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The word *bitch* in Quentin Tarantino movies subtitled into Norwegian.

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Abstract

This master's thesis has investigated the Norwegian subtitle translation of the word *bitch* in nine movies directed by Quentin Tarantino. The project sought to find out what happens to the swear word "bitch" in the Norwegian subtitle translation of the films directed by Quentin Tarantino, whether there is a difference between the word's translation in the older and newer films, and differences regarding the gender of the target of the insult in various cases. The hypotheses were that the degree of profanity caused by the use of the word *bitch* is reduced in the audiovisual translation. Secondly, it was hypothesized that *bitch* will be more reduced in the newer subtitles than in the older, because of the change in the society regarding the increasing awareness of equality issues. Thirdly, a hypothesis is that the degree of profanity will be more reduced when the term is directed at females than towards males, because of the translator's consciousness of female discrimination and thereby the plausibly hurtful effect *bitch* can have when directed at women. Tarantino's movies were chosen because they contain a significant number of swear words. The source text and target text were compared with a focus on the word *bitch* and thereafter analyzed with a descriptive-explanatory approach. The translations of the word were analyzed by considering which strategies were employed in translation, in order to shed light on whether and to what extent the degree of profanity was conserved. The findings showed that the term *bitch* was reduced in degree of profanity in the Norwegian subtitles, as only 50,6% of the instances were translated with the strategy translation with strong force, confirming the first hypothesis. This could be explained by the constraints of audiovisual translation, such as the time and space constraints, but also due to ideology and as an attempt of altering the text to fit the target text audience. The results did not show any clear tendency concerning the relationship between profanity that is caused by the use of *bitch* and the release time of the movies, which disconfirms the second hypothesis. Lastly, the findings of the study showed that 88,9% of the fixed expressions containing the word *bitch*, which were all directed at males, were translated using translation with strong force. In comparison, 34,6% and 60% of the single items and collocations were translated with strong force. This indicates that the degree of profanity is more reduced when it is targeted towards a female than a male, validating the third hypothesis. This could be explained by the ideological stance of the translator and the increasing gender consciousness, as the word could be perceived as more politically incorrect or insulting when directed at a woman than a man.

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List of abbreviations:

ST=Source text

TT=Target text

1.0 Introduction

The meaning of *bitch* is female dog. However, the word is also frequently used as a swear word negatively referring to women. Kleinman, Ezzell, and Frost (2009) connect the word *bitch* to the patriarchy of U.S society and sexism. The patriarchal society is characterized by the distinct gender roles and inequality that influence people's lives, namely male dominance and superiority and female subordination and inferiority. The term *bitch* is connected to this due to the word's history of use and connotations. The use of *bitch* referring to women is not a recent invention; in the 1400s, the word started being applied in reference to women, with sexual connotations and as an insult. In general, the term was linked to suppressing images of females (Kleinman et al., 2009, p. 47). *Bitch* is still used to refer to women insultingly, but it is now more generalized and could be applied when speaking about men and even genderless items. Still, Kleinman et al. (2009, p. 47) state that in the reference to other objects than women, the word still has connotations to the subordinate role of women, reinforcing the patriarchal ideas.

An opposing thought to this is that *bitch* is no longer perceived as harmful or offensive due to language development and shaping through use (Fägersten, 2012, p. 168). However, Kleinman et al. (2009, p.48) claim that language cannot be understood in isolation from the bigger picture, which includes the patriarchal history of male dominance, and that the word hurt women as a group. The authors further state that "Words are our tools of thought, reflecting social reality as well as shaping it" (Kleinman et al., 2009, p.48) which implies that the way we use our language in communication with others and ourselves has consequences. To call someone 'a bitch' is different from calling someone a girl. There could hence be confusion as to how we shall interact with this word, and concerning how acceptable it is that our society is exposed to it through mass media.

The word *bitch* is quite frequently found in the movies directed by Quentin Tarantino, which provides the opportunity to study the word. The directing style of the world-renowned director could be described as distinctive; his movies contain high amounts of violence, swearing, and drugs, as well bizarre scenes where humor and violence are combined. Tarantino's films are also known for the non-chronologically order of the scenes, an order which has been said to resemble a music album (Nerdwriter, 2017, 4:04). What is meant by this, is that the order of the scenes results in moving up and down in mood. For instance, the

movie *Reservoir Dogs* (1992) begins with men sitting at a diner having coffee and a snack, talking about Madonna discussing her music. This is a quite realistic scene, featuring a natural, lifelike subject of discourse and setting. Not long after comes a scene where Mr. Orange, one of the men from the diner who later executes a robbery, bleeds out in a driving car, screaming and talking hysterically, while blood is smeared everywhere. The language used is also in line with these variations in mood. Between the more violent, bizarre scenes, the language replicates the usual, day-to-day dialogue, referencing mass media and popular culture. Additionally, obscene vocabulary and insults are a characteristic of the movies overall, which lies in a contrast to the current era of political correctness. It is also a contrast to the message by Keinman et al. (2009), communicating that the use of *bitch* reinforces destructive patriarchal ideas. How the word *bitch* is transmitted in the translation of these movies could be interesting to investigate because of these conflicting ideologies, namely the world of violence found in Tarantino's movies, and the social equality conscious society. Tarantino's range of movies, containing vulgar, obscene language, span over a long period of time, and so do the subtitles. It is therefore possible to investigate both how the movies are subtitled, and how the subtitles have developed.

In this master's thesis, the Norwegian subtitle translation of the word *bitch* in the English dialogue in nine of the movies directed by Quentin Tarantino will be investigated. I will attempt to answer the following research question: What happens to the swear word "*bitch*" in the Norwegian subtitle translation of the films directed by Quentin Tarantino? Is there a difference in how the word is translated between the older and newer films? And will there be differences regarding the target of the insult in various cases? Firstly, I hypothesize that the degree of profanity caused by the use of the word *bitch* is reduced in the audiovisual translation. This is hypothesized on the background of the trend evident from previous studies that have found that the amount of swear words is reduced in translation (Pardo, 2011; Ameri & Ghazizadeh, 2014; Beseghi, 2016; Pratama, 2017; Ghazi & Sadati, 2018; Al-Yasin & Rabab'ah, 2019). Secondly, I hypothesize that *bitch* will be more reduced in the newer subtitles than in the older. The reason for this is the increasing consciousness regarding equality and women's rights, which hypothetically will affect the translation in coherence with the progression of the movement in the time span from the first movie was released in 1992 to the last movie was released in 2019. The recent increase in gender awareness is connected to intersectionality, a movement focusing on the equality of marginalized groups, which has become prominent in the last 30 years (Roth, 2021, p. 1). This could also be

validated by looking at the progression of the MeToo Movement, which put focus on women and sexual assault. This movement started in 2006 but got the most attention in 2017 (Leung & Williams, 2019, p. 350), indicating a steep rise in awareness of gender equality issues.

Thirdly, a hypothesis of this study is that the degree of profanity will be more reduced when the term is directed at females than towards males. This is likely due to the hurtful effect that *bitch* is said to have on women (Keinman et al. (2009) and that translators plausibly could be more aware of this when the word or phrase it is a part of is explicitly directed at a female. Investigating the differences in the gender of the target of the insult could shed light on the gender ideologies that are relevant for the translators.

In order to examine how the word is translated in relation to the degree of profanity, this study will look at the different strategies used in the subtitle translation. The strategies of translation with strong force, translation with weak force, omission, and foreignization will be employed in the analysis (Ameri and Ghazizadeh, 2014, p. 86). The co-text of the instances of the term will also be variables that are focused on, as this is decisive for the target of the insult when the word is used. The co-textual categories single item and collocations will also be incorporated as variables, as they potentially could affect the way the word is translated or contribute to illuminating the plausible alterations in translation. For instance, the collocation *bad bitch* will be translated differently than the single item *bitch*, as the composition of words carries with it different connotations. The word *bitch* is, as mentioned, mainly directed at women. Nonetheless, the fixed expression *son of a bitch* is often used in reference to men, and this category will thereby be included. The gender aspect will hence be investigated and discussed more closely. To my knowledge, this issue has not been studied before, and it is therefore of interest to fill this academic gap and execute this study.

2.0 Theoretical background

2.1 Audiovisual translation

Audiovisual translation denotes the transfer from multimedial and multimodal content across cultures and/or languages, and focuses on the products, processes and practices that are a result from or involved in this (Gonzales, 2020, p. 30). The different types of audiovisual translation include dubbing, subtitling, audio description, and voiceover (Gambier and Pinto (2018, p. 1). Subtitling is defined by Cintas and Remael (2007, p.8) as a translation practice that involves presenting written text, most commonly on the lower part of the screen, that aims to reproduce the original dialogue of the speakers. Other discursive details that appear in the picture and the soundtrack could also be included in the subtitles, aiding the hard of hearing. Furthermore, according to Cintas and Remael (2007, p. 9), all subtitled programs combine three main elements: the image, the spoken word, and the subtitles. The primary characteristics of the audiovisual medium are determined by the interaction of these elements, in addition to the ability of the viewer to read both the images and the written text at a specific pace, as well as the size of the screen. The subtitles need to appear in synchrony with the dialogue and image and, at the same time, remain displayed on the screen long enough for the viewers to be able to read them. The subtitles must also provide a semantically adequate version of the source language dialogue (Cintas and Remael, 2007, p.9).

2.1.1 Constraints of subtitling

The subtitling process encompasses different limitations for the text (Pedersen, 2011, p. 11). Firstly, the audiovisual translation includes a semiotic transfer, meaning a mode change from spoken text to written text, which comprises a significant constraint in subtitling (Pedersen, 2011, p. 11). The translator's work does not only consist of transferring a text from one language in the source text (ST) to another language in the target text (TT), or from written ST to written TT such as in literary translation, but the interlingual subtitle translator also crosses or transfers both language and mode, which makes interlingual subtitling unique. The transfer from spoken to written form necessitates editing, such as the deletion or condensation of redundant, oral features that arise from spontaneous, natural speech (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 20, cited in Pedersen, 2011, p. 18). This is less relevant when dealing with scripted speech, which

is often used in fiction, because oral utterances originating from written scripts contain less of the typical oddities found in spontaneous speech (Pedersen, 2011, p. 11).

Another core constraint in audiovisual translation regards condensations that result from time and space constraints (Pedersen, 2011, p. 19). Spatial constraints are founded on the fact that there is a limited number of characters one can fit into a line and that subtitling usually makes room for a maximum of two lines in each subtitle. The focus on characters, which constitutes any visible result produced by pressing a keyboard key, tells us that even word length must be considered in the translation into subtitles, not only the number of words. According to current Scandinavian guidelines, the total number of characters one can fit in one line is around 35. Still, in the study by Pedersen (2011), he found that each line could have more than this and that the average two lines could have approximately 71 characters (Pedersen, 2011, p. 19). Temporal constraints are connected to spacial limitations. The lines' message needs to be displayed for a particular amount of time, called exposure time, with the purpose of the viewer being able to read it. Different aspects affect the exposure time length, such as the TT audience, the polysemic nature of the medium, meaning whether the visual medium provides any information, and the nature of the target text, as the complex text requires longer reading time (Pedersen, 2011, p. 20).

2.1.2 Translation strategies in subtitling

As a result of the nature of the subtitle translation process, exemplified by the constraints presented above, the subtitler must use specific strategies while translating the source text into the target. According to Cintas and Remael (2007, p. 147), written speech in subtitles is nearly always a condensed form of the oral ST, and presents total and partial reduction as the two types of abbreviation. Partial reduction is achieved through a more concise rendering of the ST and condensation, and total reduction is attained through deletion of lexical items. Often, both partial and total reduction are applied and combined after assessing how much time and space are available for the segment. Cintas and Remael (2007, p. 150) further mention that the strategies the translator uses to achieve partial reduction could either be at word or sentence levels. Examples of this are simplifying verbal paraphrases, generalizing enumerations, turning long and compound sentences into simple sentences, and using a shorter near-synonym or equivalent expression. Regarding the strategy to use a shorter, equivalent term, they emphasize that synonyms are almost always near-synonyms rather than

exact equivalents (Cintas and Remael, 2007, p. 151). Synonyms can belong to different registers and could hence be less appropriate in some contexts. Total reduction, or omission, is unavoidable in subtitling, and the translator prioritizes the essential elements of the communication needed for the audience to receive the message (Cintas and Remael, 2007, p. 162).

Gottlieb (2012, p. 52) presents the notion of normalization in translation, a strategy where the translator makes obscure points in the source text explicit. An example of this could be the translation of *that rotten bitch* into *den slemme jenta* [that mean girl], where the linguistic items have been normalized and made unambiguous. This is a frequently used strategy that might aim to serve the target audience and adapt the text to fit the target culture. Nonetheless, this strategy might move the dialogue away from the source text and away from its original genre. The subtitles could be altered to be less emotional, less ambiguous, and less bizarre than their source text counterparts. Employing this strategy on swearing could, for instance, make the subtitled dialogue less insulting, less funny, and less personal than the source text dialogue originally was (Gottlieb, 2012, p. 53).

Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014) have investigated the strategies employed in the audiovisual translation of swearing from English into Persian, using the four categories direct translation with strong force, direct translation with weak force, omission, and foreignization. Direct translation with strong force indicates that the swear word or expression is transferred to the TT and that the level of obscenity or insult is not reduced. An example of this strategy in the study by Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014, p. 88) is the translation of *fucking asshole* in the ST into *faggot* in the (back-translated) TT. This example shows that the ST and TT elements have different semantic properties, but the translation has preserved an offensive or taboo element such as the one found in the ST. Direct translation with weak force indicates a translation strategy where the ST expression is mildened in the degree of offense. An example of this retrieved from the study in question is the translation of *fucking asshole* in the ST into *silly person* in the TT. The offensive characteristic of the expression is in this example considerably weakened (Ameri and Ghazizadeh, 2014, p. 87). One could also argue that some of the examples in this category have fully lost their profane connotations, despite of merely being regarded as mildened by the authors. The third translation strategy, omission, is employed when the swear word or phrase is left out of the TT translation. Lastly, the foreignization strategy denotes that the swear expressions are left untranslated but not

omitted. The ST swear word remains unaltered and is transferred directly into the TT (Ameri and Ghazizadeh, 2014, p. 87).

2.2 Translation and ideology

Within translation studies, ideology has been known to impact the translation process and translation products. The notion of ideology is particularly relevant when it comes to swearing, profanities, and insults such as *bitch*, as these words are connected to culture and the society's perceptions of taboos, and are therefore an ideological challenge in translation (Cintas and Remael, 2007, p. 196). According to De Marco (2012, p. 41), "Ideology is the set of ideas, values and aims that any social system is grounded in and that steers people towards a particular course of action and behavior." (2012, p. 41). Van Dijk (1998, p. 5) proposes a multidisciplinary theory of ideology that includes the three elements of cognition, society, and discourse. The first and second elements revolve around the beliefs and thoughts that develop into ideas, group interests, and societal power. The third element, discourse, regards language use that expresses ideologies in the society, often involving concealment and manipulation. In this sense, how we use our language is a way of channeling an ideological stance (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 5).

The ideas of how translation and ideology are related are expressed differently by different scholars. According to Lefevere (2016, p. 2), translation is the rewriting of original text. The translator, or rewriter, adapts the text to fit the ideology of the society it occurs (Lefevere, 2016, p. 12). The involvement of the recipients is also mentioned by Tymoczko (2007, p. 255), who states that the translation will be affected by the purported relevance of the ST content to the target audience of the translation. The ideology expressed through a translated text also involves the translator's representation of the content of the source text, and hence the ideological positioning of the translator (Tymoczko, 2007, p.255). Moreover, the intercultural transfer in the translation of texts allows the source text to be comprehended by an audience of new languages (Munday, 2007, p. 196), making this a highly influential and important process (Lefevere, 2016, p. 7). Translations are also influential because the target language audience often receives the text as an unmediated, originally written work (Munday, 2007, p. 197). The alterations will perhaps be unnoticed until the source and target texts are compared and analyzed (Munday, 2007, p. 197). These types of analysis would not only

discover the content of the source and target texts independently, but whether the target text is altering the message of the source text (Lefevere, 2016, p. 3).

According to Lefevere (2016, p.9), the literary system that translation functions in is controlled by the following three factors: professionals within the literary system, the dominant poetics, and patronage outside the literary system. The first factor involves critics, reviewers, teachers, and the translators themselves, who review the poetics and ideology of the translated text. The second factor, the dominant poetics, revolves around the ideas about literary devices and the relation between the literature and the social system (Lefevere, 1992, p. 19). Thirdly, patronage refers to the powers which can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature (Lefevere, 2016, p.12). In this instance, the notion of power refers to persons or institutions, for instance, a religious group, political party, social class, publishers, and the media. These powers produce and traverse ideas; they form knowledge and produce discourse. The patron intuitively delegates authority to the professional where poetics or literature is concerned. Therefore, is the translator's ideology, or the one imposed upon the translator by the patronage, a significant component (Lefevere, 2016, p. 12).

Simon (1996, p. 8) states that the concept of ideology is highly complex, and views translation as a process of mediation that does not stand above ideology, but processes through ideology. The idea of translation project is here introduced, which points at translation as a writing project where both writer and translator participate. This concept is formed on the background of studies of translation and gender and is exemplified by feminist writers who seek to emphasize their identity and ideological stance in the translation project. In this way, the ideological background of the translator and the literary work coexist and promote the translation strategies employed in the production of the target text (Simon, 1996).

3.2 Feminism and gender in translation studies

Feminism could be defined as a type of ideology and will be looked at more closely in this section. This field is especially relevant to this project because of the origin and connotations of the word *bitch*, which could be related to gender roles and issues of equality (Kleinman et al., 2009, p.52). Ergun and Castro (2018, p. 2) define feminism in a comprehensive, inclusive, and holistic manner, explaining that the term revolves around intersectional justice

and equality-consciousness, and that gender politics is intrinsically incorporated into this. Moreover, the intersection of gender and translation will hence be focused on, looking at how gender consciousness as an ideological stance can affect translation, and how one can evaluate or analyze the translation in light of gender issues.

3.2.1 Feminist translation

The emergence of the cultural turn in the 1990s in translation studies (Castro and Ergun, 2018, p. 1) has encouraged an increasing focus on examining the relationship between translated texts and their social and cultural circumstances, including gendered approaches (Camus and Castro, 2017, p. 1). Gender issues have marked the last four decades of the 20th century, as feminist role models such as Simone Beauvoir began to cultivate feminist movements by criticizing the differences between men's and women's societal roles and opportunities (Von Flotow, 1997, p. 5). As a result, both literature and translation practices and theory were significantly affected by this focus on gender, leading to translation becoming a significant field for exploring culture and gender (Von Flotow, 1997, p. 9). According to Frederici and Leonardi (2013, p. 1), feminist translation is a widespread phenomenon that combines questions of language, culture, identity, gender, and sexual equality. The goal is to reverse the subordinate role of women and translators in society by challenging what is perceived as patriarchal language (Frederici and Leonardi, 2013, p. 1). Feminist translation arose in the Bilingual Quebec in the 1980s due to different social, cultural, and identity isms that were occurring at the time (Godayol & Waldeck, 2018, p. 469). A group of feminist translators translated works, incorporating their equalist-oriented voices in the works that they rewrote. This act of rewriting could be categorized as a political act for feminist writers to challenge the sexist, androcentric, patriarchal discourse that always had been prevalent in world literature (Godayol & Waldeck, 2018, p. 469). The strategies employed by the feminist translators in the translation or rewriting of these works were put into the categories of supplementing, prefacing, footnoting, and hijacking (Godayol & Waldeck, 2018, p. 470). These strategies refer to the various ways of manipulating the text. An example of this is the subcategory of supplementing called feminizing, which implies omitting words, metaphors, and images that describe women disparagingly. The feminist translators would also include paratexts in the shape of prefaces, introductions, and footnotes to justify their decisions and shape the text, to make the translator visible and in accord with

the translator's purpose. According to Godayol & Waldeck (2018, p. 470) this became the foundation for the interdisciplinary study of the connection between translation politics and gender politics. This movement spread further, and despite not belonging to an identical social, political, and identity context as the Canadian feminist translators, simultaneously in the USA, other symbolical texts occurred that arguably fit in the feminist translation category. This made gender a priority in the practice of translating a work (Godayol & Waldeck, 2018, p. 470).

A translator's positionality within their text and in the social system is determined by how they experience the ideology of the social system they belong to and is acknowledged as a key term in feminist translation theory because it refers to the translator's ideological positioning in the political discourse (De Marco, 2012, p. 41). On the background of the cultural, economic, and political factors, translators participate in mediating. This mediation could involve both circulating or resisting the text's inherent values, by positioning themselves in the act of elaboration of the meanings of the text they are translating (De Marco, 2012, p. 41).

2.3.2 Gender and translation

In addition to the growth of feminist translation as a consciously applied ideology and movement, there are also studies investigating the influence that gender ideology has on translation implicitly. De Marco (2012) explores the field of translation through a gender lens by looking at whether the implicit or explicit gender connotations of exchanges of the original versions of Hollywood or British films are maintained or altered in the Spanish and Italian translations. The findings showed that the translations also did transmit stereotypical images of gender, as for instance the Spanish translations were more sexist than the North-American and British counterparts, which upholds the female-degrading connotations of the dialogue (De Marco, 2012, p. 220). It was found many similarities between the source texts and their translations, which De Marco (2012, p. 220) connects to similarities regarding identity-related issues between the national societies. Like other text types, films are products of the cultural values of a particular social system, mirroring reality. Cinematographic language and the translations of this could be responsible for distributing and preserving stereotypes and denigrating attitudes when issues related to identity, such as gender, are prevalent (De Marco, 2012, p. 19). This shows us that gender issues and mass media are

closely related. Through audiovisual translation, the views, norms, and values of a society is filtered. Research on the relationship between gender and screen translation is valuable since it can increase our insight into how certain assumptions and stereotypes related to gender may vary between cultures, and how translations can limit the intercultural transmission of certain stereotypes through mass media (De Marco, 2012, p. 42).

Baumgarten (2014, p. 54) investigated the differences between the English dialogue and the German dubbed version of a James Bond Film in relation to gender identities. The findings showed a difference in semiotics in the versions, where the English version depicted the female gender in a negative, derogatory way placing female and male gender roles in a hierarchy where the male speaking subject is empowered (Baumgarten, 2014, p.65). The German translated version is analyzed as directed toward verbalizing and supporting the action, meaning that it conveys information that supports the overall event structure of the film narrative, nevertheless that it was more polite than the ST. The German translation overall featured language that was gender-conscious, because potentially socially discriminating aspects were cut away. The author offers several reasons for this, such as normalization of the text, and normalizing discourses with overtones that are undesirable in the receiving culture (Baumgarten, 2014, p.68). This could be related to the topic of ideology's influence on translation, and Castro & Ergun (2017, p. 1), Lefevere (2016, p. 9), and Simon (1996, p. 8) who state that translation is an important means of generating knowledge, identities, and cross-cultural encounters, however, that it is not a neutral act of disinterested mediation.

2.4 Swearing, slurs, and their translations

Swearing is defined as a profane or obscene oath or word (Swearing, 2021). According to Andersson and Trudgill (1990, p. 53), swearing is thought of as bad language and a type of language use that is related to something taboo or stigmatized in the culture. This kind of language should not be taken literally and can be used to express strong emotions and attitudes (Andersson and Trudgill, 1990, p. 54, Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 196, Ljung, 2010, p. 4). Ljung (2010, p. 4) mentions criteria for what constitutes swearing, including the notion that most swearing qualifies as formulaic language as many of the utterances of question are fixed in form and have lexical, syntactic, and phrasal constraints. Taboo words are connected

to local traditions and are differently used in different linguistic groups, and are thereby a manifestation of culture (Cintas & Remael, 2007, p.196,; Cintas, 2009, p. 211).

2.4.1 Characterization of English swearing and the word *bitch*

In order to qualify an uttering or word as swearing, the uttering in question must violate certain taboos that are or have been perceived as generally inviolable in the cultures it takes place in (Ljung, 2010, p. 5). Swearing, as other verbal outputs, are shaped through learning, and swearing is thereby used by people on the background of what they have learned to regard as taboo in their culture (Moore, 2012, p. 172). Ljung (2011) mentions different types of swearing that are used in the American English language. These involve for instance religion and the supernatural, bodily waste or excrements, the sexual act or sexual organ (Ljung, 2010, p. 5). Hughes (2006, p. 208) also mentions names of animals, personal background, mental illness, and racism as different categories of swear words in English.

The word *bitch* stems from the late Old English word *bicche*, meaning a female dog (Hughes, 2015, p. 23). The word was not used derogatorily at first but has been utilized as an insult from the fourteenth century to the present. The term thereby has the longest history of use among animal-related insults. The early use tended to be a metaphorical extension of the behavior of a female dog in heat, referring to a sensual or promiscuous woman (Hughes, 2015, p. 23). In the 1700s, the literal sense of the word *bitch* was driven out of currency, and the insulting, virulent female sense became dominant. The term was perceived as more offensive than the insult *whore*, and as the most provocative designation that can be given to a woman (Hughes, 2015, p. 24). According to Kleinman, Ezzell & Frost (2009, p. 50), this is because at least a prostitute had financial winnings from her sexual favors.

Today the word can be used as a degrading personal insult in British and American English but is less prominent in Australian and other global varieties (Hughes, 2015, p. 24). Kleinman et al. (2009, p.52) emphasize the derogatory effect that the use of *bitch* has towards women. According to McEnery (2006, p. 30), *bitch* is used most by women than men, and also more often directed towards women than men. Still, Kleinman et al. (2009, p.52) state that even when the word is used referring to non-female objects and situations, it is often used placing the object in question in a subordinate relationship with the masculine who is in control, dominates, and vanquishes the entity referred to as *bitch*. Kleinman et al. (2009, p.52) highlight this with the following example: “I bent that test over and made it my bitch”. The

test has perhaps offered some difficulty, but it was taken control over and dominated. The expression *my bitch* illuminates this domination as the possessive “my” which indicates ownership and (sexual) dominance of the other. Kleinman et al. (2009, p.54) also state that *bitch* could be used to undermine the position of powerful women. The term *bitching* emphasizes this, as the expression is defined by the negative reaction by the audience, which often is displeased or annoyed at the *bitching*, rather than the judgment of the speaker, as the focus is on the negative character of the speaker rather than what the person has to say. It is also a female-associated term that contains negative connotations; it indicates that the person who is *bitching* is not to be taken seriously and is irritating and annoying to others (Kleinman et al., 2009, p.54). These expressions spring from acts of domination in the real world by men against women, and men against men. The humorous usage could trivialize these social harms, keeping them invisible (Kleinman et al., 2009, p.53).

The level of obscenity of the word *bitch* should be elaborated upon. McEnery (2006, p. 25) conducted a corpus-based study about the types of swear words used in the English language. The study found that the word *bitch* is categorized as mild (2) in the scale of offense that ranges from very mild (1) to very strong (5) (McEnery, 2006, p. 25). It also revealed that when the plural tense of the word is used, it was singly used targeting women, and mapped as moderate in the scale of offense (McEnery, 2006, p. 36). Fägersten (2012, p. 78) problematizes this by investigating the differences between contextualized and non-contextualized swearing. On a ten-point scale, where 1 represents “not offensive” and 10 represents “very offensive”, *bitch* was given the average rating of 5 in the non-contextualized rating where word lists were used. This is higher than the excretory, body, and religious terms such as *shit*, *ass*, and *damn*, and rated the same as *fuck*. Words rated as more offensive are *cunt* (6.6), *nigger* (8.5), and *motherfucker* (5.9). This tells us that there are difficulties concerning grading terms regarding the scale of offense, as the study by McEnery (2006) had different results. The study also found that the contextualized swear words were rated differently than the non-contextualized terms (Fägersten, 2012, p. 95). This could be connected to the notion that *bitch* has lost its sexual implications in some contexts and could instead mean stupid, contemptible, and so on, and thereby used in a positive, non-abusive way addressing a friend (Fagersted, 2012, p. 168). Consequently, it is stated that the word list method cannot account for the variations of swear word usage, nor for the effects of variations in context, such as setting and co-participants (Fägersten, 2012, p. 95).

Hughes (2015, p.34) also points out the semantic development of the word *bitch* in modern English, as the term also can be applied to a man, to a problematic situation or a complaint, and as a verb in the meaning to complain or criticize. Male application is nevertheless not exclusively modern, as it appeared in the sixteenth century, and was viewed as offensive in the 1800s. The term *son of a bitch* was introduced, initially referring to despicable men, but this term is now also more generalized through indiscriminate use (Hughes, 2015, p. 441). Nonetheless, the term *bitch* alone could also refer to men, more specifically in a denigrating fashion, by putting their masculinity into question (Kleinman et al., 2009, p. 53). In this type of use, one symbolically places the man in the woman's position, for instance, referencing a man being sexually abused by another man. Kleinman et al. (2009, p. 53) further explains that this only makes sense in a culture where women are deemed inferior and male dominance is celebrated and normalized.

2.4.2 Characterization of Norwegian Swearing

According to Svennevig & Hasund (2018, p. 139), Norwegian swear words are categorized by the notions of secularization, sexualization, and globalization. Diabolic swear words such as *faen* and *jævla* were commonly used in the 1900s (Ljung, 1987, p. 40) and still have a central position in the Norwegian language today (Svennevig & Hasund, 2018, p. 139). Nonetheless, the words are perceived as less taboo today than in the past. Swear words related to sexuality and bodily functions have increased in use frequency, and they are considered "strong" swear words (Svennevig & Hasund, 2018, p.137). The work by Ljung (1987, p. 41) presents the perspective on swearing and taboo words from the late 1900s in Norway, claiming that sexually related words were infrequent in Norwegian at the time and that the terms in question were taboo. It is nonetheless stated that words such as *kukk*, *fitte*, *hestkuk*, and *forpult*, which are related to genitalia or sexual acts, are used. Ljung (1987) does not mention swearing connected to the female gender or degradation of women, but he mentions other categories as central such as words related to feces, and that many swear expressions are borrowings (Ljung, 1987, p. 44). This is confirmed by Svennevig and Hasund (2018, p. 139) stating that Norwegian language is impacted by Anglo-American culture, and that a range of loan words have therefore entered the language, including swear words such as *fuck* and *motherfucker*. Svennevig and Hasund (2018, p. 139) mention the linguistic trend where the language user uses insults that degrade the other's mother, which is a borrowing from English. These types of insults often regard sexual slurs or incest, such as *mora di er ei*

hore, *morraknuller*, and *motherfucker*, or personal characteristics, such as *mora di er så feit at* (..) (Svennevig and Hasund, 2018, p. 138).

The words *hore* and *homo* were considered the worst curse words among Norwegian youths in the 2000s (Halseth, 2007, p.7, cited in Svennevig & Hasund, 2018, p. 137). Regarding the levels of offense of swear words, Lie (2010, p. 45) has conducted an informal study ranking Norwegian obscenities according to perceived severity. Among the terms included in this study are the words that tend to recur as translations for the words in the survey by McEneaney (2006) discussed in 2.4.1, where the word *bitch* was categorized as mild. Of these, *kjerring* is classified as mild on the scale of profanity, and *tispe* is categorized as moderate.

2.4.3 Swearing and slurs in audiovisual translation

Several existing studies investigate the intricacies between swearing and audiovisual translation, such as Dobao (2006), Díaz-Cintas, J. (2009), Greenall (2011), Pardo (2011), Ameri & Ghazizadeh (2014), Beseghi (2016), Pratama (2017), Ghazi & Sadati (2018), and Al-Yasin & Rabab'ah (2019). According to Cintas & Remael (2007, p.195), swearwords, taboo words, and interjections are often toned down or omitted if space is limited in subtitles. Nonetheless, they claim that deletion is not the optimal option when handling words within this category because they fulfill specific functions in the dialogic interaction and, thereby, the film story. Cintas and Remael also suggest that swear words are perceived as more offensive when found in the written text in subtitles than in oral language or novels (2007, p. 196). This problematizes the task of the translator when dealing with the taboo words, where the consequence often is mildening or omission of these words in the target text (Cintas and Remael, 2007, p. 196). The tendency to reduce swear words in translation is confirmed in several studies, such as Ghazi & Sadati (2018) and Al-Yasin & Rabab`ah (2019).

Ghazi & Sadati (2018) studied the audiovisual translation of American movies into Iranian to investigate the strategies applied in the translation process. They claim that audiovisual translation has the potential to play a significant role in bringing cultures closer together in the globalized, mass-media-dominated world (Ghazi and Sadati, p. 55). Nonetheless, they found that Iranian official audiovisual translators' most significant concerns are cultural and ideological issues, such as taboo terms in the audiovisual works. The Iranian official audiovisual translators in the study toned down the strong language, offensive expressions, and vulgar descriptions to create an acceptable translation for their audiences (Ghazi &

Sadati, 2018, p. 47). Al-Yasin & Rabab`ah (2019) had similar findings in their study of the Arabic subtitle translation of American hip hop movies. The Arab subtitler translated the tabooed terms in Arabic using translation techniques such as euphemism and omission, used due to cultural constraints. The euphemistic translation technique was used where the word remained a swear word, but the degree of insult and offense was toned down. Only when the translator used the euphemism technique did the Arabic translation in the study correspond to the connotative functions of the English taboo words to an adequate extent. In contrast, the connotative functions were insufficiently conveyed when using the omission technique (Al-Yasin & Rabab`ah, 2019, p. 244).

Al-Yasin & Rabab`ah (2019, p. 233) furthermore hold that there are challenges in selecting an adequate equivalent for taboo terms in the target language while recognizing the cultural and social constraints. The Arab culture is generally known to be conservative, especially by looking at religion's impact on society. Therefore, the Arabic translators tended to find a euphemistic equivalent that has similar pragmatic and semantic features as the source language word, in accordance to the norms of the target language (Al-Yasin & Rabab`ah, 2019, p. 243). A study by Beseghi (2016, p. 216) focused on censorship connected to swearing and strong language in the translation of TV series from the US into Italian containing taboo subjects and strong language. The study also focused on the differences in translation choices applied between dubbing done by professionals and fan subtitling. The findings confirm the claim that professional translators tend to eradicate taboo or offensive elements from the source text. Nevertheless, they also found that the fan subtitlers tried to follow the source text more closely than the professional translator regarding style, register, and linguistic contents, making the translated text less censored and concerned with the sensitivity of the target audience (Beseghi, 2016, p 229).

Pardo (2011) investigated the translation of swearing, focusing on sexual insults, in Tarantino movies into Spanish. In similarity to the previously discussed studies, the results showed that the Spanish target text contained a reduced number of insults compared to the American source text. Moreover, the author suggests that the Spanish dubbed version underwent so many alterations that the idea transmitted in this version is different from that of the director (Pardo, 2011, p. 322). Tarantino's directing style is categorized as containing a significant amount of violence, taboos, and swearing, such as the word *fuck*. The word is, however, translated 'partially' or not at all in 48,78% of all the cases, resulting in a non-natural translation (Pardo, 2011, p. 290). The author also offers suggestions on how instances of

swearing could be revived in translation, to preserve the stylistic element of profanity in the films. The article furthermore lists possible reasons for the deletion of the insults, including time and space restrictions and the distributor`s choice to diminish foul language for commercial reasons. It is also reasoned with the tradition of being conservative, and preserving the correct morals of the society, as television is an influential medium for ethics and linguistics. Nevertheless, Pardo (2011, p. 322) states that the censorship of bad language should not be a part of the translator`s tasks and that the subtitler should aim to replicate the style of expression that is chosen by the director.

3.0 Method

3.1 Material/data

Tarantino has produced several critically and financially successful films, and he has won several awards and achieved fame for his works (Pardo, 2011, p. 48). His movies usually feature criminals and characters that commit crimes that involve drugs, weapons, and murder, in addition to highly violent scenes that often are exaggerated and rooted in a darkly comic context as trademarks (IMDB, n.d.). An example of this is in a scene in *Kill Bill* vol. 2, where the main character, the bride, pulls out the eye of the antagonist in a sword battle. The now blind character then screams hysterically while she rips the caravan they are in apart and blood is splashing around her, while the bride steps on the eye calmly walks out of the caravan. This thesis investigates movies directed by Tarantino because they contain a significant number of swear words and obscenities compared to other films. Obscene and impolite language use is an inherent trait of the movies and directing style and is included regardless of the audience's opinion (Pardo, 2011, p. 42). Pardo (2011, p. 127) notes that the high number of swearwords in the films directed by Tarantino makes their translation an important yet challenging assignment. Moreover, on language and violence, Pardo (2011, p. 125) affirms that Quentin Tarantino is a defender of extreme violence in the cinematic realm and that physical and verbal violence merge and most often coexist.

Tarantino's movies have received criticism because of the controversies of the films (Pardo, 2011, p. 67), as well as because they are perceived as degrading to female characters (Chacko, 2019). The questioning of femininity and female characters is also evident in Bajac-Carter and Batchelor's study (2014, p. 74). Their study investigates the portrayal of the heroine in *Kill Bill*, finding that the attempt at creating a female lead where a woman fulfills the masculine hero role is chauvinistically defeated as the character is still defined by her female body and maternity, and not her manly actions. The lead character's male hero-associated qualities, such as killing, fighting, and driving motorcycles, are inferior when any motherly duties are subjects of reality, which, perhaps a bit camouflaged by all her masculine strengths, reminds us of the weaknesses of the character, and the woman (Bajac-Carter and Batchelor, 2014, p. 74).

This study aims to investigate the subtitle translation of the word *bitch* in Quintain Tarantino movies, exploring the strategies employed and looking into what this might mean when it

comes to the ideological positioning of the translator. The motivation for investigating the translation of the word *bitch* is due to the word's associations and history that originate in the deprecation and belittlement of women (Kleinman et al, 2009, p. 47). As mentioned in 2.4.1, the swear word was viewed as one of the most offensive words one could use towards women, and the word is still frequently used today referencing women, often in a negative way (Kleinman et al, 2009, p. 47). Nonetheless, it has also been judged as mild to moderate in recent studies (McEnery, 2006, p. 33; Fägersten, 2012, p. 78). Investigating how this word is translated sheds light on the translators' stance on how to handle this word in the subtitle translation of these movies. One could further make suggestions about the subtitlers' ideology and whether it has changed throughout the years on the background of this. The word *bitch* is also perhaps especially challenging to translate, as it has no direct or obvious equivalence in Norwegian. This forces the translator to make a difficult choice in the translation regarding how the term should be transferred to the subtitles.

The material used in this research consist of the Norwegian subtitle translation of the American dialogue from the nine following movies directed by Quintain Tarantino:

- Reservoir Dogs (1992). This movie follows six criminals hired to steal diamonds, who do not know each other's identities. At the heist attempt, they are ambushed by the police, leading them to figure out that one of them is undercover police.
- Pulp Fiction (1994). Pulp Fiction revolves around the criminal world in Los Angeles, specifically the two hitmen, Vincent Vega and Jules Winnfield, trying to retrieve a stolen suitcase for their mob boss and doing other "errands" for their boss that go wrong.
- Jackie Brown (1997). A flight attendant is caught smuggling gun money and has to choose between teaming up with the police to catch her arms dealer boss, or luring the cops, being true to her boss and going to jail.
- Kill Bill: Vol 1 (2003). The Bride, a pregnant assassin, wakes up from a coma four years after being brutally attacked by her ex-boss, Bill. She then begins a journey to get revenge on him and his associates.
- Kill Bill: Vol 2 (2004). The Bride continues her mission to kill her ex-boss, Bill's brother Budd and the other member of the gang, Elle, are also targeted in advance of the assassination.

- *Death Proof* (2007). Three girls go to a bar to drink, have fun and meet men. Meanwhile, they are stalked by the previous stuntman and killer Mike, who plans to take them on a deathly car trip.
- *Inglorious Basterds* (2009). A group of Jewish U.S soldiers is on an undercover mission to overthrow the Nazi government and end the war. Simultaneously, a Jewish woman seeks to avenge the death of her family caused by a German officer.
- *Django Unchained* (2012). The enslaved person Django is freed as he joins forces with a bounty hunter catching criminals and eventually plans to rescue his enslaved wife, owned by a wealthy plantation owner.
- *Once Upon A Time In Hollywood* (2019). Rick, an aged actor, and his equally struggling stunt double Cliff strive to recapture the success and fame of their past while Hollywood is in change. At the same time, murderers kill their neighbors, and try to commit the same act on them.

The movies included are chosen to represent Tarantino's movies from his early career to his latest work (1992-2019). The production dates of the subtitles are not accessible, but it is likely that the films are subtitled close to the time the films were published, as the films were distributed with Norwegian subtitles shortly after they were published in the U.S.

The data were gathered by watching the movies and transcribing each instance of the word *bitch* and the utterance or sentence it is a part of. This spoken source text and written subtitle target text are included in the analysis with time stamp and scene explanations adhering to the ST and its translation. The word *bitch* is highlighted in the ST transcription, and if the word is somehow represented in the subtitles, it is also highlighted in the TT transcription. The movies used to gather data were in DVD format or found on the streaming services Netflix (*Django Unchained*) and HBO max (*Once Upon A Time In Hollywood*). These movies are selected based on availability. The subtitlers of the works are unidentifiable.

3.2 Analytical procedure

In this study, the source text containing the word *bitch* in the dialogue of the Tarantino-directed films, is compared to the target text, the Norwegian subtitle translation of the corresponding item. Comparative models of translation compare the ST to the TT, demonstrated by the notion of $ST \approx TT$ or $TT \approx ST$ (Williams & Chesterman, 2014, p. 49). Moreover, such models perceive translation as an issue of alignment; the focus is on selecting

the elements of the target language that will align most closely with the given component of the source language. The term equivalent is often used in contrastive models and refers to the relation between two instances of language use, for instance, the ST and the TT. This term is central in contrastive models as the equivalences of individual items are often not clear and obvious; the SL item usually has several possible equivalents that could be used under different conditions (Williams & Chesterman, 2014, p. 50). Lastly, all research on a comparative model aims to discover the correlations between the two sides of the relation (Williams & Chesterman, 2014, p. 51).

The general approach to the analysis is of a descriptive-explanatory nature (Saldanha & O'Brian, 2013, p. 50). "Descriptive-explanatory" (Saldanha & O'Brian, 2013, p. 50) labels an approach to studying translation that aims to first describe the data gathered and then suggest how one could explain the aspects in focus. According to Saldanha and O'Brian (2013, p. 50), it is possible to make inferences about the process of translation by observing the products of it. The analysis of texts in their context of production and reception provides evidence of the decision-making of the translator. This grants some insight into the translation process. Furthermore, this is especially relevant when the research focuses on the process of meaning negotiation rather than the texts as products, meaning that language is used to engage. Nonetheless, no research method can provide direct access to cognitive processes, which is a challenge shared by all disciplines interested in these processes. This entails that this study could not make inferences about the exact thought process of the translator, explaining why the specific strategies are employed (Saldanha and O'Brian, 2014, p. 50).

The translations of the word *bitch* will be analyzed using the strategy categories presented in Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014, p. 86), namely direct translation with strong force, direct translation with weak force, foreignization, and deletion. These strategies represent how the swear words are translated with regards to which degree the level of offence is conserved, and whether the swear word is included at all. This study will use strategies focusing on level of profanity with the aim of investigating the ideologies that affect the translation, and whether the ideologies have changed, so that words such as *bitch* are translated with weaker or stronger force now than before. This study will alter the two first terms of the strategies found in Ameri and Ghazizadeh (2014, p. 86), namely direct translation with strong force and direct translation with weak force, to be more pertinent and applicable for this specific study. More specifically, the element *direct* in direct translation of weak force and direct translation

of strong force will be omitted as the term direct translation implies that the source text item is transferred to the target text without any semantic alterations, and that merely the language is changed (Pedersen, 2011, p. 43). One could also further argue that direct translation as such is problematic as the source and target languages rarely share close equivalents. Direct translation of strong force will, in this study, therefore be renamed to translation with strong force and regard the instances of translation where the level of profanity of the source text item is preserved, even though the semantic properties of the word might be altered. The second strategy, direct translation with weak force, will similarly be termed as translation with weak force and is applicable to the instances where the level of obscenity is considerably reduced, but parts of the semantic properties of the word are conveyed to a TT item. Thirdly, foreignization refers to the occurrences of translation where the source text item is transferred unaltered to the target text, that is, rendered in the ST language. The last translation strategy, omission, denotes when the translator deletes a ST item by not transferring it to the TT.

The analysis of the translations of *bitch* will also be separated into three types of co-texts. This is done because the kind of co-text that the word *bitch* occurs in could plausibly affect how the word is translated. Co-text is understood here as any text surrounding the element in focus. The first co-textual category, termed single items, consists of the instances where the source text term occurs as a simple noun phrase. An example of this is the uttering “Come on, bitch!”, since the word *bitch* here stands alone in the phrase. The second co-textual category that will be considered in the analysis is collocations. The term collocation has different definitions and is used differently among researchers. Bruening (2020, p. 1) defines collocation as a subclass of set phrases which occur more frequently. In this study, the category collocation will denote less fixed collocations, meaning that the phrases in this category co-occur frequently and belong together idiomatically, but are not fixed expressions (Bruening, 2020, p. 17). The collocation category consists of phrases consisting of adjectives and the word *bitch*. For instance, the phrase “dumb bitch” would be recognized as a collocation. The last co-textual category that will be incorporated in the analysis is fixed expressions. Fixed expressions are defined as rigid patterns of language that permit little or no variation or flexibility in form and often not in transparency of meaning (Baker, 1992, p. 63). Baker (1992, p. 68) also presents various difficulties regarding the translation of these expressions, including the problem that the fixed expression may not have an equivalent in the target language. The fixed expression *son of a bitch* will make up this category, as this is

the only fixed expression that involves the word *bitch* in the material, and because it is frequently found in the dialogue of the films. *Son of a bitch* is most often directed towards a man in a denigrating fashion. This co-text is included as a variable because of this quality of being directed toward men, aiming to compare the translations of the terms in regard to the gender of the recipient. *Bitch* as a single item or collocation could also be used towards men (Kleinman et al., 2009, p. 53) but is most often directed toward or referencing women (McEnery, 2006, p. 33), which is also applicable for this data material.

Lastly, the difficulties in investigating the translation of the word *bitch* in this fixed expression should be mentioned. Because the head of the noun phrase is *son*, the translations of this fixed expression therefore could be focused on preserving this specific element, while *bitch* only would be represented as an element of vulgarity. Despite this, *son of a bitch* will be analyzed by looking at the expression as a whole, and to which extent both the semantic elements and the level of profanity overall are conserved in translation.

3.3 *Validity and reliability*

Validity concerns to which extent one could make justifiable inferences based on the evidence gathered (Le Grange and Beets, 2005, p. 115). Another perspective on the term is the positivistic view that regards validity as the degree to which a study's findings are trustworthy and sufficiently authentic in the sense that the results presented match as closely as possible the actual state of the world (Saldanha and Obrien, 2013, p. 28). Questions of validity in translation studies are nonetheless challenging, and it is disclosed that one cannot claim absolute validity in studies within this field (Saldanha and O'brian, 2013, p. 28). In relation to validity and generalizability in this study, the limitations concerning the small amount of data indicate that one cannot make inferences about truths of instances outside this study. The result shows how the word *bitch* is translated in the movies directed by Tarantino and could perhaps suggest a trend if related to other studies regarding swearing and translation, and a certain transferability. However, this requires further investigation and could be subject of other studies. This study is also limited as it is specifically focused on the word *bitch*. Other swear words or pejoratives could be dealt with differently in translation, and one cannot make inferences of these on the basis on the findings in this study. Regarding external validity, the limitation of the scope of this study when it comes to the amount of data indicate that there are slim generalizability possibilities. Generalization concerns

extrapolation from the exact findings of a research and depends on the sampling method and the size of the sample.

Reliability, which refers to the extent to which, if investigating the same question, one could come to the same conclusion or generate the same results using the identical data and methods at a different time (Saldanha and O'Brien, 2013, p. 35). In order to increase reliability, the researcher can demonstrate data collection and analysis methods that are dependable and transparent, by making the choices and course of action of the method visible for the reader. Therefore, the method of this study is described as carefully and detailed as possible, at the aim of producing reliable results and provide possibilities for repeating the study by following the method described.

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Quantitative overview

The results show that 50,6% of 84 instances of the word *bitch* in the dialogue were translated by utilizing translation with strong force as strategy. Meanwhile, 34,1% of the total was omitted in the translation, and 15,3% was translated using translation with weak force as strategy (see Table 1 below). The strategy of foreignization was not found in the translated TT. Forty-six instances of the total were simple noun phrases. Among these were 64,2% omitted, 19,2% translated using translation with weak force, and 34,6% translated using translation with strong force. Furthermore, of the 15 instances which occurred as part of collocations (such as *fucking bitch* or *black bitch*), 60% were found to be translated by applying the strategy translation with strong force, 20% were omitted, and 20% was translated using translation with weak force. Lastly, among the 18 instances categorized as fixed expressions, which solely represented the fixed expression *son of a bitch*, 88,9% were translated using translation with strong force as strategy. None of the fixed expressions were translated using translation with weak force, as the remaining 11,1% were omitted.

Table 1 also shows the frequency of the different strategies used in the different movies, to show a possible development in translation strategies from the older to the newer subtitles. The result shows that there are no indications of a clear tendency of more or less reduction of the word *bitch* in the more recent movies, compared to the older. In the two newest movies, *Django Unchained* (2012) and *Once Upon a Time In Hollywood* (2019), the translator(s) have solely used the strategy translation with strong force on the word *bitch*. At the same time, the strategy of translation with weak force is most frequently used in the earliest movies, such as *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), *Pulp Fiction* (1994), and *Jackie Brown* (1997), with respective 33,3%, 33,3%, and 55,5%. However, there is not a consistent enough pattern of the strategies applied in the translations to claim that there is a clear development through time.

Table 1: Results of the quantitative analysis of the translation strategies used on *bitch* in different co-texts.

Strategies	Total number	%	RD 1992	PF 1994	JB 1997	KB1 2003	KB2 2004	DP 2007	IB 2009	DU 2012	OUAT 2019
In total:	85	100	9(100%)	6(100%)	11(100%)	7(100%)	7(100%)	26(100%)	2(100%)	15(100%)	2(100%)
foreignization	0	0	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Strong Force	43	50,6	4(44,4%)	0(0%)	1(9%)	6(85,7%)	5(71,4%)	9(34,6%)	1(50%)	15(100%)	2(100%)
Weak Force	13	15,3	3(33,3%)	2(33,3%)	5(55,5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	3(11,5%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Omission	29	34,1	2(22,2%)	4(66,7%)	5(55,5%)	1(14,3%)	2(28,6%)	14(53,8%)	1(50%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Single	52	61,2	4	5	11	6	5	19	0	2	0
foreignization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
strong force	18	34,6	3	0	1	5	3	4	0	2	0
weak force	10	19,2	1	2	5	0	0	2	0	0	0
omission	24	46,2	0	3	5	1	2	13	0	0	0
Collocation	15	17,6	4	0	0	0	2	6	0	1	2
foreignization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
strong force	9	60	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	1	2
weak force	3	20	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
omission	3	20	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Fixed expression	18	21,2	1	1	0	1	0	1	2	12	0
foreignization	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
strong force	16	88,9	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	12	0
weak force	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
omission	2	11,1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

In Table 2 below, we see the different target text counterparts of the word *bitch*, and the frequency they are applied. The most frequent correspondences, except omitting the word, is *merr*, followed by *jævel* and *megge*, all considered translation with strong force. The fourth most applied target text correspondent is *hun/henne*, categorized as translations with weak force. The transcriptions of all the instances of the word *bitch* in each of the movies are found in the appendix, including the categorization of the co-texts singles, collocations, and fixed expressions, in addition to the translation strategies.

Table 2: Target text counterparts and their frequency

Target Text translation	Total number	Strategy
Total	85	
Not translated	29	Omission
Merr	14	Strong force
Jævel	10	Strong force
megge	7	Strong force
hun/henne	5	Weak force
Kvinfolk	2	Weak force
dama	2	Weak force
kjerring	2	Strong force
tispe	2	Strong force
horesønn	2	Strong force
møkkamerr	1	Strong force
jævla svin	1	Strong force
møkkasabb	1	Strong force
mase	1	Weak force
svin	1	Strong force
dumme svin	1	Strong force
hurpe	1	Strong force
berte	1	Weak force
jenta	1	Weak force
kona	1	Weak force

4.2 Analysis

This section will present qualitative analyses of selected examples from the data. The examples will represent each translation strategy, divided into the different types of co-text in which the words are found. The co-texts involved are, as mentioned in section 3.2., *bitch* occurring as a single item, in a collocation consisting of an adjective and the word *bitch*, and in a fixed expression. Additionally, the examples will represent movies produced in Tarantino's early to late career to provide a broad selection of examples representing all of the works.

4.2.1 Translation with strong force

The closest correspondence to *bitch* is arguably the word *tispe*, as both terms denote a female dog and contains female derogatory connotations (Tispe, n.d.). Consequently, translation into this term would be of strong force. In the material, *bitch* is translated into *tispe* twice (2,4%) in the movie subtitles. An example of this is found in the movie *Django unchained* (2012) and represents the translation of *bitch* as a single item.

Example 1

ST	TT	Strategy
Butler: We're gonna blow this bitch's brains out	Jeg tror at gir du deg ikke innen 10 sekunder, skyter vi skallen av tispa .	Translation with strong force

Furthermore, the terms *merr* and *megge* are applied the most as target text correspondences, where both count as translations with strong force. *Bitch* is translated as *merr* 14 times, which constitutes 16,7% of the total of instances of the word *bitch* in all three co-texts. This is illustrated in Example 2 below, which is found in *Kill Bill Vol. 2* (2004), and where the term is a single item. Here, the semantic properties of the word are preserved in the sense that both words refer to or originate from animal terms, as well as they negatively denote female gender. However, the term *merr* does not imply a female dog but to a female horse, in addition to the demeaning aspect (Merr, n.d.), which creates a contrast semantically between the source and target text.

Example 2

ST	TT	Strategy
Beatrice: Bitch . You don't have a future.	Di merr . Du har ikke noen fremtid.	Translation with strong force

In *Death Proof* (2007), the single item *bitch* is repeatedly translated into *megge* (see Example 3 below). When it comes to semantic meaning, the translation into *megge* is similar to *merr*

as it comprises both the animalistic aspect, and the female derogatory denotation.

Nonetheless, comparable to *merr*, *megge* denotes another animal species, more specifically an enlarged, female, cloved-hoofed animal, most often a cow (Megge, n.d.).

Example 3

ST	TT	Strategy
Zoe: You just be like, bitch get over here and get busy.	Bare si: «Hei, megge , kom hit og trå til».	Translation with strong force

Within the category of collocations, an example of the use of translation with strong force is the translation of the collocation *fucking bitch* into *hurpe* in *Once Upon A Time In Hollywood* (2019), illustrated in Example 4 below. Here, the semantic property of gender and the level of profanity and insult is arguably preserved, as *hurpe* notably is used to describe women in a negative manner, and denotes a foul, bitter female (Hurpe, n.d.). However, the animalistic aspect is absent in the TT. The ST collocation as a whole is also transmitted to the target text, as the source text item *fucking* could be said to be represented in the TT item *jævla*. These items in isolation belong to different semantic categories, respectively sexual activities and religion, but consequently both pertain taboo elements (Jævla, n.d.). A possible explanation for the translation of the source text collocation in Example 4 into *jævla hurpe* could be that it is more common to use this collocation in Norwegian than to use the collocation *jævla merr*, and that the latter is not a collocation in Norwegian.

Example 4

ST	TT	Strategy
Randy: -And man she's a fucking bitch	-og hun er en jævla hurpe..	Translation with strong force

The fixed expression *son of a bitch* makes up 21,2% of the total of instances of the word *bitch* and is most often used as a slur directed towards a male, or else used as interjections without any specific (gendered) recipient. 88,9% of these instances were translated using translation with strong force. The results shows that this expression has many different

counterparts in the ST translation, such as *jævel/jævler*, *horesønn*, *jævla svin*, *møkkasabb*, *svin*, and *dumme svin*. It is important to keep in mind that the target text correspondences are translations of the ST fixed expression as a whole, since the fragments of the expression often cannot be broken down and translated similar to an ordinary phrase. One could argue that the counterparts of the fixed expression *son of a bitch* mentioned above, are focused on both conserving the male aspect derived from the fragment *son*, as well as a profane or taboo aspect that is derived from *bitch*. The outcome of this is therefore not direct translations of any sorts, but target text expressions that contain similar elements as the source text fixed expression.

There are 10 occurrences where the *son of a bitch* is translated into *jævel/jævler*. Here, the translator has used the strategy translation with strong force, and the semantic property of the item is altered in the target text expression, from originating from the categories animals, gender, and kinship terms, to religion (Jævel, n.d.). Nonetheless, the aspect of profanity is conserved. The target text item *svin* is also found as the equivalent for the fixed expression, either occurring as a single item in the target text, or as a part of the expressions *jævla svin* or *dumme svin*. In Example 5, found in *Kill Bil Vol. 1 (2003)*, the fixed expression is translated into *jævla svin*. The use of *svin* maintains the animalistic attribute of the fragment *bitch* in the source text expression, although referencing a different animal, namely a swine or pig (Svin, n.d.). In addition, the profane element is also conserved, and arguably also strengthened by employing the intensifier *jævla*.

Example 5

ST	TT	Strategy
O`Ren: Now if any of you sons of bitches-	Så hvis noen av dere jævla svin,	Translation with strong force

Similarly, in *Django Unchained (2012)* the fixed expression *son of a bitch* is translated into *horesønner* using translation with strong force (see Example 6). This TT correspondence is the most straight forward translation of the ST fixed expression, and is due to this special because it is close to a translation of the fixed expression, which is rare in this material. Here,

the semantic aspects regarding gender are preserved, both concerning the presence of the male and female attributes, namely *son* and *bitch*. Also, the target text expression encompasses a high level of offence in the sense that it includes the constituent *hore*, which refers to a (often female) prostitute, or a woman who is of lesser worth (Hore, n.d.).

Horesønner refers to the son of this woman of prostitution of low worth, in the sense that this role is degrading.

Example 6

ST	TT	Strategy
Sons of bitches!	Horesønner	Translation with strong force

4.2.2 Translation with weak force

The strategy translation with weak force was executed in diverse ways in the translations of the dialogue. The results shows that 6% of the total number of *bitch*, the word was translated into *hun/henne*, and that *kvinnfolk*, *berte*, *jenta*, *kona*, and *dama* were also found in the target text. Example 7 shows the translation into *henne* and is found in Jackie Brown (1997). In this dialogue, Ordell is talking about Jackie Brown, the main character, in anger. The target text translation *henne* has conserved the semantic aspect when it comes gender as both target and source text indicate that one is talking about a female. However, the subtitle translation's level of offence is reduced in comparison to the source text element *bitch*, which is a central part of the utterance, which is of an aggressive character.

Example 7

ST	TT	Strategy
Ordell: Drag that bitch by the hair and drag her fucking ass out of there, that's my god damn money	Dra henne av gårde etter håret! Det er mine penger.	Translation with weak force

In *Reservoir Dogs* (1992), the dialogue containing the word *bitches* as a single item was translated to *kona*, using translation with weak force (see Example 7 below). The semantic similarities here also lie within that the gender aspect is remained, nevertheless, the expressions have distinctly different connotations. The target text item *kona* could be categorized as more conservative or of a different style, as it denotes a married woman (Kone, n.d.), in addition to the fact that the profanity of the source text item is deleted in the translation.

Example 8

ST	TT	Strategy
Mr. Pink: I'll make you a bet that those same damn niggers, who's showin' their ass in public, when their bitches get'em home, they chill the fuck out.	Når nigger blærer seg ute, roer de seg nok ned når kona får dem hjem.	Translation with weak force

There are also examples of collocations that are translated using translation with weak force. In *Death Proof* (2007), *bitch*, together with the profane word *fucking*, constitutes a collocation which is translated into *dama*. The profanity attribute of the subtitle translation is totally absent, and a contrast to the source text collocation that contains swear words considered profane (Lie, 2010).

Example 9

ST	TT	Strategy
Guy at the bar: As long as the guy is buying the booze, the fucking bitch will drink anything	Så lenge en fyr spanderer, drikker dama alt.	Translation with weak force

Out of the total of instances where the translators have used the strategy translation with weak force, none of these were in the category of fixed expression. This means that among the fixed expressions, consisting of *son of a bitch*, there were detected no loss of profanity while remaining some of the semantic elements of the expression.

4.2.3 Omission

The strategy omission employed in translation of the word *bitch* is found in 28 of the total of 85 instances, or 34,1%, and is detected most frequently when the term in question occurs as a single item, as 46,15% of them were omitted. The use of this strategy is found in the example below from the film Jackie Brown. Here, the slur is completely deleted from the dialogue. An observation of significance here is the change in style from the source text dialogue to the subtitle translation. The dialogue, setting, and scene in the example could be categorized as tense and hostile, as Louis aggressively yells at Melanie while he violently drags her into a store. The use of the strategy omission in translation of the word *bitch* in the example drastically alters the style and tone of the uttering.

Example 10

ST	TT	Strategy
Melanie: Idiot. Just let go.	Idiot. Slipp meg.	Omission
Louis: Just straighten up, bitch	Oppfør deg pent.	

Another example of the omission of the term *bitch* as a single item is Example 10, found in Pulp Fiction (1994). This ST sentence encompasses two instances of the word where none are transmitted to the target text. One could suggest that some level of profanity is conserved by converting a profane item to another place in the sentence, as the uttering includes the word *fitte*, which is a vulgar word referencing a woman's genitalia. However, as the ST contains the expression *eating (..) out*, this could not be perceived as a sufficient explanation, as this is also a profane expression.

Example 11

ST	TT	Strategy
Eating a bitch out and giving a bitch a foot massage aint even the same fuckin' thing	Å slikke fitte og å gi fotmassasje er ikke det samme	Omission Omission

The omission strategy is also found among the collocations. This is illustrated in Example 11, retrieved in the dialogue in *Reservoir Dogs* (1992). In this utterance, Mr. Pink uses the collocations *white bitch* and *black bitch* in explaining the difference between the level of tolerance they have when it comes to the man's behavior. The target text lacks the item *bitch* but retains the adjectives *hvit* and *svart*, without including a noun.

Example 12

ST	TT	Strategy
Mr. Pink: What a white bitch will put up with, a black bitch wouldn't put up with for a minute, man.	Det en hvit finner seg i, vil ikke en svart finne seg i.	Omission omission

11,1% of all the fixed expressions found were omitted in translation. This is a considerably lower percentage than for instance the omission of the single items, which were 46,2%. In Example 11 below found in the film *Inglorious Basterds* (2009), an example of the employment of the omission strategy in translating the fixed expression *son of a bitch* is presented.

Example 13

ST	TT	Strategy
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Lieutenant Aldo Raine: That's why every son of a bitch we find wearing a nazi uniform, they`re going to die	Derfor skal alle vi finner som bærer en naziuniform, dø.	Omission
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5.0 Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate how the word *bitch* is subtitled in the films by Quintain Tarantino. The question of inquiry is as follows: What happens to the swear word “bitch” in the Norwegian subtitle translation of the films directed by Quentin Tarantino? Is there a difference between the word’s translation in the older and newer films? And will there be differences regarding the target of the insult in various cases? Firstly, I hypothesized that the degree of profanity caused by the use of the word *bitch* is reduced in the audiovisual translation. Secondly, I hypothesized that *bitch* will be more reduced in the newer subtitles than in the older. Thirdly, a hypothesis of this study was that the degree of profanity will be more reduced when the term is directed at females than towards males. I have looked at the translation strategies that were employed by the translators, in order to shed light on the potential reductions of profanity or shifts in their translation. The subtitle translations have also been separated into the co-textual category that the instances of *bitch* in the source text are found in, with the aim of looking at the potential differences in strategies employed between the gender of the recipient of *bitch*.

The overall tendency found in the analysis shows that the degree of profanity that is caused by the use of the word *bitch* is reduced in translation, by the use of the strategy omission and the strategy translation with weak force. Regarding the reduction of degree of profanity, one could look at the two strategies translation with weak force and omission together, since the first strategy deletes the profane characteristic of the term, and the second strategy deletes the whole term. In total, these two strategies constitute 49,4%, meaning that the offensive element of the term was deleted in almost half of all the instances. This confirms the first hypothesis. Secondly, there is no clear indication pointing at the release time of the movie subtitles as a decisive factor of how much the profanity of the swear word *bitch* is reduced, as the ratio of the different strategies employed varies from movie to movie regardless of time of release. This rejects the second hypothesis. Thirdly, the gender of the target of the word is found to be affecting the translation, as the fixed expressions are less reduced in degree of profanity than the single items and collocation. Consequently, when the term is directed towards a woman, the degree of profanity caused by the use of *bitch* is more reduced than when directed at a male, validating the third hypothesis.

Regarding the first research question and hypothesis, the constraints of time and space could be a plausible explanation for the reduction of the profanity of the word *bitch* in the subtitles, as the limited number of characters that the translator can fit into the two subtitle lines leads to condensation of the dialogue (Pedersen, 2011, p.19). For instance, the source text in Example 11 consists of 19 words and 90 characters, and the two instances of *bitch* in the dialogue were both omitted. This could be reasoned by the length of the oral utterance in relation to the space available for the written subtitle, in accordance with Pedersen (2011, p. 19), who states that the average two lines could have approximately 71 characters. The longer utterances in the source text could in this way be shortened and words could be deleted due to priorities of the translator, as the aim is to transfer the essential elements of the communication for the audience to capture the message. Total reduction of certain elements of the discourse is thereby unavoidable in subtitling in the process (Cintas and Remael, 2007, p.162). Nevertheless, one could not explain all reductions of the word due to this, as there are examples where the utterance is short and the constraints of time and space are immaterial, but the word was still omitted. Example 9 illustrates this, as the utterance was short and occurred in a scene where the discourse density was low. Also, the use of the strategy translation with weak force could in general not be explained by the constraints of time and space, as the word in question is replaced using another word, excluding only the level of profanity, indicating that there would have been room for a closer correspondent that would have incorporated the obscene characteristic.

Constraints due to the semiotic transfer from oral speech to written text could also be considered as a possible explanation of the reduction of the degree of profanity caused by the use of *bitch*. The shift from oral to written constitutes a necessity for editing certain parts of the text, such as condensation or deletion of redundant, oral features that are connected to natural speech (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 20, cited in Pedersen, 2011, p. 18). When it comes to the question of redundancy, and whether the word *bitch* merely is a surplus in the communication, one could suggest that it could have further communicative purposes and take part of the message of the film. In Example 8, the strategy translation with weak force is employed, and the collocation *fucking bitch* is transferred to *dama* [the woman] in the subtitle. The reduction in obscenity could perhaps be reasoned with the constraint of oral to written, on the background that the collocation is of an oral characteristic because it is a profane expression and therefore is fundamentally altered in the translation. However, one could also suggest that the expression was an element of significance in the communication

and of the style, as it represented the speaker's perception of the situation and the women; namely that the main goal was to get the girls drunk and sleep with them, also representing their role in the film as disreputable men of a certain gender perception. The use of the collocation arguably reinforces this effect, which indicates that the expression was indeed not redundant, nor spontaneous or simply an oral feature, but a deliberately included stylistic element in the oral source text, which takes part of the meaning of the scene and genre of the films, which is altered in the target text through reduction of degree of profanity of *bitch*. This could also be related to the notion of normalization of the translated text (Gottlieb, 2012, p. 52), as a strategy to obtain the main message of the dialogue by making the points more explicit. Example 8 is an example of this as *dama* [the woman] is a more neutral, unambiguous term than *bitch*. The employment of this strategy could result in a change and normalization of the original genre and style, as the dialogue is less bizarre or less insulting, changing the text's effect on the target audience. Cintas and Remael (2007, p. 196) also claim that swearing is perceived differently when spoken orally than when written, indicating that the word in written form is experienced as more inappropriate or vulgar than when uttered out loud, which could be an explanation to why *bitch* is omitted or weakened in degree of profanity.

On another note, the effect that is followed by the use of *bitch* could in fact be retrieved by the audience despite the use of the translation strategies omission and translation with weak force. This could be explained by looking at the notion of feedback effect, which regards the viewers' ability to partially or fully comprehend the original, oral dialogue (Gottlieb, 2012, p. 52). It is plausible that the Norwegian speaking audience is familiar with the word *bitch*, due to the frequency of use and the long history of the word (Hughes, 2015, p. 23), and the expected high level of proficiency in English among the audience. This linguistic knowledge could result in a comprehension of the dialogue and of the term *bitch*, conveying the communicative effect of the swear word to the audience despite the subtraction of it in the subtitles. The receivers' retrievability of swear words is also dealt with in the study by Greenall (2011, p. 57), where a claim is made that viewers with some knowledge of English would be able to recover swearing directly from the auditory channel. This is not to expect if the receivers are not at all familiar with the source language, however, it is often the case that the audience indeed have knowledge of it. The film studied by Greenall has, in similarity with the films investigated in this study, original dialogue in English and Norwegian subtitles. The audience of such films are relatively fluent in English and will comprehend

large parts of the dialogue. In addition, swearing is fairly noticeable for the non-native audience, since swear words often are prosodically distinct and stand out from the remaining context (Greenall, 2011, p. 58). This might be an explanation for the choice of strategy when handling swearing in subtitling, and as a compensation for the reduction/loss of the term *bitch* in translation.

The aspect of culture and ideology should also be considered when examining possible contributing rationales or explanations for the shifts and strategies used in translation leading to the reduction of the degree of profanity of *bitch*. The results are not surprising considering previous studies regarding translation of swearing; the findings in the studies by Ghazi & Sadati (2018), Al-Yasin & Rabab'ah (2019), and Pardo (2011) showed an overall clear reduction in the profanity levels of insults, taboo words, and swearing in the audiovisual translations of the films and series studied. In the study by Ghazi & Sadati (2018, p. 47), the modification or omission of the taboo terms was explained by the cultural differences between the target and source language. The study further presents ideological concerns as a reason for the translation, such as creating an acceptable translation for their audiences (Ghazi & Sadati, 2018, p. 56). Similar results were found in the study by Al-Yasin & Rabab'ah (2019, p. 243), which remarks that the Arab culture is more conservative and that the TT follows the norms of the target language. The authors further claim that the Arabic subtitles correspond to the connotative functions of the ST taboo words by using non-offensive expressions (Al-Yasin & Rabab'ah, 2019, p. 244). Contrastingly, in the study by Pardo (2011, p. 322), there were executed so many alterations that the idea transmitted in the target text was different from the idea of the director. The reasons behind this were also explicated by cultural differences, and the keywords ethics, morals, tradition, and conservatism were encompassed in the elucidation (Pardo, 2011, p. 322). The reduction of the word *bitch* in the translation of the dialogue could on the background of this perhaps be explained by the differences of culture and ideology between the producer of the movie, and the ideological context of the translators. Tarantino arguably has a clear stylistic direction with regards to the movies he has directed, which includes high amounts of violence and strong language (Pardo, 2011, p. 125). This could communicate a type of ideology that is not as concerned with principles of respectfulness and ethics, and where political correctness does not stand strongly. By contrast, the Norwegian translators are perhaps seeking to diminish the level of insult and transmitting politically correct language, in coherence with

the beliefs and ideologies of the Norwegian society, concerned with issues such as social injustice and discrimination, and affected by gender consciousness movements.

The results, which as mentioned show a clear decrease of the profanity attached to the word *bitch* in the subtitle translation, is hence connected to the aspect of ideology, and one could further suggest the implication that gender issues have on this. The word *bitch* is, according to Kleinman et al. (2009, p. 52), used derogatory of women, putting the object in question in a subordinate relationship with the masculine, something that represents or is associated to the acts of domination in the real world against women by men. The use of this term, especially in humoristic contexts, trivialize these social harms (Kleinman et al., 2009, p. 53). Consequently, there are attached multiple connotations to *bitch*, making it a loaded expression. The translation of this expression could provide an opportunity to interpret underlying ideological perceptions, on the background of how the translator has transmitted the meaning of the term. For instance, in Example 11, a male character talks about the women he wants to approach and seduce by using the collocation *fucking bitch*, which is translated into *dama [the lady]*. Here, the target text correspondent is altered to a great extent from the ST item, as the aspect of profanity is deleted, and the tone and denotations of the TT item are more polite and conventional than the source text collocation. This eminent change in tone of the uttering from the male character referencing the woman could be due to an aim of reducing the insult directed at the female, representing the gender attentive ideology of the translator. This could be connected to Baumgarten (2014, p. 68), who explains the semiotic shift in the translated text and the gender-conscious language as an act of normalizing the language and the overtones that are undesirable in the receiving culture. One could draw lines from this to the feminist translators in Quebec in the 1980s and the strategies employed in manipulating texts in the name of equality (Godayol & Waldeck, 2018, p. 469). The omission of the word *bitch* could even be compared to the strategy of feminizing that was used, which included the deletion of words, metaphors, and images that describe women disparagingly (Godayol & Waldeck, 2018, p. 469). These strategies were employed to challenge patriarchal language and are highly related to the positionality of the translator, aspects that arguably are relevant when discussing translation and ideology today.

Furthering the discussion about gender and the translation of *bitch*, an interesting element to take under deliberation is the relationship between the translation strategies employed, and thereof the level of reduction of the word *bitch*, and the gender of the main characters of the different movies. The movies *Django Unchained*, *Inglorious Basterds*, and *Once Upon A*

Time In Hollywood contained high percentages of the use of translation with strong force. These movies are also dominated by male main characters and include high amounts of discourse between men. The gender of the characters influencing the discourse is also found in Pardo (2011, p. 261). The employment of the fixed expression *son of a bitch* was also considerably increased, especially in *Django Unchained*. Meanwhile, in the films *Jackie Brown* and *Death Proof*, where there are more female characters involved, the profanity that is caused by the use of the word *bitch* is more reduced, which is visible as the percentages of omission and translation with weak force were higher and strong force were lower in these films. To illustrate this, one can look at Example 9, where the source text utterance from the male character Louis is “Just straighten up, bitch”, translated into “Oppfør deg pent” [Behave nicely]. *Bitch* is not merely omitted in the target text; the tone and style of the expression are an absolute contrast in comparison to the source text, and could be described as more polite, mature, and conservative. This could be explained by the undesired connotations of the utterings towards female characters which plausibly could be perceived as offensive and unacceptable to the TT audience (Baumgarten, 2014, p. 54), and the influence that the language used in cinema has on the recipients (De Marco, 2012, p. 19).

The second research question, concerning the difference in the translation of *bitch* between the newer and older subtitles, will hence be considered. The results showed that there was no evident tendency that *bitch* was more or less reduced in degree of profanity in the newer films. This is interesting on the background of the notion that the society and ideologies have developed from the first film was published in 1992 to the last film was released in 2019, which is suggested to have an impact on how language is used (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 5). Social equality movements such as the MeToo movements and intersectionality arguably have progressed in this time period and increasingly influenced the ideologies and beliefs of the society (Roth, 2021, p. 1; Leung & Williams, 2019, p. 350), also in Norway. The term patronage deals with relationship between the ideologies of the society and translation (Lefevere, 2016, p. 12), and denotes that the translator rewrites the text with the aim of adjusting the form of the communication in coherence to the ideas, politics, culture, audience, institutions, and leading people that are relevant to the translator’s surroundings. The translators’ ideology and the dominant target language politics are thereby both decisive for the translated text (Lefevere, 2016, p. 2). The finding that there was no clear tendency regarding the release time of the film and the reduction of profanity of *bitch*, could tell us that the influence of the developments of the society, the patronage, does not affect the translation

of *bitch* as structurally and clearly in accordance with the societal developments as hypothesized. Another reason could be that the translators of the older films in fact also were highly conscious of the insult and hurtful effect that *bitch* can have, and thereof being reluctant in the transfer of it in translation. In addition, the lack of clear tendency could also be explicated by the small amount of data, and a distinct trend could perhaps be discovered if the study was expanded.

The third research question and hypothesis, relating to the difference in translation between the genders of the targets of *bitch*, should also be discussed. The results showed that the fixed expression *son of a bitch*, which is directed toward a man, is less reduced in degree of profanity compared to the collocations and single expressions including *bitch*, which are more often directed towards women than men (McEnery, 2006, p. 25). One could compare Example 7 and Example 5 to illustrate this. An example of translation of a collocation using translation with weak force is Example 7, where the male character Mr. Pink mentions the word *bitches*, referring to females. Here, *bitches* is translated into *kona* [the wife], which transmits and communicates parts of the word's semantic meaning, as the character refers to the partner of the men in discussion. Nonetheless, the profanity is omitted, and the tone and style are altered toward a more conservative and polite uttering in the target text. In contrast, Example 5 shows a translation of the fixed expression using the strategy translation with strong force, similar to 88,9% of the fixed expressions. Here, the male character, the lieutenant, talks to his male soldiers referring to the enemy, the nazi soldiers, as *sons of bitches*, which is translated into *jævla svin* [devilish swines]. On the background of this, one could suggest that the gender of the recipient of the swear word is in fact decisive for how the word is translated. The choice of preserving the obscenity of the fixed expressions more than the single terms and collocations could be reasoned by the translator's view on gender relations and consciousness in relation to this issue. Namely, the translators consider swearing or slurs that are directed at women as more inappropriate and insulting than when the slur is directed towards a man, translating the expressions in accordance with this. This could be connected to the translators' awareness of women and their social standing, incorporated in the ideological positioning of the translator, which is expressed through the translated text (Tymoczko, 2007, p.255).

The explanation of the differences in translation between the gender of the target of *bitch*, as an aim to avoid language with gender-discriminating connotations, is in agreement with the study by Baumgarten (2014, p. 54), which found that the depiction of women was altered in

the German dubbed version of the English dialogue of James Bond movies. The TT language was more polite and gender-conscious than the ST, as potentially socially discriminating elements were removed. The reasons given for this were concerning the aim to normalize the overtones undesirable for the receiving culture, denoting that the text was adapted to be in coherence with the ideology of the TT audience (Baumgarten, 2014, p. 54). Moreover, the significance of the language conveyed through the translation is stressed by DeMarco (2012, p. 19), who states that films mirror reality and that they could be perceived as products of the cultural values of a specific social system. Cinematologic language and the translation of this could be responsible for disturbing and preserving denigrating attitudes, such as those related to gender and identity (DeMarco, 2012, p. 19). The translator as a mediator between the two texts could in this way also alter the language to fit the target language culture more closely, by conveying the message of the dialogue in a non-discriminatory, gender-conscious manner, due to its effect on the culture of the receivers.

6.0 Conclusion

This master's thesis has investigated the translation of the word *bitch* in nine of the movies directed by Quentin Tarantino, distributed from 1992 to 2019. The findings showed that the degree of profanity that is caused by the use of the word *bitch* was reduced in translation, as 49,4% of the instances of the word *bitch* were translated using the strategies omission or translation with weak force, confirming the first hypothesis. The possible reasons that were given for this were the constraints of audiovisual translation and the ideology of the translator. Firstly, the constraints regarding time and space were illuminated as a plausible explanation for the use of omission, because the target text subtitles are restricted in terms of the length and duration to be comprehensible for the audience. Nonetheless, not all instances of reduction of obscenity caused by the use of *bitch* could be explained by this. For instance, the strategy of translation with weak force shifts the term with a non-profane term, taking up space and time in the target text. Moreover, the constraints of oral to written were also presented as a possible explanation, because this change in mode could affect the choices made in translation (Pedersen, 2011, p. 11) by omitting redundant words and normalizing the text by making points more explicit (Gottlieb, 2012, p. 52). This, however, leads to the question of redundancy of *bitch* in the dialogue. The use of omission or translation with weak force result in a stylistic shift, because it leads to the normalization and alteration of the vulgar, insulting characteristic of the dialogue and genre. Nevertheless, the feedback effect could allow the audience to retrieve the word in spite of the lack of it in the subtitles, due to their plausible knowledge of English (Greenall, 2011, p. 57).

Moreover, the concept of ideology is discussed as a plausible elucidation for the use of strategies that omits *bitch* or the profane effect it gives. Translation and ideology are known to be intertwined (Lefevere, 2016, p. 12) and multiple studies show that the reduction of swearing is a result of the translator adapting the text to the culture and ideology of the TT audience. In this study, this could be explained by the contrast in the culture and ideology of the expected audience of the target text, from the world of Tarantino, where the genre of the films aims to be bizarre and violent. The translators' ideological context, as a determining factor of a translated text (Lefevere, 2016, p. 12), could be connected to increased consciousness in relation to aspects important for the target culture and ideology, such as political correctness and ethics. However, the results did not show any clear tendency

regarding the relationship between the translation of the works and the release time, comparing the newer and older works. This disconfirms the second hypothesis, proposing that the profanity caused by *bitch* would be more reduced in the newer movies than the older. This could be explained by the notion that the societal development does not affect the translation as structurally in accordance with the progression of time as one could believe.

The relation between ideology and translation enhanced in this study is also connected to the aspect of gender. The findings showed that 88,9% of the fixed expressions, namely *son of a bitch*, is translated using the strategy translation with strong force, in contrast to 34,6% and 60% for the respective single items and collocations. This means that when the term is targeted at a man, the translation retains the profanity more than when it is directed at a woman, confirming the third hypothesis of the study. The ideas explained in Kleinman et al. (2009) related to the awareness of the consequences of patriarchy and gender inequality could be explanatory for this, and is suggested as an ideologic backdrop for the translators who make choices in translation, subconsciously or consciously, on the background of this. This could be related to the notion of the power of the word, and the transmission of the type of discourse in media as a way of transmitting the underlying, female-injuring ideas to new audiences (De Marco, 2012, p. 19). The connection between the gender of the characters of the film and the translation strategy was also discussed. The instances of *bitch* are less reduced in degree of profanity in the films with more male characters, and hence containing more dialogue between men, than in films that are dominated by female characters.

The tendencies found in this study can however not be generalized and applied to other works, due to restrictions regarding data size. It would, therefore, be interesting to investigate this issue further, collecting more data, to explore if this is a generalizable trend. Another fruitful avenue for further research might be to compare the translation of slurs directed at females and slurs directed to males, in order to investigate the differences in handling the profanity and the level of insult between the two recipients. The field of translation and swearing, connected to ideology and gender could however be studied in different ways, contributing to filling the gaps in academia both in regard to translation studies and the connection between our language use and society.

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The master's thesis' relevance to the teacher profession

In this section, I will illuminate the master's thesis relevance for the work as a teacher. To begin with, the experience with the writing process will be emphasized as highly relevant. A part of teaching a language is to teach the different language skills, namely reading, speaking, listening, and writing, and to be the entrepreneur of didactic learning activities aiming to develop these skills. The experience of working with the master's thesis has proved to be a very fruitful learning process, that has illuminated the high worth of a longer-lasting writing process, including both writing, getting feedback, rewriting, and polishing the text. This is something that is transferable to the English classroom, which could make a significant difference to the learners of the language (Burner, 2014). Writing is by many pupils perceived as a challenging exercise, and in order to increase the learning outcome, the teacher should scaffold the pupil in the right direction. By working on this master's thesis, I have gathered valuable experiences and knowledge about the learning and writing process, that I will employ in the role as a teacher when scaffolding pupils and designing pedagogical learning activities.

The theoretical subjects of the thesis could also be enhanced as relevant to the teaching profession. Key concepts of the thesis, such as swearing, films, and culture are also important issues in the lives of the pupils. It could be essential to understand the youth culture in order to establish positive relations with the pupils and to get a deeper understanding of the workings of the pupils' lives. For instance, the use of swearing by the pupils should perhaps be understood to a larger degree, as it could be a way of identifying oneself with peer groups as a part of the youth culture, rather than to be totally frowned upon and prohibited. Additionally, words that we would categorize as bad words or swearing are not necessarily used to express anger or to insult someone. However, it is also important to convey that one should be conscious of the way we express ourselves. The work on the thesis has made clear that the word is so much more than the word itself; the connotations of the words we use can cause negative, emotional effects on others. How we speak to each other is vital, and one as a teacher of youths should be aware of this. This is related to the values, ideologies, and beliefs that the teacher transmits to the young learners, and as a part of the development of the individual into becoming critical thinkers with knowledge and understanding, and as independent members of the democracy (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2020).

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