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## **Exploring *Skopos* in the Dutch Dubbed Versions of the Songs of Disney's *Frozen***

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### ABSTRACT

An important part in dubbing an animated musical film – as in any translation – is setting a purpose (perhaps subconsciously) for that particular project and establishing a set of priorities to achieve that purpose. This article investigates the purpose, or *skopos*, of the dubbing process of the Dutch songs from the 2013 Disney film *Frozen*, and analyses the effect of those *skopi* on the songs. This analysis uses the triangle of aspects, a comprehensive model to compare a dubbed version of a song to the original on several important aspects, such as rhythm, lip synchrony, and sense. It is found that the Dutch songs differ most from the originals on semantic aspects, while they are most similar on musical aspects, implying musicocentric *skopi*. The findings of this study offer a much-needed context for further comparative analyses in the genre of animated musical film dubbing.

Keywords: Dubbing; *Frozen*; *skopos*; song translation; triangle of aspects

Een belangrijk onderdeel van het nasynchroniseren van animatiemusicals is het (bewust of onbewust) bepalen van een doel voor het project, en het opstellen van prioriteiten om dat doel te behalen. In dit artikel wordt het doel, of de *skopos*, onderzocht van het nasynchronisatieproces van de liedjes uit de Disney-film *Frozen* (2013), en worden de effecten van die *skopos* op de liedjes geanalyseerd. Voor deze analyse wordt de *triangle of aspects* gebruikt, een analytisch model voor vergelijkende analyses van nagesynchroniseerde liedjes met de oorspronkelijke versies aan de hand van verschillende belangrijke aspecten, zoals het ritme, de bewegingen van de mond, en de betekenis. De Nederlandse versies verschillen het sterkst van de oorspronkelijke versies m.b.t. de semantische aspecten, en het minst sterk m.b.t. de muzikale aspecten. Dit wijst mogelijk op een *skopos* die muziek voorop stelt. De resultaten van dit onderzoek vormen een belangrijke context voor andere academische analyses van nagesynchroniseerde animatiemusicals.

Trefwoorden: *Frozen*; muziek vertalen; nasynchronisatie; *skopos*; triangle of aspects

### **1. Introduction**

As attested to by its box office results (Nash 2018) and its lasting presence in stores, *Frozen* is one of the most popular Disney films of this decade. Telling the story of the two orphaned princesses Elsa and Anna and their quest for love and self-discovery, the film was a hit not only

in the US, but also around the world. For its release in the Netherlands, a mere month after its Hollywood première on 19 November 2013, the film was dubbed in Dutch, which version was received just as positively there as the original in the US (Malach 2014; Wensink 2014). It could be inferred, then, that the dubbed version constituted an effective translation. One of the first and most important issues to determine a dubbed product's effectiveness is the definition of the *skopos*, or purpose, of the project, and what priorities need to be made to fulfil that *skopos* (Reiss & Vermeer 2014). While determining a *skopos* is usually a subconscious process, the dubbing commissioner commonly has a sense of purpose and the dubbing agents interpret that purpose (Munday 2012). However, its effect on the dubbed product may differ from the original intentions – especially in a genre as complicated and multifaceted as animated musical film. To respond to that notion, this study focuses not on the dubbing agents, but rather on the product itself. It compares the songs of the Dutch dubbed version of *Frozen* to the original songs and analyses the differences found to answer the question of what elements were prioritized in the dubbing process and to venture into what this set of priorities might mean for the songs' *skopi*.

Songs from animated musical films constitute a complex genre of dubbing that involves a diverse range of aspects and codes, including the musical, the visual, and the verbal (Chaume 2004; Susam-Sarajeva 2008), as well as an expansive collection of dubbing practices involving many different agents (Sánchez Mompéan 2015). As such, the value of end-product analysis seems quite significant if one aims to gain an understanding of the genre. Since research into animated musical film dubbing is still somewhat limited (Di Giovanni 2008; Susam-Sarajeva 2008, Low 2017), this study combines song translation research (e.g. Low 2005 and 2017; Franzon 2008) with film (e.g. Monaco 2013) and dubbing research (e.g. Chaume 2004 and 2012) to determine what elements are involved in the meaning-making process of songs from animated musical films, and how those elements are managed in the dubbing process. For the purpose of source and target text comparison and analysis, this study uses the triangle of aspects (Reus 2017), a model developed specifically for the analysis of animated musical film dubbing. This model is described in more detail in section 2, which also gives a brief summary of the songs from *Frozen* and the reason for focusing on this specific animated musical film. Sections 3 to 5 describe the findings of this study and contextualize the differences found to facilitate interpretation. Section 6 discusses the findings in the light of *skopos* and prioritisation. Section 7, finally, gives a brief

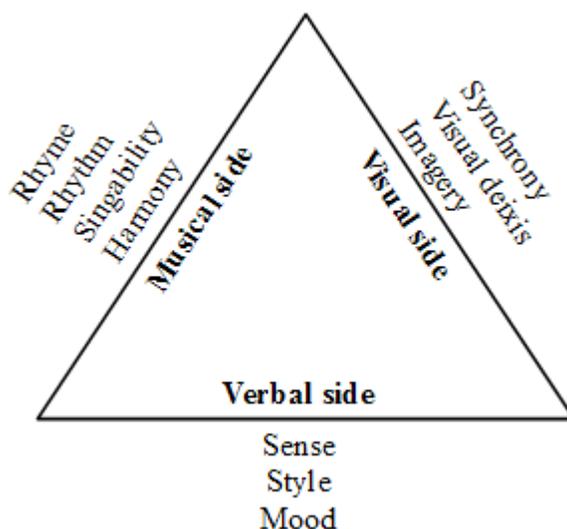
contextualisation of this study within the field of audiovisual translation, specifically dubbing and song translation research, and concludes with recommendations for further research.

While Dutch might be one of the linguistically closest living Germanic languages to English, translation from English into Dutch is subject to several important complications. Perhaps the most obvious is a common problem among many closely related language pairs: an abundance of false friends (Mackenzie 2014). Because Dutch and English have both borrowed significantly from French, Latin, and Greek, and Dutch has more recently borrowed large quantities of vocabulary from English, both languages include many words that sound similar but have different connotations or even denotations. In addition, musical translation in particular is complicated by the multisyllabic nature of Dutch verbs: English verb gerunds and present simple forms typically consist of one fewer syllable than their Dutch translations (Renkema 2012), and the final syllable in these Dutch verbs is unstressed whereas the English final syllable is usually stressed (e.g. “to read” is “*lezen*”, /'lezən/; “we write” is “*we schrijven*”, /wə 'sxreivən/). The same is true for the plural forms of some nouns (e.g. “books” is “*boeken*”, /'bu:kən/). Syntactically, Dutch has the Germanic switch of subject-verb-object structure to subject-object-verb structure in dependent clauses (Renkema 2012), which requires elaborate focus during poetic and musical translation projects. These and other structural differences between Dutch and English complicate the translation process from a linguistic standpoint.

## **2. Material and Method**

The primary purpose of this study is to explore and discuss the *skopi* and translation strategies of the Dutch dubbing process of the songs from Disney’s 2013 film *Frozen*. The assumption is that a thorough, extensive analysis of all aspects at play in songs from animated musical films will reveal a certain set of priorities that are the product of the translation strategy and, ultimately, *skopos*, of the dubbed version. Understanding this prioritisation and the *skopos* that governs a dubbed animated musical film song contributes to a better understanding of the film genre in general and constitutes a starting point for investigations into the reasons for and effects of that *skopos*.

Figure 1: The Triangle of Aspects



To systematically investigate the prioritisation of the songs, as dictated by the songs' *skopos*, this study employs the triangle of aspects (see figure 1), first introduced in Reus (2017). This model offers certain sets of aspects that together constitute the main codes of animated musical film dubbing: the musical, the visual, and the verbal. Each code, or side of the triangle, comprises three to four aspects that are considered essential to that side. These aspects, assuming the song line as their unit of analysis, facilitate numerical analysis, which contributes to the reliability and reproducibility of qualitative investigations of a film's songs. This analysis establishes the values for each aspect per line first of the original version and then of the Dutch dubbed version, and then compares the two versions to find and categorize differences.

On the musical side of the triangle, the four aspects are rhyme, rhythm, singability, and harmony. Based on Low (2005; 2017), rhyme maps the rhyme scheme of songs and the average number of times rhyme words are repeated. It can also be used to describe alliterations and assonances, establishing the lyrics' consonance. According to Franzon (2008) and Low (2017), rhythm denotes the number of syllables per line and the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables, and investigates how many syllables have been added or removed in the dubbed version and what positions those syllables occupied. Singability concerns how singable the most prominent syllables are, based on a system of vowel quality and consonant clusters. The smaller the

consonant clusters and the more open the vowels, the more singable a syllable (Low 2003; 2005). The aspect of harmony (so named because of the relation between musical harmonies and emotional responses [Clendinning and Marvin 2010]) considers the relation between the lyrics and the implicit, emotional effect of the music. Based on a song's key, time signature, tempo, melody, chord structure and arrangement, the music expresses certain emotional themes (ibid.) that can either illustrate, amplify, or provide disjuncture to the meaning of the lyrics (Kaindl 2005). The aspect of harmony analyses these musical themes and evaluates their relation to the lyrics to uncover the role the music plays in shaping the meaning of the song.

The visual side comprises the aspects of synchrony, visual deixis, and imagery. Synchrony follows Chaume's (2004; 2012) descriptions of the concepts of lip synchrony, or mouth movements, and isochrony, or utterance length. For this aspect, the visual shapes of the singer's mouth, if visible on screen, are described, and then compared to the verbal utterances in both languages. Close-up or extreme close-up shots are considered more influential than other shots where mouth movement is visible. Visual deixis, then, combines culturally significant kinetic features (Chaume 2004), referential gestures, and eye movement (Levinson 2004) to describe instances of explicit connection between the visual code and the original-language lyrics (e.g. a character visually pointing to an object while singing about that object). These instances are compared to the dubbed version to determine whether they have been retained, altered, replaced or removed, and whether some compensatory instances of visual deixis have been added. Imagery is comparable to harmony, on the musical side, in that it concerns the relation between the lyrics and the implicit, emotional effect of the visual code. Like the elements of music, a film's *mise-en-scène*, lighting, colour palette, forms, movements, and montage collaborate to communicate certain moods and have certain effects on the viewer (Arnheim 1974; Monaco 2013), and these moods and effects illustrate, amplify, or provide disjuncture to the meaning of the lyrics. The analysis of visual themes and the evaluation of their effect on the lyrics reveals the role of the imagery in the meaning expressed by the song.

The verbal side of the triangle, lastly, includes the aspects of sense, style, and mood. Sense involves the semantic meaning of the lyrics (Low 2017), and an analysis of 'sense' compares the original-language lyrics to the lyrics of the dubbed version to establish major and minor

differences. Major differences are instances of lines being replaced by lines with an entirely different pragmatic meaning, while minor differences concern added or removed connotations and partial alterations of the meaning of a line. The assignment of major and minor differences also takes into consideration the surrounding lines, to account for shifts of meaning across multiple lines. The aspect of style considers stylistic differences in language use, as well as the idiomaticity or naturalness of the language used. A system of simple, average or complex vocabulary and grammatical structures (Austin 1962, Biber 1989, Halliday and Matthiessen 2004), involving elements such as amount of Latinate vocabulary in English, number of dependent clauses, and subject position, helps assess the lyrics' style, but a qualitative inspection is required to properly describe idiomaticity. Finally, the aspect of mood governs the emotional effects of the narrative and means studying elements such as themes, motifs, symbolism, characterisation, and, obviously, the story of the song and its place in the film. An investigation of these elements thus contributes to our understanding of the role of narrative in the meaning of the song.

To conduct its analysis, this study concentrates on the songs of Disney's 2013 animated musical film *Frozen* (Del Vecho 2013), released in the US on 27 November 2013, and the Dutch-language dubbed version released in the Netherlands on 11 December 2013. This film has seen tremendous success across the globe: it was dubbed into 41 languages (Keegan 2014) and that number is still growing (Giese 2017). Being a contemporary and popular animated musical film by the largest producer of films of this genre, *Frozen* seems relevant to study in order to gain a better understanding of dubbing *skopos* in the genre.

The material for this study comprises the nine songs of *Frozen* that have lyrics, which together constitute around 23 minutes of music and exactly 395 lines (Del Vecho 2013). The first song, "Frozen Heart", introduces the film's main theme of fear versus love, as well as its main motif of ice representing emotions. "Do you Want to Build a Snowman" introduces Elsa and Anna, the two protagonist sister princesses, and the main conflict of the film: Anna's longing for a familial bond versus Elsa's fear of hurting Anna. "For the First Time in Forever" shows how both sisters deal with the radical change that Elsa's impending coronation introduces: Anna loves it but Elsa is afraid. "Love is an Open Door" displays Anna's longing for love and her apparently finding it

with one of the coronation ceremony’s guests. “Let It Go” concentrates on Elsa, portraying her liberation from her fears and social constraints as she flees the palace. “Reindeer(s) are Better than People” introduces the character of Kristoff, a young man who helps Anna find Elsa and becomes Anna’s secondary love interest (Elsa being the primary, considering the theme of familial love). “In Summer” introduces the character of Olaf, an animated snowman who represents the bond between Anna and Elsa, and stresses the importance of having a dream. “For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)” describes the first meeting between Anna and Elsa since Elsa left the palace, during which they are unable to overcome their differences. “Fixer Upper”, finally, stresses the importance of love and the destructive nature of fear, foreshadowing the film’s climax. All songs play significant narrative, musical and visual roles in shaping the meaning of *Frozen* and its reception.

### 3. Musical Analysis

This section describes and analyses the findings on the musical side in relation to the original and Dutch versions. On a general level, it is the musical side that appears to be most similar between the Dutch and original versions. Tables 1 to 4 present the findings per song and per language version for the musical aspects of rhyme, rhythm, singability, and harmony, respectively. As can be observed from Table 1, the original version has generally fewer different end-rhymes and more repetition than the Dutch, although “Frozen Heart” is an exception to this trend, as is “Love is an Open Door”, which is the only song with a major rhyme-scheme difference. Generally, however, rhyme might be the most divergent aspect on the musical side: the Dutch consistently diversifies the rhyme schemes of the songs and reduces repetition.

Table 1: Rhyme in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	Original		Dutch	
	<i>Number of rhymes</i>	<i>Average repetition</i>	<i>Number of rhymes</i>	<i>Average repetition</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	14	2.5	12	2.9
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	17	1.9	19	1.7

<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	26	2.5	30	2.2
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	15	2.7	21	1.9
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	20	2.5	24	2.1
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	7	2.1	10	1.5
<b>“In Summer”</b>	14	2.1	14	2.1
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	14	2.9	16	2.5
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	29	2.6	32	2.3

The aspect of rhythm might be most similar in the Dutch version to the original. The Dutch contains some unnatural stress, which mainly concentrates on “Do you want to build a snowman” (see table 2), and most songs include lines where the Dutch version has added or removed syllables; however, this is not a common occurrence, and the added or removed syllables are all in unstressed places, one example being the added anacrusis (i.e. the notes before the beginning of a measure) of line 9 of “For the first time in forever”, “Wow am I so ready for this change”. Anacrusis, according to Low (2005), are inconspicuous places to add syllables. Line 9, consisting of nine syllables in the original, is “*Maar wauw wat heb ik daarnaar uitgezien*” (“But wow I’ve been looking forward to it so much”, b.t.<sup>1</sup>) in the Dutch version, comprising ten syllables. Whereas the original “Wow” starts on the first beat of the measure, the Dutch “Maar” emerges as an anacrusis, leading up to “wauw” on the first beat of the measure. Other good strategies for adding syllables into a translated song are doubling notes (e.g. turning a quarter note into two eighth notes) or splitting up melismas (i.e. turning a single syllable sung across multiple different notes into multiple syllables). Both of these tools are used extensively in the Dutch version.

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<sup>1</sup> All back-translations are my translation.

Table 2: Rhythm in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	<b>Original</b>	<b>Dutch</b>		
	<i>Lines with unnatural stress</i>	<i>Lines with unnatural stress</i>	<i>Lines with a different syllable count</i>	<i>Lines with altered stress</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	1	0	2	1
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	0	7	2	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	1	3	8	3
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	1	6	7	0
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	1	2	3	1
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	0	2	1	2
<b>“In Summer”</b>	0	1	8	2
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	1	3	11	2
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	2	2	11	8

Singability generally does not differ much between the versions, although for individual songs (e.g. “Do you want to build a snowman” and “Fixer-upper”) the differences seem major (presenting in the Dutch version, respectively, a narrower focus on close-mid vowels and a shift towards increased close vowels): see table 3. A telling example from the former is the titular line 10, “Do you want to build a snowman?”, ending on a stressed /æ/, while the Dutch, “*Kom, dan maken we een sneeuwpop*” (“Come on, let’s build a snowman”, b.t.), ends on a short /ɔ/ sound surrounded by voiceless plosive consonants, which are considerably more difficult to sing than /æ/. Even there, however, instances of significantly altered singability are quite rare.

Table 3: Singability in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	Syllables <sup>2</sup>	Original				Dutch			
		0	1	2	3	0	1	2	3
“Frozen Heart”	76	6	21	28	21	6	15	34	21
“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”	66	8	8	27	23	3	20	27	16
“For the First Time in Forever”	169	23	34	65	47	29	47	34	59
“Love is an Open Door”	84	18	28	26	12	6	25	32	21
“Let It Go”	143	18	49	51	25	28	33	52	30
“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”	22	5	4	8	5	5	4	7	6
“In Summer”	73	16	10	22	25	8	23	22	20
“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”	97	13	23	43	18	9	34	28	26
“Fixer Upper”	151	16	50	39	46	29	45	47	30

Harmonically, the Dutch tends more towards illustration, literally giving voice to the emotions expressed by the music, rather than amplification, as detailed in table 4. For example, line 27 of “For the first time in forever”, “Which is totally bizarre”, is amplified by the joyful, fast-paced music in the original to stress that it is a good kind of bizarre, highlighting the singer’s surprise in addition to her excitement, while the Dutch version, “*En hij lacht om wat ik doe*” (“And he laughs because of the things I do”), expresses the same kind of excitement and joy as the music without adding to the message. Both versions have roughly the same levels of disjuncture. As a result, harmony is one of the closest aspects on the Dutch version to the original, and, since the tendency to illustrate more and amplify less is not common or even consistent across all songs, it is not of major consequence to the songs’ meaning.

<sup>2</sup> These numbers refer to vowel quality, which is a syllable’s primary contributor to its singability. A 0-vowel is a close vowel, such as /i/ or /u/; a 1-vowel is a close-mid vowel, such as /e/ or /o/; a 2-vowel is an open-mid vowel, such as /ɛ/ or /ɔ/; and a 3-vowel is an open vowel, such as /æ/, /a/ or /ɑ/. The higher the vowel’s value, the more singable it is (Low, 2003, 2005, 2017).

Table 4: Harmony in the Original English and Dutch Versions

		Original Relation			Dutch Relation		
		<i>Illus.</i>	<i>Am.</i>	<i>Disj.</i>	<i>Illus.</i>	<i>Am.</i>	<i>Disj.</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	warning	18	14	3	22	10	3
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	joy, longing	18	14	0	17	15	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	excitement, nervousness	40	26	0	46	20	0
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	joy, euphoria	33	7	0	34	6	0
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	confidence	40	4	6	38	6	6
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	resigned, cosy	9	3	3	7	5	3
<b>“In Summer”</b>	playful	14	3	12	15	2	12
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	confusion, love vs fear	30	8	15	30	11	12
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	happy, fast	58	4	13	59	2	14

#### 4. Visual Analysis

The findings on the visual side of the triangle are detailed in tables 5 to 7, concerning the aspects of, respectively, synchrony, visual deixis, and imagery. Table 5 is based on the number of syllables in each song for which mouth movement was visible on screen at all, or prominently visible in a close-up shot of the singer’s face, and describes the differences in the Dutch version between sound and image. Sizeable differences were found in “Frozen heart”, where only 2 of its 23 visually prominent syllables remained unchanged, “For the first time in forever”, and “Let it go”, which has almost as many major changes as unchanged syllables. A good example of a synchronic difference in the first song would be line 3. The last two visually distinguishable syllables are an /ɔ/ shape for the word “force” and an /æ/ shape for “foul”. The words sung on these mouth shapes are “*kracht*” (“power”), pronounced with an /ɑ/ vowel, and “*puur*” (“pure”), which has an /y/ vowel. In these cases, there is a noticeable incongruity between sound and screen.

Another example is line 5 from “Let it go”, “The wind is howling like this swirling storm inside” (Dutch: “*Van de storm die in mij woedt had tot nu toe niemand weet*”, “About the storm that rages in me, no one had a clue”, displaying a prepositional object placement common in Dutch). The close-up mouth movements of the singing character clearly indicate her singing /i/ for “wind”, /a/ for “howl”, /a/ for “like”, and /ɔ/ for “storm”, while the Dutch lyrics force /ɔ/, /ɪ/, /u/, and /i/ vowels, respectively: the mouth movements look quite different indeed from how they normally look when uttering those sounds. While complete adherence to the movements of the mouth seen on screen is impossible to achieve and unproductive to strive for, this degree of difference seems greater than it could have been had this aspect been regarded as more central to the film’s dubbing strategy. When taking all songs into consideration, the aspect of synchrony might constitute the most differences between the Dutch and original versions.

Table 5: Synchrony in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	<b>Original</b>		<b>Dutch</b>					
	<i>Syllables</i>		<i>No difference</i>		<i>Minor difference</i>		<i>Major difference</i>	
	<i>Visible</i>	<i>Close-up</i>	<i>Vis.</i>	<i>C.</i>	<i>Vis.</i>	<i>C.</i>	<i>Vis.</i>	<i>C.</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>								
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	26	63	8	28	14	27	4	8
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	101	85	41	36	45	31	17	16
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	64	29	34	15	18	11	12	3
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	49	140	11	62	19	27	19	51
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	12	24	7	15	4	8	1	1
<b>“In Summer”</b>	31	44	14	21	14	18	3	5
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	43	100	19	46	24	42	0	12

<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	86	114	46	48	31	51	9	15
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Visual deixis has generally been retained in most songs, the notable exceptions being once again “Frozen heart”, where most have been removed, “Do you want to build a snowman”, where a large part has been altered or only partially retained, and “Let it go”, where a quarter have been deleted and a fifth altered significantly. “Love is an open door” is notable in that two instances of visual deixis have been added to compensate for the three removed instances, most notable of which is line 16, “Love is an open door”, translated as “*Liefde geeft ons ruim baan*” (idiomatically, “Love gives us free rein”, but “*ruim baan*” literally means “spacious/empty lane”, referring, in this context, to the two singers sliding across an empty wooden floor).

Table 6: Visual Deixis in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	<b>Original</b>	<b>Dutch</b>			
	<i>Lines with visual deixis</i>	<i>Visual deixis is...</i>			
		<i>Retained</i>	<i>Altered</i>	<i>Removed</i>	<i>Added</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	5	2	0	3	0
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	9	5	4	0	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	19	16	2	1	0
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	7	4	0	3	2
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	20	11	4	5	0
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	8	8	0	0	0
<b>“In Summer”</b>	14	7	5	1	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	14	11	1	2	0
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	18	11	7	0	0

The imagery of most songs have an illustrative or amplifying function in both the original and Dutch versions. The Dutch “Frozen heart”, “Love is an open door”, and “Let it go” are less illustrative and more amplifying than the original versions, while the Dutch “In summer” has

somewhat reduced disjuncture.

Table 7: Imagery in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	<i>Image</i>	<b>Original Relation</b>			<b>Dutch Relation</b>		
		<i>Illus.</i>	<i>Am.</i>	<i>Disj.</i>	<i>Illus.</i>	<i>Am.</i>	<i>Disj.</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	threatening	20	15	0	15	20	0
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	Anna’s small size	27	5	0	28	4	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	bright, Anna vs Elsa	27	38	1	30	35	1
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	cosy, festive	23	15	2	17	21	2
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	isolation, cold	26	23	1	18	30	2
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	poor but cosy	3	7	5	3	5	7
<b>“In Summer”</b>	bright, dreamy	12	9	8	12	12	5
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	cold, Anna vs Elsa	20	30	3	15	34	4
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	warm, festive	26	49	0	25	50	0

The Dutch version presents some quite meaningful changes on the visual side. “Frozen heart” includes many changes in the Dutch version concerning the aspects of synchrony and visual deixis, as does “Let it go”. Most other songs include prominent changes with regard to, predominantly, synchrony, as well as visual deixis or imagery, such as the altered visual deixis in “Do you want to build a snowman” and the reduced illustrative function of the visual code in “Love is an open door”. When viewed individually these changes do not seem substantial, but they are fairly consistent throughout all songs (with the possible exception of “Reindeer[s] are better than people”, a song with only 15 lines), and they all have a similar effect in common, namely the weakening of the relation between the screen and the lyrics. Unnatural-looking mouth movements, altered or removed references to visual deixis, and a reduced illustrative function

(concentrating instead more on amplification) all serve to reduce the role of the image in the meaning-making process, which means that these changes constitute a more coherent effect than those on the musical side.

## 5. Verbal Analysis

The side of the triangle that is most different between both versions is the verbal side. Tables 8 to 10 show the findings concerning the aspects of sense, style, and mood. Table 8 shows that roughly half of the lines of all songs show no semantic differences between the original and Dutch versions, the notable exceptions again being “Frozen heart” and “In summer”, where the changes concern primarily a different approach in formulating the song’s irony. An example from the latter is line 3-4, “And I’ll be doing whatever snow does/in summer”. The Dutch version is “*O deze sneeuwpop die wordt toch zo blij/van zomer*” (“Oh, this snowman is made so happy/by summer”), eliminating the explicit irony of the original and downplaying the fact that Olaf does not know that snow melts, in favour of a heavier focus on Olaf’s happiness. In “Frozen heart”, the Dutch version concentrates more on the actual ice miners and their relation to the ice than the original. For example, lines 19-20, “Ice has a magic/Can’t be controlled”, translated as “*IJs is voor ons als/Het witte goud*” (“Ice is to us like/White gold”), forgo the song’s metaphorical, foreshadowing function and its introduction of the film’s main theme in order to re-establish a more explicit connection between image and lyrics. This focus on a more literal interpretation and reduced metaphorical meaning constitutes the main semantic difference between the two versions.

Table 8: Sense in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	Original	Dutch		
	<i>Number of lines</i>	<i>No semantic difference</i>	<i>Minor semantic difference</i>	<i>Major semantic difference</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	35	10	13	12
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	32	20	5	7

<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	66	34	15	17
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	40	19	8	13
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	50	22	11	17
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	15	7	6	2
<b>“In Summer”</b>	29	11	13	5
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	53	30	13	10
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	75	35	24	16

Table 9 shows the number of stylistically simple, average, and complex lines in both versions, with brief, admittedly blunt notes highlighting the most important ways in which the Dutch version differs from the original. In the Dutch version, the stylistic variation between characters is reduced (primarily between Elsa and Anna in “For the first time in forever” and its reprise, and between Kristoff and the other characters in “Reindeer[s] are better than people”), and the Dutch version is generally more complex and uses more archaic or unnatural phrases than the original. The exception to this is “Fixer-upper”, which is the most stylistically formal and archaic song in the original (where the archaic nature of the lyrics provide characterisation for the trolls – a device not used in the Dutch version). An example of this reduced complexity of the Dutch version of that song would be line 46, “Her brain’s a bit betwixt”, which is stylistically complex because of its archaic vocabulary and its referential obscurity: it is unclear what her brain is actually betwixt. The Dutch, “*Die weinig moeite kost*” (“That costs little effort”), is a stylistically very straightforward phrase that includes a grammatical error common among children (i.e. using the common pronoun “*die*”, rather than neuter “*dat*”, to refer to the neuter noun of the previous line). Apart from this song, however, the rise of old-fashioned or awkward language is consistent in the Dutch version and contributes to the considerable verbal difference between both versions.

Table 9: Style in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	<i>Stylistic notes</i>	<b>Original</b>			<b>Dutch</b>		
		<i>S</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>C</i>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	formal language replaces poetic language	22	11	2	20	14	1
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	childishness remains but also more old-fashioned	30	2	0	26	6	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	more archaisms replace some modern slang	58	8	0	52	14	0
<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	more archaisms and unnatural language	32	7	1	24	16	0
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	more formal and archaic	39	11	0	32	15	3
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	no linguistic error, slightly less colloquial	12	3	0	11	4	0
<b>“In Summer”</b>	no major differences	22	7	0	20	9	0
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	reduced difference between Anna and Elsa	46	7	0	37	15	1
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	more colloquial language	47	25	3	57	17	1

Table 10 outlines the themes and symbols of each song, but since the elements of narrative of two different language versions are difficult to compare on a numerical basis, the aspect of mood provides only a context for a song’s interpretation. These themes and symbols have been included in the analysis provided above, as well as the considerations of the following sections.

Table 10: Mood in the Original English and Dutch Versions

	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Symbols</b>
<b>“Frozen Heart”</b>	Love vs fear	Ice (love and fear) Frozen heart (fear) Cutting ice (confidence)
<b>“Do you Want to Build a Snowman”</b>	Sisterly love Loneliness	Building snowmen (love) Paintings (loneliness)
<b>“For the First Time in Forever”</b>	Isolation Liberation Love vs fear	Doors (isolation) Light and the town (Anna’s liberation and Elsa’s oppression)

<b>“Love is an Open Door”</b>	Freedom vs Isolation Implied: the fallacy of true love	Opening doors (freedom) The palace (isolation) Outside (freedom) Implied: marriage (isolation)
<b>“Let It Go”</b>	Freedom in Isolation	The storm (freedom) Cold (isolation) Distance (isolation) Doors (protection)
<b>“Reindeer(s) are Better than People”</b>	Loneliness	Sven singling out Kristoff Kristoff singing for Sven
<b>“In Summer”</b>	The importance of dreams or faith	Summer (the dream) Optimism (benefit of the dream) The irony (the benefit of unrealistic dreams)
<b>“For the First Time in Forever (Reprise)”</b>	Love vs fear	The storm (Elsa’s fear) Sunlight (Anna’s love) The ice palace (freedom) Anna (the instability of Elsa’s freedom) Olaf (shared love between Elsa and Anna)
<b>“Fixer Upper”</b>	Love and fear	Fixing people up (love) Fixer-uppers (fear) Marriage (organized love) Implied: marriage as counterproductive

## 6. Prioritisation

Rhythm seems to have been one of the first priorities of the dubbed version, and if the music is deemed the most important code, a close adherence to rhythm stands to reason. It is the backbone of music and together with melody one of the first things an audience notices (Clendinning and Marvin 2010). If a song gains popularity, it is commonly the result of its rhythm and melody rather than its lyrics, rhyme scheme or singability (Kaindl 2005), so if it works in one language, it might very well work in others, too, especially in instances of little cultural differences between language communities (as is currently the case with the Anglophone and Batavophone worlds). In addition, a fairly identical rhythm between the original and any dubbed version increases the

dubbed version's audience's receptiveness to the original version, should that ever become relevant – and since Dutch theatres showed two versions (one subtitled in Dutch and one dubbed in Dutch) and the soundtrack album was sold in both English and Dutch, it does seem quite relevant. Rhythm is a key aspect for musicocentric translations (e.g. Kaindl 2005; Low 2005), and plays an important role in the dubbing process's prioritisation.

While the Dutch diverges most strongly from the original on the verbal side, the single aspect that diverges most is the aspect of synchrony, on the visual side. If this aspect would be examined in a vacuum, disregarding the other visual aspects or the effects of the differences on the visual and verbal sides, one could conclude that the visual side must have been deemed less important in the dubbing process than the verbal side. However, the Dutch version's adherence to visual deixis and its arguably more effective relation to imagery than to mood indicate that, even though synchrony itself might not have been a priority, the visual side as a whole seems to have been considered quite highly in the dubbing process. This stresses the importance of evaluating not only the individual aspects in isolation, but also the combination of certain aspects on sides of the triangle to reach mindful interpretations.

The considerable divergence on the verbal side, then, is not the result of any one aspect, but rather of the combination of differences concerning all three aspects on the verbal side: sense, style, and mood. The effect of this combination of differences becomes clear in, for example, lines 13 to 14 of "Love is an open door". The lines, "And it's nothing like I've ever known before/Love is an open door", are translated as "*Dit avontuur met jou durf ik wel aan/Met deuren die opengaan*" ("I dare to start this adventure with you/With doors that open up") in Dutch. From a purely semantic point of view, the translation may resemble the original on some connotative level, but this resemblance only seems reasonable if the versions are scrutinized for similarities. Stylistically, the original is more colloquial, and although line 14 presents an abstract metaphor, the language and grammatical structure is quite simple. The Dutch version, by contrast, is more old-fashioned and slightly awkward (no Dutch-speaking teenager would use the word "*avontuur*" in a non-sarcastic tone of voice, or the construction "*durf ik wel aan*" in any tone of voice). And concerning mood, the simple statement of the song's primary metaphor of the open door representing love is eliminated in the Dutch version, as is the characterisation of line 13, in the

original portraying the singers, Anna and Hans, as surprised and being drawn into new territory, while in the Dutch they seem more in control and not as swept up in their emotions. These and similar differences are not limited to these two lines: they are consistent throughout all songs. The differences with regard to sense generally also introduce differences concerning style or mood, and vice versa, whereas the synchronic differences described above do not have such an extensive influence on the other visual aspects. While there seems to have been some form of compensation on the visual side by retaining or even adding instances of visual deixis and by maintaining the relation between the lyrics and the imagery to an important degree, no such compensation can be observed on the verbal side, which implies that the verbal side was a low priority during the dubbing process.

It seems straightforward to assume that the *skopi* of the dubbing processes (regardless of which agents or parties were actually responsible for drawing up and fulfilling the requirements of those *skopi*) prioritized the songs' musical functions over their visual or even verbal roles in meaning-making process. Considering the visual code, this focus of the dubbing process might not seem surprising, since these songs represent musicocentric interludes in the film, as in any musical film. When a song starts in a musical film, the audience's focus naturally shifts to the new code, i.e. the music, which takes momentary precedence over the visual and verbal codes (Dyer 2012). However, the visual and verbal codes play major roles in most songs in musical films as well. In the original version of *Frozen*, the supporting function of the images and the role of the narrative, the characterisation, and the development of the main themes occupy significant positions in the songs. It is the Dutch version's focus on the musical code over the visual or verbal code, then, that reveals a trend in prioritisation: adherence to the musical code seems to have been the primary priority of the songs' dubbing processes.

## **7. Conclusion**

The Dutch dubbed version's treatment of the songs, then, is relatively musicocentric. It prioritizes adherence to musical elements such as rhythm, rhyme, and a pleasant or catchy sound similar to the original over some of the more elaborate visual elements (primarily concerning lip synchrony) and, more notably, the semantic, stylistic and thematic content of the lyrics. This

conclusion is based on the data collected according to the triangle of aspects, a model that facilitates the analysis of songs from animated musical films. Data was collected on the original version and the Dutch dubbed version concerning ten aspects: rhyme, rhythm, singability, and mood on the musical side; synchrony, visual deixis, and imagery on the visual side; and sense, style, and mood on the verbal side. A comparison of the data between both language versions allowed for a comprehensive analysis of differences, and on the basis of this analysis a list of priorities of the dubbing process was drawn up. It is important to note that the priorities found in this study do not necessarily reflect the priorities of any individual agent involved in these particular dubbing processes: it merely reveals the effect of the dubbing processes as a whole on the songs – although the findings were fairly consistent for all songs, which implies that the priorities found were the product of a conscious effort or an industry norm. The possible reasons for this specific set of priorities may be diverse, ranging from the artistic or linguistic to the commercial or practical, and it would be unreasonable to expect a target text analysis to reliably find a reason, but this study does shed light on the effects of those priorities.

The findings can be interpreted in the broader context of musical film dubbing, as Di Giovanni (2008) points out that song translation for musical films is usually quite musicocentric. One of the most common dubbing strategies for US musical films in Italy, she explains, is to subtitle the songs rather than dub them (although this may prove impractical for films of which the target audience cannot read yet), and Mateo (2008) mentions that economic factors play an important role in importing foreign films in Spain, which also has a major effect on the dubbing strategy. By contrast, García Jiménez (2017) claims that song for musical film is one of the most logocentric genres of song translation, because meaning would be deemed more important than the music. Perhaps when compared to opera or folk song translation – or even Italian musical film dubbing – the findings of this study cannot be called extraordinarily musicocentric, but the finding remains that even in the Dutch dubbed version of the songs from *Frozen*, the music was prioritized over the lyrics. A comparison of these findings to other animated musical films dubbed in Dutch, or to versions of *Frozen* dubbed in other languages, may reveal how common these priorities are, as this form of context will certainly help establish the significance of these findings. After all, the scope of this paper, studying only one animated musical film and one language pair, is quite limited. Further research may also concern the effects of the priorities on

the reception of the film or the actual reasons of the dubbing agents for concentrating on these priorities (be they artistic, commercial, or simply practical). A third interesting avenue of research might be a more in-depth, qualitative investigation of the effects of these priorities on issues such as characterisation and themes. These ideas would help achieve some much-needed clarity and a better understanding of the important field of animated musical film dubbing.

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