

To Translate a Mockingbird

Theory and Practice of Translating Lee's Masterpiece

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INTRODUCTION

“Mockingbirds don’t do nothing but make music for us to enjoy. They don’t eat up people’s gardens, don’t nest in corncribs, they don’t do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That’s why it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.” (Lee, 98)

Harper Lee’s renowned novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* has succeeded to move millions of readers around the globe, who bought over thirty million copies. The novel earned Lee a Pulitzer Prize and was turned into a successful motion picture in 1962. However, the reactions were not all positive: the novel was banned from several schools due to its controversial content, which deals with subjects such as the inequality of black and white people, rape, incest and more in no uncertain terms.

When sitting down to read the novel after hearing all the above mentioned credits, one is prone to unplug the telephone, hang a ‘Do Not Disturb’ sign on the outside of the door, or in other ways prepare oneself for a good, but heavy and highly literary read. However, nothing should be further from the truth. Contrary to the expectations that are inevitably raised by a novel that belongs to the short list of ‘literary classics’, Lee’s only novel is not what you expect it to be. Although it does not in any way detract from its quality, the novel is very readable and the heavy subject matter is brought to the reader in a way that makes it bearable, without losing the strength of the message it is doubtlessly meant to convey. This readability is mostly the result of the point of view from which the novel is written. The reader experiences the story through the eyes and ears of six-to-nine-year-old Scout. She looks back on a string of important events in her childhood, one of which is the most demanding trial of her father’s life: the defense of Tom Robinson, a black man accused of rape. The injustice of the justice system the reader encounters in the novel is enough to make their hair curl, but seen through the innocent eyes and mind of a child, the edges are taken off.

This typical narrative mode is only one of the means Lee employs to make the novel what it is: a book that contains detailed depictions of different cultures and personalities which serve to create a very specific background against which the story is laid out. These elements are but a few of the possible troublemakers for the translator inherent in the novel. Before starting off, the translator would therefore do well to perform a thorough analysis of the text, as will I. In this thesis, I will try to find answers to the question:

What problems does one have to overcome while translating Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and what are the possible and most desirable means to solving those problems?

The first part of this thesis is purely theoretical. In the first chapter, I will briefly discuss the author, extensively describe the book's content and try to determine the genre it belongs to. The reception of the novel will also be addressed. With this information, I hope to give the reader of this thesis a thorough and necessary overview of the primary features of the novel, which are essential to a full understanding of the subsequent chapters.

The second chapter will serve to determine what problems the translator is most likely to face, what the possible solutions are and which of these suit the translation of this particular novel best. Two problems will need a more extensive analysis than the others: the novel's style and the dialect. These will be discussed in chapter three and four respectively. To analyze the style in *To Kill a Mockingbird* in an orderly manner, I will refer to a method described in the book *Style in Fiction* by Short and Leech. For the analysis of the translation strategies for dialect, I will consult articles by J.C. Catford, H. Diller and J. Kornelius, B. Hatim and I. Mason, and J. Levý.

After the theoretical groundwork has been done, it is time to get practical in the second part of this thesis. Here, my translation of a few abstracts of *To Kill a Mockingbird* will be presented, accompanied by extensive commentary in the form of

footnotes which will be added afterwards. In these footnotes, I will also compare my text to previous translations by Ko Kooman and Hans Edinga to discover where we agree on or differ in the choices we made.

In the end, I hope that this thesis will be proof that a thorough analysis results in a better and more consistent translation, or at the very least a more confident translator.

PART ONE: THEORY



1. TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD - THE NOVEL

In this chapter, the novel around which this thesis revolves will be discussed. It contains information about the author, several aspects of the novel's content, its genre and its reception.

1.1. Author

Harper Lee was born in 1926 in Monroeville, California. Her father was a lawyer and it seemed that Lee would follow in his footsteps, as she studied law at the University of Alabama for almost four years. In 1949, however, a few months before she finished law school, she moved to New York to pursue a career as a writer. She found a job as a clerk for an international airline. In 1959, she assisted her friend Truman Capote with the research for his novel *In Cold Blood*. In 1960 she finished her first and only novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which would gain her enormous success and great critical acclaim, including a Pulitzer Prize in 1961. (HarperLee.com)

Despite the grand and lasting success of her debut novel, Lee would never publish another book. She has always avoided press attention as much as possible and moved back to Monroeville, where she was born, to enjoy a private life. She lives there still.

1.2. Content

1.2.1. Story

The story is set in Maycomb, a little town in Alabama, in the 1930's. The first person narrator, Jean Louise "Scout" Finch, looks back on the important events that happened during a few years of her childhood. She lives with her brother Jem and widowed father, lawyer Atticus Finch. During the summer months, most of the adventures Scout relates include Dill, whom Scout and Jem befriend at the beginning of the novel. As Scout unveils the story of how her brother came to break his arm, the reader can discern the truly important issues, better than Scout herself can. Through the eyes of the young girl, we learn how her father, Atticus Finch, has taken it upon

him to defend the coloured man Tom Robinson, who is accused of raping a young white woman, Mayella Ewell. The reader catches glimpses of the developments of this case through overheard conversations and the crucial courthouse scenes, which Scout and Jem attend almost entirely.

In the months, even years leading up to the trial, several other storylines are introduced which will come together in the novel's finale. Most importantly, the children are mightily afraid of a house not far from theirs, where the Radley family lives. They are especially frightened of Arthur 'Boo' Radley, who has never been seen leaving the house and of whom strange stories are told. The children spend a great portion of their time trying to find ways to lure Boo out of the house.

During the novel, Atticus's defending a 'negro' is met with more and more disapproval from the other townspeople. Scout has several encounters with children who call her father a 'nigger-lover' and it even comes to the point where Atticus's life is in danger, although Scout does not seem to fully appreciate the danger. The climax of the Tom Robinson storyline occurs in the courtroom, where Scout, Jem and Dill watch from the balcony with all the coloured people. During the trial, Atticus proves beyond reasonable doubt that Tom cannot have committed the crime he is accused of and it becomes clear that Mayella's father is the one who beat her up. Atticus concludes the trial with a passionate speech, appealing to the common sense and conscience of the – all-white – jury members. However, it is of no avail: the jury finds Tom guilty. Atticus decides to take the case to higher court. Before he gets a chance to do this, however, Tom tries to escape prison and is shot dead.

The tragic story does not end there: Bob Ewell, the father of the girl who accused Tom of raping her, is extremely angry with Atticus for defending Tom, and attacks Scout and Jem when they are walking home from a school fair one night. Jem breaks his arm, but before anything worse can happen they are saved by 'Boo' Radley, which eventually leads Scout to realize, half asleep, that "[he] hadn't done any of those things...Atticus, he was real nice..."

1.2.2. *Title*

The title *To Kill a Mockingbird* refers to the words spoken by Atticus after Jem and Scout get air rifles for Christmas: "I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the back of the yard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." (Lee, 98) Scout's neighbour Miss Maudie explains why: "Mockingbirds don't do nothing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." (98) In his article "Prolepsis and Anachronism: Emmet Till and the Historicity of *To Kill a Mockingbird*" (6), Patrick Chura argues that the mockingbird in the novel symbolizes innocence and 'goodness', which would mean that the title refers to the sin of hurting an innocent. Many innocents are hurt in this novel: Tom Robinson is the most prominent example, as one of the main storylines revolves around him and he meets the worst and most unfair fate. Jem is another example, as is Atticus: both are good and innocent people, and get hurt as a result of doing the right thing. The distinction between good and evil is a very important theme of the novel, as will be discussed later, and therefore it would make sense if its title does indeed refer to this theme. In that case, it can be interpreted to mean "To kill an innocent", being Tom Robinson.

1.2.3. *Setting*

As said before, the story takes place in a small fictional town called Maycomb in Alabama, the home state of Lee herself. The time is the 1930's, although Patrick Chura finds evidence that the social climate described in the novel is more fitting to the 1950's (1). This idea is strengthened by little inconsistencies, such as references to events that had yet to happen. An example of this is that a character, in a part of the story set in 1935, mentions how Eleanor Roosevelt sat down next to black audience members – something that took place in 1938. As Chura puts it, "the novel is best understood as an amalgam or cross-history montage, its "historical present" diluted

by the influence of events and ideology concurrent with its period of production.” (1). Chura also suspects that the trial of Tom Robinson is based on a similar case which took place in 1955: the Emmett Till trial. Whether this is true or not, the climate of the story is one of major inequality between black and white and although the 1930’s Depression is one of the backgrounds of the novel, the social conditions described are more typical for the Civil Rights era, or in other words the 1950’s (Chura, 2).

As Jennifer Murray confirms in her article “More Than One Way to (Mis)Read a *Mockingbird*”, it is generally assumed that Lee based a lot of the subject matter on her own childhood. Therefore, the setting of the book can be said to represent, in part, the setting of Lee’s own childhood.

1.2.4. Themes

As with most literary works, many – maybe even countless – themes can be said to play a role in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Therefore, only the major ones, those themes important to the translator, will be discussed.

Social inequality

One of the most important themes is the unmistakable difference in social status between white people and African Americans in the first half of the twentieth Century. Seen through the eyes of a child who has not yet formed a conclusive opinion of this matter, but also indirectly through the eyes of more mature people who have already ‘taken sides’, the novel shows the reader how firm the ideas about the status of ‘coloured folk’ were set in people’s minds, and how extraordinary it was for people to think otherwise. The unfairness of it all is incredible, especially to the modern reader: Tom Robinson never stood a chance, because a white man’s word against a black man’s is enough proof for a jury. As argued before, the title of the novel seems to refer to this theme as well: it is a sin to hurt an innocent person who cannot defend himself, but nevertheless the majority of the people, including the jury, do not seem to have a problem with it.

Morality, or good and evil

What is good and what is evil? It is a much explored theme in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The answer is not always straightforward: most of the characters one would call evil can be said to have been driven into their wrongdoings by the way society, or life, has treated them. The essential 'good' in the novel is portrayed by Atticus Finch, who always sheds light on all sides of a story without passing premature judgements, and who defends a man against all odds, hoping that justice will prevail. His speech (222-224) near the end of the book is a vehement appeal to justice, conscience and fairness and shows he is a good man, especially because we have come to know him and can therefore be sure he means every word. This speech can be said to be the heart of the novel.

As the children get older, they start to realize more and more that the world is not entirely made up of good people, but that there is evil as well. Especially Jem comes to understand, mostly during the trial, that even people in their right minds don't necessarily do the right thing and that there is unfairness in the world. As Jem realizes this, the truth of it is emphasized to the reader who already knows, but now also sees it through the eyes of an innocent child.

Other

There are a few other important themes that have a place in the novel. The concept of coming of age is one of them, which is mostly portrayed by the teenager Jem. The moral education of children is another issue: Scout and Jem ask their father a lot of questions and he tries to answer truthfully and morally, no matter how difficult that can be. There is a short discussion on the subject of how to raise children and what you can and cannot tell them between Atticus and his brother, which further clarifies Atticus ideas on the matter (94-96). The last theme which is important to mention, because it plays such a crucial part as a leitmotiv and in the climax of the novel, is the law: for Lee, having studied Law for almost four years and having a

lawyer for a father, the law must have played an important part in her life, which very much shows in the novel.

1.2.5. *Characters*

Jean Louise Finch (Scout)

As the first person narrator of the novel, Scout lets the reader see through her eyes. The events she describes happen while she grows from six to nine years old, although it is implied at several points in the novel that at the time of relating the story, she is at least a few years older: she tells her story "when enough years had gone by to enable us to look back on them" (3). However, the supposedly grown-up narrator, though using the vocabulary that is distinctly adult, almost exclusively relates the events the way she saw, heard and understood them at the time. In other words, she gives no indication that, in retrospect, she has gained a better understanding of the world and now understands more of the events than she did then. This causes ambiguity between the views of a child told with the voice of an adult. She describes the events leading up to and following the trial of Tom Robinson almost indiscriminately, in the sense that she simply relates them, whether she understands them when they happen or not. She often expresses her feelings about certain matters and can be unreliable because she sometimes misinterprets things – for example, when adults laugh about something, she misunderstands the reason – but the reader *is* able to discover the meaning of comments, jokes or looks which Scout misinterprets. In that way, the reader gets a more complete picture than the protagonist herself had at the time, which is a form of dramatic irony. Of course, since all the signs indicate that the narrator is in fact an adult looking back on those events, it is logical to assume that the narrator – or, of course, the implied author – chooses which looks, shrugs and facial expressions to record, since in retrospect she knows full well what they mean and why they matter. In other words, the character of Scout is very complicated, because she is a mix of her child as well as her adult self.

Scout's character is very much defined by her father: she has not been raised to suspect ill will from anyone other than her and is as unprejudiced as possible for a six-year-old in those days. Her upbringing by a single man also shows in the fact that she prefers overalls over dresses and is a 'tomboy'.

Jeremy Atticus Finch (Jem)

Jem is Scout's brother and around for most of the events in the novel. Although Scout does not completely understand, the reader can see how the trial and the way the people in Maycomb deal with it affect Jem more and more as he grows older. Jem embodies the coming of age part of the novel: the growing of a conscience and a mind of your own. Through him, the emotional side of the related story is emphasized for the reader.

Atticus Finch

Atticus is a widower, lawyer and father of Scout and Jem. He embodies the 'good' in the novel: although he has seen the evil in the world, he still has faith in human kind and believes he has a chance to free Tom, simply because it is right. On the other hand, he is realistic: he knows he cannot change the world – or law – on his own, but that should not mean you cannot try (Lee, 240).

Charles Baker Harris (Dill)

Dill is an imaginative child who befriends the Finches during the summer. His obsession with the Radley House is one of the threads that are woven into the novel and which influence its outcome.

Tom Robinson

Tom is a black man who is wrongly accused of raping Mayella Ewell. As said before, it can be argued that he represents the 'mockingbird' of the story: an innocent, whom it is a sin to hurt, let alone sentence to death for something he did not do.

Calpurnia

She is the black cook in the Finch household, who also serves as a chaperone for the children. She takes the children to her black church once and is their link to the black community. Because of this, Scout, Jem and Dill can attend the trial from the balcony with the black people.

Arthur 'Boo' Radley

Boo lives in the Radley residence and has not been seen outdoors for as long as the children can remember. He serves as a constant fear and fascination for them, until he saves Jem and Scout from Bob Ewell at the end of the novel.

The Ewells

The Ewells are a very poor family who has lived on the border of town, between Maycomb and the black community, for decades. They hate 'negroes' profoundly. Bob Ewell hits his daughter Mayella for sexually approaching Tom Robinson. To cover up the disgrace of her actions, they accuse Tom of raping Mayella.

1.3. Genre

The novel has elements of different genres, but two are most obvious: the coming of age genre and the gothic novel.

1.3.1. Coming of age/Bildungsroman

Susan Fraiman discusses the genre of the Bildungsroman in her article "The Mill on the Floss, the Critics, and the Bildungsroman." She mentions several standing definitions of the genre, which all include the idea that the typical Bildungsroman has a young protagonist who experiences mental growth through the events he or she encounters in the novel (138-139). In other words, the evaluation of the main character is essential when talking about a Bildungsroman, or 'coming of age novel'. Although Scout does not seem to fit that profile – she does age three years, but her character

hardly changes –, through her, we experience the change in her brother, Jem. He is ten years old at the beginning of the book and twelve at the end, and in between he learns a lot about how their society works, which changes him greatly. Scout is often unable to understand her maturing brother, but the reader can identify with him. His coming of age story is central to the novel, because his realization of the workings of their small society serves to illuminate them for the reader, as well. When Scout and Jem encounter injustice, Jem's reaction to it is often the strongest and therefore emphasizes the injustice of the situation more than Scout can.

The same reasons which make the novel fit into the coming of age genre, make it a very suitable novel to build a bridge between the world of children's and adult literature for readers from the age of fourteen or fifteen. First of all, these young readers can identify themselves with Jem, if not with Scout herself, and recognize the changes he goes through. Secondly, it is written in a very accessible, readable manner, presumably to uphold the idea of a young narrator. What one needs to understand it, is a sense of the world that enables us to comprehend the meaning behind Scout's observations: the things she does not observe or understand, and which the reader has to figure out for themselves. Children who are too young to 'read between the lines' might therefore not be able to gather enough of the meaning behind the words, but when they are old enough to understand that what Scout experiences and what is actually happening are not always the same thing, the novel can serve as an introduction into the world of adult literature. It is impossible to name a specific age from which point onwards a person is able to understand enough, since this depends on the person and requires a definition of 'understanding enough'. However, the novel proves that literature is not always as difficult and hard to approach in the way that James Joyce could be argued to be. Perhaps, if marketed that way, it could serve a role as a young adult novel. This also goes for the translation, which should be fit for young readers and adults alike.

1.3.2. *Regional novel*

In the first chapter of his book *The Regional novel in Britain and Ireland*, K.D.M. Snell, although admitting that there are problems with giving one definition, describes the regional novel as: "fiction that is set in a recognizable region, and which describes features distinguishing the life, social relations, customs, language, dialect, or other aspects of the culture of that area and its people." (1) Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, set in the little town of Maycomb, Alabama, has all of these criteria. From the beginning of the novel, the background against which it is set is distinctively instated and the culture of this particular society carefully laid out. As Snell explains, this setting in a particular place will often illustrate how an environment or culture reflects on the people that are a part of it. This is very true for *To Kill a Mockingbird*: at the end of the novel, the reader not only has a general idea of the workings and relations in and between different parts of the society of Maycomb, but presumably also knows that the course of the story would not have been the same had the characters not come from this particular town, and their personalities not been formed in this particular environment. For example, the superstitious nature of many of the townsfolk must have had a negative influence on Boo Radley's decision never to leave his house, and the set prejudices the different social groups feel towards each other are essential to the course of Tom's trial.

Snell mentions several characteristics one often encounters in regional novels (1). First, the novel will likely contain detailed descriptions of a place which bears resemblance to an existing place. In the case of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the town of Maycomb is likely shaped after Lee's birthplace and is depicted for the reader through numerous details, sometimes seemingly insignificant, that are slipped into all parts of the novel: what the houses look like, how the people speak to one another, what the interrelations between different social groups are, what trees and flowers people grow, etcetera, etcetera. Together, these paint a very distinctive picture of the little town and its society. Secondly, the characters are often of the working or middle class, which is also true in *To Kill a Mockingbird*: the difference between these classes, or rather

between the 'learned' and the unschooled or ignorant, is very important and distinct. For example, the contrast between Atticus Finch, the schooled lawyer, and Bob Ewell, unschooled and of low descent, is striking. Snell also mentions dialect as a common characteristic, which is also present in Lee's novel. Lastly, Snell names "attempted verisimilitude" (1), or, in other words, a striving for realism, which can also be found in the novel and is related to those detailed descriptions of surroundings and society.

All in all, the novel can certainly be called a regional novel, especially because the environment of Maycomb does not only serve as a background to the story, but is intrinsic to it: it defines the course of the story, because it very much defines the characters and systems it is made up of.

1.3.3. *Gothic novel*

The gothic elements in the novel are presented by Jem's, Dill's and Scout's imaginations and superstitions. Boo Radley becomes a supernatural creature, unexplained 'hot places' on the road are "Hot Steams", ghosts that failed to pass over and suck out your breath, and Mrs Dubose, too, seems like some horror movie character when seen from the children's perspective. Next to that, there is the almost horror-like scene in which the children are attacked in the dead of night by someone they cannot see, who turns out to be Bob Ewell, and who gets stabbed to death by their other 'ghost', Boo Radley. All in all, the gothic elements are an essential part of the novel, although as it turns out, all of the supposedly supernatural elements have a perfectly reasonable explanation.

1.4. Reception

1.4.1. *Reviews*

As pointed out by Stephen Metcalf in his article "On First Looking Into *To Kill a Mockingbird*" from 2006, the reviews of *To Kill a Mockingbird* have been mixed ever

since its publication, varying from extremely positive to highly sceptical. This variation can often be found within a single review: Scout and the battle for justice seem to win the critics over, while the impossibility of the narration style tends to extract a wordily expressed frown.

The positive critique is mostly about the style, atmosphere and content of the novel: the way Lee portrays the themes of justice and racial inequality without making the novel heavy and hard to read, which is mostly attributed to the depiction of the narrator, Scout. An example of a very positive critic comes from the *New York Times*, on 10 July 1960. In his review called "One Taxi Town", Frank H. Lyell is full of praise about the novel (which at the time, as the header of the review informs us, was sold for \$3,95). Lyell is especially positive about the way the characters are portrayed through the mind, eyes and ears of Scout Finch. He rightly predicts that this novel is very well suited to be turned into a film, which it would only two years after he wrote this. Phoebe Lou Adams wrote her review for *The Atlantic* a few weeks later, and calls the read "pleasant [and] undemanding", due to the variety of characters and the continuity of incidents. *Time Magazine's* review of 1 August 1960 is exclusively positive: the critic admires Lee's brilliance in describing the growing awareness to good and evil of a six-year-old, and calls Scout "fiction's most appealing child since Carson McCullers' Frankie got left behind at the wedding". The critic admires how Lee manages to keep the "catechistic" or moralizing flavour, which he or she deems inevitable, to a minimum.

The negative reviews seem to centre on the narration style. A large concern for most of the "serious critics", as Metcalf calls them, is the inconsistency between the Scout's age and the adult prose she speaks in. They feel it makes the novel less plausible. Metcalf agrees with these critics, as do Lyell and Adams. Lyell's only negative comment on the novel is that he feels that the voice of the narrator does not always fit her character as we come to know it. Adams states that the novel "is frankly and completely impossible, being told in the first person by a six-year-old girl with the prose style of a well-educated adult", and adds that the attempts of the writer to

compensate this by not giving away more information than Scout can have known “is no more than a casual gesture toward plausibility”. Another point of critique which Metcalf points out is the improbable faultlessness of the main characters, especially Atticus. He also mentions that the novel, which began as a series of short stories, has not completely succeeded in overcoming its episodic tendencies. In Metcalf’s opinion, the novel has been reviewed too indiscriminately and too much through the eyes of “the average reader”, whose views Metcalf thinks are contrary to serious critics in the sense that what the readers love about the book – the righteousness of the characters, Scout’s complete innocence, etcetera – is what “serious critics” are sceptical about. He quotes and agrees with novelist and essayist Flannery O’Connor: ““It’s interesting that all the folks that are buying it don’t know they are buying a children’s book.”

The overall idea given by most reviews is that *To Kill a Mockingbird* is considered a readable, likeable and well-written novel. However, fault is found in the implausibility of the story telling and the faultlessness of the characters.

1.4.2. *Controversy*

Despite the enormous popularity of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and the Pulitzer Prize it won in 1961, the novel gave rise to controversies across the United States. It has been banned or challenged by schools multiple times on several grounds, which are listed on the website of the American Library Association. They retrieved the information from a “2004 Banned Books Resource Guide.” The challenging of a novel means to attempt to restrict or remove access to the work. Often when the novel was challenged or banned, it was because the school or region had a problem with the novel’s language. Words such as ‘whore lady’ and ‘damn’ are deemed unfit for a younger audience. Even more problematic was – or is – the idea that the novel contains racist elements or, in other words, “represents institutionalized racism under the guise of good literature”. Its ‘racial themes’ are considered inappropriate. Not all of these protests date from the 1960’s: on the contrary, they still occur. The latest challenge

listed is from 2004, in which year the resource guide was written. The later complaints are mostly about the racial themes in the novel, and the use of the words 'nigger'. The ALA informs us that many complaints were made by black students and parents, indicating that they disagree with the novel's status as an anti-racist work.

2. TRANSLATION PROBLEMS

On a close reading of the text with the translation at the back of one's mind, many issues that might prove to be difficult can be discovered. The most important of these problems will be discussed in this chapter. It is the objective of this chapter to find the possible solutions to these problems and to discover which of these solutions would be the most suitable. Two of the major translation problems, being style and dialect, require a more in-depth analysis and will therefore be separately discussed in chapters three and four respectively. At the end of these chapters, I hope to be well armed and prepared for the second part and final stage of this thesis: the translation.

Before turning to the translation problems, however, it is important to formulate a translation brief. Establishing the priorities may help to determine which of the possible solutions are more or less desirable. For this thesis, I have chosen to work with the translation brief as stated in the standard Dutch contract for literary translations, which is as follows:

“The translator commits him- or herself to deliver a translation faithful to content and style and in impeccable Dutch directly from the original work.” (GAU, 1)

After signing the contract, the translator is obligated to maintain the style and content of the original work. This naturally means that some problem solving methods may be more desirable than others. It goes without saying that the novel itself is the most important guideline here: what solution fits the text? What choices does the implied author seem to have made and why? To recreate the text, the translator must try and recreate the writing process of the implied author and determine which solutions serve to do that best.

It is now time to look at the translation problems I expect to encounter in the novel. To give a structural overview of the problems and their possible solutions, I will use the classification of translation problems which Nord presents in her article “Tekstanalyse en de moeilijkheidsgraad van een vertaling” (“Text analysis and the level of difficulty of a translation”, translation mine). She distinguishes four categories: pragmatic translation problems, culture specific problems, language pair specific problems and text specific problems (147). The translation problems in *To Kill a Mockingbird* will be discussed one category at a time.

In advance, I would like to add that my personal view on translation allows for some freedom to make changes in a text, but only if it serves the purpose of staying true to the original. What I mean by that is that following a text to the letter does not necessarily result in a faithful translation. Maintaining the style, flow, rhythm and, as a result, reading experience of the original text is more important than a slavish obedience to the structure and lexicon. This view may have an effect on what translation strategies I find to be preferable over others.

2.1. Pragmatic translation problems

Pragmatic translation problems are the result of differences in the communicative situation of the source and target text. In the case of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, that means the difference between America in 1960 and the Netherlands in 2011. The theme of the inequality of black and white, for example, was a very sore and very relevant subject in America in the sixties, in a very different way from the contemporary Netherlands. Although racism is an often discussed topic in the Netherlands nowadays and in no way irrelevant, the specific situation of African Americans such as described in the novel would evoke completely different emotions in Americans who read it a mere thirty years after the era that is described, in a time of racial segregation, than in Dutch readers in 2011. Of course, this is only one example: the fact that modern readers have the ability to look up everything that is unclear to them on the internet in mere

seconds is another example that may greatly influence the reading experience. However, although the differences between these two groups of target readers and their backgrounds are considerable, I foresee no major problems in this area. There will always be a difference between the reception of a novel in its homeland and a foreign country, and the themes in the novel may have been much more fresh in the memories of the 1960 readers, but that also counts for modern readers of the original novel. A British reader today, for example, will experience the novel differently from an American reader back in 1960, but the idea of changing the novel to reduce this difference seems ridiculous. In the same way, to 'translate away' the differences in time and place is undesirable. There might be some difficulties with concepts unknown to a Dutch reader, but those will be dealt with in the next section.

2.2. Culture specific translation problems

These problems result from the differences between the source and target culture, or in this case the American and Dutch culture. The most important problems in this area are the dialects spoken by some of the characters, the institutional differences between the American court around 1930 and the Dutch, and some individual culture specific elements.

As mentioned above, although the issue of dialect falls within this category, it will be discussed in a separate chapter, where there will be room for a more extensive research and analysis than is convenient here.

2.2.1. Court terminology

Because a large part of the novel revolves around the Tom Robinson's trial, and presumably because Lee's father was a lawyer, one of the topics which often comes up in the novel is that of the law. This results in a lot of court terminology. Because the American court differs from the Dutch court, this may cause problems. Some examples of court terminology are "J. P. Court", simply the word "court", which has

many meanings, "witness", "defendant", "swore out a warrant", "reasonable doubt", "the bench", "the state", "Supreme Court of the United States", "clerk" and "convicted". All of these terms occur in the excerpts that are to be translated. Some of them are easily translated, because they have an easily findable Dutch equivalent: witness, for example. The appropriate equivalents for the more difficult words can be found in relevant Dutch secondary sources, such as websites or articles on law. Even Wikipedia could prove useful, because entries are often offered in several languages. Of course, this information must be checked first.

When it comes to the word 'court', it is essential to make sure what is meant by it: is Lee referring to the courtroom, the courthouse, the people that make up the court, or the entire institution? Of course, this goes for all the terms: first, one should find out what is meant by it exactly, to make sure that the Dutch term truly is the equivalent. For example, there is a difference between "gedaagde", "verdachte" and "verweerder", all of which are translations for the word defendant. Secondary sources must determine which is the right one.

2.2.2. *Culture specific elements*

There are a few other realia which require some extra attention. These are all American terms which may or may not mean something to a Dutch reader. It is important to maintain the setting of the novel, but equally important to create a readable and understandable translation. A few examples of these realia are: "mockingbird", where the main problem is to make sure the translation refers to the same bird, "Rockefeller", "corncrib", "chiffarobe", "property" – meaning the area around somebody's house, and the different words that are employed to indicate the African Americans: "negroes", "niggers" and "coloured folk". In the article "Cultuurspecifieke elementen in vertalingen" ("Culture Specific Elements in Translation", translation mine), Javier Franco Aixela names several strategies that can

be used to translate culture specific elements or 'CSEs'. They are divided into two categories: strategies for preservation or replacement of the CSE (200-203).

Beneath are the possible strategies for preservation:

- Repetition: the CSE is literally preserved. This is an optional strategy: for example, the city of Maycomb will still be called Maycomb in the target text.
- Orthographical adaptation: here, Aixela means "transcription or transliteration" (200), which are strategies that are useful when translation from one script into another. This is not relevant for *To Kill a Mockingbird*.
- Linguistical (not cultural) translation: this is the most literal translation, which preserves the fact that the CSE is an element from the source culture. Aixela's example is the translation of the American word "dollars" into the Spanish "dólares". Because it is the goal to preserve the setting of the novel as much as possible, this strategy can be useful in the translation, as long as it does not lead to confusion. For example, in the case of longitudinal measurements, it might be best to adapt them to the Dutch metric system, because it is hard for a Dutch person to get a sense of how far a 'yard' or a 'mile' is. Maintaining this would cause a hold-up in the text.
- Extratextual explanations: it is possible to explain a CSE in a footnote or appendix. However, this would interrupt the flow of the text and therefore affect the reading experience, where this is not the case in the original text. Since there are many other options and this strategy is undesirable, it can be ruled out.
- Intratextual explanation: although adding extratextual explanations would interrupt the flow of the text, sometimes the adding of intratextual explanation to a foreign term can be a solution. If applied carefully and inconspicuously – in other words: if it does not interfere with the reading experience – this may ensure that the reader understands what is meant, without adding an intruding note or reference. Especially when a term occurs more than once, an

intratextual explanation can be very useful, since it only has to be employed once, after which the term alone will be enough.

Next, Aixela names several replacement strategies:

- Synonyms: this strategy can be used to avoid the repetition of a term, for example in the case of names (Judge Taylor, judge, sir).
- Limited or absolute universalization: replacing a term with a slightly more general, or completely general term. For example, translating “fudge” with “karamel” (limited) or “snoep” (absolute). Both variations of the strategy are possibilities, although the limited option is most desirable when trying to preserve the setting of the novel.
- Naturalization: translating the exotic term with a specifically Dutch one (“fudge” with “drop”, for example). This is not a possibility if one wants to maintain the illusion that the story is set in America: Scout and Jem sharing a ‘stroopwafel’ would seriously compromise the credibility of the novel. Universalization, even the complete form, is preferable in these situations.
- Omission: in the utmost necessity, the term can be omitted from the text completely. This is a possibility if the term is of no great importance and translating it would cause a hold-up in the text, no matter what strategy is used.
- Autonomous creation: this involves adding a CSE that is not part of the source text into the target text. For the translation of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, this strategy does not seem useful.

Aixela briefly mentions three other possibilities.

- Compensation: this is a combination of omission and autonomous creation, where a CSE is removed in one place and another CSE with a similar effect or meaning added somewhere else to make up for the omission. The idea of compensation can be a useful strategy for some problems – for example, in a

humorous text, one can choose to omit an untranslatable joke in one place and insert a new one someplace else – but in the case of CSEs in this novel, it seems too radical and not functional to insert a completely new CSE that is not part of the source text. Since omission is only an option if the CSE is not that important to the text, compensating for it is unnecessary.

- Transposition: this means to move the CSE to another place in the text. I cannot now foresee how that may be useful, but it would probably not do much harm if this strategy were applied. Perhaps it could serve to relieve a complicated sentence by taking out an element and inserting it somewhere else.
- Toning down: replacing the CSE with something that, “for ideological reasons” (203) better fits the target culture. Aixela mentions the translation of slang into Spanish, which related to the problem of translating dialect. It is also used in the translation of children’s literature. The problem of dialect will be addressed later and other, more specific strategies for its translations will be discussed then. For general CSEs, this strategy does not add much to the ones discussed before: *To Kill a Mockingbird* is not part of the genre in which this strategy is very useful.

2.3. Language pair specific translation problems

These are problems that stem from the structural differences between the two languages. In the case of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, a few important problems are the translation of “you” into “je” or “u/U”, the translation of titles (Miss, Judge, Reverend, etc.) and the proverbs Lee employs.

2.3.1. Translating “you”

As is well known, the English language knows one word for “jij”, “jullie” and “u”: you. This often poses a problem, since it is not always clear what translation is most suitable. If the translator chooses wrong, that could not only change the meaning of a

sentence or a larger part of the text, but also alter the register of the text. In the court scenes, this problem presents itself frequently: the witnesses are addressed with ‘you’, and the witnesses in turn address the lawyers with ‘you’. On first instinct, ‘u’ seems the best option in the setting of a courtroom, but that feels unnatural when the witnesses are also addressed with their first name (which happens with Tom Robinson, for example). Also, the Ewells are not the most polite sort of people, and when they are angry it might make more sense for them to say ‘jij’. The most natural option seems to be that the witnesses address their interviewers with “U” except when that does not fit their mood, and that the attorneys and the judge say “U” as well until they start using the witnesses’ first names. After that, it would seem awkward and illogical for them to keep saying “U”. I spell “U” with a capital letter, because it is more old-fashioned and thus contributes to the 1930’s setting, without being bothersome to the reader.

2.3.2. *Terms of address*

There are several titles which return throughout the text: Miss, Mr, Judge, Reverend, etcetera. Basically, there are two options: to translate or not to translate. Although it is not uncommon to leave the titles as they are, the readers may stumble on them because they interrupt the flow of the text, and remind them that they are reading a translation. This must be avoided, and therefore translation is the best option. Because the setting is far in the past, the fact that the translation of Miss - “juffrouw” – seems old-fashioned, serves the translation perfectly, while it might usually be a disadvantage.

2.3.3. *Proverbs and expressions*

When writing prose, or virtually anything that allows for some creative writing, the use of set expressions and proverbs is almost a given. In the excerpts that will be translated, there are quite a few. There are (variations of): “Dirt beneath her feet”,

“Death is the great leveler”, “Screaming fit to beat Jezus”, “Screaming like a stuck hog”, “making a holy racket”, being “devoid of evil intent”, “the whole boiling (of you)”, “It’s as simple as black and white”, “To put away from somebody (her)”, “an old Uncle” and “a black lie”.

Some of these expressions might have been solved fairly easily, had they not been used for a specific reason. For example, Atticus says: “This case is as simple as black and white” (221) and “a lie as black as Tom Robinson’s skin”. In both cases, of course, he is referring to skin colour, because that is what the case is truly about. However, the phrases “zwarte leugen” and “zo simpel als zwart en wit” do not exist in Dutch.

Another example where the expressions have been chosen for a specific reason, are the expressions Bob Ewell uses to describe the screaming of his daughter. After “like a stuck hog”, he uses two expressions with Christian connotations. This is an insult to the court, but he does not seem to notice, which has a humorous purpose as well. It would be a shame to lose that in translation. To maintain both the expressions – Atticus’s as well as Ewell’s – without losing the double meaning they have, may prove difficult. I will have to try and find Dutch expression or proverbs that balance between meaning the same thing and carrying a similar reference to the context. Compensation might also prove a possible strategy: if the reference to black and white cannot be made here, maybe that can be compensated somewhere else in the text. If all else fails, I am not opposed to allowing for some artistic license, for example by maintaining the term “zwarte leugen”, even though it is not a familiar thing to say in Dutch. The meaning is still clear: black has a similar evil connotation in Dutch as it has in English. Or it may be possible to play with the idiom “liegen dat hij zwart ziet”. With some creativity and by keeping a balance between staying true to the meaning and true to the subtext, it must be possible to find suitable solutions for all the proverbs in the text.

2.4. Text specific translation problems

These are problems that are inherent in the source text. The style of the novel is one issue, as are its setting, the large amount of dialogue and, last but certainly not least, the title. An extensive style analysis will be given in the next chapter, but the other problems will be discussed here.

2.4.1. *Setting*

The novel is set in Alabama, in the 1930's. As discussed in chapter one, there is some debate about whether or not Lee has successfully captured this specific era. Whether she has or not, the novel is typical for the genre of the regional novel and when reading the book, it is clear that the story does not take place in twenty-first century Holland. This feeling follows mostly from the society that the implied author pictures for us, and is matched by the somewhat old-fashioned language in the sense that the dialogues can be rather formal, some of the words have an old-fashioned connotation and, very importantly, the absence of distinctly modern words. This means that in translation, old-fashioned words may sometimes be preferable to words with a modern connotation, but it is important that this does not affect the readability of the translation: a text that is distinctly old-fashioned may interfere with a pleasant reading experience. The best thing to strive for is a timeless language – I say strive, because to accomplish this perfectly is virtually impossible – and to add an old-fashioned touch here and there. For example, choosing the capital 'U' as a form of address over the regular 'u' as suggested earlier, is a non-intrusive way of giving the text an old-fashioned touch.

The background of a small town in Southern America maintains itself: by preserving the exotic elements and detailed descriptions of the surroundings, the background will be recreated for the Dutch reader. In the chosen excerpts, the setting does not play an important role, so this is mainly hypothetical. In any case, it is not in the least my intention to naturalize the exotic elements to suit a Dutch setting.

2.4.2. Dialogue

The difficulty with writing and translating dialogue is that it has to look, or 'sound', convincing. Although written dialogue is nothing like actual dialogue, since it is far too 'perfect' and fluent, it is still important that the reader believes in the dialogue and can be convinced, through their willing suspension of disbelief, that it is real. To achieve that, one can read out the written dialogue and experience whether that is 'how you say it' in Dutch, and to make sure the text is fluent. Sometimes, the translator may have to deviate slightly from the source text to maintain the fluency. As stated at the beginning of this subchapter, I have no problem with that as long as the deviation serves a purpose: in this case, the purpose is to make the dialogue as convincing as possible.

2.4.3. Title

The very last translation problem that will here be discussed is one of the hardest nuts to crack. It seems so very simple: *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Four little words, that prove quite a braintwister on closer examination. First of all, the title's meaning must be taken into account. As discussed in chapter one, it can be argued that those four words refer to much of the content of the book, in particular Tom Robinson's fate: the mockingbird may symbolize Tom Robinson, who *is* in fact killed. If interpreted in this way, one could argue that the title *To Kill a Mockingbird* refers to the account of 'the killing of a mockingbird': the death of Tom. Whether this is the true meaning of the title or not, it would be ideal if the translated title could also be interpreted in this way. The first thing that one is wise to let go is the wish to use a fragment of the sentence "That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird" (98) as the title. In Dutch that is practically impossible: the translation "Daarom is het een zonde om een spotlijster te doden" would result in a title like "(Om) Een spotlijster te doden", which sounds ungrammatical and awkward. Letting go of that restriction creates a little more

freedom: as long as the same words are used, but not necessarily in the same order, the link between the title and Atticus's words remains clear.

To make sure the title can still be interpreted as a reference to the death of Tom Robinson, maintaining the element of the death of the mockingbird in Dutch is essential. An option that does this and still strongly refers to Atticus's words is: "De dood van een spotlijster". It refers both to the words of Atticus and to the story of Tom. It is slightly more specific than the original title, since it describes an event rather than an action, but this gains the title a dramatic, epic quality which I believe suits the novel.

3: STYLISTIC AND NARRATOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

One of the translation problems is that of style. Because maintaining the style of the original is such an important task of the translator, which is specifically mentioned in the translation brief, it is essential to be fully aware of the elements that make it up in order to be able to transfer them into the target text. To achieve this awareness, a thorough style analysis of *To Kill a Mockingbird* will be presented in this chapter, which will automatically cover some narratological elements as well. The analysis will be conducted according to a method described by Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short, and will focus on what is relevant for the translation of the novel as much as possible. For each style element, the potential problems it may cause and the ways to solve those problems will be discussed.

In the third chapter of their book *Style in Fiction*, Leech and Short expound a method for the analysis of a literary work. In this method, they divide the elements that should be analysed into four groups: lexical categories, grammatical categories, figures of speech and context and cohesion. I will stick to these groups and the order they are in and try to avoid overlap and irrelevant data as much as possible.

Because it would take at least twenty theses to analyze every style aspect of the entire novel, I will focus mainly on the excerpts that I have chosen to translate. Almost all of these are part of a very important part of the novel, being the trial and verdict of Tom Robinson's case. There is not enough time and space to go into every detail of the novel's style, but hopefully, using the method of Short and Leech will help to provide a broad overview of the most important elements, which will aid the translation.

3.1. Lexical categories (Leech, 61-62)

These categories contain questions on word level. As Short and Leech point out, it is important, especially when zooming in to word level, not to forget the bigger picture in order to see what choices on word level do to the text as a whole.

3.1.1. *Vocabulary and register*

What one immediately notices when reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* is that the vocabulary is neither extremely simple nor very difficult. Although the narrator employs fluent, well written, distinctly adult prose, it is also to the point and understandable. Scout does not speak in riddles or elaborated similes. A good example is the first excerpt that will be translated: the part where Atticus explains why it is a sin to kill a mockingbird. This is the only selected excerpt which does not take place in the court-room, and characteristic for the style in most of the novel. A fragment:

“When he gave us our air rifles Atticus wouldn’t teach us to shoot. Uncle Jack instructed us in the rudiments thereof; he said Atticus wasn’t interested in guns. Atticus said to Jem one day, ‘I’d rather you shot at tin cans in the back yard, but I know you’ll go after birds. Shoot all the bluejays you want, but remember it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.’” (Lee, 98)

Although, compared to many other literary works, the narrator’s text is relatively straightforward, it is not devoid of difficult words and cannot be said to fit the vocabulary of a six-to-nine-year-old. The term “rudiments” in the excerpt above is an example of this. The complexity of the vocabulary in the character’s text differs from person to person: the children, ‘negroes’ and the Ewell’s all speak in fairly low registers, while other adults such as Atticus and Miss Maudie tend to use a more complex vocabulary. This serves an important role in creating contrast between

different characters and groups of people, and in illustrating the social status of the characters.

3.1.2. Repetition

Word repetition is often used in the novel to give something extra emphasis. Depending on the situation and the character speaking, the reasons for emphasis differ. For example, when witnesses are passionate about something and want to bring this across – which Scout mentions is often a sign of guilt – they may use repetition: “I ducked and it – it glanced, that’s what it did. I ducked and it glanced off.” (203). Here, Mayella is trying to explain her way out of a tricky situation, but cannot fool the reader. In these cases, the speakers tend to use repetition unconsciously: it is a natural way to try and bring their point across.

The repetition can also serve as a rhetorical device. Atticus’s speech to the jury is a very good example of that. This speech is a unique part of the novel and almost stands on its own: in a speech that covers several pages, Atticus employs many rhetorical methods to try and convince the jury of Tom’s innocence and of the rightful path to take. The repetitions in his speech are, therefore, very consciously employed. Some examples:

“I have nothing but **pity** in my heart for the chief witness for the state, but my **pity** does not extend so far as to her putting a man’s life at stake, which she has done in an effort to get rid of her own **guilt**.”

“I say **guilt**, gentlemen, because it was **guilt** that motivated her.” (221-222)

But Atticus has not only prepared his appeal to the jury, but presumably his witness interviews as well. Here, he also employs rhetorical devices now and then to achieve his goals and emphasize important issues. For example, during his questioning of Mayella, he asks her his most important question four times, in the exact same form: “Do you remember him beating you about the face?” (201-202).

When an event carries a lot of weight, repetition is sometimes used to emphasize it. For example, just before the judge reads out Tom's verdict, Lee writes:

"A jury **never looks** at a defendant it has convicted, and when this jury came in, **not one of them looked** at Tom Robinson. The foreman **handed** a piece of paper to Mr Tate who **handed it** to the clerk who **handed it** to the judge..." (230) In the latter part, the repetition of who, without commas between the subordinate clauses, gives a sense of slow motion and anticipation.

Sometimes, the repetition is not of the exact same word, but words with a similar meaning to emphasize an event:

"Then he **left** the court-room, but not by his usual **exit**. He must have wanted to **go home** the short way, because he **walked** quickly down the middle aisle towards the **south exit**. I followed the top of his head as he **made his way to the door**." (230)

And, of course, there is the repetition of most famous sentence in the novel: "Shoot all the bluejays you want, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird", shortly followed by: "That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." (98)

As long as the translator is aware of these repetitions, they can most likely be contained without causing trouble.

3.1.3. *Scenic vocabulary*

As discussed in the genre section of chapter one, there is a strong case to be made for *To Kill a Mockingbird* to be counted among the regional novels. The story is set against a strong and realistic background, which is accomplished through detailed description of the surroundings and society. As Cees Koster calls it in his article "Iconen van de allesverzengende liefde", the novel receives "authentication by detail" (70): the more details one learns about life in Maycomb, the more real and authentic that little town becomes. Among other things, the narrator and characters tend to use very specific vocabulary when describing sceneries and situations, rather than choosing more general terminology. For example, instead of saying "Shoot all the

birds you want," Atticus names a specific bird the kids are allowed to shoot: the bluejay. This may seem trivial, but combined with other specifically named flora and fauna, one gets the sense that the townspeople of Maycomb live close to nature, which strengthens the idea of a rural and historic setting. Another example comes a few sentences later, when Miss Maudie mentions birds nesting in "corncribs": the fact that Maycomb people apparently have corncribs in their back yards adds to the rural image.

We know that Lee's own hometown has modelled for Maycomb and that the story is partly autobiographical. This presumably gives her the advantage that she is painting a scene from her own youth, and can therefore re-create from memory. As a result, one can almost see the little town come to life, because of the many specific elements Lee inserts.

Another example of authentication by detail in the form of specific vocabulary, is the court terminology that has been discussed in chapter 2.2. The use of these specific words make the court scenes and Atticus's profession more authentic.

The problem of CSEs, which results from this scenic vocabulary, has been discussed in chapter two. Because the setting is so important, maintaining the exotic elements that authenticate it should be strived for.

3.1.4. *Dialect and colloquial speech*

An important part of the novel, and a major translation problem, is formed by the use of dialect. Because one paragraph would not suffice to discuss the problems and possible solutions satisfyingly, the problem of dialect will be discussed separately in chapter four.

3.1.5. *Descriptive language*

Because Scout often describes what she experienced without evaluating it, the majority of the narrator's text is descriptive rather than evaluative. Also, a very large

part of the novel consists of conversations, which Scout observes and (flawlessly) reproduces. In many of these parts, Scout herself plays only a minor role: she is too young to be involved in most of the conversations with the adults, or to even understand what they are about, and merely serves as a witness. Therefore, pronouns and names of other people make up for a lot of words in the text, because Scout is constantly referring to actions and conversations of other people taking place around her.

Because Scout does not understand everything she sees and hears, the true meaning of what happens must be conveyed to the reader through overheard conversations and through Scout's descriptions of the scenes she witnesses. This results in detailed descriptions of surroundings, facial expressions, and many other things her senses pick up that may or may not seem important to her. Here are a few examples from the courtroom that illustrate how the implied author, or the adult narrator, chooses to describe things that, without requiring any added commentary from the narrator, give the reader an idea of atmosphere, emotions, intentions, etcetera:

- "Atticus was on his feet at the bench saying something to him, Mr Heck Tate as first officer of the county stood in the middle aisle quelling the packed courtroom. Behind us, there was an angry muffled groan from the coloured people." (188) Here, Scout only relates what she saw and heard, but the idea of chaos and discomfort in the courtroom comes across to the reader. We understand that what has happened a few moments before – Bob Ewell openly accusing Tom of rape – has caused different reactions in the different groups of people present in the courtroom.
- "He looked suddenly weary," (189) Scout thinks when looking at Judge Taylor. Scout does not elaborate on why the judge looks tired, but we understand he has a hard time with the witness that is on the stand, and with the tiresome, difficult trial. This is confirmed later on in the novel, when it is suggested that

the judge was on Tom's side: Atticus tells Jem he would rather that a judge passed judgement in capital cases than a jury (Lee, 240).

- "Mayella was silent. She seemed to be trying to get something clear to herself. I thought for a moment she was doing Mr Heck Tate's and my trick of pretending there was a person in front of us." (201-202). Again, Scout tries to interpret what she sees within her own frame of reference, and what she tells us is enough to be able to picture Mayella trying to get her story straight.
- "I peeked at Jem: his hands were white from gripping the balcony, and his shoulders jerked as if each 'guilty' was a separate stab between them." (230) By showing us Jem, who understands what the verdict of Tom means better than Scout does, Scout shows us the impact of the jury's decision on the people who care for Tom. Scout's feelings are much more subdued, because she cannot fully grasp the implications of Tom's verdict. Showing Jem's feelings through Scout is a useful tool to convey emotions to the reader which Scout does not fully possess herself.
- "I looked around. They were all standing. All around us and in the balcony on the opposite wall, the Negroes were getting to their feet." (230) This is simply a description of what is happening around Scout, without her drawing any conclusions from it, but the reader understands that this is a sign of respect from Tom's supporters to her father, and can fully picture what that must look like. It is one of the most powerful scenes in the novel, although Scout does nothing more than describe what she sees.

3.2. Grammatical categories

The way an author uses the possibilities of grammar – which options does she choose, or which not – can say much about what she is trying to convey. This may cause problems in translation, because of the differences in grammatical rules between the source and target language.

3.2.1. Sentence structure

A grammatical analysis of *To Kill a Mockingbird* gives an image consistent with the analysis on word level when it comes to complexity and readability. The novel's prose contains no significant, recurring inversion of sentences or noticeably deviant sentence structures. Most of it is written in the simple past, which fits with the story being told by Scout in retrospect.

The complexity of the sentence structures in dialogue depends on the character speaking and the person or people they address. On average, the sentence structures in the narrator's text are neither very complex nor simple, but rather consist of readable, rhythmic, well written prose. Below is an excerpt that illustrates this. Bob Ewell uses simple sentence structures and sometimes makes grammatical errors, while Mr Gilmer and the Judge employ grammatically correct English with a higher register, although they seem to avoid complex structures while speaking to Ewell.

"Mr Robert Ewell?" asked Mr Gilmer.

'That's m' name, cap'n,' said the witness.

Mr Gilmer's back stiffened a little, and I felt sorry for him. [...] Mr Ewell was Mr Gilmer's witness and he had no business being rude to him of all people.

'Are you the father of Mayella Ewell?' was the next question.

'Well, if I ain't I can't do nothing about it now, her ma's dead,' was the answer.

Judge Taylor stirred. He turned slowly in his swivel chair and looked benignly at the witness. 'Are you the father of Mayella Ewell?' he asked, in a way that made the laughter below us stop suddenly.

'Yes sir,' Mr Ewell said meekly.

Judge Taylor went on in tones of good will: 'This the first time you've ever been in court? I don't recall ever seeing you here.' At the witness's affirmative nod he considered. 'Well, let's get something straight. There will be no more audibly obscene

speculations on any subject from anybody in this court-room as long as I'm sitting here. Do you understand?" (Lee, 187)

As shown above, the sentence structure in the narrator's text is without a doubt one of an adult, but nevertheless accessible and straightforward.

The fact that the complexity of sentence structures and sentence lengths in the character's text varies from person to person, or from group to group, serves to create a strong contrast between these people: especially between what you could call the lower and upper class people. The lower class, consisting of the Ewell's and the black community, often speak in short sentences with simple structures, such as Mayella's "Whaddya mean?" (200) or Bob Ewell's "That's m' name, cap'n" (186). The upper class, represented by for example Atticus and Judge Taylor, tends to speak in perfect, well-turned phrases with more complex structures. For example, Judge Taylor says: "People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for, and they have the right to subject their children to it, but I can assure you of one thing: you will receive what you see and hear in silence or you will leave this court-room, but you won't leave it until the whole boiling of you come before me on contempt charges." A sentence like this, with its many subclauses and a parallelism, would never be employed by the Ewell's or Tom Robinson. Another such example comes from Atticus's speech to the jury:

"I shall be brief, but I would like to use my remaining time with you to remind you that this case is not a difficult one, it requires no minute sifting of complicated facts, but it does require you to be sure beyond all reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the defendant." (221).

The complexity of the narrator's text lies somewhere in between, but it is always grammatically correct and on the formal side. The register of the narrator is closer to that of the upper class people.

3.2.2. *Short sentences*

Another noticeable style element in the novel is the use of short sentences, almost one-liners, which carry a lot of weight. These are some examples:

- "That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." (98) This statement sounds very decided and convincing, as if it is a simple truth that needs not to be doubted. The fact that both Atticus and Miss Maudy are both so decided on this, that it is a sin to kill an innocent creature, is very important, as it is illustrative of their characters and values. Partly because of this, they are strongly portrayed as representatives of the 'good people', a distinction that is important in the novel.
- "Atticus's next question was one long word. 'How?'" (203) This 'how' contains the question: how can a person whose left arm is crippled have beaten, choked and violated you? It is the question on which Atticus's defence is based, and therefore extremely important. By laying all of that meaning into one single word, that 'how' becomes very strong, heavy and significant.
- "This case is as simple as black and white." (221) With this sentence, Atticus not only tries to convince the jury that the answer to 'guilty or not guilty' is very simple, but he also refers to the importance of race in the trial. In other words, a lot of meaning is conveyed in a few words, and no further explanation is necessary.
- "What did she do? She tempted a Negro." (222) Here, Atticus describes Mayella's offence in only a couple of words. This makes it sound very forceful and convincing, and one almost forgets that Mayella has never admitted to doing any such thing.
- "In the name of God, do your duty." And, shortly thereafter: "In the name of God, believe him." (224) These two simple sentences contain enormous amounts of emotion and dedication, and succeed in bringing them across. The simplicity and idiomatic structure makes them sound very forceful, perhaps because so much weight is carried by so little words.

“Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father’s passin’.” (230) At first glance, this seems like any simple, insignificant sentence. However, after the description of all the coloured people standing up respectfully, combined with the fact that it is the last sentence of the chapter, the words carry a lot of meaning, weight and emotion. Knowing what is behind the gesture makes it so forceful, and the Reverend putting that gesture into words only strengthens that. The simplicity of it – as if standing up in a show of appreciation is the only natural thing to do – makes it such a forceful sentence. This is the case with most of these short sentences: they sound matter-of-factly, which makes them so convincing: they don’t need any further explanation.

It might prove problematic to maintain these short, seemingly simple sentences in the target text, since English can often be a more compact language than Dutch. In those cases, the most natural thing for the translator to do would be to slightly elaborate. However, since the sentence length serves a purpose in these cases, it would here be better to try harder at creating a sentence that is equally short. This may require a deviation from the content for the sake of maintaining the style. The translator will have to decide what is best for each case individually, and should decide each time whether the sentence is purposefully short (or long), and how important it is to maintain this.

3.3. Figures of speech

By figures of speech, Short and Leech mean language in the novel which for some reason stands out from regular language, whether because the author uses a formal trope or deviates from standard language. The proverbs and expressions, which can also be counted among the figures of speech, have already been discussed in chapter two and will therefore not be mentioned here.

3.3.1. Parallelism

One of the most employed figures of speech in the novel is parallelism. This is used for more emphasis, mostly as a rhetorical device in the character's text of Atticus and Judge Taylor.

Here are a few of many examples of parallelism in the excerpts that will be translated:

- Judge Taylor: "People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for" (189)
- Mayella to Atticus: "'You want me to say something that didn't happen?' 'No, ma'am, I want you to say something that did happen.'" (203)

Especially Atticus's speech to the jury is full of parallelisms, as it is one of the rhetorical devices he employs:

- "[I]t requires no minute sifting of complicated facts, but it does require you to be sure beyond all reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the defendant." (221)
- "[T]his case should never have come to trial. This case is as simple as black and white." (221)
- "the assumption – the evil assumption – that *all* Negroes lie, that *all* Negroes are basically immoral beings, that *all* Negro men are not to be trusted around our women." (223) And, shortly thereafter: "some Negroes lie, some Negroes are immoral, some Negro men are not to be trusted around women" (223)
- "[S]ome people are smarter than others, some people have more opportunity because they're born with it, some men make more money than others, some ladies make better cakes than others" (223)
- "[T]here is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of an Einstein and the ignorant man the equal of any college president." (224)

And every now and then, a parallelism appears in the narrator's text. For example:

- "A jury never looks at a defendant it has convicted, and when this jury came in, not one of them looked at Tom Robinson." (230)

3.3.2. *Chiasmus*

Another, less occurring trope is the chiasmus. This is mostly used when the characters want to make forceful statements. It will not come as a surprise that two of the three examples are uttered by Atticus, but we also find one in Scout's observation of Tom: "He seemed to be a respectable Negro, and a respectable Negro would never go up into somebody's yard of his own volition." (209) The chiasmus makes the statement sound very definite.

As we know, the frequency of tropes in Atticus's address to the jury is many times higher. These chiasmi are from that speech:

- "You know the truth, and the truth is this." (223) It does not only sound convincing and decided because of what Atticus says – he simply takes for granted that the jury shares his view of the situation – but also because of the way it is put: stylistically beautiful, almost like a universally accepted truth.
- "A court is only as sound as its jury, and a jury is only as sound as the men who make it up." (224) This chiasmus serves to create a circle in which each individual jury member is a vital link. Atticus wants each jury member to be fully aware of the importance of the part they play, and their duty to do the right, lawful thing.

Maintaining these chiasme in the target text will probably not cause to many problems, since their structures are not of a nature that cannot be employed in Dutch. The important thing is to make them as fluent as possible, so as to maintain their strength as well as their structure.

3.3.3. *Metaphors and similes*

The novel does not contain many explicit metaphors or similes: compared to a book such as Homer's *Odyssee*, and many other literary novels, the similes are scarce. This might be because the text is predominantly descriptive and the illusion of the mental world of a child must be maintained. However, there are a few metaphors that

have important roles in the novel. The mockingbird as a metaphor of Tom Robinson, or of all innocents, is an obvious one.

Left and right

Less obvious, perhaps, but more often employed, is the metaphor of right and left in the novel. In her article “Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*”, Laurie Champion argues that the concepts of left and right, as in left- or right-handed, play an important symbolical role in which ‘right’ stands for virtue and innocence and ‘left’ for the opposite. She presents convincing evidence to support her theory. For example, Tom Robinson’s left arm is crippled and useless, suggesting he is free of immorality (Champion, 234), while we discover Bob Ewell – the undisputed villain of the story – to be left-handed. Atticus, the most virtuous and righteous character, has a bad left eye, which means he uses his good right eye to pass judgment and see the truth. To top this, Tom’s left arm being crippled is what proves beyond a doubt that he speaks the truth, because Mayella is attacked by a left-handed person – her father.

The translation of this particular metaphor may prove difficult. Because ‘right’ in English carries more meanings – positive ones – than ‘rechts’ in Dutch, it might be an idea to add more emphasis to the good qualities of ‘right’ by adding words like ‘goed’ (“zijn goede rechterarm”, for instance). However, this can be done only sporadically: it is not overly obvious in the original text and should not become so in Dutch. Only if it turns out that the symbolism is getting lost in translation, this form of compensation will be optional.

Other

There are also a few more easily spotted metaphors. An example of this in Atticus’s speech is:

“She did something every child has done – she tried to put the evidence of her offence away from her. But in this case she was no child hiding stolen contraband: she struck out at her victim – of necessity she must put him away from her – he must be

removed from her presence, from this world. She must destroy the evidence of her offence." (222)

Here, Mayella is compared to a child, to emphasize that her actions may have been childish, but the consequences were not.

This is another example from the speech: "[T]here is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of an Einstein and the ignorant man the equal of any college president." (224) Although he does not say it outright, what Atticus means by this is that the court is the one institution where a black person is, or should be, the equal of a white person.

There are not many metaphors in the narrator's text, but when Scout sees the jury return with their verdict and instinctively knows that they will convict Tom of rape, she says:

"[I]n a dream I saw the jury return, moving **like underwater swimmers**, and Judge Taylor's voice came from far away, and was tiny. I saw something only a lawyer's child could be expected to see, could be expected to watch for, and it was **like watching Atticus walk into the street, raise a rifle to his shoulder and pull the trigger, but watching all the time knowing that the gun was empty.**" (229-230)

In conclusion, the use of figures of speech serves mostly to stress important situations and as characteristic rhetorical devices in dialogue and Atticus's appeal. Apart from that appeal, they are not typical of the novel's style, but nevertheless play an important role.

3.4. Context and cohesion

By context and cohesion, Short and Leech mean the relation of the novel and its characters to the outside world – the reader – and the way parts of the text are related to each other, on sentence level and higher.

3.4.1. Ambiguity of narrator's text

As discussed before, the voice of the narrator is very ambiguous: we are reading a story as seen through the eyes of a six-year-old, but with the voice of an adult. Lee maintains a balance that succeeds to convince the reader that a little girl saw and heard all this, while at the same time writing in a prose that no six-year-old could even dream of. In other words, the memories are those of a little girl, but the recollection is done by someone quite a few years older. A random example of a sentence in which this becomes clear is: "At the witness's affirmative nod he considered." (187). This formal vocabulary is common in the novel, which has a higher register than would befit a six-year-old. At the same time, the thoughts expressed in the narrator's text are the thoughts of a little girl: we often feel as if she does not understand all that is happening. Only every now and then does the narrator add a retrospective note: "Until my father explained it to me later, I did not understand the subtlety of Tom predicament." (212) In translation, it is important to maintain this balance between the child and adult in the narration. This means that the prose should remain as fluent and 'adult' as it is in the original novel, while the observations remain those of a child. The latter part will presumably pose no problem, as that simply means not to add to what Scout sees and thinks. The trap which the translator should avoid to walk into is to make the narrator's text sound like that of a child's and to keep the register on the right level. In this, awareness is key.

Another reason for the reader to have serious doubts about the narrator is her flawless recollection of everything everybody says and does, including the trial of which she must not have been able to understand much, seeing as she was only eight at the time. Only the concept of willing suspension of disbelief can explain how the reader still believes the narrator to be sincere.

3.4.2. *Cohesion*

The repetition of names and titles in the novel is avoided, especially when the narrator has to refer to characters many times during long sections of dialogue. For

example, Judge Taylor is also called “the judge” and “(from) the bench”, Tom Robinson is referred to as Tom and “the defendant”, Mayella Ewell as “Miss Mayella” and simply “Miss” and Mr Ewell as “the witness”.

Conclusion

When trying to maintain the style of the source text, which is such an important part of the translation brief, it is essential to be aware of the elements that style is made up of, so one can make sure those elements are maintained. This style analysis is an important tool to achieve that, but during the translation, it will still be crucial to keep wondering why the narrator and characters say what they say, and whether the manner in which the language is constructed seems to serve a stylistic purpose. If so, the translator should of course strive to maintain that, or a similar, structure.

4: DIALECT

Another important style element in *To Kill a Mockingbird* is that of dialect. It serves the purpose of further authenticating the novel's setting, and of defining and contrasting different social groups. Because the problem of dialect is not easily determined and solved, it will be discussed separately in this chapter. Several texts concerned with translating dialect, or language varieties, will be consulted to construct an overview of the problem and its possible translation strategies. This will hopefully make it possible to decide which strategy will serve the translation of dialect in *To Kill a Mockingbird* best.

4.1. Dialect and idiolect defined

To try and define the concept of dialect, it is useful to look at what others have written on the subject of language variety and dialect, which will enable us to speak of dialect in a more scientific manner.

In the book *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*, J.C. Catford distinguishes two major classes of language varieties: varieties related to permanent characteristics of the performer (84-85) and varieties related to "transient" characteristics (85). Varieties related to permanent characteristics are:

- Dialect (85): based on the character's provenance and geographical, temporal and social place in society. The dialect in the novel is a combination of these: all speakers come from Maycomb, but the dialects they speak are the result of different backgrounds of their secluded social groups, and of their social status. Catford further describes dialect as language that deviates from what he calls the 'unmarked', standard dialect of a language. Those deviations originate in either geographical, social or temporal features, or a combination of those (86).

- Idiolect: this is the individual language variety employed by the speaker. This can mean that the speaker uses standard language or dialect, but with distinctive personal preferences and deviations.

Catford also distinguishes language varieties related to transient characteristics of the performer, which are a result of the situation in which the utterance occurs (85).

- The register, which depends on the role which the speaker is playing at that moment.
- The style, which depends on the relation between the speaker and the addressee and the situation in which the address is made.
- The mode of the utterance, which is related to the medium through which the message is conveyed.

Atticus's speech is an example of a variety that falls into the second class of language varieties: he adapts his register and style to the audience, being the jury, by applying a set of formal rules to his speech which he would not normally employ. In this chapter, however, the focus will be on the first class of varieties: the dialects and idiolects, which are related to permanent characteristics of the Ewell's and Tom Robinson.

In their work *Dicourse and the Translator*, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason employ the terms "user-related variation" and "use-related variation" respectively (39) to distinguish between the same major classes of Catford, which are discussed above. User-related varieties are the varieties related to permanent characteristics of the character, and Hatim and Mason agree that this includes dialect and idiolect.

Hatim and Mason distinguish the same types of dialect as Catford, being geographical, temporal, social and 'standard' dialect. They elaborate on the concept of standard dialect as the 'literary', standard use of language, and explain that deviations from it are hardly ever random. This is why the translator should try and find out the purpose of these deviations. Catford explains that most indicators of written dialect

are purely visual or literary: read aloud, the words sound no different from words in the standard dialect, but through their deviation from standard spelling, an illusion of dialect is created. In the work *Die literarische Übersetzung*, Jiřy Levý adds to the description of dialect by distinguishing two semantic functions of dialect: to indicate the region the speakers belong to, and to characterize the speaker's social status (143). This is yet another indication that the use of dialect is functional, because it serves to establish the character and background of the speaker.

By idiolect, Hatim and Mason mean the same as Catford: the individual preferences in language use of a character, including favourite expressions, typical pronunciations of certain words, etc. These individual tendencies in the use of the language set the character apart from other characters, even those who employ the same dialect (Catford, 88). In the case of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, that includes the differences between father and daughter Ewell. The major difference between the two is that Bob Ewell's dialect is stronger than Mayella's, with more frequent deviations from standard language. This distinction between the two is relevant, because it indicates a difference in their level of civilization and ignorance.

4.2. Problems and possible translation strategies

Hans-Jürgen Diller and Joachim Kornelius have also addressed the problem of translating dialect. Although they wonder about the translatability of dialect, they believe that the kind of dialect portrayed in the novel, being of the permanent (user related) variety, should be reproduced in the target text as well as possible, because it is part of what shapes a character's personality. According to them, this means a target language equivalent for the dialect should be found. They stress that the translator should try to find out what the purpose of the dialect is, and what it is presumably meant to convey. If the purpose is to express social status rather than regional origin, they state it is best to find an equivalent dialect that is not marked as belonging to a

specific region in the target culture. Simply replacing a regional dialect from the source text with a regional dialect from the target text is almost never possible, since they can never be truly equivalent: there are too many differences between the groups of people and the cultures which the different dialects represent (Diller, 84). The dialect of a person from rural America has different connotations from a dialect that originates in Twente, for instance. In other words: it would be too typical for a specific region that is absolutely not the setting of the novel. They do feel that a metropolitan accent from the target text could serve as the equivalent of a metropolitan accent of the source text, e.g. Cockney for 'plat Amsterdams', presumably because the differences between urban cultures in different countries are less strong than those of rural areas (82). Catford agrees that this is a possibility, because the metropolitan language variety of the target text is a 'socially geographical' equivalent of a metropolitan variety of the source text, meaning that the varieties match regarding the social and geographical connotations they convey. Catford has little scruples against using a specifically regional target text dialect anyhow, as long as it is equivalent to the source text dialect when it comes to the type of area and social group they refer to, which he admits is very difficult (87-88). Hatim and Mason, however, agree with Diller and Kornelius that replacing a geographical dialect of the source language with one of the target language can be disastrous for the text world, especially for the setting. Levý shares their opinion. According to her, the translator should definitely maintain a language variety that can be distinguished from the standard dialect. To avoid naturalizing the dialect, however, an allusion to dialect is the only option. When using a specific regional target language dialect, the people of Maycomb would, for example, turn into inhabitants of Twente, or at least speak Twents. This is impossible when trying to maintain the credibility of the original setting. The translator should therefore avoid using typically regional features in the target dialect and employ phonetic, lexical and syntactic deviations that cannot be traced back to one specific regional dialect. This way, the translator creates a universal rather than particular dialect (144).

Hatim and Mason also name the danger of offending speakers of a certain dialect if that dialect is used to portray someone with a low status. The translator should be aware of the implications of their choice, intended or not. This is also the case with translating social dialect: choosing a specific social dialect might have implications regarding the image the reader will have of the speaker's social status and place in society. However, the authors agree that a lot is lost when the dialect is abolished completely.

Catford mentions another problem: that of translating archaic dialects. Luckily, the dialect in *To Kill a Mockingbird* is relatively timeless: neither outspokenly modern nor extremely archaic. Maintaining this is one of the main priorities in translation.

In the case of idiolect, Hatim and Mason believe that the translator should wonder whether translation is even possible and necessary. This depends on the function of the idiolect: is it an important feature of the character? If so, maintaining it is desirable (44).

4.3. Most suitable translation strategy

The strategy that is proposed by Levý seems to best suit the purpose of this translation. The dialect mainly serves to underline the social status of the character that employ it, and this does not necessarily need to be achieved by selecting a specific regional dialect. The arguments against such a specific dialect are very strong: it would harm the authenticity of the carefully constructed setting majorly, while the setting is one of the most important features of the novel.

The idiolect in the novel is not very strong, but still present: little deviations that are typical for specific characters help to shape their personalities. I believe that, if it is possible to translate the idiolect, it is better to do so: the implied author used it for a reason, and that reason is still present in the target text. Therefore, I will try to maintain these individual deviations in the translation.

4.4. Practice and examples

Now that the most desirable translation strategy is selected, how to apply it to *To Kill a Mockingbird*? First, it is important to give a general idea of how the dialect is constructed in the original novel. After that, we can look at how other translators have used this strategy.

4.4.1. Dialect in the source text

Each group of people – the Ewells, the negroes and, in a way, the children – have their own way of speaking, and in the case of the first two we can call it a dialect. These dialects are variations of the standard dialect spoken by Atticus and other middle class people, which creates a sharp contrast between these social groups. The dialect is mainly portrayed by omitting letters (e.g. “nothin’” instead of nothing), misspelling and misinflecting words (“knowed”) and using typical contractions such as “ain’t”, “mighta” and “lemme”. This is done in a way that keeps the language from being hard to understand or read – even out loud – because apart from the contractions and misinflections, the dialect is more visual than anything else. Another characteristic of the novel’s dialects are sentence structures that deviate from the norm.

There are slight differences between the ‘negro’ dialect and the ‘Ewell’ dialect, and between the individual idiolects. Tom, for example, always says ‘suh’ instead of sir, which the Ewells do not, and his dialect is stronger than the Ewell’s, in the sense that more deviations from standard languages occur in his speech. The Ewells’s themselves have slightly different idiolects as well, as discussed earlier. These simple differences make sure that the reader gets the illusion he knows how these people sound like, although most of it exists only inside the reader’s head.

To illustrate what is said above, here is an example of Bob Ewell’s speech:

““Why, I run for Tate quick as I could. I knowed who it was, all right, lived down yonder in that nigger-nest, passed the house every day. Jedge, I’ve asked this county for fifteen years to clean out that nest down yonder, they’re dangerous to live around ‘sides devaluin’ my property –” (188)

And this is a fragment of Tom Robinson’s speech:

““Mr Finch, I got down offa that chair an’ turned an’ she sorta jumped on me. [...] She hugged me around the waist. [...] She reached up an’ kissed me ‘side of the face. She says she never kissed a grown man before an’s she might as well kiss a nigger. She says what papa do to her don’t count. She says: “Kiss me back, nigger.” I say: “Miss Mayella, lemme outa here” [...] an’ I say “lemme pass,” but just when I say it Mr Ewell yonder hollered through th’ window.” (211)

As shown above, the deviations from standard dialect are not always consistent – for example, sometimes Tom says “th” and sometimes he says “the” – but they occur frequently enough for the reader to know that this is dialect rather than standard speech.

The children, too, have their own way of speaking, but it is colloquial language rather than actual dialect. Deviations from standard dialect are less frequent and the sentences better constructed. For example, Jem says:

““Ain’t you ever waked up at night and heard him, Dill? [...] I’ve seen his tracks in our back yard many a mornin’, and one night I heard him scratching on the back screen, but he was gone time Atticus got there.” (13)

In the excerpts chosen for translation, this kind of language between the children does not occur, but it is frequently present in the rest of the novel.

Luckily for the translator, Lee has chosen this rather general way of creating dialectical speech, rather than imitating the sounds and word use of a specific American dialect. This means not too much is lost in translation when applying the strategy suggested by Levý: creating a general, non-specific dialect which is visual

rather than audible, yet serves the purpose of creating a contrast between different groups of people.

4.4.2. Examples from other translations

Many English to Dutch translators have faced the same hurdle of translating dialect, which means there are a lot of examples of how this can be done. Here are a few examples of translations which were written with a similar approach to the strategy we have selected, in the sense that they have chosen to translate into non-specific dialects. This will hopefully provide a clearer image of the tools that can be used to create a dialect from scratch, and which of those tools are desirable.

When thinking about dialect in a novel, one immediately springs to mind: Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, translated into Dutch by Trisnati Notosoeroto as *De hut van oom Tom*. In this novel, the slaves speak with a very heavy dialect. For example: "Well, you must n't tell nobody. Prue, she got drunk agin, – and they had her down cellar, – and thar they left her all day, – and I hearn 'em saying that the *flies has got to her*, – and *she's dead!*" (Lee 1852, 6) This is translated as follows: "Je mag aan niemand nie vertellen, maar Prue ging weer dronken worden en ze hebben haar in kelder gestopt en daar hebben zij haar hele dag gelaten en ik heb horen zeggen die vliegen hebben haar te pakken en zij is dood!" (Lee 2005, 250). What catches the eye, except from the mysterious omission of the dashes, is the fact that the translator has chosen to omit words rather than sounds, which gives me the impression of a child speaking, rather than an adult with an accent. This is not the effect I want to achieve. The translator maintains this technique of expressing the accent of the slaves throughout the novel. Sometimes, the last 'n' of a word is omitted, which might be a possibility in the translation of *Mockingbird*, since it meets the intention of creating a visual accent rather than an audible one. But on the whole, the dialect in *De hut van oom Tom* is toned down compared to the source text, which is something I want to

avoid. An example: “Lor bless us! Miss Eva’s gwine to faint away! What got us all, to let her har such talk? Her pa’ll be rail mad.” (6) This is translated as: “De hemel beware ons! Juffrouw Eva gaat flauwvallen! Wat bezielt ons haar zulke praat te laten horen?” In this fragment, the dialect has disappeared altogether. I think this is a shame, because dialect plays an important role in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Since the same can be said of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, it is important to maintain it as much as possible.

Another English novel that has been translated into Dutch and in which dialect is employed, is the young adult novel *Elijah of Buxton* by Christopher Paul Curtis. The Dutch version, translated by Annelies Jorna, is called *Elia strijdt voor de vrijheid*. In this novel, not only the dialogue is written in dialect, but the narrator’s text as well. The dialect is not as strong as, for instance, the one spoken by Tom Robinson in *Mockinbird*, but of a similar nature: letters and minor words are regularly omitted and the language is colloquial. In a lecture Jorna gave on 10 March 2011, she spoke about the difficulties with translating dialect. One of the tools she used to create a dialect that looked neither Amsterdam, Groningen, or any Dutch region whatsoever, was to take little bits and pieces of dialect from all around Holland and thus create a mishmash that looks like an authentic dialect, although it cannot traced back to a specific region. This helps to maintain the idea that the dialect is foreign.

Here is a fragment from the source text, which illustrates the frequency of deviations from regular speech:

“But afore we had the chance to ask Pa, the Preacher came walking down the road in front of Cooter’s. He ain’t atall like a common preacher that’s got a church or nothing, but he tells anyone that will listen that he’s the Right Reverend Deacon Doctor Zephariah Connerly the Third, and that he’s the most educated, smartest man anywhere ‘round. ‘Stead of saying all those names, me and Cooter just call him the Preacher.” (3)

Jorna translates:

“Voor we de kans kregen ‘t aan pa te vragen, kwam de predikant aanlopen over de weg langs Cooter z’n huis. Hij lijkt van geen kanten op een gewone predikant, met een kerk en zo, maar hij zegt tegen wie het maar horen wil dat-ie de Zeereerwaarde diaken dr. Zepharia de Derde is, de geleerdste, slimste man van de wereld. In plaats van die hele zwik namen noemen Cooter en ik hem gewoon de Predikant.” (8)

This shows that Jorna has chosen to use colloquial speech rather than actual dialect, and has inserted some vernacular words such as “en zo” and “die hele zwik” to accomplish this. This works very well because this is a children’s book with a young narrator, but might not be the best approach in the case of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. However, the idea of keeping the language neutral and inserting those colloquial terms to give an impression of informal speech could work perfectly, especially in the case of Mr Ewell, who speaks rather impolite and informally in court.

Conclusion

After an analysis of the concept of dialect and the possible translation strategies, the best approach to translating the dialect in *To Kill a Mockingbird* has become clearer. Using an existing regional dialect has been ruled out, since that would harm the novel’s setting. Instead, it seems best to use a similar approach to that in the source text: to use misspelled or misinflected words, colloquial terms, a low register and deviating sentence structures to create a non-existing, mainly visual dialect that clearly differs from the standard Dutch dialect. The omission of letters in strategic places can also help to strengthen the dialect. In this way, it is possible to regulate the ‘thickness’ of the accent per speaker by applying deviations more or less regularly. In the case of idiolect, it is most important to maintain the strength of the dialect the individual employs, and to try and insert individual tendencies comparable to Tom’s consistent use of the word ‘suh’.

PART TWO: PRACTICE



TRANSLATION AND REFLECTION

In this part of my thesis, the translation based on the previous chapters will be presented. The original excerpts are in Appendix A, at the end of this thesis. To allow for easy comparison, each excerpt has been given an English title which is the same in for the translation and original texts.

To elucidate the translation process, with all its considerations and choices, the translation is accompanied by a commentary in the form of footnotes. This allows an understanding of the considerations behind certain choices, and shows the use of the analysis in the previous chapter.

The footnotes also allow for comparison between my translation and two existing Dutch translations. The first one, titled *Spaar de spotvogels*, stems from 1961 and is a translation by Hans Edinga. The second translation, by Ko Kooman, was published as recently as 2010, under the almost identical title *Spaar de spotvogel*. Despite the similarity of the titles, which has probably to do with marketing purposes, a spot-check confirms that the 2010 translation is a completely new one and not based on Edinga's. After my translation is finished, I will revisit the more troublesome or remarkable aspects that I have encountered and compare the existing translations with my own. Have those translators made similar choices, or did they see it differently? And if so, do I agree with them? Whenever I compare my translation to theirs, I will indicate this by preceding the comparison with an asterisk (*). Copies of the chosen excerpts from both existing translations are included in this thesis as Appendix B.

I have chosen these specific excerpt for several reasons. First of all, they are very important parts of the novel: Atticus's speech may be the most important scene of all, since it carries so much of what the novel is about. Secondly, most of the translation problems inherent in the novel are present in these excerpts, which gives me the chance to apply the theory in the previous chapter. Furthermore, I thought it would make more sense to choose excerpts that together tell a story from beginning to end, in this case the trial of Tom Robinson.

It is now time to see whether the groundwork will pay off: it is time to translate *A Mockingbird*.

THE TRANSLATION

De dood van een spotlijster ¹

1. *Why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird*, p. 98.

Toen Atticus ons de luchtbuksen gaf, wilde hij ons niet leren schieten. Oom Jack onderwees ons in de grondbeginselen; hij zei dat Atticus geen interesse had voor geweren. Op een dag zei Atticus tegen Jem: "Ik had liever dat jullie op blikjes in de achtertuin zouden schieten, maar jullie zullen toch wel achter de vogels aan gaan². Schiet zoveel blauwe gaaien als je wil, maar vergeet nooit dat het een zonde is om een spotlijster te doden³."

Dat was de eerste keer dat ik Atticus ooit had horen zeggen dat het een zonde was om iets te doen en ik vroeg Juffrouw Maudie ernaar.

¹ The title being one of the most important features of a novel – especially when it comes to raising the expectations of possible buyers – it was one of the hardest things to decide on. My considerations have been discussed in chapter 2.2.4., and I have decided to stick with the option I mentioned there.

* Hans Edinga, and Ko Kooman followed him in that, chose the word 'spotvogel' as the translation for mockingbird. Unfortunately, this is a mistake: the 'spotvogel' is an entirely different kind of bird (the icterine warbler), which is not found in the United States. (VanDale, Wikipedia, Vogelvisie, Bird Guides, Vogelbeleving). The alliteration in their titles, *Spaar de spotvogel(s)*, is very cleverly found, but as I discussed in chapter 2.2.4., I think the death of Tom Robinson should be a part of the title.

² Here, I allowed for a slight deviation from the source text for more fluent effect.

³ This is, of course, a very important sentence, so I gave it extra consideration. I wanted it to sound fluent and carry the weight it is supposed to carry, and I believe that this solution does.

* Edinga writes: "Schiet dan maar op alle bluejays, die je raken kunt, maar onthoud één ding: het is zondig om een spotvogel te doden." (107) Apart from the somewhat outdated language and use of commas, and the remarkable choice for repetition (Aixela) of the term bluejays, this sentence is not much different from mine. It does sound a little too stiff to me, and not like something a father would say. Kooman writes: "Schiet zoveel blauwe gaaien als je wilt, als je ze raken kunt, maar onthou dat het doodschieten van een spotlijster een zonde is." (139) In my opinion, the insertion of an extra clause ("als je ze raken kunt") is unnecessary and does not serve any apparent purpose. The last and most important part is also a tad long and not that fluent.

‘Je vader heeft gelijk,’ zei ze. ‘Spotlijsters doen helemaal niks anders⁴ dan muziek maken waar wij van kunnen genieten. Ze eten je tuin niet kaal, nestelen niet in de maïsbak⁵, ze doen helemaal niks anders dan naar hartenlust voor ons te zingen. Daarom is het een zonde om een spotlijster te doden.’”

2. *Ewell on the stand*, p. 186-192.

“Meneer Robert Ewell?” vroeg meneer Gilmer.

“Zo heet ‘k⁶, segeant⁷,’ zei de getuige.

Meneer Gilmers rug verstrakte een beetje en ik had medelijden met hem. [...] Meneer Ewell was meneer Gilmers getuige en hij had niet het recht om uitgerekend tegen hem onbeleefd te zijn.

‘Bent U⁸ de vader van Mayella Ewell?’ was de volgende vraag.

“Nou, as dat nie zo is dan kan ‘k er nu niks meer aan doen, d’r moeder is dood,” was het antwoord.

⁴ I chose to phrase this as ‘helemaal niks anders’ because it sounds as colloquial as the source text, is fluent and has the same emphasis.

⁵ This is an example of a CSE that helps maintain the American country setting of the novel. This is not something a modern Dutch (or American, come to that) household would have, but at the same time it is not a word Dutch readers cannot comprehend.

⁶ In the dialects, in this case that of Ewell, I will try to apply all the techniques discussed in chapter 2.2: to keep it neutral, use the omission of letters and misspelling of words to create a visual dialect, keep the language colloquial and the register low.

* It goes without saying that I was eager to find out how the other translators had solved the problem of dialects, but unfortunately both Kooman and Edinga have chosen to lose the dialects. In Edinga’s translation, there is a hint of dialect by some omissions or exchanges of letters, but in Kooman’s there is nothing: neither the Ewell’s nor Tom speak anything other than a somewhat more colloquial version of Dutch. I think this is a shame: the dialect plays such a big role in the novel, I feel that at least an attempt at expressing that they speak with an accent is called for.

⁷ Ewell is trying to make a point of being impolite and disrespectful. The ‘cap’n’ is mocking and does not refer to an actual title. In Dutch, ‘kapitein’ has a strong naval connotation which is out of place here, so I chose ‘sergeant’ instead, because it is more general, and something one would use to mockingly pay respect to somebody.

⁸ As discussed in chapter two, I have chosen to use a capital ‘U’ because it has a more old-fashioned connotation.

* Both translators have chosen the same strategy for translating “you” as I have, except that they use the lower case ‘u’ and Edinga lets Atticus address Mayella with ‘jij’ as well.

Rechter Taylor verroerde zich. Hij draaide langzaam zijn stoel⁹ bij en keek minzaam naar de getuige¹⁰. ‘Bent U de vader van Mayella Ewell?’ vroeg hij, op een manier die het gelach onder ons direct deed verstommen.

“Ja, meneer,” antwoordde meneer Ewell gedwee.

Rechter Taylor vervolgde op goedwillige toon: “Is dit Uw eerste keer in de rechtbank¹¹? Ik kan me niet heugen dat ik U hier eerder heb gezien.” Toen de getuige bevestigend knikte, dacht hij even na. “Welnu¹², voor alle duidelijkheid:¹³ zolang ik hier zit wil ik van niemand in deze rechtszaal nog obscene speculaties horen over welk onderwerp dan ook. Is dat duidelijk?”

Meneer Ewell knikte, maar ik denk niet dat hij het echt begreep. Rechter Taylor zuchtte en zei, “Goed.¹⁴ Meneer Gilmer?”

“Dank U, edelachtbare. Meneer Ewell, kunt U ons alstublieft in uw eigen woorden vertellen wat er op de avond van eenentwintig november is voorgevallen?”

Jem grijnsde en duwde zijn haar naar achteren. Alleen-in-je-eigen woorden was het handelsmerk van meneer Gilmer. We vroegen ons vaak af wiens woorden de getuige volgens meneer Gilmer anders zou gebruiken¹⁵.

⁹ The difficulty here is that the word for ‘swivel chair’ is draaistoel, which would lead to a repetition of the word ‘draaien’. To avoid that, I have changed the content of the sentence a little, without changing the facts or the image.

¹⁰ This is one of many examples of sentences where the adult narrator – or the author – shines through.

¹¹ Here, “court” can also mean “rechtszaal” or a more broader idea of the institution, so I had to make a choice about what I thought it meant. Because the judge continues with: “I don’t recall ever seeing you **here**”, it is implied that he is talking about the place they are at that moment, so either the courthouse or courtroom. I chose the more general option: rechtbank.

¹² This is the first of many occurrences of the word ‘well’ at the beginning of sentences. Since I want to avoid modern words, oké is not an option. Depending on what fits best, some possibilities (from colloquial to formal) are “nou”, “goed” and “welnu”. Having these options can help establish registers for different characters, as well.

¹³ I have inserted a colon, because it is more fluent and habitual in Dutch dialogue.

¹⁴ Here I inserted a full stop, because that makes what is said more clear and sharp.

¹⁵ It was difficult to turn this simple English sentence into a fluent Dutch one. In the end, I decided to trade in the “was afraid” part of the sentence for a fluent result.

“Nou, de avond van eenentwintig november kwam ‘k ‘t bos uit met een lading a’maakhout en net toen ik bij het hek kwam hoorde ‘k Mayella gille alsof d’r een big werd geslacht daarbinnen¹⁶ –“

Rechter Taylor wierp de getuige een scherpe blik toe en moest hebben besloten dat die met zijn opmerkingen geen kwaad in de zin had, want hij zakte weer slaperig onderuit.

“Hoe laat was het, meneer Ewell?”

“Vlak voor sonsondegang¹⁷. Nou, ‘k zei dus dat Mayella zo allejezus hard¹⁸ schreeuwde –“ Een tweede blik vanaf de rechterstoel legde meneer Ewell het zwijgen op.

“Ja? Ze schreeuwde?” zei meneer Gilmer.

Meneer Ewell keek verward naar de rechter. “Nou, Mayella maakte zo’n godvegeten lawaai¹⁹, dus ‘k liet me lading vallen en rende zo hard as ik kon maar ik ren in ‘t hek, maar toen ‘k los was rende ‘k naar ‘t raam en toen zag ‘k –“ Het gezicht van meneer Ewell liep knalrood aan. “- toen zag ‘k die zwarte nikker²⁰ daaro t’keer gaan²¹ op me Mayella!”

¹⁶ Although the English phrase “screaming like a stuck hog” is a set expression, and the Dutch equivalent would be something to do with a ‘speenvarken’, that seems like too high a register to me. Shorter, less complicated words help to make the speaker sound less educated. Therefore, I have chosen to go with “big” instead, which sounds more insulting as well.

¹⁷ Misspelling the longer, more complicated words enhances the idea of a dialect and low register.

¹⁸ The English says “fit to beat Jesus” and, a few sentences later “holy racket”. To maintain the Christian connotations and, as a result, the insulting quality of the remarks, I have used Dutch swearwords with Christian connotations.

* Edinga translated the phrases with respectively: “Mayella gilde zo allejezus hard” and “ging zo alleronchristelijk tekeer”. The first option is the same as mine, while the second one seems to me to have the opposite effect of what you would want: it sounds respectful to Christianity rather than insulting. Kooman wrote: “Mayella zette zo’n godsallermachtige strot –“ and “blèrde de hele boel bij mekaar”. He must either not have signalled the irony of the fact that Ewell keeps saying the wrong things with regard to ‘taking God’s name in vain’, or he did not find it important enough to maintain it. He did preserve the impoliteness of the second remark, which Edinga did not.

¹⁹ This is the second example of Ewell ‘taking the lord’s name in vain’, which is why I translated it with “godvergeten lawaai”, dropping the ‘r’ to go with the dialect.

²⁰ Just like ‘nigger’ is more insulting than ‘negro’, ‘nikker’ is more insulting than ‘neger’. That is why I have chosen these translations for the words. I will translate ‘coloured folk’ with

Normaal gesproken verliepen de rechtszaken bij rechter Taylor zo rustig dat hij zijn hamer zelden hoefde te gebruiken, maar nu bonkte hij er een volle vijf minuten op los. Atticus was opgestaan en had de rechter benaderd om iets tegen hem te zeggen en meneer Heck Tate stond als hoogste gerechtsdienaar van de gemeente in het middenpad om de volgepakte rechtszaal tot bedaren te brengen. Achter ons klonk een boos, gedempt gegrom van de kleurlingen.

[...]

Toen hij de rechtszaal weer in bedwang had, leunde rechter Taylor achterover in zijn stoel. Hij zag er opeens moe uit: zijn leeftijd was zichtbaar en ik moest denken aan wat Atticus had gezegd – hij en mevrouw Taylor kusten elkaar niet vaak – hij moest bijna zeventig zijn geweest.

“Er is een verzoek ingediend,” zei rechter Taylor, “om de toeschouwers uit de rechtszaal te laten verwijderen, of in ieder geval de vrouwen en kinderen: een verzoek dat voorlopig nog niet zal worden ingewilligd. Mensen zien over het algemeen wat ze willen zien en horen wat ze willen horen²², en ze hebben het recht om hun kinderen daaraan bloot te stellen, maar ik kan U één ding verzekeren: U zult alles wat U ziet en hoort in stilte ontvangen of U verlaat deze rechtszaal, maar dan²³ verlaat U hem niet voordat U met z’n allen²⁴ bij mij bent voorgekomen wegens minachting voor de

‘kleurlingen’, because it has the same meaning and because it is a word that has an old-fashioned connotation.

* Both translators chose the same translations, except for ‘coloured people’, which they translated with ‘neger’.

²¹ Though not exactly the same as ‘rutting’, ‘tekeer gaan op’ gives a similar brute visual image of the supposed rape.

²² This is not exactly what Judge Taylor says, but it is very close and conveys the same meaning. Besides, it is the most idiomatic way to say this in Dutch.

²³ Inserting minor words like ‘dan’ can help keep me the dialogue fluent and natural.

²⁴ The English phrase “the whole boiling of you” is stronger and more idiomatic, but I could not find a way to make the sentence fluent and at the same time use a phrase such as “het hele spul” or “het hele zootje”. In the end, I chose fluency, in the hope that this will be compensated elsewhere.

* I was curious to find out how the other translators had solved this. Edinga writes: “krijgt u eerst stuk voor stuk een bekeuring” (202) and Kooman says: “pas nadat ik u stuk voor stuk op de bon heb geslingerd” (258). Both choose “stuk voor stuk”, which does work. I do not completely understand their translations of “come before me on contempt charges”: as far as I know, a judge has no power to arrest or book people.

rechtbank. Meneer Ewell, houd Uw getuigenis binnen de grenzen van de christelijke Engelse taal, als dat mogelijk is. Gaat U verder, meneer Gilmer.”

Meneer Ewell deed me aan een doofstomme denken. Ik wist zeker dat hij de woorden waarmee rechter Taylor hem had aangesproken nog nooit had gehoord – zijn mond worstelde er geluidloos mee – maar hun belang toonde zich op zijn gezicht. De zelfvoldaanheid vervaagde en maakte plaats voor een verbeterde ernst die rechter Taylor totaal niet voor de gek kon houden: de rest van de tijd dat meneer Ewell in de getuigenbank stond, hield de rechter hem scherp in de gaten, alsof hij hem uitdaagde om een misstap te begaan.

Meneer Gilmer en Atticus wisselden een blik van verstandhouding. Atticus was weer gaan zitten en leunde met zijn wang op zijn vuist, waardoor we zijn gezicht niet konden zien. Meneer Gilmer keek behoorlijk wanhopig. Na een vraag van rechter Taylor ontspande hij zich: “Meneer Ewell, heeft U gezien dat de verdachte²⁵ geslachtsgemeenschap had met Uw dochter?”

“Ja²⁶.”

De toeschouwers bleven stil, maar de verdachte zei iets. Atticus fluisterde tegen hem en Tom Robinson zweeg.

“U zei dat U bij het raam stond?” vroeg meneer Gilmer.

“Ja meneer.”

“Hoe ver is het van de grond?”

“Iets van ‘n meter.”

“Had U een onbelemmerd zicht op de kamer?”

²⁵ ‘Defendant’ can be translated in several ways, but to me, ‘verdachte’ sounds most common. Another option is ‘gedaagde’, but upon further investigation I discovered that this term is only used in civil proceedings (InfoNu).

²⁶ The English says “Yes, I did”, which is more elaborate and stronger than just ‘yes’, but there is no real equivalent to this form of double confirmation in Dutch. I could add “inderdaad” or “dat klopt”, or something along those lines, but that feels forced and not like something one would actually answer a question like this with. Besides, the answer is followed by a reaction of Tom, which gives it more emphasis.

* Edinga chose for: “Ja, dat heb ik gezien”, which sounds unnatural to me. Kooman’s solution is: “Ja, dat heb ik”, which I think sounds equally unnatural. However, that may be a matter of personal taste.

“Ja meneer.”

“Hoe zag de kamer eruit?”

“Nou, die lag helemaal overhoop, alsof d’r was gevochte.”

“Wat deed U toen U de verdachte zag?”

“Nou, ik ren om ‘t huis om d’erin te gaan, maar hij rent vlak voor me de voordeur uit. Ik had echt wel gezien wie die was. Ik was teveel afgeleid door Mayella om d’r achteraan te gaan. Ik rende ‘t huis in, en ze lag op de grond te krijsen –“

“Wat deed U toen?”

“Nou, ik ben zo hard as ‘k kon naar Tate gerend. Ik wis echt wel wie het was, woont daarginder in dat nikkernest, liep elke dag langs me huis. Rechter²⁷, ik vraag de g’meente al vijftien jaar om dat nest schoon te vege²⁸, ze zijn g’vaarlijk om bij te wonen en ze devaleveren ook nog ‘s me grond²⁹ –“

“Dank U wel, meneer Ewell,” zei meneer Gilmer haastig.

[...]

Atticus keek om naar meneer Gilmer en glimlachte. Meneer Ewell leek vastbesloten om de verdediging straal te negeren.

“Meneer Tate getuigde dat haar rechteroog³⁰ blauw was, dat ze in haar gezicht was –“

“O ja,” zei de getuige. “ik sta achter alles waddat Tate zei.”

²⁷ Although the proper form of address is ‘Edelachtbare’, it would not befit Ewell’s conduct and register if he used that word.

²⁸ “Schoonvegen” seemed to have the right tone to go with Ewell’s statement.

²⁹ The English word is “property”, which is difficult to translate. In Dutch, there is no word that has all the same meanings. Here, ‘grond’ is the best option, since Ewell is talking about the devaluation of his property, but in later occurrences of the word I will need to translate it differently.

* Edinga translates this with “daalt je eigendom in waarde” and Kooman chooses: “ze maken ook nog m’n bezit minder waard –“. It seems that both have chosen the very literal meaning of property, ‘bezit’, while I do not think that completely fits here.

³⁰ This is the first occurrence of left and right in these excerpts, where Mayella’s right eye being blackened symbolizes her being blind for the immorality of the choices she makes afterwards. Unfortunately, ‘rechter-’ does not have that connotation of ‘good’ as strongly. Perhaps there will be an opportunity to compensate this later on, but only if that can be accomplished without being obvious.

“Is dat zo?” vroeg Atticus kalm. “Ik wil het voor de zekerheid even contoleren³¹.” Hij liep naar de rapporteur, zei iets, en de rapporteur vermaakte ons een paar minuten door de getuigenis van meneer Tate voor te lezen alsof hij de aandelenmarkt citeerde: “...welk oog haar linker o ja dan was het haar rechter het was haar rechteroog meneer Finch ik weet het weer ze was afgeranseld.” [...]

“Dank je, Bert,” zei Atticus. “U heeft het nogmaals gehoord, meneer Ewell. [...] Bent u het eens met de sheriff?”

“Ik staat achter Tate.”

3. *Mayella on the stand*, p. 198-203

“Kende U Tom Robinson goed?”

“Wa’bedoelt U³²?”

“Ik bedoel:³³ wist U wie hij was, waar hij woonde?”

Mayella knikte. “Ik wist wie die was, hij kwam elke dag langs ‘t huis.”

“Was dit de eerste keer dat U hem vroeg Uw erf³⁴ op te komen?”

Mayella schrok op³⁵ van de vraag. Atticus was bezig aan zijn langzame pelgrimstocht naar de ramen, zoals hij de hele tijd had gedaan: hij stelde een vraag en

³¹ The English says: “I just want to make sure.” I tried to find a translation that was as short and (falsely) unthreatening as the original, but sentences such as “Ik wil het alleen even zeker weten” or “Laten we het even controleren” sound too obviously suspicious or doubtful. The sentence I have chosen, sounds more neutral to me.

³² Mayella’s dialect is slightly less strong than her father’s, which I will maintain in the translation.

³³ Again, I have inserted a colon to make the dialogue more fluent.

³⁴ Here is another occurrence of the word “property”. In this case, I believe ‘erf’ is the proper term, since Atticus is talking about a fenced off area around a house that belongs to the home owners. Since this is a country village, ‘erf’ seems more appropriate than ‘terrein’, which also sounds too large to me.

* Kooman writes: “Was het de eerste keer dat u hem vroeg het erf op te komen?” (272), which is almost identical to my solution. Endinga says: “En was dit de eerste maal dat je hem vroeg binnen de omheining te komen?” (214) I thought about using ‘omheining’ as well, but to me, that sounded too much like the Ewells lived on some sort of reservation.

³⁵ The problem with this is that ‘jump’, the English word used here, is a very visual word: you can picture Mayella literally shooting up a few inches, something that anybody looking at her would see. In Dutch, you cannot say ‘sprong op’ or anything like that, because that has a different

keek dan naar buiten, wachtend op een antwoord. Hij zag niet hoe ze onwillekeurig opschrok, maar volgens mij had hij toch door dat ze zich had bewogen. Hij draaide zich om en trok zijn wenkbrauwen op. “Was –” begon hij weer.

“Ja, ’t was de eerste keer.”

“Heeft u hem nooit eerder gevraagd het hek door te komen?”

Dit keer was ze erop voorbereid. “Nee, nooit, absoluut nog nooit³⁶.”

“Eén nooit is wel genoeg,” zei Atticus kalm. “U heeft hem ook nog nooit gevraagd om wat klusjes voor U te doen?”

“M’schien wel,” bond Mayella in. “D’r waren meer nikkers in de buurt.”

“Kunt U zich nog een andere keer herinneren?”

“Nee.”

“Goed, laten we het hebben over wat er gebeurd is. U zei dat hij U ‘met gevloek en vieze praatjes bij Uw nek greep!’ – klopt dat?”

“Ja.”

Het geheugen van Atticus was plotseling weer prima in orde. “U zegt: ‘hij greep me vast en kneep mijn keel dicht³⁷ en misbruikte me!’ – klopt dat?”

meaning. I considered ‘ze schrok zichtbaar’, but the phrase is repeated in the next sentence, where this does not fit. In the end, I decided to go with “ze schrok op”, because this also has the connotation of movement (‘op’), which is confirmed to the reader because Scout obviously sees her move, and later remarks on her father not seeing her ‘jump’.

* Edinga writes: “Mayella schrok een beetje [...] Hij zag haar niet schrikken, maar ik geloof toch wel dat hij wist dat ze een schrikachtige beweging had gemaakt.” (214) If I would have chosen to use ‘schrikken’, I think I would have left it at that: simply “hij zag haar niet schrikken, maar...wel dat ze had bewogen.” Now, the last part of the sentence seems forced. This is also what Kooman decided to do: he goes with “schrok een beetje”, “hij zag niet hoe ze schrok, maar [...] wist dat ze zich bewogen had.”

³⁶ These five words took longer to translate than one might expect. The original text says: “I did not, I certainly did not.” Because of Atticus’s response, I needed to insert two identical denials that he could refer to. At the same time, it had to sound like a lie, just like it does in the source text. In the end, I decided to go with “nooit” and settled on this solution.

* Kooman’s solution is almost the same as mine: “Nee, nooit. Helemaal nooit.” (273) Edinga writes:

“Nee nooit, vast en zeker niet” and “Het antwoord “nee” is voldoende”, which also works.

³⁷ There is no fitting Dutch word that means ‘to choke’ as it is meant here: ‘verstikken’ is not something one person does to another, and ‘wurgen’ implies that the victim is killed. Therefore, I have chosen to go with ‘keel dichtknijpen’: it is longer, which is a pity since it occurs a few times in

“Dat heb ik gezegd.”

“Herinnert U zich nog dat hij U in het gezicht sloeg?³⁸”

De getuige aarzelde.

“U weet heel zeker dat hij uw keel dichtkneep. U vocht de hele tijd terug, weet U nog? U ‘trapte en schreeuwde zo hard als U kon!’ Herinnert U zich nog dat hij U in het gezicht sloeg?”

Mayella zweeg. Het leek erop dat ze iets duidelijk probeerde te krijgen voor zichzelf. Even dacht ik dat ze dat trucje van meneer Heck en mij deed en zich inbeelde dat er iemand voor haar stond. Ze keek even naar meneer Gilmer.

“Het is een simpele vraag, juffrouw Mayella, dus ik probeer het nog eens. Herinnert U zich nog dat hij U in het gezicht sloeg?” De stem van Atticus had zijn behaaglijkheid verloren; hij sprak nu met zijn droge, afstandelijke zakelijke stem. “Herinnert U zich nog dat hij U in het gezicht sloeg?”

“Nee, ik weet niet meer of ie me geslagen heeft. Ik bedoel, jawel, hij heeft me geslagen.”

“Was die laatste zin Uw antwoord?”

“Hè? Ja, hij sloeg – ik weet het gewoon niet meer, ik weet het niet meer...het gebeurde allemaal zo snel.”

Rechter Taylor keer Mayella streng aan. “Hou eens op met huilen, jongedame –” begon hij, maar Atticus zei, “Laat haar maar huilen als ze wil, Edelachtbare³⁹. We hebben alle tijd van de wereld.”

a row and the English is just one word, but it is the only solution I could think of that doesn't imply a deathly outcome.

* Edinga and Kooman chose the same solution, although Edinga made it even longer by adding 'bijna': “kneep m'n keel bijna dicht” (215).

³⁸ This is yet another example of a seemingly simple sentence that takes a long time to translate satisfactorily. Especially the fact that 'zich herinneren' is a reflexive verb causes this problem. However, other translations of 'remember', such as 'nog weten' or 'niet vergeten' do not work here. In the end, I have inserted 'nog' to create more fluency and to put some distance between all the 'U's.

* Koomans solution is the same as mine, only he did not add 'nog'. Edinga's translation is: “Herinner je je dat hij je op je gezicht heeft geslagen?” Because he chose 'je', this is a less fluent sentence than Kooman's and my option.

Mayella snoof verontwaardigd⁴⁰ en keek op naar Atticus. “Ik zal elke vraag beantwoorden die je⁴¹ hebt –zet me hier maar neer en spot met me, hè? ‘k zal elke vraag beantwoorden die je hebt –”

“Dat is prima,” zei Atticus. “Het zijn er nog maar een paar. Juffrouw Mayella, niet om eentonig te worden: U⁴² heeft getuigd dat de verdachte u heeft geslagen, rond de nek heeft gegrepen, de keel heeft dichtgeknepen en misbruikt. Ik wil zeker weten dat U de goede persoon voor zich heeft. Wilt U de man aanwijzen die U heeft verkracht?”

“Jawel, dat is ‘m daar ginder.”

Atticus draaide zich om naar de verdachte. “Tom, sta op. Laat juffrouw Mayella eens goed naar je kijken. Is dit die man, juffrouw Mayella?”

De krachtige schouders van Tom Robinson bolden op onder zijn dunne overhemd. Hij kwam overeind en ging staan, met zijn rechterhand op de rugleuning van zijn stoel. Hij leek op een vreemde manier uit balans, maar dat kwam niet door hoe hij stond. Zijn linkerarm was ruim dertig centimeter korter dan zijn rechter en hing slap langs zijn zij. Aan het einde hing een kleine verschrompelde hand en ik kon zelfs vanaf het balkon zien dat hij er niets mee kon.

“Scout,” fluisterde Jem. “Scout, kijk! Dominee⁴³, hij is verminkt!”

[...]

Atticus zei: “Is dit de man die je heeft verkracht?”

“Ja, zeker weten⁴⁴.”

³⁹ Addressing a Judge with ‘rechter’ seems wrong in Dutch. The proper form of address is ‘edelachtbare’.

⁴⁰ I had difficulty finding the right translation for ‘wrathful’: it is different than ‘boos’ or ‘woest’ and more personal, because she feels offended (or threatened, more like).

⁴¹ This is an example where Mayella saying ‘jij’ seems to make more sense than ‘U’: she is not being respectful, so ‘U’ would contradict with her mood.

⁴² Atticus, of course, keeps referring to Mayella as ‘U’, which also serves to enhance the contrast between the moody, disrespectful witness and the polite, patient attorney.

* As I mentioned earlier, Edinga has chosen to make Atticus say ‘je’ to Mayella, which I do not think fits Atticus’s character. Besides, earlier on in the interview, Mayella accuses Atticus of mocking her because he is too polite to her, saying ‘Miss Mayella’ and so forth. Saying ‘je’ does not correspond with that.

⁴³ As I did with the other forms of address, I decided to translate “Reverend” rather than preserving the English term.

De volgende vraag van Atticus was één lang woord: “Hoe?” [...] “– wil je misschien iets van je getuigenis in heroverweging nemen?”

“Moet ‘k soms iets zeggen wat nie gebeurd is?”

“Nee, mevrouw, ik wil dat u iets zegt wat wel gebeurd is. Vertel ons, alstublieft, nog één keer wat er is gebeurd?”

“Ik heb al verteld watter gebeurd is.”

“U heeft getuigd dat u zich omdraaide en hem toen zag staan. Daarna kneep hij uw keel dicht?”

“Ja.”

“Toen liet hij uw keel los en sloeg u?”

“Dat zei ik toch.”

“Hij sloeg met zijn rechtervuist uw linkeroog blauw?”

“Ik bukte en hij – hij schampte af, zo ging ‘t. Ik bukte en hij schampte af.” Mayella had eindelijk het licht gezien.

4. *Tom Robinson on the stand, p. 209-212*

Terwijl Tom Robinson zijn getuigenis aflegde, realiseerde ik me dat Mayella Ewell de eenzaamste persoon op aarde moest zijn. Ze was nog eenzamer dan Boe⁴⁵ Radley, die al in geen vijftwintig jaar zijn huis was uitgekomen. [...] Tom Robinson was

⁴⁴ The source text says: “It most certainly is”. This is another example of a typically English confirmation that has no real equivalent in Dutch. I wanted a solution that sounded natural and just as determined (after all, she is lying, and needs to put up a good show). The first thing a Dutch person would say is ‘ja’, to answer the question. To strengthen Mayella’s confirmation, I added ‘zeker weten’.

* Edinga says “Ja, dat is ‘m”, which is slightly less strong but does sound natural. Kooman chose “wis en waarachtig”, which has everything it should have, except that it does not sound like something Mayella would say. The register is a little too high.

⁴⁵ I changed ‘Boo’ into ‘Boe’, because it is a name the children invented themselves and it stands for the sound one makes when trying to scare someone. If I preserved the English nickname, some readers might not understand why the children call him “Boo”, which means nothing in Dutch.

* Both Edinga and Kooman have chosen to keep ‘Boo’ as the nickname. I can understand that, but still think changing it to “Boe” works better. I would not change an real first or last name, though.

waarschijnlijk de enige die ooit aardig voor haar was geweest. Maar ze zei dat hij haar had misbruikt, en toen ze opstond keek ze op hem neer alsof hij een stuk oud vuil was⁴⁶.

“Heb je⁴⁷ ooit,” onderbrak Atticus mijn overpeinzingen, “op welk moment dan ook, het terrein van de Ewells betreden – heb je ooit een voet op hun terrein gezet zonder een nadrukkelijke uitnodiging?”

“Nee, m’neer Finch, nee, dat heb ik nooit gedaan. Dat zou ik nooit doen, m’neer⁴⁸.”

Atticus zei weleens dat luisteren in plaats van kijken een goede manier was om erachter te komen of een getuige loog of de waarheid sprak⁴⁹: ik paste deze test toe –

⁴⁶ The source text says: “when she stood up she looked at him as if he were dirt beneath her feet”. This sounds more personal than my translation (alsof hij een stuk oud vuil was), probably because it says “**her** feet”, but I could not find a phrase that had the exact same connotation. In the end, I settled for some emphasis on the first part of the sentence (‘keek ze op hem neer’ instead of ‘keek ze naar hem’) to compensate the slight loss of intensity in the latter part.

* Edinga’s translation says “keek ze naar hem alsof hij straatvuil was” (223) and Kooman translates: “bekeek ze hem alsof hij oud vuil was” (284). Edinga’s option sounds fine to me, although he has the same problem with loss of intensity I had, but in Kooman’s sentence I disagree with the word ‘bekeek’: somehow, that makes it sound as if she looks at him like she would look at something in a museum – long and interested – and also, ‘alsof hij oud vuil was’ seems to describe the way she ‘bekeek’ him, instead of the look on her face when she looks at him.

⁴⁷ Before this excerpt of the novel, the interrogation has already begun, and Atticus has only addressed the witness with ‘Tom’ (as has the judge). Therefore, it seems strange for Atticus to say ‘U’.

⁴⁸ Here, we hear Tom speak for the first time (in the fragments I have chosen). The portrayal of his accent does not differ much from that of the Ewells’, but it is somewhat thicker. Also, he consistently says ‘suh’ instead of ‘sir’, which I have translated with ‘m’neer’.

⁴⁹ I have struggles to turn this into a fluent sentence: it is one of those constructions that are so easy in English and for some reason so hard in Dutch. The English says: “Atticus sometimes said that one way to tell whether a witness was lying or telling the truth was to listen rather than watch.” The literal translation would be: “Atticus zei weleens dat een goede manier om erachter te komen of een getuige liegt of de waarheid spreekt is om te luisteren in plaats van te kijken.” This sentence pinches is so many different ways, that a reader would probably lay down the book and never pick it up again. Inversion was inevitable, but still the Dutch language has a problem with so many different verbs in so many different subordinate clauses that all refer to each other. Finally, I decided on “Atticus zei weleens dat luisteren in plaats van kijken een goede manier was om erachter te komen of een getuige loog of de waarheid sprak.” It will still not make the shortlist of my favourite sentences in this translation, but at least it is grammatical, reasonably short and understandable.

* Kooman: “Atticus zei weleens dat als je wilde weten of een getuige loog of de waarheid sprak, je beter kon luisteren dan kijken.” (284) Although I think it is clever to insert a comma to break up

Tom ontkende drie keer in één ademtocht, maar rustig, zonder jammerlijke toon in zijn stem en ik merkte dat ik hem geloofde, ondanks dat hij teveel protesteerde. Hij leek me een respectabele neger⁵⁰, en een respectabele neger zou nooit uit zichzelf iemands erf betreden.

“Tom, wat is er vorig jaar op de avond van eenentwintig november gebeurd?”

Onder ons ademden de toeschouwers collectief in en leunden naar voren. Achter ons deden de negers hetzelfde.

[...]

“Nou, ‘k ging de trap op en ze wenkte me na’ binnen, en ik kwam de woonkamer in en keek na’ de deur. Ik zei j’ffrouw Mayella, deze deur lijkt me in orde. [...] Nou, ‘k zei dat ik beter kon gaan want ‘k kon toch niks voor d’r doen, en ze zegt o jawel, en ik vraag d’r wat, en ze zegt ga even op die stoel daarzo staan en haal die doos na’ beneden van bovenop de kleerkast⁵¹. [...] Dus ik dee wat ze me vroeg en ik wou ‘m net pakke en uit ‘t niks – opeens greep ze me rond me benen, greep me rond me benen, m’neer Finch. Ze liet me zo schrikken dat na’ beneden sprong en de stoel om liet valle. [...]”

“Wat gebeurde er toen?” [...]

“M’neer Finch, ik kwam van die stoel af en draaide m’ om en ze besprong me zo’n beetje. [...] Ze omhelde me rond me middel. [...] Ze strekte zich uit en kustte de zijkant vamme gezicht. Ze zegt ze heb nog nooit eerder een volwassen man gekust en datse net zo goed een nikker kon kussen. Ze zegt wat papa met haar doet telt niet. Ze zegt:

the sentence, the First part still does not sound fluent to me. Edinga: “Atticus had eens gezegd dat je soms beter luisteren kon dan kijken, als je erachter wilde komen of een getuige loog of de waarheid sprak.” (223) This sounds very well: there are no places a reader might stumble on, except maybe the somewhat old-fashioned inversion of ‘luisteren kon’ instead of ‘kon luisteren’.

⁵⁰ This is the first occurrence of ‘Negro’ in the excerpts. It sounds strange and racist to use the word ‘neger’, because nobody would ever write that in a modern prose text except for some specific reason, but it fits the time setting and it is what it said in the original.

⁵¹ A chiffarobe is a word that does not even have an entry in the VanDale dictionary, but on the internet I found out that it is a large wardrobe that combines space for hanging your clothes with a chest of drawers. It is very old-fashioned, and in Dutch there is no equivalent word. I decided to use Aixela’s strategy of limited universalization, and to define what sort of a closet is meant without going into specifics. The term is not important enough for the text to require explanation.

“Kus me terug, nikker.” Ik zeg: “J’ffrouw Mayella, laat me gaan” [...] en ‘k zeg “laat me d’r langs,” maar net toen ik dat zeg schreeuwt m’neer Ewell daar door ‘t raam. [...] Hij zegt: “Jij vervloekte hoer, ik vermoord je.”

[...]

“Tom, heb je Mayella Ewell verkracht?”

“Nee, m’neer.”

“Heb je haar op wat voor manier dan ook pijn gedaan?”

“Nee, m’neer.”

“Heb je je tegen haar toenaderingen verzet?”

“M’neer Finch, dat probeerde ik. Ik probeerde ‘t zonder naar tegen d’r te doen. Ik wilde niet naar doen, ‘k wilde d’r niet duwen ofzo.”

[...] Tot mijn vader het later uitlegde, begreep ik niet goed hoe hachelijk Toms dilemma⁵² was geweest: hij zou nooit, onder welke omstandigheden dan ook, een blanke vrouw hebben durven slaan als zijn leven hem lief was, dus greep hij de eerste de beste kans om te vluchten – waardoor hij alleen nog maar schuldiger leek.

“Waarom rende je weg?”

“Ik was bang, m’neer?”

“Waarom was je bang?”

“M’neer Finch, als U⁵³ een nikker was, was U net zo bang geweest.”

⁵² The English speaks of ‘the subtlety of Tom’s predicament’. My solution, Tom’s ‘hachelijke situatie’, is based on the fact that I could not find a fluent translation that meant exactly the same (‘hoe subtiel het nare dilemma was geweest waarin Tom verzeild was geraakt?’). In the end, I decided to clarify to myself what Lee meant exactly and to write that down fluently, rather than try and be as literal as possible.

* Edinga chooses “lelijk in de knel” (226), which I think is an okay option albeit slightly outdated, and Kooman speaks of a “hachelijke situatie”, which is close to my solution. It might be a better option, because it is more idiomatic, although I still feel that ‘dilemma’ suits Tom’s situation.

⁵³ As Tom keeps referring to Atticus as ‘Mr Finch’ and is very polite throughout the entire interview, him saying ‘U’ to Atticus seems the logical choice. Besides, in the setting of the novel it would have been strange for a Negro to say ‘jij’ to a white man, especially one in Tom’s predicament. This is probably also the reason Atticus and the judge address Tom with his first name only: that is how things were back then, and how the relationship between black and white worked.

5. Atticus speaks to the jury

Atticus deed zijn handen in zijn zakken en toen hij terugliep naar de jury, zag ik zijn gouden boordenknoopje en de toppen van zijn pen en potlood blinken in het licht.
[...]

“Heren,” zei hij, “ik zal het kort houden, maar ik wil het restant van mijn tijd met u graag gebruiken om u eraan te helpen herinneren dat dit geen moeilijke zaak is: ze vereist⁵⁴ geen eindeloze doorpluizing van ingewikkelde details, maar ze vereist wel dat u er zonder enige gereede twijfel zeker van bent dat de verdachte schuldig is. Om te beginnen had deze zaak helemaal niet voor het gerecht moeten komen. Deze zaak is zo simpel als één plus één – als zwart en wit⁵⁵.”

“De staat⁵⁶ heeft nog geen greintje medisch bewijs aangevoerd dat kan aantonen dat het misdrijf waarvan Tom Robinson is beschuldigd ooit heeft plaatsgevonden. In plaats daarvan steunt zij op de verklaring van twee getuigen wiens bewijzen niet alleen ernstig in twijfel zijn getrokken tijdens het kruisverhoor, maar ook nog eens

⁵⁴ The difficulty with the English ‘it’ is that it can be used for virtually anything, which makes referencing very easy, until it (there it is again) has to be translated into Dutch. Because I want to give Atticus’s speech the rhetorical and formal feel it has in the original text, referring to ‘de zaak’ with ‘her’ fits best: it does not only sound a tad old-fashioned, but also enables me to preserve the structure of this complicated sentence.

⁵⁵ “As simple as black and white” is a fixed English expression which we do not know in Holland. We do, however, have a similar expression: “zo simpel als één plus één”. Because parallelism is not seldom used by Atticus to make his point, I saw the opportunity to apply it here as well. This is how I came to the solution: “Deze zaak is zo simpel als één plus één – als zwart en wit.”

* Edinga chose: “Deze zaak is bijzonder ongecompliceerd” and Kooman: “Het is zo eenvoudig als maar kan.” Both have decided to translate away ‘black and white’, which is their right, but I stand by my decision to maintain it. Especially since there is no room for compensation later on in the text.

⁵⁶ I have tried to find out whether you can use ‘de staat’ in the same way as in English, and have found no evidence to the contrary on the internet. Besides, this is an American trial, and this is what they say in America.

* Edinga uses ‘de staat’ as well, and Kooman decided to naturalize it to “het Openbaar Ministerie”. I chose not to naturalize to maintain the setting and stand by that decision, but of course one can choose differently.

vierkant zijn tegengesproken door de verdachte. De verdachte is onschuldig, maar iemand in deze rechtszaal is dat niet⁵⁷.

“In mijn hart is plaats voor niets dan medelijden voor de hoofdgetuige van de staat, maar mijn medelijden houdt op waar zij het leven van een man op het spel zet, iets wat zij gedaan heeft in een poging zich van haar eigen schuld te ontdoen.

“Ik zeg schuld, heren, omdat schuldgevoel⁵⁸ haar hiertoe aanzette. Ze heeft geen misdrijf gepleegd, ze heeft enkel en alleen een onbuigzame en traditionele regel⁵⁹ van onze samenleving geschonden, een regel die zo strikt is dat ieder die hem schendt uit ons midden wordt verjaagd als een persoon waarmee niet te leven valt. Ze is het slachtoffer van vreselijke⁶⁰ armoede en onwetendheid, maar toch kan ik haar niet beklagen: ze is blank. Ze wist maar al te goed hoe ontzaglijk haar overtreding was, maar omdat haar verlangens sterker waren dan de regel die ze schond, koos ze ervoor hem toch te schenden. Dat was haar keuze⁶¹ en haar reactie daarop is iets wat ieder

⁵⁷ Here, I used the strategy Chesterman calls antonymy (162), because the phrase ‘not guilty’ translates with ‘onschuldig’. To use ‘niet schuldig’ would sound awkward. Therefore, I had to change the meaning of the next clause turn it into a negation.

⁵⁸ I wanted to maintain the repetition – I had to, since it is such an important part of the style – but unfortunately, ‘guilt’ means both ‘schuld’ and ‘schuldgevoel’. In the last instance, it has to be translated with ‘schuldgevoel’, but to use that three times would make the repetition irritating rather than rhetorically stylish. Therefore, I decided that the fact that ‘schuld’ is part of the word ‘schuldgevoel’ is enough of a repetition to maintain the strength of the original sentence.

* Edinga and Kooman both agree with my choice. Their sentences are almost identical, which makes me doubt my earlier statement in the introduction of part two of this thesis, that the new translation stands completely on its own. Then again, it might be a coincidence.

⁵⁹ After some doubting between ‘code’ and ‘regel’, I decided that using ‘code’ without something in front of it (‘gedragscode’, etc.) does not sound like something you would say in Dutch. Especially when we speak of one single prohibition, which is the case here, it is more common to say ‘regel’. This seems straightforward, but ‘code’ sounds like a rule that stems from honour and values rather than a ‘regel’, which is why I doubted between the two. However, the word occurs to often to choose a translation that sounds strange, and options such as ‘conventie’ and ‘norm’ don’t completely fit, either.

⁶⁰ I had trouble finding a suitable translation for ‘cruel’ as it is used here. In the end, I decided upon the more general, but fitting ‘vreselijk’.

⁶¹ In English, the phrase ‘she persisted’ is repeated, but since I translated the first ‘she persisted’ with ‘ze koos ervoor om toch’, it is impossible to repeat that in Dutch without turning it into a longer phrase than is desirable. Therefore, to maintain the repetition, I decided to repeat ‘ze koos ervoor’, in the form of ‘dat was haar keuze’.

van ons ooit in zijn leven heeft gevoeld. Ze deed iets wat elk kind weleens doet – ze probeerde het bewijs van haar overtreding van zich af te schuiven⁶². Maar in dit geval ging het niet om een kind dat haar gestolen spullen⁶³ verstopte: ze haalde uit naar haar slachtoffer – ze voelde zich genoodzaakt *hem* van zich af te schuiven – hij moest verdwijnen, uit haar omgeving, uit deze wereld. Ze moest het bewijs van haar overtreding vernietigen.

“Wat was het bewijs van haar overtreding? Tom Robinson, een mens. Ze moest Tom Robinson van zich af schuiven. Tom Robinson herinnerde haar iedere dag aan wat ze had gedaan. Wat had ze gedaan? Ze had een neger verleid.

“Ze was blank, en ze verleidde een neger. Ze deed iets wat in onze samenleving een schande is: ze kustte een zwarte man. Geen oude opa⁶⁴, maar een sterke jonge negerman. Voor ze de regel brak kon die haar weinig schelen, maar naderhand sloeg hij in als een bom⁶⁵.

* Both Edinga and Kooman chose not to maintain the repetition and use different translations of ‘to persist’ in the first and second instance.

⁶² I had trouble determining what Lee meant exactly with “put away from her”, but I believe that ‘van zich afschuiven’ is the closest thing to an equivalent.

⁶³ Although it is a generalization, I chose to use the word ‘spullen’ as a translation of ‘contraband’, because words like ‘waar’ or ‘goed’ all seem to belong to the verb ‘verstoppen’ (waar verstoppen, goed verstoppen). This might result in the reader having to reread the sentence multiple times to understand it correctly, which is of course not desirable.

⁶⁴ The source text says “old Uncle”, which means an old, harmless person. What is meant here is that she did not just pack an old man on the cheek, but kissed a young man romantically. We would say ‘opa’ rather than ‘oom’ to indicate an elder man, so I translated the phrase with ‘oude opa’. I considered ‘oud opaatje’, but that does not fit Atticus’s register.

* Edinga goes over the top with his translation: “Niet een oude man, een oudgediende, die men ‘oom’ noemt”. He applied intratextual explanation (Aixela), but to something that in my opinion does not require it. Kooman writes: “Geen oud mannetje”, which I think is a good translation.

⁶⁵ The source text says: “No code mattered to her before she broke it, but it came crashing down on her afterwards.” I found both parts of this sentence hard to translate. First of all, I wanted to say: “Voor ze hem brak kon de regel haar niets schelen”, but the “hem” seemed to refer back to Tom Robinson. Therefore, “de regel” had to be moved to the front of the sentence. However, that made the sentence less fluent: “voor ze de regel brak kon die haar niets schelen”. Changing ‘niets’ into ‘weinig’, which is also more idiomatic in Dutch, helps to make the sentence more rhythmic. The second part of the sentence is very idiomatic and very visual, and I wanted to maintain both of those elements. After a while I came up with “slaat in als een bom”, which is not identical, but similar in meaning and just as visual.

“Haar vader zag het en de verdachte heeft ons op de hoogte gebracht van zijn reactie. Wat deed haar vader? We weten het niet, maar indirect bewijs⁶⁶ toont aan dat Mayella Ewell bruut is geslagen door iemand die daar vrijwel alleen zijn linkerhand voor gebruikte. We weten deels wat meneer Ewell deed: hij deed wat elke godvrezende, volhardende, respectabele blanke man in zijn positie zou doen – hij deed aangifte⁶⁷, die hij ongetwijfeld met zijn linkerhand ondertekende en nu zit Tom Robinson voor u, nadat hij de eed heeft afgelegd met de enige goede hand die hij bezit – zijn rechterhand⁶⁸.

“En zo kon het gebeuren dat een rustige, respectabele, bescheiden neger die zo naïef was⁶⁹ om ‘medelijden te hebben’ met een blanke vrouw nu zijn woord tegenover

* Edinga goes with “Onze code betekende niets voor haar, toen zij deze schond; maar later werd zij er als het ware door verpletterd.” It is not very fluent, but it is more clear that harm comes to Mayella herself than it is in my translation. Kooman: “Geen code hindered haar voor ze hem schond, maar het gevolg van haar daad was verpletterend.” He decided to slightly deviate from the content to create a fluent sentence, which in my opinion works very well. Note how both translators chose ‘code’ as a translation for ‘code’, which I still feel does not work in the context.

⁶⁶ The VanDale dictionary names this as the translation of circumstantial evidence. I found a few other sources that confirmed this, of which *BoomBasics.nl*, a judicial website, seemed most reliable.

⁶⁷ I slightly generalized the meaning of “swear out a warrant”, because that means to report someone and ask for their arrest, while swearing under oath that you are telling the truth. There is no Dutch equivalent of this – or if there is one, a long and thorough search has failed to reveal it – so I chose to universalize this to “aangifte doen”.

* Edinga says: “Hij tekende een bevel tot in-hechtenis-neming” (237) and Kooman: “hij verkreeg een arrestatiebevel op een beëdigde aanklacht” (301). Both seem very stiff and too specific to me: I hardly doubt that one or both of them has asked someone in the judicial system what ‘swearing out a warrant’ translates to in Dutch, but it sounds so uncommon that I feel a reader would be held up by it.

⁶⁸ Here, the reference to good and evil with right and left is most clear. In English, the double meaning of ‘right’ in ‘his right hand’ is convenient, but because this is preceded by “the only good hand he possesses”, the emphasis on ‘good’ is still very much present in the Dutch text. Extra emphasis would only distract from the other, even more important meaning of this fragment: that Tom is right handed, so cannot have been the person who beat up Mayella, but Bob Ewell could have.

⁶⁹ The English says he “had the unmitigated temerity”, which I have translated with “zo naïef”. This is less strong than the original and I regret that, but in Dutch, phrases like “die de onvervalste naïviteit bezat” sound awkward and unclear. I tried many varieties of this, but in the end decided that style and idiomatic language had to prevail over being true to the content.

* If I am deviating from the content, Kooman takes it a step further. He writes: “die de onvergeeflijke brutaliteit had om”, which I believe is supposed to be sarcastic, since Tom is far from ‘brutaal’, but that does not really come across. Edinga’s translation is: “die zo roekeloos is geweest om”, which I believe is a good translation that conveys Lee’s meaning.

dat van twee blanke mensen moet stellen, die zich aan U, heren, hebben gepresenteerd [...], overtuigd dat U mee zou gaan in hun veronderstelling – de duivelse⁷⁰ veronderstelling – dat *alle* negers liegen, dat *alle* negers in essentie immorele wezens zijn, dat we *alle* negermannen uit de buurt van onze vrouwen moeten houden. [...]

“En we weten, heren, dat dit op zichzelf een leugen is die zo zwart is⁷¹ als de huid van Tom Robinson, een leugen waar ik U niet op hoeft te wijzen. U kent de waarheid, en de waarheid is als volgt⁷²: sommige negers liegen, sommige negers zijn immoreel, sommige negers moeten ver bij vrouwen uit de buurt blijven⁷³ – zwarte of blanke⁷⁴. Maar dit is een waarheid die voor het menselijke ras geldt en niet voor één bepaald mensenras. Er is niemand in deze rechtszaal die nog nooit heeft gelogen, die nog nooit iets immoreels heeft gedaan, en er is geen man op aarde die nog nooit met begeerte naar een vrouw heeft gekeken⁷⁵.

⁷⁰ “Evil” is one of those simple English words that one never thinks about, until you realize that there is no perfect equivalent in Dutch. At least, that is how it was for me. In the end, I decided that in a speech like this, a slight overstatement could work fine, and I settled on ‘duivels’ (which I chose over ‘(door en door/in en in) slecht’, ‘kwaad’, ‘zondig’ and some other options).

* Edinga says “zondige veronderstelling” (237) and Kooman “misdadige”. I am impressed with Koomans solution, as it sounds very idiomatic and fits the context well, but also still content with my own.

⁷¹ After long contemplation, I decided to maintain the idiom of ‘a black lie’ as I already considered in chapter 2.2, because I feel the meaning is clear, it would be a shame to lose the reference to Tom’s skin, it sounds beautiful and it is my personal opinion that literature allows for some poetic licence.

* Edinga simply says “dat is een leugen” (237) and does away with the reference to Tom’s skin, while Kooman agrees with me: “een leugen [...] even zwart als Tom Robinsons huid”.

⁷² Luckily, the chiasm discussed in the style analysis works fine in Dutch. The only drawback is the fact that I need to put two words (“als volgt”) at the end of the sentence, because “de waarheid is dit” does not sound Dutch.

* Again, Edinga chooses to leave out the figure of speech: “U kent de waarheid:”. Koomans sentence is exactly the same as mine, so of course, I full heartedly agree.

⁷³ I made sure to maintain the parallelism with the earlier trinity, which luckily works perfectly for Dutch as well.

⁷⁴ I considered translating this with ‘wit’, to refer back to the “simple as black and white” comment, but decided against it: they are too far apart to ensure the reader will see the link, and it is more likely they will regard it as an Anglicism.

⁷⁵ (Side note: I noticed that the liberal Atticus must draw the line at homosexuality.)

“[...] We weten dat niet iedereen gelijk is geschapen⁷⁶, niet op de manier zoals sommige mensen ons graag willen laten geloven – sommige mensen zijn slimmer dan andere, sommige hebben meer kansen omdat ze daarmee geboren zijn, sommige mannen verdienen meer geld dan andere, sommige dames bakken betere taarten dan andere [...].

“Maar op één⁷⁷ manier is iedereen in dit land wel⁷⁸ gelijk geschapen – er is één menselijk instituut dat een bedelaar gelijkstelt aan een Rockefeller⁷⁹, de domme man gelijkstelt aan een Einstein en de onwetende man gelijkstelt aan een schoolhoofd. Dat instituut, heren, is een rechtbank⁸⁰. Of het nou het Hooggerechtshof van de Verenigde Staten is, of de meest bescheiden plaatselijke rechtbank⁸¹ van het land, of deze eervolle rechtbank die U dient. Onze rechtbanken hebben hun gebreken, zoals elk menselijke instituut, maar in dit land maken onze rechtbanken edel, arm en rijk gelijk⁸², en in onze rechtbanken worden alle mensen gelijk geschapen.

⁷⁶ It struck me as odd to say ‘gelijk zijn geschapen’, simply because ‘created equal’ sounds so much more common, but I decided that this is the only right way to say it. It might be that I have heard the English phrase much more often, because it is such an American thing to say.

⁷⁷ Although it is not necessary here, to maintain the parallelism with the following sentence I decided to add acute accents to ‘één’, because in ‘één menselijk instituut’ they are required.

⁷⁸ I added the word ‘wel’ to make the sentence more fluent and to create more cohesion between this sentence and the last paragraph.

⁷⁹ I could have universalized ‘Rockefeller’ or replaced it with another rich family name more common to Dutch people, but in this day and age it takes little trouble to find out – if you do not already know – who a Rockefeller is, and what that stands for. This also helps to preserve the American setting.

* Both translators chose repetition (Aixela) of the word ‘Rockefeller’ as well.

⁸⁰ Another occurrence of ‘court’ of which the meaning is not completely clear: ‘rechtbank’ or ‘gerecht’? I decided to choose ‘rechtbank’ because of the examples that follow, which are all ‘rechtbanken’.

⁸¹ J.P. Court is an abbreviation of Justice of the Peace Court, which is a small, civil court. This specific court is not a familiar term in Dutch, so repetition (Aixela, 200) is undesirable. Because it only serves to make the point that each court, the largest as well as the smaller ones, treat all men as equals, it is better to choose a more general translation, since to naturalize would mean to harm the setting of Alabama, USA.

* Kooman translates: “het bescheidenste kantongerecht van het land”, which means he *has* chosen to refer to a specific Dutch institution. Edinga chose: “het kleine kantoor van een bescheiden vrederechter”, which I feel is a bit too much.

⁸² In English, this is derived from the proverb “Death is the great leveller.” I thought about generalizing it, but we have a proverb – although not so well known – that means the same thing:

“[...] Heren, een rechtbank is niets beter dan iedere man die hier voor mij in de jury zit. Een rechtbank is slechts zo bekwaam als haar jury en een jury is slechts zo bekwaam als de mannen waaruit zij bestaat. Ik ben er zeker van dat U heren de getuigenissen die U heeft gehoord objectief zult beoordelen, een beslissing zult nemen en deze verdachte zult herenigen met zijn familie. In de⁸³ naam van God, doe Uw plicht.”

De stem van Atticus was gedaald en terwijl hij zich van de jury afwendde, zei hij iets dat ik niet verstond. Hij zei het meer tegen zichzelf dan tegen de juryleden⁸⁴. Ik stootte Jem aan. “Wat zei hij?”

“‘In de naam van God, geloof hem.’ Ik denk dat hij dat zei.”

6. *The verdict*

[...] Meneer Tate zei, “De zitting wordt heropend,” met een stem waar gezag in doorklonk en de hoofden onder ons schoten omhoog. Meneer Tate verliet de ruimte en kwam terug met Tom Robinson. Hij leidde Tom naar zijn plek naast Atticus en bleef daar staan. Rechter Taylor had zichzelf wakker geschud en zat plotseling alert rechtop, met zijn blik op de lege jurybank gericht.

Daarna leek alles in een droom te gebeuren⁸⁵: in een droom zag ik de juryleden terugkomen, die zich als zwemmers onder water bewogen, en de stem van rechter

“edel, arm en rijk maakt de dood gelijk” (Spreekwoorden.nl, VanDale). The fact that it is somewhat old-fashioned serves the text, and even if one does not see the reference to the Dutch proverb, they can make out the fact that it must be an aphorism because of the rhyme.

* Both Kooman and Edinga chose to lose the proverb and use a literal translation: “gelijkmakers”.

⁸³ I considered leaving out the ‘de’, because it is less common in Dutch, but I decided that this only serves to give the request more weight.

⁸⁴ This is another example where I needed to rack my brains over the word ‘court’. “Rechtbank” seemed illogical, because that is not something one would talk to. The same goes for ‘gerecht’ or ‘rechtszaal’. The people he is actually talking to are the members of the jury, and although Lee probably chose to use ‘court’ to avoid a disturbing repetition of ‘jury’, I think ‘juryleden’ works well enough here, because it is not the same word.

Taylor kwam van ver weg en klonk nietig. Ik zag iets wat alleen kinderen van een advocaat zouden kunnen zien, waar alleen zij naar zouden zoeken⁸⁶, en het was net alsof ik Atticus de straat op zag lopen, een geweer tegen zijn schouder zag zetten en de trekker zag overhalen, maar de hele tijd dat ik keek al wist dat het wapen leeg was.

Een jury kijkt nooit naar een verdachte die ze heeft veroordeeld en toen deze juryleden binnenkwamen, keek er niet één naar Tom Robinson. De voorzitter gaf een papiertje aan meneer Tate die het doorgaf aan de griffier die het doorgaf aan de rechter...⁸⁷

Ik deed mijn ogen dicht. Rechter Taylor las de uitslag van de jury voor: "Schuldig...schuldig...schuldig...schuldig..." Ik gluurde naar Jem: hij greep het balkon zo hard vast dat zijn handen wit waren, en zijn schouders schokten alsof elke "schuldig" een dolkstoot⁸⁸ in zijn rug was.

[...] Atticus pakte zijn jas van zijn stoelleuning en legde hem over zijn schouder. Toen verliet hij de rechtszaal, maar niet via de normale uitgang. Hij wilde waarschijnlijk de kortste weg naar huis nemen, want hij liep in snel tempo over het middenpad naar de zuidelijke uitgang. Ik volgde de bovenkant van zijn hoofd terwijl hij naar de deur liep. Hij keek niet op.

⁸⁵ I translated away 'dreamlike quality' because I could not find a satisfactory equivalent, and instead chose "Daarna leek alles in een droom te gebeuren." This also adds an extra parallelism with the next sentence.

⁸⁶ Unfortunately, I needed to insert 'wat' in "ik zag iets wat", which means the second part of the sentence – originally "could be expected to look for" – does not connect well with the first part anymore. To keep the sentence fluent, I decided to change 'child' into a plural (so that I could refer back to them with one word and avoid using 'hij of zij') and add the word 'waarnaar'.

⁸⁷ In concordance with the source text, I left out the commas that would normally have separated the clauses, to create a feeling of slow motion (as discussed in chapter 2.1.)

⁸⁸ The source text says: "As if each 'guilty' was a separate stab between them", 'them' meaning his shoulders. Because 'een dolkstoot in de rug' is idiomatic Dutch, and because a formulation with 'between them' would not work well, I chose to go with that.

* Edinga translated it with: "alsof elke 'schuldig' hem een dolkstoot in de rug gaf" (245) and Kooman says: "alsof elke 'schuldig' een dolkstoot in zijn rug was" (311). Apparently, we were all on the same train of thoughts, or at least all got off at the same station.

Iemand stootte me aan, maar ik wilde mijn ogen niet afwenden van de mensen onder ons, en van het beeld van Atticus die zijn eenzame tocht over het middenpad maakte.

“Juffrouw Jean Louise?”

Ik keek om. Ze waren allemaal gaan staan. Overal om ons heen en op de galerij aan de overkant kwamen de negers overeind. De stem van Dominee Sykes kwam van net zo ver als die van rechter Taylor:

“Juffrouw Jean Louise, sta op. Je vader komt voorbij.”⁸⁹

⁸⁹ To me, this is one of the most emotional and beautiful sentences of the novel. It is short, but conveys a lot of meaning and emotion: the respect of the black community for what Atticus has done for one of them, despite the fact that he has failed; the simplicity of the order, as if standing up for this man is the only right thing to do: all of this is inherent in these few words. Therefore, it took me a long time to decide on the translation. It has a huge impact in the source text, where it ends the chapter, and I wanted the translation to carry the same meaning and respect as the original.

* Of course, I was curious to find out what the other translators had translated this into, and whether I found their solutions as moving as the source text. Edinga writes: “Juffrouw Jean Louise, sta op. Uw vader gaat weg.” (246) I disagree with ‘gaat weg’, because first of all, they refer to his passing by more than his leaving, and secondly it is less epic, somehow. Kooman has the exact same solution, except that he starts with “Sta op” (311), so my opinion is the same.

CONCLUSION

Now that the work has been done, it is time to evaluate the process of writing this thesis. The question I wanted answered when I started was:

“What problems does one have to overcome while translating Harper Lee’s *To kill a Mockingbird*, and what are the possible and most desirable means to solving those problems?”

The expectation was that a satisfactory answer to this question, in the form of an extensive analysis of the source text, would aid me in my attempt to translate part of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. It was a long and difficult process to break down a novel that I find so beautiful into little, analyzable fragments, all to find out how, added up, these fragments can account for the effect of the novel as a whole. However, I do feel I understand the novel better now than I did before I started, and that this has helped me considerably during the translation.

The first chapter has offered a broad overview of the novel itself and some background information that helps to better understand it. This confirmed that the theme of the novel and the message it conveys are important aspects to maintain and that the parts of the novel concerned with it need to keep their emphasis. Also, it helped to understand some of the choices Lee made with regard to the content of the novel, seeing as it is partly autobiographical.

The second chapter started off with a thorough style analysis after the method of Short and Leech. This analysis served to discover style elements that were less obvious, and to confirm some assumptions about the strategies Lee used that make the novel what it is. In the second part of the chapter, the problems encountered during the analysis and some other difficulties that I expected to form an obstacle during the translation were ordered according to the four categories of Nord. This offered an organized framework in which to discuss the problems one by one. Although this has

helped me tremendously during the actual translation, there is always room for further investigation. For example, a whole thesis could be written on the matter of translating dialect, or even just about recreating colloquial, accented speech in writing. This counts for almost all the problems that have been discussed, but dialect was one of the issues that struck me as an interesting topic for another student to worry themselves with.

After that, it was time to put the theory into practice and use all the information gathered thus far to translate some fragments from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Knowing my preferred strategies to dealing with certain problems before I started has certainly helped to not only speed up the proceedings, but to be consistent in my choices regarding said problems. To explain my choices in the footnotes also helped, especially to become aware of my motivation behind them. The comparison to the existing translations has not shaken the confidence in my own text: sometimes it confirmed the motivations behind my choices, and sometimes it proved that there is always more than one right option. I discovered that the major difference between the two translations is that Edinga's language is often very outdated – the curse of a translation – and Kooman's is much more modern. It still strikes me as odd that they both chose not to include dialect in their translations.

Although it is the translators' doom that their work will never be perfect and that there is always room for improvement – if not according to the translators themselves, then at least to the critical reader – I am satisfied with the translation as it is. I believe that it is better because of the extensive groundwork that preceded it, which means that I can confidently say that this thorough dissection of a text is preferable. It is unfortunate that such an amount of work is not always profitable – or possible – when working on an actual contract, with the inevitable deadline.

All in all, the answers to the question have definitely served their purpose of making the translation of *To Kill a Mockingbird* a better and more consistent one than it would have been without them, and they definitely made for a more confident translator than I would have been otherwise.

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APPENDIX A: SOURCE TEXT EXCERPTS

Below are the excerpts from *To Kill a Mockingbird* which I have translated for this thesis. They are in the same order as the translation, and have the same header, to simplify comparison between the two texts.

From: Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

7. *Why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird, p. 98.*

When he gave us our air rifles Atticus wouldn't teach us to shoot. Uncle Jack instructed us in the rudiments thereof; he said Atticus wasn't interested in guns. Atticus said to Jem one day, 'I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the back yard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the bluejays you want, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it.

'Your father's right,' she said. 'Mockingbirds don't do one thing but make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corncribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird.'

8. *Ewell on the stand, p. 186-192.*

'Mr Robert Ewell?' asked Mr Gilmer.

'That's m' name, cap'n,' said the witness.

Mr Gilmer's back stiffened a little, and I felt sorry for him. [...] Mr Ewell was Mr Gilmer's witness and he had no business being rude to him of all people.

'Are you the father of Mayella Ewell?' was the next question.

'Well, if I ain't I can't do nothing about it now, her ma's dead,' was the answer.

Judge Taylor stirred. He turned slowly in his swivel chair and looked benignly at the witness. 'Are you the father of Mayella Ewell?' he asked, in a way that made the laughter below us stop suddenly.

'Yes sir,' Mr Ewell said meekly.

Judge Taylor went on in tones of good will: 'This the first time you've ever been in court? I don't recall ever seeing you here.' At the witness's affirmative nod he considered. 'Well, let's get something straight. There will be no more audibly obscene speculations on any subject from anybody in this court-room as long as I'm sitting here. Do you understand?'

Mr Ewell nodded, but I don't think he did. Judge Taylor sighed and said, 'All right, Mr Gilmer?'

'Thank you, sir. Mr Ewell, would you tell us in your own words what happened on the evening of November twenty-first, please?'

Jem grinned and pushed his hair back. Just-in-your-own words was, Mr Gilmer's trade-mark. We often wondered who else's words Mr Gilmer was afraid his witness might employ.

'Well, the night of November twenty-one I was comin' in from the woods with a load o' kindlin' and just as I got to the fence I heard Mayella screamin' like a stuck hog inside the house –'

Here Judge Taylor glanced sharply at the witness and must have decided his speculations devoid of evil intent, for he subsided sleepily.

'What time was it, Mr Ewell?'

'Just 'fore sundown. Well, I was sayin' Mayella was screamin' fit to beat Jesus –'

another glance from the bench silenced Mr Ewell.

'Yes? She was screaming?' said Mr Gilmer.

Mr Ewell looked confusedly at the judge. 'Well, Mayella was raisin' this holy racket so I dropped m'load and run as fast as I could but I run into th' fence, but when I got distangled I run up to th' window and I seen –' Mr Ewell's face grew scarlet. He

stood and pointed his finger at Tom Robinson. '– I seen that black nigger yonder ruttin' on my Mayella!'

So serene was Judge Taylor's court, that he had few occasions to use his gavel, but he hammered fully five minutes. Atticus was on his feet at the bench saying something to him, Mr Heck Tate as first officer of the county stood in the middle aisle quelling the packed court-room. Behind us, there was an angry muffled groan from the coloured people.

[...]

In possession of his court once more, Judge Taylor leaned back in his chair. He looked suddenly weary; his age was showing, and I thought about what Atticus had said – he and Mrs Taylor didn't kiss much – he must have been nearly seventy.

'There has been a request', Judge Taylor said, 'that this court-room be cleared of spectators, or at least of women and children, a request that will be denied for the time being. People generally see what they look for, and hear what they listen for, and they have the right to subject their children to it, but I can assure you of one thing: you will receive what you see and hear in silence or you will leave this court-room, but you won't leave it until the whole boiling of you come before me on contempt charges. Mr Ewell, you will keep your testimony within the confines of Christian English usage, if that is possible. Proceed, Mr Gilmer.'

Mr Ewell reminded me of a deaf-mute. I was sure he had never heard the words Judge Taylor directed at him – his mouth struggled silently with them – but their import registered on his face. Smugness faded from it, replaced by a dogged earnestness that fooled Judge Taylor not at all: as long as Mr Ewell was on the stand, the judge kept his eyes on him, as if daring him to make a false move.

Mr Gilmer and Atticus exchanged glances. Atticus was sitting down again, his fist rested on his cheek and we could not see his face. Mr Gilmer looked rather desperate. A question from Judge Taylor made him relax: 'Mr Ewell, did you see the defendant having sexual intercourse with your daughter?'

'Yes, I did.'

The spectators were quiet, but the defendant said something. Atticus whispered to him, and Tom Robinson was silent.

'You say you were at the window?' asked Mr Gilmer.

'Yes sir.'

'How far is it from the ground?'

''bout three foot.'

'Did you have a clear view of the room?'

'Yes sir.'

'How did the room look?'

'Well, it was all slung, like there was a fight.'

'What did you do when you saw the defendant?'

'Well, I run around the house to get in, but he run out the front door just ahead of me. I sawed who he was, all right. I was too distracted about Mayella to run after 'im. I run in the house, and she was lyin' on the floor squallin' –'

'Then what did you do?'

'Why, I run for Tate quick as I could. I knowed who it was, all right, lived down yonder in that nigger-nest, passed the house every day. Jedge, I've asked this county for fifteen years to clean out that nest down yonder, they're dangerous to live around 'sides devaluin' my property –'

'Thank you, Mr Ewell,' said Mr Gilmer hurriedly.

[...]

Atticus looked around at Mr Gilmer and smiled. Mr Ewell seemed determined not to give the defence the time of day.

'Mr Tate testified that her right eye was blackened, that she was beaten around the –'

'Oh yeah,' said the witness. 'I hold with everything Tate said.'

'You do?' asked Atticus mildly. 'I just want to make sure.' He went to the court reporter, said something, and the reporter entertained us for some minutes by reading Mr Tate's testimony as if it were stock-market quotations: '...which eye her left oh yes

that'd make it her right it was her right eye Mr Finch I remember now she was bunged.' [...]

'Thank you, Bert,' said Atticus. 'You heard it again, Mr Ewell. [...] Do you agree with the sherrif?'

'I holds with Tate.'

9. *Mayella on the stand, p. 198-203*

'Was Tom Robinson well known to you?'

'Whaddya mean?'

'I mean did you know who he was, where he lived?'

Mayella nodded. 'I knowed who he was, he passed the house every day.'

'Was this the first time you asked him to come inside the fence?'

Mayella jumped slightly at the question. Atticus was making his slow pilgrimage to the windows, as he had been doing: he would ask a question, then look out, waiting for an answer. He did not see her involuntary jump, but it seemed to me that he knew she had moved. He turned around and raised his eyebrows. 'Was –' he began again.

'Yes it was.'

'Didn't you ever ask him to come inside the fence before?'

She was prepared now, 'I did not, I certainly did not.'

'One did not's enough,' said Atticus serenely. 'You never asked him to do odd jobs for you before?'

'I mighta,' conceded Mayella. 'There was several niggers around.'

'Can you remember any other occasion?'

'No.'

'All right, now to what happened. You said he "got you around the neck cussing and saying dirt!" – is that right?'

'Yes.'

Atticus's memory had suddenly become accurate. 'You say "he caught me and choked me and took advantage of me!" – is that right?'

'That's what I said.'

'Do you remember him beating you about the face?'

The witness hesitated.

'You seem sure enough that he choked you. All this time you were fighting back, remember? You "kicked and hollered as loud as you could!" Do you remember him beating you about the face?'

Mayella was silent. She seemed to be trying to get something clear to herself. I thought for a moment she was doing Mr Heck Tate's and my trick of pretending there was a person in front of us. She glanced at Mr Gilmer.

'It's an easy question, Miss Mayella, so I'll try again. Do you remember him beating you about the face?' Atticus's voice had lost its comfortableness; he was speaking in his arid, detached professional voice. 'Do you remember him beating you about the face?'

'No, I don't recollect if he hit me. I mean yes I do, he hit me.'

'Was your last sentence your answer?'

'Huh? Yes, he hit – I just don't remember, I just don't remember...it all happened so quick.'

Judge Taylor looked sternly at Mayella. 'Don't you cry, young woman –' he began, but Atticus said, 'Let her cry if she wants to, Judge. We've got all the time in the world.'

Mayella sniffed wrathfully and looked up at Atticus. 'I'll answer any question you got – get me up here an' mock me, will you? I'll answer any question you got –'

'That's fine,' said Atticus. 'There're only a few more. Miss Mayella, not to be tedious, you've testified that the defendant hit you, grabbed you around the neck, choked you, and took advantage of you. I want you to be sure you have the right man. Will you identify the man who raped you?'

'I will, that's him right yonder.'

Atticus turned to the defendant. 'Tom, stand up. Let Miss Mayella have a good look at you. Is this the man, Miss Mayella?'

Tom Robinson's powerful shoulders rippled under his thin shirt. He rose to his feet and stood with his right hand on the back of his chair. He looked oddly off balance, but it was not from the way he was standing. His left arm was fully twelve inches shorter than his right, and hung dead at his side. It ended in a small shriveled hand, and from as far as the balcony I could see that it was no use to him.

'Scout,' breathed Jem. 'Scout, look! Reverend, he's crippled!'

[...]

Atticus said, 'Is this the man who raped you?'

'It most certainly is.'

Atticus's next question was one long word. 'How? [...] – do you wish to reconsider any of you testimony?'

Tell us once more, please, what happened?'

'I told'ja what happened.'

'You testified that you turned around and there he was. He choked you then?'

'Yes.'

'Then he released your throat and hit you?'

'I said he did.'

'He blacked your left eye with his right fist?'

'I ducked and it – it glanced, that's what it did. I ducked and it glanced off.'

Mayella had finally seen the light.

10. Tom Robinson on the stand, pp. 209-212

As Tom Robinson gave his testimony, it came to me that Mayella Ewell must have been the loneliest person in the world. She was even lonelier than Boo Radley, who had not been out of the house in twenty-five years. [...] Tom Robinson was probably

the only person who had ever been decent to her. But she said he took advantage of her, and when she stood up she looked at him as if he were dirt beneath her feet.

‘Did you ever,’ Atticus interrupted my meditations, ‘at any time, go on the Ewell property – did you ever set foot on the Ewell property without an express invitation?’

‘No, suh, Mr Finch, I never did. I wouldn’t do that, suh.’

Atticus sometimes said that one way to tell whether a witness was lying or telling the truth was to listen rather than watch: I applied his test – Tom denied it three times in one breath, but quietly, with no hint of whining in his voice, and I found myself believing him, in spite of his protesting too much. He seemed to be a respectable Negro, and a respectable Negro would never go up into somebody’s yard of his own volition.

‘Tom, what happened to you on the evening of November twenty-first of last year?’

Below us, the spectators drew a collective breath and leaned forward. Behind us, the Negroes did the same.

[...]

‘Well, I went up the steps an’ she motioned me to come inside, and I went in the front room an’ looked at the door. I said Miss Mayella, this door looks alright. [...] Well, I said I best be goin’ I couldn’t do nothin’ for her, an’ she says oh yes I could, an’ I ask her what, and she says to just step on that chair yonder an’ get that box down from on top of the chiffarobe. [...] So I done what she told me, an’ I was just reachin’ when the next thing I know she – she’d grabbed me round the legs, grabbed me round th’ legs, Mr Finch. She scared me so bad I hopped down an’ turned the chair over. [...]’

‘What happened after that?’ [...]

‘Mr Finch, I got down offa that chair an’ turned an’ she sorta jumped on me. [...] She hugged me around the waist. [...] She reached up an’ kissed me ‘side of the face. She says she never kissed a grown man before an’ s she might as well kiss a nigger. She says what papa do to her don’t count. She says: “Kiss me back, nigger.” I say: “Miss

Mayella, lemme outa here" [...] an' I say "lemme pass," but just when I say it Mr Ewell yonder hollered through th' window. [...] He says: "You goddamn whore, I'll kill ya."

[...]

'Tom, did you rape Mayella Ewell?'

'I did not, suh.'

'Did you harm her in any way?'

'I did not, suh.'

'Did you resist her advances?'

'Mr Finch, I tried. I tried to 'thout bein' ugly to her. I didn't wanta be ugly, I didn't wanta push her or nothin'.'

[...] Until my father explained it to me later, I did not understand the subtlety of Tom predicament: he would not have dared strike a white woman under any circumstances and expect to live long, so he took the first opportunity to run – a sure sign of guilt.

'Why did you run?'

'I was scared, suh?'

'Why were you scared?'

'Mr Finch, if you were a nigger like me, you'd be scared, too.'

11. Atticus speaks to the jury, pp. 221-224

Atticus put his hands in his pockets, and as he returned to the jury, I saw his gold collar-button and the tips of his pen and pencil winking in the light.

[...]

'Gentlemen,' he was saying, 'I shall be brief, but I would like to use my remaining time with you to remind you that this case is not a difficult one, it requires no minute sifting of complicated facts, but it does require you to be sure beyond all reasonable doubt as to the guilt of the defendant. To begin with, this case should never have come to trial. This case is as simple as black and white.'

'The state has not produced one iota of medical evidence to the effect that the crime Tom Robinson is charged with ever took place. It has relied instead upon the testimony of two witnesses whose evidence has not only been called into serious question on cross-examination, but has been flatly contradicted by the defendant. The defendant is not guilty, but somebody in this court-room is.

'I have nothing but pity in my heart for the chief witness for the state, but my pity does not extend so far as to her putting a man's life at stake, which she has done in an effort to get rid of her own guilt.

'I say guilt, gentlemen, because it was guilt that motivated her. She has committed no crime, she has merely broken a rigid and time-honoured code of our society, a code so severe that whoever breaks it is hounded from our midst as unfit to live with. She is the victim of cruel poverty and ignorance, but I cannot pity her: she is white. She knew full well the enormity of her offence, but because her desires were stronger than the code she was breaking, she persisted in breaking it. She persisted, and her subsequent reaction is something that all of us have known at one time or another. She did something every child has done – she tried to put the evidence of her offence away from her. But in this case she was no child hiding stolen contraband: she struck out at her victim – of necessity she must put him away from her – he must be removed from her presence, from this world. She must destroy the evidence of her offence.

'What was the evidence of her offence? Tom Robinson, a human being. She must put Tom Robinson away from her. Tom Robinson was her daily reminder of what she did. What did she do? She tempted a Negro.

'She was white, and she tempted a Negro. She did something that in our society is unspeakable: she kissed a black man. Not an old Uncle, but a strong young Negro man. No code mattered to her before she broke it, but it came crashing down on her afterwards.

'Her father saw it, and the defendant has testified as to his remarks. What did her father do? We don't know, but there is circumstantial evidence that Mayella Ewell was beaten savagely by someone who led almost exclusively with his left. We do know in

part what Mr Ewell did: he did what any God-fearing, persevering, respectable white man would do under the circumstances – he swore out a warrant, no doubt signing it with his left hand, and Tom Robinson now sits before you, having taken the oath with the only good hand he possesses – his right hand.

‘And so a quiet, respectable, humble Negro who had the unmitigated temerity to “feel sorry” for a white woman has had to put his word against two white people, [who] have presented themselves to you gentlemen [...], confident that you gentlemen would go along with them on the assumption – the evil assumption – that *all* Negroes lie, that *all* Negroes are basically immoral beings, that *all* Negro men are not to be trusted around our women. [...]

‘Which gentlemen, we know is in itself a lie as black as Tom Robinson’s skin, a lie I do not have to point out to you. You know the truth, and the truth is this: some Negroes lie, some Negroes are immoral, some Negro men are not to be trusted around women – black and white. But this is a truth that applies to the human race and to no particular race of men. There is not a person in this court-room who has never told a lie, who has never done an immoral thing, and there is no man living who has never looked upon a woman with desire.’

‘[...] We know all men are not created equal in the sense some people would have us believe – some people are smarter than others, some people have more opportunity because they’re born with it, some men make more money than others, some ladies make better cakes than others [...].

‘But there is one way in this country in which all men are created equal – there is one human institution that makes a pauper the equal of a Rockefeller, the stupid man the equal of an Einstein and the ignorant man the equal of any college president. That institution, gentlemen, is a court. It can be the Supreme Court of the United States or the humblest J.P. court in the land, or this honourable court which you serve. Our courts have their faults, as does any human institution, but in this country our courts are the great levelers, and in our courts all men are created equal.

'[...] Gentlemen, a court is no better than each man of you sitting before me on this jury. A court is only as sound as its jury, and a jury is only as sound as the men who make it up. I am confident that you gentlemen will review without passion the evidence you have heard, come to a decision, and restore this defendant to his family. In the name of God, do your duty.'

Atticus's voice had dropped, and as he turned away from the jury he said something I did not catch. He said it more to himself than to the court. I punched Jem. 'What'd he say?'

' "In the name of God, believe him." I think that's what he said.'

12. The verdict, pp. 229-230.

[...] Mr Tate said, 'This court will come to order,' in a voice that rang with authority, and the heads below us jerked up. Mr Tate left the room and returned with Tom Robinson. He steered Tom to his place beside Atticus, and stood there. Judge Taylor had roused himself to sudden alertness and was sitting up straight, looking at the empty jury box.

What happened after that had a dreamlike quality: in a dream I saw the jury return, moving like underwater swimmers, and Judge Taylor's voice came from far away, and was tiny. I saw something only a lawyer's child could be expected to see, could be expected to watch for, and it was like watching Atticus walk into the street, raise a rifle to his shoulder and pull the trigger, but watching all the time knowing that the gun was empty.

A jury never looks at a defendant it has convicted, and when this jury came in, not one of them looked at Tom Robinson. The foreman handed a piece of paper to Mr Tate who handed it to the clerk who handed it to the judge...

I shut my eyes. Judge Taylor was polling the jury: 'Guilty...guilty...guilty...guilty...' I peeked at Jem: his hands were white from

gripping the balcony, and his shoulders jerked as if each 'guilty' was a separate stab between them.

[...] Atticus took his coat off the back of his chair and pulled it over his shoulder. Then he left the court-room, but not by his usual exit. He must have wanted to go home the short way, because he walked quickly down the middle aisle towards the south exit. I followed the top of his head as he made his way to the door. He did not look up.

Someone was punching me, but I was reluctant to take my eyes from the people below us, and from the image of Atticus's lonely walk down the aisle.

'Miss Jean Louise?'

I looked around. They were all standing. All around us and in the balcony on the opposite wall, the Negroes were getting to their feet. Reverend Sykes's voice was as distant as Judge Taylor's:

'Miss Jean Louise, stand up. Your father's passin'.'

APPENDIX B: EXCERPTS FROM EXISTING TRANSLATIONS

The first excerpts are from:

Lee, Harper. *Spaar de spotvogels*. Trans. Hans Edinga. 8th ed. Baarn: Uitgeverij de Fontein bv., 1978.

The second excerpts are from:

Lee, Harper. *Spaar de spotvogels*. Trans. Ko Kooman. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2010.