

# Through *The Years* and the Moment

Translating the Gerund-Participle as Part of Virginia Woolf's Literary Style



Picture by flickr.com user Brocco Lee.

MA thesis **Translation Studies**  
Utrecht University Department of English

Marleen Masselink 3114171

Supervisor:  
Second reader:

dr. Cees Koster  
prof. dr. Ton Naaijken

August 2011

## Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <u>Introduction: 'Being Scientific'</u>                          | 3  |
| Through <i>The Years</i> and to the Point                        | 6  |
| <u>Literary Background: 'Granite and Rainbow'</u>                | 10 |
| Opening Doors  | 14 |
| <u>Dissecting Style</u>  | 16 |
| Closing in on Time   | 19 |
| <u>The Gerund-Participle</u>                                     | 20 |
| Abstractness and the Progressive                                 | 24 |
| <u>Towards A Contrastive Analysis for Translational Purposes</u> | 28 |
| The Gerund-Participle in Practice                                | 31 |
| <u>Perceived Changes in Effect</u>                               | 37 |
| Conclusion   | 38 |
| Characters and Relationships                                     | 41 |
| <u>Annotated Translation</u>                                     | 42 |
| Original Text  | 66 |
| Bibliography   | 81 |

## Introduction

“[F]or one must be scientific, above all scientific”<sup>1</sup>

Virginia Woolf distrusted academics, openly criticised academic traditions and opposed Oxbridge views in the essays she wrote. She, an “educated gentleman’s daughter” (Woolf 1929), was not allowed to enter university like her brothers, but would not let such a thing prevent her from gaining the knowledge she craved. If anything, it made her more determined to be successful and to prove society wrong, as becomes clear from her extended essay *A Room of One’s Own*. And academia was just one of many Victorian institutions that Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group wanted to shake up.

Woolf’s literary style, her own particular brand of what we now call modernism, challenged Victorian conventions, by having most of the action in her novels take place in the (often female) characters’ heads, by letting these characters’ trains of thought determine the pace and direction of developments, while experimenting with language so as to challenge linearity and duration, rationality, existing morals and the possibility of passing judgment in its entirety, and emphasise the subjectivity of human experience – which made her works almost perfect opposites of her very Victorian father’s studious biographies. The concept of ‘personal time’ was central to her work, Woolf’s famous stream-of-consciousness style being widely acclaimed. With her focus on subjectivity she provided room with which to expand society’s narrow-mindedness. In her essays and diaries Woolf provided a context to her narrative techniques, voicing her opinions for example

---

<sup>1</sup> (Woolf 1925 p. 18)

when attacking her fellow critics' views, saying: "This is an important book, the critic assumes, because it deals with war. This is an insignificant book because it deals with the feelings of women in a drawing-room." (Woolf 1929 p. 150) Both the position of women in society and her anti-war stance were issues Woolf felt strongly about and discussed in her critical essays, as well as used, more obliquely, in her novels. In *Mrs Dalloway* there is Septimus Warren Smith, a shell-shocked veteran whose incoherence has poetic quality and whose overall charm and wit win over the reader, while the educated gentleman doctor who treats him is distrusted. Mr. Smith, of course, is displaying perfectly rational behaviour, strolling around the park happily stating that "the human voice [...] can quicken trees into life"; though only "in certain atmospheric circumstances", he adds, feeling he should "be scientific" (Woolf 1925 p. 18), while in fact only adding to the vagueness of his statement. This fragment clearly makes fun of 'science', showing a stance against academic attempts that would try, as well, to structure Woolf's work 'scientifically', rationally and following contemporary opinions on, say, linearity. Unfolding the style would take away at least part of the work's meaning, and explaining the events goes against Woolf's intention of letting readers draw their own conclusions.

All aspects and layers of language are important when it comes to discussing Woolf's work, fond as she was of experimenting with words, though simply explaining and categorising everything will not do. The same idea goes for literary translation as a field and a job, with the same strain between analysis and conveying literary effect. Translation Studies operates right on the edge of academic study and personal experience, linguistics and literature. Woolf hated translators by the way, spoke of the "mutilation" of texts and preferred to avoid meeting translators of her own work (Andringa ..), which seems opposite to the enormous care and effort she

put into writing herself, weighing every word and spending years editing her material before publishing a book. Yet after a book had been published she truly let it go, still worrying immensely about what people would think but never changing what she had written (McNees liv). Terms such as “the death of the author” and “implied reader” would probably have been fascinating to one so concerning herself with interpretation and experimenting with her role. “Using language as a means to break through language is essentially the task and paradox of being a writer” says Joke Hermsen (Hermsen 90). A translator, then, faces the dilemma of having to ‘save’ as well as ‘break through’ the original work.

Philosopher Hermsen devotes a chapter of her book to the perception of time, subtitled “A plea for a slow future”<sup>2</sup>, to Virginia Woolf and Marcel Proust. “Time regained” she calls this chapter (after Proust’s famous work), as the narratological explorations of both authors were intended to create a space for personal experience, ‘time regained’ outside of the clock’s strict regime. Up until the introduction of Greenwich Mean Time in 1880, time had not even been that much of a steady or outwardly-controlled factor: people lived by their local church clock or father’s pocket watch and times varied (albeit slightly) across the nation. Modernist writers also experienced first-hand how the pace of life increased with the new century’s technological advances, more speed meaning more profit, all of which has influenced their choice of themes as well as writing methods, often involving a struggle between the human and technology (Pascoe). Interestingly, for instance, Septimus Smith’s unsympathetic doctor – Sir William Bradshaw - is presented as being particularly punctual and concerned with the clock, studies have been dedicated to the presence of traffic noise in *Mrs Dalloway* and the reader of *The Years*

---

<sup>2</sup> All translations are my own, unless stated otherwise.

witnesses the effects of modern technologies as well as human aging on the Pargiter family.

### Through *The Years* and to the Point

The present study focuses on the translation of the important yet overlooked piece of literature that is *The Years*, the last of Virginia Woolf's novels<sup>3</sup>, which has only recently gained serious scientific interest (and still more concerning the editing process than the actual finished product itself) and has not to this day seen a translation into Dutch. It is even the only one of Woolf's works without a Dutch counterpart, which on its own is a good enough reason for undertaking this project. Yet *The Years* also holds intrinsic value, as a book with a unique style and interesting history, produced by a great writer who in creating it was attempting to go beyond the style she was and still is famous for, never satisfied with repeating herself. The book, in her initial view, was to be a culmination of her talents and experience in both directions of her success: literary fiction and critical essays. It was to cover the grand topics of her career: the position of women in society, the Victorian Age and its effects on her life and that of her contemporaries, the representation of the individual and personal experience in literature and she wanted to continue expanding the possibilities of language and literary form (McNees xli); an experiment that, to a certain extent, failed, or at least was reshaped to something entirely different.

---

<sup>3</sup> The last one that she finished herself, as *Between the Acts* was published posthumously without Woolf having edited it (elaborately, as she was wont to do) to her full satisfaction.

The aim of this study is to capture the specific style of *The Years* and to discuss the problems that arise with the translation of this novel and this style, most specifically the problems arising when translating the English gerund-participle, which plays an important role in the style of *The Years*. As, generally, not a marked or uncommon form of the English verb, the gerund-participle would probably not have stood out if not for some central themes in the works of Woolf and her contemporaries. Time, transience, changing points of view and freedom of interpretation are essential in both style and content, if ever there is a clear cut between the two<sup>4</sup>. And, as critic Julia Briggs puts it, “Woolf’s central concern had always been with lives in time, and how best to represent time, since its steady falling away endlessly recreated the experience of absence and loss, in a range of shapes and at a variety of levels.” (Briggs 5) The translator, then, has to study this representation and its relevance. The –ing form in English can be an interesting focus, as it allows the writer to be short and relatively unbound, while a Dutch variation on the English progressive aspect requires more specific and more marked alternatives. An example of the use of the gerund-participle in *The Years* can be found in the following passage:

“We’re having a bonfire,” she said. Her eyes were glowing; her hair was looping down. “That’s why I’m all so blown-about,” she added, putting her hand to her head. (TY 112)

---

<sup>4</sup> On this subject – the definition of ‘style’ and ‘content’ - there are numerous sources to be cited and points of view to be explained, no doubt very interesting also in relation to translation, but I will not go into this discussion in detail here. It is sufficient to say, at this stage, that I support a pluralist view on style (as presented by Leech and Short in *Style in Fiction*, p. 24) and that there is meaning, ‘content’ in the stylistic choices that Woolf made.

These words, spoken by and describing the character called Eugénie Pargiter, wife and mother and portrayed as displaying a strong sense for drama in whatever she does, stand out on the page because of their ‘flowing’ effect and are stylistically foregrounded, which gives a sense of continuity to Eugénie’s actions as well as makes the readers slow their pace. Eugénie dazzles her brother-in-law with her feminine charms and fussy ways. It is clear that he lingers on her presence and the duration of her movements suddenly becomes meaningful, an example of the concept of ‘personal time’, yet the wording itself is not elaborate. The gerund-participles present Eugénie’s movements as a continuing process, a film slow motion. What the character actually says is put down even more curtly and matter-of-factly and only a paragraph-and-a-half later does Abel Pargiter grace Eugénie with an answer. The –ing form used for her speech can be seen as short solution that allows her to be vague; not deliberately so but because the character is too “blown-about” to be very precise in her wording or to linger on details.

This overall curtiness can actually be said to be a very clear aspect of the style<sup>5</sup> of this novel, visible through the use of short sentences, dialogue without interpretations by an intervening narrator, and fragments. While this style supports Woolf’s ideas about ‘the moment’ and free interpretation, it is certainly a break from some of her earlier novels, where senses are weaved into sentences that in a way never end, but keep continuing as one association turns into the next. That style, however, did involve a lot of ‘telling’ instead of ‘showing’ and, because of that, directed the readers’ thoughts along a path that Woolf had carefully laid out for them instead of allowing them to interpret the words by themselves. The more fragmented style of *The Years* seems to emphasise the concept of ‘the moment’ even

---

<sup>5</sup> It does not do to present ‘style’ as a term without explanation, but significantly more attention will be paid to this aspect of the novel at a later stage in this study.



more, as dialogues and impressions pass without further explanation by an all-seeing narrator, noticeable and analysable or just fleeting without much further ado, as happens in real life. Yet, this 'flowing' style Woolf is famous for does not altogether disappear, but comes to the fore every now and then when an image is evoked, which Woolf then leaves for the reader to interpret. This idea seems to connect to the contents of the novel as well, as it is known –through drafts and earlier versions of the novel which are still available- that Woolf had a rather rigorous and lengthy editing phase in which many 'obvious' opinions and explanations behind the actions of characters were cut out of the text, making the whole more subject to the reader's own explanation instead of offering for instance feminist theories, present in Woolf's original version, thereby beginning the process of killing the author.

The issues at stake - time, transience, changing points of view and freedom of interpretation (showing vs. telling) are also central to the job of the translator, making the translation of this novel a very interesting project to discuss. In a more practical sense, connected to the actual translation of fragments from the novel, this study will have to contain a thorough representation of the ways in which the gerund-participle is present in the source text, including an analysis of the function of these verb forms in relation to the stylistic issues mentioned above as well as the essential description of the linguistic characteristics that make up the gerund. These data, in a narrowed-down contrastive analysis of English and Dutch, will then be matched with their possible equivalents in the Dutch language system, resulting in a list of (partial) solutions to what can be said to be a translation problem. Then the effects of these solutions on the style of Woolf's novel can be discussed and a translational approach can be decided on. Discussing the Dutch alternatives will aid

the understanding of how Woolf plays with abstractness, points of view, flow and duration. The main question, then, that this study seeks to answer is:

Which role does the gerund-participle play in the particular style of Virginia Woolf's *The Years* and which options does the translator have to communicate that role to a Dutch reading audience?

In the course of this, a translational approach will be constructed with the assignment in mind, which, in this case, is the translation of the novel “true to style and content” of the original, “in impeccable Dutch and produced straight from the original text”, in accordance with the standard agreement of the translator (VSenV I). The text will come to function within a new literary field and society, where the image and works of Virginia Woolf live on but in a new context, much like the graffiti street art shown on the cover. This study will take the reader through *The Years*, into the ‘now’, where Woolf’s ‘moment’ should be as much alive in translation as it was back in 1937, or the book’s 1880, 1914 or ‘Present Day’.

## Granite and Rainbow

*The Years* was published in 1937, after five years of hesitation and radical editing that followed Woolf’s initial idea, which she first worded as follows:

“[I]ts [sic] to take in everything, sex, education, life &c; & come, with the most powerful & agile leaps, like a chamois across precipices from 1880 to here & now – That’s the notion anyhow, & I have been in such a haze &

dream & intoxication, declaiming phrases, seeing scenes, as I walk up Southampton Row that I can hardly say I have been alive at all, since the 10<sup>th</sup> Oct” (Woolf Diary 4 p. 129)

This shows a rather ambitious plan that she wanted to result in “a novel of fact”, an attempt at combining her two fortes (and opposing forces, as she would increasingly come to see them); a “battle between reason and imagination” (McNees xlili) or “granite and rainbow” in the words Woolf chose for a 1927 essay, literally fought out by interspersing novel chapters with commentary essays. At the basis of *The Years* stood a speech she had given to the London National Society for Women’s Service on “Professions for Women”, in which she discussed the changes in the position of women in society and the future she saw in store for them. No longer, she argued, would the Victorian ideal of the passive, charming and submissive “Angel in the House” do as an image of womanhood, but women could now choose a profession of their own, with being self-supporting as a great improvement now within reach. (Woolf in *Pargiters* xxxi) Further scrapbooks of “newspaper clippings about the relations between the sexes in England, France, Germany and Italy” (Hussey xxii) that Woolf had collected in the tumultuous thirties, already showing signs of the coming Second World War, filled her head with pacifist and feminist ideas and the idea of exploring this evolution of women’s roles in her new novel. By February 1933, however, roughly two years into the writing process, Woolf decided to abandon her original novel-essay idea and deleted the six essays. Some of the arguments from these essays would later be used for “her pacifist-feminist polemic” (Hussey xxii) *Three Guineas*. From what was left behind she, “withdrew her authorial voice, parceling it out instead among the characters [...]. She likewise buried political

and historical facts within conversational allusions or couched them in the lyrical prefaces to the eleven chronological sections of the novel. In effacing a specific authorial presence and allowing factual details to appear almost as asides, Woolf created a new novelistic genre,” (Leaska xix) one that Mitchell Leaska in his introduction to the “1880” section of the manuscript<sup>6</sup> termed “documented vision in union with poeticized truth” (Woolf, *Pargiters* xviii).

The finished novel is a collection of events and impressions colourful with detail from the lives of members of the Pargiter family<sup>7</sup>, between the year 1880 and what is called ‘Present Day’, which would be around 1935<sup>8</sup>. The novel is divided into eleven chapters that have years as titles, starting, without exception, with a descriptive paragraph that functions as a scene setting and draws the reader into the experience of that specific day, season and year. Season is significant here, because all chapters start with a weather description that Woolf uses to draw the reader into the appropriate atmosphere. Sights and sounds are, indeed, present everywhere and fix the reader’s attention to ‘the moment’. Details of each period are well researched and carefully placed, so “1880” has its hansom cabs and ‘present day’ has “running water in all the bedrooms” (TY 383).

An issue Woolf felt strongly about was, of course, the women’s change in perspective, which is traceable through all sorts of allusions but never explained or pinned down. The reader gets an insight into some of the characters’ actions and thoughts that cross their minds and that portrait may be coloured further with

---

<sup>6</sup> Many studies on TY tend to focus more on the process of creation than the actual end result and product. I do not consider it relevant for this study to go into the unfinished manuscript version (published as *Pargiters*) and the quotations from aforementioned studies were selected for having just as much relevance to TY in its final shape.

<sup>7</sup> A character overview has been included in the appendices.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Present Day’ was chosen for a reason and simply replacing it with 1935 would not do, as will be explained later.

thoughts and actions of a relative around them, gossip too, but that is as judging as it is going to get. The reader is a privileged eavesdropper and there is much to be heard. Woolf “aspired to cram the book full of everything she knew, to sum up but not to preach” (McNees li). A comparison of the novel’s women, then, may reveal many things, but these conclusions are the reader’s own. Only the facts of changing circumstance are shown, and individuals interacting with and influencing each other. No superimposed story line or pattern to prove a point, but events in their barest form and fragments of conversation that the reader randomly picks up, though sometimes including references to common knowledge or nudges into a certain direction. The passing of years and their effect on the lives of the characters is central to the novel and plays a role on many different levels, and the shift from Victorian to ‘modern’ finds its way to the details of Woolf’s seemingly random descriptions. McNees categorises these details as ‘historical’ (references to British monarchs, for example), ‘political’ (references to British imperialism, elections and suffrage), ‘social and cultural’ (use of slang, description of changes in vehicles), ‘geographical’ (as time goes by, characters move from more to less established London residences, interestingly) and ‘literary’ (paraphrases and quotations from a wide range of authors, both contemporary and the likes of Sophocles and Dante) (McNees lix). The devil being in the details, the translator is reminded not to view the story too loosely – yet also avoid over-specification.

## Opening Doors

When *The Years* got out it received mixed reviews, praising for instance Woolf's skilful way of presenting interior worlds (Panhuysen, qt. in Andringa 518), capturing "moments that suggested a mystical depth beneath the surface" (Majumdar and McLaudin 114 qt. in McNees lxxiv) and her ability to convey "the blood and marrow of history" (Majumdar and McLaudin 377 qt. in McNees lxxiv) (which would mean her submerged layer of history had served its purpose), but complaining of a lack of unity in her novel and a sensed "inability to depict character" (McNees xxiv), with one reviewer even calling the novel "a document of purposelessness" (Majumdar and McLaurin 379 qt. in McNees lxxiv). The novel was, however, quite popular with the reading audience and more copies of it were sold than Woolf had ever experienced before, especially in the US. Ironically, it was even published in an armed forces edition. Not everyone knew what to make of the novel, though that did change when in 1953 *A Writer's Diary* was published, revealing Woolf's intentions and struggles and improving the readers' comprehension. With it came an increase of critical evaluations and a growing appreciation of Woolf's attempts at mixing vision with fact. This even developed to such an extent that the writing process of *The Years* has received more scholarly attention than the finished novel itself. There is some renewed interest, though, mostly from the corner of gender studies.

Woolf had ended her initial speech for the Women's Service with the image of a door, closed to women but about to open, at which point "there will take place between you [her audience of working women] and someone else the most interesting, exciting, and important conversation that has ever been heard" (*Pargiters* p. xliv qt. in McNees xlvi). She hints at a future without 'gender' as a restrictive

factor. Woolf's speech ends in a somewhat teasing note, with whatever is outside that door staying just out of reach. The way in which Woolf uses conversations in *The Years* ("The Door" is also a title Woolf considered) is connected to this idea, because "although *The Years* is more filled with conversation than any of Woolf's earlier novels, those conversations are invariably fragmented, interrupted, and almost always unfinished (McNees xlvi). This culminates in the "Present Day" section, at a party where many family members meet up, talk, reflect on their lives and each try to reach some sort of conclusion or higher insight, but all the scattered bits of information together do not lead to a revelation. Several guests ask for a 'speech' but there is none, though a 'chorus' of sorts – echoing the conversation the classics scholar Edward and his nephew North were having – does arise, the caretaker's children singing "a song for sixpence", though the guests cannot understand a word the children are singing nor make sense of the melody, which emphasises the absence of a conclusion. At the very end of the novel, the party is over and the Pargiters all head home in the early summer morning, with significant emphasis on doors opening. Woolf, here, also seems to refer to a passage from *A Room of One's Own* in which a young man and woman meet and share a cab, symbolising a happy union of the sexes (also seen internally as accepted androgyny) that Eleanor notices when looking out of the window (Radin 8). "And now?" are the last words that are spoken, showing the reader an open door of possibilities instead of a conclusion. Also, ending with a 'Present Day' section, as Briggs argues, already shows an intention to cut loose from the idea of merely categorising time into stackable bits of past that can be leaved through like an archived "past already selected and distorted by the mind", for "the present time consists of 'ourselves'" (Briggs 135). The present is not dead yet, nor played out. This gives us yet another instance of 'personal time'

and shows an example of how language can be used to emphasise personal involvement, making the reader part of the 'present' the characters experience.

This “strange yet transitory nature of the present moment” (Briggs 135) brings us back to the relevance of the representation of time in *The Years*, as both time and representation get special attention in this novel, what with Woolf constantly concerning herself with these concepts. Indeed, discussing time as a separate theme feels very unnatural, because the book does not follow a plot outline or have a clear purpose apart from being a representation of people set in time, or time set in people<sup>9</sup>. This, in turn, makes the transition from a thematic, literary analysis to a style- and grammar-focused analysis comparatively easy. And even though Woolf may not have approved, I want to show that both analyses have credibility here.

## Dissecting Style

“Every analysis of style [...] is an attempt to find the artistic principles underlying a writer’s choice of language.” (Leech and Short 60)

Stylistics, then, concerns itself with the interpretation of texts from a linguistic angle and as such links literary criticism with linguistics. A translator is, through the nature

---

<sup>9</sup> It would be possible to argue here that a feminist stance or an anti-academic one are being presented in the novel’s content, but through describing how Woolf edited her text I want to show how she only included (or such was her intention) that layer by allowing the reader the freedom of interpretation, which for her is the grand purpose: an open-mindedness that encompasses both a feminist and an emotion-oriented stance.



of his or her work<sup>10</sup>, directly concerned with the wording a writer chooses: it is his or her task to find matching equivalents to the writer's words in the target language<sup>11</sup>. Semantics and syntactics make up the basis of any work of literature; words on a page – in certain cases aided by the presence of pictures or symbols perhaps – make up the only material medium for the writer's message. When looking at the grammatical features, certain patterns – together making up a style – may arise which the translator can hold on to in the process of transferring the perceived message, or use as a basis to start analysing content. For the actual practice of the translator the importance of analysing grammar might not be so clear, as translating a work of prose is not normally a word-for-word but rather a sense-for-sense affair, inspired by St. Jerome's well-known statement<sup>12</sup>, and should as such not be directly concerned with every grammatical detail. Too strict an adherence to such details would, indeed, interfere with the creative process and block the translator's language instincts. A study of grammar can, however, help the translator when specific problems arise in a text. Through an exact definition of the problem and an inventarisation of all possible translations and their effect, the translator can actually improve his understanding and become more effective and creative when next faced with a similar problem.

---

<sup>10</sup> I will not repeat this "his or her" distinction whenever referring to "the translator"; it should be clear that I do not see translation as either a masculine or a feminine profession.

<sup>11</sup> 'Equivalents' here is not meant to be a reference to Nida's theory on 'dynamic' and 'formal equivalence', though of course it could be explored further; wording can indeed be approached in various ways, and though a biblical adherence to the literal text is usually not desirable, *The Years* certainly pushes the translator's boundaries as it asks for a non-interpretative translation – almost a contradiction in terms. This makes the exact wording more important than 'usual'.

<sup>12</sup>Ironically, some scholars, Lambert (1991) among them, believe that these terms have been misinterpreted and that their meaning is narrower than their common explanation: morpheme-for-morpheme and word-for-word rather than involving any reference to the wider context (Munday 20). The well-known interpretation is still widely accepted and used.

Literary and grammatical analyses can, thus, go hand in hand; stylistic analysis attempts to explain how style shapes meaning. Translation is intimately concerned with both sides – if it is even realistic to speak of two sides. Technically a division of some sort cannot be avoided, as to deny the existence of a separation between form and content (a monist view of style) (Leech and Short 13) would imply that all translation is useless, which is clearly not something we want to do. But the fact that there are different views on the role of style in literature is an indication of the complexity of literary analyses.

This is where a work such as Leech and Short's *Style In Fiction* can prove useful, because, as they put it in their introduction, "examining the language of a literary text can be a means to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the writer's artistic achievement" (Leech and Short 1). They wrote successfully for the student of poetry and later expanded their methods to suit the study of prose. And it is not difficult to imagine how the student and/or translator of prose could benefit from tools for dissecting style and getting a closer look at the often-intangible literary effect. It is more difficult, however, to analyse prose fiction to this end as, compared to poetry, the perceived "aesthetic effect" is not so much intrinsically present in heavily manipulated wording, but more in "other factors (such as character, theme, argument) which are expressed through, rather than inherent in, language" (Leech and Short 2). Which in turn does not mean these factors cannot be (made) visible in the text, it just means that there is a great amount of potentially meaningless data to work with, as longer stretches of text will have to be examined in order to discover patterns.

## Closing in on Time

The case at hand, being the study of the 'time' theme through a pattern of verb use, is less straightforward than the recurring use of a certain name or for instance the use of exclamation points. There are many slightly different ways in which to use a verb, to a wide scale of effects and often not consciously so. It becomes difficult to determine which data to pick for the analysis, to determine what exactly is relevant and which signs are clear enough to be interpreted as intentional or 'foregrounded' in the terms of the Prague School of poetics (Leech and Short 23). What is clear, though, in the case of *The Years* is that content-wise time plays a very important role and the selection of this aspect as the main topic has largely been based upon this fact, combined with the given of contrastive problems arising with the gerund-participle: it is difficult to translate into Dutch. The research conducted has not been centered around a quantitative analysis of different verb varieties, so it may well be concluded that overall not so much the use of the gerund-participle stands out in this book, but for instance an increased use of simple present when compared to Woolf's earlier works. This study cannot pretend to answer questions of that sort, rather it focuses on the possible translation problems that arise having to do with the representation of the English progressive.

To be sure, though, many instances of the -ing form have been detected, which shows in the adjoined translated fragments. Some parts of the text stand out, most notably perhaps the 'descriptive introductions' that Woolf uses as scene setting and which show a tendency for long sentences full of details that are reminiscent of the famous style of her other novels, the flowing quality that binds the sensory elements into a quickening stream. The final passage of the book, in which the party gathering

of the Pargiters comes to -or rather: is coming to- an (open) end also shows a remarkable amount of -ing forms, as every character seems to be absent-mindedly doing things while in fact thinking about other things entirely. The use of this grammatical element, the gerund-participle, can as such be placed within the stylistic patterns of use that encompass it, thus again connecting (not so) individual use to thematic purpose and perceived content.

## The Gerund-Participle

Either way, having arrived at a more grammatical level, it becomes necessary to give an exact definition for this 'gerund-participle' that is the main focus. The term 'gerund-participle' has been chosen on the basis of the study by Patrick J. Duffley that intends to compare the aforementioned with the infinitive. He quotes Huddleston and Pullum's *Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* as his source for the term that combines gerund and participle, explaining that he also sees no reason in grammatical morphology to make a distinction between the two uses of -ing, even though semantically "the situation is not so clear" (Duffley 1). Because Huddleston and Pullum also see linguistic form and content as separable from each other, this does not cause a problem in their description of this verb form. For the purpose of this study it is important to note these different uses of the -ing form and how they are both relevant to the topic. To illustrate the difference, I use two lines from *The Years*. In "How could she prevent herself from thinking?" (TY 257), 'thinking' functions as a noun and is therefore called a gerund. 'Fumbling' in "She seemed to be fumbling to find the exact words." (TY 24) is a participle and refers to the performance of an action. 'Thinking' is an action too, but it is substantivised, which

creates more distance. Both of these examples tell of a possibility, but in the case of 'fumbling' there is definitely an action of sorts going on that is interpreted as 'fumbling', while 'thinking' is a mention of an abstract possibility that is being considered. Though the translation problems for these two forms are different, they both contribute to the duration and non-closure that is essential to this style of open possibilities.

Clearly, there are more than those two functions to this –ing form, causing Duffley to describe the gerund-participle as “a stable form [that] has no stable meaning” (Duffley 1), which is challenging to the field in which he operates, that of cognitive linguistics, which essentially depends upon conceptualisation and connects grammar directly to semantic values. Indeed, this form turns out to be quite challenging in general. Duffley aims to “characterise the semantic structure corresponding to the –ing form, on the hypothesis that the semiological principle posited by cognitive grammar can be applied to this linguistic sign” (Duffley 2), this with comparisons to the infinitive to add clarity. While it is interesting for the linguist to go into every detail and create an exhaustive overview of the gerund-participle's use, this would not be relevant for the sake of translation as it would always deal with applied rather than 'pure' linguistics. The following will therefore be more of an overview than an exhaustive survey, to the aim of understanding the actual occurrences of the ing-form in the translation section.

### **Uses of the English –ing form**

Based upon the distinctions made by Duffley, a list of the main uses of the -ing form was made with added examples from the actual text of *The Years*. The main distinction is that between “adjective-like” and “subjective-like”, which seems

straightforward but can still be confusing, as all instances look alike and are quickly perceived as ‘more’ than their syntactic role because of the implicit action suggested by the verb form. Concentrating on the distinction and each subdivision, though, makes it possible to discuss the effect of all these forms in depth and shows the pluriformity of the translation problem ahead. A large portion of the problem even lies within this pluriformity, which asks for a great variety of translations where there is only one English form.

The adjective-like –ing form is subdivided into five varieties, being, in Duffley’s terms: (1) subject complements in the progressive, (2) object complements in the progressive, (3) appositions, (4) modifiers in absolutely free adjuncts and (5) attributive modifiers (Duffley 9). A subject complement in the progressive (1) appears after the verb ‘to be’ or another one denoting a state, as in: “Rose stood there panting.” (TY 27). The effect is imperfective, the action is not yet completed (though the whole text is placed in the past, meaning it did end at some point but is being relived, as it were, here). Not every case of this form has the same progressive meaning, as Duffley illustrates with “Branching off from the War Room is a warren of powerfully built and beautifully orchestrated rooms.” (Duffley 9); clearly, it is not meant to suggest that the rooms are actually developing on the spot. An object complement in the progressive (2) is shown in the next example: “She heard voices murmuring in the drawing-room.” (TY 25). The effect is again imperfective, the sound continues. Because “voices murmuring” is abstractly worded (undefined voices, continuing sound) it builds up tension. An example of an –ing form in apposition (3) was found in: “The guard passed the window, holding his flag in his hand.” (TY 255) Simultaneity is shown, as well as an imperfective effect: the reader does not know when – if ever – the guard will let go of the flag. Movement is

emphasised here, painting a clear picture for the reader. The perfective is again possible for a form of this kind (Duffley's example: "Being an enemy of the Duke's,..." (Duffley 12)). The -ing form used as a modifier in absolute free adjuncts (4) appears in the following sentence: "Isn't it rather late for a little girl like you to be out alone?" she asked, looking at her as if she knew she had come out in her house shoes, disobeying her sister." (TY 27) The message conveyed is that of an action in progress at the time of the main verb's event, though it does not always have to be that way in this kind of construction; the action can already have been accomplished ("A discussion arising..., the meeting was adjourned.") or the progressive can be used in a stative sense ("...the proportion varying from tissue to tissue") (Duffley 13). Lastly, (5) an attributive modifier -ing is discerned: "Over the vast domes, the soaring spires of slumbering University cities, over the leaded libraries, and the museums, now shrouded in brown Holland, the gentle rain slid down, ..." (TY 45) In this sentence, the gerund-participles represent a state rather than a process, though it does not always have to be like that ("the clangour of shunting carriages echoed in the immense vacancy" (TY 254). The suggestion of movement and an image, of course, remains and Woolf also tends to play with this, as becomes clear in the example of Rose Pargiter's portrait: "a smiling indifference that outraged her daughter" (TY 43).

The subjective-like form is the adjunct in an absolute construction, used as a "gerund", performing the functions of subject, object or object of a preposition (Duffley 15). "Walking won't do us any harm." (TY 411) shows a subject function. In "...and I remember going to Covent Garden and buying roses for a certain lady. . ." (TY 411) the -ing forms are substantivised forms used in an object function. An -ing form as object of a preposition appears in "Ah, but when we were young," [...] "we

thought nothing of making a night of it!" (TY 411). All of these uses are quite suggestive of the actual event, the reader is drawn into the idea by elements such as "I remember", but this way they are also put decidedly in the past.

Some other uses remain in Duffley's analysis which are more difficult to classify, becoming in-betweens such as 'participle (adjective-like)' and 'gerund (noun-like)', or 'half-gerund'. No such forms have been detected in the selected translation material, though there has been some doubt. Most of the complex forms, however, turned out to be object complements or *accusativus cum participio* (Königs 232), indeed a confusing form because it is highly abstract and uncommon to native speakers of Dutch. The gerund-participle, as shown in the examples above, can express not only "progressive aspectuality" but also "perfective" and "imperfective but not progressive", leading Duffley to call the form neither perfective nor imperfective. It is important to realise that not every use of the -ing form in the English language has to be related to the durative aspect. In *The Years*, however, this aspect is overly prominent and should as such be noted, even emphasised at times - and emphasised in this study. Simultaneity and continuing action create the feeling that the answer to everything, the grand 'speech' is constantly just out of reach.

### **Abstractness and the Progressive**

After diving into the very specific definitions of gerund-participle forms it is now useful to head back to a somewhat larger whole and discuss the effect of the use Woolf makes of the -ing form, the patterns that can be discerned and how all of this relates to the concept of 'personal time' through the effects of duration and abstractness. Woolf actually contrasts progressive and simple forms quite clearly and



as such controls the pace of the text and for instance the build-up of tension, where sentences become shorter and shorter, while progressive 'lingering' is used to evoke thought or create a feeling of meaning slipping away. Two examples from the text will demonstrate this contrast.

1. "The enemy!" Rose cried to herself. "The enemy! Bang!" she cried, pulling the trigger of her pistol and looking him full in the face as she passed him. It was a horrid face: white, peeled, pock- marked; he leered at her. He put out his arm as if to stop her. He almost caught her. She dashed past him. The game was over." (TY 26)

This fragment moves from descriptive uses of the progressive gerund-participle to simple past as the scary event progresses. Here, "pulling the trigger" and "looking him full in the face as she passed him" slow down the movement to the effect of a slow-motion close-up sequence in a film. The reader's attention is drawn to the details of the man's face. After this sentence the experience becomes fragmented, suiting its traumatic nature. The very short sentences that follow are incredibly direct and factual when compared to the flow of detailed descriptions that make up most of the book. They can be contrasted to sentences in the following fragment.

2. "'Look, Eleanor!" She turned to her sister.  
But Eleanor was standing with her back to them. She was watching a taxi that was gliding slowly round the square. It stopped in front of a house two doors down.  
  
"Aren't they lovely?" said Delia, holding out the flowers.  
  
Eleanor started.  
  
"The roses? Yes . . ." she said. But she was watching the cab." (TY 412)

A seemingly meaningless situation is described: Delia wants to show her sister Eleanor the flowers she has been given, but Eleanor is absent-mindedly staring out of the window instead of paying attention. This fragment draws attention to failing communication and suggests deeper meaning behind what is actually shown, by slowing down the action for no apparent reason.

Because part of the holograph version of the novel has survived, it is possible to see some of the changes that were made during the writing process – a rare opportunity, though of course unrelated to the translation of the actual finished novel. Interestingly, many of the changes that were made seem to be related to the contrast that has just been described. As discussed, Woolf initially intended to mix story and analysis into one ‘novel-essay’ that was to go into the origins of all the problems her characters were experiencing, telling her readers how things were mixed with showing them. Instead, she decided to present the novel’s events in such a way that the failure of communication in example two and the intense shame in example one are actually embedded within the choice of verbs. In the holograph version, Rose’s meeting occurs as follows.

“The enemy – the enemy!” Rose cried to herself, once more playing the game. [He] <The man> seemed to hesitate; as if he were doubting whether to cross the road or not, but as Rose ran past him, he stopped and looked at her. Clenching her hand, as if to pull the trigger of her revolver, she looked him full in the face. Bang! She said to herself. What a horrible face! For a moment she was frightened, genuinely; - she became herself, a little girl of ten, who had disobeyed her sister & run away from home, leaving them all

safe[ly] there <in the nursery>. [He] <The man> smiled <very queerly> at her. She dashed straight across the crossing; [...].” (*Pargiters* 43)<sup>13</sup>.

In comparing this version with example one above it becomes clear that Woolf removed some descriptive elements and made the events speak for themselves. As a result, verb use has come to carry more implicit meaning. Distractions and interpretations have been removed. Seeing the use of the gerund-participle as meaningful is, therefore, not such a strange idea. As discussed, the representation of time in a text can emphasise a feeling of absence and abstractness and act as a tool for showing failed communication as well as allow room for interpretation by the reader. The gerund-participle is specifically suited for such purposes, because it usually denotes duration, and duration may shade off into a sense of incompleteness and a missing ending (Aarts & Wekker 229) – indeed a theme in this novel and in modernism as a whole. Woolf even moves beyond her focus on personal experience and towards emphasising these absences, indicating a move away from high modernism and towards postmodernism, doubt and chaos.

It is important to note that when translating a text the aim is to achieve the same effect, not necessarily using the same form. Though the –ing form is a main focus, it is the perceived intention that matters most in the end. Difficulties arise when both content and style have to be reproduced in the translation, as the target language might not offer the same linguistic options. The representation of time is an important issue in *The Years*, but Woolf’s text also contains an abundance of sensory detail, for instance through onomatopoeia. So, in reality the translation becomes a careful compromise between desired style elements, resulting in what is closest to the original effect. An important part of Woolf’s intention is to let images speak for

---

<sup>13</sup> The words put between symbols in this quotation (as used by Dudley) represent notes that Woolf added to the holograph version.

themselves and allow room for the reader to interpret what is going on. For this to remain possible it is essential that the original images and sounds are as clearly present in the translation. The best combination of means to achieve this end is found after researching what options are actually available to the translator.

## **Towards A Contrastive Analysis for Translational Purposes**

Here, the relevance of a contrastive grammatical overview comes in, a survey of the possible translations of gerund-participles. Its potential use as a translation tool has been stressed by others before me, including quite recently Spies (2009) and Van de Wardt (2010). I support their claim, though I agree that for a full picture, as Spies already says, a contrastive lexicon and pragmatics overview would be a necessary addition, as well as the literary analysis that helps define the significance of linguistic choices. A contrastive grammar on its own is not even necessarily suitable for translational purposes, because such a study can be set up with different goals in mind and will usually need to restrict itself to one or a few grammatical topics amidst the vast collection of syntactic, semantic and phonological elements that make up a language, topics that might not even cause the translator any problems.

Apart from that, it is important not to forget that though words and sentences are translated, essentially it is the 'sense' level that gets the overall focus and the text has to be translated as a whole and not a long list of linguistic elements. Moreover, it should be remembered that a translation is not a standalone project and that the text, of course, has to be seen in the light of its background – to which I have paid quite extensive attention – but also of its function within a new cultural context.

This way of looking at texts has been widely accepted and as such becomes a

second nature: some sort of translation-oriented text analysis should accompany every translation. One approach to this is to use the model suggested by Christiane Nord, but it is not so suitable for literary texts. When more than a literal message is being conveyed as is the case for literary translations, the world behind the words comes within view, a world that renowned Dutch translator Anneke Brassinga calls 'het voorgeborchte van de woorden', a 'literary limbo': the translator should seek to come as close as possible to internalising the original author's mindset, intentions and situations. This could be seen as a next step after finding the bare essentials through a translation-oriented text analysis, which focuses on the identification of every actor, means and message in the communication chain, for which Nord used the Lasswell formula. For a work of literature also the not-so-literal contents would have to be determined, as well as their context.

The actual translation of *The Years* is part of the project at hand, making it necessary to discuss certain practical issues that hardly have anything at all to do with the gerund-participle. Clearly, time is not just present in a grammatical sense, but also in cultural-specific items (CSI's). Characters also have specific vocabularies and speech habits, and choices have to be made regarding the conservation of these time-defining elements; choices that depend to a large extent on the definition of an audience and their needs and wishes in the reading of this novel. The relevance of the translation of this novel has already been addressed and completing the repertoire of a writer of Woolf's stature already seems a good enough reason for publishing this book. Perhaps a scholarly edition might even be considered, possibly in combination with *Three Guineas*, seeing the scientific value *The Years* has already shown to possess. The reading audience, then, that the translator should aim is probably the group with specific interests in the area of gender studies or

modernism, though the majority of readers would probably eventually be the group that buys a collection of Virginia Woolf's works. An ideal combination could be a 'scholarly edition-light' with a few introductory words, footnotes for clarity and perhaps a list with suggestions for further reading. The descriptive details having to do with time and other elements adding to the *couleur locale* of London 'through the years' should be salvaged wherever possible, even to the point of historicising and exotising here and there, in Holmes' terms. Those details make up a large part of the pieces that Woolf wanted her readers to put together.

With the aforementioned background already in mind, there is still much to be gained from a closer look at grammatical features. Translators would in general do well to have some knowledge of contrastive linguistics for their language pair, but not every aspect of these studies would actually be beneficial to the practice of their work. Though a large part of most contrastive issues would hopefully not be new to any practicing translator as he or she should already be aware of many of the differences in word order, regular verb conjugations and negations for their language pair, to name but a few topics. The larger part of the translation job should cause no considerable problems as soon as the translator lives up to some basic requirements – which alone is a huge point of discussion in Translation Studies, and rightfully so, because 'translator' is not a protected profession and as such there is no fixed list of requirements or safeguard of quality. When dealing with complex (literary) texts, though, more than basic knowledge is called for and even while individual judgment and intuition will continue to play a big role, a good contrastive analysis can help solidify any foundation of perceived style. Ideally that is, as in real-life situations there will usually not be enough time to go into all the linguistic details for every single translation case. I can only hope to add to the creation of a basic contrastive analysis

for this specific problem – a prominent problem for the English-Dutch language pair and, thus, a matter of broader significance.

Dutch and English are cognate languages and, as such, there may be fewer translation problems on the way, though some similarities are actually deceptive and lead to mistakes that are easily made. Interference becomes an easy trap, the “importation into the target text of lexical, syntactic, cultural or structural items typical of a different semiotic system” (Aixela 75). These items are often still comprehensible by readers of the target language, but not always correct. CSI’s such as English heraldic titles could be copied without too many problems, perhaps in the worst case requiring a footnote. An overall approach has to be decided on regarding the translation of possibly problematic CSI’s. Syntactic interference should be avoided though, as it can cause ungrammaticality in the translated text or distort the original meaning. When comparing translations to their source texts, such distortions or departures from the nearest equivalent would be referred to as shifts, “results from attempts to deal with systemic differences” (Koster 26). In the case of the gerund-participle such problems could arise, as both in English and Dutch use these constructions exist on a systemic level, but in Dutch it is much less frequently used than in English. In Dutch, constructions like “al doende leert men” (Van de Wardt 61) have come to be seen as old-fashioned and as such quite marked, meaning that set expressions are about the only examples left in everyday language.

## **The Gerund-Participle in Practice**

An actual comparison of gerund-participle with the possibilities that the Dutch language offers is the next step. As has been mentioned before, it is mostly the

effects of the gerund-participle forms that we are talking about as the forms are not standalone objects but part of a text. The translator is faced with the recurring use of the gerund-participle and has to look for ways to best represent its effects, discussed in the above chapters and shortly presented here. In the discussion of the perceived effects above it has become clear that the progressive effect is prominently present and that temporal relations as a whole are important in the text, almost to the point of leading to every occurrence of the gerund-participle to become foregrounded. Not all instances lead to the same difficulties in translation, though.

Aarts and Wekker, in their contrastive grammar of English and Dutch, discuss and name examples of the durative aspect in both languages. The translation problem that has already been noted finds its basis in what is quite matter-of-factly stated in the following: “The simple present tense occurs far more frequently in Dutch than in English. One of the reasons is that where English has a progressive form, we often find the simple present tense in Dutch.” (Aarts and Wekker 203). This is certainly the case for –ing occurrences indicating future events, such as appear when Delia has heard the bell ring, meaning her mother might be dying soon: “you’re not going to die” and “nothing’s going to happen” (TY 43), to progressive uses that become simple forms in Dutch. A useful addition, though, is that of pragmatic particles, which are very common in Dutch and especially in dialogue situations. In this text, a useful extra of these pragmatic particles is the addition of another time indicator, meaning this layer of meaning will not fully go to waste even when the progressive is lost. Aarts and Wekker next mention the English -ing are habitual / iterative, shown in: “Ah, but when we were young [...] we thought nothing of making a night of it!” (TY 411), which is also best represented in a non-progressive form in Dutch, in this case the infinitive “door [te] gaan”, which makes the full translation: “Ah, maar toen we



nog jong waren [...] maakten we er echt geen punt van om een hele nacht door te gaan!”. “Making a night of it” is also a specific English saying, which means that different wording was called for anyway. Since the overall tone of this conversation is informal, expressions from everyday language were chosen, but never too modern, because it is important to preserve the 1930s feel.

The most common uses of the progressive are, according to Aarts and Wekker’s division, characterised either by limited duration and temporariness - which they translate with the Dutch simple past, thereby losing the progressive sense which is seen rather as a side-effect of the form that does not have to be conveyed – or expression of the durative aspect in situations where the duration of an action seems to be specifically important. An example from *The Years* of the latter situation would be “They were leaving London behind them” (TY 256) as the gradual process is clearly indicated in the words that precede this sentence, describing the train ride. The translation that has been chosen, “Ze lieten Londen geleidelijk achter zich”, consists of a past simple with an adverb that conveys the durative sense. While this is a slight shift in meaning, changing the active “leaving” into the more passive “achter zich laten”, the poetic sound effects and curtness of the sentence are saved, which helps the sense of continuing movement come out more than a solution with “aan het + infinitive” or a Dutch participle, both closer to the meaning of the actual form, could have. Due to the nature of the novel’s topics and aim, no durative use of the –ing form can actually be seen as meaningless, even in the case of temporariness, when actually absence should be conveyed instead. Normalising a sentence for the sake of easy reading is not usually the right way to go here, though of course it should be stressed that ungrammaticality is still to be avoided. Distraction because of annoying repetition of marked translations is far from ideal too, and quite a real

danger in fact, as many of the gerund-participles in the text are used to convey simultaneity, meaning a translation like “terwijl + simple present or past” is never far off. A sea of ‘terwijls’ would be an unwanted result, not in the least because much of the abstractness of the original style would be lost.

Put curtly, according to Aarts and Wekker, “the durative aspect is expressed by a simple present tense or by a construction consisting of ‘staan te’, ‘zitten te’, ‘lopen te,’ ‘ bezig zijn te’ or ‘zijn aan het’ + infinitive.” As mentioned earlier, Dutch does have a few expressions consisting of “the verb zijn + present participle: ‘doende zijn’, ‘lijdende zijn’, ‘stervende zijn’. They are rare, and occur mainly in formal written language” (Aarts & Wekker 234). All these options apart from the simple tense are actually more marked than the original English progressive forms, so they should only be used in cases where duration is clearly important; if not, they will confuse the reader. As stated, the translator should be careful about repeating his moves, too, as these marked forms can become annoying to read much faster than the English gerund-participles would (if ever).

Luckily, various solutions can be thought of, depending on the nearest surroundings and broader context of the form. Added to the contrastive constructions that Aarts and Wekker mention, there should be an attempt at categorising the movement of the ‘progressive effect’ to other parts of the sentence than the actual verb form. The perceived role of the gerund-participle has been that its broad presence adds to the density and abstractness of Woolf’s prose and aids the establishment of ‘time’ as a main focus, being the most obvious tool for emphasising the ‘moment’ in this novel. As we are dealing with another language system altogether though, this effect does not have to be contained within a replica of the gerund-participle form. At least, not always: it would be strange to suddenly

depart from the original form ‘*en masse*’, so wherever a Dutch gerund-participle can be put in without standing out it should. Examples of this are

“Wat vreemd,” mompelde ze, om zich heen kijkend, “...wat vreemd...”

as a translation of

“How strange,” she murmured, looking round her, “...how strange...”

(TY 410), and

“de dreunende klokken van Oxford, alsmar tuimelend als trage bruinvissen in een zee van olie, intoneerden bedachtzaam hun muzikale bezweringen”

as a translation of

“the walloping Oxford bells, turning over and over like slow porpoises in a sea of oil, contemplatively intoned their musical incantations” (TY 45).

In both translations the progressive forms are embedded within their surroundings in such a way that they do not stand out too much, yet manage to keep the effects of the original. A regular occurrence of this form, though not nearly as often as in the original, would also maintain the aforementioned sense of time being the main focus in a non-obtrusive way. In some instances, adverbs or pragmatic participles can help to make these forms less obtrusive, as in the following sentence. This way, repetition of “terwijl” has also been avoided.

““Wees een net meisje en haal je naaiwerkje op,” zei Nurse terwijl Rose Mrs. C. de hand schudde, “anders ben je nooit op tijd klaar voor Vaders verjaardag,” voegde ze eraan toe, ondertussen plaats vrijmakend op tafel.” (tr. of TY 24)

Rhythm, tactile qualities and curtness have been seen as important throughout, so every possible short solution has been hailed and every longer one compensated where possible. A short solution was for instance found in: “De naam is Pargiter, van

de Pargiter-ruiters”, zei ze, met een zwierig armgebaar, “De redding is nabij!” (tr. of TY 26). The phrase that contained “flourishing her hand” was replaced by an adverbial phrase without a verb but with the noun “gebaar” which evokes the image of if not denotes actual movement. “De redding is nabij!” is another way around using the gerund-participle: the sentence has been changed completely to another ‘heroic’ sentence deemed suitable for Rose’s battle cry. Often, a reinterpretation of the gerund-participle’s meaning using nouns, adjectives or other ways of achieving a short description can be achieved, especially when the use of ‘tactile’ words, rhyme and tools such as alliteration and assonance are encouraged throughout, improving pace and rhythm. An example of this is: “Ze hoorde stemgemurmel in de salon.” (tr. of TY 25). The uncommon noun that has been created here still carries an echo of the original gerund-participle within it. Only if these methods do not succeed, far-reaching changes should be attempted in temporal structure, punctuation and sentence length. As abstractness is an important effect in this novel, explicitations and specifications should also be avoided wherever possible, though a clear example of this not being possible exists in the translated fragments: the descriptive rain passage of the “1880” chapter that was problematic because “regen” cannot be referred to as “it”.

When it comes to describing the methods of gerund-participle translation that have been used in the translation of this text, it is difficult to achieve an exact categorisation. This is also where science and subjective decision-making collide. In summary of the aforementioned approaches it could, however, be said that a peculiar mix of almost ‘literal’ translation and free association has been achieved.

## Perceived Changes in Effect

The “stable form [that] has no stable meaning” (Duffley 1) had to be translated in many different ways in order to maintain the effects that Woolf achieved in her novel. Repetition might indeed be the most important thing that is lost, as the Dutch language forces the translator to come up with various different forms that suit this scala of effects. It can be confirmed that Dutch as a language requires more specific wording and nudges the translator towards narrowing down the broad, abstract, elusive meanings that Woolf created in her text. And as a translation is always an interpretation of the original, not every such nudge to pin down meaning can in fact be avoided. The translator has attempted to stay as true to the original as possible though, also in cases where no apparent reason for somewhat strange linguistic choices could be deducted. Here, a lack of studies of this rather complex novel becomes a bit problematic. Future study of *The Years* would be encouraged; for many reasons, but most importantly because the book itself deserves to be lifted from the ashes of a failed experiment that still surround it.

## Conclusion

As much as a study of time, this project has been an attempt at reaching the ‘literary limbo’ Anneke Brassinga so appropriately called it. Consciously or not, I literally dived into every aspect of the book’s origins, to the point of this study becoming just as complex a mix of two directions as was Woolf’s novel, at the risk of it actually taking ‘Years’ to complete. It struck me quite early on that Woolf’s problematic relationship with “being scientific” was not far removed from my own, especially after a year of being confronted with the difficult middle ground between theory and practice of translation. As I like a challenge, this attracted me; not realising, perhaps, that I would have to come up with answers in the end, too, and could not merely linger on how interesting this project was. Was, as it is about time to abandon the gerund-participle and durative aspect and to actually finish what I started.

The question I set out to answer,

Which role does the gerund-participle play in the particular style of Virginia Woolf’s *The Years* and which options does the translator have to communicate that role to a Dutch reading audience?

has been elaborated on in the pages above, in which the different occurrences of the gerund-participle in the source text, have been discussed, including an analysis of the functions of these verb forms in relation to the stylistic issues mentioned above as well. These data, combined with the results of translating the actual fragments from the novel a few times over - so both not collected without a struggle – have led to an overview of tools and solutions to aid the translation of the gerund-participle as it

is used in *The Years*. The effects of these solutions should be as close to those of the original as possible, though indeed the level of non-interpretation that Woolf tries to achieve cannot be reached in its translation, its interpretation.

This somewhat depressing conclusion is not all I take back from this process or indeed of what any student of translation could learn; I have not turned into a 'monist' or lost my faith in translation. As Anneke Brassinga discussed in her inspiring opening speech to the newly established Literary Translation master's programme at Utrecht University, "translation is a form of literature in which restriction; formal restraint; can be incredibly productive" (Brassinga 5) and she even included her own "song for sixpence" in the body of Louis Lehmann's experiment of language. All these layers of meaning and restriction, as well as the world within words and, indeed, *Years*, challenge me and make me happy about my choice of profession. Though *now* (present day), a quote from Virginia Woolf best sums up the 'moment':

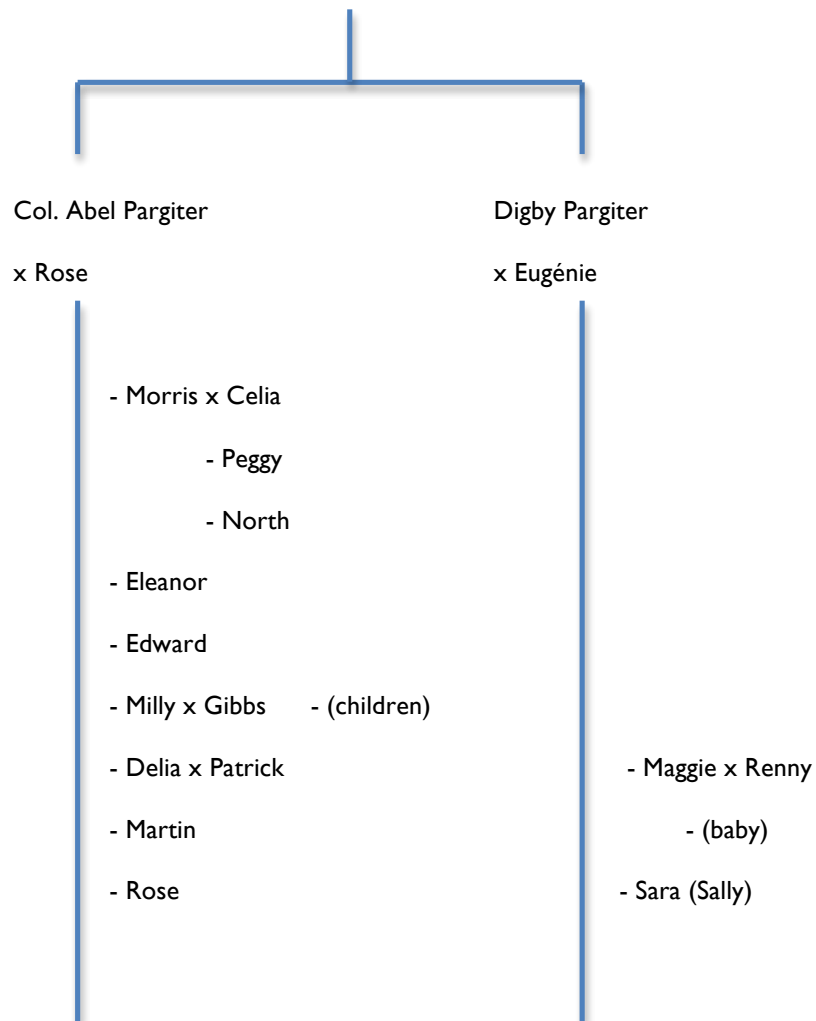
"She was happy, completely. Time had ceased."

## Thank You

Cees Koster for great advice, some much-needed structure, faith even when results failed to show, and time – a loaded concept by now. Ton Naaijens for nudging me in the direction of *The Years*. Both for inspiring classes and conversations. Dear friends and family for not allowing me to get lost in translation (and coping with the increase of word jokes).



## I. CHARACTERS AND RELATIONSHIPS



Cousin Kitty Lasswade, whose mother was a cousin of Mrs Rose Pargiter

Nicholas (Brown), a close friend of Sara's

Servants

This rather basic character overview shows how the characters in the translated fragments are related to each other. More characters appear in the book as a whole, but they have been left out as they do not play a role in this study.

## II. TRANSLATION

For the sake of this study I have made a selection of four fragments from *The Years* which I feel are a good representation of the book as a whole. They show dialogue, tension, oblique meaning, elaborate description and time as a topic. The selection includes fragments from the beginning, middle and end of the book ('1880', '1914' and 'Present Day', thus also roughly representing the timespan of the novel.

The main focus of this study has been on time-related translation problems, most specifically those involving the gerund-participle, which indeed is present in abundance on these pages. Going into the details of what the English ing-form actually stands for and translates to has been a vital part of the translation process, for with the knowlegde came the confidence needed to decide to which extent the progressive should stand out or not in the final translation. The extensive research reported above has made it possible for the translator to establish the effect of Woolf's use of the gerund-participle and to come up with a clear overview – through the use of a contrastive grammar – of the available tools and techniques in Dutch. Even though the eventual choices have more often than not been based on their immediate textual surroundings, as well as having been governed by the idiosyncracies of the translator's perception – these elements cannot be ignored after all – all choices have been well-informed and well-considered and well-based in linguistic theory. Notes have been added wherever deemed necessary.

1. From: "1880", p. 24-28
2. From: "1880", p. 44-45
3. From: "1914", p. 212, p. 245-263 (fragments)
4. From: "Present Day", p. 407-412

I.

[...]

“Toen kwamen de neven en nichten elke zomer bij elkaar<sup>14</sup>” vervolgde haar moeder plotseling. “Je had jouw oom Horace...”

“Die met het glazen oog,” zei Delia.

“Ja. Hij bezeerde zijn oog aan het hobbelpaard. De tantes droegen Horace op handen. Ze zeiden altijd...” Hier viel een lange stilte in. Ze leek te worstelen met het vinden van de juiste woorden<sup>15</sup>.

“Als Horace hier is... denk eraan hem te vragen over de eetkamerdeur.”

Mrs Pargiter leek ineens bevangen door een merkwaardige vrolijkheid. Ze lachte zelfs. Ze moet een of ander langvergeten familiegrapje in haar hoofd hebben<sup>16</sup>, nam Delia aan, terwijl ze toekeek hoe de glimlach flikkerde en vervaagde. Er heerste totale stilte. Haar moeder lag daar met haar ogen dicht; de hand met de enkele ring, de bloedeloze, broze hand, lag op de sprei. In de stilte konden ze een kooltje in de haard horen knetteren en een straatventer doorlopend zijn verkooppraatje horen opdreunen<sup>17</sup>. Mrs Pargiter zei niets meer. Ze lag volmaakt stil. Toen slaakte ze een diepe zucht.

---

<sup>14</sup> Leading up to this sentence there is a prolonged silence in the fragmented conversation between Delia and her mother. "You know" in the original text mostly serves as a matter-of-factly start of this sentence, the surprise emphasised by "her mother suddenly resumed". "Weet je" or something similar is more of a pensive remark than its English counterpart and would only slow the sentence down.

<sup>15</sup> The original durative "fumbling" is part of Delia's irritated perception of her mother's lingering existence: "She [Delia] longed for her to die. There she was - soft, decayed but everlasting, lying in the cleft of the pillows, an obstacle, a prevention, an impediment to all life." (TY 21, earlier in the same passage). For this reason, the sentence should be 'sharp' as well as portray lingering action. "[L]eek te worstelen met het vinden van..." is put in simple past, but still shows the slow process, slightly enforced by the use of 'worstelen' instead of the likes of 'zoeken naar'.

<sup>16</sup> "[I]n haar hoofd hebben" implies the same continuing action while not drawing unnecessary attention to verb forms.

<sup>17</sup> While this translation does not achieve the seemingly effortless brilliance of "droning down the street", 'doorlopend' and 'opdreunen' indicate duration and some repetition of d's and o's makes this sentence relatively easy to read even though it is longer than its English counterpart.

De deur ging open en de verpleegster kwam binnen. Delia stond op en ging weg<sup>18</sup>. Waar ben ik? vroeg ze zich af, starend naar een witte kan die roze verkleurde door de ondergaande zon. Een moment lang leek ze te verkeren in een grensgebied tussen leven en dood. Waar ben ik? herhaalde ze, kijkend naar de roze kan<sup>19</sup>, want alles leek zo vreemd. Toen hoorde ze water ruisen en voeten bonzen op de verdieping boven haar.

"ROSIE, DAAR ben je wel,<sup>20</sup>" zei Nurse, die opkeek van het naaimachinewiel toen Rose binnenkwam<sup>21</sup>.

Het kinderverblijf was helder verlicht<sup>22</sup>; er stond een lamp zonder kap op de tafel<sup>23</sup>. Mrs C., die elke week kwam met de was, zat in de leunstoel met een kopje in haar hand. "Wees een net meisje en haal je naaiwerkje op," zei Nurse terwijl Rose Mrs C. de hand schudde, "anders ben je nooit op tijd klaar voor Vaders verjaardag," voegde ze eraan toe, ondertussen plaats vrijmakend op tafel<sup>24</sup>.

---

<sup>18</sup> Here I chose for an abstract translation rather than 'verliet de kamer' or something similar, as this would make the next sentence a bit odd. When in doubt, abstractness is generally the preferred option, as this increases reader involvement.

<sup>19</sup> The short interjection that sketches Rose's setting should remain short and slightly intrusive - her (seemingly random) surroundings draw attention by their position mid-sentence, suggesting they are important - and this is exactly what the Dutch durative achieves as well.

<sup>20</sup> There is no obvious preceding situation to this sentence, but it suggests that Rose would have been expected to show up sooner or later and that Nurse might have been wondering where Rose was - which makes sense in the child-nurse relationship.

<sup>21</sup> A more precise representation of the gerund-participle would take too long a sentence in Dutch, so the duration has been downplayed for the sake of readability. Also, since "Nurse" is used like a given name I have chosen to maintain it; 'het kindermeisje' is significantly longer and more descriptive than what the children themselves would use.

<sup>22</sup> "Het kinderverblijf" may seem slightly contrived, but it is essential here to keep the distinction between "nursery" and "night nursery" in place to avoid confusion. Woolf also intended to give a picture of what a Victorian house would have looked like. 'Kinderdagverblijf' has ceased to be an option as a reader would see it as an institution outside the house.

<sup>23</sup> Semicolons have been saved wherever they could be used to the same effect. The way sentences are linked to each other and the time relationship this suggests, is an essential element of this text and Woolf's work in general.

<sup>24</sup> "[O]ndertussen was added to improve readability and ease the use of an uncommon verb form.

Rose opende de tafellade en haalde daar de laarzentas uit waar ze voor haar vader<sup>25</sup> een patroon van blauwe en rode bloemen op borduurde. Meerdere groepjes rozen waren pas potloodlijntjes en moesten nog overgestikt worden<sup>26</sup>. Ze vouwde haar werkje uit op tafel en bestudeerde het terwijl Nurse verder ging met wat ze Mrs C. aan het vertellen was over Mrs Kirby's dochter<sup>27</sup>. Maar Rose luisterde niet.

Dan ga ik wel alleen, besloot ze, de laarzentas gladstrijkend. Als Martin niet met me mee wil dan ga ik wel alleen.

“Ik heb mijn naaidoos in de salon laten liggen,” zei ze hardop.

“Nou, ga hem maar snel halen dan,” zei Nurse, maar ze lette niet echt op; ze wilde verder gaan met wat ze Mrs C. aan het vertellen was over de dochter van de kruidenier.

NU IS het avontuur begonnen, zei Rose tegen zichzelf terwijl ze op haar tenen naar de slaapkamer sloop<sup>28</sup>. Nu moest ze munitie en proviand gaan verzamelen; ze moest de huissleutel van Nurse te pakken zien te krijgen, maar waar zou die liggen? Elke avond werd hij uit angst voor inbrekers op een nieuwe plaats verstoppt. Hij zou waarschijnlijk óf onder de zakdoekdoos liggen, óf in het doosje waarin ze haar moeders gouden horlogeketting bewaarde. Daar lag hij. Nu had ze haar pistool en munitie, bedacht ze en pakte haar eigen beursje uit haar eigen lade. En genoeg proviand, dacht ze toen ze haar hoed en mantel over haar arm hing, om het veertien dagen mee uit te houden.

---

<sup>25</sup> "[H]er father's birthday" has been shortened to "voor haar vader" to improve readability for this rather long and detailed sentence which becomes longer in Dutch; the necessary information has already been conveyed.

<sup>26</sup> To maintain the image of "pencilled", a slightly more descriptive translation was chosen.

<sup>27</sup> As the continuing motion in this sentence contrasts with Rose's quick decision, it is important to also let it show in translation. Also, Nurse is clearly engulfed in her conversation, and 'Wat was ik aan het vertellen?' is a very normal Dutch construction for when such a conversation has been interrupted.

<sup>28</sup> For the sake of speed, 'kinder-' has been left out; the more abstract form itself already suggests she will be heading to her own bedroom, for surely there is more than one bedroom in the house.

Ze sloop langs het kinderverblijf, toen de trap af. Ze hield haar oren gespitst toen haar tocht langs de deur van het schoollokaal leidde<sup>29</sup>. Ze moest oppassen dat ze niet op een droge tak stapte, of dat zelfs ook maar een twijgje onder haar zou kraken, zei ze tegen zichzelf en liep op haar tenen verder. Ze stopte en luisterde opnieuw toen ze langs de deur van haar moeders slaapkamer moest. Alles was stil. Toen stond ze een moment lang op de overloop, te kijken naar de hal beneden<sup>30</sup>. De hond lag op zijn mat te slapen, de kust was veilig, de hal was leeg. Ze hoorde stemgemurmel in de salon<sup>31</sup>.

Ze draaide uiterst voorzichtig de deurknop om en sloot de voordeur achter zich met een nauwelijks hoorbare klik. Tot ze de hoek om was ging ze gebukt dicht langs de muur zodat niemand haar zou zien. Eenmaal onder de goudenregen op de hoek ging ze rechtop staan. “De naam is Pargiter, van de Pargiter-ruiters”, zei ze, met een zwierig armgebaar<sup>32</sup>, “De redding is nabij!”<sup>33</sup>

Ze was bij nacht onderweg op een ernstige missie naar een belegerde vesting, zei ze tegen zichzelf. Ze droeg een geheime boodschap – ze klemde haar vuist om het beursje – die aan de Generaal persoonlijk overhandigd moest worden. Al hun levens stonden op het spel. Op de middelste toren wapperde nog steeds de Britse vlag - Lamley's was de middelste toren<sup>34</sup>; de Generaal stond al op het dak van Lamley's door zijn telescoop te turen. Hun levens stonden op het spel; zij moest hen zien te bereiken, dwars door vijandelijk gebied rijden. Nu galoppeerde ze door de woestijn. Ze zette het op een drafje. Het werd al donker. De straatlantaarns werden

---

<sup>29</sup> This sentence was changed around slightly to save the durative aspect and the image of Rose actually passing the door, and through them also the build-up of tension for the whole paragraph.

<sup>30</sup> Conciseness has been attempted, but the recurring use of "for a moment" in this novel suggests that it is of importance, so "een moment lang" is a fitting translation even if it slows down the sentence - perhaps this would even be fitting.

<sup>31</sup> "[M]urmuring" has been translated as if it were a gerund here, because the noun "gemurmel" retains a suggestion of duration, more so than the use of simple past.

<sup>32</sup> The movement of the gerund-participle here is turned into the noun "gebaar" as it is a short solution that still contains the image.

<sup>33</sup> Here, again, the gerund-participle is avoided by a short solution that still suggests movement and also fits in with a heroic knight's lingo.

<sup>34</sup> "[S]hop" is left out here, because including this information the translation would have to be 'de winkel van Lamley' while "Lamley's" as a shop name actually is clear enough to Dutch readers, as well as a lot shorter. The shop has already been mentioned a few times at this point, so the readers will be familiar with the name and need no extra explanation.

aangestoken<sup>35</sup>. De lantaarnopsteker porde zijn stok door het luikje naar binnen; de bomen in de voortuinen vormden een wiegend netwerk van schaduwen op het trottoir; het trottoir strekte zich breed en donker voor haar uit. Daarachter<sup>36</sup> kwam de oversteek en dan lag daar Lamley's op het eilandje van winkels aan de overkant. Ze hoefde alleen maar de woestijn over te steken en de rivier te doorwaden en ze was veilig. Met een zwaai van haar pistoolarm gaf ze haar paard de sporen en galoppeerde over Melrose Avenue. Toen ze langs de rode brievenbus rende<sup>37</sup> verscheen ineens het silhouet van een man in het gaslicht<sup>38</sup>.

“De vijand!” riep Roos bij zichzelf. “De vijand! Pang!” riep ze en haalde de trekker van haar pistool over; ze keek recht in zijn gezicht terwijl ze hem voorbijging. Het was een akelig gezicht: lijkleek, schilferig, pokdalig; hij loerde naar haar. Hij stak zijn arm uit alsof hij haar tegen wilde houden. Hij kreeg haar bijna te pakken. Ze stoof langs hem heen. Het spel was voorbij.

Ze was weer zichzelf; een klein meisje dat niet geluisterd had naar haar zus, op pantoffels, op de vlucht naar Lamley's.

MRS LAMLEY stond met een opgewekt gezicht achter de toonbank de kranten op te vouwen. Ze stond te denken tussen haar prullerige horloges, kaartjes met gereedschap erop, speelgoedbootjes en dozen goedkoop postpapier; aan iets aangenaams leek het, want ze glimlachte erbij. Toen stormde Rose naar binnen. Ze keek verwonderd op.<sup>39</sup>

“Hallo, Rosie!” riep ze vrolijk<sup>40</sup>. “Wat kan ik voor je doen, kind?”

---

<sup>35</sup> The duration is lost in this translation, but as the next sentence goes more deeply into this action nothing is really lost.

<sup>36</sup> “[D]aarachter” is a more specific indication of place than “then” and has been chosen on purpose to improve readability, as Dutch often is more specific and the obvious translation ‘toen’ is already quite common in this text.

<sup>37</sup> A translation with ‘terwijl’ would be more precise about the simultaneousness of what is happening, but it would also slow down the reader and create a slightly ambiguous situation. Tension is of the essence here.

<sup>38</sup> The image created with “under the gas lamp” contains both the actual lamp post and the historically quaint gas light. In Dutch, one of these two will have to be chosen in order to avoid a strange solution like ‘gaslantaarnpaal’. The light was seen as more important for the overall image.

<sup>39</sup> The same ambiguity exists in the original text, though “looked up” and “keep op” point in the direction Mrs Lamley.

<sup>40</sup> Here “vrolijk” was added to make Mrs Lamley's cry more of the jovial than the aggressive kind or suspicious kind.

Ze had haar hand nog op de stapel kranten. Rose stond hijgend voor haar. Ze was vergeten waarvoor ze was gekomen.

"Ik wil graag de doos met eendjes uit de etalage," herinnerde Rose zich uiteindelijk.

Mrs Lamley waggelde achter de toonbank weg<sup>41</sup> om hem te halen.

"Is het niet wat laat voor een kleine meid als jij om zo alleen op pad te zijn?" vroeg ze, met een blik<sup>42</sup> alsof ze wist dat ze op haar pantoffels gekomen was en niet naar haar zus had geluisterd.

"Tot ziens<sup>43</sup>, liefje, en ga maar snel naar huis," zei ze, toen ze haar het pakketje overhandigde.<sup>44</sup> Het kind leek te treuzelen op de drempel, ze stond daar naar het uitgestalde speelgoed te staren onder de hangende olielamp; toen ging ze met tegenzin naar buiten.

IK HEB de generaal mijn boodschap persoonlijk gegeven, zei ze tegen zichzelf toen ze weer buiten op de stoep stond. En dit is de trofee, zei ze met haar arm stevig om de doos<sup>45</sup>. Ik keer als overwinnaar terug met het hoofd van de rebellenleider, zei ze tegen zichzelf, terwijl ze het stuk Melrose Avenue voor zich inspecteerde. Ik moet mijn paard de sporen geven en galopperen. Maar het verhaal werkte niet meer. Melrose Avenue bleef Melrose Avenue. Ze keek de straat af. Er lag nog een flink stuk onbeschutte straat voor haar. De bomen wiegden hun schaduwen over het trottoir. De lampen lagen vreselijk ver uit elkaar<sup>46</sup> en lieten inktzwarte poelen tussen zich. Ze

---

<sup>41</sup> "[W]addled" here describes how Mrs Lamley must have made a bit of a slalom movement around her counter while it also humorously compares her to the ducks in the previous sentence.

<sup>42</sup> The gerund-participle here has been substantivised to make the sentence shorter and easier to read, also adding assonance.

<sup>43</sup> A more literal translation that refers to the time of day would be very odd here, so a common way of saying goodbye was chosen.

<sup>44</sup> Though "toen" does not accurately represent the simultaneous action, it was chosen as a more Dutch sounding alternative. The time gap between this sentence and the one before suggests that there was no continuing motion anyway, readers are left to picture the rest of the shopping formalities themselves.

<sup>45</sup> The gerund-participle has been avoided by using a description of the image instead. This adds to the tactile quality of the text and instances like this one can be used to compensate for the loss of image or sound elsewhere.

<sup>46</sup> Though to remain consistent 'lantaarnpalen' would have to be chosen, the one specific "lamp-post" that is mentioned suddenly emerges again -twice- after this sentence, creating a sudden "de lantaarnpaal" among several, which would odd.



zette flink de pas erin. Plotseling, toen ze langs de lantaarnpaal kwam, zag ze de man weer. Hij stond met zijn rug tegen de lantaarnpaal te leunen en het licht van de gaslamp flakkerde over zijn gezicht. Toen ze langs kwam zoog hij zijn lippen in en uit. Hij maakte een miauwend geluid. Maar hij stak zijn handen niet naar haar uit; die waren bezig zijn kleren los te knopen.

Ze vluchtte hem voorbij. Ze dacht dat ze hem achter haar aan hoorde komen. Ze hoorde zijn voeten op de tegels<sup>47</sup>. Alles deinde nu ze rende; roze en zwarte vlekken dansten voor haar ogen terwijl ze de treden voor de deur op snelde, de sleutel in het slot duwde en de deur opendeed. Het kon haar niet schelen of ze lawaai maakte of niet. Ze hoopte dat iemand te voorschijn zou komen en wat tegen haar zou zeggen. Maar niemand hoorde haar. De hal was leeg. De hond lag op de mat te slapen. Nog steeds murmelden stemmen in de salon.

## 2.

“Goed,” zei Eleanor, een blik om zich heen werpend<sup>48</sup>, “ik denk dat ik naar bed ga. Nurse belt wel” zei ze, “als ze iets nodig heeft”.

“Dan kunnen we allemaal wel gaan,” zei Morris. Milly begon haar borduurwerkje op te rollen. Morris begon met het doven van het haardvuur.

“Wat een belachelijk vuur” – riep hij geërgerd uit. De kooltjes zaten allemaal aan elkaar vast. De vlammen gloeiden fel<sup>49</sup>.

Plotseling rinkelde er een bel.

“Nurse!” riep Eleanor uit. Ze keek naar Morris. Ze verliet haastig de kamer. Morris volgde haar.

---

Though "lampen" is not a very common word when it comes to lamp-posts, it fits comfortably into the sentence and does not draw unnecessary attention.

<sup>47</sup> "[P]adding" was actually not translated here, because mentioning the feet alone already suggests this sound and a translation with the same short onomatopoeic effect could not be found. A shorter but very tactile alternative was seen the most suitable.

<sup>48</sup> This translation using "een blik" instead of "looking" makes Eleanor's action seem less aimless and more like a final glance, which it is. "[O]m zich heen werpend" still emphasises the original movement.

<sup>49</sup> Maintaining the durative would slow down the text here for no apparent reason, and the fierce blaze already draws some attention by its position. Its intention, loosely suggesting Morris is angry, remains clear.

Maar wat had het voor zin? dacht Delia bij zichzelf. Het is toch weer vals alarm. Ze stond op. “Het is Nurse maar,” zei ze tegen Milly, die met een geschrokken blik in haar ogen van haar stoel kwam<sup>50</sup>. Die zal toch zeker niet weer gaan huilen, dacht ze en ze slenterde richting de voorkamer. Er brandden kaarsen op de schoorsteenmantel; ze verlichtten het portret van haar moeder<sup>51</sup>. Ze wierp een blik op het portret van haar moeder. Het meisje in het wit leek de langgerekte toestand rond haar eigen sterfbed te overzien<sup>52</sup> met een onbekommerde glimlach die haar dochter woest maakte.

“U gaat niet dood – u gaat toch niet dood!”<sup>53</sup> zei Delia verbitterd, terwijl ze naar haar opkeek. Haar vader, geschrokken door de bel, was de kamer binnen gekomen. Hij had een rode fez op met een belachelijk kwastje eraan<sup>54</sup>.

Maar het is allemaal voor niets, zei Delia stilletjes terwijl ze naar haar vader keek. Zij beiden moesten hun opwinding in de hand houden vond ze. “Er gebeurt niets – helemaal niets,” zei ze met haar blik op hem gericht. Maar op dat moment kwam Eleanor de kamer binnen. Ze zag erg bleek.

“Waar is Vader?” zei ze al om zich heen kijkend.<sup>55</sup> Ze zag hem staan. “Kom, Vader, kom,” zei ze, haar hand naar hem uitgestrekt. “Moeder is stervende...”<sup>56</sup> De kinderen ook” zei ze over haar schouder tegen Milly.

---

<sup>50</sup> A translation like "die aan het opstaan was" would suggest slower and less sudden movement than is intended here, but a more tactile solution than 'stond op' has been chosen to still involve the reader in the actual process.

<sup>51</sup> Though "lit up" can be seen in an emotional interpretation, I have chosen not to go into this too much to preserve abstract suggestion.

<sup>52</sup> The durative was lost here, but other words in the sentence already picture an enduring situation, and a Dutch durative would add more emphasis than necessary here.

<sup>53</sup> A child in the 1880s would definitely use "u" (or the English situation would be so as to suggest the use is proper here) when talking to his or her parents, if a parent were addressed directly at all.

<sup>54</sup> Though the latter part of this sentence is clearly Delia's interpretation, "smoking-cap" is quite a specific word and something Delia might not have been familiar with. The authorial voice seems to be interfering here to give the reader a description that suits the old-fashioned 1880s. Because "fez" gives a clear image of what kind of hat is meant and is a short word, it is better than translations like "huismuts" or "kalotje" which are also quite Dutch.

<sup>55</sup> In short phrases like this one, the durative is occasionally preserved when it does not interfere with the reading experience.

<sup>56</sup> This is the only instance where the use of an archaic Dutch participle was deemed appropriate, because of the solemn nature of death and the importance of the continuing progress in this situation.

Twee witte plukjes verschenen boven haar vaders oren, viel Delia op. Zijn blik verhardde zich. Hij bereidde zich voor. Hij schreed hen voorbij de trap op. Ze volgden met z'n allen op een afstandje in een kleine processie. De hond, viel Delia op, probeerde met ze mee naar boven te komen, maar Morris duwde hem terug.

De kolonel ging als eerste de slaapkamer in; daarna Eleanor; daarna Morris; daarna kwam Martin van boven, die nog een ochtendjas aantrok; daarna bracht Milly Rose langs, gewikkeld in een sjaal. Maar Delia hield zich afzijdig achter de anderen. Ze waren met zovelen in de kamer dat ze niet verder kon komen dan de deuropening. Ze kon twee zusters zien die met hun rug naar de muur tegenover stonden. Een van hen huilde – degene, zag ze, die pas die middag was gekomen. Van waar ze stond kon ze het bed niet zien. Maar ze kon wel zien dat Morris op zijn knieën was neergevallen. Zou ik ook moeten knielen, vroeg ze zich af? Niet op de gang, besloot ze. Ze keek weg; ze zag het kleine raam aan het einde van de gang. Er viel regen; ergens kwam licht vandaan dat de druppels deed schitteren. De ene na de andere druppel gleed langs het glas naar beneden; ze gleden en bleven hangen; de ene druppel kwam samen met een andere druppel en daarna gleden ze weer. In de slaapkamer heerste totale stilte.

Is dit de dood? vroeg Delia zich af. Een moment lang leek er iets te zijn.<sup>57</sup> Een muur van water leek zich te splijten; de twee muren hielden zichzelf gescheiden. Ze luisterde. Er heerste totale stilte. Toen was er beweging, geschuifel van voeten in de slaapkamer en daar kwam haar vader naar buiten, wankelend<sup>58</sup>.

“Rose!” riep hij uit. “Rose! Rose!” Hij hield zijn armen met gebalde vuisten voor zich uit.

Dat heeft u knap gedaan<sup>59</sup>, zei Delia tegen hem toen hij langs haar liep. Het was net een scene uit een toneelstuk. Ze nam vrij onbewogen waar dat de regendruppels nog steeds naar beneden kwamen<sup>60</sup>. De ene glijdende druppel

---

<sup>57</sup> Though the situation here is quite vague, for the sake of Woolf's intended style it is essential not to overinterpret or clarify things.

<sup>58</sup> This translation still allows for the interpretation of Delia being disappointed in her father's strength, while also showing his unstable movement.

<sup>59</sup> There is a cynical note in the original remark that is better preserved by "knap" than "good".

<sup>60</sup> This slightly lengthy way to keep the durative in place does succeed to enforce the image and is therefore preferred over a solution in simple past.

ontmoette een andere en samen in één druppel rolden ze naar de onderkant van het vensterglas.

HET REGENDE<sup>61</sup>. Een fijne regen, een mild buitje, besprenkelde de stoepjes en maakte ze glibberig. Was het de moeite waard om een paraplu op te steken<sup>62</sup>, was het nodig om een hansom aan te halen vroegen de theatergangers zich af terwijl ze opkeken naar de zachte, melkachtige hemel met afgestompte sterren<sup>63</sup>. Waar de regen de grond raakte, in velden en tuinen, kwam de geur van aarde naar boven. Hier balanceerde een druppel op een grasspriet; daar vulde hij de kelk van een wilde bloem, tot de wind zich roerde en de regen gemorst werd. Was het de moeite waard om te schuilen onder de meidoorn, onder de heg, leek het schaap zich af te vragen; de koeien, alweer over de grijze velden verspreid, onder de schemer van de heggen, kauwden verder, slaperig en met regendruppels op hun huid. Regen landde op de daken – hier in Westminster, verderop in de Ladbroke Grove; op de weidse zee prikten een miljoen puntjes het blauwe monster als een oneindig grote badkuip<sup>64</sup>. Over de grootse koepels en hoge torens<sup>65</sup> van sluimerende universiteitssteden, over de met lood bedekte bibliotheken en de musea, nu met bruin linnen afgedekt, gleeed de zachte regen naar beneden tot het water aanbelandde bij die fabelachtige lachers, de grijpgrage gargouilles, en door wel duizend grillig gevormde groeven verwaaierd

---

<sup>61</sup> The fact that rain in Dutch cannot be referred to as "it" caused some problems in this paragraph, and some additions and changes had to be made, like using "de regen" or "de druppels" instead of more abstract English references. Also "it is raining" is the common way to indicate drops of water are falling out of the sky, while the simple past is used in Dutch: "het regende". This has led to some loss of the durative aspect.

<sup>62</sup> The gerund-participle here is not directly referring to movement but is more a short solution that sounds good.

<sup>63</sup> With long sentences like this one, there is always loss of the durative aspect because a Dutch equivalent would require more words, which would often make it impossible to keep the sentence structure as it is. Sentence structure and correlation between phrases and sentences has been deemed essential to this tactile description, which also requires speed and a certain amount of alliteration and other sound repetition, at times onomatopoeic.

<sup>64</sup> Many showers at the time were shower-baths and this is indeed the term Woolf used. The most precise translation in this situation (apart from a lengthy description, which is obviously out of the question) would be 'stortbak', but this is not as clear an image as "badkuip". Both translations leave out the shower part, which readers will have to think of by themselves.

<sup>65</sup> These adjectives were chosen, rather than some more superlative ones, to save the slightly sarcastic tone that lies underneath.

werd. Een dronkenlap die uitgleed in een steegje naast de pub vloekte erover. Vrouwen in het kraambed hoorden de dokter tegen de vroedvrouw zeggen, “Het regent.” En de dreunende klokken van Oxford, alsmar tuimelend als trage bruinvissen in een zee van olie, intoneerden bedachtzaam hun muzikale bezweringen. De zachte regen, de milde regen, stroomde in gelijke mate over de mijterdragers en de blootshoofdsen met een onpartijdigheid die suggereerde dat de god van de regen, was er een god geweest, zou denken Laat dit alles niet beperkt blijven tot de wijzen en de hoogvliegers, maar maak dat alles dat ademt - de knagers en de kauwers, de onwetenden, de ongelukkigen, degenen die zwoegen in de ovens om ontelbare kopieën te maken van dezelfde pot, degenen die scherpe geesten vervelen met omslachtige brieven en ook Mrs Jones in het steegje - kan delen in mijn gift<sup>66</sup>.

### 3.

[...]

In Londen was alles luisterrijk en schrill; het seizoen kwam op gang; claxons toeterden; het verkeer gromde; vlaggen wapperden stijfjes gelijk, als forellen in de stroming. En vanuit alle torenspitsen van alle kerken van Londen – de chique heiligen van Mayfair, de sjofele heiligen van Kensington, de grijze heiligen van de City – werd het uur aangekondigd. De lucht boven Londen leek een ruwe zee van geluid waardoor ringen reisden. Maar de klokken sloegen ongelijk, alsof de heiligen zelf het niet eens werden. Er waren onderbrekingen, stiltes... Toen sloegen de klokken opnieuw.

[...]

DE NACHT was helder en kalm en elke boom op het plein was zichtbaar; sommige waren zwart, andere besprenkeld met vreemde lapjes groen kunstlicht. Boven de elektrische lampen rezen donkere zuilen op. Hoewel het bijna middernacht was leek het nauwelijks avond; eerder een etherische, ontaarde dagvariant, want er waren zoveel straatlantaarns; voorbijgaande auto's; mannen met hun witte dassen en lichte

---

<sup>66</sup> I have chosen to use dashes here instead of commas, to avoid confusion and an ungrammatical situation with "kan delen", which serves both as singular and plural in English. They are occasionally used in the English text as well.

overjassen halfopen die liepen over de schone, droge trottoirs, en veel huizen waren nog steeds verlicht, want iedereen gaf feestjes.<sup>67</sup>

De stad veranderde terwijl ze zich vloeiend door Mayfair bewogen. De pubs waren aan het afsluiten; hier stond een groepje om een lantaarnpaal geschaard op de hoek. Een dronken man brulde een of ander lawaaiig lied; een tipsy meisje met een veer die voor haar ogen danste, slingerde tot ze zich kon vastgrijpen aan de lantaarnpaal...<sup>68</sup> maar alleen Kitty's ogen vingen op wat ze zag. Na al het gepraat, de moeite en de haast kon ze niets veranderen aan wat ze zag. En ze reden haastig voort. Nu hadden ze een afslag genomen en kon de auto op volle snelheid over een lange helder verlichte hoofdstraat vol grote, gesloten winkels. De straten waren vrijwel leeg. De gele stationsklok liet zien dat ze nog vijf minuten hadden.

Net op tijd, zei ze tegen zichzelf. Haar gebruikelijke voorpret kwam opzetten toen ze het perron over liep. Diffuus licht stroomde van grote hoogte naar beneden. Geschreeuw van mannen en het ratelen van rangerende wagons echoden door de immense holle ruimte. De trein stond klaar; reizigers maakten zich gereed voor vertrek. Sommigen stonden te drinken uit grove bekers met één voet op het opstapje van de wagon, als waren ze bang te ver van hun stoel te gaan.

Ze keek langs de lengte van de trein en zag de locomotief uit een slang water zuigen<sup>69</sup>. Hij leek wel een uit de kluiten gewassen spierbundel; zelfs de nek was opgegaan in de gladde vormen van de cilindervormige romp. Dit was dé trein; alle anderen waren speelgoed in vergelijking. Ze snoof de zwavelachtige lucht op die een licht bijtend tintje achterliet in haar keel, alsof er al een zweem van het noorden in zat.

De conducteur had haar al gezien en kwam naar haar toe<sup>70</sup> met zijn fluit in de hand.

“Goedenavond m’vrouw” zei hij.

“Goedenavond, Purvis. Op de valreep gehaald,” zei ze terwijl ze de deur van

---

<sup>67</sup> The durative has been replaced with a simple past, because it denotes a habit that endures beyond the timeframe of this sentence.

<sup>68</sup> Here, the gerund-participles have been abandoned for the sake of sentence length and tension.

<sup>69</sup> Here, too, sentence length was seen as more important than conserving the durative; it is already clear from the contents of this sentence that there is continuing action.

<sup>70</sup> “[N]aar haar toe” already suggests movement, so a more contrived solution involving the durative is not necessary and would draw too much attention to itself.

haar wagon ontsloot.

“Da's juist, m'vrouw. Nog maar net op tijd,” antwoordde hij.

Hij sloot haar deur. Kitty draaide zich om en keek de kleine verlichte kamer rond waar ze de nacht zou gaan doorbrengen. Alles lag klaar; het bed was opgemaakt, de lakens waren opengeslagen, haar bagage lag op de fauteuil.<sup>71</sup> De conducteur kwam langs haar raam met zijn vlag in de hand.<sup>72</sup>

Een man die de trein nog maar net gehaald had rende het perron over met uitgestrekte armen. Een deur sloeg dicht.

“Net op tijd,” zei Kitty tegen zichzelf toen ze daar zo stond. Vervolgens voelde ze de trein zacht trekken. Ze kon nauwelijks geloven dat zo'n enorme machine zo kalm kon beginnen aan zo'n lange reis. Toen zag ze de theeketel voorbijgliden.

“We zijn onderweg,<sup>73</sup>” zei ze tegen zichzelf, terugleunend in de zitting. “We zijn onderweg!”

Alle spanning verliet haar lichaam. Ze was alleen; en de trein ging vooruit.<sup>74</sup> De laatste lamp van het perron gleed voorbij. De laatste figuur op het perron verdween.

“Wat een pret!<sup>75</sup>” zei ze bij zichzelf, alsof ze een klein meisje was dat was weggelopen van haar kinderjuf en nu ontsnapte. “We zijn onderweg!”

ZE ZAT een moment lang stil in haar helder verlichte compartiment; toen trok ze aan het raamscherm en dat sprong met een schok omhoog. Uitgerekte lichtjes gleden voorbij; lichtjes in fabrieken en pakhuizen; lichtjes in duistere achterafstraatjes.

---

<sup>71</sup> Lady Lasswade would travel 1st class, and have an armchair rather than a bench at her disposal. Still, the travel bed that she annoyedly refers to later on in this passage is quite a bit smaller and less comfortable than she is used to.

<sup>72</sup> Here the gerund-participle has been avoided altogether to preserve simultaneity while being short.

<sup>73</sup> "We're off!" has three obvious Dutch translations with slightly different meanings: "We zijn onderweg", "We zijn op weg" and "We zijn weg". I observed that each of these in fact suits one of the three times she says this, in this same order, starting from initial movement to the feeling of leaving London behind. To translate each instance differently would be too big a change, though.

<sup>74</sup> Here, again, a translation has been chosen that involves the single past but also suggests movement.

<sup>75</sup> This exclamation would be old-fashioned to the modern reader, but this rather adds to the feel of the text. It is also followed by an explanation that supports this translation, as it conveys excitement rather than just enjoyment (as in 'heerlijk') and does not become too specific (as in 'een avontuur').

Toen waren er asfaltpaden, meer lichtjes in openbare tuinen en daarna struiken en een heg om een weiland. Ze lieten Londen geleidelijk achter zich<sup>76</sup>; verlieten die zee van licht die zich, zo leek het op het tempo van de trein in de duisternis, steeds verder samentrok tot één vurige cirkel. De trein raasde brullend door een tunnel<sup>77</sup>. Die leek een amputatie te verrichten; nu was ze afgesneden van die cirkel van licht.

[...]

Soepeltjes maar krachtig werd ze door Engeland getrokken naar het noorden toe. Ik hoef niets te doen, dacht ze bij zichzelf, niets, niets meer dan me verder te laten trekken. Ze draaide zich om en trok de blauwe kap over de lamp. Het geluid van de trein werd sterker in het donker; zijn gebulder en trillingen leken in een regelmatig ritme van geluiden te vallen dat door haar hoofd ploegde, haar gedachten uitrolde<sup>78</sup>.

Ah, maar niet allemaal, dacht ze, zich rusteloos draaiend op haar bedplank. Sommigen stonden nog recht overeind. Ze was toch zeker geen kind meer, dacht ze, starend naar het licht onder de blauwe kap. De jaren veranderden dingen; vernielden dingen, hoopten dingen op – zorgen en lasten; daar waren ze weer. Fragmenten van gesprekken bleven maar naar boven komen<sup>79</sup>; beelden stonden haar weer voor de geest. Ze zag zichzelf aan het raam trekken; en de borstelharen op de kin van tante Warburton. Ze zag de vrouwen opstaan en de mannen aansluiten in de rij<sup>80</sup>. Ze zuchtte bij een volgende draai op haar richel. Al hun kleren zijn hetzelfde, dacht ze; al hun levens zijn hetzelfde. En wat is goed? dacht ze, zich rusteloos draaiend op haar plank. Wat is slecht? Ze draaide zich weer.

De trein jaagde haar op. Het geluid was dieper geworden; het was nu een voortdurend gebulder. Hoe kon ze zo slapen? Hoe kon ze het piekeren voorkomen?

---

<sup>76</sup> Here, "geleidelijk" has been introduced to emphasise that it is a gradual process, as opposed to the specific changes that have been described above. The effect of this continues in the part after the semicolon, making further changes unnecessary.

<sup>77</sup> This slightly unorthodox translation was chosen to save some part of the original onomatopoeia.

<sup>78</sup> A durative would be too contrived here in Dutch and is therefore avoided.

<sup>79</sup> "[N]aar boven komen" suggests movement and can replace the gerund-participle.

<sup>80</sup> "[W]omen rising" should, I think, also be read symbolically, over time, while I suppose it literally refers to people getting on the train at stops. Men, in this reading, would be following orders - maybe even in wars - like they always had and were expected to.



Ze draaide zich weg van het licht. Waar zijn we *nu*? zei ze tegen zichzelf. Waar is de trein op dit moment? *Nu*, mompelde ze, de ogen sluitend, komen we langs het witte huis op de heuvel; *nu* gaan we door de tunnel; *nu* gaan we de brug over de rivier over... Een leegte kwam tussenbeide; haar gedachten werden fragmentarisch, ze raakten door elkaar. Verleden en heden kwamen op één hoop terecht. Ze zag hoe Margaret Marrable<sup>81</sup> de jurk tussen haar vingers klemde maar ze leidde een stier met een ring door zijn neus... Dit is slaap, zei ze tegen zichzelf en opende half haar ogen; godzijdank, zei ze tegen zichzelf en sloot ze weer<sup>82</sup>, het is slaap. En ze gaf zich over aan de zorg van de trein, wier gebulder nu dof werd en ver weg.

ER WERD geklopt aan haar deur. Ze bleef een moment liggen, zich afvragend waarom de kamer toch zo wankelde; toen stabiliseerde de setting zich; ze zat in de trein; ze was op het platteland; ze naderden het station. Ze stond op.

[...]

“Laten we met de kap open rijden<sup>83</sup>, Cole,” zei ze en hij vouwde de stijve nieuwe kap op, en ze stapte naast hem in. Erg langzaam<sup>84</sup>, want de motor leek wat onregelmatig te lopen, te starten en te stoppen en dan weer te starten, kwamen ze in beweging. Ze reden door het stadje; alle winkels waren nog dicht; vrouwen waren op hun knieën stoepjes aan het schrobben; gordijnen waren nog gesloten in slaapkamers en salons; er was erg weinig verkeer op straat. Alleen melkkarren rammelden langs. Honden dwaalden midden op straat hun neus achterna. Cole moest toeteren en nog eens toeteren.

[...]

Te snel, te snel! zei Kitty in zichzelf. Maar de wind in haar gezicht beviel

---

<sup>81</sup> She is mentioned before this passage so her name needs no explanation.

<sup>82</sup> The simple past is used here to avoid extensive comma use, which is more problematic in Dutch than in English and can confuse the reader.

<sup>83</sup> I have been unable to find a translation as matter-of-factly and vague as the original, which does not mention the hood at all at first, though the car has been mentioned two sentences before. I decided to include the hood.

<sup>84</sup> The same ambiguity exists in the original.

eigenlijk wel. Nu kwam de poort van de Lodge in zicht; Mrs Preedy hield hem open met een witharig kind aan de arm. Ze raasden door het Park. De herten keken op en hupsten lichtvoetig weg door de varens.

“Twee minuten onder het kwartier, m'vrouw,” zei Cole terwijl ze een zwerige ronding maakten die eindigde voor de deur. Kitty bleef een moment lang staan kijken naar de auto. Ze legde haar hand op motorkap. Hij was warm. Ze gaf hem een klopje. “Hij deed het prachtig, Cole,” zei ze. “Ik zal het de Lord doorgeven.” Cole glimlachte, hij was gelukkig.<sup>85</sup>

[...]

De wind leek aan te zwellen toen ze onder de bomen liep<sup>86</sup>. Hij zong in de toppen, maar was beneden stil. De dode bladeren knisperden onder haar voeten<sup>87</sup> en ertussen rezen bleke lentebloemen op, de mooiste van het jaar – blauwe bloemen en witte bloemen, bibberig op groene moskussentjes<sup>88</sup>. De lente was altijd treurig, vond ze; ze bracht herinneringen naar boven. Alles gaat voorbij, alles verandert, dacht ze, terwijl ze het paadje tussen de bomen beklom. Niets van dit alles was haar eigendom; haar zoon zou het erven; zijn vrouw zou hier na haar lopen. Ze brak een takje af; ze plukte een bloem en hield hem aan haar lippen. Maar ze was in de bloei van haar leven, ze was levenslustig. Ze stapte voort. De ondergrond liep scherp omhoog en telkens als ze haar dik gezoalde schoenen tegen de grond drukte voelden haar spieren krachtig en elastisch. Ze gooide de bloem weg. De begroeiing werd dunner naarmate ze hoger en hoger kwam. Plotseling zag ze de lucht ontzettend blauw

---

<sup>85</sup> “[G]elukkig” might be seen as an over-interpretation of “happy”, which could also be a simple ‘blij’. But later on in the same chapter, Kitty is paralleled with Cole with a copy of this same sentence, and there is no doubt that “gelukkig” is intended there. For her it is a moment of freedom from people, for him it is a moment of appreciation from people. I am therefore inclined to believe that Cole is “gelukkig” here too.

<sup>86</sup> While “as” signifies a gradual change here, “toen” is better than “terwijl” unless the order of the sentence is changed, and this is not preferable as the wind has main focus here.

<sup>87</sup> “[O]nder haar voeten” is more specific than “underfoot”, but I wanted to save the image of feet stepping onto these leaves, and this interpretation is present in the original sentence.

<sup>88</sup> Here the gerund-participle was changed into an adjective, thus losing movement, but the image is clear enough for this not to be a problem.

tussen twee gestreepte boomstammen.<sup>89</sup> Ze bereikte de top. De wind ging liggen<sup>90</sup>; het landschap ontvouwde zich aan haar voeten. Haar lichaam leek te krimpen; haar zicht zich te verwijderen. Ze liet zich op de grond vallen en keek uit over het golvende landschap dat omhoog kwam en wegebde,<sup>91</sup> verder en verder, totdat het ergens ver weg de zee bereikte. Onbewerkt, onbewoond, overlevend op zichzelf, voor zichzelf, zonder steden of huizen, zo zag het eruit vanaf deze hoogte. Donkere schijfjes schaduw en heldere banen licht lagen zij aan zij. Toen, voor haar ogen, bewoog licht en bewoog donker; licht en schaduw reisden samen over de heuvels en valleien<sup>92</sup>. Een diepe ruis zong in haar oren – het landschap zelf, in zichzelf zingend, een refrein, alleen. Ze lag daar te luisteren. Ze was gelukkig, volkomen. De tijd was opgehouden.

#### 4.

Etho passo tanno hai,  
 Fai donk to tu do,  
 Mai to, kai to, lai to see  
 Toh dom to tuh do —<sup>93</sup>

Dat was hoe het klonk. Er was geen woord van te herkennen. De vervormde geluiden gingen omhoog en omlaag alsof ze een melodie volgden. Ze hielden op.

Ze stonden met hun handen achter hun rug. Toen werd abrupt het volgende couplet aangevallen:

---

<sup>89</sup> I have chosen to retain the odd suddenness of "extraordinarily blue", which does not seem to belong anywhere, structure-wise; it just pops up, exactly like the view itself.

<sup>90</sup> Dutch requires a more specific verb in this case, and the image that arises is not at all unfitting for the rest of the situation.

<sup>91</sup> Here the gerund-participle has been sacrificed for the sake of conciseness and the overall structure of the sentence, the rest of which already shows signs of continuing motion.

<sup>92</sup> Though 'gingen op reis' would be a more accurate representation of "went travelling", it also has something silly about it that does not seem appropriate here. The translation that was chosen is also a bit shorter and better sounding.

<sup>93</sup> The text of this song has not been translated, for no-one knows exactly what it means or which language it is in - this interpretation is repeated in the text itself and the lack of sense itself becomes an important topic.

Fanno to par, etto to mar,  
 Timin tudo, tido,  
 Foll to gar in, mitno to par,  
 Eido, teido, meido —

Ze zongen het tweede refrein driftiger dan het eerste. Het ritme leek te wiebelen en de onbegrijpelijke woorden balden zich samen tot bijna een schreeuw. De volwassenen wisten niet of ze moesten lachen of huilen. Hun stemmen waren zo ruw; het accent was zo vreselijk lelijk.

Ze barstten weer los:

Chree to gay ei,  
 Geeray didax. . . .

Toen stopten ze. Het leek wel middenin een couplet. Ze stonden daar te grijnzen, stil, hun ogen naar de vloer.<sup>94</sup> Niemand wist wat hij moest zeggen. Er was iets verschrikkelijks aan het geluid dat ze voortbrachten. Het was zo schrill, zo onaangenaam en zo betekenisloos. Toen kwam oude Patrick aandrentelen.

“Ah, dat was enig, enig. Bedankt hoor, kinderen,<sup>95</sup>” zei hij op zijn hartelijke manier, friemelend aan zijn tandenstoker. De kinderen grijnsden hem toe. Toen begonnen ze zich uit de voeten te maken. Toen ze langs Martin probeerden te glippen stopte hij ze nog wat kleingeld toe. Daarna maakten ze een sprintje naar de deur.

“Maar wat zongen ze in vredesnaam?” zei Hugh Gibbs. “Ik kon er geen woord van verstaan, moet ik toegeven.” Hij hield zijn handen langs zijn grote witte gilet.

“Cockneyaccent, lijkt me” zei Patrick. “Da's wat ze die kinderen tegenwoordig leren op school, weet je.”

“Maar het was...” begon Eleanor. Ze stopte. Wat was het? Ze hadden er daar zo waardig uitgezien en toch die afschuwelijke wanklanken geproduceerd. Het contrast tussen hun gezichten en hun stemmen was verbazingwekkend, het was

<sup>94</sup> Here, "hun ogen" has been chosen to replace the gerund-participle with a tactile alternative that avoids an uncomfortable durative.

<sup>95</sup> The intention behind this translation is to make it sound meaningless but 'pleasant' and slightly uncomfortable. "Enig" has as little actual meaning as "nice".

onmogelijk om daar een woord voor te vinden. “Mooi?” zei ze, op een vragende toon, zich richtend tot Maggie.

“Ontzettend,” zei Maggie.<sup>96</sup>

Maar Eleanor was er niet zeker van of ze wel hetzelfde in gedachten hadden.

ZE RAAPTE haar handschoenen, haar handtas en wat muntgeld bij elkaar en stond op. De kamer droeg een vreemd bleek licht. Voorwerpen leken zich uit hun slaap, uit hun vermomming op te richten en de nuchterheid van alledag aan te nemen. De kamer was zich klaar aan het maken voor zijn gebruik als makelaarskantoor. De tafels veranderden in kantoortafels<sup>97</sup>, hun poten waren kantoortafelpoten en toch waren ze nog steeds bezaaid met borden en glazen, met rozen, lelies en anjers.

“Het is tijd om te gaan,” zei ze, de kamer overstekend. Delia was naar het raam toe gegaan. Nu trok ze met een ruk de gordijnen open.

“De dageraad!”<sup>98</sup> riep ze nogal melodramatisch.

Aan de overkant van het plein rezen huizenvormen op. Hun gordijnen waren allemaal gesloten, ze leken nog diep in slaap in bleke ochtendkleuren.

“De dageraad!” zei Nicholas, terwijl hij opstond en zich uitrekte. Ook hij liep naar het raam. Renny volgde hem.

“En dan nu de slotrede,” zei hij, naast hem voor het raam. “De dageraad – de nieuwe dag – ”

Hij wees naar de bomen, naar de daken, naar de lucht.

“Nee,” zei Nicholas, het gordijn tegenhoudend. “Daar heb je het mis. Er komt geen slotrede – geen slotrede!” riep hij uit met een wild gebaar, “omdat er geen rede is geweest.”<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>96</sup> In this situation there is no visible difference between an adjective and an adverb, and Maggie's answer can be interpreted as both. This adds something that is not there in the original, though it is still to be preferred over contrived, longer translations and the correct interpretation is suggested by the next sentence.

<sup>97</sup> The durative has been used as often as possible, but here it would just look strange. Duration has already been suggested at this point and does not need further emphasis.

<sup>98</sup> "De dageraad" is indeed a rather melodramatic translation for "dawn", but also the only suitable one here, and suiting the authorial description even more than the original word perhaps.

<sup>99</sup> The absence of a speech probably refers to the incomprehensible songs before, or a more general lack of instruction, philosophically. Edward and North were discussing the Classics and the role of a Chorus in classical plays earlier in this

“Maar de zon is op,” zei Renny, naar de lucht wijzend.

Dat was een feit. De zon was opgekomen. De lucht tussen de schoorstenen zag er ontzettend blauw uit.<sup>100</sup>

“En ik ga naar bed toe,” zei Nicholas na een korte stilte. Hij keerde zich van de anderen af.

“Waar is Sara?” zei hij, om zich heen kijkend. Daar lag ze in een hoekje opgerold met haar hoofd tegen een tafel te slapen zo te zien.

“Maak je zus wakker, Magdalena,” zei hij, zich tot Maggie richtend.<sup>101</sup> Maggie keek naar haar. Toen nam ze een bloem van de tafel en gooide die naar haar toe. Ze opende half haar ogen. “Het is tijd,” zei Maggie, met een hand op haar schouder. “Ja, is het tijd?” zuchtte ze. Ze geeuwde en rekte zich uit. Ze richtte haar ogen op Nicholas alsof ze geleidelijk aan op hem scherpstelde.<sup>102</sup> Toen lachte ze.

“Nicholas!” riep ze uit.

“Sara!” antwoordde hij. Ze lachten naar elkaar. Toen hielp hij haar overeind en ze bracht zich onhandig tegen haar zus aan terug in evenwicht en wreef zich in de ogen.

“Wat vreemd,” mompelde ze, om zich heen kijkend “...wat vreemd...”.

Daar lagen de vuile borden en de lege wijnglazen, de bloemblaadjes en de broodkruimels. In het gemengde licht leken ze prozaïsch maar onwerkelijk, ontbindend maar schitterend. En daar bij het raam, in een groep bijeen, stonden de oude broers en zussen.

“Kijk, Maggie,” fluisterde ze, zich omdraaiend naar haar zus, “Kijk!”

DE GROEP voor het raam, de mannen in hun zwart-witte avondkleding, de vrouwen in hun karmozijn-, goud- en zilvertinten, bezaten een moment lang iets statigs, alsof ze uit steen gehouwen waren. Hun jurken vielen in stijve, gebeeldhouwde vouwen. Toen bewogen ze zich; gingen ze zich anders gedragen; begonnen ze te praten.

---

chapter, which seems to be of some significance here. "Rede" has been chosen for its broad range of meanings, similar to "speech".

<sup>100</sup> This is a direct echo of Kitty Lasswade's passage and should therefore get the same adjective.

<sup>101</sup> The gerund-participle has been saved wherever possible in these sentences, as the length of the sentences allows for their use and the continuing motion here suggests a kind of intangible significance. "[T]urning to" can be both physical and when speaking, and "zich richtend tot" still allows for both interpretations.

<sup>102</sup> "[G]eleidelijk aan" stresses the process, replacing the gerund-participle as such.

“Kan ik je geen lift terug aanbieden, Nell?” probeerde Kitty Lasswade.<sup>103</sup> “Ik heb een auto klaarstaan.” Eleanor antwoordde niet. Ze was de huizen met de gesloten gordijnen aan het bekijken aan de overkant van het plein. De ramen waren goudgespikkeld. Alles zag er schoongeveegd, fris en ongerept uit. Duiven schuifelden in de boomtoppen. “Ik heb een auto...” herhaalde Kitty.

“Luister...” zei Eleanor, haar hand opheffend. Boven werd “God save the King” gedraaid op de grammofoon, maar het waren de duiven die ze bedoelde - die koerden.

“Dat zijn houtduiven, toch?” zei Kitty. Ze boog haar hoofd naar een kant om te luisteren. Ze koerden roekoe, koerden roekoe.<sup>104</sup> “Houtduiven?” zei Edward, en bracht zijn hand naar zijn oor.

“Daar in de boomtoppen,” zei Kitty. De groenblauwe vogels schuifelden rond op de takken, pikkend en koerend in zichzelf.

Morris veegde de kruimels van zijn gilet.

“Wat een tijdstip voor ons oudjes om nog op te zijn!” zei hij. “Ik heb de zon niet zien opkomen sinds... sinds...”

“Ah, maar toen we nog jong waren,” zei oude Patrick, hem een klopje op de schouder gevend, “maakten we er echt geen punt van om een hele nacht door te gaan! Ik herinner me dat we naar Covent Garden gingen om rozen te kopen voor een zekere dame...”<sup>105</sup>

Delia glimlachte alsof een of andere romantische gedachte, haar eigen of die van iemand anders, naar boven kwam.

---

<sup>103</sup> "Kitty Lasswade was saying" uses a gerund-participle to the effect of suggesting an uncertain outcome. If she had 'said' this to Eleanor instead, it would be like every other sentence in the novel. To make sure this distinction does not get lost in translation, I used the verb 'proberen'.

<sup>104</sup> The original sentence here comes from a children's story in which the pigeon's call is turned into a sentence, which the pigeon-character utters as a bit of a warning, though the actual meaning of "coos" is not clear. In Dutch, there is no similar song so this added meaning cannot be put in there, unless it were to be explicitly mentioned. Letting the original sentence stay in place could work, though the Dutch reader would probably not be able to make any sense of it without an explanatory footnote. Instead, I chose to imitate the pigeon's call by copying the rhythm this bird uses, staying with the basic interpretation.

<sup>105</sup> Using the progressive here would be too contrived in Dutch, and especially since we are dealing with dialogue text here. The most important consideration here is whether an actual old man would utter such a sentence in conversation.

“En ik...” begon Eleanor. Ze stopte. Ze zag een lege melkfles en vallende bladeren<sup>106</sup>. Toen was het herfst geweest. Nu was het zomer. De lucht was fletsig blauw; de daken kregen een zweem van paars zo tegen het blauw afgezet; de schoorstenen waren een puur baksteenrood. Een etherische rust en eenvoud bedekte alles.

“En de metro’s lopen allemaal niet meer, en de autobussen ook allemaal niet,” zei ze terwijl ze zich omdraaide. “Hoe komen we thuis?”

“We kunnen lopen,” zei Rose. “Een wandeling<sup>107</sup> kan geen kwaad.”

“Niet op zo’n mooie zomerochtend,” zei Martin.

Een briesje ging over het plein. In de serene stilte konden ze de takken horen ritselen die lichtjes werden opgetild en weer vielen en een golf van groen licht door de lucht deden schudden.

Toen vloog de deur open. Paar na paar kwam weer binnenstromen<sup>108</sup>, chaotisch, vrolijk, op zoek naar hun jassen en hun hoeden, om afscheid te nemen.

“Het is geweldig dat jullie allemaal gekomen zijn!” riep Delia uit, zich richtend tot hen allen met haar armen uitgestrekt<sup>109</sup>.

“Dank jullie wel voor jullie komst!” kirde ze<sup>110</sup>.

“En kijk toch eens naar Maggie’s bloemen” zei ze en nam een veelkleurige bos bloemen aan die Maggie naar haar uitstak.

“Wat heb je ze prachtig geschikt!” zei ze. “Kijk toch, Eleanor!” Ze draaide zich om naar haar zus.

Maar Eleanor stond met haar rug naar hen toe, kijkend naar een taxi die langzaam rond het plein gleed.<sup>111</sup> Hij stopte voor een huis twee deuren verderop.

---

<sup>106</sup> The easiest solution here is to turn the gerund-participle into an adjective; that way it is also possible to preserve the progressive aspect.

<sup>107</sup> The gerund-participle was replaced with the noun “wandeling” mainly because it is the most suitable solution for this dialogue situation. The action of walking has already been mentioned and the progressive does not carry great significance here.

<sup>108</sup> The verb that was chosen carries a strong image within it that helps convey the sense of duration.

<sup>109</sup> “[T]urning to” has been interpreted figuratively here, while maintaining the progressive form, both of which suit the slightly dramatic behaviour of Delia the hostess.

<sup>110</sup> The sound that Delia would utter here has been specified slightly, as would be normal in Dutch texts. ‘Roepen’ would be deemed unsuitable for the situation.

<sup>111</sup> To use progressive equivalents for all gerund-participles here would be very strange in Dutch, but because duration is indeed relevant in this situation, it has been



“Zijn ze niet prachtig?” zei Delia, de bloemen voor zich uit houdend.

Eleanor schrok op.

“De rozen? Ja...” zei ze. Maar ze was de taxi aan het volgen<sup>112</sup>. Een jongeman was uitgestapt; hij betaalde de chauffeur. Daarachter volgde een meisje in reiskleding van tweed. Hij stak zijn huissleutel in de deur. “Ziedaar<sup>113</sup>,” mompelde Eleanor, toen hij de deur opende en ze een moment bleven staan op de drempel. “Ziedaar!” herhaalde ze, toen de deur met een kleine bons achter hen dichtviel.

Toen draaide ze zich om naar de kamer. “En nu?” ze en keek naar Morris, die de laatste druppels uit een glas wijn dronk. “En nu?” vroeg ze, haar handen naar hem uitgestrekt<sup>114</sup>.

DE ZON was opgekomen en de lucht boven de huizen droeg een zeldzame schoonheid, eenvoud en vrede.

---

preserved for “looking” so the Dutch reader will still be drawn into Eleanor’s experience.

<sup>112</sup> The verb “volgen” was used here to emphasise continuing movement.

<sup>113</sup> The somewhat archaic option “ziedaar” both draws attention and points in a certain direction. As we are dealing with a somewhat dated situation as well as some dramatic effect, it was deemed to be suitable here.

<sup>114</sup> While “uitgestrekt” does not keep the durative in place, it does have continued effect: the hands are still in place. The sense of abstractness was also maintained by keeping the sentence short.

## Source Text

I.

“You know all the cousins used to come together in the summer,” her mother suddenly resumed. “There was your Uncle Horace. . . .”

“The one with the glass eye,” said Delia.

“Yes. He hurt his eye on the rocking-horse. The aunts thought so much of Horace. They would say . . .” Here there was a long pause. She seemed to be fumbling to find the exact words.

“When Horace comes . . . remember to ask him about the dining-room door.”

A curious amusement seemed to fill Mrs Pargiter. She actually laughed. She must be thinking of some long-past family joke, Delia supposed, as she watched the smile flicker and fade away. There was complete silence. Her mother lay with her eyes shut; the hand with the single ring, the white and wasted hand, lay on the counterpane. In the silence they could hear a coal click in the grate and a street hawker droning down the road. Mrs Pargiter said no more. She lay perfectly still. Then she sighed profoundly.

The door opened, and the nurse came in. Delia rose and went out. Where am I? she asked herself, staring at a white jug stained pink by the setting sun. For a moment she seemed to be in some borderland between life and death. Where am I? she repeated, looking at the pink jug, for it all looked strange. Then she heard water rushing and feet thudding on the floor above.

“HERE YOU ARE, Rosie,” said Nurse, looking up from the wheel of the sewing-machine as Rose came in.

The nursery was brightly lit; there was an unshaded lamp on the table. Mrs C., who came every week with the washing, was sitting in the armchair with a cup in her hand. “Go and get your sewing, there’s a good girl,” said Nurse as Rose shook hands with Mrs C., “or you’ll never be done in time for Papa’s birthday,” she added, clearing a space on the nursery table.

Rose opened the table drawer and took out the boot-bag that she was embroidering with a design of blue and red flowers for her father’s birthday. There

were still several clusters of little pencilled roses to be worked. She spread it on the table and examined it as Nurse resumed what she was saying to Mrs C. about Mrs Kirby's daughter. But Rose did not listen.

Then I shall go by myself, she decided, straightening out the boot-bag. If Martin won't come with me, then I shall go by myself.

"I left my work-box in the drawing-room," she said aloud.

"Well, then, go and fetch it," said Nurse, but she was not attending; she wanted to go on with what she was saying to Mrs C. about the grocer's daughter.

NOW THE ADVENTURE has begun, Rose said to herself as she stole on tiptoe to the night nursery. Now she must provide herself with ammunition and provisions; she must steal Nurse's latchkey; but where was it? Every night it was hidden in a new place for fear of burglars. It would be either under the handkerchief-case or in the little box where she kept her mother's gold watch-chain. There it was. Now she had her pistol and her shot, she thought, taking her own purse from her own drawer, and enough provisions, she thought, as she hung her hat and coat over her arm, to last a fortnight.

She stole past the nursery, down the stairs. She listened intently as she passed the schoolroom door. She must be careful not to tread on a dry branch, or to let any twig crack under her, she told herself, as she went on tiptoe. Again she stopped and listened as she passed her mother's bedroom door. All was silent. Then she stood for a moment on the landing, looking down into the hall. The dog was asleep on the mat; the coast was clear; the hall was empty. She heard voices murmuring in the drawing-room.

She turned the latch of the front door with extreme gentleness, and closed it with scarcely a click behind her. Until she was round the corner she crouched close to the wall so that nobody could see her. When she reached the corner under the laburnum tree she stood erect.

"I am Pargiter of Pargiter's Horse," she said, flourishing her hand, "riding to the rescue!"

She was riding by night on a desperate mission to a besieged garrison, she told herself. She had a secret message — she clenched her fist on her purse — to deliver to the General in person. All their lives depended upon it. The British flag

was still flying on the central tower — Lamley's shop was the central tower; the General was standing on the roof of Lamley's shop with his telescope to his eye. All their lives depended upon her riding to them through the enemy's country. Here she was galloping across the desert. She began to trot. It was growing dark. The street lamps were being lit. The lamplighter was poking his stick up into the little trap-door; the trees in the front gardens made a wavering network of shadow on the pavement; the pavement stretched before her broad and dark. Then there was the crossing; and then there was Lamley's shop on the little island of shops opposite. She had only to cross the desert, to ford the river, and she was safe. Flourishing the arm that held the pistol, she clapped spurs to her horse and galloped down Melrose Avenue. As she ran past the pillar-box the figure of a man suddenly emerged under the gas lamp.

"The enemy!" Rose cried to herself. "The enemy! Bang!" she cried, pulling the trigger of her pistol and looking him full in the face as she passed him. It was a horrid face: white, peeled, pock-marked; he leered at her. He put out his arm as if to stop her. He almost caught her. She dashed past him. The game was over.

She was herself again, a little girl who had disobeyed her sister, in her house shoes, flying for safety to Lamley's shop.

FRESH-FACED Mrs Lamley was standing behind the counter folding up the newspapers. She was pondering among her twopenny watches, cards of tools, toy boats and boxes of cheap stationery something pleasant, it seemed; for she was smiling. Then Rose burst in. She looked up enquiringly.

"Hullo, Rosie!" she exclaimed. "What d'you want, my dear?"

She kept her hand on the pile of newspapers. Rose stood there panting. She had forgotten what she had come for.

"I want the box of ducks in the window," Rose at last remembered.

Mrs Lamley waddled round to fetch it.

"Isn't it rather late for a little girl like you to be out alone?" she asked, looking at her as if she knew she had come out in her house shoes, disobeying her sister.

“Good-night, my dear, and run along home,” she said, giving her the parcel. The child seemed to hesitate on the doorstep: she stood there staring at the toys under the hanging oil lamp; then out she went reluctantly.

I GAVE MY message to the General in person, she said to herself as she stood outside on the pavement again. And this is the trophy, she said, grasping the box under her arm. I am returning in triumph with the head of the chief rebel, she told herself, as she surveyed the stretch of Melrose Avenue before her. I must set spurs to my horse and gallop. But the story no longer worked. Melrose Avenue remained Melrose Avenue. She looked down it. There was the long stretch of bare street in front of her. The trees were trembling their shadows over the pavement. The lamps stood at great distances apart, and there were pools of darkness between. She began to trot. Suddenly, as she passed the lamp-post, she saw the man again. He was leaning with his back against the lamp-post, and the light from the gas lamp flickered over his face. As she passed he sucked his lips in and out. He made a mewling noise. But he did not stretch his hands out at her; they were unbuttoning his clothes.

She fled past him. She thought that she heard him coming after her. She heard his feet padding on the pavement. Everything shook as she ran; pink and black spots danced before her eyes as she ran up the door-steps, fitted her key in the latch and opened the hall door. She did not care whether she made a noise or not. She hoped somebody would come out and speak to her. But nobody heard her. The hall was empty. The dog was asleep on the mat. Voices still murmured in the drawing-room.

## 2.

“Well,” said Eleanor, looking around her, “I think I shall go to bed. Nurse will ring,” she said, “if she wants anything.”

“We may as well all go,” said Morris. Milly began to roll up her embroidery. Morris began to rake out the fire.

“What an absurd fire –“ he exclaimed irritably. The coals were all stuck together. They were blazing fiercely.

Suddenly a bell rang.

“Nurse!” Eleanor exclaimed. She looked at Morris. She left the room hurriedly. Morris followed her.

But what was the good? Delia thought to herself. It’s only another false alarm. She got up. “It’s only Nurse,” she said to Milly, who was standing up with a look of alarm on her face. She can’t be going to cry again, she thought, and strolled off into the front room. Candles were burning on the mantelpiece; they lit up the picture of her mother. She glanced at the portrait of her mother. The girl in white seemed to be presiding over the protracted affair of her own death-bed with a smiling indifference that outraged her daughter.

“You’re not going to die – you’re not going to die!” said Delia bitterly, looking up at her. Her father, alarmed by the bell, had come into the room. He was wearing a red smoking-cap with an absurd tassel.

But it’s all for nothing, Delia said silently, looking at her father. She felt that they must both check their rising excitement. “Nothing’s going to happen – nothing whatever,” she said, looking at him. But at that moment Eleanor came into the room. She was very white.

“Where’s Papa?” she said, looking round. She saw him. “Come, Papa, come,” she said, stretching out her hand. “Mama’s dying....And the children,” she said to Milly over her shoulder.

Two little white patches appeared above her father’s ears, Delia noticed. His eyes fixed themselves. He braced himself. He strode past them up the stairs. They all followed in a little procession behind. The dog, Delia noticed, tried to come upstairs with them; but Morris cuffed him back. The Colonel went first into the bedroom; then Eleanor; then Morris; then Martin came down, pulling on a dressing-gown; then Milly brought Rose wrapped in a shawl. But Delia hung back behind the others. There were so many of them in the room that she could get no further than the doorway. She could see two nurses standing with their backs to the wall opposite. One of them was crying – the one, she observed, who had only come that afternoon. She could not see the bed from where she stood. But she could see that Morris had fallen on his knees. Ought I to kneel too, she wondered? Not in the passage, she decided. She looked away; she saw the little window at the end of the passage. Rain was falling; there was a light somewhere that made the raindrops shine. One drop after another slid down the pane; they slid and they paused; one drop

joined another drop and then they slid again. There was complete silence in the bedroom.

Is this death? Delia asked herself. For a moment there seemed to be something there. A wall of water seemed to gape apart; the two walls held themselves apart. She listened. There was complete silence. Then there was a stir, a shuffle of feet in the bedroom and out came her father, stumbling.

“Rose!” he cried. “Rose! Rose!” He held his arms with the fists clenched out in front of him.

You did that very well, Delia told him as he passed her. It was like a scene in a play. She observed quite dispassionately that the raindrops were still falling. One sliding met another and together in one drop they rolled to the bottom of the window-pane.

IT WAS RAINING. A fine rain, a gentle shower, was peppering the pavements and making them greasy. Was it worth while opening an umbrella, was it necessary to hail a hansom, people coming out from the theatres asked themselves, looking up at the mild, milky sky in which the stars were blunted. Where it fell on earth, on fields and gardens, it drew up the smell of earth. Here a drop poised on a grass-blade; there filled the cup of a wild flower, till the breeze stirred and the rain was spilt. Was it worth while to shelter under the hawthorn, under the hedge, the sheep seemed to question; and the cows, already turned out in the grey fields, under the dim hedges, munched on, sleepily chewing with raindrops on their hides. Down on the roofs it fell – here in Westminster, there in the Ladbroke Grove; on the wide sea a million points pricked the blue monster like an innumerable shower bath. Over the vast domes, the soaring spires of slumbering University cities, over the leaded libraries, and the museums, now shrouded in brown Holland, the gentle rain slid down, till, reaching the mouths of those fantastic laughers, the many-clawed gargoyles, it splayed out in a thousand odd indentations. A drunken man slipping in a narrow passage outside the public house, cursed it. Women in childbirth heard the doctor say to the midwife, “It’s raining.” And the walloping Oxford bells, turning over and over like slow porpoises in a sea of oil, contemplatively intoned their musical incantations. The fine rain, the gentle rain, poured equally over the mitred and the bareheaded with an impartiality which suggested that the god of rain, if there were a

god, was thinking Let it not be restricted to the very wise, the very great, but let all breathing kind, the munchers and the chewers, the ignorant, the unhappy, those who toil in the furnace making innumerable copies of the same pot, those who bore red hot minds through contorted letters, and also Mrs. Jones in the alley, share my bounty.

### 3.

In London all was gallant and strident; the season was beginning; horns hooted; the traffic roared; flags flew taut as trout in a stream. And from all the spires of all the London churches — the fashionable saints of Mayfair, the dowdy saints of Kensington, the hoary saints of the city — the hour was proclaimed. The air over London seemed a rough sea of sound through which circles travelled. But the clocks were irregular, as if the saints themselves were divided. There were pauses, silences. . . . Then the clocks struck again.

[...]

IT WAS a clear still night and every tree in the square was visible; some were black, others were sprinkled with strange patches of green artificial light. Above the arc lamps rose shafts of darkness. Although it was close on midnight, it scarcely seemed to be night; but rather some ethereal disembodied day, for there were so many lamps in the streets; cars passing; men in white mufflers with their light overcoats open walking along the clean dry pavements, and many houses were still lit up, for everyone was giving parties. The town changed as they drew smoothly through Mayfair. The public houses were closing; here was a group clustered round a lamp-post at the corner. A drunken man was bawling out some loud song; a tipsy girl with a feather bobbing in her eyes was swaying as she clung to the lamp-post . . . but Kitty's eyes alone registered what she saw. After the talk, the effort and the hurry, she could add nothing to what she saw. And they swept on quickly. Now they had turned, and the car was gliding at full speed up a long bright avenue of great shuttered shops. The streets were almost empty. The yellow station clock showed that they had five minutes to spare.

Just in time, she said to herself. The usual exhilaration mounted in her as she



walked along the platform. Diffused light poured down from a great height. Men's cries and the clangour of shunting carriages echoed in the immense vacancy. The train was waiting; travellers were making ready to start. Some were standing with one foot on the step of the carriage drinking out of thick cups as if they were afraid to go far from their seats. She looked down the length of the train and saw the engine sucking water from a hose. It seemed all body, all muscle; even the neck had been consumed into the smooth barrel of the body. This was "the" train; the others were toys in comparison. She snuffed up the sulphurous air, which left a slight tinge of acid at the back of the throat, as if it already had a tang of the north.

The guard had seen her and was coming towards her with his whistle in his hand.

"Good evening, m'lady," he said.

"Good evening, Purvis. Run it rather fine," she said as he unlocked the door of her carriage.

"Yes, m'lady. Only just in time," he replied.

He locked the door. Kitty turned and looked round the small lighted room in which she was to spend the night. Everything was ready; the bed was made; the sheets were turned down; her bag was on the seat. The guard passed the window, holding his flag in his hand.

A man who had only just caught the train ran across the platform with his arms spread out. A door slammed.

"Just in time," Kitty said to herself as she stood there. Then the train gave a gentle tug. She could hardly believe that so great a monster could start so gently on so long a journey. Then she saw the tea-urn sliding past.

"We're off," she said to herself, sinking back onto the seat. "We're off!"

All the tension went out of her body. She was alone; and the train was moving. The last lamp on the platform slid away. The last figure on the platform vanished.

"What fun!" she said to herself, as if she were a little girl who had run away from her nurse and escaped. "We're off!"

SHE SAT STILL for a moment in her brightly lit compartment; then she tugged the blind and it sprang up with a jerk. Elongated lights slid past; lights in factories and

warehouses; lights in obscure back streets. Then there were asphalt paths; more lights in public gardens; and then bushes and a hedge in a field. They were leaving London behind them; leaving that blaze of light which seemed, as the train rushed into the darkness, to contract itself into one fiery circle. The train rushed with a roar through a tunnel. It seemed to perform an act of amputation; now she was cut off from that circle of light.

[...]

Smoothly and powerfully she was being drawn through England to the north. I need do nothing, she thought, nothing, nothing, but let myself be drawn on. She turned and pulled the blue shade over the lamp. The sound of the train became louder in the darkness; its roar, its vibration, seemed to fall into a regular rhythm of sound, raking through her mind, rolling out her thoughts.

Ah, but not all of them, she thought, turning restlessly on her shelf. Some still jutted up. One's not a child, she thought, staring at the light under the blue shade, any longer. The years changed things; destroyed things; heaped things up — worries and bothers; here they were again. Fragments of talk kept coming back to her; sights came before her. She saw herself raise the window with a jerk; and the bristles on Aunt Warburton's chin. She saw the women rising, and the men filing in. She sighed as she turned on her ledge. All their clothes are the same, she thought; all their lives are the same. And which is right? she thought, turning restlessly on her shelf. Which is wrong? She turned again.

The train rushed her on. The sound had deepened; it had become a continuous roar. How could she sleep? How could she prevent herself from thinking? She turned away from the light. *Now where are we?* she said to herself. *Where is the train at this moment?* *Now*, she murmured, shutting her eyes, *we are passing the white house on the hill; now we are going through the tunnel; now we are crossing the bridge over the river. . . .* A blank intervened; her thoughts became spaced; they became muddled. Past and present became jumbled together. She saw Margaret Marrable pinching the dress in her fingers, but she was leading a bull with a ring through its nose. . . . This is sleep, she said to herself, half opening her eyes; thank goodness, she said to herself, shutting them again, this is sleep. And she

resigned herself to the charge of the train, whose roar now became dulled and distant.

THERE WAS a tap at her door. She lay for a moment, wondering why the room shook so; then the scene settled itself; she was in the train; she was in the country; they were nearing the station. She got up.

[...]

“Let’s have it open, Cole,” she said, and he opened the stiff new hood, and she got in beside him. Very slowly, for the engine seemed to beat intermittently, starting and stopping and then starting again, they moved off. They drove through the town; all the shops were still shut; women were on their knees scrubbing doorsteps; blinds were still drawn in bedrooms and sitting-rooms; there was very little traffic about. Only milk-carts rattled past. Dogs roamed down the middle of the street on private errands of their own. Cole had to hoot again and again.

[...]

Too fast, too fast! Kitty said to herself. But she liked the rush of the wind in her face. Now they reached the Lodge gate; Mrs Preedy was holding it open with a white-haired child on her arm. They rushed through the Park. The deer looked up and hopped away lightly through the fern.

“Two minutes under the quarter, m’lady,” said Cole as they swept in a circle and drew up at the door. Kitty stood for a moment **looking** at the car. She laid her hand on the bonnet. It was hot. She gave it a little pat. “She did it beautifully, Cole,” she said. “I’ll tell his Lordship.” Cole smiled; he was happy.

[...]

The wind seemed to rise as she walked under the trees. It sang in their tops, but it was silent beneath. The dead leaves crackled under foot; among them sprang up the pale spring flowers, the loveliest of the year — blue flowers and white

flowers, trembling on cushions of green moss. Spring was sad always, she thought; it brought back memories. All passes, all changes, she thought, as she climbed up the little path between the trees. Nothing of this belonged to her; her son would inherit; his wife would walk here after her. She broke off a twig; she picked a flower and put it to her lips. But she was in the prime of life; she was vigorous. She strode on. The ground rose sharply; her muscles felt strong and flexible as she pressed her thick-soled shoes to the ground. She threw away her flower. The trees thinned as she strode higher and higher. Suddenly she saw the sky between two striped tree trunks extraordinarily blue. She came out on the top. The wind **ceased**; the country spread wide all round her. Her body seemed to shrink; her eyes to widen. She threw herself on the ground, and looked over the billowing land that went rising and falling, away and away, until somewhere far off it reached the sea. Uncultivated, uninhabited, existing by itself, for itself, without towns or houses it looked from this height. Dark wedges of shadow, bright breadths of light lay side by side. Then, as she watched, light moved and dark moved; light and shadow went travelling over the hills and over the valleys. A deep murmur sang in her ears — the land itself, singing to itself, a chorus, alone. She lay there listening. She was happy, completely. Time had ceased.

#### 4.

Etho passo tanno hai,  
 Fai donk to tu do,  
 Mai to, kai to, lai to see  
 Toh dom to tuh do —

That was what it sounded like. Not a word was recognisable. The distorted sounds rose and sank as if they followed a tune. They stopped.

They stood with their hands behind their backs. Then with one impulse they attacked the next verse:

Fanno to par, etto to mar,  
 Timin tudo, tido,  
 Foll to gar in, mitno to par,  
 Eido, teido, meido —

They sang the second verse more fiercely than the first. The rhythm seemed to rock and the unintelligible words ran themselves together almost into a shriek. The grown-up people did not know whether to laugh or to cry. Their voices were so harsh; the accent was so hideous.

They burst out again:

Chree to gay ei,  
Geeray didax. . . .

Then they stopped. It seemed to be in the middle of a verse. They stood there grinning, silent, looking at the floor. Nobody knew what to say. There was something horrible in the noise they made. It was so shrill, so discordant, and so meaningless. Then old Patrick ambled up.

“Ah, that’s very nice, that’s very nice. Thank you, my dears,” he said in his genial way, fiddling with his toothpick. The children grinned at him. Then they began to make off. As they sidled past Martin, he slipped coins into their hands. Then they made a dash for the door.

“But what the devil were they singing?” said Hugh Gibbs. “I couldn’t understand a word of it, I must confess.” He held his hands to the sides of his large white waistcoat.

“Cockney accent, I suppose,” said Patrick. “What they teach ’em at school, you know.”

“But it was . . .” Eleanor began. She stopped. What was it? As they stood there they had looked so dignified; yet they had made this hideous noise. The contrast between their faces and their voices was astonishing; it was impossible to find one word for the whole. “Beautiful?” she said, with a note of interrogation, turning to Maggie.

“Extraordinarily,” said Maggie.

But Eleanor was not sure that they were thinking of the same thing.

SHE GATHERED together her gloves, her bag and two or three coppers, and got up. The room was full of a queer pale light. Objects seemed to be rising out of their sleep, out of their disguise, and to be assuming the sobriety of daily life. The room was making ready for its use as an estate agent’s office. The tables were becoming

office tables; their legs were the legs of office tables, and yet they were still strewn with plates and glasses, with roses, lilies and carnations.

“It’s time to go,” she said, crossing the room. Delia had gone to the window. Now she jerked the curtains open.

“The dawn!” she exclaimed rather melodramatically.

The shapes of houses appeared across the square. Their blinds were all drawn; they seemed fast asleep still in the morning pallor.

“The dawn!” said Nicholas, getting up and stretching himself. He too walked across to the window. Renny followed him.

“Now for the peroration,” he said, standing with him in the window. “The dawn — the new day —”

He pointed at the trees, at the roofs, at the sky.

“No,” said Nicholas, holding back the curtain. “There you are mistaken. There is going to be no peroration — no peroration!” he exclaimed, throwing his arm out, “because there was no speech.”

“But the dawn has risen,” said Renny, pointing at the sky.

IT WAS A FACT. The sun had risen. The sky between the chimneys looked extraordinarily blue.

“And I am going to bed,” said Nicholas after a pause. He turned away.

“Where is Sara?” he said, looking round him. There she was curled up in a corner with her head against a table asleep apparently.

“Wake your sister, Magdalena,” he said, turning to Maggie. Maggie looked at her. Then she took a flower from the table and tossed it at her. She half-opened her eyes. “It’s time,” said Maggie, touching her on the shoulder. “Time, is it?” she sighed. She yawned and stretched herself. She fixed her eyes on Nicholas as if she were bringing him back to the field of vision. Then she laughed.

“Nicholas!” she exclaimed.

“Sara!” he replied. They smiled at each other. Then he helped her up and she balanced herself uncertainly against her sister, and rubbed her eyes.

“How strange,” she murmured, looking round her, “. . . how strange. . . .”

There were the smeared plates, and the empty wine-glasses; the petals and the bread crumbs. In the mixture of lights they looked prosaic but unreal;

cadaverous but brilliant. And there against the window, gathered in a group, were the old brothers and sisters.

“Look, Maggie,” she whispered, turning to her sister, “Look!” She pointed at the Pargiters, standing in the window.

THE GROUP in the window, the men in their black-and-white evening dress, the women in their crimsons, golds and silvers, wore a statuesque air for a moment, as if they were carved in stone. Their dresses fell in stiff sculptured folds. Then they moved; they changed their attitudes; they began to talk.

“Can’t I give you a lift back, Nell?” Kitty Lasswade was saying. “I’ve a car waiting.”

Eleanor did not answer. She was looking at the curtained houses across the square. The windows were spotted with gold. Everything looked clean swept, fresh and virginal. The pigeons were shuffling on the tree tops.

“I’ve a car . . .” Kitty repeated.

“Listen . . .” said Eleanor, raising her hand. Upstairs they were playing “God save the King” on the gramophone; but it was the pigeons she meant; they were crooning.

“That’s wood pigeons, isn’t it?” said Kitty. She put her head on one side to listen. Take two coos, Taffy, take two coos . . . tak . . . they were crooning.

“Wood pigeons?” said Edward, putting his hand to his ear.

“There on the tree tops,” said Kitty. The green-blue birds were shuffling about on the branches, pecking and crooning to themselves.

Morris brushed the crumbs off his waistcoat.

“What an hour for us old fogies to be out of bed!” he said. “I haven’t seen the sun rise since . . . since. . . .”

“Ah, but when we were young,” said old Patrick, slapping him on the shoulder, “we thought nothing of making a night of it! I remember going to Covent Garden and buying roses for a certain lady. . . .”

Delia smiled as if some romance, her own or another’s, had been recalled to her.

“And I . . .” Eleanor began. She stopped. She saw an empty milk jug and leaves falling. Then it had been autumn. Now it was summer. The sky was a faint blue; the

roofs were tinged purple against the blue; the chimneys were a pure brick red. An air of ethereal calm and simplicity lay over everything.

“And all the tubes have stopped, and all the omnibuses,” she said turning round. “How are we going to get home?”

“We can walk,” said Rose. “Walking won’t do us any harm.”

“Not on a fine summer morning,” said Martin.

A breeze went through the square. In the stillness they could hear the branches rustle as they rose slightly, and fell, and shook a wave of green light through the air.

Then the door burst open. Couple after couple came flocking in, dishevelled, gay, to look for their cloaks and their hats, to say good-night.

“It’s been so good of you to come!” Delia exclaimed, turning towards them with her hands outstretched.

“Thank you — thank you for coming!” she cried.

“And look at Maggie’s bunch!” she said, taking a bunch of many coloured flowers that Maggie held out to her.

“How beautifully you’ve arranged them!” she said. “Look, Eleanor!” She turned to her sister.

But Eleanor was standing with her back to them. She was watching a taxi that was gliding slowly round the square. It stopped in front of a house two doors down.

“Aren’t they lovely?” said Delia, holding out the flowers.

Eleanor started.

“The roses? Yes . . .” she said. But she was watching the cab. A young man had got out; he paid the driver. Then a girl in a tweed travelling suit followed him. He fitted his latch-key to the door. “There,” Eleanor murmured, as he opened the door and they stood for a moment on the threshold. “There!” she repeated, as the door shut with a little thud behind them.

Then she turned round into the room. “And now?” she said, looking at Morris, who was drinking the last drops of a glass of wine. “And now?” she asked, holding out her hands to him.

THE SUN had risen, and the sky above the houses wore an air of extraordinary beauty, simplicity and peace.



## Bibliography

- Aarts, F.G.A.M. and H.Chr. Wekker. *A Contrastive Grammar of English and Dutch. Contrastieve grammatica Engels/Nederlands*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987.
- Aixela. "An overview of interference in scientific and technical translation." *The Journal of Specialised Translation*. 11 (2009): 75-88. 14 August 2011.  
<[http://www.jostrans.org/issue11/art\\_aixela.pdf](http://www.jostrans.org/issue11/art_aixela.pdf)>
- Andringa, Els. "Penetrating the Dutch Polysystem: The Reception of Virginia Woolf, 1920- 2000." *Poetics Today* 27.6 (2006): 501-568. 4 August 2010.  
<<http://web.ebscohost.com.proxy.library.uu.nl/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&hid=14&sid=7d38d5fa-38c5-414b-85ee-71ff907e9820%40sessionmgr10>>
- Brassinga, Anneke. *Opening lecture of the Literary Translation master's programme at Utrecht University*. "Steikzwulle sweipels: Over de noodzaak van literair vertalen." Enschede: AfdH Uitgevers, 2010.
- Briggs, Julia. *Reading Virginia Woolf*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.
- Duffley, Patrick J. *The English gerund-participle: A Comparison With The Infinitive*". New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006.
- Hermesen Joke J. *Stil de tijd*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij de Arbeiderspers, 2010.
- Hussey, Mark. Preface. *The Years*. By Virginia Woolf. 1939. Annotated ed. Orlando: Harcourt, 2008. xv – xxiv.
- Königs, Karin. *Übersetzen Englisch – Deutsch: Ein systemischer Ansatz*. 2nd ed. München: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2004.
- Koster, Cees. *From World to World. An Armamentarium for the Study of Poetic Discourse in Translation*. Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 2000.
- Leaska, Mitchell. Introduction. *The Pargiters by Virginia Woolf: The Novel-Essay Portion of*

- The Years*. London: Hogarth Press, 1978.
- Leech, Geoffrey and Michael Short. *Style in Fiction. A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. 2nd ed. London/New York: Longman, 2007.
- McNees, Eleanor. Introduction. *The Years*. By Virginia Woolf. 1939. Annotated ed. Orlando: Harcourt, 2008. xli – lxxxiii.
- Pascoe, David. Lecture notes, 20th Century British Literature, Utrecht University May-June 2009.
- Radin, Grace. *The Years: The Evolution of a Novel*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981.
- Spies, Jan-Jaap. “Translating Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury*: How Translation Can Benefit from Stylistic Analysis.” Master Thesis. Utrecht University, 2009.
- Vereniging van Schrijvers en Vertalers. “Modelcontract voor de uitgave van een vertaling van een literair werk”. *VSenV.nl*. 2007. 25 August 2011.  
<<http://www.vvl.nu/content/68/47/modelcontracten.html>>
- Wardt, M.R. van de. “What a plunge! Translating Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs. Dalloway*”. Master Thesis. Utrecht University, 2010.
- Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One’s Own*. 1929. eBooks@Adelaide. 2009. July 2011.  
<<http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/w/woolf/virginia/w91r/>>
- Woolf, Virginia. *Mrs Dalloway*. 1925. London: Vintage, 2004.
- Woolf, Virginia. “Speech Before the London / National Society for Women’s Service, January 21 1931”. In *The Pargiters by Virginia Woolf: The Novel-Essay Portion of The Years*. Ed. Mitchell A. Leaska. London: Hogarth Press, 1978.
- Woolf, Virginia. *The Years*. 1937. Ed. Eleanor McNees. Houghton: Orlando, 2008.

## Reference works

Genootschap Onze Taal. *Het Witte Boekje. Spellinggids van het Nederlands*. Utrecht:

Het Spectrum, 2006.

Genootschap Onze Taal. <<http://www.onzetaal.nl>>

Linden, G.A.M.M. van der. *Prisma woordenboek Duits-Nederlands*. Utrecht: Het

Spectrum, 2002.

Martin, W. and Guy A.J. Tops. *Van Dale groot woordenboek Engels-Nederlands*. 3rd

edition. Utrecht: Van Dale Lexicografie, 1998.

Martin, W. and Guy A.J. Tops. *Van Dale groot woordenboek Nederlands-Engels*. 3rd

edition. Utrecht: Van Dale Lexicografie, 1998.

OED Online. Oxford University Press. <<http://www.oed.com.proxy.library.uu.nl>>

Renkema, Jan. *Schrijfwijzer*. 4th edition. Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers, 2008.

<<http://www.statenvertaling.net/uitdrukkingen.html>>

Synoniemen.net. <<http://synoniemen.net>>