuste haar ook niet.
[B] But he finally kissed her, they started dating, she went to Germany, Ted kissed Robin, lost Victoria.	Hij kuste. Haar, ze gingen uit, ze ging naar Duitsland, Ted kuste Robin.
[B] Ted did a rain dance, got Robin, Ted and Robin broke up, Robin moved to Brazil.	Ted en Robin gingen uit elkaar, Robin ging naar Brazilië.
[B] Came back with a Latin stud, Ted got jealous, got a tramp stamp.	Kwam terug met een stuk, Ted nam een tattoo.
[B] Not really relevant to the story I just like mentioning that as much as possible, I hooked up with Robin.	Dat is niet relevant. Ik had seks met Robin.
[B] Ted and I stopped being friends, Ted got hit by a bus, we made up...	Ted en ik kregen ruzie, Ted kreeg een ongeluk, het kwam goed.
[B] Robin and I started dating, I got fat, her hair fell out. We broke up, Robin dated Don.	Robin en ik kregen iets. Ik werd dik, zij kaal. Het ging uit.

[B] I dated Nora, cheated on her with Robin, I dumped Nora, Robin dated Kevin, but not for long.	Ik had Nora, ging vreemd. Robin had even iets met Kevin.
[B] And then I met you and you took my grandpa's watch but I fell in love with you anyway...	Ik ontmoette jou, jij nam het horloge van mijn opa, ik werd verliefd...
[B] and you let me fart in front of you and I asked you to marry me and you said yes and we came over here to meet little Marvin and that's everything!	je laat me scheten laten, ik vroeg je ten huwelijk en toen kwamen we hier.
[B] Also I went on the Price Is Right and won a dune buggy.	En ik won een duinbuggy bij <i>Prijzenslag</i> .
[Q] Goodbye, Barney.	Tot ziens, Barney.
[B] I just...	Wat? Ik heb...

S6E18, 7:51-9:47 (1:56 minutes)

[S] I smell food. Does this place have a kitchen? I'll be right back.	Ik ruik eten. Hebben ze een keuken hier? Ik ben zo terug.
[R] Okay, but you have to admit that he is a lot of fun.	Je moet toegeven dat je lol met hem kunt hebben.
[M] Oh, I actually think he's quite intelligent for what he is.	Hij is best intelligent voor wat hij is.
[R] And what is he?	En wat is hij?
[M] He's a dog.	Een hond.
[T] He's totally a dog.	Absoluut een hond.
[R] What? You saw him hitting on someone?	Probeerde hij iemand te versieren?
[M] No, no. I didn't say "He a dawg." I said, "He's a dog," as in a dog.	Ik zei niet: Een absolute hond. Een hond, als in <i>hond</i> .
[M] I think we've all noticed a few curious mannerisms.	Hij vertoont vreemd gedrag.
[M] Or, uh, rather, dog-erisms.	Oftwel hondenmanieren.
[T] Uh, Scooby, the tag's still on your jeans.	Scooby, het prijsje van zit nog aan je broek.
[S] Where?	Waar?
[M] Okay, Scooby. You ready? Ohh!	Scooby. Klaar?
[T] Good t, Scooby!	Braaf, Scooby.
[M] Good job, Scoob.	
[R] That last one did not happen.	Dat laatste is niet waar.
[T] Okay, you're right.	Je hebt gelijk.
[M] He dropped it.	Hij liet hem vallen.
[R] He's not a dog.	Hij is geen hond.
[T] Robin, it's fine. You said you wanted a dog, and you got one.	Het geeft niet. Je wou een hond, nu heb je er een.
[T] And the best part is he got his shots.	En hij is goed in dingen halen.
[S] Hey, guys. Got my shots.	Jongens, ik heb de borrels.
[M] You are so playful.	Je bent zo speels.
[T] Nice job fetching those.	Goed gehaald.
[R] Guys.	Jongens.
[L] Yeah, guys, cut it out.	Ja, hou op.
[L] Scooby, sit.	Scooby, zit.
[M] So, Scooby, if you're gonna be hanging out with our Robin, you should be properly vetted.	Als je met onze Robin wilt omgaan, moet je eerst <i>gekeurd</i> worden.
[T] Uh, yeah. And we hope your nosiness doesn't give you pause [paws].	We hopen dat je niet <i>dicht</i> klapt door onze nieuwsgierigheid.

[L] How did you meet? Tell us the tale [tail].	Hoe hebben jullie elkaar ontmoet? Houdt niets <i>achter</i> .
[M] Yes, how did you whisk her [whisker] off her feet?	Hoe heb je haar <i>aan de lijn</i> gekregen?
[T] Shed a little light on the matter.	We weten er niks van <i>af</i> .
[L] Did you send her an email, or did you call her [collar]?	Heb je haar een e-mail gestuurd? Hadden jullie meteen een <i>band</i> ?
[R] Guys, stop hounding him.	Zit hem niet zo op z'n nekvel.
[R] Oh, geez.	
[M] No, you're right, Robin.	Je hebt gelijk Robin.
[M] We don't want your new guy to flee [flea].	Het kan wel <i>loslopen</i> .
[L] We're just trying to make sure he's not a heel.	We willen alleen maar weten op welke <i>voet</i> hij met je staat.
[T] So, moving from Canada, that transition must've been pretty rough [ruff].	Dus je komt uit Canada, dat is heel anders dan <i>hier</i> .
[S] Sure was. My part of Canada's pretty different from New York.	Nou. Waar ik vandaan kom, is heel anders dan New York.
[L] Oh, I bet it was a incredible journey.	Het was vast een <i>ongelooflijke reis</i> .
[M] What part of Canada is that? Speak.	Welk deel van Canada is het? <i>Spreek</i> .
[S] Labrador.	Labrador.
[L] This isn't happening.	Dit is niet waar.
[R] Hey, Nate, why don't you go play some music on the jukebox.	Nate, zet eens wat muziek op.
[S] No, I'm good.	Hoeft niet.
[R] Oh, shoot. Dropped my keys.	Verdorie. Ik liet m'n sleutels vallen.
[S] I'll get 'em.	Ik haal ze wel.
[R] Okay.	

S4E1, 1:27-1:44 | 5:40-5:53

S4E3, 2:47-3:28 | 19:40-20:00 (1:37 minutes)

[N] Kids, your Aunt Robin was sick of her job at Metro News 1.	Tante Robin had genoeg van haar baan bij Metro News One.
[N] She was sick of the low production value...	Ze was het lage niveau beu.
[R] I'm Robin Scherbatsky, and you're watching...	Ik ben Robin Scherbatsky en je kijkt naar...
[R] Etro News 1 at 11:00.	Etro News One at 11:00.
[R] And again at 1:00.	En nog een keer om 1.00 uur.
[N] ...sick of the stories she had to report...	Ze werd moe van de verhalen.
[R] So hurry up and get your votes in for New York's cutest doggie.	Dus schiet op met stemmen voor de leukste hond van New York.
[N] ...and most of all, she was sick of all the stupid puns.	...van de woordspelingen.
[R] Four transit workers were electrocuted when a subway train jumped the tracks.	Vier arbeiders werden geëlectrocuteerd toen een metro ontspoorde.
[R] Stay tuned for the shocking details.	Blijf kijken voor de schokkende details.
[R] Joel, people died.	Joel, er zijn mensen dood.
[N] And Robin continued to uphold the high journalistic standards of Metro News 1.	Robin hield de journalistieke standaard van Metro News 1 hoog.
[R] Is your favorite brand of dental floss poisoning your entire family?	Vergiftigt jouw favoriete flosmerk je gehele familie?
[R] Tune in at 11:00 for the shocking...	Kijk om 23.00 uur voor de schokkende...
[R] tooth.	tanden.

[R] Coming up next, is your local ice-cream man actually driving...	Dit zie je zo: Bestuurt je plaatselijke ijscoboer...
[R] a roving meth lab on wheels?	eigenlijk een meth lab op wielen?
[R] Stay tuned for the full...	Blijf kijken voor de volgende...
[R] scoop.	schep.
[R] Really?	Echt waar?
[R] Good evening, New York.	Goedenavond, New York.
[B] Hey, look, she made it.	Kijk, ze heeft het gehaald.
[R] Our top story tonight, the newborn panda at the Central Park Zoo...	Het grootste nieuws: De baby-panda van de Central Park Zoo...
[R] got its first tooth today.	kreeg vandaag haar eerste tandje.
[R] I guess that makes her...	Daardoor is ze nu...
[R] a molar bear.	een melkbeer.
[R] You know what? I really am done.	Weet je wat? Ik ben hier echt klaar mee.
[R] Good night, New York.	Goedenavond, New York.

S2E6, 7:57-8:47 (Total of 0:50 minutes)

[L] I can't believe how Mr. Druthers treats people.	Ongelofelijk hoe Mr Druthers mensen behandelt.
[L] And that building? Talk about overcompensating.	En dat gebouw? Over compenseren gesproken.
[T] He's not usually this bad.	Anders is hij nooit zo erg.
[T] It's just that the partners have made it very clear this project is make or break for us...	De partners waren heel duidelijk dat dit project cruciaal is...
[T] so lately he's been a little testy.	dus hij is de laatste tijd een beetje balorig.
[T] You know what I mean, crotchety.	Je snapt me wel. Lullig.
[T] I'm just saying it's been hard on him.	Ik zeg alleen dat hij stijfjes is.
[T] All right, stop.	Oké, goed, hou op.
[R] Did you show Lily your design?	Heb je Lily je ontwerp laten zien?
[T] No.	
[L] What design?	Welk ontwerp?
[T] It's nothing.	Het is niks.
[R] It's fantastic.	Het is fantastisch.
[R] Just for fun, Ted's been working on his own design...	Ted heeft aan een eigen ontwerp gewerkt...
[R] and it doesn't look at all like male genitalia.	dat niet lijkt op een mannelijk geslachtsdeel.
[R] At least, not healthy male genitalia.	Een gezond mannelijk geslachtsdeel.
[R] Ted, you should pitch your building to Druthers.	Je moet je gebouw aan Druthers laten zien.
[T] Are you kidding? He's Hammond Druthers. He's a legend. I'm just part of his team.	Ben je gek? Hij is Hammond Druthers. Een legende. Ik ben iemand uit z'n team.
[T] This building is huge for the firm, so it's really important we don't blow it.	Dit is belangrijk voor het bedrijf, dus we moeten het niet verneuken.
[T] All right, enough.	Goed, genoeg.

S9E22, 3:21-4:59 (Total of 1:38 minutes)

[L] Are you dying?	Ga je dood?
[B] I'm writing my vows to Robin.	Ik schrijf m'n huwelijksgeloften.
[B] But I want them to be profound and inspiring.	Maar ik wil dat ze diepzinnig en inspirerend zijn.
[B] As if they were written by the bard himself, Lionel Richie.	Alsof de bard zelf, Lionel Richie, ze heeft geschreven.

[M] Then why did you wait until right before the wedding to compose them?	Waarom schrijf je ze dan pas vlak voor je bruiloft?
[B] I didn't. I've been trying to get these right for weeks.	Ik ben er al weken mee bezig.
[L] This is a lot of vows.	Dat zijn behoorlijk wat flinke geloften.
[M] Vow-za.	
[M] I'll say it again. Vow-za.	Ik zeg het nog een keer.
[L] Are you really gonna read all of these?	Ga je deze allemaal oplezen?
[M] Yeah, uh, wouldn't it be better to project them as a VowerPoint presentation?	Gaat het niet beter met een beamer, als een Geloftenpoint-presentatie?
[M] Say it again. VowerPoint...	Ik zeg het nog een keer.
[B] I know it's a lot, but I... I don't want to screw up this wedding thing.	Ik weet dat het veel is, maar ik wil dit niet verpesten.
[L] "I vow to love you forever unconditionally..."	'Ik zal van je houden, voor altijd en onvoorwaardelijk...
[L] unless you pudge out, in which case I'm a Barney-shaped hole in the wall."	tenzij je mollig wordt, dan ben ik een Barney-vormig gat in de muur.'
[M] "I vow to start watching hockey with you..."	'Ik beloof dat ik ijshockey met je ga kijken.'
[L] Oh, that one's sweet.	Dat is lief.
[L] I know how much you hate hockey.	Je hebt een hekel aan ijshockey.
[M] "...once a month."	'Eén keer per maand.'
[L] But it's still a nice gesture.	Nog steeds mooi.
[M] "No. Once a year. No. Hockey's dumb.	'Nee, één keer per jaar.
[M] Not watching it, and neither are you, woman.	Nee, ijshockey is stom, ik kijk 't niet. En jij ook niet, vrouw.
[M] Now make me a French toast."	Maak wentelteefjes voor me.'
[M] I'll put this in the maybe pile.	Zal ik hem bij 'misschien' leggen.
[L] Look, if you're having trouble...	Als het niet lukt...
[L] you've got two vow consultants standing right in front of you.	staan er twee gelofte-deskundigen voor je neus.
[M] Yeah. We can show you vow it's done.	Geloft het maar.
[M] Say it again. Vow it's done...	Ik zeg het nog een keer...
[L] We're just not enjoying them, honey.	We vinden ze niet leuk, schat.
[B] I am not gonna take marriage advice from a couple who just got in a gigantic fight.	Ik hoef geen huwelijksadvies van een stel dat enorme ruzie had.
[R] I'm doing fine on my own.	Ik red me wel.
[L] No, you're not.	Niet waar.
[L] All of these vows are selfish and way too easy to keep.	Deze geloften zijn egoïstisch en makkelijk om je aan te houden.
[L] Wedding vows need to be real commitments, like our vows.	Huwelijksgeloften moeten echt iets betekenen. Zoals die van ons.
[B] Poppycock!	Onzin.
[M] What are you talking about?	Waar heb je het over?
[B] I remember your precious wedding vows, and I guarantee you've broken every single one of them.	Ik kan me jullie geloften nog herinneren en jullie hebben ze allemaal verbroken.
[M] Vow dare you!	Gelofte nog aan toe.
[L] Just stop.	Hou op.
[M] I can't. It's involuntary.	Kan niet. Ik geloft dat het vanzelf gaat.