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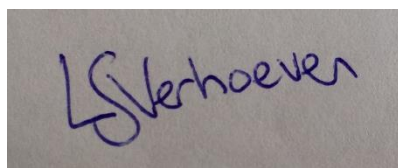
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Politeness in Dutch translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*



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Abstract

The study of politeness is, among other things, concerned with the differences in polite behaviour between different languages. Quite some differences in politeness between English and Dutch exist, which can sometimes lead to misinterpretations. Politeness and its differences between English and Dutch have been described by several scholars, such as Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, Eva Ogiermann, and Berna Hendriks. In a translation process, a translator always needs to make choices on how to translate (im)polite behaviour to make it appropriate for the readers of the target text. This study investigates the effect of translational choices in Dutch translations on the characterisation of the main characters in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* with regards to their (im)polite behaviour. Two chapters of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* have been selected to be analysed, namely 'A Mad Tea Party' and 'The Mock Turtle's Story'. The behaviour of Alice, the Hatter, and the Mock Turtle is analysed in Carroll's source text and in three Dutch translations, namely those of Cornelis Reedijk and Alfred Kossmann, Gonne Andriesse-van de Zande, and Nicolaas Matsier. The texts are analysed following Brown and Levinson's 'Politeness Theory', Ogiermann's findings on the use of subjectivisers and downtoners and Markus de Jong, Marion Theune, and Denis Hofs's conclusions on the Dutch pronoun *u*. The translations have been compared with Carroll's text, but they are also compared with each other. The results show that there are no major differences in politeness between Carroll's text and the Dutch translations. The effect on the characterisation of Alice, the Hatter and the Mock Turtle is therefore rather small. Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier did use the Dutch pronoun *u*, whereas Andriesse-van de Zande did not. Moreover, Carroll used more downtoners than the Dutch translators did. The Dutch translators appear to have made different translational choices concerning adverbs or adjectives, which could influence the characterisation of the

characters. In conclusion, the differences which have been found, do not change the characterisation of the characters enormously.

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1. Introduction

There are many differences in pragmatics across cultures. These differences could cause difficulties in the translation process. Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has been translated into Dutch many times. The perception of politeness differs between English and Dutch speakers. It is possible that Dutch translators change English expressions due to these differences. However, this may influence the characterisation of the main characters of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The aim of this research is therefore to find an answer to the following question:

What effect do the translational choices in three Dutch translations have on the characterisation of the main characters in Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland with regards to their (im)polite behaviour?

Firstly, some background information on Lewis Carroll's book and three Dutch translations will be given. This will be followed by an explanation of 'politeness' and a description of the differences in politeness between Dutch and English. Consequently, examples from the source text and the three translations will be given to show the differences between them. Lastly, the paper will be concluded by a discussion and conclusion.

1.1 Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

In 1865, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson published *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll (this name will therefore be used throughout the rest of this paper).

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland is a children's book which tells the story of Alice, who, on an ordinary day, suddenly sees a rabbit with a watch passing by. She looks on as it jumps in a large rabbit-hole under a hedge and she follows the rabbit down the hole "never once considering how in the world she was to get out again" (Carroll 2). Then a large tunnel brings her to a magical world, where she meets many different and surrealistic characters.

As a child, Lewis Carroll had always been interested in magical tricks and puppetry. In his older years, he took up photography and made mathematical and word puzzles or games (Gardner 11). These interests can be traced back in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The book has become a surrealistic and fantastic book. Many characters have strange traits. The rabbit is always running late, the grinning Cheshire Cat appears and disappears whenever he likes, the Mad Hatter and March Hare perpetually drink tea, and so on.

Next to Carroll's interest in surrealism, he also had many so called "child-friends", which he told stories to. Initially, Carroll wrote a hand-written story called *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* for Alice, one of his "child-friends". For her, this story caused a desire to hear more stories about Alice's adventures (Matsier 11). Hence, Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was written, however, it was aimed at a larger audience as well (Matsier 11). Carroll's book was planned to be understandable for children under fifteen (Gardner 7). At that time, no one had ever thought that this book would become successful (Gardner ix). Moreover, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has become a children's book which needs many analyses and explanations, and appeals to older readers as well.

Much attention has been paid to Carroll's life and works. For example by Peter Newell, a scholar who analysed *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and wrote about it. He claims that Alice is a girl who has "a delicate sense of considerations for the feelings of others" (Gardner xvii). On the contrary, she can be rather rude as well.

- (1) 'I think you might do something better with the time,' she [Alice] said, 'than waste it in asking riddles that have no answers.' (Carroll 75).

In this example she just met the Hatter and the March Hare, but the unfamiliarity between them does not seem to keep Alice from giving her opinion in a rather impolite, slightly imperative, manner. In addition, Newell claims that the animate characters have been

portrayed in such a manner that they are admirable and easily perceived as “natural and appropriate” (Gardner xviii).

1.2 Dutch translations of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland

Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland has been translated into Dutch multiple times. According to Nicolaas Matsier, there are 12 translations, of which the first one was published in 1890 (100). Some of the earlier translations are still being republished nowadays.

According to Matsier, there are three integral Dutch translations of Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Firstly, his own translation *De avonturen van Alice in Wonderland* (1989). Secondly, the translation by Gonne Andriesse-van de Zande (*De avonturen van Alice in Wonderland*, 1976). Thirdly, Tiny Mulder’s translation (*Alice yn Wûnderlân*, 1964) (75). According to Matsier, these three translations are most complete because they did not omit or add any chapters or fragments, and they contain Carroll’s poem “All in the golden afternoon” as prefatory text to the book. In other translations, this poem is not included. Mulder’s translation, however, is a Frisian translation. I have decided to include a different translation instead, namely a Dutch translation which has been reprinted in 2015. This is Cornelis Reedijk and Alfred Kossmann’s translation (*De avonturen van Alice*), which was firstly published in 1947.

The main focus will therefore be on the translations by Reedijk & Kossmann, Andriesse-van de Zande, and Matsier. This choice is based on Matsier’s findings, but because, Frisian is an unfamiliar language to me I have opted for Reedijk and Kossmann’s translation instead, because of its recent republishing.

Reedijk & Kossmann

Reedijk and Kossmann translated *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* in 1947. According to Frederike Westera and Babette Cillekens, this translation is sometimes called the standard

Dutch translation. The translation is often used in citations or in comparison with other Dutch translations. One lack they mention is the omission of the prefatory poem and the final chapter (3).

Andriessse-van de Zande

Andriessse-van de Zande published her translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in 1976. Her translation shows many similarities with Reedijk & Kossmann's translation. The same Dutch proper nouns have been used. The sentence structure is rather similar to that of Reedijk and Kossmann as well. The existence of Reedijk and Kossmann's translation and the many similarities this translation has with that of Reedijk and Kossmann may be the reasons why this version was withdrawn from the market (4). According to Westera & Cillekens, however, Andriessse-van de Zande's translation is one of the two Dutch integral translations (ibid).

Matsier

Matsier's translation was published in 1989. Matsier himself mentions in his preface that his version is complete; that all other Dutch translations have some imperfections. Matsier was asked to make a "new, literary translation" because an English illustrator had published new illustrations for Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Westera & Cillekens 5). This translation was very successful and was reprinted within a year (ibid).

1.3 Cillekens on politeness in three Dutch translations

There has already been paid attention to politeness in Dutch translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Babette Cillekens has written an article on the changes Alice goes through during the translation process. She focusses on two main elements, namely intelligence and politeness. She compares the first Dutch translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by R. ten Raa, Reedijk and Kossmann's translation, and Matsier's translation with Carroll's

source text. She concludes that Alice is less smart, curious and polite in Ten Raa's translation than in the source text. In Reedijk & Kossmann's translation she appears to be less polite, but more direct and spontaneous, and Alice acts less smart and polite, but more articulate and curious in Matsier's translation (37). In present study, three Dutch translations will be compared to each other as well (instead of Ten Raa's translation Andriessse-van de Zande's translations will be analysed). The results will show whether the same conclusion as Cillekens can be drawn.

1.4 Methodology

The two chapters in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which contain many examples of polite and impolite behaviour are 'A Mad Tea Party' and 'The Mock Turtle's Story'. These two chapters will therefore be analysed to draw conclusions on the effect of the translational choices. The interaction between Alice and the Hatter, and Alice and the Mock Turtle will be the main focus of this research. Firstly, their polite and impolite behaviour will be determined following Eva Ogiermann's findings on the use of subjectivisers and downtoners, Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson's Face Threatening Acts (FTAs), and the Dutch pronoun *u* which does not exist in English. Conclusions on the characterisation of the main characters can be drawn by, firstly, comparing the source text with the three Dutch translations, and secondly, by comparing all three translations with each other.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Politeness across cultures

There are many differences in pragmatics across different countries. Various research has been done on politeness across cultures. According to Chris Christie, research in this field shows how to cope with situations in which face and politeness interact (x).

Eva Ogiermann researched the differences in requests across cultures. She compared English, German, Polish and Russian requests. Direct requests appeared to be used frequently by Polish and Russian speakers, whereas the German and English speakers made more use of conventionally indirect requests (189). According to Escandell-Vidal (as cited by Ogiermann), every language has culture-specific formulae which carry politeness (190). English and German speakers appeared to use more ability questions. These questions are considered to be more polite, because it does not emphasise an urge that the requests needs to be fulfilled (199). In these questions the conditional tense is used. In English, first-person requests are quite often used (201). These four languages all share the use of the politeness marker 'please', although the context of use or sentence-position are not similar in each language (203).

2.2 (Im)Politeness in Dutch and English

In Dutch and English there are several differences in the performance of polite behaviour. A difference between Dutch and English is the existence of the Dutch politeness marker *u*. This pronoun does not exist in English. In Dutch, the pronoun *u* is used in a formal situation where polite behaviour is appropriate (De Jong, Theune, & Hofs 4). There may be a distinction between 'polite' and 'formal', however, in the case of the Dutch pronoun *u* these terms go hand in hand. The effect of the Dutch pronoun *u* is that a reader can actually see whether someone is polite or not. In a translation process, Dutch translators always have to decide

whether they should use *u* or not. On the other hand, when translating a Dutch text to English, a translator may need to use other politeness markers to convey the politeness which the Dutch pronoun *u* carries.

Native speakers of English use the politeness marker ‘please’ to be more polite as Eva Ogiermann has shown. Berna Hendriks shows that native speakers of Dutch use the same politeness marker as well (351). She researched whether there are differences between English and Dutch speakers in their use of requests. In her study she also investigated whether there is situational variation. Hendriks found that native speakers of English used many subjectivisers. Subjectivisers “are phrases in which a speaker expresses a personal opinion, attitude or a degree of pessimism with respect to the request, such as in ‘I’m afraid’ (Hendriks 349). On the other hand, Hendriks did not find many occurrences in which the English speakers used downtoners (e.g. ‘perhaps’) and understaters (e.g. ‘a bit’). The native speakers of English used indirect strategies in requests addressed to people with authority. They did so less when speaker and reader were rather equal in authority (343). Hendriks’ results show that native speakers of English use the politeness marker ‘please’ very often.

On the contrary, Hendriks found that native speakers of Dutch appeared not to use subjectivisers (349). The native speakers of Dutch did use downtoners and understaters, because they carry politeness in Dutch (Hendriks 351). The Dutch speakers also used indirect strategies in requests address to people with authority, and less when reader and hearer were rather equal (343). Moreover, the Dutch speakers appeared to omit the politeness marker ‘please’ quite often. They can omit this politeness marker without sounding impolite (Hendriks 347).

According to Hendriks, the most salient difference between Dutch and English concerns the use of the politeness marker ‘please’. In Dutch, one could omit the word ‘please’ without sounding impolite (347). In addition, Hendriks’ results show that native speakers of

English use this politeness marker more often than the native speakers of Dutch (348).

Furthermore, another difference between English and Dutch is the use of subjectivisers, downtoners, and understaters. The native English speakers used many subjectivisers, whereas the native speakers of Dutch did not. Downtoners and understaters were used more often by the Dutch speakers than by the English speakers.

As a consequence of these existing differences between Dutch and English, the main characters in the Dutch translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* may be portrayed differently than Carroll's source text. They could be more polite or impolite. Their behaviour is therefore relevant to analyse in translational research; different descriptions could cause differences in the image a reader receives from the characters' behaviour.

These differences could be caused by the addition of the politeness marker *u* or the manner of performing requests. Consequently, Dutch translations may not be equal to the source text. When major changes are made, a translation tends to become an adaptation. The main characters in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* are portrayed as being rather rude to one another. Situational differences do not appear to influence their behaviour. When two characters unknown to each other meet, their behaviour does not differ from a conversation between characters who actually do know each other.

There may appear additional differences in polite behaviour between Dutch and English, because this research will be performed by following Brown and Levinson's *Politeness Theory*, De Jong, Theune and Hof's finding, and Hendriks' conclusions.

2.3 Face Threatening Acts (*The Politeness Theory* Brown and Levinson 1978)

In 1978 Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson published their *Politeness Theory*. Their theory turned out to be rather influential and many scholars have used this theory in their own research. Brown and Levinson's aim was simply to shed light on the phenomena 'politeness'.

They initiated to write on politeness, because they experienced differences across cultures in doing verbal exchanges (62).

Brown and Levinson firstly start off by explaining that every adult member of society has 'face'. They define it as being "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself, consisting in two related aspects" (66). These aspects are 'negative face' and 'positive face'. Negative face is "the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition". Positive face is "the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants" (66). To both speaker and hearer it would be best to maintain each other's face in a conversation (66). Betty Birner explains the difference between the two faces as thus:

“[W]hen you phrase your utterance in such a way as to emphasize the solidarity between you and your interlocutor, you are appealing to their positive face; when you phrase the utterance in such a way as to allow them space and the freedom to decline solidarity or interaction, you are appealing to their negative face” (201).

A salient aspect in conversations is what the speaker or hearer requires from someone. This could be, for example, the desire to be understood, however it could also be something physical (Brown & Levinson 67).

Every interlocutor attempts to maintain his or her face. However, there may be Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) which cause problems in protecting the face. Brown and Levinson clearly enlisted all of the different types of FTAs and make a distinction between two categories. The first category consists of: (1) acts which ask for a future act of the hearer, which cause some pressure on him; (2) acts that imply a positive future act of the speaker to the hearer, and need the hearer to accept or reject them; (3) acts in which the speaker desires goods from the hearer, which gives the hearer reasons to think he needs to take actions; (4)

acts which show that the speaker thinks negatively about some part of the hearer's positive face, and lastly (5) acts that display that the speaker does not care about the hearer's face (71). The acts belonging to the second category are: (1) acts that offend the speaker's negative face and (2) the acts that directly damage the speaker's positive face (73). According to Holger Limberg, these threats are all considered to be impolite (166).

Brown and Levinson describe different strategies that can be used in conversations to behave politely or impolitely. Firstly, the bald-on-record strategy could be applied when the speaker intends to threaten the hearer's face (100). When this strategy is used, the threat may not be minimised to any extent, or it is minimised by implication. Secondly, the strategy of positive politeness does not include the will to threaten the hearer's face; the hearer's positive face needs to be maintained. This strategy could even be called a "social accelerator" (108). A few of the numerous manners to disseminate the will to enhance someone's positive face in a conversation are, for example, the exaggeration of intonation and stress (109); the intensification of interest to the hearer (111); and the seeking for agreement (117). Moreover, the strategy of negative politeness is addressed to the negative face of the hearer. According to Brown and Levinson, in western cultures "negative politeness is the most elaborate and the most conventionalised set of linguistic strategies for FTA redress". This strategy is likely to be used when the speaker wants to have a pause in the interaction with the hearer (135). Examples of how this strategy could be performed are being direct (135); not forcing the hearer (177); and not "impinging" the speaker's wish on the hearer (192). Lastly, the off-record strategy could also be present in a conversation. This strategy is performed when there is no clear intention of the act. The intention of an utterance could be multidimensional, but how to interpret it is the hearer's own choice. In this strategy conversational implicatures are invited by the speaker, or the speaker is being vague or ambiguous.

3. (Im)Politeness in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and three Dutch translations

There are two chapters in Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* which contain many examples of polite and impolite behaviour, namely 'A Mad Tea Party' and 'The Mock Turtle's Story'. The first chapter is set at the Hatter's and March Hare's unceasing tea party. In 'The Mock Turtle's Story', Alice is brought to the Mock Turtle by a Gryphon. The Mock Turtle then tells a story about his past. There may occur shifts in the three Dutch translations. The focus will be on these shifts. The Dutch translations will each be compared to the English source text, and they will also be compared to each other. Specifically, the behaviour of Alice, the Hatter, and the Mock Turtle will be analysed. The English translations of the Dutch target texts are written by me.

A Mad Tea Party – Alice and the Hatter

(2a) 'Your hair wants cutting,' said the Hatter. [...] 'You should learn not to make personal remarks,' Alice said with some severity; 'it's very rude.' (Carroll 72)

(2b) 'Je haar moet geknipt worden,' zei de Hoedenmaker. [...] 'U moet niet zo persoonlijk worden,' zei Alice streng, 'dat is erg grof.' (Reedijk & Kossmann 74)

'Your hair has to be cut,' said the Hatter. [...] 'You don't have to get this personal,' said Alice severely, 'that is very crude.'

(2c) 'Je moet je haar eens laten knippen,' zei de Hoedenmaker. [...] 'Je moet geen persoonlijke opmerkingen maken,' zei Alice streng, 'dat is erg grof.' (Andriessse-van de Zande 71)

'You need to get your hair cut,' said the Hatter. [...] 'You don't have to make personal remarks,' said Alice severely, 'that is very crude.'

(2d) 'Jouw haar moet nodig geknipt worden,' zei de Hoedenmaker. [...] 'U moet niet persoonlijk worden,' zei Alice streng, 'dat is heel ongemanierd.' (Matsier 71)

‘Your hair needs to be cut,’ said the Hatter. [...] ‘You don’t have to get personal,’ said Alice severely, ‘that is very ill-mannerd’.

In example (2a), both the Hatter’s and Alice’s face is threatened. The Hatter’s negative face is threatened because he does not receive “freedom of action” (Brown & Levinson 66). Alice remarks that what the Hatter has just done is not correct. In addition, the Hatter threatens Alice’s positive face in this case. By making this personal remark about Alice, the Hatter touches upon Alice’s self-image. The preservation of her positive self-image is suddenly for a few seconds disrupted by this remark.

Example (2b) shows Matsier’s Dutch translation in which he substitutes ‘rude’ with *ongemanierd* (‘ill-mannered’). Reedijk and Kossmann, and Andriessse-van de Zande both use the word *grof* (‘crude’ or ‘brutish’). Although Alice speaks with a severe tone, *ongemanierd* (‘ill-mannered’) could possibly be perceived as being politer than *grof* (‘crude’). Matsier appears to have tried to be as polite as possible.

(3a) ‘What a funny watch!’ she [Alice] remarked. ‘It tells the day of the month, and doesn’t tell what o’clock it is!’ ‘Why should it?’ muttered the Hatter. ‘Does your watch tell you what year it is?’ ‘Of course not,’ Alice replied very readily: ‘but that’s because it stays the same year for such a long time together.’
(Carroll 74)

(3b) ‘Wat een grappig horloge!’ zei ze [Alice], ‘je kunt er op zien welke dag het is en niet eens hoe laat het is.’ ‘En wat dan nog?’ mompelde de Hoedenmaker, ‘kan je op jouw horloge zien welk jaar het is?’ ‘Natuurlijk niet,’ antwoordde Alice, ‘maar dat is omdat het zolang hetzelfde jaar blijft.’ (Reedijk & Kossmann 77)

‘What a funny watch!’ said she [Alice], ‘you can see which day it is and not even what time it is.’ ‘So what?’ mumbled the Hatter, ‘you can see what day it is on your watch?’ ‘Of course not,’ answered Alice, ‘but that is because it stay the same year for so long.’

(3c) ‘Wat een grappig horloge,’ zei ze [Alice]. ‘Je kunt er wel op zien welke dag het is, maar niet hoe laat het is.’ ‘En wat zou dat?’ mopperde de Hoedenmaker.
 ‘Kun je op jouw horloge soms zien welk jaar het is?’ ‘Natuurlijk niet,’ antwoordde Alice vlug, ‘maar dat komt omdat het zo lang hetzelfde jaar blijft.’
 (Andriessse-van de Zande 73)

‘What a funny watch,’ she said [Alice]. ‘You can see which day it is, but not what time it is.’
 ‘What of that?’ grumbled the Hatter. ‘Can you perhaps see what day it is on your watch?’ ‘Of course not,’ answered Alice hastily, ‘but that is because it stays the same year for so long’.

(3d) ‘Wat een grappig horloge!’ merkte ze op. ‘Het geeft de dag van de maand aan, maar niet hoe laat het is!’ ‘Moet dat dan?’ mopperde de Hoedenmaker. ‘Heb jij een horloge dat het jaar aangeeft?’ ‘Natuurlijk niet,’ antwoordde Alice prompt, ‘maar dat is omdat het een hele tijd hetzelfde jaar blijft.’ ‘Dat is met het mijne net zo,’ zei de Hoedenmaker. (Matsier 73)

‘What a funny watch!’ she [Alice] remarked. ‘It gives you the day of the month, but not what time it is!’ ‘Does it have to?’ grumbled the Hatter. ‘Do you have a watch that gives you the year?’ ‘Of course not,’ answered Alice promptly, ‘but that is because it stays the same year for such a long time’.

In example (3a), the Hatter threatens Alice’s face. Alice remarks that she thinks that the Hatter’s watch is funny and why she thinks it is funny. However, the Hatter immediately responds to this remark in a rather odd way. He mutters, and asks whether Alice’s watch works the same. In the online Cambridge Dictionary, the given definition of ‘to mutter’ is “to speak quietly so that your voice is difficult to hear, often when complaining about something”. The Hatter complains about something Alice has said. This could therefore be the threatening of Alice’s positive face. She may feel as if she had said something rather stupid. Alice therefore replies readily to this, which infers that she is quite surprised by the way the Hatter acts. However, she does not threaten the Hatter’s face when she answers his questions. In examples (3c) and (3d) ‘muttered’ is translated with *mopperde* (‘grumbled’). ‘To

grumble’ and ‘to mutter’ both carry the act of complaining. However, ‘muttering’ is performed in a low voice, whereas ‘grumbling’ is not. Reedijk & Kossmann, in example (3a), have chosen to use the word *mompelde* (‘mumbled’). This does not carry the act of complaining (Online Cambridge Dictionaries).

(4a) ‘I think you might do something better with the time,’ she [Alice] said’ (Carroll 75)

(4b) ‘Je kunt je tijd toch wel beter besteden,’ zei ze (Reedijk & Kossmann 78).

‘You can anyhow spend your time better,’ she said.

(4c) ‘Ik vind dat je de tijd wel beter kunt besteden [...]’ zei ze (Andriessse-van de Zande 74).

‘I think that you can spend the time better,’ she said.

(4d) ‘Je kunt je tijd wel beter gebruiken, lijkt mij,’ zei ze (Matsier 73).

‘You can use your time better, appears to me,’ she said.

In example (4a), Alice mentions that the Hatter is not doing the right thing. His negative face is therefore threatened. However, she tries not to sound too harsh by using the subjectiviser ‘I think’ and by using the downtoner ‘might’. The Dutch translations appear to be less polite than the source text. The use of the downtoner ‘might’ in the English text cannot be traced back in the Dutch translations. However, this downtoner increases the politeness in the source text. In example (4c), the subjectiviser ‘I think’ has been maintained. The translators could have used *zou kunnen* (‘could’) instead of *kunnen* (‘can’) to make it politer, or they could have added a downtoner such as *misschien* (‘perhaps’). Nevertheless, a translational change can be noticed in this fragment.

(5a) ‘Well, I’d [the Hatter] hardly finished the first verse,’ said the Hatter, ‘when the Queen jumped up and bawled out, “He’s murdering the time! Off with his head!”’

‘How dreadfully savage!’ exclaimed Alice (Carroll 77).

- (5b) ‘Ik had amper het eerste couplet gezongen,’ zei de Hoedenmaker, ‘toen de Koningin opsprong en schreeuwde, ‘Hij is de Tijd aan het doden. Sla zijn hoofd af!’ ‘Wat afschuwelijk wreed,’ riep Alice uit (Reedijk & Kossmann 79).

I had hardly sung the first verse,’ said the Hatter, ‘when the Queen jumped up and screamed, ‘He is murdering the time. Knock off his head!’ ‘How dreadfully savage!’

- (5c) ‘Nou, ik was amper klaar met het eerste couplet,’ zei de Hoedenmaker, ‘of de Koningin sprong overeind en begon te schreeuwen: ‘Hij verknoeit de Tijd! Hij verknoeit de Tijd! Sla zijn hoofd er af!’ ‘Wat afschuwelijk wreed!’ riep Alice uit (Andriessse-van de Zande 75).

‘Well, I was hardly done with the first verse,’ said the Hatter, ‘when the Queen jumped up and started screaming: ‘He is wasting the time! He is wasting the time! Knock off his head!’ ‘How dreadfully savage!’

- (5d) ‘Nou, ik was nauwelijks klaar met het eerste couplet,’ zei de Hoedenmaker, ‘of de Koningin sprong op en brulde: “Hij zingt zo vals als een kraai! Hij verknoeit onze tijd! Zijn hoofd eraf!”’ ‘Wat ontzettend wreed!’ riep Alice uit (Matsier 75).

‘Well, I was hardly done with the first verse,’ said the Hatter,’ ‘or the Queen jumped up and bawled: ‘He singing out of key like a crow! He is wasting our time! Knock off his head!’ ‘How terribly savage!’

According to Brown and Levinson, a strategy for polite behaviour is the seeking for agreement, and the avoidance of disagreement (118). Alice appears to do so in this example. However, another strategy to be polite is “hedging opinions”, which means that a speaker remains vague about its own opinion by exaggerating (121). This appears to be the case in Alice’s response to the Hatter’s story. All three Dutch translators have chosen to take a literal approach in this passage. Alice’s exclamation “How dreadfully savage!” becomes *Wat afschuwelijk wreed!* (‘How dreadfully savage!’). However, in example (7d), Matsier uses *ontzettend* (‘terribly’, but ‘dreadfully’ as well) instead of *afschuwelijk* (‘dreadfully’).

However, *afschuwelijk* could also be translated as ‘terribly’. There are many different adverbs, which carry the same meaning.

The Mock Turtle’s Story – Alice and the Mock Turtle

(6a) ‘The master was an old Turtle – we used to call him Tortoise –’ ‘Why did you call him Tortoise, if he wasn’t one?’ Alice asked. ‘We called him Tortoise because he taught us,’ said the Mock Turtle angrily: ‘really you are very dull!’
(Carroll 105)

(6b) ‘De meester was een oude Schildpad – wij noemden hem Roodschild.’
‘Waarom noemde u hem Roodschild!’ vroeg Alice, ‘was hij zo rijk?’ ‘Omdat hij socialist was natuurlijk,’ zei de Soepschildpad boos, ‘jij bent ook niet erg snugger!’ (Reedijk & Kossmann 105)

‘The master was an old Turtle – we called him Redshield.’ ‘Why did you call him Redshield!’ asked Alice, ‘was he that rich?’ ‘Because he was a socialist of course,’ said the Mock Turtle angrily, ‘you are not that smart!’

(6c) De meester was een oude Schildpad – we noemden hem altijd Landrot.’
‘Waarom?’ vroeg Alice. ‘Omdat hij dat niet was, daarom!’ zei de Soepschildpad boos. ‘Kun je niet eens een grapje begrijpen?’ (Andriessse-van de Zande 99)’

‘The master was an old Turtle – we always called him Landlubber.’ ‘Why?’ asked Alice.
‘Because he wasn’t, that’s why!’ said the Mock Turtle angrily. ‘You can’t even understand a joke?’

(6d) ‘De meester was een oude schildpad – we noemden hem de Scheldpad...’
‘Omdat hij altijd zo schold, zeker?’ vroeg Alice. ‘Nee maar, wat ben jij snugger!’ zei de Imitatieschildpad boos. ‘Zouden wij hem de Scheldpad noemen omdat hij zo vriendelijk tegen ons sprak?’ (Mastier 98).

‘The master was an old turtle – we called him Curse Turtle...’ ‘Because he always cursed, right?’ asked Alice. ‘No way, you are so smart!’ said the Mock Turtle angrily. ‘Would we call him Curse Turtle because he always spoke so friendly to us?’

Alice questioning why the Mock Turtle and his fellow students called their teacher Tortoise instead of Turtle can be seen as rather polite. Her interest in the Mock Turtle’s story is intensified by asking a question (Brown & Levinson 111). However, the Mock Turtle thinks Alice is dull, and says so out loud. Hereby Alice’s positive face is threatened. It attracts to her self-image in a negative manner. In examples (6b-d), the Dutch translations are listed. In Andriesse-van der Zande’s translation the whole part in which Alice is called “dull” has been left out. This makes it less face threatening. It is nonetheless impolite to ask such a question, because it does threaten positive face. Reedijk & Kossmann have chosen to say that Alice is “not smart” instead of “dull”. This may be perceived as being less impolite, although it still comes down to a similar meaning. Matsier has changed it into a sarcastic remark.

(7a) ‘Yes, we went to school in the sea, though you mayn’t believe it –’ ‘I never said I didn’t!’ interrupted Alice. ‘You did,’ said the Mock Turtle (Carroll 106).

(7b) ‘We gingen dus in zee op school of je het gelooft of niet –’ ‘Ik heb helemaal niet gezegd dat ik je niet geloofde!’ zei Alice. ‘Dat heb je wel,’ snauwde de Soepschildpad (Reedijk & Kossmann 105).

‘So we went to school in sea if you believe it or not-’ ‘I haven’t said I didn’t believe you at all!’ said Alice. ‘You did,’ snapped the Mock Turtle.

(7c) ‘Ja, we gingen dus in de zee op school, of je het nu geloven wilt of niet...’ ‘Ik heb helemaal niet gezegd dat ik het niet geloofde,’ viel Alice hem in de rede. ‘Dat heb je wel,’ zei de Soepschildpad (Andriesse-van de Zande 99).

‘Yes, so we went to school in sea, if you want to believe it or not...’ ‘I have never said I didn’t believe it at all,’ interrupted Alice. ‘You did,’ said the Mock Turtle.

- (7d) ‘Ja, we gingen in zee op school, geloof het of niet...’ ‘Ik heb nooit gezegd dat ik ’t niet geloofd!’ onderbrak Alice hem. ‘Jawel,’ zei de Imitatieschildpad (Matsier 98).

‘Yes, we went to school in sea, believe it or not...’ ‘I have never said that I didn’t believe it!’ interrupted Alice. ‘Yes, you did,’ said the Mock Turtle.

In example (7a), Alice and the Mock Turtle both do something remarkable. At first, Alice interrupts the Mock Turtle. She does not seek agreement at all (Brown and Levinson 117).

Moreover, the Mock Turtle does not seek for agreement as well. They have a short discussion. The use of *snauwde* (“snapped”) in example (7b) makes the utterance more inappropriate than it already is in the source text. Only Reedijk and Kossmann made use of this verb.

- (8a) ‘We had the best of educations – in fact, we went to school every day –’ ‘I’ve been to a day-school, too,’ said Alice; ‘you needn’t be so proud as all that.’ ‘With extras?’ asked the Mock Turtle a little anxiously. ‘Yes,’ said Alice, ‘we learned French and music.’ (Carroll 106).

- (8b) ‘Het was een hele goede opvoeding, we gingen iedere dag naar school.’ ‘Dat doe ik ook,’ zei Alice, ‘daar hoeft u heus niet zo trots op te zijn.’ ‘Met facultatieve vakken?’ vroeg de Soepschildpad een beetje bezorgd. ‘Ja,’ zei Alice, ‘Frans en muziek’ (Reedijk & Kossmann 105).

‘It was a really good upbringing, we went to school every day.’ ‘That is also what I do,’ said Alice, ‘you don’t need to be so proud of that.’ ‘With facultative subjects?’ asked the Mock Turtle a little concerned. ‘Yes,’ Alice said. ‘French and music.’

- (8c) ‘We kregen een uitstekende opleiding – we gingen dan ook iedere dag naar school.’ ‘Ik ga ook iedere dag naar school,’ zei Alice, ‘daar hoeft je heus niet zo trots op te zijn.’ ‘En hebben jullie ook extra vakken?’ vroeg de Soepschildpad een beetje verontrust. ‘Ja,’ zei Alice, ‘we krijgen Frans en muziek.’ (Andriesse-van de Zande 99)

‘We got an excellent education – we went to school every single day.’ ‘I also go to school every day.’ Said Alice, ‘you don’t have to be so proud of that.’ ‘And did you have extra subjects?’ asked the Mock Turtle a little worried. ‘Yes’ she said, ‘we got French and music.’

- (8d) ‘Wij kregen zulk goed onderwijs... wij ging zelfs elke dag naar school...’ ‘Ik zit ook op een dagschool,’ zei Alice, ‘daar hoeft u helemaal niet zo trots op te zijn!’ ‘Was jullie school inclusief of exclusief?’ vroeg de Imitatieschildpad een beetje bang. ‘Exclusief,’ zei Alice, ‘wij kregen Frans en muziek.’ (Matsier 98)
- ‘We got such a good education... we even went to school every day...’ ‘I also go to a day-school,’ said Alice, ‘you don’t have to be so proud of that!’ ‘Was your school included or excluded?’ asked the Mock Turtle a little afraid. ‘Excluded,’ said Alice, ‘we got French and music.’

In example (8a), the Mock Turtle is convinced that he has received good education. However, Alice responds that she has received the same sort of education, so there is no need for him to act proud. This is threatening to the Mock Turtle’s positive face. He has a positive self-image, because he is certain that he had “the best of educations” (Carroll 106). However, his self-image is touched upon, because Alice notices that he does not need to be proud, because she goes to school every day as well. The Mock Turtle responds “anxiously” to this question. This shows that he is indeed a little overwhelmed. In the Dutch translations the manner in which the Mock Turtle asks that question, differs slightly. However, Alice’s first reply is translated rather literally.

On the other hand, Alice also knows how to be polite. In example (9a) she “intensifies her interest” in the Mock Turtle’s story (Brown and Levinson 111).

- (9a) ‘I couldn’t afford to learn it,’ said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. ‘I only took the regular course.’ ‘What was that?’ inquired Alice (Carroll 107).
- (9b) ‘Ik had er jammer genoeg geen gelegenheid voor,’ zei de Soepschildpad zuchtend, ‘ik volgde alleen de gewone cursus.’ ‘Wat was dat?’ vroeg Alice (Reedijk & Kossmann 106).

‘Unfortunately, I didn’t have the opportunity for that,’ said the Mock Turtle sighing, ‘I only did the normal course.’ ‘What was that?’ asked Alice.

- (9c) ‘Ik ben helaas nooit in de gelegenheid geweest om het te leren,’ zei de Soepschildpad met een zucht. ‘Ik volgde alleen de gewone lessen.’ ‘En wat was dat?’ vroeg Alice (Andriesse-van de Zande 100).

‘Unfortunately, I never had the opportunity to learn it,’ said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. ‘I only did the usual lessons.’ ‘And what was that?’ asked Alice.

- (9d) ‘Ik kon me die lessen niet veroorloven,’ zei de Imitatieschildpad met een zucht. ‘Ik heb alleen het gewone programma gevolgd.’ ‘Wat was dat?’ informeerde Alice (Matsier 99)

‘I couldn’t afford the lessons,’ said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. ‘I only did the usual programme.’ ‘What was that?’ informed Alice.

The Mock Turtle tells something about his past and about the lessons he had at school. Alice then asks which lessons he used to have. This shows her interest in the Mock Turtle’s past. In Dutch translations, this appears to be the same. The translators did not choose to change this question.

All these observations show that the Dutch translators have made some adaptations concerning the (im)polite behaviour of Alice, the Hatter, and the Mock Turtle. In addition, the decision on whether to use the Dutch pronoun *u* or not differs among the translators. The pronoun *u* is considered to be politer than *jij* (‘you’) in Dutch (De Jong, Theune, & Hofs 4). Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier both use the Dutch personal pronoun *u*, whereas Andriesse-van de Zande uses *jij* (‘you’). However, the usage of the pronoun *u* appears not to be consistent. Reedijk and Kossmann let Alice use *u(w)* in example (8b), whereas she does not use it in example (7b).

- (8b) ‘Het was een hele goede opvoeding, we gingen iedere dag naar school.’ ‘Dat doe ik ook,’ zei Alice, ‘daar hoeft u heus niet zo trots op te zijn.’ ‘Met

facultatieve vakken?’ vroeg de Soepschildpad een beetje bezorgd. ‘Ja,’ zei Alice, ‘Frans en muziek’ (Reedijk & Kossmann 105).

‘It was a really good upbringing, we went to school every day.’ ‘That is also what I do,’ said Alice, ‘you don’t need to be so proud of that.’ ‘With facultative subjects?’ asked the Mock Turtle a little concerned. ‘Yes,’ Alice said. ‘French and music.’

(7b) ‘We gingen dus in zee op school of je het gelooft of niet –’ ‘Ik heb helemaal niet gezegd dat ik je niet geloofde!’ zei Alice. ‘Dat heb je wel,’ snauwde de Soepschildpad (Reedijk & Kossmann 105).

‘So we went to school in sea if you believe it or not-’ ‘I haven’t said I didn’t believe you at all!’ said Alice. ‘You did,’ snapped the Mock Turtle.

Alice does not use the pronoun *u* consistently in Reedijk & Kossmann’s translation in “A Mad Tea Party”. In example (2b), she does use *u*, whereas in example (4b) she does not. The exact same choices on the usage of the pronoun *u* have been made by Matsier.

Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier have chosen not to let the Hatter and the Mock Turtle use the pronoun *u*. In that respect, Alice is politer than the Hatter and the March Hare. She tries to be polite to characters she does not know by using the Dutch polite pronoun *u*.

4. Discussion

In ‘A Mad Tea Party’ in Carroll’s source text, Alice and the Hatter appear not to be polite to each other very often. Many Face Threatening Acts are being performed by both of them. Alice does that in the manner of limiting the Hatter’s “freedom of action”; by threatening the Hatter’s negative face. She explicitly mentions that the behaviour or the Hatter’s utterances are wrong, which can be seen in the examples (2a) and (4a). In example (2a), she explicitly says that what the Hatter remarks is “very rude”. In example (4a), she mitigates her suggestion with the use of the subjectiviser ‘I think’ and the downtoner ‘might’. The Hatter shows similar behaviour. In example (3a), the Hatter mutters and complains about what Alice has just said. This may attract to her positive face in a negative way, because she may feel a little stupid, which influences her own self-image. On the other hand, Alice is also polite to the Hatter, because in example (5a) she avoids disagreement and she remains vague about her own opinion by exaggerating, which is according to Brown and Levinson polite behaviour (121).

In the Dutch translations of ‘A Mad Tea Party’ slight changes have been made in comparison with Carroll’s source text. Example (2c) shows Matsier’s use of *ongemanierd* (‘ill-mannered’), which could be perceived as being politer than *grof* (‘crude’ or ‘brutish’), which is used by the other translators. Also the difference between *mopperen* (‘to grumble’) and *mompelen* (‘to mutter’) could influence the reader’s perception, because *mompelen* is not complaining. The use of the subjectiviser ‘I think’ in example (5a) has been maintained, however, the downtoner ‘might’ has been omitted in all Dutch translations. This could make the Dutch utterances less polite than the English source text.

In ‘The Mock Turtle’s Story’ Alice is impolite towards the Mock Turtle, because she interrupts him and does not search for agreement at all. Seeking for agreement is a strategy for being polite, according to Brown and Levinson (117). In addition, in example (8a), Alice does

also threaten the Mock Turtle's positive face. The Mock Turtle himself has a positive self-image, because of his good education. However, Alice immediately tells him his education was not that special, because she has exactly the same kind of education. However, The Mock Turtle calls Alice "dull", which also threatens Alice's positive face; it touches upon her self-image. However, Alice intensifies her interest in what the Mock Turtle is telling in example (9a). This is considered to be polite (Brown and Levinson 111)

The Dutch translations of 'The Mock Turtle's Story' differ in some respect from Carroll's source text. In example (6a), Alice is called "dull". However, Andriesse-van de Zande omitted this whole passage, and Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier substituted "dull" with "not smart". This could make the Mock Turtle a little politer. Reedijk and Kossmann were the only translators who made use of the verb *snauwen* ('to snap') (example (7b)). Through this it seems as if the Mock Turtle is rather impolite.

The pronoun *u* is considered to be polite in Dutch (De Jong, Theune, & Hofs 4). Only Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier have used this pronoun. However, they did not do this consistently with Alice's behaviour. At some moments, she uses the Dutch pronoun *u* and sometimes *jij* ('you').

Since there are not many differences in the behaviour of Alice, the Hatter and the Mock Turtle, their characterisation does not appear to be changed significantly. Alice's behaviour in the conversations with the Hatter appears not to differ from the way she acts in conversations with the Mock Turtle. There are many similarities between the source text and the three translations. However, when comparing the three translations, different translational decisions can be seen. By native speakers of Dutch, Alice may possibly be perceived to be politer in Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier's translation, than in Andriesse-van de Zande's translation, because in Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier's translation, she uses the polite pronoun *u*. The examples of the different translational choices show that the changing of one

word could suddenly carry more or less politeness. As well as the addition of a downtoner could influence the image one receives of a character.

Babette Cillekens only focusses on Alice's behaviour in three Dutch translations. According to her, Alice does not behave smart and polite in Reedijk & Kossmann's translation, whereas she is more articulate and curious in Matsier's translation (37). Present study shows that Alice acts politer in the translations by Reedijk and Kossmann, and Matsier, than in Andriesse-van de Zande's translation. The use of the Dutch pronoun *u* makes someone seem politer. Cillekens refers to Ten Raa's translations in which Alice never uses the pronoun *u*. This is also the case in Andriesse-van de Zande's translation. Cillekens' conclusions appear to be similar to the conclusions which can be drawn from present study.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to investigate what effect the translational choices in three Dutch translations have on the characterisation of the Alice, the Hatter, and the Mock Turtle in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The main differences between the source text *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and the three Dutch translations are in certain small additions, omissions or changes. There do not appear to be many major differences in politeness between Carroll's text and the Dutch translations. The effect is therefore rather small. There are a few cases in which the Dutch translators have chosen to be more polite or impolite, specifically when focussing on Brown and Levinson's findings. Nonetheless, this does not change the characterisation of the characters enormously. In two of the Dutch translations, the characters could be perceived politer due to the usage of the pronoun *u*.

Several limitations of this study need to be examined. Firstly, it might have been better to analyse more Dutch translations since there are 12 different Dutch translations. Due to time constraints this was not possible.

Secondly, it may have been interesting to focus more on the year of publication of the translations, and perhaps even the age of the translators. People could have been politer in the days of the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* than 100 years after that. In addition, there could be a difference in the perception of politeness between older translators and younger translators. In addition, the years of experience a translator has in the translation field might also influence the manner of dealing with such pragmatic differences.

Lastly, it might have been useful to know what readers actually think about the characters' behaviour. They could have been presented with an English fragment of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Then they had to rate on scale if the characters are polite or

impolite. However, it may be useful to include certain fillers, to prevent the participants from discovering that the research is only about *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Future research might investigate whether similar results can be found in a study in which more Dutch translations are compared to each other and to the source text. This could provide more insight in the way pragmatic differences are translated. It would also be interesting to see whether there are differences in the perception of politeness between different eras or decades. It would also be useful to see what readers actually think of the behaviour of the characters in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

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