

PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

Fraud and Plagiarism

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.


The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) theses sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.	
Name:	Michelle Kleijne
Student number:	5541263
Date and signature:	25-7-2019 

Submit this form to your supervisor when you begin writing your Bachelor's final paper or your Master's thesis.

Failure to submit or sign this form does not mean that no sanctions can be imposed if it appears that plagiarism has been committed in the paper.

Nonce-formations and Personifications Adrift: Translating Daisy Johnson's *Everything Under*

Abstract: This thesis discusses a number of the translation problems, in particular the nonce-formations and personifications, in Daisy Johnson's *Everything Under* and what the likely solutions to these problems would be, were this novel to be translated for Dutch publisher De Fontein. A synopsis of the source text will be provided, in addition to a discussion of this translation. The research question is: what are the translation problems in Johnson's *Everything Under* and what are the possible and most desirable solutions to these problems?

Michelle Kleijne

5541263

BA Thesis English Language and Culture, Utrecht University

Supervisor: Cees Koster

Second Reader: Onno Kusters

July 2019

Contents

Research.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Synopsis of Source Text.....	3
Translating <i>Everything Under</i>	4
Translation problems and desirable solutions.....	4
Text Specific Translation Problems.....	4
Nonce-formations: the verbs and nouns.....	4
Words that occur in the passages.....	7
Words that can be found outside of the passages.....	10
Nonce-formations: translation of names.....	11
Interlingual Translation Problems.....	12
Other Translation Problems.....	13
Establishing translation strategy.....	13
Translating the nonce-formations.....	13
Conclusion.....	15
Translated passages.....	16
Translated Text and Annotations.....	16
Bibliography.....	23
Appendix: Source Text.....	24

Word count (excl.):

Research: 4300

Translated Passages: 2621

Annotations: 450

Total: 7371

Research

Introduction

In this thesis, translation problems that occur in the novel *Everything Under* by Daisy Johnson are analysed and discussed, were this novel to be translated for the Dutch publisher De Fontein. Particularly the nonce-formations and the personifications are a challenge the translator and are discussed in depth. The novel belongs to the genre of psychological fiction. The target audience will, most likely, be predominantly female readers from the age of 16 and up but this is an estimate. This estimation on the age of the target audience is based upon the fact that the novel deals with philosophical themes such as fluidity of language, gender and inevitably. It rules out that this novel would be suitable for children as they would not be able to fully understand these themes. The Dutch translation of this novel will be published by De Fontein, which has experience with publishing psychological fiction for an adult target audience. Therefore it is assumed that this publisher knows how to recommend the novel and how to reach the intended target audience. Additionally, a synopsis of the novel is provided to give insight into the plot of the story.

Synopsis of Source Text

Everything Under by Daisy Johnson was published in 2018 by Graywolf Press and is about a mother and daughter that used to live isolated from society, in a houseboat on a river. Language is a very important theme in the novel because together Gretel and her mother Sarah use words that nobody else uses, which strengthens their mother-daughter relationship. After she is abandoned by her mother as a teenager, Gretel is at the same time also estranged from the rest of society because she continues to use these words amongst peers. In adulthood, language is still very important to Gretel as she works as a lexicographer for the Oxford English Dictionary. Additionally, it shows the readers that she did not let her past define her and managed to learn the English language properly. Her job gives her a sense of control over language and therefore she no longer feels like an outsider to society.

The narrative starts off with Gretel's search for her mother, which has been an unsuccessful quest for the last sixteen years. When the two finally meet again, Gretel slowly but surely learns more about her family history and regains the memories of her grim childhood which she repressed for a long time. Sarah has a hard time expressing herself because she struggles with Alzheimer's disease and therefore loses the words that she used to use during Gretel's childhood. This hardship caused by the disease becomes symbolic for the

way that their relationship is damaged due to the abandonment of Gretel and for the fact that their bond will never be as strong as it once was. At the same time that Gretel is looking for Sarah, two people from the same town, Laura and Roger, are looking for their daughter Margot, who goes by the name of Marcus nowadays. Marcus ran away from home and stayed for a month with Sarah and Gretel, appearing at their boat one day. A family friend convinced Marcus that he would suffer from the Oedipus complex in the future and that he would ultimately kill his father one day, after which he decided to leave his parents.

Translating *Everything Under*

Translation problems and desirable solutions

Everything Under is a difficult work to translate, mainly because of a multitude of personifications and nonce-formations. Most of the translation problems that can be found in the text are text specific and interlingual problems (Nord 60). Therefore the focus on the discussion of the translation problems lies mostly on these types of problems, rather than the intercultural and pragmatic problems (Nord). The three translated passages are a good reflection of the entire text since some of the most problematic personifications and the most interesting nonce-formations can be found in these passages. The desirable solutions to some of the translation problems are discussed in the footnotes in the translation, but the most intricate and interesting problems are elaborated on in the discussion below.

Text Specific Translation Problems

There are different types of text specific translation problems to be found in this text. A translation problem that falls into this category are the so-called nonce-formations, that can be divided into two different categories: the verbs and nouns, and the names.

Nonce-formations: the verbs and nouns

Neologisms are new words that are used in a sentence, most of the time with no description provided of their meanings (Fisher 3). There are different stages in the ‘life’ of a potential neologism. Nonce-formations are words created by the writer and have a limited use. If they are actively used by the language community, they turn into neologisms. Those neologisms can ultimately be taken up in the language system, if they become popular (Fisher 5).

Stekauer defines nonce-formations as: “new words, expressive units of parole that come into existence in the process of text-production, and usually serve only one specific, contextually

conditioned ‘application’” (97). The invented words in this novel are stuck in the stage of being nonce-formations since the active use of the words is restricted to the two main characters. The words are used passively by some characters because Marcus knows about the words but does not use them in conversation and only passes the information on their meaning over to the readers. Gretel’s class mates only repeat the words after her to ridicule her, without knowing what they mean which also classifies as rather passive use. Therefore, it is not expected that the words develop from their stage as nonce-formations and turn into neologisms because the world only exist in the world that is depicted by Johnson. It is not very likely that these words will be taken up in the standard language.

Some of the nonce-formations can be seen as *hapax legomena*, words that only occur in a single language situation (Szymanek 430). Most of the nonce-formations that are used in the fictional world of *Everything Under*, can be seen as *hapax legomena* because these words are only recorded in this work of fiction. Words as “sills”, “grear” and “sheesh” cannot be truly seen as *hapax legomena* because these are existing words although in this novel they have been given a new meaning. This can be considered a sort of semantic shift, however only limited to their usage in the fictional world because the new meanings are not actively used in the standard English language.

In this novel, the nonce-formations are invented by Sarah and are used in conversations with her daughter Gretel. The words that occur in the passages are: “effing along”, “sheesh time”, “harpiedoodle”, “sprung”, “duvduv”, “sills”, “grear” and “The Bonak.” Some of the meanings of the invented words become clear from the context and others need explanation. The meanings of the nonce-formations are disclosed near the end of the novel, when they are explicitly mentioned by the narrator. The narrator explains how a side character called Marcus analysed the use of the nonce-formations: “the words were instinctual, formed from the sound things made or words Gretel had come up with as a baby which had stuck” (Johnson 190). For example, he finds out that the word “harpiedoodle” means “a small annoyance like a dropped plate or scratch but was used often, mostly shouted, to denote anything that hadn’t gone quite to plan” (Johnson 189-190). To clarify, the words that are created out of Gretel’s utterances are developed into complete words, not merely syllables or sounds as you would expect from a baby. It becomes clear that some of the words are based upon Sarah’s sensory perception, upon how she experiences certain natural phenomena: “*sills* was the noise the river made at night and *grear* the taste of it in the morning” (Johnson 191). These descriptions of the meaning are advantageous for the translator since he/she is guided in the right direction and thus may prevent misinterpretation of the meanings of the nonce-

formations.

Even though these words are overheard by a couple of people in their social environment, they are not actively used by anyone other than Sarah and Gretel. The various nonce-formations that are used throughout the novel reflect an important part of the identity of the two main characters and are therefore very important in the translation of this novel. These words can have a surprising effect upon the reader because of the ingenuity with which these were invented. More importantly, Sarah and Gretel's nonce-formations show that language can either enable or disable close connections between people. The reader is most likely to feel excluded from the small sociolinguistic group that consists of only Sarah and Gretel. The way these words came into existence, displays how much emotion is attached to their own private language and how it strengthened the mother-daughter relationship. In addition, Marcus tells about how long it took him to finally understand all of the words that they use and how it made him feel left out from conversation and excluded from the little sociolinguistic group. Also, Gretel uses the nonsense words at school, not realising that they are unconventional and because of that she does not fit in with her peers.

In this following overview of the nonce-formations, is stated how many times a certain word can be found in the text. More importantly, from these examples it becomes clear what the meaning of the word is. The nonce-formations that can be found outside of the translated passages, "runner-away", "stayer-putter" and "egaratise", are also included to gain better insight in how the nonce-formations were coined. In addition, it provides a complete overview of the newly coined words that can be found in the novel.

The nonce-formations have various subcategories:

- Borrowings (loanwords from another language: "hobby")
- Shifting (semantic shifts: a word gets a new meaning or grammatical shifts: nouns become verbs)
- Combining (derivations: "Thatcherite", compounding: "bromance")
- Coining (words that are created spontaneously and do not seem to derive from existing words)
- Imitating ("onomatopoeic imitation of sounds": "zoom")
- Blending (parts of words are combined: "hotel" + "motor" = "motel")
- Shortening (clippings: "WIFI", acronyms: "AIDS") (Delabastita 884).

Words that occur in the passages

Effing along

p.6	You tell me that you can hear the water effing along; I answer that we are far from any river but that I sometimes hear it too.
p.13	<i>What are you doing?</i> you said. <i>Is this where you've ended up? Just effing along.</i>
p.190	He understood that effie meant the current was faster as in the water was effing along or effying along the banks.
p.217	The river was effing along, heavy with sprung.

The nonce-formations “effing along” or “effie” are used four times throughout the narrative. From these four sentences in which the verb is used, you can tell that it has two different grammatical functions:

- Effing along or effying along (verb)
- Effie (noun)

The noun “effie” refers to water that flows quickly because the current is faster and “effing along” seems that the water is flowing along the banks. There seems to be no difference between “effing along” and “effying along” in usage within the context of the sentence. These words seem to belong to the subcategory of derivations.

Sheesh time

p.6	You tell me you need me to leave, you need some sheesh time.
p.30	I told one of the teachers I needed sheesh time.
p.49	You, I remember, had told me you needed a sheesh, asked me to sleep on the roof.
p.185	Sleep on the roof tonight, Gretel, I need some sheesh time.
p.189	To have sheesh time meant that Sarah needed some time alone.

The nouns “sheesh time” or “sheesh” occur five times in the text. On page 49, it is referred to as needing a “sheesh”, so the nonce-formation is abbreviated. On page 189, where the word is last used, is explained that it means “alone time”. Both “alone time” and “sheesh time” are compound words. That means that they are created through a process of “combining”

(Delabastita 884). The word “sheesh” already exists in the English language and it seems to have various meanings. According to the Collins Dictionary, it used as an interjection that can be applicable in a lot of sentences but it is mostly used as an exclamation of surprise, annoyance, disbelief (“Collins Dictionary”). “Sheesh” is related to the word “djeez”, which is an abbreviation of “djeesus”, in this case the word is a derivation (process of combining) and a semantic shift took place (process of shifting) (Delabastita 884).

Harpiedoodle

p.6	I tell you that you are a harpiedoodle and you grow enraged or laugh so hard you cry.
p.30	[...] I shouted at a boy that he was a harpiedoodle.
p.176	[...] she'd dropped a bowl and shouted Harpiedoodle! very loudly. A word he did not think was real but that she somehow made exist just by saying it.
p.189	A harpiedoodle was a small annoyance like a dropped plate or scratch but was used often, mostly shouted, to denote anything that hadn't gone quite to plan.

The noun “harpiedoodle” is a compound word that is based upon the existing words, “harp” and “doodle”. The meanings of these words are not transferred to this nonce-formation because a “harpiedoodle” is not a subcategory or types of doodles and the harp has nothing to do with the new meaning of the word. As explained on page 189, a “harpiedoodle” is something or someone that annoys you or a small thing that went wrong. Just as with “sheesh time”, this nonce-formation falls into the category of both compounding because the two words are combined in order to create a new word and shifting because of the semantic shift in the meaning of the word (Delabastita 884). The two parts of the words are joined together by the infix “ie”.

Duvdud

p.153	The game, she'd said, was a duvdud one, which he thought meant something good, that she really liked.
p.190	Something comfortable or enjoyable, often soft or warm, was duvdud – named after a blanket Gretel had as a child and then lost.
p.216	It's duvdud to see you, Gretel, you said.

The noun “duvduv” can be found three times in the text. Gretel gave her blanket this name and Sarah decided that this would be the name that would be used to refer to the object. Over time, the word came to denote anything that is good, positive or comfortable. In sentences it can be replaced by the words “lovely”, “nice” or “good”. The word seems to derive from the word “duvet” and therefore it is a derivation (process of combining) (Delabastita 884).

Grear

p.19	<i>sills</i> was the noise the river made at night and <i>grear</i> the taste of it in the morning.
------	---

The noun “grear” is used in one sentence and it is immediately explained what the word means. “Grear” is the taste the river has in the morning. The word did not yet exist in the English language and therefore we can conclude that this word falls into the category of coinages. (Delabastita 884).

Sills

p.191	<i>sills</i> was the noise the river made at night and <i>grear</i> the taste of it the morning.
-------	--

The noun “sills” is used once in this novel and the meaning of this word can be directly found in the sentence. This word is derived from the word “sill” which has various meanings.

According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, it can be:

- A horizontal piece of material that is the lowest part of a construction, like a building or a door
- A flat intrusion of molten rock that is in between two layers of rock.
- A barrier at the sea floor that divides two basins. (“Merriam Webster Dictionary”)

The nonce-formation derived from the word but an extra ‘s’ is added to it. The process of shifting took place because the meaning of the word has changed (Delabastita 884).

Sprung

p.192	Sarah and Gretel called anything that came by in the river (fish, planks of wood, plastic bags) a sprung. People on boats where human-sprungs; carcasses or sheep or water-logged birds were dead-sprungs.
p.217	The river was effing along, heavy with sprung.

In the first sentence that this noun is used, is explained what the word means and in the second sentence it is expected of the reader that they picked up what is meant. A “sprung” is any type of object that be found in the rivers and they have different categories with according names. In the standard English language, “sprung” is the past participle of the verb “spring”.

Words that can be found outside of the passages

Egaratise

p.51	The word you were looking for is <i>egaratise</i> and it means to disappear yourself, to step out of your past. I tell you there is no such word and show you the place in the dictionary to prove it.
------	--

The verb “egaratise” occurs only once in the text and is not part of the language that Sarah and Gretel share, so it is not actively used in conversation. However, it is interesting to see that the nonce-formations that were created, are not only verbs. While suffering from the impact that Alzheimer’s disease has on her brain, Sarah was convinced this was a real word and asks Gretel to look it up in a dictionary. Sarah thinks it means “to disappear yourself, to step out of your past” which makes it seem like she is talking about a new word for something like committing suicide or to start a whole different live somewhere nobody knows you. Giving the meaning Sarah thinks the words has, the verb “to erase” comes to mind, which might had an impact in the coinage of this word. It can be a derivation of two verbs but how the word came into existence remains unknown. It can be translated as “egaratiseren” which has an equally alienating effect upon the readers of the target text as the original nonce-formation has on the audience of the source text.

Runner-away, stayer-putter

p.147	She says she’s a runner-away but really she is a stayer-putter and very good.
-------	---

The adverbs “runner-away” and “stayer-putter” occur only once in the text and derive from the verbs “to run away” and “to stay put”. These type of verbs are called phrasal verbs (Sayadi).

The formation of these adverbs occurs in two steps.

1. Firstly, the suffix ‘-er’ is added to the verbs, which results in an agentive noun
2. The two parts of the verb are connected with a hyphen.

The meaning of the two phrasal verbs is straightforward and can be deduced from the meaning of the two verbs. This nonce-formation falls into the category of both compounding because the two words are combined in order to create a new word and shifting because of the semantic shift in the meaning of the word (Delabastita 884). They can be translated as ‘wegrenner’ and ‘hierblijver’.

Nonce-formations: translation of names

Names that are made up also fall into the category of nonce-formations. One of the first names that the translator is faced with is the name “The Bonak.” From context it becomes clear that this name is used to refer to the presence of a physical monster that is being personified by means of giving it a name. Sarah explains that “[t]hat’s what we called everything that we ever afraid of” (Johnson 144). The name is also used when the characters want to express their fear for non-physical things such as being afraid of water or being afraid of the dark. It is also used in the plural, without the article “the” in the sentence “[t]here were more Bonak in the water than could be counted: bodies whose ghosts might catch on the anchor[...], trunks of trees [...], the canal thief”[...] (Johnson 195). The name itself is aptly chosen because by means of its phonological attributes, characterised by harsh short sounds divided up into two short syllables, it already sounds terrifying. Also, the addition of the article “the” in combination with the capital letter makes the monster seem all the more powerful and dangerous. The sounds of the word are do not seem exclusively English because with a little adjustment in the pronunciation of the word it could very well be a word from the Dutch language. Therefore, the name of the monster is translated into “De Bonak”, with only the article translated in Dutch.

Sometimes Sarah calls Gretel ‘Regretel’ which is a contraction of the name ‘Gretel’ and the verb ‘to regret’, in which the two words overlap. It can be considered a portmanteau word because the meanings and the sounds of the two words are mixed together into a single word (“Encyclopaedia Britannica”). It can be compared to the way that the words “bro” and “romance” overlap in “bromance”. Sarah does not disclose to the reader why she came up with that name however the reader may interpret that she feels unfit for motherhood. Looking at it from that perspective, the name seems to hint at Sarah’s incapability of coming to terms with being a mother and that she regrets getting pregnant with Gretel. This wordplay adheres to the style of the work, because it is also part of the nonce-formations that are invented by

Sarah, and therefore is decided to maintain the name. The name is translated into ‘Vergretel’ which is a contraction between the name ‘Gretel’ and the verb ‘vergeten’. The two words do not overlap in the same way as they do in the original name because not all of the letters from verb ‘vergeten’ are used and the letter ‘r’ is not part of the verb, only of the name. The verb ‘vergeten’ is not chosen at random as it also applies to the nature of their mother-daughter relationship, in particular to their bond after the reunion. Sarah does not recognise Gretel once the Alzheimer’s disease starts to progress and from time to time Gretel reminds her that she is her daughter.

Interlingual Translation Problems

The personifications of objects are the most challenging interlingual translation problems in the novel. The objects that are personified are the rivers, trees, stars, floorboards, pronouns, nouns and grammatical objects. An example of this is “I watch the words leaving you. The pronouns are slippery and won’t stay still; objects go first [...]” (Johnson 257). Another example is “The river curls through the corner of the sitting room, upsets the floorboards” (257). When a non-animated noun is a subject to an animated verb, it sounds too animistic in the Dutch language and are therefore rarely used in translation, according to the Dutch translator Paul Claes (37). The example of the river and the floorboards is twofold. It is constructed out of two objects which are connected to two different verbs: the river that curls and the floorboards that are upset. In order to maintain the alliteration of curls and corners the meaning of the sentence is slightly changed into “baande zich een weg door de woonkamer”, which disregards the precise way in which the water found its way and also leaves out the emphasis on the corners of the living room. The difference between the two parts of the sentence is that the second part of the sentence, the upset floorboards, can be regarded as a personification. The personification of the floorboards is changed into a less animistic verb ‘verstoren’, so the sentence becomes: ‘De rivier baant zich een weg door woonkamer, verstoort de vloerplaten.’ This grammatical construction indicates that something happened to the floorboards rather than the floorboards expressing a human emotion. In Dutch, it is unusual to link a human emotion to a non-animated object, so ideally it should be avoided. However, the translator may choose to maintain the personification for a good reason. This done for the personifications in the next sentences: “The next day I watch the words leaving you. The pronouns are slippery and won’t stay still; objects go first so that you only point or shout until I bring what you want. Names are long gone” (Johnson 257). In these sentence, the personifications are maintained to emphasise the powerlessness that Sarah experiences with

the process of losing language because of Alzheimer's disease. The words are literally leaving her brain and she cannot do anything to stop that from happening.

Other Translation Problems

A pragmatic translation problem that can be found in the selected passages are the following words that may be viewed as inappropriate: "Even now they feel like words only half-translated fuck, shag, bang, snog, French" (Johnson 31). These informal British words refer to sexual intercourse and kissing and are mostly used among teenagers. Research shows that using obscene language or even swearing has a social purpose such as fitting in with a particular social group (Karjalainen 26). Although Gretel is able to understand the words through the context she is not familiar with them which causes Gretel to feel somewhat alienated from her classmate Rosie. This can be explained by the way she was brought up in a remote area and not learning the English language properly and thus she linguistically and socially falls behind her peers. It would not fit with Rosie's blunt way of expressing herself if the words were translated with Dutch words of a higher register, like "making love", "having sexual intercourse" and "kissing". The last word of these obscene words, "French", can be considered a separate part of the enumeration because it used as a noun while the rest of the words are verbs. It will require a little more attention of the translator compared to the noun because of its cultural connotation. Most readers probably know understand that "French" refers to French kissing but when it is literally translated into "Frans" it will lose its connotation of the particular kissing style. Therefore the best option would be to translate it into "tongen". For translating these obscene words it is important to find words that can be seen as equally in register: "neuken, naaien, wippen, bekken, tongen".

Establishing translation strategy

Translating the nonce-formations

It is important to carefully opt for a translation in which the goal is to maintain the alienating effect that these words have. On the one hand, the goal is to appropriate these nonce-formations for a Dutch target audience while on the other hand it is important to maintain the style of the text.

Delabastita gives **three options** for the translation of the nonce-formations:

1) directly copy the source-text nonce-formation, possibly with footnotes or annotations or "phonological/graphological adaptation"

2) use a different nonce-formation, one that already exists in the target language, even though it compromises the meaning.

3) use an expression or word that has the same meaning, but that is not a nonce-formation, so-called “non-neologistic” expression. (Delabastita 885).

The first option that Delabastita gives, is chosen to translate the nonce-formations. This option can be divided into **two different translation strategies** designed by Chesterman:

- 1) Use a “calque”, a derivation, copying the entire word from the source language
- 2) Literal translation, staying as close to the language of the source text as possible (which corresponds with Delabastita’s theory behind “phonological/graphological adaptation”) (Chesterman 155).

For each of the nonce-formations, the translation strategy that is chosen, is as follows:

<u>Original word</u>	<u>Translation</u>	<u>Translation strategy</u>
effing along	essen	Phonological adaptation
effie	essie	phonological adaptation
sheesh time	sjeesus tijd	Literal translation
harpiedoodle	harpiedoedeltje	Literal translation
sprung	verschijning	Non-neologistic expression
duvduv	dekdek	phonological adaptation
sills	sellig	phonological adaptation
grear	greur	phonological adaptation
The Bonak	De Bonak	Literal translation

The phonological adaptations are explained below:

Effing along – The words “effing along” and “effie” to derive from the verb “flowing” and the noun “flow”. For the creation of the verb, “ef-” is added as a prefix and “low” is omitted from the word. For the creation of the noun, “ef-” is added as a prefix, “low” is omitted from the word and “ie” is added as a suffix. The same can be done for the Dutch verb “stromen” which results in “essen”

‘ss’ first letter of the verb duplicated + ‘e’ added as a prefix + ‘en’ as a suffix is create a verb in the Dutch language.

“effie” becomes “essie”.

Duvdov- The suffix “et” is lost from the word and the stem “duv” is duplicated. The same can be done with the Dutch noun “deken” which becomes “dekdek”

Grear- This word is difficult to translate because it is a coinage and did not derive from an existing word. The strategy of “phonological/graphological adaptation” that is described in the first option for the translation of the nonce-formations, is chosen for this word (Delabastita 885). “Grear” would sound more Dutch if the vowel “ea” would be changed into “eu”.

Conclusion

If Johnson’s novel *Everything Under* were to be translated for publishing house De Fontein, the nonce-formations and the personifications are important to look at. The alienating feeling that these words and expression give should be preserved in the Dutch translation of this novel. The nonce-formations and personifications account for almost all of the text specific and interlingual problems, which each need a specific approach. Language plays an important part in the narrative since it is a very important theme in the novel. The nonce-formations give us a lot of information on the mother-daughter bond that Sarah and Gretel share and how other people are linguistically excluded from this little sociolinguistic group. Therefore, it is of great importance to find suitable solutions to these translation problems. Johnson guides the reader into a correct understanding of the nonce-formations by letting the character of Marcus provide the descriptions of the meanings. This guides the translator in the translation process because the words cannot be misinterpreted. All in all, the translation problems that can be found in this novel make up for an interesting but challenging translation task.

Translated Passages

Translated Passages and Annotations

Fragment 1: pp. 29-31

Ik denk, zei je alsof ik er niet eens bij was, dat ik me dat vanaf het begin al had moeten realiseren¹. Je had het over wat je had gezien in het water, over de lijken in de rivier en de metalen vallen. Je vertelde over de Bonak. We hebben hem zelf gevormd, bleef je maar zeggen, begrijp je niet dat we hem zelf gevormd hebben tot wat hij nu is. Ik plaatste mijn handen op mijn oren zodat je stemgeluid werd overstemd door de ruis van muziek.

Bij de bus stapte ik als eerste in. Toen ik me omdraaide stond je op het trottoir en toen de buschauffeur vroeg of je nog kwam zei je nee. Door de verduisterende deuren van die bus: je omhoog gerichte voorhoofd, het poeder dat vastplakt op je gezicht lijkt op een laag kalksteen, de lippenstift amper nog op je mond. Je gezicht leek op een afnemende maan tot het moment dat de deuren zich sloten.

Daarna hing ik nog een tijdje rond bij de stallen en ik denk dat ze dat toelieten omdat ze wisten dat jij weg was en dat ik nergens anders naartoe kon. Het was een van de moeders – met hun perfect opgemaakte, bezorgde gezichten – die mij heeft verraden. Ik stond een tijdje ‘onder toezicht’² – zoals de anderen meiden waarmee ik woonde het noemden, werd doorgeschoven van het ene huis naar het andere, verschillende pleeggezinnen, dezelfde gezichten. Ik kan me er niet meer veel van herinneren. Ze vroegen naar je. Meerdere keren. Ze vroegen of ik nog andere familieleden had, iemand die voor me kon zorgen totdat ik achttien zou worden. Ik zei nee. Ze vroegen of ik wist waar je was. Ik zei dat je dood was.

Het was taal, onze taal, waarover ik struikelde op school. Ik zei tegen een van de leraren dat ik ‘sjees tijd’ nodig had, schreeuwde naar een jongen dat hij een ‘harpiedoedeltje’ was. Gedurende al die jaren heb je me nooit verteld dat je een aparte taal had gecreëerd, alleen van toepassing op die periode, op ons. Je hebt me nooit gewaarschuwd. Na een tijdje begonnen andere leerlingen te merken dat ik woorden gebruikte die zij niet kenden. Ze gingen de woorden nazeggen, gebruikten de verkeerde klanken, schreeuwden ze door de gangen of

¹ S7: Change in emphasis. The verb, ‘know’ is translated into ‘realiseren’. In this context ‘realising’ something is a more profound way of understanding something than simply ‘knowing’. This puts emphasis on the importance of the information that the character will be disclosing in the next sentences.

² Language pair specific translation problem: ‘in the system’ is translated into ‘onder toezicht’, to be under the surveillance of child protective services is worded differently in the two languages.

door de klas. Ze noemden me ‘de buitenlander’ of ‘de bedenker’, omdat ze zich te goed voelt om Engels te praten en daarom maar wat verzint.

Ik hakte de woorden die jij mij gegeven had uit mijn geheugen,³ wiste ze. Raakte ze door de jaren heen kwijt zodat, wanneer ik er nu op terugkijk, ze net zo vreemd aanvoelen in mijn mond als ze zullen hebben gedaan bij de andere kinderen.

Je bent zo’n wild kind, zei een van de meisjes op school tegen mij. Haar naam is Fran. Je bent een van die kinderen die in kelders worden verstopt. Je bent net als een van die kinderen die vastgeketend zitten aan de wc’s in hun kelder en die niet geleerd hebben hoe ze moeten praten.

Ik stal Frans zorgvuldig verborgen verzameling oogschaduw en kettingen, begroef die. Ik vocht met de grotere gasten⁴ tot ze bloedden of wij allebei bloedden. Ik heb het nog steeds onthouden, denk ik, de meeste aspecten van het leven op de rivier en ⁵de kennis daarvan heeft zich vastgebeten in mij en zich spreidde zich uit over mijn armen als een stel knipperende ogen.

*

Dat waren de jaren waarin je ik probeerde te vinden. In de weekenden nam ik de bus en ging ik naar plekken waarvan ik dacht dat je naartoe zou kunnen zijn gegaan. Sleepte mezelf van plaats naar plaats en vroeg rond naar jou. Ik had de foto bij die ik nu nog steeds heb en liet die aan iedereen zien die ik ontmoette. Ik zei ze is klein, kleiner dan wij, ze heeft grijs haar en grijze ogen. Het was moeilijk om je niet overal te zien. Door de ramen van bewegende bussen, in de gangen van de supermarkt, aan tafeltjes in cafés of pubs, in auto’s bij de verkeerslichten. Ik zag je lopen of rennen, zitten, praten, lachen met je kin op je borst. Ik achtervolgde vrouwen op straat maar je zat er nooit tussen. Je was gegaan zonder een spoor achter te laten. Je was een geest in mijn hersenen, in mijn maag. Ik begon me af te vragen of je wel echt bestaan had.

³ PR2: ‘uit mijn geheugen’ is added to make it explicit how where the words were hacked out of although the readers are able to get that information from the context. The purpose is to improve the readability of the sentence.

⁴ Alliteration from the source text is maintained in the translation, **bigger boys** is translated into **grotere gasten**. The alliterations are part of the style of the work and are therefore maintained.

⁵ Unfamiliar metaphor, translated as literally as possible to maintain the alienating effect that this has on the reader.

Er hing een groepje meiden om me heen en ik denk omdat ik eruit zag alsof ik tegen de stroom in aan het zwemmen was en ze wilden afwachten⁶ wat er zou gebeuren. Rosie vond het fijn om naast me te zitten bij wiskunde en soms vertelde ze mij dingen: hoe ze haar eigen oor had gepiercet, hoe haar zus bijna de pingpongtafel in brand had gezet, waar ze naartoe zou gaan op vakantie. Ze vond het leuk om te praten over de wiskundeleraar, die alleen aantrekkelijk was omdat hij jonger was dan al de anderen. Ze omschreef hem als verlegen en gaf een opsomming van dingen die ze wel met hem zou willen doen na school. Achteraf gezien denk ik dat ze graag naast me zat omdat het vertellen van die dingen niet hetzelfde aanvoelt wanneer ze het zou vertellen aan een van de andere meisjes. Het was net als iemand leren praten of lezen. Ik had de woorden die zij gebruikte nog nooit gehoord. Ik kende de taal niet waarin zij sprak. Zelfs nu lijken het woorden die maar half vertaald zijn: neuken, naaien, wippen, bekken, tongen.

Fragment 2: pp. 255-258

Ik ben zo boos op je dat ik amper kan zien. Ik ga tekeer en jij zit stilletjes af te wachten of gaat samen met mij tekeer, smijt de keukendeur dicht, gooit dingen van tafel. Ik denk na over alle manieren waarop ik je zou kunnen straffen. Geen eten meer geven, je wakker houden, de deur open laten staan en je gewoon naar buiten laten lopen. Wanneer je moet huilen doe je je armen om mijn nek en houd je je stevig vast aan mij. Je bent jezelf niet. Je bent niet dezelfde persoon die al die dingen heeft gedaan. Je kan je de taal niet meer herinneren die je tot die persoon maakte. Je drukt je gerimpelde gezicht hard tegen het mijne, trekt aan mijn kleding om me nog dichter bij je te hebben. Wanneer je in je handen klapt, zie ik het dakluik ertussen, licht sijpelt mijn donkere woonkamer binnen.

Soms bekruipt me 's ochtends een koud gevoel van zekerheid dat enkel een oude marteltechniek zal volstaan, een steniging of je verblinden, je achterlaten zodat de wolven je vinden. Je zegt me dat je het niet wist en we worden allebei muisstil en we vragen onszelf af of de ander dat ook echt geloofd. Keer op keer kom ik terug bij het idee dat onze gedachtes en onze handelingen bepaald worden door de taal die in ons hoofd zit. Dat misschien niets anders had kunnen gebeuren dan wat is gebeurd. Essen, sjeesus tijd, harpiedoedeltje, verschijning, Bonak. Bonak, Bonak, Bonak. Woorden als broodkruimels. Net alsof Bonak niet stond voor waar we bang voor waren, voor wat zich in het water bevond, maar kijk uit; dit is wat opdoemt uit de rivier.

⁶ S5: "see" was not literally translated into "zien", but into "afwachten" because from context it was clear that was the meaning that was implied.

Het is langer dan een maand geleden dat ik je terug hebt gebracht. We zijn in een impasse geraakt en spreken geen woord. Draaien in vaste kringen om elkaar heen terwijl duidelijk is wie wat bezit⁷: de woonkamer is van jou, ik neem de slaapkamer en de keuken; het bad is ook van jou. Praten zou betekenen dat we erover zouden discussiëren en dat gaan we niet doen. Wat jij hebt gedaan. Wat er is gebeurd toen jij Margot kreeg. Ik bak vissticks en zet ze naast je stoel terwijl jij een bad bent. Op een dag vind ik een half opgegeten chocoladereep op mijn kussen. Een andere dag maak je alle kommen uit de keukenkastjes kapot en ik loop naar buiten de regen in en neem een bus en ga naar het centrum en wandel wat rond bij de winkels. Staan in de deuropeningen tot de supersterke stormkracht⁸ afneemt. ⁹Sta in de supermarkt waar we die keer waren. Ik weet zeker dat je weg bent wanneer ik weer thuis ben en ik weet niet zo goed hoe ik me daarover voel. Alleen ben je niet weg. Waar zou je naartoe moeten gaan? Ik maak het avondeten voor je klaar. Je bent onze ruzie vergeten en je raakt mijn haar en armen aan terwijl je me verteld dat ik de regen lekker vind, vind je ook niet? De volgende dag zie ik dat de woorden¹⁰ je verlaten. De voornaamwoorden zijn glibberig en willen niet stilstaan; voorwerpen gaan eerst zodat je alleen nog wijst of schreeuwt tot ik je breng wat je wilt. Namen zijn allang weg. Sommige dagen heb je het over je kinderen die je ooit had maar wanneer ik je vraag hoe ze heetten kan of wil je niet antwoorden. We spelen kleine spelletjes, tijdverdrijf, die je doet met zulke opperste concentratie dat ik er hoofdpijn van krijg. Links en rechts, omhoog en beneden. Hoe heet dit? Hoe laat is het? Welk jaar is het? Ik wacht tot de verhalen je verlaten. Het zou het beste zijn ze allemaal gaan. Alles wat je me hebt verteld. Maar ze blijven hangen, wellen keer op keer uit je op, je handen geklemd over je mond om ze tegen proberen te houden. Het huis is gevuld met alles wat er gaande is. Marcus zijn koude gezicht plakt tegen de natgeregende ramen, kijkt uit de spiegel als ik mijn tanden poets, staand naast je leunstoel. De Bonak is er ook, rammelend door de kamers boven onze hoofden, wegwijnend in het bad. Zo nu en dan heeft het jouw ogen of lange voeten in plaats van een staart. Zo nu en dan heeft het een vacht in plaats van schubben

⁷ S9 (C): paraphrase of the idiomatic expression ‘circles of ownership’ because it is not literally translatable in the Dutch language.

⁸ Alliteration is maintained in the translation, however slightly compromised. ‘strong swells of storm’ is translated into ‘supersterke stormkracht’. Although the alliteration can now be found in two words, instead of three, the letter still occurs three times in the translation.

⁹ Sentence without subject, occurs a few times throughout the passage and this is maintained in the translation.

¹⁰ In these first three sentences of this paragraph, the personifications are maintained since it emphasises the fact that Sarah is losing language involuntarily due to Alzheimer’s disease. It comes across as if language has agency instead of people having agency over the use of language.

en loopt rechtop, of is een schaduw, amper aanwezig. De rivier baant zich een weg door woonkamer, verstoort de vloerplaten. De bomen breken door het natte pleisterwerk heen en leggen hun wortels om ons heen. Je hoort¹¹ – in de nacht – het geluid van de trein. Er zijn ploeterende¹² boten met platte daken en een man die in een lokaas snijdt dat groot genoeg is om hetgeen te vangen waar we bang voor zijn. Wat het ook is waar we bang voor zijn.

Doe het niet, zeg ik tegen je zodra je begint te praten. Je hoeft het niet meer te doen.

Maar het praten is onvrijwillig en het stopt zelfs niet wanneer ik slaaptabletten in je thee stop of je probeer af te leiden met oude zwart-wit films op mijn laptop of je vertel over de geschiedenis van de lexicografie of legpuzzels op de vloer uitspreid voor je. Je mond gaat wijd open en de woorden¹³ herhalen en herhalen.

Fragment 3: pp. 189-191

De dagen krompen en werden tegelijkertijd langer. Twee weken gingen voorbij. Zijn ouders kwamen terug voor hem. Hij dacht, ik mis jullie, ik hou van jullie, ik wil dat jullie mij vinden, het spijt me. Hij dacht aan de dag die hij doorbracht met Charlies lichaam op de boot. Hij herinnerde zich wat hij verstopt had onder zijn kleren en het leek een te groot geheim voor slechts één persoon. Het was zo koud dat er rijp op de zijkant van zijn tent zat, de rand van de rivier, in zilveren lijnen vanaf de bomen. In de ochtend was hij zo eenzaam dat hij amper kon zien.

Maar in de vlugge middagen en de langzame avonden was het anders. Sarah liet hem zien hoe je wilde knoflook kon vinden, diep verborgen. In de zomer, zei ze, groeiden er paddenstoelen uit de grond en appels aan sommige bomen. Ze liet hem zien hoe je brood moest kneden en hoe je zelfgebrouwen bier moest filteren zodat het amberkleurig werd. Hij begreep steeds meer woorden die zij gebruikten ondanks dat hij zichzelf niet dapper genoeg vond om ze zelf te gebruiken. Sarah noemde Gretel El en soms Hansel of Vergretel. Gretel noemde Sarah Dudey of Dokter. ‘Sjeesus tijd’ hebben betekende dat Sarah tijd voor zichzelf nodig had. Een ‘harpiedoedeltje’ was een kleine irritatie zoals een bord dat op de grond viel of een kras maar werd vaak gebruikt, vaak luid geroepen, om aan te duiden dat er iets niet helemaal volgens plan was verlopen. Iets aangenaams of prettigs, vaak zacht of warm, was ‘dekdek’ – genoemd naar een dekentje Gretel had als kind en toen verloor. Er waren meer

¹¹ ‘Je hoort’ instead of ‘er is’, language pair specific translation problem, otherwise it would be a grammatically incorrect sentence in Dutch.

¹² G3: Transposition from the verb ‘ploeteren’ to the adjective ‘ploeterende’ to improve the readability of the sentence.

¹³ PR3: ‘they’ is translated into ‘de woorden’ for the purpose of clarification.

woorden voor het geluid dat water maakte of de rivier in verschillende seizoenen en temperaturen dan hij zich kon herinneren. Hij begreep dat essie een sterkere stroming betekende, het water esde langs of esde langs de oevers; dat ‘sellig’ het geluid was dat de rivier in de nacht maakte en ‘greur’ de smaak ervan in de ochtend. Vaak gebruikten ze woorden die hij die kende en hij zag hij dat Sarah naar hem keek en hij vroeg zich af of, op een of andere manier, dat ze het fijn vond dat hij hen niet altijd begreep, dat er nog steeds geheimen waren waar hij geen deel van uitmaakte. Hoe meer hij hoorde, des te beter hij begreep dat de woorden instinctief waren, ontstaan uit de geluiden of woorden die Gretel had verzonnen als baby en die waren blijven hangen. Terwijl hij hen bekeek realiseerde hij zich dat ze al lang met z’n tweeën waren dat het niet uitmaakte als niemand ze begreep. Ze hadden zichzelf afgezonderd van de rest van de wereld, zowel linguïstisch als fysiek. Ze waren een eigen soort. Hij wilde net zo zijn als hen, hij wilde hen zijn.

Als hij niet bij Sarah was volgde hij Gretel terwijl zij haar vallen leegde en de windgongen hervulde met de dode lichamen van muizen en kikkers. Ze las hem elk boek voor dat er te vinden was op de boot. Haar favoriete boek was een gehavende encyclopedie, met zijn woorden dicht op elkaar geschreven in kleine letters en heldere foto’s. In de ochtenden kreeg ze lessen van Sarah die bestonden uit – voor zover hij wist – het lezen van dit boek. Ze wist veel betekenissen¹⁴ uit haar hoofd. Anastasia was een overleden Russische prinses en al jaren deden mensen alsof ze haar waren. De Styx is een van de rivieren van de onderwereld. Ze liet hem de encyclopedie niet vasthouden maar hield het open en sloeg de pagina’s om zodat hij mee kon kijken. Ze vond de waterwezens het leukst. Hij vroeg zich af of zij ze leuk vond omdat ze makkelijker in te beelden zijn dan de leeuwen of olifanten. Ze zouden in de rivier kunnen zijn en niemand zou het doorhebben, terwijl ze voorzichtig door het leven gaan: de narwallen, haaien, schildpadden, forellen en zalmen. Ze hield van foto’s van de oceaan, de opmetingen van zijn diepte, de tekeningen die verduidelijkten hoe de rivieren zich vormden, snijdend door steen. Ze hield van de feiten in een puntsgewijs lijstje die ze hem toewierp. Wist je dat de naakte molrat het langst levende knaagdier is? Dat ze koloniën en koninginnen hebben net zoals bijen?

Ik wist daar helemaal niks vanaf, zei hij. Hij vond het leuk als ze het had over sterren, de vegen van lichtgevend gas aan elkaar gelinkt door hun eigen geheim, de interne

¹⁴ Language pair translation problems: ‘entries’ in a dictionary cannot be literally translated into Dutch. The direct translation ‘inzending’ would have sounded formal and archaic. Instead, ‘betekenis’ is chosen because it fitted best with the register of the language use.

vergrendeling van de zwaartekracht. Ze kwamen voor in paren of in clusters, zelden alleen. Er was iets bijzonders aan de ruimte, de bobbels¹⁵ van bewegende planeten en sterren, elk om elkaar heen draaiend, de logica van de zwaartekrachtsvelden, de sterren allang vergaan voordat wij ze te zien krijgen.

¹⁵ Alliteration is maintained, bulges of busy planets' is translated into 'de bobbels van bewegende planeten'. 'Being busy' as a planet can be regarded as a personification since the word is usually used to describe the lifestyle of human beings. Therefore 'busy' is interpreted as planets that are moving. The personification of the planets is eliminated from the translation because this trope is rarely used in Dutch.

Bibliography

Primary Source

Johnson, Daisy. *Everything Under*. Graywolf Press, 2018.

Secondary Sources

Chesterman, Andrew and Ton Naaijken. "Vertaalstrategieën: een Classificatie." *Denken over Vertalen*, Vantilt, 2010, pp. 153-172.

Claes, Paul. "Gouden Vertaalregels II." *Filter - Tijdschrift over Vertalen*, 2012, vol.19, no.2, pp. 37- 44.

Delabastita, Dirk. "Literary style in translation: archaisms and neologisms." *Übersetzung, Translation, Traduction*. De Gruyter, 2004, pp. 883-888.

Fisher, Roswitha. *Lexical Change in Present-Day English: A Corpus-Based Study of the Motivation, Institutionalisation, and Productivity of Creative Neologisms*. Gunter Narr Verlag, 1998, pp. 1-99.

Karjalainen, Markus. "Where Have All the Swearwords Gone : An Analysis of the Loss of Swearwords in Two Swedish Translations of J. D. Salingers Catcher in the Rye." *Where Have All the Swearwords Gone : An Analysis of the Loss of Swearwords in Two Swedish Translations of J. D. Salingers Catcher in the Rye*, Helsingfors Universitet, Oct. 2012, url: helda.helsinki.fi/handle/10138/19330.

Nord, Christiane. "Tekstanalyse en de Moeilijkheidsgraad van een Vertaling." Naaijken, Ton et al. (eds.) *Denken over Vertalen*, Vantilt, 2010, pp. 145-152.

"Portmanteau word." Encyclopaedia Britannica. Web. 1 July 2019.

Sayadi, Forough. "The Translation of Neologisms." *Translation Journal*, vol.16, no.2, Apr. 2011, url: <http://translationjournal.net/journal/56neologisms.htm>.

"Sill." Merriam Webster Dictionary. Web. 1 July 2019.

"Sheesh time." Collins Dictionary. Web. 1 July 2019.

Štekauer, Pavol. "On the Theory of Neologisms and Nonce-formations." *Australian Journal of Linguistics*, vol.22, no.1, 2002, pp. 97-112.

Szymanek, Bogdan. "The Latest Trends in English Word-Formation." *Handbook of Word-Formation Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, vol. 64, Springer, 2005 pp.429-448.

Appendix: Source Text

Passage 1 pp. 29-31

I think, you said as if I wasn't even there, that I should have known from the beginning. You spoke about what you'd seen in the water, about bodies in the river and metal traps. You spoke about the Bonak. We made it, you kept saying, don't you understand we made it what it was. I put both hands over my ears until your voice was lost in the hum of music.

At the bus I got on first. When I turned back you were standing on the pavement and when the driver asked if you were coming you said no. Through the eclipsing doors of that bus: your upturned forehead, the powder on your face claggy as limestone, the lipstick barely even on your mouth any more. Your face thinning moon-like until the doors had drawn closed.

For a while after that I just hung around at the stable, and I think they let me because they knew you had gone and I had nowhere else to go. It was one of the mothers – their carefully made-up, concerned faces – who told on me. I was in the system for a while – that's what the other girls I lived with called it – passed around different houses, different foster homes, similar faces. I don't remember much. They asked me about you. More than once. They asked if I had other relatives, anyone who could look after me until I turned eighteen. I said no. They asked if I knew where you were. I said you were dead.

It was language – our language – that tripped me up at school. I told one of the teachers I needed sheesh time, shouted at a boy that he was a harpiedoodle. Over all those years you had never told me you were creating a different language, applicable only to that time, to us. You had never warned me. After a while the other students started noticing I spoke with words they didn't know. They mimicked them back at me, getting the sounds wrong, shouting them down corridors or in class. They started calling me the foreigner or the make-up – as in she doesn't want to speak English, she's too good for English she going to make it up.

I hacked those words that you had given me out, erased them. Lost them over the years so that now – looking back – they feel as foreign in my mouth as they must have done to those other children.

You're like a wild child, one of the girls at school said. Her name is Fran. You're like one of those children kept in cellars. You're like one of those children chained to their potties in cellars and not even taught how to talk.

I stole Fran's careful stash of eyeshadow and necklaces, buried it. I fought with the bigger boys until they bled or we both did. I still remembered then, I think, most of what it had been like to live on the river, and the knowledge of this was strung inside me and along my arms like blinking eyes.

*

Those were the years of trying to find you. At the weekends I'd catch the bus to places I thought you might have gone. Trawl around asking after you. I had the photo I have now and I'd show it to everyone I met. I'd say, She's short, short than us; she's got grey hair and grey eyes. It was hard not to see you everywhere. Out of the windows of moving buses, down supermarket aisles, at tables in cafes or pubs, in cars at traffic lights. I saw you walking or

running, sitting, talking, laughing with your head tipped forward against your chest. I chased women down the street but they were never you. You had gone without a trace. You were a ghost in my brain, in my stomach. I began to wonder if you had ever really existed at all.

A couple of the girls hung around me, and I think it was because I looked like I was swimming the wrong way up the river and they wanted to see what would happen. Rosie liked to sit next to me in maths and occasionally she'd tell me things: how she'd pierced her own ear; how her sister had nearly set the ping-pong table on fire, where she was going on holiday. She liked to talk about the maths teacher, who was attractive only because he was younger than all the others. She called him shy and listed the things she'd like to do to him after school. Looking back I think maybe she sat next to me because telling me wasn't the same as telling one of the other girls. It was like teaching someone to talk or read. I had never heard the words she used before. I didn't know the language she was talking in. Even now they feel like words only half-translated: fuck, shag, bang, snog, French.

Passage 2, pp. 255-258

I am so angry at you I can barely see. I rage and you sit quietly or rage with me, slamming the kitchen door, knocking things off the table. I think of all the ways I could punish you. Withholding food, keeping you awake, opening the door and simply letting you wander away. When you cry you put your arms around my neck and cling on. You are not yourself. You are not the person who did any of those things. You do not remember the language that made you that person. You hold your wrinkled face hard against mine, your hands scrabbling at my clothes to hold me closer. When you clap your hands the roof hatch appears between them, fizzing light into my dark sitting room.

Some mornings I am cold with certainty that only some ancient punishment will do, a stoning or a blinding, leaving you out for the wolves. You tell me that you didn't know and we grow silent and wonder if either of us really believes that. Again and again I go back to the idea that our thoughts and actions are determined by the language that lives in our minds. That perhaps nothing could have happened except that which did. Effing along, sheesh time, harpiedoodle, sprung, messin, Bonak. Bonak, Bonak, Bonak. Words like breadcrumbs. As if all along *Bonak* didn't mean what we were afraid of, what was in the water, but watch out; this is what is coming down the river.

It is over a month since I brought you back. We come to a stalemate and do not speak at all. Move around one another in strict circles of ownership: the sitting room is yours, I take the bedroom and the kitchen; the bath belongs to you. Talking would mean that we would have to discuss it and we will not do that. What you did. What happened when you had Margot. I make fish fingers and leave them beside your chair when you are in your bath. One day I find a half-eaten bar of chocolate on my pillow. Another day you break all the bowls in the cupboards, and I go outside into the rain and get on a bus and go into town and wander around the shops. Stand in the doorways to wait out the strong swells of storm. Find myself in the supermarket we'd gone to that time. I am certain that when I get back you will be gone and I am not sure how I feel about that. Except that you are not gone. Where would you go? I make you dinner. You have forgotten our fight and you touch my hair and hands, tell me that you like the rain, don't I?

The next day I watch the words leaving you. The pronouns are slippery and won't stay still; objects go first so that you only point or shout until I bring what you want. Names are long gone. Some days you talk about children you once had, but when I ask what they were

called you cannot or will not reply. We play small games, time-fillers which you do with such intense concentration it gives me headaches to watch you. Left and right, up and down. What's this called? What time is it? What year is it? I wait for the stories to leave you. It would be best for them to go. Everything you told me. But they stick around, come surging out of you again and again, your hands clamped over your mouth to try and hold them back. The house is filled with everything that went on. Marcus's cold face is up against the rain-streaked windows, looking out of the mirror when I brush my teeth, standing beside your armchair. The Bonak is here too, rattling through the rooms above our heads, languishing in the bath. Now and then it has your eyes or long feet rather than a tail. Now and then it has fur rather than scales or walks upright or is a shadow, barely even there. The river curls through the corner of the sitting room, upsets the floorboards. Trees break through the wet plaster and lay their roots around us. There is – in the night – the sound of the train. There are flat-roofed boats floundering and a man who whittles a lure big enough to catch what we are afraid of. Whatever we are afraid of.

Don't, I tell you when you start speaking. You don't have to any more.

But the telling is involuntary and won't stop even when I slip sleeping tablets into your tea or try and distract you with old black and white films on my laptop or talk to you about the history of lexicography or spread jigsaws on the floor for you. Your mouth gapes open and they repeat and repeat.

Passage 3, pp. 189-191

Days shrank and lengthened together. Two weeks went past. His parents came back to him. He thought, I miss you, I love you, I want you to find me, I'm sorry. He thought about the day spent on the boat with Charlie's body. He remembered what he'd hidden beneath his clothes and it seemed too big a secret for just one person to have. It was so cold there was frost hardening the side of his tent, the edge of the river, in silver lines from the trees. In the mornings he was so lonely he could barely see.

But in the quick afternoons and the slow evenings it was different. Sarah showed him how to find wild garlic, buried deep. In the summer, she said, there were mushrooms in the ground and apples on some of the trees. She showed him how to knead bread and filter homebrew so it was the colour of amber.

He began to understand more of the words they used though he didn't feel brave enough to speak them himself. Sarah called Gretel El or sometimes Hansel or Regretel. Gretel called Sarah Dudev or Doctor. To have sheesh time meant that Sarah needed some time alone. A harpiedoodle was a small annoyance like a dropped plate or scratch but was used often, mostly shouted, to denote anything that hadn't gone quite to plan. Something comfortable of enjoyable, often soft or warm, was duvduv – named after a blanket that Gretel had as a child and then lost. There were more words for the sound the water made or the river in different seasons and temperature than he could remember. He understood that effie meant the current was faster as in the water was effing along or effying along the banks; that sills was the noise the river made at night and gear the taste of it the morning. Often they used a words he did not know and he would see Sarah looking at him and wonder if, somehow, she liked that he did not always understand, that there were still secrets he was not included in. The more he listened the more he understood that the words were instinctual, formed from the sound things made or words Gretel had come up with as a baby which had stuck. Watching them he realised that it had been just them for so long it did not matter if no one understood. They had cut themselves off from the world linguistically as well as physically. They were a species all

their own. He wanted to be like them, he wanted to be them.

When he wasn't with Sarah he followed Gretel as she emptied her traps and refilled the wind chimes with the dead bodies of mice and frogs. She read him every book there was on the boat. Her favourite was the battered encyclopedia, with its dense, ant-sized writing and bright photos. In the morning she had lessons with Sarah which consisted – as far as he could see – of reading this book. She knew a lot of entries off by heart. Anastasia was Russian princess who died and for years people pretended to be her. The Styx is one of the rivers of the underworld. She wouldn't let him touch, but she held it open and turned the pages so he could see. She liked the water creatures best. He wondered if she liked them because they were easier to imagine there than the lions or elephants. They could be in the river and no one would know, going carefully through their lives: the horned whales, sharks, turtles, trout and salmon. She liked the pictures of the ocean, the measurements of its depths, the illustrations of how rivers were formed, cutting through stone. She liked bullet-point facts which she'd snap out at him. Did you know that a naked mole rat is the longest living rodent? That they have colonies and queens the way bees do?

I don't know anything about that, he said. He liked it when she spoke about stars, the smears of luminous gas joined to one another with their own secret, internal locking of gravity. They came in pairs or clusters, rarely alone. There was something about space, the bulges of busy planets and stars, each orbiting one another, the logic of gravitational fields, the stars dying long before we got to see them.