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BEYOND THE DICTIONARY IN DUTCH 226

a guide to correct word usage for the english-speaking student

b.c. donaldson

PREFACE

When I first started teaching Dutch in 1974 there was a chronic shortage of textbooks for the teaching of Dutch as a foreign language. There has since been a vast improvement, helped to some extent by a long awaited realisation amongst the Dutch themselves that there **are** foreigners who, for whatever reason, have a need or a desire to learn their language. Nevertheless, there is still room for works on aspects of Dutch which have not yet been covered by existing texts but on which there has long been a considerable number of texts for other 'larger' languages like French and German. This book is one such example.

All Dutch people who have learnt German at school have at some time or other consulted a textbook on "schwere Wörter", Dutch and German being so closely related and sharing so many similar words that have quite different meanings. When a speaker of English learns Dutch there are occasions where he too chooses the wrong Dutch word because of etymological similarity between the items, e.g. *mening* (opinion) and 'meaning' (*betekenis*) – this is what is referred to in French teaching circles as *faux amis* – but this is not the most common source of confusion. The English speaker usually makes a wrong choice of word because of the variety of possible translations offered for a particular English word by his dictionary – it is, as it were, a case of *l'embarras du choix*. Generally speaking, not enough additional information is provided by the dictionary to guide the user towards the correct word for a given context. Of course dictionary compilers have tremendous constraints of space imposed upon them and there is probably no dictionary for any language that could not have this criticism directed at it, but all too often the apparent inadequacies of Dutch-English/English-Dutch dictionaries are the result of their not having been compiled at all with the English learner of Dutch in mind, but the Dutch learner of English.

If one were to look up many of the English words I deal with here in an English/Dutch dictionary, it is highly likely that one would find that the dictionary gives more options for translating a given English word into Dutch than I do. In such cases I have made a selection of the available options according to their frequency based on my experience of teaching Dutch to tertiary students over fifteen years. To have covered all possible options would have rendered many entries unwieldy, and the words required in ninety-nine per cent of cases would then have been obscured by a wealth of material covering only a small minority of cases. The choice of English words dealt with may seem arbitrary to a proficient speaker of Dutch, but I now have a reasonable idea from my own experience of the language and from the experience of my students, where the **common** difficulties of vocabulary lie, which is not to say that **all**

such difficulties are dealt with here – certain practical constraints have after all had to be kept in mind. My prime intention is to contribute to the reader's active vocabulary, and thus peripheral subtleties of meaning are only dealt with where I feel that to omit them could lead to confusion, i.e. where dictionaries include them under the English lemmas concerned and thus the student is likely to be confronted with them anyway. I am endeavouring to guide the student through the quagmire of information offered by the dictionaries.

Many of the Dutch words I deal with have a variety of other meanings which are not mentioned here. Native-speaker teachers consulting this book, for example, must realise that the fact that a given word can mean a host of other things not covered by me, is not at all relevant to the translation of the English word under discussion.

Very seldom are two words absolutely synonymous; at the very least there is usually a difference in style, but more often than not two words may be interchangeable in one context but not in another, which goes to show that the meaning of words is determined more by the context in which they appear than by any fixed lexical signification, a common misconception which dictionaries do nothing to dispel. This is all the more the case when transferring from one language to another and thus dictionaries very often let one down, not to mention the misconceptions that arise due to the previously mentioned constraints of space in dictionaries. Different cultures also perceive their environment and experiences differently and it is when these cultural differences are expressed in linguistic terms that one has difficulty in comprehending, and thus applying, the distinctions unknown to one in one's native culture and tongue.

The importance of context to determining the meaning of a word is often highlighted in my choice of sample sentences to illustrate the use of words under discussion. At times I was confronted with the difficulty that one may say/hear one thing, but is more likely to write/read another. Equally, when making a statement such as "in higher style one may hear..." it could be argued that one will not **hear** such a thing at all, but will be more inclined to **see** it in writing; on the other hand, one may well hear such a thing on the electronic media, which puts a different connotation on the word 'hear'. Thus where I refer to a word being 'higher style', '(more) formal' or 'elevated', the implication is that it occurs more frequently in the written language than in natural speech.

Although a larger dictionary usually attempts to give some additional comment to suggest what contexts a particular option can be used in, the larger Dutch dictionaries are totally **descriptive**; they list what is **possible**, without giving additional information on what is most **usual** and therefore, by implication, what the non-native can afford to ignore, at

least for the time being - I give such advice from time to time. I also deviate from dictionary practice by suggesting ways and means of getting around difficulties; for example, the array of options given under 'to shorten' is rather overwhelming, but one will seldom be wrong if one uses *korter maken*.

Under many entries I have used the term 'dominant meaning' or 'dominant word'. This is the means I have employed to indicate to the reader that of all the options offered, the 'dominant' word is the one that is required in the majority of cases and/or in those cases not covered by the definitions of the other options covered. I often comment that one particular word is more common, or more frequently used than another or others given. Such statements are not based on scientifically compiled frequency lists, but merely on my own observations. As a non-native-speaker of the language myself, I am well aware that various words and turns of phrase can prove to be problematical to non-natives and that to simply confront the reader with a whole list of options, however clearly defined and illustrated they may be, is not always sufficient; it can be helpful in such cases to steer the reader towards a given 'common' word and thereby help him to decide if he is in doubt, or alternatively, to thereby recommend to him one reliable option that will serve most contingencies.

Many of the mistakes made by students referring to dictionaries are the result of their not really knowing how to use a dictionary. For example, one must be thoroughly acquainted with the symbols and abbreviations used in the particular dictionary one is working with (every dictionary is different in this respect) and one must not ignore this additional information – it is there for a purpose. In addition, it is always good dictionary practice, having looked up an English word in the English/Dutch part of the book and made a choice from the numerous options offered, to then look up that word in the Dutch/English section; very often the additional information about the word contained in that section will be sufficient to confirm that one has made the right or wrong decision. To the experienced foreign language student such advice may be regarded as self-evident, but my years of teaching Dutch have taught me that this is not the case for the average student. Of course the practice takes twice as long, but at least one is then using a bilingual dictionary as it is meant to be used. An additional advantage can be the extra little tips about the use of a particular word that one picks up in cross-checking in that way, even if one is already sure that one has selected the correct option. But even using a dictionary in this way, and taking advantage of every little bit of information the compilers have provided one with in an endeavour to help one make the right choice, there is still only so much information that can be included in a dictionary and a limit to the number of examples that can be provided. That is where this book comes into its own. It attempts to take

up the story where the dictionaries leave off, while at the same time containing a great deal of information that may be gleaned from dictionaries, but I stress the plural.

Some may accuse me of oversimplification here and there, which may be quite correct, but where this occurs I feel it can be defended on didactic grounds. The guidelines set out here are after all intended primarily to **minimise** errors, which is not to say that they will **eliminate** all errors associated with the words dealt with here or that there is not more that can be said about the words concerned: often, however, where there is more that can be said about the Dutch words discussed under a given English lemma, that additional information is not relevant to the use of that word as a translation of the English lemma it appears under. Nevertheless, where a different meaning of a particular Dutch word is dealt with in this book under another English lemma, this has been cross-referenced accordingly.

This book is not intended to be an academic treatise on semantics. It is intended to be a practical book which aims specifically at the native-speaker of English who is battling with the problems of semantic field that plague all students of foreign languages. From the time I started to teach Dutch, I discovered that there were many words which were consistently used incorrectly by my students, either because they were all being misled by the minimal information offered by their dictionaries or because of other inherent differences between Dutch and English. Consequently I collected over the years those words which recurred. Many of these errors I had of course initially made myself. In the course of time I reached a point in my teaching career where I rarely encountered instances of wrong dictionary use which I had not previously recorded. At that point I decided that the majority of common word choice errors had been collected and it was time to turn them into a publication.

In my undergraduate days as a student of German I had found R.B. Farrell's *A Dictionary of German Synonyms* (Cambridge University Press, 1953) extremely useful and regretted that there was not being a similar book for Dutch when I began to learn that language some years later. Farrell's book, per chance also a work that emanated from Australia, has undergone numerous reprintings and is still used throughout the English-speaking world. I hope that this book will prove to be as useful to its readers as I, as well as countless other generations of students, have found the said work by Farrell to be for German.

Whereas my *Dutch Reference Grammar* (Martinus Nijhoff, Leiden, 1981, 1984, 1987) is still the most detailed grammatical work compiled specifically with the native-speaker of English in mind, since 1984 the serious student of Dutch has also had the *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* (G.

Geerts ed. i.a., Wolters-Noordhoff, Groningen) at his disposal – the book is now generally referred to by the acronym *ANS*. In the short time that has elapsed since its appearance, the *ANS* has already established itself as the authority on grammatical issues. In this book I refer on several occasions to the *ANS*' explanation of various grammatical phenomena where the need arises. All such references here are to the first edition (1984), should a further edition appear at some later date.

Wherever an irregular verb is given as a possible translation of an English word under discussion, its constituent parts are given in brackets after it as well as whether it is conjugated with *zijn* in the perfect tenses. If such brackets do not follow a verb, it can be assumed that it is regular, and, if no specific mention of the fact that it takes *zijn* in the perfect is given, one can assume it is conjugated with *hebben*.

Where words like *normáliter* and *aanvááarden* occur in the text with such accents indicating stress, these are not of course normally written and have only been added by me to words that might otherwise be stressed incorrectly by a non-native.

If the English word one is looking up does not appear as a separate lemma, refer to the index of English words at the back of the book. 'Space', for example, will not be found alphabetically under 's' in the body of the book but is dealt with under 'place'; one may, on the other hand, have expected it to be dealt with under 'room', but under that lemma one is referred to 'place'. There is a certain arbitrariness involved here but it will not cause problems if one works via the English index. All the Dutch words (circa 2500) dealt with also occur in a separate index at the back of the book.

If on occasions American or British users of this book find my English somewhat at odds with theirs, I call on them to show a little tolerance – they are not the only ones in the world with English as their mother tongue and other Englishes sometimes express things in other ways. Thus I was once criticised by an Englishman in another publication of mine for translating *een beslissing nemen* as 'to make a decision'. It so happens that in Australian and South African English, to name two that I know well, it is rather formal to say 'to take a decision' and at the time I was not aware that our expression was not just as common in Britain. I have attempted to avoid being parochially Australian wherever possible, but sometimes one is unaware where the differences between the various forms of English lie. Nevertheless, *een beslissing nemen* is dealt with in this book too under 'to make', regardless of the fact that it does not constitute a difficulty for the British (or the Americans?). Another such example is found under 'tin' where I translate *een pot verf* with 'a tin of paint'; although I believe it is not unknown in England to talk of 'a pot of paint', this is not at all the custom in the colonies.

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And finally a word about the title. In the 1960's Cassell produced some useful little books entitled *Beyond the Dictionary in German/French/Spanish* etc. To my knowledge six volumes were published, but not one for Dutch. Such a title seemed eminently appropriate to describe the contents of this book, although in size, approach and content this book does not bear much resemblance at all to those. I have taken the liberty of applying a similar title to the present work without feeling too guilty of plagiarism, particularly as the said series reappeared some years ago under the new title *Colloquial German* etc.

I would like to thank the following people for their meticulous reading of the manuscript and the valuable suggestions they made to improve it: Dr. C. de Heer, formerly of the University of Western Australia, Dr. W. Shetter of Indiana University and (Mrs.) M.J. van de Vathorst, formerly of the Instituut voor Vertaalwetenschap at the University of Amsterdam and drs Janet Gilbert of London. In addition I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Miriam Bervoets and Ms. Françoise Thornton-Smith, both of Melbourne, who helped compile the indexes.

I cordially invite the users of this book to write to me at the address below with any constructive criticism they have to offer. If this work is ultimately blessed with a second edition, it will be that much better than this edition because of your comments. The perfecting of such language textbooks is a cumulative process; if one were otherwise to wait until one felt that one's manuscript were quite complete and perfect, the work would, I fear, never see the light of day.

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Dr. B.C. Donaldson
Department of Germanic Studies
University of Melbourne
Parkville, Victoria
Australia 3052

ABBREVIATIONS

ANS – *Algemene Nederlandse spraakkunst*

coll. – colloquial

dim. – diminutive

enz. – enzovoorts (= etcetera)

intr. – intransitive

lit. – literally

n. – neuter

opp. – opposite

o.s. – oneself

pl. – plural

pron. – pronounced

s.o. – someone

s.t. – something

tr. – transitive

* = not possible (placed before sample sentences that are ungrammatical)

A

about:

circa, een man/stuk of..., om een uur of ..., om en nabij, omstreeks, omtrent, ongeveer, over, plusminus, ruim, tegen, zo'n, zowat

The difficulty of translating 'about' is partially the result of the English word being both an adverb and a preposition; the distinction is not always clear in Dutch either. (cf. *omtrent*)

The preposition is relatively simple: *een film/boek/verhaal over de oorlog* – a film/book/story about the war (i.e. concerning), *praten/schrijven/spreken/vertellen over* – to talk/write/speak/tell about, e.g. *Vertel me iets over wat je gedaan hebt* – Tell me something about what you did.

Only in higher style does one find *omtrent* being used as a preposition, in which function it renders more 'associated with/in connection with' than 'about', e.g. *De problemen omtrent buitenlandse werknemers zijn enorm* – The problems associated with foreign workers are enormous. However, *omtrent* is more commonly used as an adverb (see below), where it does correspond to 'about' in the sense of approximately, but in that function too it belongs to the realm of higher style, e.g. *Omtrent tien ministers vergaderden die middag in Den Haag* – About ten ministers met that afternoon in The Hague.

The adverb 'about', i.e. approximately, can be rendered in a variety of ways in Dutch, most of them more or less synonymous. In the sentence 'There were about ten people in the cinema' one has the choice of *circa, een man of tien, ongeveer, om en nabij, omstreeks, omtrent, plusminus, zo'n* (pron. like *zoon*) and *zowat* (cf. 'almost') – the distinction is more one of style than of meaning. The simplest most common solution is to use *ongeveer*, e.g. *Er zaten ongeveer tien mensen in de bioscoop* – There were about ten people (sitting) in the cinema.

Very idiomatic, but also very common in speech in particular, is the formulation: *Er zat een man of tien in de bioscoop* (note the singular verb). When this expression is used one simply inserts the appropriate quantifier, e.g. *Ik ben met skiën een pond of drie afgevallen* – I've lost about three pounds from skiing, *Ik heb van de week een boek of drie gelezen. Hoeveel boeken heb jij gelezen? Een stuk of vijf* – I've read about three books this week. How many books have you read? About five. In such cases *stuk* can relate to any more or less non-personal noun but is also sometimes used with reference to people.

Circa and *plusminus*, which is often written \pm and is more common than *circa*, are more usually found in mathematical contexts, e.g. *De temperatuur steeg vandaag tot \pm /circa 17 graden* – The temperature got up to about 17 degrees today.

'About' followed by the time can be a little confusing at first. When the preposition 'at' does not precede the expression, there is no problem – the most usual translation is *ongeveer*, e.g. 'It is about ten o'clock' – *Het is ongeveer tien uur*. However, when one has to translate 'at about' things are not quite so straight-forward, e.g. 'He's coming at about ten o'clock' – *Hij komt tegen tien uur/tegen tien/om ongeveer tien uur/om een uur of tien*.

The expressions *een tiental*/*vijshtiental*/*dertigtal* etc. can be used to render 'about ten, fifteen' etc., e.g. *Ze heeft me een tiental ansichten gestuurd terwijl ze in het buitenland zat* – She sent me about ten postcards while she was abroad.

The word *ruim*, when used as an adverb meaning 'approximately', often precedes a numeral indicating age, size, distance, price etc. but it has a connotation which the above options do not; *ruim* means 'about' when one means 'a good' or 'at least' or even 'over/more than', e.g. *Hij is ruim veertig jaar oud* – He is a good/at least/over forty.

Generally speaking one can get by simply using either *over* (preposition) and *ongeveer* (adverb).

to accept, acceptable:

accepteren, aannemen, aanvaard

These three words are all more or less interchangeable in the meaning of 'to accept' with *aannemen* possibly being the most common. *Aannemen*, however, also means 'to presume, suppose'.

Of the corresponding adjectives, *aannemelijk* and *aanvaardbaar*, only the latter means 'acceptable' (synonymous with *acceptabel*) and the former has a meaning derived from the second meaning of *aannemen*, i.e. 'plausible, credible', e.g. *Het is zeer aannemelijk dat in Sri Lanka repressie op terugkerende vluchtelingen wordt uitgeoefend* – It is quite plausible/highly likely that repression is being exerted on returning refugees in Sri Lanka.

actually, in fact:

eigenlijk, in feite, feitelijk, trouwens

The most common word is *eigenlijk*, which can also mean 'really', in which case it is often interchangeable with *werkelijk* (cf. 'really'), e.g. *Wat zei hij? Ik heb eigenlijk niet geluisterd* – What did he say? Actually, I wasn't listening. *In feite* is somewhat more formal and means 'in fact, as a matter of fact', e.g. *Er zijn in feite meer studenten dit jaar dan vorig jaar* – There are in fact more students this year than last; if 'actually' can be used in English instead of 'in fact' in a given context, then *eigenlijk* can replace *in feite* in Dutch too. *Feitelijk*, apart from being an adjective meaning 'actual, real', which *eigenlijk* can be too, is a less common synonym of *in feite*.

In contexts where 'in fact' means 'as a matter of fact, as it happens' it is possible to use *trouwens* instead of *in feite*, e.g. *Hij zei weinig. Trouwens hij zegt nooit veel* – He said so little, but actually/in fact/as a matter of fact he never says much. In this example one could really use *eigenlijk, in feite* or *trouwens* with virtually no difference in meaning, as the English translation indicates, but the former two would require inversion of subject and verb if used at the beginning of the sentence, e.g. *Eigenlijk/in feite zegt hij nooit veel*.

to add:

bijdoen, bijvoegen, optellen, toevoegen, verder zeggen

Optellen is 'to add up' of numbers and should not be the cause of any confusion.

Toevoegen (aan) is the word that will normally be required. It renders 'to add to' (= attach, append) and is most frequently, but not exclusively, used in the sense of adding to something said or written, e.g. *En dat moet absoluut, voegde hij eraan toe* – And that's absolutely necessary, he added, *Voeg dit aan je collectie/eraan toe* – Add this to your collection/to it, *Belasting Toegevoegde Waarde (de BTW)* – Value Added Tax (VAT). Note that it is followed by *aan* and when used in the sense of adding to something said or written, is followed by *eraan* if no other object is mentioned; compare too *Daar valt nog wel iets aan toe te voegen* – Something else can be added to that/can be said in addition to that. A common, simple alternative for *eraan toevoegen*, when 'added' follows reported speech, is *verder/erbij zeggen*, e.g. *En dat moet, zei hij verder/erbij* – And that must be done, he added. (cf. 'to continue')

Bijvoegen, which is often confused with *toevoegen* by non-natives, is a rather official sounding word that means 'to enclose' rather than 'to add',

e.g. *Bijgevoegde formulieren in duplo ingevuld inleveren* – Fill in the enclosed forms and hand them in in duplicate.

Bijdoen is a very common way of rendering 'to add' meaning 'to put in as well', e.g. *Wil je al die oude kleren weggooien? Hier, doe deze trui er ook bij* – Are you going to throw all those old clothes away? Here, add this jumper to them.

to admit:

bekennen, toegeven, toelaten (tot)

Bekennen is the word required when guilt for an offence is being admitted (= to confess), e.g. *Hij bekende de moord (gepleegd te hebben)* – He admitted ([to] having committed) the murder. Also *Ik moet bekennen dat...* – I have to admit that... but *Ik moet toegeven dat...* also exists and is the more usual of the two if it is not a guilt one is confessing, e.g. *Ik hou niet van kwarktaart, moet ik toegeven* – I don't really like cheese cake, I have to admit.

Toelaten (tot) is the verb required when speaking of being admitted to a course, university, the (legal) bar etc., e.g. *Je wordt niet toegelaten (tot de universiteit) als je niet voor Nederlands slaagt* – You won't be admitted (to university) if you don't pass Dutch.

the advice, to advise:

het advies, de raad, de raadgeving(en); aanraden, adviseren, afraden, ontraden

Advies and *raad* are usually synonymous in the sense of 'advice', with the former being perhaps somewhat more common, e.g. *Hij heeft advies/raad nodig* – He needs advice, *Dat was geen goed advies/geen goede raad* – That wasn't good advice. Given that *raad* is the usual translation of 'council', one can appreciate that it has connotations of 'counsel', which is not the everyday word in English for 'advice' either. An elevated synonym of *raad* is *raadgevingen*, usually found in the plural and rendering advice/suggestions. It is in fact the only possible plural of *raad* in this sense.

'To advise s.o.' in the sense of 'to give s.o. advice' is *iemand advies/raad geven* but 'to advise s.o. to do s.t.' requires a totally different verb, *aanraden (raadde, aangeraden)*, the opposite of which is *afraden* (to advise against s.t.), e.g. *Ik heb hem aangeraden om naar de dokter te gaan* – I advised him to see a doctor (cf. 'to recommend'), *Ik heb het hem afgeraden/ik heb hem afgeraden dat te doen* – I advised him against it/I advised him not to do that. In both the previous examples *ontraden* could

also have been used, but it is not a common word. Note *op (doktersadvies) advies/aanraden van de dokter* – at/on the doctor's/medical advice.

Adviseren has strong connotations of 'to recommend' (cf. 'to recommend'), e.g. *Hij adviseerde een andere aanpak* – He recommended a different approach. In addition, it is the only word that can be used in the following context: *Jan Welkamp adviseert de minister* – Jan Welkamp advises the minister (= is his adviser). (cf. also *berichten* under 'to report')

to afford:

bekostigen, betalen, zich permitteren, zich veroorloven, iemand te duur zijn

The most usual way of translating 'to afford', whether in the monetary sense or otherwise, is with *zich veroorloven* (cf. footnote under 'to imagine'), e.g. *Ik kan me die dure auto niet veroorloven* – I can't afford that expensive car, *Ik kan het me niet veroorloven (om) met hem gezien te worden* – I can't afford to be seen with him.

Bekostigen, which is only used of money, can be used instead of *zich veroorloven* in such contexts, e.g. *Ik kan die dure auto niet bekostigen* – I can't afford that expensive car.

Zich permitteren is more or less a synonym of *zich veroorloven* but is heard somewhat less frequently in the monetary sense. It is, however, not infrequently used in a figurative sense rendering quite literally the English 'to permit/allow oneself', e.g. *Politici kunnen zich geen liefdesverhoudingen permitteren* – Politicians can't afford to have love affairs/can't allow themselves to have affairs

A very simple and common way of expressing the literal meaning of 'to afford', particularly in the negative, is by using *betalen*, e.g. *Dat kan ik niet betalen* – I can't afford that.

An equally common way of saying the same thing is *iemand te duur zijn*, e.g. *Dat is me/je/hem enz. te duur* – That's too expensive for me/you/him etc. Compare: *Het is me hier te koud* – It's too cold for me here, *Dat gaat me te ver* – That's going too far for me.

e.g. *Bijgevoegde formulieren in duplo ingevuld inleveren* – Fill in the enclosed forms and hand them in in duplicate.

Bijdoen is a very common way of rendering 'to add' meaning 'to put in as well', e.g. *Wil je al die oude kleren weggooien? Hier, doe deze trui er ook bij* – Are you going to throw all those old clothes away? Here, add this jumper to them.

to admit:

bekennen, toegeven, toelaten (tot)

Bekennen is the word required when guilt for an offence is being admitted (= to confess), e.g. *Hij bekende de moord (gepleegd te hebben)* – He admitted ([to] having committed) the murder. Also *Ik moet bekennen dat...* – I have to admit that... but *Ik moet toegeven dat...* also exists and is the more usual of the two if it is not a guilt one is confessing, e.g. *Ik hou niet van kwarktaart, moet ik toegeven* – I don't really like cheese cake, I have to admit.

Toelaten (tot) is the verb required when speaking of being admitted to a course, university, the (legal) bar etc., e.g. *Je wordt niet toegelaten (tot de universiteit) als je niet voor Nederlands slaagt* – You won't be admitted (to university) if you don't pass Dutch.

the advice, to advise:

het advies, de raad, de raadgeving(en); aanraden, adviseren, afraden, ontraden

Advies and *raad* are usually synonymous in the sense of 'advice', with the former being perhaps somewhat more common, e.g. *Hij heeft advies/raad nodig* – He needs advice, *Dat was geen goed advies/geen goede raad* – That wasn't good advice. Given that *raad* is the usual translation of 'council', one can appreciate that it has connotations of 'counsel', which is not the everyday word in English for 'advice' either. An elevated synonym of *raad* is *raadgevingen*, usually found in the plural and rendering advice/suggestions. It is in fact the only possible plural of *raad* in this sense.

'To advise s.o.' in the sense of 'to give s.o. advice' is *iemand advies/raad geven* but 'to advise s.o. to do s.t.' requires a totally different verb, *aanraden (raadde, aangeraden)*, the opposite of which is *afraden* (to advise against s.t.), e.g. *Ik heb hem aangeraden om naar de dokter te gaan* – I advised him to see a doctor (cf. 'to recommend'), *Ik heb het hem afgeraden/ik heb hem afgeraden dat te doen* – I advised him against it/I advised him not to do that. In both the previous examples *ontraden* could

also have been used, but it is not a common word. Note *op (doktersadvies) advies/aanraden van de dokter* – at/on the doctor's/medical advice.

Adviseren has strong connotations of 'to recommend' (cf. 'to recommend'), e.g. *Hij adviseerde een andere aanpak* – He recommended a different approach. In addition, it is the only word that can be used in the following context: *Jan Welkamp adviseert de minister* – Jan Welkamp advises the minister (= is his adviser). (cf. also *berichten* under 'to report')

to afford:

bekostigen, betalen, zich permitteren, zich veroorloven, iemand te duur zijn

The most usual way of translating 'to afford', whether in the monetary sense or otherwise, is with *zich veroorloven* (cf. footnote under 'to imagine'), e.g. *Ik kan me die dure auto niet veroorloven* – I can't afford that expensive car, *Ik kan het me niet veroorloven (om) met hem gezien te worden* – I can't afford to be seen with him.

Bekostigen, which is only used of money, can be used instead of *zich veroorloven* in such contexts, e.g. *Ik kan die dure auto niet bekostigen* – I can't afford that expensive car.

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to be afraid:

bang zijn voor, vrezen

'To be afraid of' is *bang zijn voor*, e.g. *Ik ben bang voor slangen/hem* – I'm afraid of snakes/him.

'To be afraid/fear', as illustrated in the following example, can be rendered either by *bang zijn* or *vrezen*, where the former is more colloquial, e.g. *De regering is bang/vreest dat dat plan niet zal lukken* – The government is afraid that plan won't work.

Bang zijn voor also renders 'to fear for/to be afraid for' but context always makes it clear whether this or the previous meaning is intended, e.g. *Ik ben bang voor jouw zekerheid* – I fear for your safety/I'm afraid for your safety.

after:

daarna, na, naar, nadat, nadien

Na is chiefly a preposition and is the most usual translation of the English preposition 'after', e.g. *na het ontbijt* – after breakfast, *na de film* – after the film. *Naar* is also a preposition but only rarely renders English 'after', e.g. *Het pas geboren kind is naar zijn oom genoemd* – The newly born child was named after its uncle.

Nadat is a subordinating conjunction, e.g. *Nadat de film afgelopen was, zijn we nog naar een pannenkoekenhuis gegaan* – After the film had finished, we went to a pancake parlour. Compare this with *Na de film zijn we naar een pannenkoekenhuis gegaan* where 'after the film' is an adverbial expression of place incorporating the preposition; it is chiefly this distinction which constitutes the difficulty for speakers of English plus confusion with the adverb 'afterwards', discussed below.

Na also occurs as a conjunction introducing infinitive clauses, but this usage is normally only found in the written language, e.g. *Na de zaak urenlang besproken te hebben heeft de vergadering het volgende besloten* – After having discussed the matter for hours still no decision was taken. In normal style this would be rephrased using the subordinating conjunction *nadat*, e.g. *Nadat de zaak urenlang besproken is, is er nog geen besluit genomen*.

Daarna and *nadien* are both adverbs meaning 'afterwards'. They are synonymous but *nadien* (lit. after that) is literary; the usual word is *daarna* (lit. after that), e.g. *Wat gaan jullie daarna doen?* – What are you going to do afterwards/after that?

after all:

immers, per slot van rekening, tenslotte, toch

Per slot van rekening can mean only this; *tenslotte* and *toch* are frequently used in this sense but have common alternative meanings as well (cf. 'finally' and 'nevertheless'), e.g. *Jij zou het moeten weten want jij bent per slot van rekening/tenslotte/toch Nederlander* – You should know because after all you are Dutch.

Immers is similar in meaning but belongs to a higher style than the above, e.g. *Ik hoef hem er nu niet over op te bellen, hij komt immers morgen* – I don't have to ring him up about it because after all he'll be here tomorrow.

again:

alweer, nog eens, nog een keer, opnieuw, steeds, telkens (weer), wederom, weer; her-, over-

The most common word is *weer*. *Alweer* means '(yet) again', often uttered with a sense of despair or relief, e.g. *De zon scheen net nog en nu regent het alweer* – The sun was shining a moment ago and now it's raining yet again, *Het is alweer zomer* – It's summer again; the distinction lies in the *al* (= already, so soon).

Telkens (weer) means 'again and again', e.g. *Ik heb hem telkens (weer) gewaarschuwd* – I warned him again and again/time and time again. *Steeds*, which actually means 'always/all the time/every time' or 'still' (cf. 'still'), is also interchangeable with *telkens* in the above example.

Opnieuw means 'once again' or 'a second time', e.g. *Ik heb de kast al een keer geverfd maar ik zal hem duidelijk opnieuw moeten verven* – I've already painted the cupboard but I'll obviously have to paint it again. *Nog eens, nog een keer* and *nog eens een keer* all mean 'once again/more', e.g. *Probeer het nog eens/nog een keer/nog eens een keer* – Try it again/once more (*nog één keer* = one more time).

Wederom can be used with several of the above meanings but it is not at all colloquial.

Just as the English verbal prefix 're-' can replace 'again', e.g. He returned/came again, He remarried/married again, so the inseparable prefix *her-*, and less commonly the separable prefix *over-*, function in the same way in Dutch, e.g. *Hij is hertrouwd* – He's married again, *Hij heeft*

zijn rede moeten herschrijven – He's had to rewrite his speech, *Je zult het moeten overdoen* – You'll have to redo it.¹

to agree/disagree; the agreement:

akkoord gaan met, instemmen, kloppen met, overeenkomen, overeenstemmen, het eens zijn met/over

This is an exceedingly difficult word to translate into Dutch. The verb needed in the majority of cases is *het eens zijn met*, which unfortunately is syntactically also the most complicated, e.g. *Ben je het ermee eens dat...?* – Do you agree that...?, *We zijn het nu met elkaar eens* (*eens* can also go before *met elkaar*) – We now agree; compare *Al gauw bleek het dat de partijen het niet eens waren* – It soon became evident that the parties did not agree. This distinction between *het eens zijn over iets* and *het eens zijn met iets* is as follows: *We zijn het erover eens (dat...)* – We agree that... (i.e. several of us have discussed it and we are all of the same opinion; it can only be used when more than one person is involved), *Ik ben het ermee eens (dat...)* – I agree that (= you have my permission/approval, i.e. only one person involved), but also possible is *Wij zijn het ermee eens (dat...)* i.e. each one of us gives his consent.

Overeenkomen (noun *de overeenkomst*) renders 'to agree/decide', e.g. *We zijn (met elkaar) overeengekomen dat...* – We've agreed/decided/reached an agreement that...

Instemmen (noun *de instemming* – approval), which belongs to higher style, is similar in meaning to *het eens zijn met* and has connotations of 'to approve (of)', e.g. *Stem je daarmee in?* – Do you agree with that/approve of that?, *De Indonesische regering wilde niet instemmen met dit plan* – The Indonesian government was not prepared to agree to this plan.

Overeenstemmen renders 'to agree' without such connotations of approval (= *het eens zijn [met elkaar] over*), e.g. *Stemmen we ten minste daarin overeen dat...?* – Do we at least agree that...? The expression *een overeenstemming bereiken* (to reach an agreement) gives some indication of the implications of this word. It is also used when talking linguistically, for example, of nouns 'agreeing/corresponding' with adjectives, e.g. *In het Latijn moeten de uitgangen van de bijvoeglijke naamwoorden met die van de zelfstandige naamwoorden overeenstemmen/in overeenstemming zijn* – In Latin the endings of the adjectives have to agree with those of the

¹ Sometimes Dutch uses *terug* (back) as a separable prefix with the meaning of 're-' (cf. 'to reflect'), e.g. *terugkeren* (to return), *terugkaatsen* (to reflect), *terugkopen* (to repurchase). Note *terugvinden* (to find s.t. again).

nouns. More colloquially one could say here *Ze moeten met elkaar kloppen* – They have to agree with each other.

Akkoord gaan met is 'to be in agreement (with), to consent to' (*het eens zijn met*), e.g. *Ik kan daar niet mee akkoord gaan* – I can't agree (with that)/consent to that, *Akkoord* – Agreed. The latter can also be expressed by *afgesproken*, e.g. *We vergaderen morgen om tien uur – akkoord/afgesproken?* *Ja, afgesproken/akkoord* – We'll meet tomorrow at ten o'clock – agreed/all right? Yes, all right. *Op de afgesproken plaats* – At the agreed spot. *Het akkoord* is also used as a noun outside the above expression, e.g. *Er is een cultureel akkoord tussen Nederland en Polen* – There is a cultural agreement between the Netherlands and Poland.

all:

al, alle(n), allemaal, alles/het enige (wat), heel, helemaal

Al, alle(n) and *allemaal* are all more or less synonymous but there can be a stylistic difference and the syntax they require can differ, e.g. *Al de kopjes zijn kapot/alle kopjes zijn kapot/de kopjes zijn allemaal kapot* – All the cups are broken/the cups are all broken. Of these, the example with *allemaal* is the most usual and that with *al de kopjes* the least usual. *Alle kopjes*, despite appearances, does not necessarily mean just 'all cups' but also translates 'all the cups'. Just as in English, with a singular noun one must use *al de/het* + noun and not *alle* + noun, e.g. *Al het brood is op* – All the bread has been eaten (= *Het brood is helemaal op* – The bread has all gone). Compare *Alle wijn is schadelijk* – All wine is harmful, which would seem to contradict the rule just given, but the distinction is the same as in English, i.e. particular bread as opposed to wine as a substance.

Allen is used when 'all' refers to persons and is not used adjectivally before a noun, e.g. *De matrozen bleven allen op hun schip, allen bleven op hun schip* – The sailors all stayed on their ship/all stayed on their ship, but *Alle matrozen bleven op hun schip* – All the sailors stayed on their ship. The constructions with *allen* given in the first two examples in this paragraph are confined to the written language.

Allemaal, which is always placed after the finite verb, is the most colloquial way of expressing 'all' but it is never used as a subject pronoun, e.g. **Allemaal zijn gekomen*; this must be rephrased as *Ze zijn allemaal gekomen* or (in the written language) *allen* must be used as a subject pronoun, as illustrated above (cf. 'both'). Note that colloquially *allemaal* is very frequently used in the following way where it does not translate 'all': *Wie wonen er nu allemaal in dat huis?* (plural verb required with *allemaal*) – Who lives in that house?, *Wat heb je vandaag allemaal gedaan?*

– What did you manage to do today? In such cases it can easily be omitted without the meaning being seriously affected.

Met ons/z'n allen is very commonly used instead of *allemaal* with reference to a group of people that is doing something together, e.g. *We gingen met ons/z'n allen picknicken* – We all went off on a picnic.²

Aller (compare *beider*, *veler*) is an archaic genitive plural form found in the written language, e.g. *in aller belang* – in the interests of all.

In expressions such as 'all day/night/week' etc., 'all' is rendered by *heel*, e.g. *de hele dag/nacht/week*. Also *mijn hele leven* – all my life.

'All in 'no(ne)/nothing at all' is rendered by *helemaal*, e.g. *Ik heb helemaal geen vrienden* – I have no friends at all, *Ik heb helemaal geen geld meer* – I have no money at all any more. Also in the sentence 'I was all alone' *helemaal* is required – *Ik was helemaal alleen*. (cf. 'completely')

'All I know, all he can tell me' etc. is rendered by *alles wat* or *het enige wat*, e.g. *Ik heb je al alles verteld wat ik weet* – I've already told you everything I know. *Het enige wat hij ons kan vertellen...* – All (i.e. the only thing) he can tell us ...

almost, nearly:

bijna, *haast*, *nagenoeg*, *vrijwel*, *zowat*

The most frequently used word for 'almost' is *bijna*, e.g. *Ik heb bijna geen geld meer* – I have almost no money left. In many cases one can use *vrijwel* instead with no difference in meaning, as in the previous example. *Vrijwel* can have connotations of 'pretty well' or 'quite' (cf. 'quite') which *bijna* does not, in which case the two are not interchangeable, e.g. *Ik was vrijwel klaar* – I was pretty well/just about finished, *Ik was bijna klaar* – I was almost finished.

Haast in the sense of 'almost' is more or less synonymous with *bijna* but is best avoided if you are not sure it is correct in a given context; it is not always possible to replace *bijna* with *haast*, but the reverse is usually permissible, e.g. *Er wonen in Rotterdam haast/bijna net zo veel mensen als in de hoofdstad* – Almost/nearly as many people live in Rotterdam as in the capital, *Ik heb hem haast/bijna op zijn voeten getrapt* – I almost trod on his feet (cf. 'hardly' for *haast* + negative), *Je ziet het gras haast groeien* – You can almost see the grass growing.

² With *wij* as a subject one can use either *ons* or *z'n*, but with either *jullie* or *zij* as a subject, only *z'n* is possible.

Nagenoeg, like *haast*, can usually be replaced by *bijna*, but the reverse is not necessarily the case. It is best avoided by the non-native to begin with.

Although a common translation of *zowat* is 'about' (cf. 'about'), there are contexts where it can render 'almost', e.g. *De oorlog was toen zowat (also haast, nagenoeg, vrijwel and bijna) afgelopen* – The war was almost over then. This example also illustrates that the safest translation is *bijna*.

already:

al, *alreeds*, *reeds*

The usual word for 'already' is simply *al*. It is identical to the word for 'all' (cf. 'all') but context usually makes it clear what is meant,³ e.g. *Heb je het werk al gedaan?* – Have you already done the work?, *Heb jij al dat werk gedaan?* – Did you do all that work?

Al commonly occurs as a particle rendering the perfective aspect in Dutch, in which function it does not always necessarily require translation by 'already' in English, e.g. *Heb je de krant al gelezen?* – Have you read the paper?, *Heb je al gegeten?* – Have you had your dinner? (= yet). (cf. 'still')

Al is also used before expressions of time in combination with the present tense for ongoing actions begun in the past where English uses the perfect tense plus 'for', e.g. *Mijn zangleraar woont al jaren in Ermelo* – My singing teacher has been living/has lived in Ermelo for years. (cf. 'for')

In the written language *reeds* is frequently encountered. It is usually synonymous with *al*, e.g. *De verkiezingscampagne is reeds van start gegaan* – The election campaign has already commenced. When used in combination with an expression of time, *reeds* means 'as early as', e.g. *Reeds in 1933 zijn de Duitsers begonnen maatregelen tegen de joden te nemen* – As early as 1933 the Germans began to take action against the Jews, *Het is reeds in februari gebeurd* – It occurred as early as (= as far back as) February; but when used with other expressions, an alternative translation is required to render it correctly into English, e.g. *Reeds in het oude Egypte werden bakstenen verglaasd in verschillende kleuren* – Even in/as far back as ancient Egypt bricks were glazed in different colours.

Alreeds is even more formal and is far less frequently heard than *reeds*

³ Compare: *Heb jij de afwas al gedaan?* – Have you already done the dishes/done the dishes yet?, *Heb jij al de afwas gedaan?* – Have you done all the dishes?, *Heb jij al de afwas al klaar?* – Have you already done all the dishes?

with which it is synonymous. *Toen al* (= then, as now,...) is similar in meaning, e.g. *Toen al werden bakstenen verglaasd...* (cf. 'then').

also, as well, too:

evenals, eveneens, mede, ook, alsook

By far the most common word for 'also' etc. is *ook*. There are two things to beware of with regard to Dutch *ook*, however. Firstly, it commonly renders English 'even' (cf. 'even') and secondly it does not always stand in the same position in the sentence as 'also' and 'too' do. When it means 'even', word order makes this obvious, e.g. *Ook al heeft hij het niet gedaan, het maakt niets uit* – Even if he didn't do it, it doesn't matter. In the sentence *Ook hij heeft geen geld* the meaning could be 'He too has no money' (cf. 'not...either' below) or 'Even he has no money' but a more usual way of rendering the latter is *Zelfs hij heeft geen geld*. It is not as common to end a sentence with *ook* in Dutch as we do with 'also/too/as well' in English; if this can be avoided, it should be, e.g. *Ik lees elke dag de krant en ook een roman* – I read the paper every day and a novel too/as well. In *Ook dat heb ik gelezen* the sentence starts with *ook* to give it a certain emphasis, i.e. I've read that too. The same can be said for the following examples where *ook* does occur at the end of the sentence, *En het is waar ook* (= *het is ook waar*) – And it's true too, *Ik heb de NRC gelezen, en de Volkskrant ook* – I've read the NRC, as well as the Volkskrant.

Ook plus *niet* or *geen* is the way the Dutch render 'not...either', e.g. *Hij komt ook niet* – He won't be coming either, *Hij heeft ook geen geld* – He hasn't any money either.

Eveneens is a rather elevated synonym of *ook*, e.g. *Het kasteel is onlangs gerestaureerd en het meubilair eveneens* – The castle was recently restored, and so was the furniture.

Alsook and *evenals* could also be used in the above situation, e.g. *Het kasteel is onlangs gerestaureerd alsook/evenals het meubilair*. *Alsook* is quite rare. Note that *evenals* requires a different word order from *eveneens*.

Mede belongs to higher style and has connotations of 'partly', e.g. *Mede door het feit dat het eiland zo klein is, wordt de bevolking gedwongen om uit te wijken* – Also (= partly) because of the island being too small, the population is being forced to emigrate.

angry; the anger:

boos, kwaad, nijdig, toornig, woedend; de boosheid, de toorn, de woede

All these words are more or less synonymous, with *kwaad* and *boos* being by far the most common. 'To be angry with s.o.' is *kwaad/boos zijn op iemand* whereas 'to be angry about s.t.' is *boos zijn over iets*. *Kwaad* is stronger than *boos* (= cross), whereas *woedend* (= furious) is stronger than *kwaad*.

Nijdig, with an intensified form *spinnijdig*, is a strong word meaning 'very cross'. Note that although *nijdig op* means 'angry with', *de nijd* (envy) and *benijden* (to envy) have nothing to do with anger.⁴

Toornig is not common in everyday language, nor is the noun *toorn*.

The verb *zich ergeren*, although meaning a variety of things, can be used to express anger, e.g. *Ik heb me dermate aan de hele situatie geërgerd* – I got so angry at the whole situation (i.e. 'to get annoyed').

to announce; the announcement:

aankondigen, afkondigen, bekendmaken, omroepen, verkondigen; de aankondiging, afkondiging, bekendmaking, kennisgeving, verkondiging

The most common word is *aankondigen* (noun *aankondiging*), e.g. *De regering heeft aangekondigd dat alle verse groente uit de Sovjet-Unie vernietigd moet worden* – The government has announced that all fresh vegetables from the Soviet Union must be destroyed.

Afkondigen is actually the verb 'to proclaim' and is thus very close in meaning to *aankondigen*, as are 'to announce' and 'to proclaim' in English, e.g. *Eerder was voor het vee een graasverbod afgekondigd* – Previously a prohibition on cattle grazing had been proclaimed (after Chernobyl), *vrede afkondigen* – to proclaim peace. The noun *afkondiging* relates to the act of *afkondigen* (i.e. an abstract noun), whereas a 'proclamation' published in poster form, for example, is likely to be headed *kennisgeving* (= notice, notification). Colloquially these days one hears *een radioprogramma afkondigen* meaning 'to announce the end of a radio programme (= giving the necessary information about who compiled, produced it etc.)'.

Verkondigen (noun *verkondiging*) also translates 'to proclaim, never 'to announce', and has strong connotations of 'to preach' as in *het evangelie*

⁴ Note that 'envious of' is identical to 'jealous of' in Dutch, i.e. *jaloers op*; if it is important to make the distinction, Dutch uses the verb *iemand benijden*.

verkondigen (to proclaim/preach the gospel). It is best avoided by the non-native in any other context.

Somewhat less formal than *aankondigen* and with connotations of 'to make known' is *bekendmaken* (noun *bekendmaking*), e.g. *Wanneer wordt hun verloving bekendgemaakt?* – When will their engagement be announced?

'To announce' something over a loud speaker is *omroepen*, e.g. *Instapberichten worden niet omgeroepen* – No boarding announcements will be made (at Schiphol airport). Note that a radio or t.v. announcer is *de omroep(st)er*.

another:

een ander(e), nog een

The question 'Would you like another?' contains a theoretical ambiguity which is avoided in Dutch. When asking someone if he would like another cup of coffee, for example, one says *Wilt u nog een kopje koffie?* Compare *Nu heb ik een andere auto* – I now have another car (i.e. a different one) with *Ik heb nu nog een auto* – I now have another car (i.e. a second one).

The same distinction applies to the expressions *nog iets* (something else – additional) and *iets anders* (something else – different), e.g. *Ik had graag iets anders willen doen* – I would have liked to do something else/different; *Ik had graag nog iets willen doen* – I would have liked to do something else as well/in addition.

Note the expression *anders nog iets?* (anything else?), commonly asked by shop assistants.

to answer:

antwoorden (op), antwoord geven (op), beantwoorden

The difficulty here is due to a distinction being made in Dutch between the transitive and the intransitive verb. *Antwoorden* is an intransitive verb so that when one answers a letter, question etc. and uses this verb, the direct object must be preceded by *op*, e.g. *Hij antwoordde niet op de brief/vraag* – He didn't answer the letter/question. *Antwoorden op* in the sample sentence could be replaced by the transitive verb *beantwoorden*, e.g. *Hij beantwoordde de brief/vraag niet*.

When the object of the verb is a person, however, the Dutch use *antwoorden* and not *beantwoorden*, e.g. *Hij antwoordde me niet* – He

didn't answer me. Actually, this use of *antwoorden* is still intransitive because there is an implied *aan* after the verb and thus *me* is an indirect object. (cf. *vragen aan* under 'to ask')

'An answer to s.t.' is *een antwoord op iets* and thus the following alternative to the above (*geen*) *antwoord geven op*, e.g. *Hij gaf geen antwoord op mijn vraag* – He didn't answer my question.

'To answer' with reference to the telephone is rendered in another way. 'To answer the phone' can be expressed by *de telefoon opnemen*, e.g. *Daar gaat de telefoon. Zal ik opnemen?* – The phone's ringing. Shall I answer? But the expression 'There was no answer' is *Ik kreeg geen gehoor*.

The verb *beantwoorden aan* sometimes translates 'to answer' in a figurative sense but more usually renders other English verbs in such contexts, e.g. *Hij beantwoordt niet aan die beschrijving* – He doesn't answer that description (= correspond to, tally with), *Hij beantwoordde niet aan mijn verwachtingen* – He didn't come/measure up to my expectations.

to appear; seem:

optreden, te voorschijn komen, verschijnen; blijken, lijken, schijnen, eruitzien

'To appear' in the literal sense, i.e. the opposite of 'to disappear' (*verdwijnen*), is rendered by *verschijnen* (*verscheen, is verschenen*). Very close in meaning is *te voorschijn komen* (*tevoorschijn* is frequently written as one word). The latter expresses 'to come into view' (after having been lost or in hiding), e.g. *Opa verscheen ineens in de deuropening* – Suddenly granddad appeared (= turned up) in the doorway, but *Opeens is opa te voorschijn gekomen* – Suddenly granddad appeared (we had been playing hide and seek and he came out of hiding), *Toen kwam de zon te voorschijn* – Then the sun appeared. An actor who 'appears' in a film or play *treedt op* (*trad op, is opgetreden*), e.g. *Hij treedt vanavond in een toneelstuk op* – He's appearing on stage tonight.

In the sense of 'it appears/seems that' there is a variety of options. The verb *blijken* has very specific connotations and is often best translated by 'it is obvious/evident that', e.g. *Het blijkt nu dat de bediende de moord gepleegd heeft* – It now appears (= turns out, is evident) that the servant committed the murder, whereas *lijken* leaves room for doubt, e.g. *Het lijkt alsof hij het gedaan heeft* – It appears (i.e. seems, looks) as if he did it. *Schijnen* is similar in meaning to *lijken* but requires different syntax, e.g. *Het schijnt dat hij het gedaan heeft* – It seems/people say that he did it.

An alternative to both *lijken* and *schijnen* is the verb *er uitzien*, e.g. *Het ziet ernaar uit dat hij het gedaan heeft* – It seems/looks like he did it. (cf. 'to look like')

the appointment, to appoint:

de aanstelling, de afspraak, de benoeming; aanstellen, benoemen

An appointment to a job is an *aanstelling* (verb *aanstellen*) or a *benoeming* (verb *benoemen*), e.g. *Wie is door de minister aangesteld/benoemd?* – Who was appointed by the minister?, *Hij is benoemd tot officier in de Orde van Oranje Nassau* – He was appointed an officer in the Order of Orange Nassau. *Aanstellen* has connotations of 'to employ', which is not the case with *benoemen*, e.g. *een vaste aanstelling* – a tenured job, *Daar is hij voor aangesteld* – That's what he's employed/paid for.

The very specific 'by appointment' with reference to supplying the royal court is *hofleverancier*, literally 'court supplier'. This is an honorary title bestowed on Dutch firms.

An appointment with a doctor or with a friend etc. is *een afspraak*, e.g. *Het spijt me maar ik heb al een afspraak om die tijd* – I'm sorry, but I already have an appointment/date/engagement at that time. *Afspraak* (verb *afspreeken*) also has other meanings not immediately associated with English 'appointment'. (cf. 'to agree')

to approach:

benaderen, naderen, dichterbij/naderbij komen

Benaderen is the verb used for approaching people in the figurative sense of *zich wenden tot iemand* (to turn to s.o., cf. 'to turn'), e.g. *De BBC heeft hem benaderd om een programma te maken* – The BBC has approached him to make a programme.

Naderen (zijn) is 'to approach' in the sense of approaching in a vehicle, e.g. *Dames en heren, wij naderen nu het station Den Haag Centraal* – Ladies and gentlemen, we are now approaching/coming into the central station in The Hague (announcement made in the train). *Naderen* is used both transitively and intransitively, e.g. *De trein naderde* – The train approached. In both cases it is more usual in everyday speech to use *dichterbij komen*, e.g. *De trein kwam (steeds) dichterbij (het station)* – The train approached (the station) (= got closer and closer). Less commonly *naderbij* is used. (cf. 'close') *Naderen* is also used in a temporal sense, e.g. *Die tijd nadert* – That time is approaching.

Another everyday way of expressing 'to approach' is with *in de buurt komen van* (lit. to arrive in the vicinity of), e.g. *We komen nu in de buurt van Leeuwarden* – We're now approaching/getting close to Leeuwarden.

around: (cf. 'to look around')

in het rond, om, om...heen, rondom

The preposition 'around' is usually expressed by *om*; the distinction between *om* and *om...heen* can often be difficult for speakers of English, however. *Hij liep om de tafel* means that he walked around the table without necessarily walking right around the table back to where he started from – that would be *Hij liep helemaal om de tafel heen*,⁵ with omission of *helemaal* it is unclear whether he walked right around the table or just part way round it, but *om* is more commonly heard with *heen* in this sense than without it. *Rondom de tafel* is also possible but with reference to position rather than motion, e.g. *De leerlingen zaten (rond)om de tafel* – The (high school) students were sitting all around the table, *Rondom mij stonden soldaten* – There were soldiers standing all around me/on all sides of me. (cf. 'to look around')

In het rond means 'around' in the sense of 'in a circle', e.g. *Zet de stoelen in het rond en laat de jarige in het midden gaan zitten* – Put the chairs in a circle and let the birthday-boy sit in the middle, *Hij was erg ongelukkig en liep doelloos in het rond* – He was very unhappy and was walking aimlessly around and around (= in circles); compare this with *rondlopen*, the normal translation of 'to walk around', e.g. *Hij liep rond met een grijns op zijn gezicht* – He was walking around with a smirk on his face.

to arrive:

aanbreken, aankomen, arriveren, komen

Nine times out of ten 'to arrive' is expressed by *aankomen*. It is a verb which is conjugated with *zijn* in the perfect, e.g. *De hertog van Edinburgh/de trein is die ochtend in Berlijn aangekomen* – The duke of Edinburgh/the train arrived in Berlin that morning.

Arriveren, also conjugated with *zijn*, is identical in meaning to *aankomen* but belongs to higher style. It is relatively rare as a synonym of *aankomen* but 'arriving' in the figurative sense of making it socially etc. is always

⁵ A post-positioned *heen* used in combination with a preposition usually emphasises the extent of distance covered, e.g. *Hij liep door het park heen* – He walked (right) through the park (i.e. from one side to the other). Note the figurative use in *langs elkaar heen praten* – to talk at cross purposes, *eromheen praten* – to talk round/dodge a subject.

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rendered by this word, e.g. *Hij is nu eindelijk gearriveerd* – He's now finally arrived/made it.

Mail does not 'arrive' in Dutch but simply 'comes', e.g. *Hoe laat komt de post?* – What time does the mail arrive?

Aanbreken (*brak aan, is aangebroken*) renders 'to arrive, come' in the figurative sense of a new age arriving/coming/dawning, e.g. *Het computertijdperk is al tien jaar geleden aangebroken* – The age of computers arrived (= started) ten years ago.

as:

als, zoals, naarmate, terwijl, daar, omdat; zo...als, even

Mastering how to translate 'as' belongs more to the realm of grammar than vocabulary; this is a brief synopsis of the problem. The two words which are most usually confused are *als* and *zoals*. Apart from various other functions, *als* is used as a preposition rendering English 'as', e.g. *Als kind was hij wel knap* – As a child he was quite clever. Notice the lack of an indefinite article after this *als*.

Zoals is a conjunction, as illustrated by the 'as' just mentioned in this sentence, i.e. *Zoals geïllustreerd door dat woordje* – As illustrated by that little word. It is also subordinating, e.g. *Zoals u al weet...* – As you already know... There are, however, other 'as' conjunctions in English which are semantically quite different from the above and which are thus not rendered by *zoals*:

- 1) 'As one gets older...' is *Naarmate men ouder wordt...*
- 2) 'As I was waiting for the train...' is *Terwijl ik op de trein stond te wachten...*
- 3) 'As (= because, since) he wasn't feeling well, he stayed in bed' is *Omdat hij zich niet lekker voelde, bleef hij in bed liggen*. *Daar* is a very elevated synonym of *omdat*. (cf. 'since')

The comparative expression '(just) as big as' etc. is (*net*) *zo groot als* or *even groot als*, e.g. *Deze boom is (net) zo groot als die/Deze boom is even groot als die* – This tree is (just) as big as that one.

Cf. 'also' for 'as well [as]' and 'soon' for 'as soon as'.

to ask:

verzoeken (om), vragen (aan, om, naar), een vraag stellen

'To ask a question' is *een vraag stellen*, whereas 'to ask' is otherwise nearly always expressed by the mixed verb *vragen* (*vroeg, gevraagd*). 'To ask s.o. for s.t.' requires the preposition *om*, e.g. *Het kind vroeg haar moeder om een tweede boterham* – The child asked her mother for a second slice of bread. Thus 'to beg for' (*bedelen om*), for example, requires the same preposition, as does *verzoeken* (to request), which is transitive in English but one must *verzoeken om* things in Dutch, e.g. *De werkgever verzocht zijn werknemers om voorstellen* – The employer asked his employees for suggestions/requested suggestions from his employees.

In certain expressions the object of *vragen* is not preceded by the preposition *om*, e.g. *excuus/toestemming/verlof/een antwoord/een offerte vragen* – to ask for forgiveness/permission/leave/(demand) an answer/a quotation (tender). These all relate to the asking of questions and are possibly best seen as standard expressions rather than exceptions to the rule of *vragen* being followed by *om* when rendering 'to ask for' – compare 'to ask forgiveness/permission' and 'to ask for forgiveness/permission' where the former, which correspond with the Dutch, possibly also sound more natural. But on occasions one does find *om* being omitted after *vragen* where grammar would seem to prescribe it, e.g. *Ze vroeg (mij) het recept* – She asked (me) for the recipe, *NS-aanbiedingen. Vraag de folder* – NS Bargains. Ask for the brochure (NS = Dutch Railways).

As with *antwoorden* (cf. 'to answer'), if the object of *vragen* is a person, no preposition is required but *aan* is implied and sometimes stated, e.g. *Ik vroeg hem of...* – I asked him whether..., *Ik vroeg het aan hem* – I asked him, an emphatic variant of *Ik vroeg het hem*. Compare *De man die we dat gevraagd hebben/de man aan wie we dat gevraagd hebben/de man wie we dat gevraagd hebben...*⁶ – The man we asked... Notice the use of *het* in these examples, also *Als je het mij vraagt...* – If you ask me...

Vragen naar (to ask after) commonly refers to directions, e.g. *Hij stond in Amsterdam op het station en vroeg naar het paleis* – He was at the station in Amsterdam and asked the way to the palace. 'Asking after' s.o.'s health also requires this verb, e.g. *Hij vroeg naar de gezondheid van mijn oma* – He asked how my grandmother is faring.

⁶ Sometimes *wie* is still used as a dative relative pronoun where *aan* is implied but not actually stated. It is a practice which is very much on the wane.

to avoid:

eronderuit komen, mijden, omzeilen, ontkomen, ontwijken, vermijden

By far the most common translation of 'to avoid' is *vermijden* (*vermeed, vermeden*), e.g. *We moesten uitwijken om een botsing te vermijden (voorkomen)* – We had to swerve to avoid (prevent) a collision. This word commonly has the connotation 'to prevent'. (cf. 'to prevent')

Mijden, which is not at all commonly used, renders 'to avoid' when there are connotations of 'to steer clear of, shun'; object of which is usually a

person, e.g. *iedereen mijdt hem als de pest* – Everyone avoids him like the plague, *Ik mijd zijn gezelschap* – I avoid being with him.

Ontwijken (*ontweek, ontweken*) has connotations of 'to evade' or 'to dodge' a question, a problem, a blow, a person etc, e.g. *Mijn schoonouders waren ook op de kermis; ik heb ze niet kunnen ontwijken* – My parents-in-law were at the fair too; I wasn't able to avoid/dodge them.

Omzeilen is similar in meaning to *ontwijken* but is only used in figurative contexts, i.e. to avoid/get around difficulties and figurative obstacles, e.g. *Hoe kunnen we dit probleem omzeilen?* – How do we get around this problem?

Ontkomen (aan) also renders 'to avoid' in the sense of 'to evade, elude', e.g. *Misschien wil je niet betalen maar je kunt er niet aan ontkomen* – You may not want to pay but you can't avoid/get out of it.

Very idiomatic and very common is the expression *eronderuit kunnen* which renders 'to avoid doing s.t.'; it is very close in feeling and usage to 'to get out of doing s.t.', e.g. *Ik wilde helemaal niet naar de begrafenis gaan maar ik kon er niet onderuit* – I didn't want to go to the funeral at all but I couldn't avoid it/get out of it.

B**the backside, bottom, bum etc.:**

het achterste, het achterwerk, de billen, de bips, het gat, de kont, de reet, het zitvlak; de achterkant, de ommezijde

The problem with deciding between the various options here is one of style rather than one of true semantic difference, with the exception of *achterkant* and *ommezijde*. The crudest of the words given above, the equivalent of 'arse' or 'bum' in other words, are *reet, kont* and *gat*, e.g. *Je zit de hele dag op je kont/gat te niksen* – You sit around on your arse all day doing nothing, *Hij kreeg het op zijn reet/kont/gat* – He had his arse thrashed. *Billen* is in fact a plural, *één bil* being one cheek of one's bottom, compare *kikkerbiljetjes* (frogs' legs). This is an innocuous word similar in connotation to 'bottom'. *Bips* is rather similar to *billen* but is more euphemistic. *Achterwerk* (also *het achterste, zitvlak*) is the word one uses in polite company, i.e. the equivalent of 'backside'. The 'seat' of a pair of pants is also *het zitvlak*.

The 'back(side)' of a house etc. is *de achterkant*, as is 'the other side' of this page (also *de andere kant*). Just in the expression 'p.t.o.' (< please turn over), this concept is rendered by *ommezijde*, e.g. *z.o.z.* (< zie *ommezijde*).

to be:

zich bevinden, blijven, hangen, liggen, lopen, staan, wezen, worden, zijn, zitten

Many of the complications associated with the translation of 'to be' into Dutch are problems of grammar rather than simply of vocabulary.

In the existential sense of 'to be' Dutch has two infinitives, *zijn* and *wezen*. *Wezen*, apart from providing *zijn* with its past tense forms (*was/waren, geweest*) and its imperative (*wees*), is always used instead of *zijn* in double infinitive constructions, e.g. *We zijn net wezen kijken* – We've just been to look. In addition, it is found quite frequently in its infinitive form in contexts where it is interchangeable with *zijn*, e.g. *Het zou fantastisch wezen als het zo was* – It would be great if that was the case, *Hoe zou het wezen om blind te zijn?* – How would it be to be blind? In the latter case *wezen* is preferable for phonic reasons, i.e. to avoid a repetition of *zijn*.

Worden only translates 'to be' with reference to professions, as in *Ik wil soldaat worden* – I want to be (i.e. become) a soldier.

Blijven only renders one very specific 'to be' as illustrated in the following examples: *Ik vroeg me af waar ze gebleven waren* – I wondered where they were (i.e. where they had got to); *Waar blijft ze toch?* – Where on earth is she/Where's she got to?

The greatest problem with the translation of 'to be' arises when the verb in question refers to position.¹ Things are regarded by the Dutch as 'standing', 'sitting' or 'lying' in a particular position; more rarely they can also be seen to be 'hanging' or 'running'. The literal translation of English 'to be', *zijn*, often sounds rather un-Dutch. If a book, for example, 'is' on the table, *liggen* is required, and if it 'is' in a bookcase, *staan* is used; but a plate or a saucer, however flat they may be, require *staan* whereas either *staan* or *liggen* is used for a bottle, depending on whether it is standing upright or lying on its side. The distinction between the plate and saucer on the one hand and the bottle on the other, can be explained in terms of there being only one possible position for the former, but two for the latter. For similar reasons, despite the fact that they are more vertical than horizontal, a ball or an apple always *liggen*. The following examples should serve to illustrate the concept further:

staan:

Hoeveel bomen staan er in deze tuin? – How many trees are there in this garden?, *De deur staat al open* – The door is already open, *Het stond in de krant* – It was in the newspaper,

zitten:

Kijk, er zit een muis in de hoek – Look, there's a mouse in the corner, *Er zit nog geen postzegel op deze enveloppe* – There isn't a stamp on this envelope yet, *Je das zit scheef* – Your tie is crooked, *De sleutel zit in mijn zak* – The key is in my pocket. As the previous example illustrates, *zitten* is commonly used in contexts where things are inside other things, but it also depends on the physical shape of things. For example, *Er staat een bezem in de kast* – There is a broom in the cupboard, but *Wat zit er in die doos?* – What's in that box? (cf. 'to contain')

Zitten commonly refers to people 'being' in certain places, e.g. *Mijn vader zit in Japan* – My father's in Japan, *Jan zit nog op school* – Jan is still at school, *Hij heeft in de gevangenis gezeten* – He's been in jail. The previous three examples refer to a prolonged stay somewhere, which is the most common use of *zitten* in this sense but the following use is also possible: *Hij zit op dansles* – He's at a dancing lesson, but this can also mean 'He's taking a dancing course' in general (the more usual meaning) without him necessarily being there at the time the utterance is made.

¹ For this reason there is ultimately a connection here with the way the Dutch express 'to put'. (cf. 'to put')

liggen:

The use of *liggen* to render 'to be' has a parallel in English, e.g. There is a book (lying) on the table. In such a case Dutch **always** uses *liggen*, e.g. *Er ligt een boek op tafel. Waar zijn mijn sleutels?* (NB. *zijn* not *liggen*) *Je sleutels liggen op de grond* (NB. *liggen* not *zijn*) – Where are my keys? They're (lying) on the floor.

Also as in English and as implied above, when an object which is normally upright (i.e. *iets wat staat of zit*) is **lying** in the wrong position, *liggen* is used in Dutch as well, e.g. *Waarom liggen er overal stoelen op de grond?* – Why are there chairs (lying) all over the floor? Compare *Waarom staan die stoelen daar?* – Why are those chairs (standing) there?

The following example illustrates a subtle distinction which emphasises how difficult the problem of choosing the right word can be: while pointing to a map on the wall, one would ask *Waar ligt Amsterdam?* – Where's Amsterdam? The answer would be *Amsterdam staat helemaal niet op deze kaart* – Amsterdam isn't even on this map. This latter example is analogous to the above *Het stond in de krant*. Normally *liggen* is used for towns, e.g. *Ze begonnen te graven waar de stad Pompei gelegen had* – They began to dig where the town of Pompei had stood.

lopen:

This verb is used only for roads, canals, rivers etc. and does have a parallel in English, e.g. The main road to Utrecht runs/is right behind our place – *De hoofdweg naar Utrecht loopt vlak achter ons huis. Er loopt ook een kanaal langs* – There's also a canal (running along) beside it. (cf. 'to run')

hangen:

Anything which 'is' on the wall in English is said to be 'hanging' there in Dutch, e.g. *Er hangt een schilderijklok aan de muur* – There is a picture/clock (hanging) on the wall.

In many of the examples given above to illustrate this particular use of *staan*, *zitten*, *liggen* etc. a similar possibility exists in English too to use the English equivalents rather than simply the verb 'to be'. The two languages differ in that it is nearly always mandatory in Dutch to use these verbs in such cases whereas in English it is optional and often sounds unnatural to do so, e.g. *Hoeveel bomen staan er in jouw tuin?* – How many trees are there (*standing) in your garden?

Cf. 'to find' for comments on contexts where *zich bevinden* renders 'to be'.

before:

alvorens, eer(dat), voor(dat); eerder, voorheen, voordien, vroeger, (van) tevoren

The difficulty here, as with 'after' (cf. 'after'), arises partially because 'before' in English is an adverb, a conjunction and a preposition.

Voor, sometimes written *vóór* to distinguish it from the word for 'for', is a preposition; it is in fact the only word of those given above that is, e.g. *voor de oorlog* – before the war. One can make a conjunction of it by the addition of *-dat*,² e.g. *Voordat de oorlog begon...* – Before the war began... But is not necessary to add *-dat* to make a conjunction of *voor*; it is perhaps slightly higher style not to do so, e.g. *Voor de eerste zitting van het parlement geopend werd...* Definitely higher style is the couplet *eer/ eerdat*, where the same distinction as between *voor* and *voordat* exists, e.g. *U kunt beter even denken eer u wat zegt* – You'd better think about it before you say anything..

Alvorens also belongs to higher style but usually requires different syntax to the above (cf. also *na* under 'after'). It is usually followed by an infinitive clause, a form of clause which is not common in normal speech, e.g. *Alvorens de zaal te verlaten wordt men vriendelijk verzocht het register te ondertekenen* – Before leaving the room you are kindly requested to sign the register. Occasionally *alvorens* introduces a subordinate clause, in which case it requires the same syntax as *voordat*.

Eerder, voorheen, voordien, tevoren and *vroeger* are all adverbs of time. In the sentence 'I had never seen him before' one has the choice of *eerder, voorheen* or *voordien* but the most usual in speech is *eerder* (cf. 'rather'), i.e. *Ik had hem nooit eerder gezien* – I had never seen him before; *eerder* commonly goes hand in hand with *nooit*, but not necessarily, e.g. *Ik ben hier al (eens) eerder geweest* – I've been here before. *Voorheen* and *voordien* are more or less synonymous higher stylistic (archaic) variants of *eerder* but the latter also renders 'before that', a more usual translation of which is *daarvoor*, e.g. *Waar heb je voordien/daarvóór gewoond?* – Where did you live before that?³

Vroeger, in addition to meaning 'earlier' and 'in the olden days', also commonly renders the adverb 'before' in everyday language, e.g. *Waar hebben ze vroeger gewoond?* – Where did they live before/previously?

Tevoren is close in meaning to the previously mentioned function of *vroeger*, e.g. *Haar man was twee jaar tevoren/eerder overleden* – Her

² The same distinction applies to *na/nadat* (after) and *tot/toidat* (until).

³ The same situation applies to *nadien* and *daarna* (cf. 'after').

husband had died two years before. Notice that in this example *eerder* would be perfectly acceptable too; *vroeger* could only be used here if she **too** had died young. As with *eerder*, the combination *nooit tevoren* (never before) commonly occurs. *Van tevoren* expresses 'beforehand, first, ahead of time, in advance', e.g. *Plaatsbewijzen kunnen van tevoren aan het loket gekocht worden* – Tickets can be bought at the ticket box beforehand.

to begin, start:

aanbreken, aansteken, aanvangen, beginnen, aan de gang krijgen, starten, van start gaan

By far the most usual word for 'to begin' is *beginnen*. but there are several difficulties associated with the use of this verb. Firstly, it takes *zijn* in the perfect and secondly, like nearly all verbs that take *zijn*, it is usually used intransitively, the direct object of the English being preceded by *aan* or *met*, e.g. *Hoe laat is de voorstelling begonnen?* – What time did the performance begin?, *Het wordt tijd dat je aan je huiswerk begint* – It's about time you started your homework. The latter example shows how it can also translate 'to start on', which is more or less the force of the *aan* which so commonly follows *beginnen*. There are contexts where *beginnen* takes a direct object without a preposition, but these should perhaps be regarded as set idioms, e.g. *Hij is in Australië een nieuw leven begonnen* – He started a new life in Australia.

Aanvangen is only rarely used in Dutch to render 'to begin', e.g. *De voorstelling vangt om 8 uur aan* – The show begins at 8.00. *De aanvang* (beginning, commencement) is somewhat more common than the verb, but here too *het begin* is more usual except in the expression *de aanvangstijd* (starting time). Very common is the adverb *aanvankelijk* (initially, in the beginning) but it is also replaceable by *in het begin*.⁴

Aanbreken, meaning 'to dawn', renders 'to begin, start' in this sense or in the figurative sense of a new age beginning/dawning, e.g. *De dag breekt nu aan* – The day is now beginning/breaking, *Toen brak een nieuw tijdperk van welvaart aan* – Then a new era of prosperity dawned/began.

Van start gaan, which is used in a literal sense in racing, can also be used figuratively for a campaign, for example, but in such contexts it is interchangeable with *beginnen*, e.g. *De verkiezingscampagne is gisteren begonnen/van start gegaan* – The election campaign began/started/got going yesterday.

⁴ Note that the expression *in beginsel* means 'in principle' and is a synonym of *in principe*.

As some of the above examples have illustrated, 'to begin' and 'to start' are often interchangeable in English and in such cases 'to start' is rendered by *beginnen* in Dutch, e.g. *Wanneer gaan we beginnen?* – When are we going to start? In cases where 'to start' means only that and is not interchangeable with 'to begin', Dutch uses *starten* or *aan de gang krijgen*, e.g. *Hij kon zijn auto niet starten/aan de gang krijgen* – He couldn't start his car.

'To start' a fire is *aansteken*. (cf. 'to light')

to believe: *geloven aan/in*

The problem here is merely one of which preposition to use with which meaning of 'to believe in'. If one 'believes in' Santa Claus, i.e. whether he exists or not, the appropriate preposition is *aan*, e.g. *Mijn zoontje geloof niet meer aan Sinterklaas* – My little boy no longer believes in St. Nicholas. But if one 'believes in s.o.', i.e. has faith in that person, the preposition *in* is required; this is also the preposition normally used in relation to a 'belief in God', whether the reference is to putting your faith in him or simply to whether he exists or not e.g. *Ik geloof in die man* – I believe in that man, *Geloof jij in God?* – Do you believe in God (that there is one)?, *Ik geloof in God* – I trust/believe in God.

to belong: *behoren (tot), horen (aan, bij), toebehoren (aan)*

The most usual way of expressing 'belong' with reference to things belonging to people is by putting it periphrastically as follows: *Dat is van mij* – That belongs to me/That's mine, *Van wie is deze paraplu?* – Who does this umbrella belong to/Whose umbrella is this?

Horen is used impersonally as in *Die stoel hoort hier niet* – That chair doesn't belong here.⁵ In higher style the synonymous variant *behoren* is sometimes found. *Horen bij* is used for persons or things that 'belong together', i.e. form a group or set, e.g. *Die riem hoort bij deze broek* – That belt belongs with these pants, *Wij horen bij elkaar* – We belong/are together.

Whereas *horen* refers to belonging in the sense of possession, *behoren tot* is used more figuratively as in *Zij behoren tot de middenklasse/een andere*

⁵ Notice that this particular use of *horen* cannot always be translated by 'to belong', e.g. *Die stoel hoort hier niet te staan* – That chair shouldn't be here, *Dat hoort niet* – That is not right/proper/the correct thing to do.

groep – They belong to the middle class/another group (= are part/members of), *Dat behoort tot het verleden* – That belongs to the past.

Toebehoren is very high style and thus relatively rare, e.g. *Wij geloven dat Zuid-Afrika aan allen toebehoort die er wonen* – We believe that South Africa belongs to all who live there.

the blind:

het blind, de jaloezie, de lamellen, de luifel, het (rol)luik, de luxaflex, de markies, het rolgordijn, het zonnescherm, de zonwering

A 'holland blind' that rolls up out of sight when not in use is a *rolgordijn*. 'Venetian blinds' are usually referred to by the brand name *luxaflex* (a singular), regardless of the brand. Other forms of blind consisting of slats or sections are called *jaloerieën*, a word which is more commonly heard in the plural than the singular and which is pronounced more or less as in French; even a Venetian blind is a form of *jaloerie*. The vertical slatted blinds that have become popular recently are called *lamellen*.

A 'blind' in the sense of an awning as suspended above a window or balcony and usually made of canvas, for example, is a *zonnescherm* or a *markies*. A similar sort of 'blind' or awning which overhangs the entrance to a shop is called a *luifel*, a word which can also refer to the flap which is suspended over the entrance to a tent; nevertheless a fixed (metal) awning above the window of a house can also be called a *luifel*. A collective term for all these various canopies is *zonwering* (sunshade)

Luik normally means 'shutter' rather than blind but the slatted blinds, if indeed they are blinds, that one finds on the outside of windows (now commonly found on shops against window breakage) which can be lowered to keep out burglars or light and retain heat, are called *rolluiken*.

The word *blind* (always found in the plural, *blinden*) exists in Dutch but is rarely used these days. It translates 'shutter', not 'blind', in which meaning it has been replaced by *luik*.

to blow:

blazen, waaien

Blazen (blies, geblazen) is what one does with one's breath, e.g. *Heb je je vinger gebrand? Blaas erop!* – Have you burnt your finger? Blow on it, *De postbode in Australië blaast op een fluitje als hij brieven in je bus doet* – In Australia the postman blows (on) a whistle when he puts letters in your box.

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Waaïen (*waaiide/woei, gewaaid*) is used only with reference to the wind e.g. *Die nacht woei het verschrikkelijk om het huis* – The wind blew around the house terribly that night, *De wind waaiide zachtjes/het waaiide zachtjes* – There was a mild wind blowing.⁶ Note that *wind* can be omitted and more usually is, unlike English. *Blazen* can be used in this sense too but, unlike *waaiën*, the word *wind* must be mentioned and there is in addition a connotation of the wind blowing in a certain direction and not higgledy-piggledy as with *waaiën*, e.g. *De wind blies zachtjes door zijn haar* – The wind blew softly through his hair, *De wind blies in de zeilen* – The wind blew into the sails. In such cases *waaiën* would be incorrect. *Waaïen* is intransitive and thus 'The wind blew the tree over' must be rendered by *De boom is omgewaaid* – The tree blew over; also *Het waait hard; straks waaïen de pannen nog van het dak* – It's very windy; any moment now the tiles will get blown off the roof/will blow off the roof.

Although semantically quite different, the separable verbs *overwaaiën* (to blow over, intr.) and *opblazen* (to blow up, tr.) may serve to further illustrate the semantic distinction between *waaiën* and *blazen*, e.g. *Dat is een gerucht dat uit Engeland is overgewaaid* – That's a rumour that blew over from England, *Dat soort ruzie waait meestal na een paar dagen over* – That sort of argument usually blows over/peters out after a few days, *De Duitsers probeerden de brug bij Arnhem op te blazen* – The Germans tried to blow up the bridge near Arnhem.

the bone:

het been, het bot, de graat, de kluif

'Bone' as a material is *been*, but the bone in a piece of meat is either a *been* (plural *beenderen*) or a *bot*. The distinction between these two words is not always clear. With reference to meat one can generally say that the 'bones' of larger animals are *beenderen* whereas those of smaller animals are *botten*; a leg of lamb contains a *been* (also *bot*) and what is left when one consumes a chicken are the *botten* (also *beentjes*).

When referring to one's own bones it is more usual to use the word *bot*, e.g. *Ik heb een botje (also beentje) in mijn voet gebroken* – I've broken a little bone in my foot. (Note: *de bot* = flounder) Probably the preference for *bot* over *been* is connected with the ambiguity of the latter which can also mean 'leg' (plural *benen*). For example, in the expression *Ik voel het in mijn botten* (I can feel it in my bones) only *bot* is possible because of the ambiguity of *been*.

⁶ It is worth noting that the two imperfect forms of *waaiën* are not necessarily synonymous – *woei* implies force and thus could not have been used in the second example.

Graat, often used in the diminutive, in the sense of 'bone' refers exclusively to a fish bone and must always be used with reference to fish bones, e.g. *Er zit een graatje in mijn keel* – There's a (fish) bone caught in my throat.

A dog can be given a *been* or a *bot*, but a bone for gnawing on is also called a *kluif* (usually a large bone); *kluiven* – to gnaw.

bored, boring:

(*zich*) *vervelen, vervelend, saai*

Zich vervelen renders 'to be bored', e.g. *Ik heb me rot verveeld* – I was bored stiff. This, plus what dictionaries say, commonly leads people to believe that the adjective *vervelend* means 'boring'; in fact it more usually means 'annoying', e.g. *Het kind was erg vervelend* – The child was a nuisance/quite annoying.⁷ *Vervelend* has connotations of irritation, connotations which are not present in the word *saai*, which is simply the opposite of 'interesting', e.g. *Wat een saai landschap/saai film* – What a boring landscape/film. It is perhaps safer to stick to *saai* if you are unsure whether *vervelend* is permissible in a given context; for example, a film, as illustrated, can be *saai* or *vervelend* but a landscape can only be *saai*.

Note the expression *tot vervelens toe* (ad nauseam, over and over again).

'A bore' (i.e. person) is commonly expressed as follows, *Wat een saai iemand/wat een saaie vent* – What a bore, but *een zeur(piet)* is also close in feeling to English 'bore'. Note: *Ik moet 's zondags werken. Wat vervelend* – I have to work on Sundays. What a bore.

both:

allebei, beide(n)

There are parallels here with the various words for 'all'. (cf. 'all')

The most common word for 'both' is *allebei* but it can never function as the subject of a finite verb (the same applies to *allemaal*, cf. 'all'). Therefore a sentence such as 'Both (the) boys wanted to go the movies' has to be either rephrased to accommodate *allebei*, or it must begin with *beide(n)*, e.g. *De jongens wilden allebei naar de bioscoop gaan/Beide jongens/Allebei de jongens wilden naar de bioscoop gaan*. Only when *beide* is used pronominally (i.e. not followed by a noun) with reference to

⁷ *Het is een erg vervelende film* means more than that the film was boring – it provokes a certain aversion in the viewer and is thus not enjoyable.

people is the *-n* necessary, e.g. *Beiden wilden gaan*. When referring to non-personal objects *beide* is used, e.g. *Beide (boeken) zijn in die boekhandel verkrijgbaar* – Both (books) are available in that bookshop. In the following example *beiden* sounds more formal than *allebei*, e.g. *De eerste minister van Turkije en zijn ambtgenoot uit India zijn allebei/beiden heel hartelijk ontvangen* – The prime minister of Turkey and his counterpart from India were very warmly received.

Note the unusual syntax in the following example: *Ik hoop dat je van allebei je ondernemingen heel veel plezier zult hebben* – I hope that you will get a lot of pleasure out of both of your projects. This is syntactically akin to *op alle vijf de continenten* – on all five continents.

Note also the syntactic stylistic variants *Allebei/beiden zijn ze gegaan* – Both of them went; more usual would be *Ze zijn allebei gegaan*.

the box:

de box, de bus, de doos, de kist, het krat

A 'cardboard box' of any shape or size is a *doos*. If the sense allows it, the word is commonly used in the diminutive, e.g. *een doosje lucifers* (a box of matches). *Dozen* do not necessarily have to be of cardboard, however; the plastic box one stores a video tape in, for example, is called *de video-bewaardoos*.

A *kist* is usually made of wood but may be of metal; thus it can render 'chest' or 'trunk' (but not trunk in the sense of suitcase). Although *dozen* are nearly always made of cardboard, some wooden boxes may be too small to refer to as a *kist* and *doos* may be more appropriate, e.g. *Zij bewaart haar antieke lepeltjes in een fraai doosje uit Hindeloopen* – She keeps her antique teaspoons in a beautiful box from Hindeloopen. This could also be referred to as a *kistje*, however. Note that a '(tin) cigar box' is *een (blikken) sigarendoos* whereas a wooden one is *een (houten) sigarenkistje*.

A *krat* is a 'crate' or 'case', as in a case/crate of beer or vegetables. Sometimes we refer loosely to such containers in English as 'boxes', in which case the Dutch would always use *krat*.

Bus in the sense of 'box' refers exclusively to a letter box, either one's own or the pillar box on the corner, e.g. *Doe deze brief alsjeblieft op de bus op weg naar school* – Please put this letter in the box on the way to school, *Heb je geen brievenbus?* – Haven't you got a letter box? Letters to official post boxes are always addressed to *Postbus 523*, for example. (cf. 'tin')

The English loanword *box* has a variety of meanings in Dutch, none of them corresponding with 'box', e.g. child's playpen, hifi loudspeaker, (slatted) storage area.

to break, broken:

breken, onderbreken, verbreken, kapotmaken, stukmaken, stukslaan; gebroken, kapot, stuk

The usual word for 'to break' is simply *breken* (*brak/braken, gebroken*). Although this verb takes *hebben* when used transitively, it takes *zijn* when used intransitively, e.g. *Mijn been is op twee plaatsen gebroken* – My leg broke/has/is broken in two places. The adjective 'broken' is rendered by *stuk* or *kapót*. The former is only used predicatively, e.g. *Mijn fiets is stuk* – My bike is broken, whereas the latter is both a predicative and an attributive adjective, e.g. *Mijn theepot is kapot/mijn kapotte theepot* – My teapot is broken/my broken teapot. Therefore the verbs *kapotmaken, stukmaken* and *stukslaan* (*sloeg, geslagen*) all also render 'to break', although the last option is somewhat stronger (= to smash).

The distinction between *breken* and *verbreken* is often difficult. Whereas *breken* is generally used in literal contexts, although one says for example *Ze heeft mijn hart gebroken* – She's broken my heart, *verbreken* is used when a contract, diplomatic relations, a promise, telephone connection etc. are broken, e.g. *Betrekkingen tussen die twee landen zijn inmiddels verbroken* – Relations between those two countries have since been severed.

Onderbreken (to interrupt) is what is required when one breaks a journey, e.g. *Ze hebben hun reis naar Moskou in Warschau onderbroken* – They broke their journey to Moscow in Warsaw.

the brush:

de borstel, de kwast, het penseel, de stoffer

It is not often that a simple concrete noun like 'brush' causes translation difficulties. The general word is *borstel*, as in *haarborstel* (hairbrush), *tandenborstel* (toothbrush) and *wc-borstel* (toilet brush). A fine paintbrush as used for art and make-up is a *penseel*. A paintbrush for painting walls etc. is a *kwast*, as is a shaving brush. *Een stoffer en blik*, nearly always expressed as a couplet, refers specifically to a household 'brush and dustpan' for picking up what has been swept together by a broom (*de bezem*).

to build:

aanbouwen, afbouwen, bouwen, verbouwen, optrekken, aanleggen

Bouwen is the general word for 'to build'. 'To build on' a room etc. is simply *aanbouwen* (noun *de aanbouw*), whereas 'to rebuild' in the sense of 'to alter' is *verbouwen* (noun *de verbouwing*). Dutch also has *ombouwen* in this sense but it is not common and like *omkleden* (cf. 'to change'), it sounds like a germanism to some.

'To rebuild' in the sense of starting from scratch again is *herbouwen*. (noun *de herbouw*). *Herbouwen* can also refer to the figurative reconstruction of countries in the aftermath of war.

Afbouwen refers to the completed action and actually translates 'to finish' with reference to building, e.g. *Wanneer zal het stadhuis afgebouwd worden?* – When will the (building of the) town hall be finished?

Optrekken (to erect) can render 'to build', e.g. *Deze school is pas in 1986 opgetrokken* – This school was only built/erected in 1986.

Aanleggen refers specifically to roads and thus literally means 'to lay', e.g. *Er is nog helemaal geen weg aangelegd* – No road at all has been built/laid so far.

to burn:

aanbranden, afbranden, branden, uitbranden, verbranden; in brand staan, in de fik gaan/staan; schroeien, verschroeien

The two most common words are *branden* and *verbranden*; the former is usually intransitive and the latter is transitive, e.g. *Ik ga al deze oude dozen verbranden* – I'm going to burn all these old boxes, *Kijk eens hoe goed ze branden* – Look how well they burn. But in fact the situation is a little more complex than this. One says, for example, *Ik heb mijn hand gebrand* – I've burnt my hand, i.e. a transitive use of *branden* (also *zich branden* – to burn oneself, cf. footnote under 'to cut'), but to use *verbranden* here would be to imply that you set it alight with the purpose of disposing of it, as with the boxes above, or else that you burnt your hand very severely.⁸ If one has lain in the sun too long, one says *Ik ben vandaag verbrand* – I got burnt today, i.e. an intransitive use of *verbranden*. One can also *verbranden* food by accident although (*laten*) *aanbranden* is more common, the connotation of the latter usually being that the food has stuck to the pot rather than burnt to a cinder (= *verbran-*

den), e.g. *Ik heb de aardappels laten aanbranden/Ze zijn aangebrand* – I've burnt the potatoes/They've got burnt (stuck to the pot). *Aanbranden* is an intransitive verb and must therefore be used in collaboration with *laten* if a direct object is involved.

Afbranden translates 'to burn down' (intr.) and takes *zijn*, e.g. *De Rijksdag in Berlijn is zelfs vóór de oorlog afgebrand* – The Reichstag in Berlin burnt down/was burnt down even before the war. Transitive 'to burn down' is either expressed by *in brand/de fik steken* (= to set alight, cf. 'to light') or by *afbranden* in combination with *laten*, e.g. *Hebben de communisten het werkelijk in brand gestoken/laten afbranden* – Did the communists really burn it down? *Afbranden* also renders the transitive verb 'to burn off' (with *hebben*) with reference to grass, a wart, paint etc. e.g. *Ik wil dat kastje opnieuw schilderen maar ik moet er eerst de oude verf van afbranden* – I want to repaint that cupboard but I'll have to burn the old paint off it first.

Uitbranden, apart from referring to a fire burning itself out, is also used to translate 'to be gutted by fire', e.g. *In Ellecom brandde een pension vrijwel volledig uit* – In Ellecom a guest house was almost completely burnt out/gutted.

In brand staan is synonymous with the above intransitive use of *branden* but can be stylistically more desirable on occasions, e.g. *Hun huis stond in brand toen ze thuiskwamen* – Their house was alight/burning when they got home. Note also the expressions *in brand vliegen/vlam vatten* (to catch alight) and the more colloquial *in de fik gaan* and *in de fik staan* (to be on fire/alight). *In brand/de fik steken* renders 'to set alight/fire to', e.g. *Hij heeft zijn eigen huis in brand/de fik gestoken* – He set his house alight/burnt his house down. (cf. 'to light')

When the sun or wind 'burn' (= singe, scorch) foliage, the earth etc. either *schroeien* or *orverschroeien* (tr. & intr.) is required, e.g. *De zon heeft de chrysanten in de voortuin geschroeid/verschroeid. De bloemen zijn geschroeid/verschroeid* – The sun has burnt the chrysanthemums in the front garden. The flowers are burnt/have been burnt. *Verschroeien* is more severe implying they have been totally ruined, which is not the case with *schroeien*. Thus also *Er schroeit iets. Ruik je het? Ja, het vloerkleed schroeit* – There's something burning. Can you smell it? Yes, the carpet is burning, where the connotation is one of smoldering, not flames.

⁸ Note that the idiom 'to burn one's bridges/boats' is rendered by *zijn schepen achter zich verbranden*.

busy: *bezig, druk*

The distinction between these two words is perhaps best remembered by learning them in the following standard expressions, *het druk hebben* – to be busy,⁹ and *(druk) bezig zijn met iets* – to be busy with s.t., e.g. *Ik heb het vreselijk druk op het moment* – I'm terribly busy at the moment, *Juffrouw, is die brief al klaar? Ik ben er op het ogenblik mee bezig, meneer* – Is that letter ready yet, miss? I'm busy with (I'm doing it) it at the moment, sir. Inserting *druk* before *mee* would add the connotation 'I'm really busy doing it at the moment'. 'To be busy doing s.t.' is expressed by *bezig zijn iets te doen*, e.g. *Ze is bezig haar schoenen te poetsen* – She's busy cleaning her shoes.

Although *hebben* is always used with *druk* when people are busy, *druk zijn* is required with reference to a city, library etc. being busy, e.g. *Het was die dag erg druk in de stad* – It was very busy in town that day. *Druk* is commonly used as an attributive adjective, *bezig* only very rarely, e.g. *een drukke weg* – a busy road, *een bezige bij* – a busy bee.

to buy*aan-, in-, omkopen, aanschaffen*

It is the choice of separable prefixes attached to *kopen* (*kocht, gekocht*) that can make translation of this otherwise quite simple verb difficult.

Aankopen is used in more official contexts and renders 'to acquire, purchase', e.g. *Onlangs werd dat gebouw aangekocht door de universiteit* – That building was recently acquired by the university. A dealer who buys and sells stamps will have on his window *aan- en verkoop van postzegels*, *aankopen* being used for buying/acquiring stock across the counter in a retail business. The buying rate for currency in a bank is *de aankoopkoers*. (cf. *inkopen* below)

Inkopen is used in the business sense of 'buying (in)' stock, e.g. *Hij heeft nieuwe voorraad ingekocht* – He has bought (in) new stock. Compare *een antiquariaat koopt boeken aan* (an antiquarian bookshop) whereas *een boekhandel koopt boeken in* (a normal bookshop). In the expression *inkopen doen* (to go shopping), *inkopen* is a noun (= *de boodschappen doen*), e.g. *Ik ga even wat inkopen doen* – I'm just going shopping.

⁹ This construction is one of a series of similar idioms:
het benauwd hebben – to be suffocating, in need of air
het koud hebben – to be cold (of people)
het warm hebben – to be hot (of people)

'To bribe, buy s.o. off' is rendered by *omkopen* (*de omkoperij* – bribery), e.g. *De douanier wilde dat ik invoerrechten zou betalen maar ik heb hem met een tientje omgekocht* – The customs officer wanted me to pay duty but I bribed/bought him off with ten guilders.

Aanschaffen is commonly used instead of *kopen* and like *aankopen*, it also has connotations of 'to acquire' but is not limited in its application to business transactions; it can also translate 'to procure' and is occasionally used reflexively, e.g. *Ik heb net een roeiboort aangeschaft. Echt waar? Ik wil (me) er ook eentje aanschaffen* (= *Ik wil er ook eentje kopen*) – I've just bought a rowing boat. Really? I want to buy one too.

Te koop means 'for sale' (compare *te huur* – to let) and is what one sees on signs, for example, but in the classifieds of a newspaper one finds the columns *te koop gevraagd* (wanted to buy) and *te koop aangeboden* (for sale).

by the way:*overigens, trouwens, tussen twee haakjes*

Trouwens is probably the most usual translation of 'by the way', i.e. when one wants to add some information to what has just been said, e.g. *De familie Smit komt een week bij ons logeren. Ze komen trouwens morgen al* – The Smits are coming to stay with us for a week. By the way, they'll be arriving tomorrow. English commonly starts such sentences with 'by the way' but this is not necessarily the case with *trouwens*. (compare *echter* under 'however').

Overigens is similar in meaning but in addition to this meaning *overigens* can translate 'otherwise', e.g. *Dat kind doet wel eens wat raar maar het is overigens (= anders) wel braaf* – That child behaves a bit strangely now and then but is otherwise quite well-behaved really.

Tussen twee haakjes literally means 'in brackets'. The meaning 'by the way' is a figurative extension of this literal meaning, e.g. *Dat land is tussen twee haakjes ook nog erg rijk aan olie* – That country is, by the way (= I might add), also rich in oil. In practice it usually differs very little in meaning from *trouwens*. In the following example it cannot be replaced by *trouwens*: *Het is ook erg rijk aan olie, maar dat tussen twee haakjes* – It's also very rich in oil, but that is by the way.

C

the cake:

de cake, het gebak(je), de koek, de taart, de vla(ai)

Dutch does not have an overall term quite equivalent to 'cake' although the word *gebak* is used as a collective meaning 'cakes, pastries' etc. The English word *cake* is very commonly used but usually refers to one particular sort of cake, namely plain yellow cake, known to some as 'madeira' or 'pound cake'. One could, however, talk of a *chocoladecake* if it were a plain chocolate flavoured cake without a filling of any sort. In addition, *cake* is rectangular in shape. Cakes filled with jam, cream and possibly something on top belong to the realm of *taart*, as does a (sweet) pie, with the exception of 'apple pie' (cf. below); *taart*, unlike *cake*, is always round. *Cake* is cut into *plakken*, whereas *taart* is cut into *stukken* (cf. 'piece') or *punten*. A small individual cake, a petit fours, is either a *taartje* or most frequently a *gebakje*.¹

In a cake shop a triangular piece of cake cut from a larger *taart* is often labelled *een punt*, e.g. *slagroompunt*, *kwarkpunt* etc.

A 'cheese cake' is a *kwarktaart* and 'apple pie', a Dutch speciality, is called *appeltaart* or *appelgebak* (a mass noun, cf. *gebak* above)). A flat pie without a lid is a *vla(ai)* (plural *vlaaien*). (cf. 'dessert')

Koek is typically Dutch. *Koek*, also called *ontbijtkoek* and coming in various forms such as *gementkoek*, is a dry, rectangular shaped cake which is cut into slices which are then usually buttered; the closest thing in English is 'tea cake' or 'loaf'.

to calculate:

afrekenen, berekenen, rekenen, uitrekenen, (zich) verrekenen

'To do sums, arithmetic' is *rekenen*, e.g. *Ik ben niet goed in rekenen* – I'm no good at arithmetic. *Berekenen* and *uitrekenen* are more or less synonymous in the sense of 'to calculate/figure out an amount', but the former is usually followed by a direct object, e.g. *Hoe heeft u dat bedrag berekend?* – How did you come to that amount? *Ik heb uitgerekend*

¹ The distinction between *gebak* and *gebakje* illustrates one of the functions of the diminutive – it itemises. *Gebak* is a mass noun – the material as it were – and *een gebakje* is one individual item thereof; compare *ijs* (icecream) and *een ijsje* (an icecream), *drop* (licorice) and *een dropje* (a piece of licorice).

hoeveel je me nog schuldig bent – I've worked out how much you still owe me. Note: *Ik heb u te veel berekend* – I've overcharged you.

Uitgerekend is also used figuratively with reference to people in exactly the same way as 'calculating' is in English, *Wat is die vent uitgerekend, zeg* – Gee that guy is calculating. In addition it is used in the following way: *Mijn eerste vrouw is uitgerekend op de dag van mijn bruiloft op komen dagen* – My first wife turned up on my wedding day of all days.

Afrekenen, despite appearances, has little to do with 'to calculate' and means 'to settle, square accounts' (also figuratively), e.g. *Ober, mag ik even afrekenen?* – Waiter, can I settle the bill, please?

Verrekenen is the least common of all the options given. It is used in the world of finance with various technical meanings (none of them corresponding with 'to calculate') but otherwise usually occurs as a reflexive verb; *zich verrekenen* (to miscalculate, make an error in one's calculations) illustrates one of the various functions of the prefix *ver-*, i.e. to express error (cf. ['to be] wrong/mistaken'), e.g. *Het spijt me maar ik heb me duidelijk verrekend* – I'm sorry but I've clearly made a mistake, *Hij heeft zich in de tijd verrekend* – He miscalculated/misjudged the time it would take (to do s.t.).

to call, name:

benoemen, heten, noemen (naar), (om-/op)roepen, vernoemen (naar); laten komen, ontbieden; langskomen; (op)bellen, telefoneren, een telefoontje/belletje geven

Ik heet Piet is the most usual way of saying 'My name is Piet' but it is also possible to say *Mijn naam is Piet*. The corresponding questions are *Hoe heet jelu?* and *Hoe is jelu/w naam?* (NB: not *wat*).² *Ik heet Rudolf maar mijn vrienden noemen me Dolf* – My name is Rudolf but my friends call me Dolf, illustrates the most usual meaning of *noemen*. It is also used in the following sense: *Zijn naam is helemaal niet genoemd* – His name wasn't even mentioned (as a possibility). *Hij riep mij/mijn naam* – He called me/my name, on the other hand, illustrates the meaning of *roepen* as opposed to *noemen*. Note also *Hij schreeuwde* – He called/cried out (without an object, cf. 'to cry') and *oproepen* (to call up – i.e. as for military service).

Omroepen is also mentioned under 'to announce'. If one's name is 'called' or one is 'called for' over an intercom in a shop or at an airport, for example, this is the word required, e.g. *Ze hebben me net door de luid-*

² Note also *Hoe heet dat in het Nederlands?* – What's that called in Dutch?

spreker omgeroepen – They just called for/paged me through the loud-speaker/on the intercom.

'To call' of a bird is *roepen*. (cf. 'to cry')

Noemen naar is the verb required when s.o. or s.t. is 'named after' s.o. or s.t. else (Am. Eng. 'to name for'), e.g. *Piet is naar zijn vader genoemd* – Piet is called after his father. Less commonly *vernoemen naar* is used with this meaning too.

Benoemen (tot) is actually the verb 'to appoint (to)' and only translates 'to name' on the few occasions that the English verb has that meaning, e.g. *Wie is tot president van de maatschappij benoemd?* – Who was named/appointed president of the company?

Laten komen is 'to call, have come' of the doctor, e.g. *Oma werd ineens ernstig ziek en we hebben de dokter laten komen* – Grandma suddenly got seriously ill and we called the doctor.

Ontbieden (ontbood, ontboden) is a rather formal word meaning 'to call, have come' where there is usually a connotation of ordering to come, e.g. *De koningin heeft de minister-president ontboden* – The queen called (for) the prime minister.

Langskomen only translates 'to call (by, in)' in the sense of 'to visit, pop in' (cf. 'to visit'), e.g. *Ben je morgen thuis want ik wil even langskomen?* – Will you be home tomorrow because I'd like to call by?

'To call s.o. on the phone', i.e. 'to ring s.o. up', is *opbellen*. Just as this 'up' is optional in English, so is the *op* in Dutch, e.g. *Hoe laat moet ik je (op)bellen?* – What time should I call you? *Telefoneren* (intr.) is used about as frequently as 'to telephone' is in English, i.e. *(op)bellen* (tr. and intr.) is much more frequent (cf. 'to ring'). *(Op)bellen* and *telefoneren* also render 'to make a phone call'. 'To give s.o. a call' is *iemand een telefoontje/belletje geven*.

Note all the possible ways of translating 'so-called'; all of them are more or less synonymous although *zogenaamd* is perhaps the most frequently used: *zogeheten, zogenaamd, zogenoemd, z gezegd*.

the cap, hat:

de hoed, de muts, de pet

A hat with a brim around it, whether worn by a man or a woman, is a *hoed*. 'Hat' is a more general word in English than in Dutch and what we

sometimes call a hat is not a *hoed* but a *pet(je)*. The main distinguishing feature between the two is that a *pet(je)* has a peak and not a brim. The sort of hat worn by a conductor or an army general, for example, is a *pet* not a *hoed*.

Strictly speaking a *pet* is a cap but *muts* also renders cap; the distinction here is that a *muts* has no peak and is soft – what a skier wears is a *muts* not a *pet*. Compare also *slaapmuts* (night cap).

There are two nice expressions in Dutch which incorporate the word *pet*: *Dat gaat hem boven zijn pet/Dat is boven zijn pet* – That's beyond/above him (his comprehension). (cf. 'to congratulate')

the car, truck:

de auto, de slee, de wagen, de wagon

The dominant word is *auto* but colloquially one frequently hears people referring to their own car as a *wagen*, e.g. *Ik heb een leuk tweedehands wagentje gekocht* – I've bought a nice second-hand car. The names of various utility vehicles are formed from compounds of *auto* or *wagen* where both seem to be equally common, e.g. *de ziekenauto/-wagen* – ambulance, *de vrachtauto/-wagen* – truck, *de verhuisauto/-wagen* – removal truck, *de brandweerauto/-wagen* – fire truck/engine.

De wagón (pl. *wagons*) refers to a 'railway car' (= carriage).

Colloquially *slee* (literally 'sleigh') is used with reference to a large posh car, a limousine for example, e.g. *Wat een slee heeft die vent* – What an enormous car that guy's got.

to care:

geven (om), passen op, verzorgen, zorgen voor

'To care for s.o.' is most usually the verb *zorgen voor*, e.g. *Hij zorgt al jaren voor zijn moeder* – He's been caring for (nursing) his mother for years. Both *verzorgen* and *passen op* (not *oppassen*, cf. 'to look') are synonymous with *zorgen voor* in this sense. What old people get in a home for the aged is (*de*) *verzorging* (*het verzorgingstehuis* – rest home). *Ik zal voor de kinderen zorgen* – I'll take care of the kids (i.e. look after) could also be expressed with *passen op* but not with *verzorgen* which is, however, used with reference to caring for or tending to one's hands, garden etc. 'To take care of something' is also the verb *zorgen voor*, e.g. *We gaan vandaag picknicken. Jan, zorg jij voor het eten en ik zal voor al de andere dingen zorgen* – We're going on a picnic today. Jan, you take

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care of the food (= provide) and I'll take care of everything else. In more elevated style it is possible to use *verzorgen* like this too, e.g. *De Algemene Bank Nederland verzorgt graag uw reizen* – The ABN will take care of your travels.

'To care about s.o. or s.t.' is *geven om*, e.g. *Zij geeft (helemaal niet) om haar kinderen* – She cares (doesn't care at all) about her children.

'To care' as in 'I don't care' (= It doesn't matter to me) is dealt with under 'to matter'.

careful(ly):

nauwkeurig, omzichtig, voorzichtig, zorgvuldig

All four words bear the stress on the penultimate syllable. The distinction between these words is very subtle for English-speaking people. *Nauwkeurig* has connotations of precision and accuracy, e.g. *Lees de aanwijzingen heel nauwkeurig voordat je begint* – Read the instructions very carefully (= exactly) before you begin.

Voorzichtig is what one needs to be when handling something fragile or when dealing with a touchy person, e.g. *Je moet dat moeilijke mens heel voorzichtig behandelen* – You have to handle that difficult woman very carefully. It has connotations of prudence, tact, caution etc.

Zorgvuldig is the least common of the three and is very close in meaning to *nauwkeurig* (but is not synonymous with it), i.e. something which is done *zorgvuldig* is done with the utmost care and precision, e.g. *Mijn vader is drie maanden weg geweest en ik heb in zijn afwezigheid heel zorgvuldig voor al zijn zaken gezorgd* – My father was gone for three months and in his absence I looked after all his affairs very carefully.

The least common of the above options is *omzichtig*, a word which renders 'careful' when there are connotations of 'cautious', but in practice it tends to overlap with *voorzichtig*, e.g. *Je moet voorzichtig zijn dat je die vaas niet breekt. Je moet hem heel omzichtig/voorzichtig uitpakken* – You must be careful with that vase. You must unpack it very cautiously/carefully, *De spion ging heel omzichtig te werk* – The spy went about his work very cautiously.

to catch:

gaan, halen, nemen, opvangen, vangen, verstaan

'To catch a bus, train' etc. is *een bus/trein nemen*, or *met de bus/trein gaan* e.g. *Ik neem/ga elke dag met de bus naar kantoor* – I take/catch a bus to the office every day. However, if one just manages to catch the bus in time, the verb required is *halen*, e.g. *Ik heb de bus vanochtend net (niet) gehaald* – I only just caught (missed) the bus this morning.

'To catch' of balls, animals etc. is *vangen*, but 'to catch' rain, for example, requires *opvangen*, which has connotations of gathering in. *Opvangen* can also be applied to radio waves and refugees, in which case it is very close in meaning to *ontvangen* (to receive).

Only the figurative 'I didn't catch what you said' is rendered by *verstaan*. (cf. 'to understand')

'To catch a cold' is *kou vatten*, e.g. *Ik heb kou gevat* – I've caught a cold (but *ik ben verkouden* – I have a cold) but 'to catch the flu' is *griep oplopen*, e.g. *Ik heb griep (opgelopen)* – I have (caught) flu.

to change, exchange:

inruilen, kleinmaken, zich omkleden, omruilen, omslaan, overstappen, ruilen, uitwisselen, veranderen, zich verkleden, vermaken, verruilen, verschonen, verversen, verwisselen, wijzigen, wisselen

'To change' is one of the most difficult verbs to translate into Dutch, as the number of options given above indicates. In as far as one can say there is a basic verb, one would have to say that it is *veranderen*. It can be used both intransitively and transitively, e.g. *Wat ben je veranderd* – How you have changed, *Hoe kunnen we de situatie veranderen?* – How can we change the situation? On occasions the direct object of the English is preceded by the preposition *van* after *veranderen* in Dutch, but these are perhaps best learnt as standard idioms, e.g. *Ik ben van baan/mening/gedachten/versnelling veranderd* – I've changed my job/opinion/mind/gear, *Het is van kleur veranderd* – It has changed colour, *Dit woord is van betekenis veranderd* – This word has changed (its) meaning. Note that *veranderen* takes *zijn* in the perfect when used intransitively but *hebben* when it takes a direct object, e.g. *Hoe heb je het veranderd?* – How did you change it?

'To get changed/change one's clothes' is *zich omkleden*, the object being expressed in the verb itself, e.g. *Ik ga me nu omkleden* – I'm going to change (my clothes)/get changed now. There is still a feeling in some circles that *omkleden* is a germanism and that the correct Dutch verb is *zich verkleden*, but it is now more usual to restrict the latter to the

meaning of 'to dress up (in fancy dress), disguise o.s.', as illustrated in the word *verkleedfeestje* (fancy dress party). A 'changing room' is a *kleedkamer*. (cf. *verwisselen* below with reference to items of apparel)

Along the lines of *instappen* (to get in) and *uitstappen* (to get out) there is also a verb *overstappen* (to change) with reference to public transport. All three take *zijn* and the first two can take an indirect object but *overstappen* cannot, e.g. *We zijn in Groningen ingestapt/uitgestapt/overgestapt* – In Groningen we got in/out/changed (trams, buses, trains). Compare *We zijn in Groningen in/uit de trein gestapt*³ – We got into/out of the train in Groningen; when the mode of transport is mentioned, one is no longer dealing with the verbs *in-* and *uitstappen* but with *stappen in/uit*. Because the means of transport is never mentioned with *overstappen* when changing trains, buses etc., the problem does not arise with this verb. But if one changes one's mode of transport, it is expressed as follows: *Ik ben van de bus in de trein overgestapt* – I changed from the bus to the train. Note this figurative use: *Ik ben van een Renault op een Citroën overgestapt* – I've changed (over) from a Renault to a Citroën (= changed brands).

Omslaan relates to weather changing, e.g. *Het was de hele dag heel mooi weer geweest en toen sloeg het ineens om* – The weather had been beautiful all day and then suddenly it changed. *Omslaan* also takes *zijn*. 'Changing/unpredictable weather' is *wisselvallig/veranderlijk/onbestendig weer*.

Wisselen is chiefly used for changing money, both foreign money and when desiring smaller coins or notes in exchange for what one has; this latter meaning can also be expressed by *kleinmaken*, e.g. *Ik heb alleen maar een briefje van honderd. Kunt u dat wisselen/kleinmaken?* – I only have a hundred guilder note. Can you change it? Note: *kleingeld* = (small) change. Occasionally *wisselen* is used figuratively as in the following example: *Ik heb je een tijd niet gezien. Ik vind het leuk om weer een woordje met je te wisselen* – I haven't seen you for a while. It's nice to be able to exchange a word or two with you again. Note *de briefwisseling* – correspondence.

'Exchange' in the sense of interchange, as in exchanging ideas and student exchange, is rendered by *uitwisselen/uitwisseling*, whereas to alternate is *afwisselen* and thus the expression *iets voor de afwisseling doen* (to do

³ Note that even the construction *We zijn de trein in gestapt/ingestapt* can be seen, despite appearances, as a permutation of *stappen in* where the preposition is placed after the noun to emphasise motion towards; compare *Hij gooide de dode kat de gracht in/in de gracht*; *Hij heeft de dode kat de gracht in gegooid/ingegooid* – He threw the dead cat in(to) the canal. In such cases the past participle should in fact be simply *gestapt* and *gegooid* but more often than not the distinction is not observed in the written language.

something for a change). *Voor de verandering* is also used in the meaning of 'for a change'.

Verwisselen translates 'to exchange' and often has connotations of 'to interchange', also by mistake (cf. 'to confuse' in the next paragraph), e.g. *De omslagen van die twee boeken zijn verwisseld* – The dust jackets of those two books have been changed around/switched. *Omruilen* is synonymous with *verwisselen* in the above sense. *Verwisselen* is also used with reference to items of apparel when one item is exchanged for another, e.g. *De koningin moet haar schoenen tien keer per dag verwisseld hebben* – The queen must have changed her shoes ten times a day.

Verwisselen has another meaning, namely 'to confuse s.t.', e.g. *Als ik in Amerika ben, verwissel ik altijd de bankbiljetten omdat ze allemaal dezelfde kleur hebben* – When I'm in America I always confuse the bank notes because they are all the same colour. This verb is more frequently found with this meaning than with that of 'to exchange'.

'To exchange, change' in the sense of 'to swop' is *ruilen*, e.g. *Ik heb zo'n honger en jouw boterham is groter dan die van mij. Kunnen we ruilen?* – I'm so hungry and your sandwich is bigger than mine. Can we change/swop?, *Als de broek niet past kunt u hem altijd terugbrengen en ruilen, mevrouw* – If the pants don't fit you can always bring them back and (ex)change them, madame. *Van plaats ruilen* – to change/swop seats/places. (Compare this use of *van* with its use with *veranderen* above) *Verruilen* is synonymous with *ruilen* but is much less common. 'To exchange' in the sense of 'to trade s.t. in' is expressed by *inruilen (tegen/voor)*, e.g. *Hij heeft zijn Citroën tegen/voor een Mercedes ingeruild* – He traded his Citroën in on a Mercedes.

Wijzigen (de wijziging), which can sound pompous or official if used where *veranderen* would suffice, renders 'to change, alter, amend, correct, modify, revise', e.g. *Dat plan was niet praktisch. We hebben het moeten wijzigen* – That plan was not practical. We had to alter it, *De vertrektijden op dat rooster zijn niet meer geldig. Ze moeten gewijzigd worden* – The departure times on that timetable aren't correct any more. They'll have to be changed (*veranderen* is possible here too), *Stuur me een adreswijziging als je verhuist* – Send me a change of address when you move, *De inhoud van de rede is gewijzigd* – The content of the speech was amended/changed; to have used *veranderen* here would have meant that the content was completely changed, not just modified.

'To change' (= to replace by fresh) the oil in a car, the water in a pool, the dog's water, the air in a room, etc. is rendered by the verb *verversen* plus the appropriate noun, e.g. *De olie moet ververst worden* – The oil has to

be changed, *Kan ik het raam even opendoen om de lucht te verversen?* – Can I open the window to change the air?

If clothing needs to be changed, i.e. altered, the verb required is *vermaken*. (cf. 'to repair')

'To change a baby's nappy/diaper' is rendered either by the verb *verschonen* or by *een schone luier om-/aandoen*, e.g. *Ik moet het kind verschonen* – I must change the baby's nappy, *Ik moet hem een schone luier om-/aandoen* – I have to put a clean nappy on him (also *Het kind moet een schone luier krijgen*).

'To change the sheets' is best rendered quite simply as follows: *Ik moet nu schone lakens op het bed doen* – I'll have to change the sheets now.

childish, childlike:

kinderachtig, kinderlijk, kinds

Although these three words are not at all synonymous, dictionaries sometimes give the impression that all three mean 'childish'. The pejorative meaning of 'childish', as of people's behaviour, is expressed by *kinderachtig*, e.g. *Otto, doe niet zo kinderachtig* – Otto, stop acting so childish/like a child.

Kinderlijk means 'childlike, naive, innocent', e.g. *Hollanders vinden dat Afrikaans kinderlijk klinkt* – Dutch people think that Afrikaans sounds childish (= simple), *kinderlijk vertrouwen* – childlike/naive trust.

Kinds means 'senile' (= *demént*) and thus *kindsheid* renders 'second childhood', *Mijn oma is helaas kinds aan het worden* – Unfortunately my granny is getting senile. The expression *van kinds af* (from a child, since his childhood) bears no relation to this adjective *kinds*.

the/to claim:

de bewering, de claim, de eis; af-/ophalen, aanspraak maken op, beweren, claimen, (op)eisen

Beweren is the verb used 'to claim' or 'maintain' that s.t. is so, e.g. *Hij wilde beweren dat ik er geen recht op had* – He tried to claim that I had no right to it. The corresponding noun is *bewering* (claim, assertion, contention).

Eisen is the verb 'to demand' (cf. 'the/to demand') and thus renders 'to claim' when there are connotations of demanding, e.g. *Hij eiste vergoe-*

ding van de Nederlandse Spoorwegen – He claimed/demanded compensation from the Dutch Railways (< *vergoeding eisen van* – to claim against/on), *De aardbeving in Noord-Italië eiste veel levens* – The earthquake in northern Italy claimed a lot of lives. The corresponding noun, which is usually translated by 'the demand, requirement', is *de eis* (plural *eisen*).

Af-/ophalen is used 'to claim' luggage (cf. 'to pick up') whereas 'to claim' responsibility for a bomb, e.g. *Verantwoordelijkheid voor die bomaanslag is door de PLO opgeëist* – Responsibility for that bomb attack was claimed by the PLO.

Aanspraak maken op means 'to claim' in the sense of 'to lay claim to s.t.' (i.e. a right), e.g. *Hij maakt aanspraak op de helft van de erfenis* – He's claiming/laying claim to half the inheritance. (cf. 'responsible')

Claimen and *claim* must be used with reference to insurance but they are also commonly used in a broader sense covering contexts where (*op*)*eisen* and *aanspraak maken* would otherwise be used, e.g. *Ik heb het hele bedrag van de verzekeringsmaatschappij geclaimd maar ze beweren dat ze mijn claim niet zullen erkennen* – I've claimed the whole amount back from the insurance company but they maintain that they won't recognise my claim.

to clean:

opruimen, poetsen, reinigen, schoonmaken, stomen, wassen, zuiveren

The dominant word is *schoonmaken*, e.g. *De werkster heeft vandaag het hele huis schoongemaakt* – The cleaning lady cleaned the whole house today. *Opruimen* is 'to clean/clear/tidy up', e.g. *Anneke, wil je alsjeblieft je kamer nu eindelijk eens een keer opruimen* – Anneke, will you please clean (tidy) up your room for once.

Poetsen implies a certain brushing, polishing or shining, e.g. *schoenen/zilver/tanden poetsen* – to clean/polish shoes, silver, to clean/brush teeth.

Sometimes we use 'to clean' when in fact we mean 'to wash'. In such cases one says *wassen* in Dutch, e.g. *Wil je alsjeblieft de auto voor me wassen?* – Will you please clean the car for me?

'Dry-cleaning' is *chemisch reinigen* (lit. chemical cleaning) and that is probably what one will see on the window of a shop, but in practice it is more common to use the verb *stomen*, e.g. *Ik moet mijn jas vóór de winter laten stomen* – I must have my coat dry-cleaned before winter.

Reinigen has technical connotations and even borders on 'to purify', as of blood for example, e.g. *de stadsreinigingsdienst* – municipal sanitary service (the body that cleans/sweeps the streets and collects rubbish).

Zuiveren, formed from *zuiver* (pure), also means 'to clean', often with connotations of 'to purify' technically or 'to cleanse' in the figurative sense, e.g. blood, air, metals, one's heart,⁴ e.g. *De waterzuiveringsinstallatie* – water purification plant.

clear(ly):

duidelijk, helder, klaar

'Clear' of water, sky (i.e. *lucht*) etc. is *helder*. A voice can also be *helder* but what one says is *duidelijk*, as well as the way one says it, e.g. *De docent heeft een heel heldere stem en hij spreekt ook duidelijk* – The lecturer has very clear voice and he speaks clearly too, *Is het nu duidelijk hoe je het moet doen?* – Is it now clear/evident how you should do it? (cf. 'obviously')

Klaar only very rarely translates 'clear', e.g. *klare taal* (= *duidelijke taal*), which should be regarded as a standard expression; *klaar* is best learnt as meaning 'ready' or 'finished' (cf. 'to finish')

clever:

clever, knap, pienter, slim

The most usual word for 'clever' is *knap*. Like English 'smart', however, *knap* can be ambiguous as it also means 'pretty, good-looking'; whereas women can be either *mooi* or *knap* (pretty), men are usually *knap* (good-looking). *Een knappe vent* is thus ambiguous, i.e. 'a clever chap' or 'a handsome chap'. Sometimes people ask for further clarity if one refers to someone being *knap*, e.g. *Hoe bedoel je – knap om te zien?* This ambiguity may be the reason why one occasionally hears the English word *clever* being used.

Pienter, an Indonesian loanword, is synonymous with *knap* meaning 'clever', e.g. *Dat kind is erg pienter* – That child is very clever. There are occasions where *slim* has this meaning too, e.g. *Wat slim van jou* – How clever of you, but *slim*, unlike the other words, commonly has the

⁴ It is interesting to note that the verb *kuisen* (to purify, < *kuis* – chaste), not commonly heard in Holland, is very frequently used as an everyday synonym for *schoonmaken* in Belgium as the word *schoon* there has preserved its original meaning of 'beautiful', as in German, and Flemings use the French loanword *proper* for 'clean'. This word occurs in Holland too.

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to climb:

af dalen, af klimmen, beklimmen, klimmen, op klimmen, stijgen

This verb is a good example of one of the main functions of the prefix *be-*: *klimmen* (*klim*, *is geklimmen*) is intransitive while *beklimmen* is transitive. When *klimmen* is used with reference to climbing trees, the object is preceded by *in*, e.g. *Jongens van tien jaar klimmen graag in bomen* – Boys of ten like to climb trees, *We moesten over een muur klimmen om aan de stier te ontsnappen* – We had to climb over a wall to escape from the bull, *Hij is van zijn paard geklimmen* – He took the trouble to get off his horse (*klimmen* here has a connotation of 'laboriously'). It is also possible to *beklimmen* a tree, ladder or mountain, e.g. *We hebben de Mont Blanc geklimmen* – We have climbed Mount Blanc. *Beklimmen*, being transitive, takes *hebben*.

'To climb down/descend', both transitive and intransitive, is *af dalen* (= to come down, thus also on a bike or in a car) but also *af klimmen* (= to clamber down, tr.), *Hij daalde/klom de berg af* – He climbed down the mountain, *Hij daalde af* – He climbed down. Both verbs take *zijn*. *Op klimmen* (to climb up, mount, ascend), which is common, is also intransitive and takes *zijn*, e.g. *Hij is steeds hoger op geklimmen in de hiërarchie van de universiteit* – He climbed higher and higher in the hierarchy of the university.

Stijgen (to rise, ascend, mount), in the sense of 'to climb', is used exclusively of aeroplanes and balloons, e.g. *Het pendelvliegtuig steeg steeds hoger* – The shuttle climbed higher and higher. Compare *op stijgen* ('to take off' of planes). These verbs, being intransitive, also always take *zijn*.

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close (to):

dichtbij/dicht bij, nabij, vlakbij/vlak bij, nauw

Dichtbij and *vlakbij* are more or less synonymous as translations of 'close (to)'.⁵ Just as in English, where the adverb is 'close' and the preposition is 'close to', Dutch too makes a distinction: *dichtbij* and *vlakbij* are adverbs whereas *dicht bij* and *vlak bij* are prepositions, e.g. *Hij woont heel dichtbij* – He lives very close, *Hij woont dicht bij de school* – He lives close to the school. *Vlakbij* cannot be used in the comparative or the superlative but *dichtbij* can, e.g. *Hij woont dichterbij dan ik* – He lives closer than I, *Hij woont dicht bij de school dan ik* – He lives closer to the school than I do, *Hij woont heel dichtstbij* – He lives (the) closest (see below). *Vlak*, unlike *dicht*, is frequently used before various prepositions to express 'right under/against/behind' etc., e.g. *Hij woont vlak achter het station* – He lives right behind the station.

Synonymous with both *dichtbij* and *vlakbij* is *nabij*, which is used more often as a preposition than as an adverb. It belongs to somewhat higher style. (cf. 'near')

Note that *naast* does not translate 'close to' but 'next to, beside', e.g. *Hij woont naast mij* – He lives next to me/next door. (cf. 'next'). But *naast* does render 'closest' with reference to relationships, e.g. *mijn naaste familieleden* – my closest relatives.

If there are 'close' ties between people or concepts or they are 'closely' related, the word required is *nauw* (lit. narrow, see 'narrow'). *Het Internationale Rode Kruis werkt nauw samen met de plaatselijke overheid* – The International Red Cross works closely with the local government, *Die zijn nauw verwant* – They are closely related.

'Closest' or 'nearest' as an attributive adjective is *dichtstbijzijnde*, e.g. *De dichtstbijzijnde brievenbus is op de hoek van de Biltstraat* – The nearest letterbox is on the corner of Bilt Street, but such attributive use is usually avoided, e.g. *De brievenbus op de hoek van de Biltstraat is het dichtste bij*. There is a synonym, *dichtstbijgelegen* (lit. closest situated), which is used with reference to towns, although *dichtstbijzijnde* is possible there too, e.g. *Het dichtstbijgelegen/dichtstbijzijnde dorp* – the closest village. (cf. 'to be' for contexts where *liggen* translates 'to be situated')

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to close, shut:

dichtdoen, dichtgaan, dichtslaan, dichtmaken, dichtplakken, op slot doen, sluiten

Although *sluiten* can be used for doors, windows books and eyes, it is much more usual to use *dichtdoen*, e.g. *Sluit de deur/doe de deur dicht* – Close the door. (cf. 'to open') When a door or window 'shuts' of its own accord, i.e. when an intransitive verb is required, *dichtgaan* is required, or *dichtslaan* if there is a connotation of it slamming shut, e.g. *Het raam ging dicht* – The window shut, *De deur is ineens dichtgeslagen* – The door suddenly slammed (shut). (Compare *dichtgooien* [tr.] below which is personal and intentional) (cf. 'to throw')

Dichtgaan is used with reference to shops closing (impersonal use, opposite of *opengaan*, cf. 'to open'). One could thus ask a shopkeeper *Hoe laat gaat u dicht?* – What time do you close?, where 'you' is in fact impersonal as it obviously refers to the shop.

If it is important to distinguish between merely closing as opposed to locking a door etc., *op slot doen* is used to express the latter, e.g. *Doe de deur op slot. Hij is al op slot* – Lock the door. It is already locked.

The distinction between *dichtmaken* and *dichtdoen* can be difficult for speakers of English. *Dichtmaken* implies that more effort is required as with a jar, coffin, hole in the roof. (Compare *opendoen* and *openmaken* under 'to open').

Dicht is prefixed to a number of verbs to express various styles of closing or shutting, for example: *dichtgooien* (to slam shut, tr.), *dichtplakken* (to seal up, stick shut), *dichtschroeven* (to screw shut).

the coat:

het/de colbert, de (over)jas, de mantel

The dominant word is *jas*. A 'raincoat' is a *regenjas* and if one needs to emphasise that a coat is an 'overcoat', one can also say *overjas* but this now sounds somewhat old-fashioned. Only with reference to the 'overcoat' of a woman, which can also be an *overjas*, it is possible to use *mantel* but this word is on the wane. A 'fur coat' is a *bontjas* (male or female) or *bontmantel* (female).

A 'jacket' or coat of half length for a male is a *colbert*, a *jasje* or a *colbertjasje*; as the top half of a suit only *jasje* is used, whereas a *colbert* is not part of a matching suit. Also the 'jacket' of a woman's suit (*het mantelpak* = coat plus skirt) is most usually called *het jasje*.

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to close, shut:

dichtdoen, dichtgaan, dichtslaan, dichtmaken, dichtplakken, op slot doen, sluiten

Although *sluiten* can be used for doors, windows books and eyes, it is much more usual to use *dichtdoen*, e.g. *Sluit de deur/doe de deur dicht* – Close the door. (cf. 'to open') When a door or window 'shuts' of its own accord, i.e. when an intransitive verb is required, *dichtgaan* is required, or *dichtslaan* if there is a connotation of it slamming shut, e.g. *Het raam ging dicht* – The window shut, *De deur is ineens dichtgeslagen* – The door suddenly slammed (shut). (Compare *dichtgooien* [tr.] below which is personal and intentional) (cf. 'to throw')

Dichtgaan is used with reference to shops closing (impersonal use, opposite of *opengaan*, cf. 'to open'). One could thus ask a shopkeeper *Hoe laat gaat u dicht?* – What time do you close?, where 'you' is in fact impersonal as it obviously refers to the shop.

If it is important to distinguish between merely closing as opposed to locking a door etc., *op slot doen* is used to express the latter, e.g. *Doe de deur op slot. Hij is al op slot* – Lock the door. It is already locked.

The distinction between *dichtmaken* and *dichtdoen* can be difficult for speakers of English. *Dichtmaken* implies that more effort is required as with a jar, coffin, hole in the roof. (Compare *opendoen* and *openmaken* under 'to open').

Dicht is prefixed to a number of verbs to express various styles of closing or shutting, for example: *dichtgooien* (to slam shut, tr.), *dichtplakken* (to seal up, stick shut), *dichtschroeven* (to screw shut).

the coat:

het/de colbert, de (over)jas, de mantel

The dominant word is *jas*. A 'raincoat' is a *regenjas* and if one needs to emphasise that a coat is an 'overcoat', one can also say *overjas* but this now sounds somewhat old-fashioned. Only with reference to the 'overcoat' of a woman, which can also be an *overjas*, it is possible to use *mantel* but this word is on the wane. A 'fur coat' is a *bontjas* (male or female) or *bontmantel* (female).

A 'jacket' or coat of half length for a male is a *colbert*, a *jasje* or a *colbertjasje*; as the top half of a suit only *jasje* is used, whereas a *colbert* is not part of a matching suit. Also the 'jacket' of a woman's suit (*het mantelpak* = coat plus skirt) is most usually called *het jasje*.

the cold drink:

de limonade(siroop), de fris(drank), de jus, de kwast, de prik, het sap

The names of various sorts of cooldrink are quite confusing in Dutch and because of the terseness of dictionary definitions and differences in the meaning of certain English words in different parts of the English-speaking world – something none of the existing Dutch dictionaries are even aware of, it would seem – it is useful to deal with them collectively here. The most common term for 'cooldrink' is *fris(drank)*, e.g. *Wil je iets fris?* – Would you like a cooldrink?

A drink which is 'aerated/carbonated/fizzy' is *met prik*, the opposite being *zonder prik*. The technical term for 'aerated' is *koolzuurhoudend* but that is the sort of word one would only find on labels. *Prik* is also used as a material noun referring to all carbonated drink(s), e.g. *Ik hou niet van prik* – I don't like fizzy drinks/pop/soda. Also *de prikwijs* – bubbly.

'Juice' is *het sap*, often found in compounds such as *appelsap, peresap, druivesap* etc. (Note *druivesap* not *druivensap* etc.) Bought 'orange juice' is usually referred to as *jus (d'orange)* although it may have *sinaasappelsap* on the label, but the latter word must be used with reference to freshly squeezed orange juice.⁶

What the Dutch call *limonade* is not what we call 'lemonade', although that term also means something quite different in America than in England. *Limonade* is the syrupy concentrate, called cordial in some parts of the English-speaking world, which is mixed with water; thus, although one drinks *een glas limonade* (i.e. when mixed with water) the concentrate itself is called *limonadesiroop*.⁷ *Limonade* can also refer to 'aerated cooldrinks' in general.

But what do the Dutch call 'lemonade'? The British and 'colonial' meaning of the word is rendered by the appropriate brand name, *Seven-up* (with the stress on *up*; compare *de pick-up* - record player), *Sprite*, *Spa citron*. The 'lemonade' that Charlie Brown and company in Peanuts are always selling – what the British call 'lemon squash' – is best described as *citroenlimonade* (= *de kwast*, a transformed Eng. loanword).

⁶ The Dutch have also borrowed *jus* from French to express 'gravy', applying their own subtle distinction in pronunciation to keep the two separate: *jus* meaning 'orange juice' is always written that way and is pronounced [ʒy], whereas *jus* meaning 'gravy' is always pronounced [ʃy] and is thus sometimes written *sju*.

⁷ The word 'syrup' occurs in two forms in Dutch, *siroop* and *stroop*. Although golden or maple 'syrup' and the like may be referred to as either, *limonadesiroop* is always formed with *siroop*.

to collect, gather; the collection:

collecteren, inzamelen, (op)rapen, (zich) vergaren, (zich) verzamelen

Stamp collectors and the like *verzamelen* the objects of their passion (noun *de verzameling* = *de collectie, de verzamelaar* – collector); also *Ik spaar* (= *verzamel*) *postzegels* – I collect stamps. (cf. 'to save') *Collecteren/de collecte* (*de collectant* – collector) are used as in 'to collect/the collection' for charity but this is also the main meaning of *inzamelen/de inzameling*; the latter verb having connotations of 'to gather in' as well. *Collecteren/de collecte* also refer to '(taking) the collection' in church.

Rapen means 'to pick up, gather, collect', e.g. *Raap al die dingen bij elkaar* – Collect/gather all those things together. *Oprapen* translates 'to pick up', e.g. *We hebben al de eieren in het hok opgeraapt* – We've gathered/picked up all the eggs in the pen. (cf. 'to pick up')

When people 'gather', i.e. the intransitive verb, *zich verzamelen* is used, e.g. *Er heeft zich een menigte mensen vóór de kerk verzameld* – A crowd of people gathered outside the church.

(*Zich*) *vergaan* is used in certain standard expressions but is otherwise archaic, e.g. *zich in korte tijd een fortuin vergaan* – to accumulate a fortune over a short period of time, *wijsheid vergaan* – to accumulate wisdom. *Vergaan* should not be confused with *vergaderen*. (cf. 'to meet')

'To collect' in the sense of 'to pick up' is dealt with under that lemma (i.e. *afhalen*).

coloured:

bont, gekleurd, kleurrijk

Bont means 'many-coloured' and thus also expresses 'variegated' and even 'pied', as of animals. *Kleurrijk* means 'colourful', also in the figurative sense, e.g. *kleurrijke taal* – colourful language.

Gekleurd means 'coloured' as opposed to having no colour, e.g. *gekleurd glas*; someone of mixed blood is also *gekleurd* and can be called *een kleurling* (a coloured).

the column:

de colonne, de column, het cursiefje, de kolom, de rubriek

The 'columns' that the page of a newspaper is divided into are *kolommen* (i.e. 5 or 6 to a page). Someone who writes a weekly 'column' for the

paper writes a *column* or a *rubriek* (*de columnist* = *de rubriekschrijver*); the word *cursiefje* is now a little old-fashioned but means the same thing. *Colonne* is used in the expression *de vijfde colonne* (the fifth column) and can also refer to a 'row' of trucks (especially military), e.g. *een colonne vrachtwagens*. A 'column' in the sense of a pillar is *kolom*, thus also figuratively as in *een rookkolom* (a column of smoke).

to come/go home:

thuiskomen, naar huis gaan

'To go home' is *naar huis gaan* but 'to come home' is *thuiskomen*, e.g. *Hoe laat is je vader thuisgekomen?* – What time did your father come/get home? *Ik moet nu naar huis (gaan)* – I have to go home now.

common:

gebruikelijk, gemeen, gemeenschappelijk, gewoon, ordinair

'To have s.t. in common with s.o.' is *iets met iemand gemeen hebben*, e.g. *Zij hebben een interesse in talen met elkaar gemeen* – They have an interest in languages in common. But *Ze hebben een gemeenschappelijke belangstelling voor talen (een gemeenschappelijke kennis)* – They have share a common interest in languages (a common acquaintance).

A 'common' (low class, vulgar) expression or person requires the word *ordinair*, e.g. *Wat een ordinaire griet* – What a common tart. 'Common' or 'ordinary' without this negative connotation is (*dood*)*gewoon*, e.g. *Hij is een doodgewone vent* – He's a perfectly ordinary fellow.

Gebruikelijk is a very common word (= *een heel gebruikelijk woord*). It translates 'common' in the sense of 'usual, frequent, customary', e.g. *Het is gebruikelijk in Nederland om een boterham met mes en vork te eten* – It is common/customary in Holland to eat a sandwich with a knife and fork.

'Common(ly)' can also be expressed by *vaak voorkomen* in certain contexts, e.g. *Het komt vaak voor dat hij dagen achter elkaar verdwijnt* – It commonly/frequently occurs that he disappears for days on end.

complete(ly):

helemaal, compleet, volledig, volstrekt, voltooid

If something is 'completely' finished or cooked, or someone is 'completely' exhausted or mad, for example, the most usual way of rendering that word in Dutch is with *helemaal*, e.g. *De aardappels zijn nog niet helemaal*

gaar – The potatoes aren't yet completely (= quite) cooked/ready/done, *Ben je helemaal gek?* Are you completely mad?, *Niet helemaal* – Not completely. This is by far the most common of the options given above as far as the adverb is concerned. (cf. 'quite')

Volstrekt, which is a strong word with connotations of 'absolutely', is most commonly used adverbially and usually with negatives, e.g. *Dat is volstrekt onmogelijk* – That is completely/absolutely/quite impossible. (cf. 'definite')

For the adjective, a choice has to be made between *compleet* and *volledig*, the distinction being very subtle: s.t. is *compleet* if all constituent parts are present, as in the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle or as in *Mijn oom heeft een complete verzameling postzegels uit die tijd* – My uncle has a complete collection of stamps from that time. *Volledig* is more subjective; it does not refer to numerical completeness, e.g. *Die zin is niet volledig; er moet nog iets bij* – That sentence is not complete; something needs to be added to it. The adverb 'completely' is always rendered by *volledig*, e.g. *een formulier volledig invullen* – to fill in a form completely (*een formulier invullen* – to complete a form), *Hij heeft zich volledig voor de zaak ingespannen* – He devoted himself completely to the issue. As a noun, only *volledigheid* (completeness) exists; there is no corresponding nominal form of *compleet*.

Voltooid, the past participle of *voltooien* (to finish, complete), differs from all the above in translating 'completed', e.g. *Het werk is nu voltooid* – The work has now been completed/is now complete.

to congratulate, the congratulations:

feliciteren (met), gelukwensen (met), proficiat

Feliciteren and *gelukwensen* are synonymous but the former is somewhat more frequent, e.g. *Ik heb hem met de geboorte van zijn kind gefeliciteerd/gelukgewenst* – I congratulated him on the birth of his child, *Hartelijk gefeliciteerd (met je verjaardag)* – Happy birthday,⁸ congratulations. (cf. 'luck') Note that whatever one is offering congratulations 'on' is preceded by *met* in Dutch.

Proficiat, not commonly heard, is a terse, formal way of offering general congratulations on any achievement, but it is not used for birthdays.

⁸ It is customary in Holland to say (*hartelijk*) *gefeliciteerd* to all close members of the family of the person whose birthday it is while also shaking hands with all concerned. It is also customary in Holland for men to shake hands with women and women with women as well as adults with children, unlike in Anglo-Saxon society.

to contain:

bevatten, inhouden, omvatten, staan, zitten

Bevatten is the dominant verb, e.g. *Deze margarine bevat 50% minder calorieën* – This margarine contains 50% fewer calories, *Het boek bevat een volledig register/250 pagina's* – The book contains a complete index/250 pages. *Omvatten* means 'to comprise', e.g. *Het werk omvat 10 delen* – The work comprises 10 volumes.

The noun *de inhoud* (contents, of a bottle, box, book) can be regarded as the noun belonging with *bevatten*. The verb (*zich*) *inhouden* means 'to contain (oneself)' figuratively, e.g. *Hij kon het lachen niet inhouden* – He couldn't contain his laughter/stop himself laughing, *Hou je een beetje in* – Contain yourself. But possibly the most common meaning of *inhouden* is 'to entail', as in the following example: *Wil je voorzitter worden? Misschien, maar wat houdt het precies in?* – Do you want to be chairman? Perhaps, but what does it entail?

The following is an example of the use of *zitten* to express 'to be' (cf. 'to be') which corresponds to 'to contain': *Wat zit erin?* – What's in it/what does it contain? *In dit potje zit honing* – This jar contains honey. This is a more colloquial way of expressing *bevatten*, e.g. *In deze margarine zitten alleen plantaardige vetten* – This margarine contains only vegetable fats. (but on the container one would read *Deze margarine bevat slechts plantaardige vetten*.) In a similar way *staan* could be used instead of *bevatten* in the second example given above, e.g. *Er staat een volledig register in dit boek*.

to continue:

aanhouden(d), blijven + verb, continueren, door-, doorgaan, verder + verb, vervolgen, voortduren, voortzetten

'To continue' as a transitive verb is usually *voortzetten* (noun *de voortzetting* – continuation), e.g. *Ze hebben hun reis op tien juni voortgezet* – They continued their journey on the tenth of June. It thus also renders 'to go on with, proceed with'.

'To continue' in the sense of 'to last', an intransitive use of the verb, is usually translated by *voortduren*, e.g. *Het duurde tot diep in de nacht voort* – It continued/went on deep into the night, e.g. *De Zuidafrikanen dreigen met verdere vergeldingsacties als de aanslagen voortduren* – The South Africans are threatening with reprisals if the attacks continue. In speech one normally hears *doorgaan* in such cases although *voortduren* is not always possible, e.g. *Deze trein gaat door* – This train is continuing/going on. *Doorgaan met* is the way one renders 'to continue/go on with'.

e.g. *Einstein ging door met zijn experimenten* – Einstein continued with his experiments (= *Einstein zette zijn experimenten voort*). *Doorgaan (met)* is also frequently followed by an infinitive rendering the English 'to continue doing s.t.', e.g. *De leraar zei "Wees stil" maar Piet ging toch door met praten* – The teacher said "Be quiet" but Piet went on/continued talking anyway, *Ze werkt elke avond door tot elf uur* – She works on/through till eleven every evening.

In higher style one may meet *continueren* for *voortzetten* and *doorgaan* but it is not common.

There are other common ways of expressing 'to continue doing s.t.' Making a separable verb of the action involved by using the prefix *door* is one way, e.g. *Hij praatte maar door* – He just continued/went on talking, *Ik zat te lezen toen moeder me riep maar ik las gewoon door* – I was reading when mum called but I simply went on reading, *De spion overhandigde het pakje en liep door* – The spy handed the parcel over and continued walking/on his way.

Iets blijven doen is also a common means of expressing 'to continue doing s.t.', e.g. *Ik zei "Wees stil" maar hij bleef praten* – I said "Be quiet" but he went on talking, *Het had die zomer al veel geregend en het bleef regenen* – It had already rained a lot that summer and it continued raining.

'To continue' can also be expressed by *verder gaan*. This verb refers in particular to speech, e.g. *En toen is er een oorlog uitgebroken, ging hij verder* – And then a war broke out, he continued/added (cf. *verder zeggen* under 'to add'), *Ga verder* – Go on, continue (talking).

When a story or film is 'to be continued' the corresponding expression in Dutch is *wordt vervolgd*.⁹ Otherwise *vervolgen* is more or less interchangeable with *voortzetten* but the latter is more common.

Aanhouden does not commonly render 'to continue' but can sometimes do so in the transitive sense of 'to hold on to, keep, retain', e.g. *Ik wil mijn abonnement op de Volkskrant aanhouden* – I want to continue my subscription to the Volkskrant. It can also translate 'to continue' in the intransitive sense of 'to persist, keep on', e.g. *De regen hield maar aan* – The rain continued/It kept on raining. The adjective/adverb *aanhóúddend* is a very common way of expressing 'continuous(ly), ceaseless(ly)', e.g. *Het regende aanhóúddend* – It rained continuously, *aanhoudende regen* –

⁹ *Wordt Vervolgd* is the name of the monthly bulletin of Amnesty International, it being a pun on this meaning of *vervolgen* and another of its meanings, 'to persecute'.

continuous/endless rain, *Die trein heeft aanhoudend vertraging* – The train is continually late.¹⁰ (cf. 'to keep' and 'to stop')

to cook:

bakken, braden, fruiten, grillen, klaarmaken, koken, smoren, stoven, sudderen

The most general verb is *koken*, which also means 'to boil', e.g. *Zij kan heel goed koken* – She can cook really well (also the most usual translation of 'She's a good cook'), *Het water kookt* – The water is boiling. 'To cook/prepare' a meal or food in general is *klaarmaken*, e.g. *Ik moet het avondeten/eten klaarmaken* – I must cook/prepare the dinner/meal. But when one refers to the way in which a particular dish is 'cooked', the Dutch use the appropriate verb, e.g. *bakken* (*bakte, gebakken*) means both 'to bake' (cakes, bread) and 'to fry' (onions, eggs). 'To bake/roast' meat in an oven requires *braden* (*braadde, gebraden*), which is also what happens to meat on an open fire or on a spit, for example, but if meat is 'cooked' in a frying pan, as is usually the case in Holland, the appropriate verb is *bakken*.¹¹ In recipes one regularly meets the term *fruiten* (to fry) with reference to onions etc.

Suddereren is actually 'to simmer' but due to our very free use of 'to cook' in English, it can on occasions be the appropriate translation of 'to cook', e.g. *Laat het tien minuten sudderen* – Let it cook for ten minutes. If one lets food *suddereren* in its own juices, that process can be referred to as *smoren*.

Grillen is not only 'to grill' but also translates 'to barbecue', e.g. *Je moet vlees niet langer dan tien minuten op een barbecue grillen* – You mustn't let meat cook for longer than ten minutes on a barbecue.

Stoven is 'to stew'. Note that with all these various verbs for styles of cooking it is common for the Dutch to use them in combination with *laten*, especially in recipes, e.g. *Laat het gerecht een kwartier stoven/koken/bakken* – Stew/boil/fry the dish for a quarter of an hour (lit. Let it stew etc.).

¹⁰ Compare the shifting stress here with that of *aanstaande* under 'next'.

¹¹ The Dutch don't commonly use an oven to prepare food in. Where Anglo-Saxons may bake meat in the oven, the Dutch will often *braden* it in a large (usually black) enamel pot on top of the stove, if they don't *bakken* it in a frying pan. Such typically Dutch pots are called *braadpannen* and thus the English translation a 'Dutch oven'. The difference between *braden* and *bakken* with reference to meat is as follows: the former takes longer, is wetter, employs a lid and is usually done to larger pieces of meat, whereas what one does to a steak, for example, is *bakken*. It is thus possible to *braden* s.t. in a frying pan too if the process is of longer duration. *Bakken* is also used with reference to 'sunbaking'.

When food is 'cooked' or 'not done/cooked (through)' it is *gaar* or *ongaar/niet gaar*, e.g. *ongare aardappels zijn niet lekker* – Potatoes that are not properly cooked are not very nice. *Koken*, in addition to meaning 'to cook' in the general sense, also translates 'to boil', e.g. *een zacht/hard gekookt ei* – a soft-/hard-boiled egg.

the/to copy:

het afschrift, de doorslag, het exemplaar, de kopie, de kopij; (foto)kopiëren, overschrijven, vermenigvuldigen

If one has two 'copies' of a book, one has *twee exemplaren*. If one makes a 'copy' of a document on a photocopier, for example, one gets a *kopie*. If one uses carbon paper while typing, the 'carbon copy' is *de doorslag*. The copy which printers make prior to sending something to press is their *kopij*.

The act of copying s.t. by hand or transcribing it is *overschrijven*; what one ends up with is an *afschrift*. *Overschrijven* is also used to render 'to write out again'. (cf. 'again') If the copying is done mechanically, one uses *(foto)kopiëren*. To make multiple copies, i.e. to duplicate, is *vermenigvuldigen* (= to multiply).

to correct:

corrigeren, nakijken, verbeteren

Corrigeren is 'to correct', a concept often rendered by *verbeteren*, which literally means 'to improve', e.g. *Er zitten zo veel fouten in dit opstel dat het niet te corrigeren valt* – There are so many mistakes in this essay that it's impossible to correct, *Als ik fouten maak in mijn Nederlands, wil je me dan alsjeblieft verbeteren?* – If I make mistakes in my Dutch, would you please correct me?

When teachers 'correct' exams, essays etc., the verb *nakijken* is generally used, rather than *corrigeren* (g pron. as in French), e.g. *Ik moet deze opstellen nakijken en de spelfouten corrigeren/verbeteren* – I must correct/look at/mark these essays and correct the spelling mistakes.

the cover (of a book):

de band, de cover, het kft, de/het omslag

If a book has a 'soft cover' it has a *slap kft*. 'To cover' schoolbooks, for example, is *kaften*. A 'paperback' is also commonly called *de paperback* or *de pocket*. The cover on a hard covered book is *de band*; one can talk of

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de band, de cover, het kaft, de/het omslag

If a book has a 'soft cover' it has a *slap kaft*. 'To cover' schoolbooks, for example, is *kaften*. A 'paperback' is also commonly called *de paperback* or *de pocket*. The cover on a hard covered book is *de band*; one can talk of

it having *een harde/linnen band* or *een hard/stijf kaft*. The 'paper cover' or 'dust jacket' that is wrapped around books is *het omslag*, a word which is sometimes also used to refer to the *kaft* or *band* of the book too. The 'cover design' of a book, whether it appears on the *omslag*, *band* or *kaft*, is called *het omslagontwerp*. The loanword *cover* is also used, particularly with reference to a magazine or journal.

crisp:

bros, krokant, knapperig

Bros has connotations of 'brittle' and 'airiness' and is thus the appropriate word for sweet biscuits, meringues, the base of a cheese cake etc. *Bros* should not be confused with *broos*, which means 'fragile, delicate, brittle' but not with reference to food. Otherwise the word required is *knapperig*.

Higher style, and thus a word commonly used in advertising food products, is *krokant*; for example, cornflakes are described on the pack as being *krokant geroosterde maïsvlokken*, but when eating them oneself one would refer to how *knapperig* they are.

to criticise:

bekritiseren, kritiseren, kritiek hebben op, kritisch zijn

Very often the Dutch simply say *kritisch zijn* (= to be critical of) where in English we may use the verb 'to criticise', e.g. *Je moet niet zo kritisch zijn* – You shouldn't criticise so much.

Bekritiseren and *kritiseren* seem to be interchangeable as transitive verbs; although the prefix *be-* was presumably intended originally to make the verb transitive, both are now used transitively but *bekritiseren* cannot be used intransitively, *Je kritiseert te veel* – You criticise too much, *Je moet je moeder niet zo bekritiseren* – You shouldn't criticise your mother so much.

Kritiek hebben op iemand is more commonly used than *iemand bekritiseren*, e.g. *Al de lalle leerkrachten hebben veel kritiek op het nieuwe hoofd* – All the teachers are very critical of the new headmaster; *bekritiseren* would not be correct here.

the/to cry:

het gehuil, het geschreeuw, de gil, de kreet, de leus, de roep, de schreeuw; gillen, huilen, roepen, schreeuwen, wenen

'To cry about s.t.' is *huilen om*. *Wenen* has the same meaning but is rather poetic and archaic. *Gillen* (to yell) is used in the sense of 'to cry out', e.g. *Pas op, gilde hij* – Watch out, he cried. *Schreeuwen*, actually the verb 'to shout, scream', is used in a similar fashion, as is *roepen* (lit. to call, call out, cf. 'to call').

The correct translation of 'the cry' can also cause problems. The nouns formed from *huilen* and *schreeuwen*, *het gehuil* and *het geschreeuw*, are collectives referring to 'crying' in general rather than 'the cry'. *De gil*, with obvious connotations of 'yell', is perhaps the best way to render 'the cry', whereas *de schreeuw* corresponds to 'the shout, scream'. A 'cry' in the sense of a 'war-cry' or the 'cry' of a particular movement is *de kreet*, *de strijdkreet* (war-cry), *de leus* (motto, war-cry, rallying cry). The 'call' or 'cry' of a bird is *de roep*.

curious:

benieuwd (naar), nieuwsgierig; curieus, merkwaardig, raar, vreemd

Monkeys are curious/inquisitive (animals) – *Apes zijn nieuwsgierig*. One is *benieuwd* if one is curious to know or find out s.t., e.g. *Ik ben benieuwd of hij hertrouwd is* – I'm curious (= interested) to know/I wonder if he has remarried; *benieuwd zijn* is thus also a means of expressing 'to wonder' (also *zich afvragen*). The preposition *naar* translates 'about', e.g. *Ik ben er heel benieuwd naar* – I'm very curious about it.

'Curious' in the sense of peculiar, strange is *merkwaardig, raar, vreemd*, and least commonly *curieus*, e.g. *Ze vertelde mij een heel merkwaardig/vreemd/curieus verhaal over haar ervaringen in India* – She told me a very curious/remarkable/strange story about her experiences in India. (cf. 'strange')

the currency:

de deviezen, het geld, de geldeenheid, de munt, de valuta

If one has a collection of foreign currency in one's wallet, this is simply *buitenlands geld*, the most everyday way of expressing the concept, but *valuta* is not a particularly technical term either, e.g. *Andere valuta's zijn onbetrouwbaar* – Other currencies are unreliable. In financial circles a

country's currency can be referred to as its *munt*,¹² e.g. *De Nederlandse munt is onlangs gerevalueerd* – The Dutch currency was revalued recently. *Geldeenheid* (unit of currency) is a less technical term for the same thing but in the following example it is not interchangeable with *valuta*; *Je zegt honderd - in welke geldeenheid is dat?* – A hundred you say – in what currency?

In financial circles one talks of *deviezen* (a plural) with reference to a country's supplies of foreign currency/exchange and the column in a newspaper where exchange rates are listed is headed *deviezen* ([foreign] exchange).

to cut:

knippen, snijden; (om)hakken, kappen, maaien, snoeien, vellen, zagen

Dutch distinguishes between cutting with scissors (*knippen*) and cutting with knives and other sharp implements (*snijden*), e.g. *Ik ga mijn haar laten knippen* – I'm going to have my hair cut, *Wil jij het brood even snijden?* – Will you cut the bread? 'To cut off' is thus *afknippen* and *afsnijden* respectively, the latter also being used figuratively for the telephone, diplomatic relations etc., e.g. *We zaten gezellig met elkaar aan de telefoon te praten en ineens werden we afgesneden* – We were having a nice chat to each other on the phone and suddenly we were cut off.

There are grammatical complications if one wants to express that one has cut o.s. with a knife. The verb required is *zich snijden* and the part of the body concerned is preceded by *in*, used in combination with the possessive pronoun, e.g. *Ik heb me in mijn vinger gesneden* – I've cut my finger; compare *Ik heb mijn vinger gebrand* – I've burnt my finger.¹³

'To cut down' a tree is *omhakken, kappen* or *velen* (to fell), whereas if one needs to cut a piece of wood to a particular size or shape, one must use the appropriate verb, e.g. *zagen* (to saw), *schaven* (to plane) etc. 'To cut' or 'chop' wood for a fire is *hakken* or *kappen*. For plants which need to be 'cut back/pruned' the verb *snoeien* is used. 'To cut the grass' is *het gras maaien* (to mow).

¹² In addition to this, *de munt* is also the normal word for both a 'coin' and a 'mint', i.e. where the coins are produced. Just like its English cognate, it also means 'mint' as in 'peppermint' (*de pepermint*).

¹³ Notice that unlike French and German, parts of the body in Dutch are usually preceded by possessives rather than definite articles although definite articles are sometimes used in higher style, e.g. *Ik moet mijn handen wassen, Hij heeft zijn haar laten knippen, Ze deed haar ogen dicht*. It is also worth noting that *zich ergens mee in del/zijn vingers snijden* renders the figurative expression 'to get one's fingers burnt', e.g. *Hij heeft zich daar lelijk mee in del/zijn vingers gesneden* – He got his fingers badly burnt with that.

D

to dare:

aandurven, durven, uitdagen, (zich) wagen

Durven,¹ the most usual word, is a modal verb² and as such is either followed by an infinitive or one is implied, e.g. *Ik durf het niet te doen/ik durf het niet* – I don't dare (do it). *Durven* is thus an intransitive verb, the transitive counterpart being *aandurven*, e.g. *Ik weet niet of ik dat aandurf* – I don't know whether I dare (do it/take it on); as illustrated, it translates 'to dare to do, to tackle s.t.', e.g. *Ik durf die taal/persoon niet aan* – I don't dare to tackle/take on that language/person.

Wagen is similar in meaning to *durven* in certain contexts, e.g. *Ik waagde/ durfde het te zeggen* – I dared to say it. *Wagen* can also translate 'to dare' when issuing a challenge to someone, but *uitdagen* (to challenge) is more common in that sense, e.g. *Waag het eens* – I dare you to/just you dare, *Ik daag je uit om het te proberen* – I dare you to try. In addition, *wagen* renders 'to risk, wager', e.g. *je leven/geld wagen aan* (to risk your life/money on). There is also a reflexive form, *zich wagen*, which means 'to venture, hazard', e.g. *zich op het ijs wagen* (to venture onto the ice).

to decide, the decision:

beslissen, besluiten, zich voornemen; een beslissing/besluit nemen

The distinction between *beslissen* and *besluiten* is very subtle for speakers of English (and Dutch for that matter) to appreciate but it must be grasped as the two are not interchangeable. *Beslissen* is used when a decision has yet to be taken, as for example when a choice has to be made out of a series of options, e.g. *Ik kan niet beslissen (welke ik kopen wil)* – I can't decide (which one I want to buy), *Je zult zelf moeten beslissen* – You'll have to decide (for) yourself, *We moeten die zaak gauw beslissen* – We must decide that matter soon. But when the decision making has taken place, *besluiten* must be used, e.g. *Dit is het gevolg van de bezuinigingsoperatie waartoe de regering twee jaar geleden heeft besloten* – This is the result of the economy measures that the government decided on two years ago. The following example incorporates both verbs: *Ze hielden een vergadering om te beslissen wie de nieuwe burgemeester moest zijn maar uiteindelijk*

¹ Although *durven* is normally a regular verb, it preserves an archaic irregular imperfect, *dorst*, which is still relatively common but not as common as *durfde*.

² *Durven* differs from all other modal verbs, except *hoeven*, in that the infinitive which follows it is preceded by *te* in the present and imperfect and is optional in the perfect, e.g. *Hij durft/durfde het niet te doen, Hij heeft het niet durven (te) doen*.

besloten ze om de oude te herbenoemen – They held a meeting to decide who the new mayor should be but eventually they decided to reappoint the old one.

'To make/take a decision' is either *een beslissing nemen* or *een besluit nemen*, the latter being limited on the whole to more formal contexts, e.g. *Op zijn verjaardag heeft hij de beslissing genomen (= heeft hij besloten) om voortaan niet meer te roken* – On his birthday he decided/made a decision not to smoke in future, *De spellingcommissie heeft dat besluit genomen* – The spelling commission took that decision/made that resolution. *Het besluit* often has the meaning of 'decree, resolution', e.g. *Het Belgische Spellingbesluit van 1946* – The Belgian Spelling Decree of 1946, but in the following example only *beslissing* is possible: *De regering staat voor een belangrijke beslissing* – The government is facing an important decision.

It is my general impression that we often use 'to decide' in spoken English where the Dutch may not use any of the above options but paraphrase it very often with *weten*, e.g. *Weet je al met welke trein je gaat? Ik weet het nog niet.* – Have you decided what train you're taking? I haven't decided yet.

Other parts of speech derived from these two verbs express closely related ideas and also indicate the subtle difference in meaning between *beslissen* and *besluiten*: *beslissend* (decisive), *beslist* (definitely, see 'definitely'); *besluiteloos* (indecisive).

When 'to decide' actually means 'to determine', the appropriate word is *bepalen*, e.g. *Hoe kun je bepalen of deze meloenen rijp zijn?* – How can you decide/determine that these melons are ripe?

Zich voornemen has much the same meaning as *besluiten* when followed by an *om...te* clause, but it emphasises the idea of 'proposal/intention' rather than definite 'decision/resolution', e.g. *We hebben ons voorgenomen om het komende jaar naar het buitenland te verhuizen* – We have decided/are determined/are proposing to move to another country during the coming year. (cf. 'to intend')

definite(ly), certain(ly):

absoluut, bepaald, beslist, definitief, pertinent, vast, volstrekt, zeker

'Definitely' is most commonly rendered by *beslist*, e.g. *Het is beslist waar* – It is definitely true, *Heeft hij het gedaan? Ach beslist* – Did he do it? Oh, definitely/for sure.

Zeker is used more or less in those cases in English where 'certainly' can replace 'definitely'. In both the above examples it would not have been incorrect to use *zeker* although it is perhaps a little stronger, leaving no room for doubt at all, which is not necessarily the case with *beslist*. Also *Ben je daar zeker van?* – Are you certain/sure (of that)?

As an adverb meaning 'definitely', *bepaald* leaves no room for doubt, e.g. *Hij is bepaald niet ziek* – He definitely isn't sick (stress on *bepaald*); compare *Hij is niet bepaald ziek* – He's not particularly sick, another meaning of *bepaald*. With the stress on *beslist*, *Hij is beslist niet ziek* is synonymous with *bepaald*, but without that stress and with a certain intonation *beslist* is synonymous with *Hij is vast niet ziek* – Surely he's not sick/He can't be sick, i.e. expressing some doubt. *Bepaald*, unlike *beslist*, more commonly occurs as an adjective but then it renders more 'particular/certain' than 'definite', e.g. *Je moet de sleutel op een bepaalde manier in het gat steken* – You have to insert the key in the hole in a certain/particular way; in such cases it is usually interchangeable with *zeker*, e.g. *op zekere dag* (no article!), *een zekere/bepaalde persoon*. Note *het (on)bepaald lidwoord* – the (in)definite article.

Definitief is not a common word. It is used chiefly as an adjective in which case it often renders 'definitive', e.g. *Hij gaf geen definitief antwoord* – He didn't give a definite/definitive answer. It can be used as an adverb if there are connotations of 'finally, permanently', e.g. *Anneke en Jan zijn nu definitief uit elkaar* – Anneke and Jan are now permanently separated (i.e. divorced).

Volstrekt (always used adverbially) means 'completely/absolutely' and thus overlaps at times with 'definitely', e.g. *De minister staat daar volstrekt afwijzend tegenover* – The minister definitely rejects that. *Absoluut* is also commonly used in Dutch where in English we may say 'definitely', e.g. *Ik ga absoluut niet met hem in één auto* – I'm definitely not going in the same car as he. *Absoluut* could also be used in the example above illustrating *volstrekt*.

Pertinent is a very strong word and is heard in the phrase *pertinent niet* – definitely not, but is also used as in *Ik heb pertinent geweigerd* – I definitely refused/I refused outright.

the/to demand:

de eis, het/de vereiste, de vraag; eisen, vereisen, vergen, verlangen, vragen

The dominant words are *de eis* and *eisen*, e.g. *U eist* (or *verlangt*, cf. below) *te veel van mij* – You demand too much of me, *aan de eisen voldoen* – to satisfy the demands.

Vereisen is the verb 'to require', as in 'to require s.t. of s.o.', and is always used instead of *eisen* when that connotation is present, e.g. *Voor deze post zijn de volgende kwalifikaties vereist* – This position demands/requires the following qualifications; thus *vereiste* translates 'requirement' and *een eerste vereiste* translates 'a prerequisite'.

Vragen, besides meaning 'to ask', can also have the meaning of 'to demand' or 'to require', e.g. *Dat project vraagt te veel geld/te veel van mijn tijd* – That project requires too much money/demands too much of my time. Here it is synonymous with *vereisen* but *vergen* could also be used with exactly the same meaning and is perhaps the most common way of translating 'to demand/require s.t. of s.o.', e.g. *Het was heel veel werk en het heeft veel van me gevergd* – It was a lot of work and it demanded a lot of me/took it out of me.

Something that 'demands' a lot of time, energy, patience etc. is rendered by *vergen*, e.g. *Het schrijven van een proefschrift vergt zo veel (tijd)* – The writing of a dissertation demands/takes so much (time), *Ze vergen te veel van hun werknemers* – They are demanding/expecting too much from/of their employees.

'To demand money' for s.t. is either *geld vragen* or *verlangen* (always has a personal subject), e.g. *Hij vraagt/verlangt er veel te veel geld voor* – He's asking/demanding far too much money for it. Cf. also the first example under *eisen*.

'The demand' is normally *de eis* but in the very specific case of 'supply and demand' it is rendered by *vraag en aanbod* (note that in Dutch the reverse order is used), e.g. *Er is heel veel vraag naar dit product* – There is (a) great demand for this product.

to deny:

loochenen, (zich) onthouden, ontkennen, (zich) ontzeggen, verloochenen, van nee zeggen

The dominant word is *ontkennen*, e.g. *Ik heb hem gevraagd of hij mijn fiets gestolen heeft maar hij heeft het ontkend* – I asked him if he stole my

bike but he denied it, *Ik ontken niet dat...* – I don't deny that...³ Colloquially one may hear the following variant of the former example: ... *maar hij zei van niet* – ... but he denied it/said no.

'To deny o.s. s.t.' is *zich ontzeggen* and 'to deny/refuse s.o. else s.t.' is *ontzeggen*, e.g. *Moeder Teresa heeft zich alles ontzegd* – Mother Teresa has denied herself everything, *Hem is het presidentschap ontzegd* – He was refused/denied the presidency.

Onthouden and *zich onthouden van* relate to each other in a similar fashion to the two verbs given in the previous paragraph. *Onthouden* is close in meaning to *ontzeggen* but it translates 'to deny' when there are connotations of 'to withhold/keep s.t. from s.o.', e.g. *Ze hebben hem alle voedsel onthouden* – They denied him all food. *Zich onthouden van* does not translate 'to deny' but 'to refrain/abstain from', e.g. *Hij heeft zich van sterke drank moeten onthouden* – He had to keep off/abstain from strong liquor.

Loochenen and *verloochenen* are not very common words and only seldom do they mean 'to deny'. They are very close in meaning to each other and translate 'to deny' when there are connotations of 'to disavow', as of God for example, *verloochenen* being more common and also translating 'to repudiate/renounce', e.g. *Petrus heeft Jezus verloochend* – Peter renounced Jesus.

the dessert:

na, het nagerecht, de pudding, toe, het toetje

Nagerecht is a rather official sounding word; the dessert section of a menu is likely to be entitled *nagerechten*. (cf. 'dish') In everyday language one normally uses one or other form of the preposition *toe* (i.e. either nominalised or not) but occasionally *na* is heard too (compare English 'afters'). One can refer to a dessert either as *het toetje* (most usual form) or in the following way using the adverbs *toe* or *na*, e.g. *Krijgen wij ook nog wat toel/voor toe, ma?* – Are we getting afters, mum? (lit. anything in addition), *Dat was een verrukkelijk toetje* – That was a delicious dessert, *Wat eten we na?* – What's for afters?, *Je krijgt joghurt na* – You're getting yoghurt for dessert.

In English the word 'pudding' can either be used as a synonym for 'dessert' or it can refer to a cake-like dessert that is usually baked in the oven. The Dutch do not know such desserts. Nine times out of ten a Dutch

³ Note that 'negation' in the grammatical sense is *ontkenning* and that 'the double negative' is called *de dubbele ontkenning*.

dessert consists either of ready-made custard (*de vla*),⁴ yoghurt (*de joghurt*) or fresh fruit (*fruit*) and consequently a question like 'Would you like some dessert?' will often be put as *Wil je wat vla/joghurt/fruit?* The word *pudding* (pron. the *u* as if it were Dutch) normally refers to something shaped and firm (e.g. as with gelatine); a baked or steamed pudding in the English sense is not (no longer?) a concept in Holland.

to destroy:

vernielen, vernietigen, verwoesten

In the sense of 'to destroy' these three verbs are pretty well interchangeable. Their actual meanings are respectively 'to smash/wreck', 'to annihilate' and 'to devastate'. If any of those connotations seems appropriate to the context in question, choose accordingly. For example: *De auto was totaal vernield* – The car had been completely destroyed, *De Duitsers hebben de Joden van Europa proberen te vernietigen* – The Germans tried to annihilate the Jews of Europe, *De atoombom heeft de stad en de hele omgeving van Hiroshima verwoest* – The atom bomb destroyed/devastated the city and the entire surroundings of Hiroshima. Note also *svp deze brief na lezing vernietigen* – Please destroy this letter after reading it (only possibility of the three) and the figurative use of *vernietigen*, e.g. *een contract vernietigen* – to ruin a contract. The corresponding nouns are *de vernieling, vernietiging* and *verwoesting*.

to die:

de dood vinden, doodgaan, heengaan, inslapen, aan zijn eind komen, om het leven komen, het hoekje omgaan, omkomen, ontslapen, overlijden, sneuvelen, sterven, vergaan, verongelukken

All languages have an assortment of words to express 'to die', some very formal or euphemistic and others rather irreverent, depending on the context. All of the above options are thus broadly speaking synonymous but range in connotation from 'to pass away' through to 'to snuff it'. All of them are conjugated with *zijn* in the perfect tense. The list could be expanded with other possibilities but these are the common ones.

The word which corresponds most closely to 'to die' is *sterven* (*stierf/stierven, gestorven*), e.g. *Elke dag sterven er in Ethiopië mensen van de honger* – Every day people die of starvation in Ethiopia. *Overlijden* (*overleed, overleden*) is the most usual way of expressing 'to

⁴ Strangely enough, should the Dutch ever make their own custard, rather than buying the ready-made stuff they call *vla*, they call it *de custard*. The custard filling in a cake is called *de banketbakkersroom* to distinguish it from (whipped) cream, *de (slag)room*.

die' of people when a slightly softer word than 'die' is required, e.g. *Mijn opa is gisteren overleden* – My grandfather passed away yesterday. The past participle, *overleden*, is also the word used on forms etc. to translate 'deceased'.⁵

Doodgaan is the dominant verb and certainly the most usual word when referring to animals, but it can also be used for people if the situation isn't too sensitive, e.g. *Mijn hond is doodgegaan* – My dog has died, *De buurvrouw is drie jaar geleden doodgegaan* – The lady next-door died three years ago.

Omkomen implies to die in some kind of accident or disaster and is thus used in newspaper articles where the number of fatalities in natural disasters etc. is being discussed, e.g. *Er zijn bij die ramp vijfhonderd mensen omgekomen* – Five hundred people died/lost their lives in that catastrophe. A synonym of *omkomen*, also commonly used in newspapers and with connotations of 'to perish', is *om het leven komen*, e.g. *Er zijn als gevolg van de aardbeving vijfhonderd mensen om het leven gekomen* – Five hundred people perished as a result of the earthquake. Compare *Mijn buurman is bij een auto-ongeluk omgekomen/om het leven gekomen* (not *gestorven*) – My neighbour died in a car accident, and *Mijn buurman is vorige week gestorven aan kanker(not omgekomen)* – My neighbour died of cancer last week.

Sneuvelen is used of soldiers and renders 'to fall in battle/die in action', e.g. *Mijn oom is in de Tweede Wereldoorlog gesneuveld* – My uncle died/fell in World War Two. (cf. 'to break')

Both *ontslapen* and *heengaan* are very euphemistic words and verge on the poetic; they are similar in feeling to the English 'to leave/part this life'. They are not used in everyday speech. The same applies to *inslapen*. (cf. 'to sleep in')

At the other end of the spectrum is *het hoekje omgaan*, the Dutch equivalent of 'to kick the bucket', e.g. *In die film gaat er om de paar minuten iemand het hoekje om* – Every few minutes someone snuffs it in that film.

Vergaan is literally 'to perish, pass away' but is commonly used figuratively in expressions such as the following: *Ik verga van de dorst/honger/hitte* – I'm dying of thirst/hunger/the heat. It is also used of rubber 'perishing'.

⁵ The late meaning that the person referred to is deceased, is rendered by *wijlen*, e.g. *wijlen Professor C.B. van Haeringen* – The late Prof. C.B. van Haeringen.

Verongelukken, as the word suggests, refers to fatalities incurred in accidents. It can simply mean 'to meet with an accident' (both people and trains, for example) and is, with reference to people, thus commonly accompanied by the adverb *dodelijk* (fatally) to make it clear that the accident resulted in death, e.g. *Een drieëndertigjarige vrouw en haar vierjarige kind zijn in Tirol dodelijk verongelukt* – A thirty-three year old woman and her four year old child were fatally injured in Tyrol, *Het vliegtuig is verongelukt* – The plane had an accident. *Verongelukken*, like *omkomen* and *om het leven komen*, sounds like newspaper language.

De dood vinden renders the English expression 'to meet one's death' (cf. *de dood tegemoetgaan* under 'to meet'), and *aan zijn eind komen* renders 'to meet one's end', e.g. *Hij is heel akelig aan zijn eind gekomen* – He met his end in a dreadful way.

different:

ander(s), apart, ongewoon, verscheiden, verschillend

'Different from' is *anders dan*, e.g. *Zij is heel anders dan haar zuster* (= *Zij zijn heel verschillend*) – She's quite different from her sister (= They are very different). The verb 'to differ from' is *verschillen van*, e.g. *Zij verschilt heel veel van haar zuster*. Note that 'to differ' in age is *verschillen met* (prep. used when the degree of difference is specified), e.g. *Zij verschilt twee jaar (in leeftijd) met haar zuster* – She differs two years in age from her sister, *Zij verschillen in leeftijd* – They differ in age.

Sometimes we use the word 'different' in English meaning 'various'; the same occurs in Dutch with *verscheiden* (lit. various) and *verschillend*, e.g. *In dit land worden verscheiden/verschillende talen gesproken* – Various/different languages are spoken in this country.

When 'different' is used adverbially it is usually translated by *anders*, as explained above, e.g. *Amerikanen reageren anders op Engeland dan Australiërs* – Americans react to England differently from/than Australians. But *verschillend* can be used adverbially in a similar way with a meaning that is then somewhat different, e.g. *Amerikanen reageren verschillend op Engeland* – Americans react differently (in various ways) to England.

Notice that although *anders dan* renders 'different from', there are contexts where no preposition is required, e.g. *Je ziet er nu heel anders uit* – You look quite different now; *verschillend* is not possible in this example as it requires at least two; for example, if one were commenting on how different twins look from each other, one would say *Maar jullie zien er heel verschillend uit* – But you look quite different.

The following examples summarise the above distinctions:

I saw **another/a different doctor** last time = *een andere dokter*

This doctor is quite **different from** the one I saw last week = *heel anders*

My brother and I have **different doctors** = *verschillende dokters* or *Hij heeft een andere dokter dan ik*.

'Different' meaning 'unusual' is rendered by *ongewoon*, when the connotation is somewhat negative, and *apart* when it is positive, e.g. *Hoe vind je mijn nieuwe lamp? Hij is erg ongewoon/heel apart* – What do you think of my new light? It's quite different.

dirty:

schuin, smerig, vet, vettig, vies, vuil

The most common word is *vies*. In many cases it is interchangeable with *vuil* but it is more commonly used than that word. But as a noun *het vuil* (dirt) is the word required.⁶ A 'dirty' joke, i.e. *risqué*, is *een schuine mop*. *Smerig* is commonly used for people in a figurative sense, as is indicated by the insult *smeelap* (dirty bastard), but *vies* and *vuil* can also be used in the same way, as in the following insults where the connotation of 'dirty' is however more literal, e.g. *viespeuk, viezerik* (dirty fellow); 'a dirty old man' is *een vieze, oude man* (not *vuil*), but *een vuile streek* – a dirty trick.

Vet is used with reference to 'dirty/greasy/oily' hair and 'greasy' food is also *vet*; otherwise the most usual word for 'greasy' is *vettig*. A Dutchman may find a fried English breakfast both *vet* (greasy) and *smerig* (awful, disgusting), but he could also refer to it as being *vies* (not nice, the opposite of *lekker*, cf. 'nice').

the dish, bowl:

de bak, het bord, de dis, het gerecht, de kom, de schaal, de schotel

The sort of deep plate or shallow bowl one eats porridge, cereal and soup from is a (*diep*) *bord*, e.g. *een soepbord* (soup plate). The somewhat deeper bowl in which Anglo-Saxons serve dessert and sometimes soup, is a *kom* or *kommetje*; also *de viskom* (fish bowl). The sort of bowl one mixes a cake in is also a *kom*. In addition *kom* translates 'basin', in which case its meaning is clear, but where it means 'bowl', the line that the Dutch draw between a *kom* and a *schaal* is subtle for a speaker of English. A larger serving bowl or dish is a *schaal*, e.g. *fruitschaal* (fruit bowl); here it is as

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Verongelukken, as the word suggests, refers to fatalities incurred in accidents. It can simply mean 'to meet with an accident' (both people and trains, for example) and is, with reference to people, thus commonly accompanied by the adverb *dodelijk* (fatally) to make it clear that the accident resulted in death, e.g. *Een drieëndertigjarige vrouw en haar vierjarige kind zijn in Tirol dodelijk verongelukt* – A thirty-three year old woman and her four year old child were fatally injured in Tyrol, *Het vliegtuig is verongelukt* – The plane had an accident. *Verongelukken*, like *omkomen* and *om het leven komen*, sounds like newspaper language.

De dood vinden renders the English expression 'to meet one's death' (cf. *de dood tegemoetgaan* under 'to meet'), and *aan zijn eind komen* renders 'to meet one's end', e.g. *Hij is heel akelig aan zijn eind gekomen* – He met his end in a dreadful way.

different:

ander(s), apart, ongewoon, verscheiden, verschillend

'Different from' is *anders dan*, e.g. *Zij is heel anders dan haar zuster* (= *Zij zijn heel verschillend*) – She's quite different from her sister (= They are very different). The verb 'to differ from' is *verschillen van*, e.g. *Zij verschilt heel veel van haar zuster*. Note that 'to differ' in age is *verschillen met* (prep. used when the degree of difference is specified), e.g. *Zij verschilt twee jaar (in leeftijd) met haar zuster* – She differs two years in age from her sister, *Zij verschillen in leeftijd* – They differ in age.

Sometimes we use the word 'different' in English meaning 'various'; the same occurs in Dutch with *verscheiden* (lit. various) and *verschillend*, e.g. *In dit land worden verscheiden/verschillende talen gesproken* – Various/different languages are spoken in this country.

When 'different' is used adverbially it is usually translated by *anders*, as explained above, e.g. *Amerikanen reageren anders op Engeland dan Australiërs* – Americans react to England differently from/than Australians. But *verschillend* can be used adverbially in a similar way with a meaning that is then somewhat different, e.g. *Amerikanen reageren verschillend op Engeland* – Americans react differently (in various ways) to England.

Notice that although *anders dan* renders 'different from', there are contexts where no preposition is required, e.g. *Je ziet er nu heel anders uit* – You look quite different now; *verschillend* is not possible in this example as it requires at least two; for example, if one were commenting on how different twins look from each other, one would say *Maar jullie zien er heel verschillend uit* – But you look quite different.

The following examples summarise the above distinctions:

I saw **another/a different doctor** last time = *een andere dokter*

This doctor is quite **different from** the one I saw last week = *heel anders*

My brother and I have **different doctors** = *verschillende dokters* or *Hij heeft een andere dokter dan ik*.

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much the function as the shape and size of the receptacle which determines whether it is a *kom* or a *schaal*.

The word *bak* refers to containers of various kinds and translates 'dish' or 'bowl' with reference to the receptacle a cat's or dog's food is served in, e.g. *de hondebak, een bak voer*. Nevertheless, 'a dessert bowl', in addition to being a *kom(metje)*, as suggested above, can also be called a *bakje* or even a *schaaltje* (both always in the diminutive with this meaning).

A *schotel* (dish), which is a flatter receptacle than a *schaal*, is not common except in the following contexts. In its diminutive form, *het schoteltje*, it means 'saucer' and it is also used – but not in its diminutive form – to render 'flying saucer', *de vliegende schotel*. However, it is usual to refer to 'a cup and saucer' as *een kop en schotel*. Also *de schotelantenne* (dish/saucer antenna). This word also renders 'dish' in the sense of a 'course'; for example, a restaurant's 'dish of the day' is its *dagschotel*; *de ovenschotel* – a dish cooked in the oven. In this sense of 'dish' *schotel* is more or less identical in meaning to *het gerecht*, e.g. *Moussaka is een Grieks gerecht/Griekse schotel* – Moussaka is a Greek dish, *De maaltijd bestond uit vijf gerechten* – The meal consisted of five dishes (i.e. meat, potatoes etc.). The following compounds of *gerecht* also occur: *hoofdgerecht* (main course), *nagerecht* (dessert, cf. 'dessert') and *voorgerecht* (entrée).⁷ However, *de gang* renders 'course' too but is not interchangeable with *gerecht*, e.g. *Het diner bestond uit vijf gangen* – The dinner consisted of five courses.

the distance:

de afstand, een eind/end/eindje/endje (all n.), *de verte*

'To put distance behind one' is *afstand afleggen*, e.g. *We hebben vandaag een hele afstand afgelegd* – We covered quite a distance today. The 'distance' from one place to another is also *afstand*, e.g. *De afstand van Amsterdam naar Berlijn is plusminus 900 kilometer* – The distance from Amsterdam to Berlin is approximately 900 kilometres. 'To keep one's distance' is *afstand houden* and 'at a distance' is *op een afstand*.

Eind/end can be synonymous with *afstand* as it is used in the first example above, but it is more colloquial, e.g. *Het is een heel eind/end naar Berlijn* – It's quite a distance to Berlin, *Ik heb vandaag een eind/end (eindje) gelopen* – I walked a fair distance/long way (a little way) today. *End* is colloquial and is not normally written. (cf. 'the/to end')

⁷ American readers please note: *het hoofdgerecht* is what you call 'the entree' and *het voorgerecht* is your 'appetizer'.

Verte is used above all in the expression *in de verte* (in the distance), e.g. *We konden in de verte sneeuw op de bergen zien* – In the distance we could see snow on the mountains. This expression also renders the adverb 'distantly/remotely', e.g. *Ze zijn in de verte met elkaar verwant/verre verwanten van elkaar* – They are distantly related/distant relatives.

to disturb; the disturbance:

storen, verstoren; de storing, de stoornis, de verstoring

A 'Do not disturb' sign reads *Niet storen*. *Storen* has connotations of interrupting; for example, if a teacher standing in front of a class is 'disturbed' or 'interrupted' by a child misbehaving or by a knock at the door, *Hij wordt gestoord* and the incident constitutes a *storing* (disturbance, interruption), e.g. *Mag ik even storen?* – Can I interrupt for a moment? Radio or TV disturbance is also *storing* and one electric appliance *stoort* (causes disturbance to) another. *Storing* also renders 'failure, breakdown, blackout'.

Stoornis is almost exclusively reserved for 'disorder' in the medical sense. If one is 'hard of hearing' (*hardhórend*), one is *gehoorgestoord* and suffers from *gehoorstoornis*. 'Mentally disturbed' is also *geestelijk gestoord*. Such words ending in *-gestoord* are euphemistic in character.

Verstoren is 'to disturb' the peace or 'to upset/disrupt' someone's plans, e.g. *We hebben vlak voor de vakantie een auto-ongeluk gehad wat onze plannen voor de zomer helemaal verstoord heeft* – We had an car accident just before the holidays, which totally upset our plans for the summer; a more colloquial way of expressing this would be *...en daardoor zijn onze plannen in de war gebracht*. Also *verstoring van de openbare orde* – disturbance of the peace.

A rule of thumb for distinguishing between *storen* and *verstoren* is that the direct object of the former is usually a person and of the latter a situation.

to do: (cf. 'to make', 'to repair')

aandoen, doen, maken

Aandoen translates only one very specific meaning of 'to do', namely 'to do s.t. to s.o.', e.g. *Hoe kun je mij zo iets aandoen?* – How can you do such a thing to me?, *Wat Hitler de joden aangedaan heeft mag nooit vergeten worden* – What Hitler did to the Jews must never be forgotten.

The only difficulty associated with *doen* and *maken* is that occasionally the Dutch use *maken* to translate 'to do' in a similar fashion to the Germans,

but the practice is not nearly as widespread in Dutch as in German; as it is used in the following examples, it should be regarded as part of a standard expression and thus not productive, e.g. *Je moet je huiswerk maken* – You must do your homework, *Dat kun je niet maken* – You can't do that (figurative, not literal).

In the idiom 'It/that has nothing to do with it/you' *maken* is not interchangeable with *doen*, e.g. *Het/dat heeft er niets mee te maken/Het heeft niets met je te maken* – It/that has nothing to do with it/That has nothing to do with you. Similarly with the idiom 'to have s.t./nothing to do with s.o.' is *iets/niets met iemand te maken hebben*, e.g. *Heb je ooit iets met hem te maken gehad? Nee, en ik wil ook nooit iets met hem te maken hebben* – Have you ever had anything to do with him? No, and I never want to have anything to do with him either.

to drive, ride:

berijden, besturen, rijden

Berijden (*bereed, bereden*) is another example of the prefix *be-* being used to make a transitive verb of the root verb; one can either *rijden te paard* (to go on horseback) or *een paard berijden* (to ride a horse), although the latter is not common; it is unusual to use *berijden* with reference to other forms of transport. 'To ride a bike', for example, is normally *fietsen* or *op/met de fiets gaan/komen*, e.g. *Hij is op zijn fiets hiernaartoe gekomen* – He rode his bike here. But there are occasions where one needs to express that a particular bike is 'ridden' and in such cases *rijden*, an intransitive verb, is used in combination with the preposition *op*, e.g. *Het kind rijdt heel goed op die fiets* – The child rides that bike well. *Rijden op* is also used with reference to 'driving a particular road' (another transitive use in English), e.g. *Ik heb vaak op die weg gereden* – I have driven that road often.

A similar construction can be used when translating 'to drive' a car (transitive): if one drives a vehicle, one must *rijden in* it, e.g. *Hij rijdt al de hele dag rond in zijn vaders Mercedes* – He's been driving his father's Mercedes around all day. Otherwise the verb *besturen* can be used with a direct object, e.g. *Wie heeft de auto bestuurd?* – Who was driving the car? (*de bestuurder/chauffeur* = driver)

My description of the use of *rijden in* in the previous paragraph may seem to be at odds with the following transitive use of *rijden*, e.g. *Ik heb de auto voor mijn vader naar Amsterdam gereden* (= *gebracht*) – I drove the car to Amsterdam for my father. *Rijden* can also be used transitively with a personal object, e.g. *Omdat het al donker was heb ik haar naar huis gereden* – Because it was already dark I drove her home.

to dry (up):

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The difficulty here is caused by the fact that English makes no distinction between the transitive and intransitive forms of this verb, while Dutch does.

Intr. 'to dry', i.e. when s.t. dries of its own accord, is *drogen*, e.g. *De verf moet nog drogen* – The paint still has to dry. Often intr. 'to dry' is best expressed simply by use of the adjective *droog*, e.g. *De was is nog niet droog* – The washing still isn't dry (hasn't dried), *Laat maar, dat wordt vanzelf wel droog* – Leave it, it'll dry of its own accord.

Tr. 'to dry' is expressed periphrastically by *droog laten worden* or *droog krijgen/droogmaken*; they are not necessarily interchangeable, the latter indicating a more active process than the former, e.g. *Mijn handdoek is in het zwembad gewaaid. Hoe moet ik hem droog laten worden (droogmaken, droog krijgen)?* – My towel has blown into the swimming pool. How should I get it dry (dry it)?, *Hoe krijg ik hem nu droog?* – How can I get it dry (dry it)?

'To dry up' as an intr. verb is *opdrogen* (takes *zijn*), e.g. *Het water in de sloten is helemaal opgedroogd* – The water in the ditches has dried up completely. In the first example above *opdrogen* could also have been used to render 'to dry', e.g. *De verf/inkt/vloer moet nog opdrogen*. Transitive 'to dry (up)' with reference to dishes is *afdrogen*, e.g. *Ik wil wel afwassen als jij afdroogt. Droog vooral het zilveren bestek goed af* – I'll wash up if you'll dry (up). Above all dry the silver cutlery well.

during:

gedurende, in, onder, tijdens; door de week, overdag, 's nachts

Gedurende and *tijdens* are totally synonymous in the sense of 'during' and occur with similar frequency, e.g. *Gedurende/tijdens de oorlog leefde hij in ballingschap* – During the war he lived in exile. Both these words are somewhat higher style and are commonly replaced by *in* in speech, e.g. *in de oorlog/nacht* – during the war/night. Note also *onder het eten* – during the meal. *Gedurende* occurs in contexts where it does not render 'during' but 'for', e.g. *Zij heeft er gedurende drie jaar gewoond* – She lived there for three years; in such cases *gedurende* cannot be replaced by *tijdens*. (cf. 'for')

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'during', e.g. *Ze zijn 's nachts ontsnapt* – They escaped during the night.
Wat doe je overdag? – What do you do during the day?, *Door de week werkt hij helemaal niet* – During the week he doesn't work at all.

E

to eat:

eten, opeten, uiteten, vreten

The main difficulty here is when to render 'to eat' by *opeten* rather than simply *eten* (*at/aten, gegeten*). When 'to eat' means to eat s.t. until it has all gone, *opeten* must be used, e.g. *Ik eet een appel. Ik heb de appel opgegeten* – I'm eating an apple. I ate the apple, *De kinderen hebben al de koekjes opgegeten* – The children have eaten all the biscuits.

Vreten (*vrut/vraten, gevreten*) is used with reference to animals but can also be used to refer to people if s.o. is eating in a socially unacceptable manner, e.g. *Wat vreten kangoeroes?* – What do kangaroos eat?, *Moet je kijken hoe die vent zit te vreten* – Just take a look at how that guy is gorging himself; also *Dit vlees is niet te vreten* – This meat is inedible. Whereas using *vreten* for people draws a comparison with animals, it is not uncommon for the reverse to occur and to use *eten* for animals, particularly for pets and animals which one has a certain rapport with, e.g. *Mijn poesje eet geen lever* – My cat doesn't eat liver; *vreten* would be inappropriate here, whereas the above example could also have read *Wat eten kangoeroes*, as it is never incorrect to use *eten* with reference to animals. (cf. 'to feed')

The separable prefix *uit-* is added to several verbs in Dutch to render that the action has been completed (cf. 'to finish'); *uiteten*, or more correctly *uitgegeten zijn*, thus means 'to have finished eating', e.g. *Ben je uitgegeten?* – Have you finished (eating)?/Have you had enough?, although the most usual way of saying one has had enough is *Ik heb genoeg gehad/gegeten*. 'I am full' is rendered either in the same way or by use of the adjective *verzadigd*, never *vol*, e.g. *Ik ben verzadigd*. Compare *Ik ben uitgegeten* – I've finished eating and *Ik heb het opgegeten* – I finished it off.

the education:

het onderwijs, de opleiding, de opvoeding, de pedagogiek

'The Department of Education and Science' in The Hague is called *Het Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen* (*O en W* for short). 'Primary' and 'secondary education' are *het lager* and *middelbaar onder-*

wijs respectively.¹ Related to this word are *onderwijzer(es)* (primary school teacher) and the verb *onderwijzen* (to teach, cf. 'to teach').

The education (i.e. training) that one gets at school or university is an *opleiding*, i.e. a specific 'training';² what one gets at home (i.e. upbringing) is an *opvoeding*. But the subject 'physical education' is called *lichamelijke opvoeding* (also *de gymnastiek*). When studying education as a subject, it is referred to as *pedagogiek*. A 'diploma of education teacher's certificate' etc. is called in Holland *onderwijsbevoegdheid* (qualification to teach).

Note: an 'educated/cultured/cultivated' person or race is *ontwikkeld*. Thus *Een jaar in het buitenland is goed voor haar ontwikkeling* – A year abroad is good for her education (= general education, knowledge).

embarrassed, embarrassing; to embarrass:

gênant, pijnlijk; in verlegenheid brengen, zich generen, zich schamen, verlegen maken, verlegen zitten

This is not an easy concept to render in Dutch. The verb is usually expressed by using one of the above adjectives. An 'embarrassing' situation is either *pijnlijk* or less commonly *gênant* (pron. [ʒənant]). *Verlegen maken* translates 'to embarrass s.o.' (= to make s.o. blush), although the usual meaning of *verlegen* is 'shy'.

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Om geld verlegen zitten renders 'to be financially embarrassed', e.g. *Ik zit op het ogenblik verlegen om geld* – I am financially embarrassed at the moment.

the/to end: (cf. 'to finish' and 'to stop')

het einde, eind, eindje, end, de finish, het slot; aflopen, beëindigen, eindigen, ten einde lopen, een eind maken aan, uitgaan op, uitlopen op

The formal word for 'end' or 'finish' is *het einde*; more commonly one hears *eind*, e.g. *eind(e) volgende week/maand* – at the end of next week/month. 'Weekend' is usually rendered by the anglicism *het wéekend* (pron. [ˈvɪkənt]) but occasionally in writing one sees *weekeinde*.³ *End* is a very common colloquial variant of *eind*, e.g. *We gaan nu een eindje/end lopen* – We're going to walk a little ways now, *Wat een eind/end, zeg!* – Gosh, what a long way! The Dutch frequently refer to a film having *een happy end* (pron. [hepi 'ent]), pseudo-English for 'a happy ending'.

In sport the loanwords *de finish/finishen* are used exactly as in English.

The various translations of 'to end' overlap with those of 'to finish'. *Eindigen* is an intransitive verb that takes *zijn*; it is synonymous with *aflopen*, which also takes *zijn* and which is more common in speech than *eindigen*, e.g. *De oorlog is nu geëindigd/afgelopen* – The war has now ended/is finished now. *Afgelopen* is a common way of expressing 'over', e.g. *De oorlog was toen al afgelopen* – The war was over (= had ended) by then.

Beëindigen is the transitive equivalent of *eindigen* and as such takes *hebben*; being transitive, *beëindigen* more usually translates 'to finish' rather than 'to end'. Just as *eindigen* is usually replaced by *aflopen*, so *beëindigen* is usually replaced by *afmaken* in speech,⁴ e.g. *De eerste minister heeft zijn rede met een anekdote beëindigd* – The prime minister ended/finished his speech with an anecdote, but *Ik heb mijn huiswerk nog niet afgemaakt* (= *af, klaar*) – I haven't finished my homework yet.

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wijs respectively.¹ Related to this word are *onderwijzer(es)* (primary school teacher) and the verb *onderwijzen* (to teach, cf. 'to teach').

The education (i.e. training) that one gets at school or university is an *opleiding*, i.e. a specific 'training';² what one gets at home (i.e. upbringing) is an *opvoeding*. But the subject 'physical education' is called *lichamelijke opvoeding* (also *de gymnastiek*). When studying education as a subject, it is referred to as *pedagogiek*. A 'diploma of education, teacher's certificate' etc. is called in Holland *onderwijsbevoegdheid* (qualification to teach).

Note: an 'educated/cultured/cultivated' person or race is *ontwikkeld*. Thus *Een jaar in het buitenland is goed voor haar ontwikkeling* – A year abroad is good for her education (= general education, knowledge).

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'To end in' in the sense of 'to result in' is rendered by *uitlopen op*, e.g. *De voetbalwedstrijd liep uit op een gevecht* – The football match ended in a fight.

engaged:

bezet, in gesprek, verloofd

If somebody is 'engaged' in the sense of 'busy, occupied' the word required is *bezet*, e.g. *De directeur kan u niet spreken want hij is op het ogenblik bezet (= in bespreking)* – The manager can't see you because he's busy at the moment.

When a telephone is 'engaged' it is *in gesprek*, e.g. *Ik probeer hem al uren te bellen maar zijn telefoon is steeds in gesprek* – I've been trying to ring him for hours but his phone is continually engaged.

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to enjoy (oneself):

zich amuseren, zich vermaken, genieten (van); lekker vinden, smaken

'To enjoy oneself' is expressed by the same verb as 'to amuse oneself', i.e. *zich amuseren*; the addition of *erg* or *goed* in the former case making the distinction in meaning clear, e.g. *De kinderen hebben zich erg/goed op het strand geamuseerd* – The kids enjoyed themselves at the beach. *Zich vermaken* is synonymous with *zich amuseren* but is not as common.

The transitive verb 'to enjoy' can be a little tricky. If it is a film, day out, book etc. one is enjoying, the object must be preceded by *van*, e.g. *Ik heb van die film genoten* – I enjoyed that film a lot. If 'enjoy' is used figuratively, however, as in 'to enjoy a good education' or 'to enjoy s.o.'s

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to enter, come in, go in/out(side), to get in/out:

(naar) binnengaan, binnenkomen, gaan, inkomen, ingaan, uitgaan, naar buiten gaan

If s.o. knocks at the door,⁵ the required response is *(Kom) binnen* (*Komt u binnen* is a very polite alternative). One sees on an office door *Binnen zonder kloppen* – Enter without knocking. 'He entered' can be either *Hij ging binnen* or *Hij kwam binnen*, depending on the perspective of the speaker, e.g. *Hij liep naar haar slaapkamer toe en ging naar binnen* – He walked to her bedroom and entered (= went in), *De deur van mijn kamer ging open en hij kwam binnen* – The door of my room opened and he entered (= came in). As the examples illustrate, if one rephrases 'enter' in terms of coming and going, the structures are the same as in English.

A difficulty can arise with regard to whether *naar* is required with *binnengaan* and *binnenkomen*. When used transitively, *naar* is omitted, e.g. *Hij kwam de kamer binnen* – He came into the room, *Een kamer waar een kind slaapt moet je altijd op je tenen binnengaan* – You should always enter a room where a child is sleeping on tiptoe. In intransitive contexts *naar* is usually optional with both verbs but *binnenkomen* is more commonly used **without** it and *binnengaan* **with** it, e.g. *Ik ga in de tuin zitten lezen. Als het begint te regenen, kom ik weer (naar) binnen* – I'm going to read a book in the garden. If it starts to rain I'll come inside again, *Hij rende naar de deur van de winkel en ging (naar) binnen* – He ran to the door of the shop and went in(side).^{6,7} As mentioned above, one says to s.o. knocking at the door, *Kom binnen*, but if s.o. is sitting in the garden and you wish to call them in (= inside), you have the choice of *Kom binnen* or *Kom naar binnen* – Come inside.

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A slightly less common synonym of this transitive *binnengaan* is *ingaan*, e.g. *Hij ging de winkel in*. But *ingaan* must be used when the 'entering' or 'going in' is figurative, e.g. *Mijn zoontje gaat nu de wereld in* – My little boy is now going out into the world, *Hij gaat de zakenwereld in* – He is going to enter the business world, *Hij is de gevangenis ingegaan* – He has gone into jail; compare *Hij is de gevangenis binnengegaan*, i.e. he was walking past it and went in.

Just as *ingaan* exists side by side with *binnengaan*, so *inkomen* (opposite of *uitkomen*) exists side by side with *binnenkomen*, e.g. *Hij liep door de gang, zag mijn deur openstaan en kwam de kamer in* – He was walking down the passage, saw that my door was open and came into the room, but *binnenkomen* would be more common (compare *ingaan*).

Naar is always used in the expression *naar buiten gaan* – to go out(side), e.g. *Hij ging naar buiten* – He went outside.

Uitgaan is 'to go out', as opposed to 'to go outside'(cf. footnote), e.g. *Ik ga vanavond uit want ik heb vandaag hard gewerkt* – I'm going out tonight because I've worked hard today, *Ik wil graag een keer met haar uitgaan* – I'd like to go out with her some time. But *uitgaan* is also used transitively to render 'to leave' (opposite of *ingaan*), as in *de kamer uitgaan* and the standard expressions *de deur uitgaan* (to go out the door) and *het huis uitgaan* (to leave the house). (cf. 'to leave')

Note that if one is 'going out' with a girl on a regular basis, 'dating' as the Americans say, this is *gaan met* in Dutch, e.g. *Ik ga op het ogenblik met Anneke* (= *heb verkering met Anneke*) – I'm going out with Anneke at the moment.

especially, special:

(in het) *bijzonder*, *speciaal*, *vooral*

When the adverb 'especially' is followed by an adjective, the word required is *bijzonder* (sometimes spelt *bi(e)zonder*, a spelling which reflects the way it is still pronounced), e.g. *In de zomer zijn appels bijzonder duur* – In summer apples are especially/particularly expensive. *Vooral* (lit. above all) is the adverb used when no adjective follows, e.g. *Appels zijn hier erg duur, vooral 's zomers* – Apples are terribly expensive here, especially/particularly/above all in summer.

In het bijzonder renders 'in particular, particularly', e.g. *De landen van de EG zijn economisch vrij gezond, Duitsland in het bijzonder* – The countries of the Common Market are economically quite healthy,

particularly Germany. Here one could also use *vooral*, either before or after *Duitsland*.

But *bijzonder* is also an adjective, which *vooral* is not. In this function it sometimes alternates with *speciaal* although the two are not completely synonymous, e.g. *een speciale aanbieding* – A special (offer), i.e. in a sale; also *Wintertruien zijn nu in de aanbieding* – Winter woollens are now on special; *speciaal* as an adverb is not very common. In the sentence *Dit is een heel speciaal gerecht* – This is quite a special dish, *speciaal* could be replaced by *bijzonder*; here the two are more or less synonymous although the connotation of *bijzonder* is 'exceptional', a word which in turn can be rendered by *buitengewoon* (lit. extraordinary). In all its functions *bijzonder* is quite an emphatic word, e.g. *bijzonder goede vrienden* – particularly/exceedingly good friends (adv.), *een bijzondere voorkeur hebben voor* – to have a particular preference for (adj.).

even:

even, *eens*, *gelijk*, *glad*, *nog*, *ook*, *zelfs*

Take note that English 'even' is very rarely translated by *even* (cf. 'just'). In fact it only translates 'even' with reference to odd and even numbers, e.g. *1, 3 en 5 zijn oneven getallen en 2, 4, en 6 zijn even getallen*.

If a surface or edge is 'nice and even', it is *mooi gelijk/glad*.

The dominant adverb for 'even' is *zelfs*, e.g. *Zelfs Nederlanders maken die fout* – Even Dutch people make that mistake. *Ook* at the beginning of a sentence also renders 'even', but *zelfs* is more emphatic, e.g. *Ook/zelfs de docent wist niet wanneer het college zou beginnen* – Even the lecturer didn't know when the lecture would begin. (cf. 'also')

In combination with the subordinating conjunction 'if', *zelfs als* is frequently replaced in higher style by *al*, an adverbial conjunction requiring inversion of subject and verb, e.g. *Zelfs als (= ook als) het regent, willen we toch gaan* = *Al regent het, we willen toch gaan*⁸ – Even if it rains, we want to go anyway.

The combination 'not even', however, is rendered by *niet eens*, e.g. *Hij had niet eens genoeg geld bij zich om de tram te kunnen nemen* – He didn't even have enough money on him to be able to catch the tram. Note the following very idiomatic rendition of 'not even': *f 9,98 voor een hele krat*

⁸ Note the lack of inversion in the second clause when *al* is used, unlike the previous example with *zelfs als*.

bier – dat is nog geen 42 cent per fles – f 9.98 for a whole crate of beer – that's not even (= less than) 42 cents a bottle.

'Even' plus the comparative of an adjective or an adverb is *nog*, e.g. *Mijn jongste zoon is nog langer dan ik* – My younger/youngest son is even taller than I,⁹ *Ik heb nog harder gereden* – I drove even faster.

ever:

ooit, wel eens

The dominant word is *ooit*, the opposite of which is *nooit* (never), e.g. *Ben je ooit in Engeland geweest? Nee, daar ben ik nooit geweest* – Have you ever been to England? No, I've never been there. If the connotation of 'ever' is 'at some time or other', it is very frequently rendered by *wel eens*, e.g. *Ben je wel eens in Engeland geweest? Ja, daar ben ik wel eens geweest* – Have you ever been to England? Yes, I've been there a few times. Notice that *wel eens* translates quite differently in the answer than it does in the question; it only renders 'ever' in questions. The way *wel eens* is used here in the answer is the dominant meaning of this very common expression (cf. 'once' and 'sometimes')

It is worth noting here that *ooit* is also sometimes used with a meaning very much akin to that of *wel eens* where the latter does not translate 'ever'; for example, *ooit* could also have been used in the answer given above, *Ja, daar ben ik ooit geweest*. Compare *Die kat hebben we ooit van de burens gekregen* – We got that cat from the neighbours (at one time, on a particular occasion). In this case it could be replaced by *een keer*. (cf. 'once')

evidently, apparently:

blijkbaar, kennelijk, klaarblijkelijk, schijnbaar

As with *blijken* (cf. 'to appear'), *blijkbaar* leaves no room for doubt; it thus has connotations of 'obviously', e.g. *Blijkbaar heeft de bediende de moord gepleegd* – Apparently/evidently/obviously the servant committed the murder. *Klaarblijkelijk* is a somewhat less common synonym of *blijkbaar*.

If there is doubt, the appropriate word is *kennelijk*, *Hij heet kennelijk Piet* – Apparently (= it seems) his name is Piet. As an adverb *schijnbaar* is

⁹ The distinction we make in English between 'younger' and 'youngest', according to whether you are referring to two or more, is unknown in Dutch; one uses *jongste* in both cases. This applies to all such attributive comparatives, e.g. *het goedkoopste van de twee/drie* – the cheaper (cheapest) of the two (three).

more or less synonymous with *kennelijk* but it is not as commonly used, although it is the most usual way of translating the adjective 'apparent', e.g. *de schijnbare beweging van de zon om de aarde* – the apparent movement of the sun around the earth.

the/to experience:

beleven, ervaren, meemaken, ondervinden; de belevenis, de ervaring, de ondervinding

The dominant words are *beleven* and *de belevenis*, e.g. *Wat heeft hij in zijn leven veel beleefd* – Hasn't he experienced a lot in his life!, *De jaren in Japan waren een hele belevenis* – The years in Japan were a real experience. A very common synonym of *beleven* is *meemaken*, which must be used when that which is experienced is an ordeal (although it can be positive too), e.g. *Jullie hebben de oorlog niet meegemaakt* – You didn't experience (= go through) the war.

The connotation associated with *ervaren* and *de ervaring* is that of gaining experience or expertise in a particular field, e.g. *We zoeken een ervaren typiste; ze moet ervaring hebben in het kruideniersbedrijf* – We're looking for an experienced typist; she must have experience in the grocery business. Note the expressions *iets uit (eigen) ervaring weten* (to know s.t. from [one's own] experience) and *ervaring opdoen* (to gain experience). But also *Hij heeft zijn oorlogservaringen later op papier gezet* – He later committed his wartime experiences to paper.

The verb *ervaren* (*ervaardelervoer, ervaren*) rarely translates 'to experience' as such and means more 'to know, (have) learnt from/by experience', e.g. *Ik heb tot mijn spijt ervaren dat...* – I have discovered/learnt to my sorrow that..., *Dat hebben we zelf ervaren* – We have experienced that ourselves = We know that from our own experience.

Ondervinding is synonymous with *ervaring*, as illustrated in the proverbial expression *Ondervinding is de beste leermeester* – Experience is the best teacher/ the mother of science. The two are more or less interchangeable. But the verb *ondervinden* (*ondervond, ondervonden*) is often synonymous with *meemaken*, although is not as commonly used as that verb, but in the following sense the two are not interchangeable: *Hij ondervond veel tegenstand* – He experienced a lot of opposition.

F

to fail: (cf. 'to pass' and 'to succeed')

niet lukken, mislukken, niet slagen; een onvoldoende krijgen, zakken (voor)

All the above options require *zijn* in the perfect tense. 'To fail an exam' is *voor een examen zakken*, e.g. *Ik ben voor wiskunde gezakt* – I failed mathematics. It is also common for the Dutch, who give marks out of ten for school and university subjects, to express this meaning of 'to fail' as *Ik heb een onvoldoende voor wiskunde (gekregen)* – *onvoldoende* = unsatisfactory. (cf. footnote under 'to pass')

Lukken and *slagen* both mean 'to succeed' and thus negating them render 'to fail'. They are more or less synonymous but require different syntax. *lukken* is an impersonal verb whereas *slagen*, although not impersonal, must be followed by *in* if the action attempted is mentioned, e.g. *Het is hem niet gelukt (om) zijn opstel op tijd in te leveren/Hij is er niet in geslaagd (om) zijn opstel op tijd in te leveren* – He failed (= didn't manage to) get his essay in on time. (cf. 'to pass' for further uses of *slagen*, the opposite of *zakken*)

Mislukken is more or less synonymous with *niet lukken* and is usually used impersonally, e.g. *Het is mislukt/niet gelukt* – It failed. If a person is concerned *Het is mij/hem/haar niet gelukt*, i.e. I/he/she failed (to get s.t. done, accomplish s.t.), is somewhat more common than *Het is mij/hem/haar mislukt*. If one wishes to express that someone is a failure at what he is doing, *mislukken* can be used personally, e.g. *Ik moet tot mijn grote spijt bekennen dat ik als kok mislukt ben* – To my great sorrow I have to admit that I'm a failure as a chef.

the family:

de familie, het gezin

The word *gezin* causes non-natives untold trouble. In short, the 'nuclear family' is *het gezin* and the 'extended family' is *de familie*; for example, Queen Beatrix and Prince Claus together with their children constitute *het Koninklijk Gezin* whereas the family as a whole is *de Koninklijke Familie*. This is simple enough but it is still possible to use *gezin* incorrectly even once one is aware of this distinction. An unmarried, childless person does not yet have a *gezin* – he or she is one member of his or her mother's or father's *gezin*. Therefore if that person says 'I went to Holland with my/the family', there are several possibilities: *Ik ben met mijn familie*

naar Nederland geweest or *Wij zijn met de familie naar Nederland geweest*; the father says *Ik ben met mijn gezin naar Nederland geweest*, but that person can say *Ik ben met het gezin naar Nederland geweest*. If one refers to, or sends a letter to, a particular (nuclear) family, the form of address required is *Familie De Smet* (the De Smet Family), despite the fact that together they constitute a *gezin*. (cf. 'relation')

fast, quick(ly):

gauw, (kei)hard, snel, spoedig, vlug

Only *gauw* functions exclusively as an adverb; all the other words are used both adjectivally and adverbally. The safest, all purpose word is *vlug*, e.g. *Wat praat je vlug* – You do talk fast, *Wat heb je dat vlug gedaan* – You did that quickly. In the first example *vlug* could be replaced by *snel*, although *vlug* is much more common, and in the second example either *snel* or *gauw* could be used – *gauw* always refers to time. *Spoedig*, like *gauw*, has connotations of 'soon' but *gauw* is much more common. (cf. 'soon') Note *spoedige beterschap (gewenst)* – I/we wish you a speedy recovery/May you get better soon.

Wat praat je hard with reference to voices or the volume of a radio, t.v. etc. always means 'loud(ly)'; thus the example given means 'You do speak loudly'. But with reference to cars, trains, runners etc. *hard* means 'fast', e.g. *Rij niet zo hard* – Don't drive so fast. It is best not to use any of the above synonyms in such cases. *Hard* also means 'hard' (i.e. not soft – it never means 'difficult'), whence the intensified form *keihard* (lit. rock hard). But *keihard* can also apply to the two other meanings of *hard*, i.e. 'loud' and 'fast', e.g. *Tieners houden van keiharde muziek* – Teenagers like really loud music, *De trein reed keihard door de tunnel* – The train went through the tunnel terribly fast.

the favour, favourite:

de dienst, de gunst, het genoegen, het voordeel; favoriet, lievelings-

The dominant word for 'favour' is *gunst*, e.g. *bij iemand in de gunst staan/zijn* – to be in favour with s.o., *uit de gunst zijn* – to be out of favour. Beware: *ten gunste van* occurs in numerous idiomatic expressions where it seldom, if ever, corresponds with 'in favour of', an idiom best expressed as follows: *Ben jij ervoor?* – Are you in favour of it?

'To do s.o. a favour' is *iemand een genoegen doen*, e.g. *Zou je mij alsjeblieft een genoegen willen doen?* – Would you please do me a favour? A more formal way of expressing 'to do s.o. a favour' is to say *iemand een gunst/dienst bewijzen*. 'To ask s.o. a favour' is *iemand een gunst vragen*.

Voordeel (lit.advantage) only renders 'favour' in contexts where the connotation is 'advantage', e.g. *Dat is in uw voordeel* – That's in your favour/to your advantage.

The adjective 'favourite' can be translated quite literally by *favoriet*, e.g. *Mijn favoriete filmster* – my favourite filmstar, *Dit is mijn favoriete* – This is my favourite, but is very commonly expressed by forming compound noun with *lievelings-*, e.g. *mijn lievelingsschrijfster* (my favourite [female] writer).

to feed:

eten, te eten geven, voedsel geven, voeden, voeren/voederen

If one has 'to feed' people, as in a mother feeding her children, *te eten geven* is the most usual way of expressing it, e.g. *De kinderen hebben een razende honger, dus moet ik ze wat te eten geven* – The kids are starving so I'll have to feed them.

Voedsel geven is limited to those usually more elevated contexts where *voedsel* replaces *eten* (cf. 'food'), e.g. *Amerikaanse ontwikkelingswerkers hebben de bevolking voedsel gegeven* – American aid workers fed the population (= gave them food).

As with the corresponding nouns (cf. 'food'), *voe(de)ren* is used mainly for animals,¹ particularly livestock, e.g. *'s Winters moeten de koeien in Europa gevoe(de)rd worden want er is geen gras* – In Europe cows have to be fed in winter because there isn't any grass. *Voeren*, but not *voederen*, can also be used of domestic pets and they are fed *voer*; but with cats and dogs it is also very common to say *eten geven/krijgen*, e.g. *Je geeft je poes nooit (te) eten* – You never feed your cat, *Poes, poes, kom eens hier, je krijgt nu wat (te) eten* – Come here pussy, you're going to be fed now, *Zullen we de eendjes in het park gaan voeren?* – Shall we go and feed the ducks in the park? (*voederen* not possible here). (cf. 'to eat')

'To feed' information into a computer or paper into a photocopier is *invoeren*, e.g. *Ik heb de gegevens in de computer ingevoerd* – I've fed the details into the computer.

Where 'to feed' is synonymous with 'to eat', *eten* is required, e.g. *De koeien gingen door met eten* – The cows went on feeding.

¹ If a baby or patient is '(spoon)fed', *voeren* is the required verb in Dutch but one doesn't otherwise use *voeren* for people.

Voeden renders 'to feed' in the sense of 'to suckle, nourish, nurture', e.g. *Zij heeft al haar kinderen zelf gevoed* – She breastfed all her children.

to feel:

aanvoelen, (zich) voelen, denken/menen/vinden, trek/zin hebben in

The dominant word is *voelen*. The difficulty here is that in certain contexts *voelen* is reflexive, e.g. *Hij voelt zich ziek* – He feels sick; compare *Voel mijn handen. Voel je hoe koud ze zijn?* – Feel my hands, Feel how cold they are/can you feel how cold they are?² In the latter example *voelen* has a direct object and thus the reflexive pronoun is not required, but in the first example an object must be supplied and as the object and the subject are one and the same person, the reflexive is required. Note, however, *Ze voelen koud aan* – They (i.e. my hands) feel cold.

Voelen can also be followed by a verb, in which case no *te* is required and thus a double infinitive construction occurs in the perfect tense, e.g. *Ik voelde mijn hart kloppen/Ik heb mijn hart voelen kloppen* – I could feel my heart beating, *Ik voelde het aankomen* – I could feel it coming.

Whereas *voelen* and *aanvoelen* are not interchangeable in the examples in the first paragraph, they are in the sense of 'to sense, understand', e.g. *Ik kon (aan)voelen dat ze eigenlijk vrij kwaad op me was* – I could feel/sense that she was actually quite angry with me. But only *aanvoelen* is possible when one says, for example, This feels so soft/just like silk – *Dit voelt zo zacht/net als zijde aan*.

'To feel' in the sense of 'to think' can be rendered by *denken, menen* or *vinden* but never by *voelen*, e.g. *Wat denk/meen/vind jij?* – What do you feel/think? (= What's your opinion?) *Vinden* is the most common of the three. (cf. 'to think') But note *Ik voel daar wel/niet voor* – I fancy/don't fancy the idea.

'To feel like' can also cause problems. The following example illustrates one meaning of the expression, which is rendered by *zich voelen*, e.g. *Ik voel me net als een koning* – I feel (just) like a king. If one 'feels like doing s.t.' the expression is *zin hebben in iets*, e.g. *De logés hadden (er) geen zin (in) om te blijven ontbijten* – The (house) guests didn't feel like staying for breakfast. 'To feel like food' can be rendered in the same way or with the synonymous alternative *trek hebben in*, e.g. *Heb je trek/zin in een pannenkoek?* – Do you feel like a pancake?

² Note that with 'to feel', a verb of perception, one does not translate the 'can'.

the fence:

de afrastering, het hek, de (om)heining, de schutting

A (usually low) suburban fence made of iron, palings or pickets is a *hek*. The 'gate' in such a fence is also called a *hek(je)*, so the word can be ambiguous. (cf. 'gate') 'Hurdles', as in running, are *hekken* too, which gives an idea of the general size and shape of what the Dutch imagine by the word *hek*.

Schutting is used with reference to a higher paling or picket fence made of wood. Depending on the height and density of a fence standing between two houses for example, it could be called either a *hek* or a *schutting*; it is not normally possible to see through a *schutting*.

When a farmer 'fences' in a field *hij omheint een akker* (but an area can also be *omheind* with a hedge). Thus the word *omheining* refers to the (usually) wire fences found on farms (but not to hedges – *de heg*). The gate found in such a fence, or in a *schutting* for that matter, is called a *hek* (*het valhek* – portcullis). The word *heining*, although given in dictionaries, is never used.

Afrastering refers to a 'wire fence' or 'barrier', not so much on a farm as on a building site, for example. The implication here is that the fence is made of the sort of wire found around tennis courts, for example, as opposed to the wire fences found on farms.³

few:

een paar, weinig

'A few' in the sense of 'some' is *een paar* (cf. 'some'), e.g. *Ik heb een paar vrienden in Frankrijk zitten* – I have a few friends living in France. The following examples illustrate the difference in meaning between *een paar* and *weinig*: *De leraar Frans heeft maar een paar leerlingen in zijn klas* – The French teacher only has a few students in his class, *Hij heeft erg weinig leerlingen in zijn klas* – He has very few pupils in his class. *Weinig* also means 'little' when used with non-countable nouns or independently, e.g. *Ik heb weinig geld* – I have little money, *Ik heb erg weinig* – I have very little. Compare *Ik heb een beetje geld* – I have a little money. (cf. 'little')

³ In fact I had great difficulty getting any two Dutch people to agree on what constitutes the distinction between an *omheining* and an *afrastering*. The distinction made here is the nearest I could get to a consensus of opinion: the former seems to imply 'surrounded by' whereas the latter implies 'proceed no further'.

the field, paddock:

de akker, het gebied, het veld, de wei(de), het weiland, het vak(gebied)

A 'field' which is cultivated for the growing of crops is an *akker*, thus *akkerland* (arable land), but *land* too can have this meaning, e.g. *De tomaten zijn rijp, maar ze staan nog op het land* – The tomatoes are ripe but they're still in the fields.

Veld is a general term denoting a 'field' used for anything (e.g. sport) as well as being the only word possible when speaking of sending troops into the field (*het slagveld* – battle field). Also *het veldwerk* – field work (of a scientist).

Animals graze in *weiland*, which literally means 'pasture land'. 'Meadows' or 'paddocks' can be referred to collectively as *weiland* (pasture/grazing land), but one can also talk of *weilanden* (pastures). It is common to refer to one's animals being *in de wei* (at pasture, out in the paddock) or *op het land*, e.g. *Die boer laat zijn dieren de hele winter in de wei/op het land* – That farmer leaves his animals out(side)/in the paddock all winter. *De koeien de wei in sturen* renders 'to put the cows out to pasture, to send them into the fields'. A more formal synonym of *wei* and *weiland(en)* is *weide(n)*. (Compare *hei/heide* – heather/heath, where *heide* is more formal too.)

The figurative meaning of 'field' is rendered by *gebied*, e.g. *Hij weet niet veel op dat gebied* – He doesn't know much in that field. A 'field of science' is *het vak(gebied)*, e.g. *Dat is niet mijn vak(gebied)* – That's not my field of expertise.

the/to fight, struggle:

kampen, ruziën, ruzie hebben/maken, (be)strijden, (be)vechten; de kamp, de ruzie, de strijd, het gevecht, de vechtpartij

The dominant word for 'to fight' is *vechten* (*vocht, gevochten*) and when a physical fight breaks out between two or more people, it is a *vechtpartij*, e.g. *Mijn vader heeft in de Tweede Wereldoorlog gevochten* – My father fought in World War Two, *Piet is gisteravond in de kroeg bij een vechtpartij betrokken geraakt* – Piet got into a fight in the pub last night. 'Fighting, combat' in general is *het gevecht*, e.g. *Het was een gevecht op leven en dood* – It was a fight to the death. 'To fight for' a cause figuratively speaking is also *vechten voor*. (cf. *strijd* versus *gevecht* and *bevechten* below)

Kampen, which is not a common word, is normally only used figuratively, especially in the expression *te kampen hebben met* (to have to contend

with), e.g. *Mensen in het onderwijs hebben tegenwoordig steeds meer bezuinigingen te kampen* – People in education these days continually have to contend with cuts in expenditure being made. Hitler's autobiography is called *Mijn Kamp* in Dutch. The noun *kamp* is otherwise rarely used; should not be confused with the very common word *het kamp* (camp).

There is often no clear distinction between *het gevecht* and *de strijd* and *vechten* and *strijden* (*streed, gestreden*), but *strijd/strijden* do not have any connotations of physical fighting. 'To fight/battle/struggle' against a foe or social issue, for example, is, *Men heeft erg lang tegen/voor die wetgeving gestreden/gevochten* – People fought against/for that legislation for a long time, e.g. *De strijd is gewonnen* – The battle has been won (i.e. to permit abortion).

Bevechten and *bestrijden* are good examples of one of the prime functions of the prefix *be-* in Dutch: they are transitive verbs. They obviate the need to use a preposition, which is usually required with *vechten* and *strijden*. *Bevechten* is relatively rare and means 'to fight for (a cause), obtain by fighting', e.g. *Hij heeft deze overwinning zwaar moeten bevechten* (= *vechten voor*) – He had to fight hard for this victory. *Bestrijden* is very common and is an indispensable word. If one is combatting (= fighting against) a disease or drug addiction, *bestrijden* is the appropriate word, e.g. *Er zijn nu allerlei manieren om kanker te bestrijden* – There are now all sorts of ways of fighting/combating/preventing cancer, *De kankerbestrijding* – the prevention/fight against cancer. *Bestrijden* is more or less synonymous with *strijden tegen*, the distinction is similar to that in English between 'combatting' and 'fighting against' a disease.

'To fight' in the sense of 'to quarrel, argue' is *ruziën* or more commonly *ruzie hebben/maken* and the corresponding countable noun is *de ruzie*, whereas 'quarrelling' is *het geruzie*, e.g. *Die twee hebben altijd ruzie/zijn altijd aan het ruziën* – Those two are always fighting, *Waar gaat de ruzie nu over?* – What's the fight/quarrel about now?, *Ik kan niet meer tegen al dat geruzie* – I can't stand all that quarrelling/fighting any more.

to find (out):

zich bevinden, informeren, ontdekken, vinden

The dominant word is of course *vinden* (*vond, gevonden*). This word can also render 'to think, feel'. (cf. 'to feel' and 'to think') Whenever there are connotations of 'to discover', it is best to translate 'find' by *ontdekken*, e.g. *Ik heb vanmiddag iets vreemds in de tuin ontdekt* – I found something strange in the garden this afternoon. *Ontdekken* also translates 'to find out' although *uitvinden* has that meaning too as well as meaning 'to invent'. 'To find out (about)' is also very frequently translated by *informeren* (*naar*),

e.g. *Ik ga informeren hoeveel een vlucht naar Kreta kost/naar vluchten richting Kreta* – I'm going to find out how much a flight to Crete costs/about flights to Crete.

Zich bevinden very commonly translates 'to be' when there are connotations of 'to find o.s.', e.g. *In dat stadium bevond hij zich in een erg moeilijke positie* – At that stage he was in a very difficult position, *Dames en heren, u bevindt zich nu in de slaapkamer van Lodewijk de Zestiende* – Ladies and gentlemen, you are now in Louis XVI's bedroom (during a guided tour of Versailles).

to finish, finished: (cf. 'to end' and 'to stop')

afbouwen, afkrijgen, afmaken, afwerken, besluiten, leegdrinken, oprinken, opeten, opmaken, uit + verb, voltooien, klaar zijn met

The dominant word for 'finished' is *klaar (zijn)*, e.g. *Ben je klaar?* – Have/are you finished? *Ja, ik ben nu klaar met mijn huiswerk* – Yes, I have now finished my homework. *Ik ben klaar met die cursus* – I have finished that course. *Klaar zijn met + infinitive* is a common means of translating 'to finish doing s.t.', e.g. *Zijn jullie al klaar met eten?* – Have you finished eating? *Klaar* also means 'ready'. *Klaar krijgen* (to get finished), a synonym of which is *afkrijgen*, is also commonly heard, e.g. *Ik ga die muur vanochtend verven en ik moet het vóór tien uur klaarkrijgen/afkrijgen* – I'm going to paint that wall this morning and I must finish it (= get it done) by ten o'clock.

In addition to *klaar zijn met + infinitive*, if one has finished 'doing' something, depending on what that action is, there is a variety of other ways of expressing the idea. One very common method is to use *uit* as a separable prefix added to the verb concerned: *uitkijken, uitlezen, uitpraten, uitschrijven, uitslapen*, e.g. *Heb je dat boek nog niet uit(gelezen)?* – Haven't you finished reading that book yet?, *Nu ben ik uitgepraat* – Now I've finished saying what I had to say, *De kinderen zijn drie uur op de kermis geweest en waren nog steeds niet uitgekeken* – The kids were at the fair for three hours and still hadn't finished looking round, *Bent u uitgegeten?* – Have you finished eating? (waitress to customer). (cf. 'to eat') *Uitslapen* not only renders 'to finish sleeping' but by extension also 'to sleep in'. (cf. 'to sleep in')

'To finish building' has a specific form in Dutch, namely *afbouwen*, e.g. *De bouw van de Utrechtse dom is in de vijftiende eeuw begonnen maar hij is pas drie eeuwen later afgebouwd* – Utrecht cathedral was begun in the fifteenth century but wasn't finished till three centuries later.

A good general verb meaning 'to finish' with a wide application is *afmaken*. This is best used whenever any of the above, which refer to specific actions being completed, are not applicable, although *klaar zijn* is also a very common way of expressing this concept. *Afmaken* is a transitive verb and is always accompanied by a direct object, e.g. *Ik wil het opstel nu afmaken* – I want to finish this essay now. *Af*, like *klaar*, is also used independently of *maken*, e.g. *Het opstel is nu af* – The essay is now finished (compare *op* below), *Ik ben klaar met het opstel* – I have finished the essay. Compare *Ik heb het opstel af* – I've finished the essay, and *ik heb het vannacht afgemaakt* – I finished last night.

Opmaken commonly refers to food, but *op* alone is often sufficient, e.g. *Hebt je aardappels nog niet op(gemaakt/-gegeten)* – You haven't finished eating your potatoes yet. However, *opmaken* can be used with reference to things other than food, e.g. *De verf is op. Wil je het restje uit het ander blik opmaken?* – The paint is finished/all gone. Do you want to finish off/use up the bit that's left in the other tin? And when used with reference to money, it translates 'to spend'. (cf. 'to spend') Just as *opeten* renders 'finish (eating)' food (cf. *uiteten* above), as in the above example, so too *opdrinken* is a means of translating 'to finish (drinking)', e.g. *Drink je pilsje op* – Finish your beer. Note also *Ik heb mijn glas nog niet leeg(ge)dronken* – I haven't finished my drink yet (= emptied my glass).

Although the dominant meaning of *besluiten* is 'to decide' (cf. 'to decide') it can render 'to finish, conclude' in one rather elevated instance, namely when rounding off a speech, document or broadcast in the following way, e.g. *Ik zou graag met de volgende opmerking willen besluiten* – I would like to finish/conclude with the following remark. Compare *tot besluit* (in conclusion, to conclude with, finally).

Aflopen and *(be) eindigen*, which can also translate 'to finish', are dealt with under 'to end'.

Voltooien literally means 'to complete' and is dealt with under 'complete(ly)'.

the fire:

de brand, het vuur

'Fire' as an element or what one makes in one's hearth or backyard is *vuur*, whereas an unintentional fire is a *brand*. On discovering one's house is on fire, one thus rushes outside shouting *Brand, brand!* whereas an army officer giving an order to fire says *Vuur!*

first, firstly, at first:

allereerst, eerst, (voor) het eerst, ten eerste, eerstens, in eerste instantie, in de eerste plaats

The attributive adjective 'first' is quite simply *eerst*, e.g. *de eerste keer* – the first time, *Dit is het eerste boek dat ik ooit gelezen heb* – This is the first book I ever read. The superlative form *allereerst* renders English 'the very first, first of all', e.g. *Dit is het allereerste boek dat ik gelezen heb* – This is the very first book I read.

In the statement 'I was here first' the superlative of the adverb is required, i.e. *het eerst*, e.g. *Ik was hier het eerst*, also *Wat heb je het eerst gedaan?* – What did you do first? Compare the use of the same form in *Ik heb er in 1986 voor het eerst van gehoord* – I first heard of it in 1986 (= for the first time; note the compulsory *voor*). The emphatic form *het allereerst* also exists, e.g. *Ik was er het allereerst* – I was the very first one there/I was first of all. The distinction between the adverbs *het eerst* and *eerst* is not easy:

Wat heb je het eerst gedaan = What was the first thing you did?

Ik ben eerst naar huis gegaan = I first went home (before going somewhere else).

Ik ben het eerst naar Piet z'n huis gegaan = Piet's house was the first one I went to.

When listing a number of points, where in English we say 'firstly..., secondly..., thirdly... and lastly', the Dutch say *ten eerste..., ten tweede..., ten derde... en ten laatste*. (cf. 'last') *Eerstens* is synonymous with *ten eerste* but the series goes no further, i.e. **tweedens, *derdens* etc. don't exist.

The expressions *in/op de eerste plaats* and *in eerste instantie* render the synonymous expressions 'in the first place' and 'in the first instance' but note that the latter expression omits the definite article.

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to flatter:

flattëren, vleien

The dominant verb is *vleien*, e.g. *Je moet mensen niet zo vleien. Je maakt ze verlegen* – You shouldn't flatter people so. It embarrasses them.

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A good general verb meaning 'to finish' with a wide application is *afmaken*. This is best used whenever any of the above, which refer to specific actions being completed, are not applicable, although *klaar zijn met* is also a very common way of expressing this concept. *Afmaken* is a transitive verb and is always accompanied by a direct object, e.g. *Ik wil dit opstel nu afmaken* – I want to finish this essay now. *Af*, like *klaar*, is also used independently of *maken*, e.g. *Het opstel is nu af* – The essay is now finished (compare *op* below), *Ik ben klaar met het opstel* – I have finished the essay. Compare *Ik heb het opstel af* – I've finished the essay, and *ik heb het vannacht afgemaakt* – I finished last night.

Opmaken commonly refers to food, but *op* alone is often sufficient, e.g. *Je hebt je aardappels nog niet op(gemaakt/-gegeten)* – You haven't finished eaten your potatoes yet. However, *opmaken* can be used with reference to things other than food, e.g. *De verf is op. Wil je het restje uit het andere blik opmaken?* – The paint is finished/all gone. Do you want to finish off/use up the bit that's left in the other tin? And when used with reference to money, it translates 'to spend'. (cf. 'to spend') Just as *opeten* renders 'to finish (eating)' food (cf. *uiteten* above), as in the above example, so too *opdrinken* is a means of translating 'to finish (drinking)', e.g. *Drink je pilsje op* – Finish your beer. Note also *Ik heb mijn glas nog niet leeg(ge)dronken* – I haven't finished my drink yet (= emptied my glass).

Although the dominant meaning of *besluiten* is 'to decide' (cf. 'to decide'), it can render 'to finish, conclude' in one rather elevated instance, namely when rounding off a speech, document or broadcast in the following way, e.g. *Ik zou graag met de volgende opmerking willen besluiten* – I would like to finish/conclude with the following remark. Compare *tot besluit* (in conclusion, to conclude with, finally).

Aflopen and *(be)eindigen*, which can also translate 'to finish', are dealt with under 'to end'.

Voltooien literally means 'to complete' and is dealt with under 'complete(ly)'.

the fire:

de brand, het vuur

'Fire' as an element or what one makes in one's hearth or backyard is *vuur*, whereas an unintentional fire is a *brand*. On discovering one's house is on fire, one thus rushes outside shouting *Brand, brand!* whereas an army officer giving an order to fire says *Vuur!*

first, firstly, at first:

allereerst, eerst, (voor) het eerst, ten eerste, eerstens, in eerste instantie, in de eerste plaats

The attributive adjective 'first' is quite simply *eerst*, e.g. *de eerste keer* – the first time, *Dit is het eerste boek dat ik ooit gelezen heb* – This is the first book I ever read. The superlative form *allereerst* renders English 'the very first, first of all', e.g. *Dit is het allereerste boek dat ik gelezen heb* – This is the very first book I read.

In the statement 'I was here first' the superlative of the adverb is required, i.e. *het eerst*, e.g. *Ik was hier het eerst*, also *Wat heb je het eerst gedaan?* – What did you do first? Compare the use of the same form in *Ik heb er in 1986 voor het eerst van gehoord* – I first heard of it in 1986 (= for the first time; note the compulsory *voor*). The emphatic form *het allereerst* also exists, e.g. *Ik was er het allereerst* – I was the very first one there/I was first of all. The distinction between the adverbs *het eerst* and *eerst* is not easy:

Wat heb je het eerst gedaan = What was the first thing you did?

Ik ben eerst naar huis gegaan = I first went home (before going somewhere else).

Ik ben het eerst naar Piet z'n huis gegaan = Piet's house was the first one I went to.

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you, *Deze foto (van mij) flatteert* – This photo of me is flattering/flatters me. Nevertheless it is possible to say *Ik voel me wel geflatteerd/gevleid* – I do feel flattered (= honoured).

to flee:

vluchten, ontvluchten

It is the presence or absence of an inseparable prefix that constitutes the difficulty here. 'To flee from' is *vluchten voor* which takes *zijn*, e.g. *De Russische boeren zijn voor de oprukkende Duitsers gevlucht* – The Russian peasants fled from the advancing Germans. 'Refugees' are *vluchtelingen*, i.e. *Mensen die uit hun land gevlucht zijn/hun land ontvlucht zijn* – People who have fled (from) their country; note that *ontvluchten* is used transitively and requires no preposition – compare what follows.

But *ontvluchten* has connotations of escaping and as such comes very close in meaning to *ontsnappen* (to escape). Thus, like that verb, if one 'flee/escapes from s.o.' the preposition required is *aan*, e.g. *De gevangenen zijn aan de politie ontvlucht/ontsnapt* – The prisoners escaped from the police. If you 'escape from' prison, *Je ontvlucht de gevangenis/ontsnapt uit de gevangenis*.

the floor:

de bodem, de etage, de grond, de verdieping, de vloer

The dominant word is *vloer*. If one has a tradesman in to build or work on a 'floor', it is *de vloer* he is concerned with. However, if one likes sitting on the floor or if something falls on the floor, it is more usual to say *grond* than *vloer*, although the latter is never wrong, e.g. *Laat het kind op de grond/vloer spelen* – Let the baby play on the floor, *Je zou de vloer wel eens kunnen vegen* (not *grond*) – You could sweep the floor now and again. *Vloer* can be used in the plural whereas *grond* in this sense cannot.

Bodem, which usually means 'soil, ground', both of which meanings *grond* also has (e.g. *vruchtbare bodem/grond* – fertile soil, *bodemschatten* = minerals, natural resources⁴), only translates 'floor' with reference to the 'floor' of the sea (never *vloer*), where in English we also talk of the 'bottom' of the ocean, e.g. *De Titanic ligt op de bodem van de Noord-atlantische Oceaan* – The Titanic is lying on the floor/bottom of the North Atlantic.

⁴ *Bodemschatten* can also refer to archeological finds/treasures because of the literal meaning of its constituent parts. *Grondstoffen* by contrast means '(raw) materials'.

Verdieping and *etage* (no accent) are synonymous when referring to the first, second, third 'floor' etc. of a building, e.g. *Huishoudelijke artikelen vindt u op de tweede verdieping/etage* – You'll find household appliances on the second floor.⁵ *Etage* is used rather than *verdieping* in department stores, but the reverse is the case for houses and blocks of flats, e.g. *een huis met twee verdiepingen* – a two-storied house (never *etages*). But if one lives in an apartment block, as is so commonly the case in Holland, and one's flat takes up a whole floor, one refers to one's *etage*, never to one's *verdieping*, e.g. *Mijn tante heeft een hele etage in die torenflat* – My aunt has a whole floor in that high rise apartment building. Such a flat/apartment is also called an *etagewoning*.

the flour:

de bloem, het meel, de maizena, het zelfrijzend bakmeel

It is amazing that such a seemingly simple concept as 'flour' should prove to be difficult to translate, but the Dutch make distinctions here which we do not. The hardest distinction for us to appreciate is that between *bloem* and *meel*: refined, white flour as used for making cakes and biscuits is *bloem*, whereas coarser flour such as used in breadmaking, for example, is *meel*. *Meel* is the general word used when no distinction needs to be made; when one grinds peas, maize, rice etc. what one gets is *meel*. Although one in fact makes crêpes from *bloem*, it is not incorrect to say *Hoeveel meel heb ik nodig voor die flensjes?* – How much flour do I need for those crêpes? 'Wholemeal flour' is *volkorenmeel*. If what one requires for a given recipe is 'self-raising flour' – which is in fact a sort of *bloem* – the substance is nevertheless called *zelfrijzend bakmeel* (note that the adjective never takes an -e). 'Corn flour', sometimes called 'corn starch' (i.e. the binder) is called *maizena*, whereas flour made from ground maize is *maïsmeel*. Also *het aardappelmeel* – potato starch.

following:

eerstkomend(e), eerstvolgend(e), komend(e), onderstaand(e), volgend(e)

The dominant word is *volgend(e)*, which also commonly renders 'next' (cf. 'next'), e.g. *in het volgende hoofdstuk* – in the following/next chapter. With reference to something written one would render 'in the following

⁵ The Dutch follow the British system, not the American, where the first floor is not the ground floor. The ground floor is *de begane grond* (BG in a Dutch lift). Some dictionaries and grammars give the word *gelijkvloers* as a noun meaning 'ground floor'. If it is used at all in Holland today, it occurs as an adjective/adverb referring to everything being on ground level without storeys, as in a bungalow style house for example, e.g. *Alle kamers zijn gelijkvloers* – All the rooms are on the ground floor.

paragraph' by *in de volgende/onderstaande alinea* but 'in a following paragraph' would be *in een volgende alinea*.

With reference to future time, 'following' can be translated by *eerstkomend(e)*, *eerstvolgend(e)* or, less frequently, *(nu) komende*, e.g. *De eerstkomende/eerstvolgende/nu komende drie jaar gaat de regering een ton aan het project besteden* – In the following (= next, coming) three years the government is going to spend 100.000 guilders on the project.

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the food: (cf. 'to feed')

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(present, uncompleted action). It is possible to use *voor* with verbs in the past but then the connotation is not that one **did** spend a period of time somewhere, but that one went there with the **intention** of spending a certain period of time there, e.g. *Ik ben voor een week naar Rhodos gegaan* – I went off to Rhodes for a week.

Verbs of asking, begging, requesting + 'for' take *om* in Dutch, e.g. *Hij smeekte/soebatte/verzocht/vroeg om hulp* – He implored/beseeched/requested/asked for help, *Hij bedelt altijd om geld* – He's always begging for money.

to forget:

vergeten, verleren

The dominant word is *vergeten* and there is a grammatical difficulty associated with this word which is totally ignored in practice. Theoretically there can be a distinction between *vergeten* conjugated with *hebben* and *vergeten* conjugated with *zijn* in the perfect, but the Dutch usually use *zijn* in all cases; it is thus not worth burdening the learner with the distinction here (cf. ANS p.522), e.g. *Ze is de naam van de winkel vergeten* – She's forgotten the name of the shop, *Ze is vergeten (om) de boodschappen te doen* – She forgot to do the shopping.

It is common practice in English to say 'I forget where he lives', using 'forget' in the present; in Dutch this must be expressed either as *Ik ben vergeten waar hij woont* or *Ik weet niet meer waar hij woont*.

Verleren, which takes either *hebben* or *zijn* but usually the latter, as is the case with *vergeten*, means 'to forget s.t. one has learnt', e.g. *Ik woon al zo lang in dit land dat ik mijn moedertaal verleerd ben/heb* – I've been living in this country so long that I've forgotten my mother tongue.

Cf. *Denk erom* (Don't forget) under 'to remember'.

to freeze:

bevriezen, dichtvriezen, doodvriezen, invriezen, vriezen

Part of the difficulty here arises out of the distinction between the transitive and the intransitive verb, a distinction which English does not make in this case, as in so many other instances. If one wishes 'to freeze' food (i.e. the transitive verb), the verb required is *invriezen* (*vroor in, heeft ingevroren*), e.g. *Ze heeft heel veel vlees in de aanbieding gekocht en gaat het allemaal invriezen* – She bought a lot of meat on special and is going to freeze it all. The freezer compartment in a refrigerator is *het*

vriesvak, whereas a separate (deep)freezer is *de vrieskast/vrieskist/diepvries*; whether it's a *kast* or a *kist* depends on whether it is vertical or horizontal. *Diepvriesprodukten* (= *iets uit de diepvries*) renders 'frozen produce'.

Bevriezen is only used transitively (and thus takes *hebben*) when it is used figuratively, as in wages being 'frozen' for example: *Alle lonen worden door de regering bevroren* – All wages are being frozen by the government. Otherwise *bevriezen* is an intransitive verb and takes *zijn*, e.g. *Het water is in de leidingen bevroren* – The water froze in the pipes. If a particular part of the body is freezing (= feeling very cold or even literally freezing), *bevriezen* is required, e.g. *Mijn vingers bevroren* – My fingers are freezing. One can also say of oneself *Ik bevroes* – I'm freezing, without this being taken too literally.

Bevriezen is thus the appropriate word in the case of Arctic explorers who literally 'froze' to death, but *doodvriezen* is possible here too, e.g. *Zij zijn bevroren/doodgevroren* – They froze to death.

If sea routes 'freeze up' or lakes 'freeze over', they *bevriezen* but *dichtvriezen* is frequently used in such cases too, e.g. *Het meertje was helemaal bevroren/dichtgevroren* – The little lake had completely frozen over, *De grachten van Amsterdam zijn van de winter dichtgevroren en waren berijdbaar* – The canals of Amsterdam froze over this winter and you could skate on them.

The distinction between the above intransitive use of *bevriezen/dichtvriezen* and *vriezen*, **always** an intransitive verb that takes *hebben*, is not always evident to speakers of English. If the temperature drops below zero, one says *Het vriest* – It's freezing (= *De temperatuur is onder het vriespunt/onder nul* – The temperature is below zero).⁶ *Vriezen* is an impersonal verb whose subject is thus always *het*.

fresh:

fris, vers

Vers is the opposite of 'stale', e.g. *vers/oud brood* – fresh/stale bread. *Fris* means 'fresh' in the sense of 'chilly' or as in 'fresh smelling', e.g. *Ik vind het een beetje fris in deze kamer* – I find it a bit cold in this room, *De wc ruikt nu lekker fris* – The toilet now smells beautifully fresh; compare *Die koek ruikt heerlijk vers* – That cake smells deliciously fresh. *Frisdrank* or

⁶ Apart from expressing zero temperatures as *min vijf (graden)* etc., in Dutch weather reports one commonly hears it expressed as follows: *We hebben vannacht vijf graden vorst gehad* or *Het heeft vannacht vijf graden gevroren*.

even simply *fris*, is the way the Dutch express 'cooldrink' (cf. 'cool-drink'), e.g. *Jan: Wat wil je drinken? Piet: Heb je iets fris?* – Jan: What would you like to drink? Piet: Have you got any cooldrink (= anything soft)? *Verfrissend* means 'refreshing' and *verfrissingen* means 'refreshments', whereas the verb *verversen* renders 'to renew, replenish', e.g. *Je moet de hond z'n water verversen* – You should change your dog's water. (cf. 'to change')

the friend:

de kennis, de vriend(in)

The dominant word is *vriend(in)* where it is necessary to show the gender of the friend concerned by adding *-in* if it is a female. This ending takes the stress. But in addition to meaning 'friend', *vriend* and *vriendin* also render 'boyfriend' and 'girlfriend', e.g. *Gré heeft een nieuwe vriend* – Gré has got a new boyfriend, *Dit is een vriendin van mij* – This is a friend/girlfriend of mine. The possible distinction between a '(female) friend' and a 'girlfriend', as illustrated in the previous example, is not always clear in Dutch. There is also an expression *verkering hebben* (to be going steady), which can be translated as 'to have a boy/girlfriend', e.g. *Heeft je dochter al verkering (= een vriend)?* – Has your daughter got a boyfriend yet? (cf. 'to go out')

Although one normally learns that a *vriend* is a 'friend' and a *kennis* is an 'acquaintance', in practice the distinction is not that simple; *kennis* is very frequently used in Dutch where we say 'friend', the word 'acquaintance' being relatively rare in spoken English. The Dutch regard people as having in fact very few *vrienden* (= truly close friends) but a host of *kennissen* (= people you know). If, for example, one were to remark in a conversation about Japan that one has a 'friend' living there, where the emphasis is not so much on the intimacy of the relationship, but simply that one knows someone living there, it would be far more usual to use *kennis* than *vriend*, e.g. *Een kennis van mij woont in Tokio* – A friend of mine lives in Tokyo.

from:

afkomstig uit, per, uit, van, vanaf, vandaan, vanuit

The difficulties associated with rendering this word in Dutch verge on the grammatical rather than being simply a matter of vocabulary. The dominant word is of course *van*, but if one comes/is 'from' a particular town or country, then *uit* is used, e.g. *De Rooseveltts kwamen oorspronkelijk uit Nederland* – The Rooseveltts came from the Netherlands originally. But the question 'Where do you come from?' is *Waar komt u*

vandaan? Answer: *Ik kom uit Nederland/Amsterdam* – I'm from Holland/Amsterdam. If asking where someone has just come from, i.e. where someone has just been as opposed to where they were born or where they live, the question and answer are still the same as above.

A more elevated way of saying that s.o. is 'from' a particular town or country is *afkomstig uit* (= *komen uit*), e.g. *Ik ben uit Nederland afkomstig/afkomstig uit Nederland* – I come from Holland, *De Rooseveltts zijn oorspronkelijk afkomstig uit Nederland* – The Rooseveltts originally came from Holland. Note too *Zij is van Nederlandse afkomst/komaf* – She is Dutch by origin/of Dutch extraction.

Note the use of *vandaan* with *er, daar* and *hier*, e.g. *Hoe ver is Amsterdam hiervandaan?* – How far is Amsterdam from here?, *Ik kom er nu net vandaan/Daar kom ik nu net vandaan* – I've just come from there.

Vanaf renders 'from a particular time or place on', e.g. *De paus zal vanaf de dertiende hier zijn* – The Pope will be here from the thirteenth (on), *Lees het volgende hoofdstuk vanaf bladzijde tien* – Read the next chapter from page ten (on). The form *van...af aan* will also be encountered with reference to time, e.g. *Hij vond het moeilijk van het begin af aan/vanaf het begin* – He found it difficult right from the start. (cf. 'in (the) future')

In higher style, as in business letters for example, *per* is used meaning 'from' a particular date in the future, e.g. *Deze wet gaat per één januari in* – This law will be in force from the first of January, *U wordt per één maart aangesteld* – You will be employed from the first of March.

Vanuit renders 'from a particular point', e.g. *Je kunt Calais makkelijk bereiken vanuit Brussel* – You can easily reach Calais from Brussels, *Je kunt vanuit dit raam de Utrechtse Domtoren zien* – You can see the tower of Utrecht cathedral from this window, *De excursie vertrekt vanuit Rotterdam* – The excursion will be leaving from Rotterdam (= will be launched from there). Compare the previous example with *De Lek loopt van(af) Wijk bij Duurstede naar Rotterdam* – The Lek stretches from Wijk bij Duurstede to Rotterdam.

the fruit:

het fruit, de vrucht

Fruit is a collective, e.g. *Ik heb vanmiddag fruit bij de groenteboer gekocht* – I bought fruit at the greengrocer's this afternoon. It is also commonly used in compounds such as the following: *fruitmesje* (fruit knife), *fruitschaal* (fruit bowl); in some compounds *fruit-* and *vrucht(en)-*

can alternate, e.g. *fruit-* and *vruchtboom* (fruit tree),⁷ *fruit-* and *vruchtensalade* (fruit salad). *Tropisch fruit* is the same as *tropische vruchten*, the latter not being a collective noun and thus frequently used in the plural, e.g. *Neem een vrucht (= een stuk fruit)* – Take a piece of fruit. *Er zitten veel vruchten/er zit veel fruit aan die boom* – There's a lot of fruit on that tree, but if one plucks a peach from the tree and bites into it, one exclaims *Wat een heerlijk stuk fruit/Wat een heerlijke vrucht* – What a delicious piece of fruit, where the latter expression also renders 'What a delicious fruit', said of a fruit one has never tasted before.

funny, the fun:

gek, grappig, komisch, raar; de gein, de lol, het plezier, de pret

The most common word for 'funny' is *grappig*, given that a joke is *de grap*. The exclamation 'how funny', if it means 'funny ha ha', can only be translated by *wat grappig*; if it means 'how peculiar/strange', one can choose between *wat gek* and *wat raar*. (cf. 'strange') *Komisch*, although more or less synonymous with *grappig*, is not a common word in Dutch.

The words for 'fun' bear no relation to any of the above adjectives. The most common word is *de pret* or *het plezier* but the Yiddish loanword *de gein* is quite frequently used too, e.g. *We hebben die middag veel pret/plezier/gein gehad* – We had a lot of fun that afternoon. *Iets voor de lol/je plezier doen* (to do s.t. for fun) is a very common expression; in fact *lol* could have been used instead of *pret*, *plezier* or *gein* in the example above too. *Een geintje* is the same as *een mop[je]* (a joke) but the expression *Dat was geen pretje/lolletje* (always in the negative) means 'That was not much fun/no joke.'

in (the) future:

in de toekomst, van nu af aan, voortaan, in het vervolg,

The expression *in de toekomst* translates both 'in the future' and 'in future', e.g. *In de toekomst zal de mens waarschijnlijk voedsel produceren in de ruimte* – In the future man will probably produce food in space. *Je moet in de toekomst dat soort fouten niet meer maken* – In future you mustn't make that sort of mistake any more. But 'in future' as used in the previous example can also be expressed by *voortaan* (= henceforward), *in het vervolg* or even *van nu af aan* (= from now on).

⁷ An idiosyncrasy of *fruitboom* and *vruchtboom* is that the former only occurs in the plural, whereas the latter can be used in both the singular and the plural.

G

the gardener:

de tuinder, de tuinier, de tuinman

'To work in the garden' is *tuinieren* and therefore a 'home gardener', i.e. what one is oneself, is a *tuinier*. If you employ a gardener, he is a *tuinman* (which also means 'groundsman', pl. *tuinlui/-lieden*), whereas *tuinder* translates as 'market gardener'.

the gate:

de deur, het hek, de poort

The meanings of *hek* are discussed under 'fence'. (cf. 'fence') The 'gate' in the average suburban fence is a *hekje*, if the fence is a *hek*, but it is a *deur* or *poortje*, if the fence is a *schutting*. A *poort* is a far grander affair; the gate(way) of a city is a *poort* and the high wall of a Hollywood style mansion could also be said to contain a *poort* rather than a *hek* although *hek* would not be wrong here (one can always see through a *hek*). The use of the diminutive or not with these words is significant.

to get:

aanschaffen, bezorgen, halen, kopen, krijgen, laten + verb, verkrijgen, worden

It is well known that 'to get' means many things in English. On the whole only 'to get' in the sense of 'to obtain' is rendered by *krijgen* (*kreeg, gekregen*). In all other cases one should look for an English synonym and then use the equivalent Dutch expression, for example: Where did you get that hat?¹ = to buy, thus *Waar heb je die hoed gekocht?*, (Go and) get the butter out of the fridge = to fetch, thus *Haal de boter eens uit de koelkast*, I've got a cold = to catch, thus *Ik heb kou gevat/Ik ben verkouden*, When did you get home? = to come, thus *Wanneer ben je thuisgekomen?*

There are, however, a couple of 'gets' which one may not expect to be translated literally by *krijgen*, but which are, e.g. *Ik kan niets gedaan krijgen* – I can't get anything done, *Ik kan de deur niet openkrijgen* – I can't get the door open, *Ik krijg honger/dorst* – I'm getting hungry/thirsty, *Ik krijg het koud/warm* – I'm getting cold/hot.

¹ *Krijgen* commonly has connotations of 'to get for nothing', e.g. *Ik heb hem niet gekocht, maar gekregen* – I didn't buy it, I was given it.

Verkrijgen differs from *krijgen* in the same way as 'to get' differs from 'to obtain, acquire', e.g. *Die informatie kon niet verkregen worden* – That information could not be obtained. Note (*niet*) *verkrijgbaar* – (not) obtainable, available.

Aanschaffen only translates 'to get' in the sense of 'to purchase' and therefore is more or less synonymous with *kopen*. (cf. 'to buy') It is occasionally used with an optional reflexive pronoun and has connotations of 'to get/buy o.s. s.t.', e.g. *Ik vind het leuk. Ik ga (me) er ook eentje aanschaffen* – I think it's terrific. I'm going to get (myself) one too.

Bezorgen, which is very close in meaning to *verschaffen*, translates 'to get' when there is a connotation of procuring s.t. for s.o., e.g. *Als je werkelijk een exemplaar van dat boek wilt hebben kan ik je er misschien een bezorgen* – If you really want a copy of that book, I might be able to get you one.

'To get' very commonly replaces 'to become' in English, in which case *worden* (*werd, is geworden*) is the verb required, e.g. *Het wordt donker* – It's getting dark, *Mijn oma wordt oud* – My granny is getting old.

The list of expressions involving 'to get' is almost limitless in fact and all are rendered quite differently in Dutch, e.g. *verdwalen* (to get lost), *zich aan/uitkleden* (to get dressed/undressed), *zich omkleden* (to get changed), *in de war raken/zijn* (to get/be confused), *er komen* (to get there).

to get on/off:

afstappen, afstijgen, bestijgen, instappen, klimmen, opstappen, uitstappen, springen, stijgen

'To get on' a bus, tram, train or plane is the same as 'to get in'; both 'to get in' (*instappen*) and 'to get out' (*uitstappen*) of vehicles are dealt with under 'to change'.² But 'to get on/off' a bicycle is *op-* and *afstappen*, the former behaving in exactly the same way as *in-* and *uitstappen*, i.e. it acts as a separable verb when the bike is not mentioned, but as verb + prepositional object when it is (both take *zijn*), e.g. *Zijn fiets stond voor de deur. Hij is opgestapt en (is) verdwenen* – His bike was in front of the door. He climbed on and disappeared, *Hij is op zijn fiets gestapt en verdwenen* – He got on his bike and disappeared. Compare *afstappen*: *Hij stapte af en kwam binnen* – He got off and came inside, *Hij stapte van zijn fiets af* – He got off his bike.

² Another sense of 'to get in/out' is dealt with under 'to enter'. Yet another is the imperative 'Get out' (= scram) – *Maak dat je wekomt*.

The most usual way of expressing 'to get on' a horse is by using either *klimmen* or *springen op*, depending on the speed involved (the latter implying more haste), e.g. *De jockey klom/sprong op zijn paard en reed weg* – The jockey got on/mounted his horse and rode off. A more formal way of expressing 'to get on/mount a horse' is with *bestijgen*, e.g. *De ruiters bestegen hun paarden* – The riders got on/mounted their horses. (cf. 'to climb') 'To get off' a horse' is rendered by *afstappen van* (opp. of *klimmen op*) or *afspringen van* (opp. of *springen op*), e.g. *Hij stapte/sprong van zijn paard af*. More formally this can be expressed by *Hij steeg af* – He dismounted (omitting the object).

to get on with s.o.:

met iemand kunnen opschieten, het met iemand kunnen vinden, met iemand overweg kunnen

These three expressions are synonymous and all equally common, e.g. *Zij kan (niet) erg goed met haar moeder opschieten/Zij kan (niet) erg goed met haar moeder vinden/Zij kan (niet) goed met haar moeder overweg* – She gets (doesn't get) on well with her mother.

to give:

geven, schenken, verlenen

Sometimes the verb 'to give' can be a little ambiguous in English; it is not always clear whether one is being given something for keeps or simply being lent something. *Geven* contains the same ambiguity but this can be avoided by using *iemand iets cadeau geven/doen*³ (to give s.o. s.t. as a present), e.g. *Hij heeft zijn nicht zijn oude auto cadeau gegeven* – He gave his car to his niece (for keeps).

Schenken (*schonk, geschonken*) is 'to give' in the sense of 'to donate', e.g. *bloed schenken/geven* (to donate blood), *Een rijke zakenman heeft een ton aan de school geschonken* – A rich businessman gave the school/donated a hundred thousand guilders to the school. There is a noun, *het geschenk* (present), which is derived from this verb but the loanword *het cadeau(tje)* is more common.

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to go: (cf. 'to enter')

fietsen, gaan, lopen, rijden, varen, vliegen, werken

If one goes anywhere by vehicle it is quite permissible to use *gaan*, e.g. *met de auto/boot/fiets/tram/trein gaan* (to go by car/boat/bike/tram/train). Just with *fiets* it is also possible to say *op de fiets gaan*; note also *fietsen*, e.g. *Hij is naar huis gefietst* – He went home by bike/cycled home.

Varen (voer, gevaren) is used only of boats and thus translates 'to sail/go by boat or ship', e.g. *We hebben een boot en daar zijn we mee naar de Kanarische Eilanden gevaren* – We own a boat and we sailed/went to the Canaries in it.

The verbs *fietsen, lopen, rijden, varen* and *vliegen* all render English 'to go' in contexts where Dutch chooses to express the mode of transport without resorting to the above *met de* constructions, e.g. *Ze zijn al teruggevlogen* – They've already gone/flown back, *Hij is toen naar huis gelopen* – He then went/walked home.

Werken only translates that very specific meaning of 'to go' which corresponds to 'to work, function', e.g. *Werkt die oude televisie van jou nog?* – Is your old television still going? A common alternative means of expressing this is by *doen*, e.g. *Hij doet het weer/niet meer* – It's going again/not going any more (= working).

to go/come upstairs, to go/come downstairs:

naar boven gaan/komen, de trap op gaan/komen; naar beneden gaan/komen, de trap afgaan/afkomen

De trap opgaan and *naar boven gaan* are synonymous, as are *de trap op komen/naar boven komen* in the sense of 'to go/come upstairs'. The same applies to *de trap afgaan/afkomen* and *naar beneden gaan/komen* in the sense of 'to go/come downstairs', but if one goes up or comes down a particular flight of stairs, only the options with *trap* can be used, e.g. *Hij ging/kwam de/die/deze trap op* – He went/came up the/those/these stairs, *Zij ging/kwam de/die/deze trap af* – She went/came down the/those/these stairs. If taking a lift up- or downstairs, only *naar boven/beneden gaan/komen* can be used.

The adverbs of place 'upstairs' and 'downstairs' are simply *boven* and *beneden*, e.g. *Anneke ligt boven te slapen* – Anneke is asleep upstairs.

the government:

het bestuur, het bewind, het gouvernement, de overheid, de regering, het rijk, de staat

The usual word is *regering*, although strictly speaking this refers to the cabinet of the day (= *het kabinet*). *Gouvernement* is no longer used and has a colonial air about it.

Dictionaries maintain that *bewind* and *bestuur* mean 'government' but there is more to them than this. *Bewind* has connotations of '(period of) administration', as does *regering* in the narrow sense of 'cabinet', e.g. *het Reagan bewind* – the Reagan administration, *Wie is op het ogenblik aan het bewind in Chili* – Who's in power (= in government) in Chile at the moment? (cf. *aan het bewind zijn/blijven/komen*) *Bestuur* has connotations of 'board, committee' (of a club, association), e.g. *Hij zit in het bestuur* – He's a member of the executive, *het dagelijks bestuur* – the executive committee. The verb *besturen*, on the other hand, is the usual way of expressing 'to govern/run' a country. (cf. 'to manage' and 'to drive')

The government is very commonly referred to as *de overheid*, e.g. *Ik werk voor de overheid* – I work for the government, *Dit is een overheidsinstantie* – This is a government body/institution, *De overheid heeft besloten dat...* – The government has decided that... In advertisements for government jobs in Holland one reads *De rijksoverheid vraagt...* – The government is seeking..., where the addition of *rijks-* refers to government at the national level. But *overheid* can refer to government at any level, thus *de plaatselijke overheid* – the local authorities.

Het rijk, a word which does not have the negative connotations of its cognate form in German (*Het Derde Rijk* = *das Dritte Reich*), also frequently renders 'government', e.g. *Ik werk voor het rijk/ik ben bij het rijk* – I work for the government (*de rijksambtenaar* – public/civil servant).⁴ *Rijk* is also used as a prefix rendering 'national' or 'state', e.g. *het Rijksmuseum* – the State/National Museum, *de Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht* – the State/National University of Utrecht, *Rijkswaterstaat* – department for the maintenance and construction of dikes, canals etc.

Staat means much the same thing as *rijk* where the latter too translates 'state', e.g. *Het Surinaams Nieuwsagentschap is in staatshanden* – The Surinam Press Agency is controlled by the state/government. If one uses

⁴ Here again compounds with *rijk* refer to the national government. Thus a 'civil servant' working for a local municipality cannot be called a *rijksambtenaar*. He is a *gemeenteambtenaar* and *Hij werkt voor de gemeente/Hij is bij de gemeente*.

staat generally to translate 'state', rather than 'government', one will not go wrong.

the grain:

de draad, het graan, de grein, het koren, de korrel, de maïs, de nerf

The most general word is *graan*, e.g. *Dit brood bevat vijf verschillende graansoorten* – This bread contains five different grains. In some parts of the English-speaking world 'corn' sometimes means grain in general; Dutch uses *koren* in the same way.⁵ Note also *volkoren* (wholemeal). True 'corn' or 'maize' is *maïs*, which is also the name of 'sweet corn', although this is sometimes called *suikermaïs*.

A 'grain' of sugar, for example, is a *korrel*, although the word is more often than not used in the diminutive, e.g. *iets met een korreltje zout nemen* – to take s.t. with a grain of salt.

Grein (actually a unit measure) is not commonly heard and it too is usually used in the diminutive. It is only used figuratively as in a 'grain, scrap, shred' of evidence, difference, truth etc., e.g. *Er is geen greintje waarheid in wat hij zegt* – There's not a grain/iota of truth in what he says.

The 'grain' in wood is *de nerf* or *de draad*.

to greet:

begroeten, groeten

The verb 'to greet, to say hello' is *groeten*, e.g. *Hij groette me niet eens* – He didn't even say hello. *Begroeten* is used figuratively, rendering 'to welcome, receive' s.o., e.g. *De gastheer stond bij de deur en begroette iedere gast met een brede glimlach* – The host stood by the door and welcomed every guest with a broad smile. It is also used figuratively with reference to non-personal objects, e.g. *De afschaffing van de doodstraf is in Nederland met enthousiasme begroet* – The abolition of the death sentence was welcomed with enthusiasm in Holland.

The standard ending for friendly, informal letters is *(met) hartelijke groet(en)*. *Met vriendelijke groet(en)* is a little more reserved and *de groeten* is the least formal.

⁵ It seems that *koren* (like 'corn') traditionally refers to the main grain (*het hoofdgraan*) in one's particular area.

The expression *de groeten doen aan iemand* renders 'to give one's regards to s.o.' (cf. 'to remember')

to grow:

(op)groeien, kweken, laten groeien/staan, telen, verbouwen, wassen

Groeien is an intransitive verb which takes *zijn*, e.g. *Suikerriet groeit alleen in de tropen* – Sugar cane only grows in the Tropics, *Wat is je zoon gegroeid* – How your son has grown. *Opgroeien* corresponds with 'to grow up' although a 'grown-up' (= adult) is *de volwassene* (pl. -n).

To render 'to grow' a beard or one's hair, cases where *groeien* needs to be used transitively, it is necessary to use it in combination with *laten* to overcome the intransitivity of *groeien*, e.g. *Ik denk dat ik mijn haar laat groeien* – I think I'll grow my hair. Note also *Hij heeft in de vakantie zijn baard laten staan* – He let his beard grow during the holidays.

Whereas plants *groeien* (i.e. intr.), if one 'grows' plants (i.e. tr.) the verb required is *kweken*, e.g. *Ik kweek mijn eigen groente* – I grow my own vegetables. Thus a 'nursery' is *de kwekerij*.⁶ In more formal contexts *telen* is used, but this corresponds more with 'to produce', e.g. *de fruitteelt* – fruit production/cultivation, *de fruittelersvereniging* – fruit growers association/society, but *Hier wordt fruit gekweekt* – Fruit is grown here. One also uses *kweken* with reference to 'growing' bacteria or 'rearing' new varieties of plants (also *kweken uit zaad* – to grow from seed), but 'rearing' or 'breeding' of animals is *fokken*, e.g. *Die boer fokt paarden* – That farmer breeds horses (*de paardenfokkerij* – stud farm).

Verbouwen is a synonym of *kweken* and corresponds more or less to 'to cultivate', e.g. *Wat voor graan wordt hier verbouwd?* – What sort of grain is grown/cultivated here?

Wassen is an archaic word for 'to grow', similar to its cognate in English 'to wax'. It is only heard in poetry or in a few standard expressions (e.g. *de wassende maan* – the waxing moon) and has given rise to a few commonly heard, but nevertheless elevated derivatives, e.g. *het gewas* – growth, vegetation, *de bevolkingsaanwas* – growth in population.

⁶ A 'nursery' where the plants are grown is a *kwekerij* but a retail outlet where one buys such plants and other garden paraphernalia, also commonly called a nursery in English, is *het tuincentrum* (garden centre).

to guess:*gissen, raden*

Raden (*raadde, geraden*), commonly pronounced *raaien* in colloquial Dutch, is more deliberate and planned than *gissen*, which is the verb required when one makes a wild guess, e.g. *Wat heb ik achter mijn rug?* *Raad het even/Raad of het in mijn linker of rechter hand is?* – What have I got in my hand? Guess/guess whether it's my left or right hand (i.e. a limited choice), *Ik heb eenvoudig gegist waar hij woont* – I simply guessed where he lives (= made a wild guess). Thus *gissen en missen* (trial and error).

the guest, visitor: (cf. 'to visit')

bezoek (*hebben/krijgen*), *de bezoeker*, *de eter*, *de gast*, *de logé(e)*, *visite* (*hebben/krijgen*), *over de vloer hebben/komen*

The dominant word is *gast*, as in the elevated expression *bij iemand te gast zijn* (to be a guest at s.o.'s place), e.g. *De ambassadeur is die avond bij mij te gast geweest* – The ambassador was my guest that night. But in those contexts where 'guest' means 'visitor', which is the majority of cases, *gast* is seldom used; if *bezoek hebben/krijgen* or *visite hebben/krijgen* at all fit the context, they should be used instead of *gasten hebben/krijgen*, e.g. *Heb je bezoek/visite op het ogenblik?* – Have you got guests/visitors at the moment?, *Ik krijg vanavond bezoek* – I'm expecting guests/visitors tonight. *Gasten* is not wrong in such cases, however. But if one is expecting 'guests for dinner', it is not uncommon to refer to them as *eters*, e.g. *Ik krijg vanavond eters* (= *mensen om te eten*) – I've got people coming to dinner tonight (guests for dinner).

It is not at all usual to refer to one's collective *bezoek* at home as *bezoekers* but 'visitors' to a hospital, for example, are called *bezoekers*.

The idiom *iemand over de vloer hebben/over de vloer komen* also renders 'to have visitors', e.g. *Zij heeft veel mensen over de vloer/Er komen bij haar veel mensen over de vloer* – She has lots of visitors, *Hij komt hier geregeld over de vloer* – He's a frequent visitor here.

If the guest concerned is staying with someone, i.e. spending the night, one must use the word *logé(e)*, the *-e* being applied to the feminine but it is not pronounced and is commonly omitted in writing. *Logé* is connected with the verb *logeren* (cf. 'to live'), e.g. *Het spijt me dat ik niet kan komen maar ik heb een logé/iemand te logeren* – I'm sorry I can't come but I've got a guest/someone staying with me.

H**(the) half:***anderhalf, half, de helft*

The word 'half' is not easy to translate. The main difficulty lies in the syntactical behaviour of the adjective *half* and its interchangeability with the noun *helft*.

'Half of' with reference to plural nouns can only be expressed as *de helft van de mensen/honden/boeken* – half the people/dogs/books.

With inanimate objects in the singular the above is possible but alternatives also exist, e.g. *De kinderen hebben de halve koek opgemaakt/de koek half opgemaakt/de koek voor de helft opgemaakt* – The kids have eaten half the cake; the third option requires one to continue and mention what was done with the other half, e.g. *...en voor de helft ingevroren* – and frozen the other half. *De helft van* is the simplest and possibly the most common form.

Anderhalf means 'one and a half', e.g. *Ik heb hem pas anderhalf uur geleden gesproken* – I spoke to him just one and a half hours/an hour and a half ago. *Anderhalf*, along with *twee-en-een-half*, *drie-en-een-half* etc. is always followed by a singular noun in Dutch as an expression such as *vier-en-een-halve maand geleden* (four and a half months ago) is seen as meaning 'four (months) and one half month ago'. Notice that *half* always becomes *halve* when the noun that follows is not neuter, e.g. *over anderhalf jaar* – in eighteen months' time, *anderhalf pond* – one and a half pounds (750 grams) but *anderhalve meter* – one and a half metres.

the hall:*de aula, de gang, de hal, het studententehuis, de vestibule, de zaal*

The 'hall' in a private house, i.e. the corridor running through the home, is *de gang*. If 'hall' means a large room, as in the 'dining hall' of a boarding school, the word required is *de (eet)zaal*. (cf. 'room')

In many Dutch homes there is an area just inside the front-door, sectioned off from the *gang*, where one leaves one's coat and where the cold and wet from outside are confined so that they don't penetrate the house; this is called *de (voor)hal* (entrance hall) or *de vestibule*.

The 'assembly hall' or 'great hall' of a school or university is *de aula*.

In some countries student residences are also called 'halls (of residence)'. This is a foreign concept to the Dutch but it is best described as *het studententehuis*.

The '(entrance) hall' of a school, museum, office building etc. is *de hal*, e.g. *Je kunt in de hal van het museum reproducties kopen* – You can buy prints in the hall/foyer of the museum. The main 'hall' or foyer of a station is *de (stations)hal* and the departure wing of an airport is *de vertrekhal*. It can also refer to a 'market hall' which is covered but may be open at the sides, and those often sleazy amusement centres stocked with noisy video games and pinball machines are called *amusementshallen*.

the handle:

de handel/hendel, de (hand)greep, het handvat, het heft, het hengsel, de knop, de kruk, het oor, de steel

This is another example of what would seem to be a simple concept being very difficult to translate. We use 'handle' to refer to a variety of implements that all have in common that they are taken in the hand. In Dutch the determining factor that distinguishes between the above options is shape, not function.

A *knop*, given that the word also means 'knob', can only refer to a handle that is knob-like, e.g. *de deurknop* – handle of the door/doorknob. If a door literally has a 'handle', not a 'knob', it is called a (*deur*)*kruk*. The handle of a car door is also a *kruk*.

Oor can only be used for cups or other items of crockery (i.e. jugs, tureens etc.) with similar shaped handles, as the word refers to the shape of such handles, e.g. *Dat kopje heeft een gebroken oortje* – That cup has got a broken handle.

The 'handle' of an axe, broom or spoon etc., i.e. anything with a **long** handle, is *de steel*, but a knife has a *heft*.

Handvat (pl. *handvaten*) has quite a general application. The ends of the handle-bar (*het stuur*) of a bike are *handvaten*, as is the 'handle' of a suitcase, a drawer, a pot or a pan.

(*Hand*)*greep* and *handvat* are very close in meaning; the former is used in a Dutch train, for example, where one is warned to pull the *handgreep* (of the brake) only in case of emergency. Otherwise it can be forgotten.

Hengsel refers to the long, floppy 'handles' one finds on shopping or shoulder bags (i.e. straps), but a bucket or basket also has a *hengsel*.

Handel/hendel, an English loanword, is not a common word. The handle of a door (*kruk*) may also be called a *handel* (pron. *hendel*) but it is normally used with reference to machinery, e.g. the handle on a poker machine or a paper guillotine.

to hang:

hangen, ophangen, (zich) verhangen

Hangen (*hing, gehangen*) is both a transitive and an intransitive verb, e.g. *Het schilderij hangt aan de muur* – The painting is (hanging) on the wall, *Ik heb het aan de muur gehangen* – I hung it on the wall.

Ophangen is the word required when people are hanged, i.e. 'hang/hanged' as opposed to 'hang/hung', e.g. *Moordenaars worden in veel landen opgehangen* – Murderers are hanged in a lot of countries. It can also be used for pictures etc. which one 'hangs up', e.g. *Ik heb het schilderij opgehangen* – I hung the picture up (note: either *opgehangen* or *aan de muur gehangen*, not **aan de muur opgehangen*).

Zich ophangen means 'to hang o.s.' (= to commit suicide by hanging), e.g. *De arme jongen heeft zich in de gevangenis opgehangen* – The poor boy hanged himself in prison; more unusual is the synonym *zich verhangen*. *Verhangen* used as a transitive verb illustrates one of the functions of *ver-*, i.e. to change or do otherwise, e.g. *Je moet dat schilderij verhangen* – You should hang that picture in another place, *Ik ga de prenten verhangen* – I'm going to change the pictures.

to happen, occur:

gebeuren, geschieden, overkomen, zich voordoen, voorkomen, aan de hand zijn

The dominant word is *gebeuren*, which takes *zijn*, as do all the above verbs with the exception of *zich voordoen*, e.g. *Wat is er met hem gebeurd?* – What's happened to him?

Geschieden is synonymous with *gebeuren* but is very high style. It is best avoided. On Dutch letter boxes one reads *Lichting 3 is geschied* – Pick-up 3 has occurred.

Voórkomen, a separable verb which is not to be confused with *voorkómen* (to prevent, cf. 'to prevent'), differs from *gebeuren* only as 'to occur' differs from 'to happen' in English; generally speaking if 'occur' can replace 'happen' in a given context, *voorkomen* is possible in Dutch, e.g. *Dat is hier nog nooit voorgekomen* – That has never occurred/happened

here. Whereas there is a noun derived from *gebeuren*, *de gebeurtenis* (happening), there is no nominal derivative of *voorkomen*¹ and 'occurrence' is either *de gebeurtenis* or *het voorval*.

Zich voordoen is quite high style. It never translates 'to happen' but 'to occur'. Incidents, riots, accidents etc. *doen zich voor*, e.g. *Files doen zich voor op de volgende wegen* – There are traffic jams occurring/Traffic is banking up on the following roads.

One very commonly hears in speech *Wat is er aan de hand? Er is helemaal niks aan de hand* – What's happened? (= what's up?) Nothing's happened (= nothing's up), *De politie was snel ter plaatse en vroeg wat er aan de hand was* – The police were soon on the scene and asked what was happening (= what was up).

Overkomen is 'to happen' in the sense of 'to befall' and is thus an impersonal verb, e.g. *Ik hoop dat dat mij nooit overkomt* – I hope that that never happens to me, *Stel je voor dat dat je ooit zou overkomen* – Imagine if that ever happened to you.

happy:

blij, gelukkig, happy

Het geluk means both 'happiness' and 'luck', and *gelukkig* means 'happy, fortunate(ly), luckily (but not 'lucky')'; the opposite of *gelukkig* (fortunately, luckily) is *helaas* (unfortunately), whereas *ongelukkig* means 'unhappy'. (cf. 'luck') But more often than not *blij* renders 'happy'. If one is 'happy' in the sense of being full of happy feelings, the word required is *gelukkig*, e.g. *Ik ben/voel me gelukkig in Engeland* – I am/feel happy in England (= *Het bevalt me in Engeland*, cf. 'to like'). But if one is 'happy' with s.t. one has purchased, i.e. satisfied (cf. 'satisfied'), *blij* must be used, e.g. *Ze hebben hem voor zijn verjaardag een horloge gegeven waar hij erg blij mee was* – They gave him a watch for his birthday which he was very happy with, *Wees blij dat het voorbij is* – Be happy that it's over. *Gelukkig* is more enduring whereas *blij* is temporary, caused by s.t. specific and thus *blij* also renders 'pleased' and 'glad'.

One will even hear *happy* being used with the meaning of both *gelukkig* and *blij*, particularly in the expressions *zich niet happy voelen met* (not to feel happy/to feel uneasy about s.t.) and *(niet)happy zijn met* (not to be happy with/about s.t.), e.g. *Mijn dochter is onlangs naar Australië geëmigreerd en ik ben er niet zo happy mee* – My daughter emigrated to

¹ This not to say that *voorkomen* itself can't be used nominally, e.g. *Het voorkomen van olifanten op Java* ... – The occurrence/presence of elephants in Java...

Australia recently and I'm not so happy about it. (cf. 'satisfied') It is now also a recognised Dutch expression to say that a book or film has *een happy end* (pron. [ən həpi 'ent]), an imperfect borrowing of 'a happy ending'. Note ...*en ze leefden nog lang en gelukkig* – ...and they lived happily ever after.

We often use 'happy' in English where we in fact mean 'pleased, content, satisfied', e.g. I'm not at all happy with the outcome. (cf. 'satisfied')

hard:

hard, moeilijk

'Hard' meaning 'difficult' is never *hard*; that is *moeilijk*. *Hard* means 'hard' as opposed to 'soft', as well as frequently meaning 'fast' and 'loud'. (cf. 'fast' and 'loud')

hardly, scarcely:

amper, bijna, haast, nauwelijks

The correlative conjunction 'hardly...when' is *nauwelijks ...of*, e.g. *Nauwelijks was ik thuis of er werd gebeld* – Hardly/scarcely had I got home when the phone rang. Just as one can say in English 'I had hardly/scarcely got home when the phone rang', so it is also possible in Dutch to say *Ik was nauwelijks thuis of er werd gebeld*.

Bijna and *haast* as translations of 'almost' are discussed under 'almost'. In combination with a negative they can render 'hardly, scarcely', e.g. *Ik heb bijna/haast geen geld meer* – I hardly/scarcely have any money left, *Het was een donkere avond en er was bijna/haast geen wind en geen maan* – It was a dark night and there was hardly any wind or moon; *bijna* is more commonly heard than *haast*.

Similar in meaning to *bijna/haast* + negative is *amper*; like 'hardly' and 'scarcely', it is negative in itself but is not as common as the other two forms. It has connotations of 'just', e.g. *Ik heb je amper geraakt* – I scarcely touched you (= I only just touched you), *Ik heb amper geld genoeg* – I scarcely have enough money (= I have just enough money, cf. 'just').

to hate:

haten, een hekel hebben aan, spijten

Haten is used primarily with reference to people and in that sense is used just as its cognate in Eng., e.g. *Ik haat die vent* – I hate that guy. But when one 'hates doing' s.t., *haten* cannot be used; common in such cases is the expression *een hekel hebben aan*, e.g. *Ik heb er een hekel aan 's avonds uit te gaan* – I hate going out at night. This expression can also be applied to people and things (i.e. both animate and inanimate objects of 'to hate'), e.g. *Ik heb een hekel aan die vent/café's* – I hate that guy/café's, but *Ik haat café's* is also possible. *Haten* is stronger than *een hekel hebben aan* and definitely expresses a stronger sentiment than Eng. 'to hate'.

Een hekel hebben aan is a relatively strong expression and is not always appropriate. In such cases style may require the word *spijten* (= to be sorry, cf. 'sorry'), e.g. *Het spijt mij u om geld te moeten vragen maar ik heb er geen bij me* – I hate having to ask you for money, but I haven't got any on me.

to have:

The various translations of 'to have' defy description in the confines of a book like this because they can be so idiomatic, e.g. *Veel plezier* – Have fun, *Neem er nog een* – Have another (i.e. biscuit etc.), *iets laten doen* – to have s.t. done, as in *Ik heb mijn slaapzak laten stomen* – I've had my sleeping bag dry-cleaned. In addition, the Dutch use *hebben* in many idioms where we use 'to be', e.g. *dienst/dorst/honger/slaap hebben* – to be on duty/thirsty/hungry/sleepy, *het benauwd/druk/koud/warm hebben* – to be short of breath/busy/cold/hot (of people and animals). As with 'to get', if one is in doubt whether a literal translation is correct, it is safer to rephrase, e.g. *Ik ga in het bad/ik ga een bad nemen* – I'm going to have a bath, *Ik zit in het bad/sta onder de douche* – I'm having a bath/shower. (*Hebben* would be incorrect in all these cases.)

the head:

de bol, het hoofd, de kop, het schuim/de schuimlaag, het stuk

People have a *hoofd* and animals have a *kop*, although it is not uncommon to refer to the head of a horse as *hoofd* too. Colloquially the word *kop* can also refer to people, e.g. *de koppijn* is an informal variant of *hoofdpijn*. Even more colloquially one hears the word *koppie* with reference to people, e.g. *Die heeft een koppie/Die heeft een knappe kop* – He's a clever one/got a clever head on him.

'Head' in the sense of main/chief is always *hoofd*, commonly used in compounds, e.g. *het hoofdkantoor* – the main office, *Het hoofd van de school* – The school's head(master). A 'letterhead' is *het briefhoofd* and a '(newspaper) headline' is *de krantekop* and the 'headlight' of a vehicle is *de koplamp*.

Very colloquially one hears *de bol/het bolletje* with reference to a person's head – compare 'noggin' in English.

The 'head' on a glass of beer is called both *de kop* and *het schuim/de schuimlaag* and a 'head' of cattle is *een stuk* (pl. -s), e.g. *twintig stuks vee* – twenty head of cattle.

Cf. 'mind' for other meanings of *hoofd*.

to hear:

aanhoren, horen, vernemen

The dominant word is *horen*. *Vernemen* (*vernam, vernomen*) can replace *horen* in written style when 'to hear' means 'to learn, be told', e.g. *Wij hebben vernomen dat de dollar gedevalueerd gaat worden* – We have heard that the dollar is going to be devalued.

Aanhoren, apart from often translating 'to listen' (cf. 'to listen'), means 'to hear s.o. out, give s.o. a hearing', e.g. *Ik heb hem tot het einde aangehoord maar was het toch niet eens met wat hij zei* – I heard him out but still didn't agree with what he said. It also translates 'to hear' in the sense of to tell s.t. about s.o. from the sound of his voice, e.g. *Het is u aan te horen dat u (een) Duitser bent* – One can hear/tell that you're German; compare *Het is aan u te horen dat u verkouden bent* – One can hear that you've got a cold. The second example uses *horen aan*, which differs from *aanhoren* in that it does not refer to a permanent quality in the voice of the person concerned. (cf. *aanzien/zien aan* under 'to see')

to hide:

onderduiken, (zich) verbergen, zich verschuilen, (zich) verstoppen, zich schuil houden

As a transitive verb one can use either *verstoppen* or *verbergen* (*verborg, verborgen*), the latter sounding more formal, e.g. *De hond heeft zijn kluiw ergens in de tuin verstoppt/verborgen* – The dog has hidden his bone somewhere in the garden. But as an adjective *verborgen* is always used, e.g. *een verborgen schat* – a hidden treasure.

When one 'hides (oneself)', the verbs concerned are always used reflexively, which is seldom the case in English. Here again either *verstoppen* or *verbergen* (less common) are correct, e.g. *De inbreker verstopte/verborg zich in een kast* – The burglar hid in a cupboard.

'To be in hiding' is *zich schuil houden*, e.g. *De spion hield zich schuil terwijl de politie het gebouw doorzocht* – The spy hid/remained in hiding while the police searched the building.

Onderduiken (*dook onder, is ondergedoken*) means 'to go into hiding' and was, for example, the word used during World War II, e.g. *Veel Nederlandse joden zijn in de oorlog ondergedoken* – Many Dutch Jews hid/went into hiding during the war.

The game 'hide and seek' is called *verstoppertje spelen*.

the home:

het huis, het tehuis, thuis

The English distinction between 'house' and 'home' is not made in Dutch (cf. house/homework under 'work'); both are *huis*, e.g. *Wat hebben jullie je huis mooi ingericht* – Gosh, you have furnished your home very nicely.

Heim, a German loanword, only occurs in the expression *heimwee hebben naar* (to be homesick for).

'To go home' is *naar huis gaan*, but 'to come home' is *thuiskomen*, e.g. *Hoe laat is ze thuisgekomen?* – What time did she come/get home? This is unusual as *thuis* normally means only 'at home' and all other expressions of motion to and from home use simply *huis*: 'to leave home' is *van huis (weg)gaan*, e.g. *Vader gaat elke ochtend om acht uur van huis (weg)* – Dad leaves home at eight every morning, *De school is vlak bij huis* – The school is right near home, *Ik breng je met de auto naar huis* – I'll take you home by car.

Tehuis, from which *thuis* has been derived, is a noun meaning 'home' in the sense of an institution, e.g. *het bejaardentehuis* – home for the aged, *het tehuis voor daklozen/zeelieden* – home for the homeless/sailors.

A South African 'homeland' is called *het thuisland*.

however:

echter, hoe...ook, hoe...toch, toch

The adverb 'however' (= nevertheless, yet) is *echter*, but it is seldom used in the spoken language. Unlike English, it is unusual to begin or end a sentence with *echter*; the normal position is straight after the finite verb without placing commas on either side of it, as we so often do with 'however' in English, e.g. *Hij zal echter moeten wachten* – However, he'll have to wait/He'll have to wait, however/He will, however, have to wait.

If there are strong connotations of 'nevertheless' behind a given 'however', it is better to use *toch*, e.g. *Hij wist dat hij het had moeten doen en toch heeft hij niet gedaan* – He knew he should have done it, however/nevertheless he didn't.

The conjunction 'however' is *hoe ...ook*,² e.g. *Hoe hij het ook gedaan heeft, het interesseert mij niet* – However he did it, I'm not interested (in knowing). (For the word order in the second clause, cf. the footnote under 'even'.)

The interrogative 'However did he do it?' is *Hoe heeft hij het toch gedaan/voor elkaar gekregen?*

the/to hurry:

haast hebben, zich haasten, haastig, ijlen, in allerijl, opschieten

(*Geen*) *haast hebben* translates '(not) to be in a hurry', e.g. *Het spijt me, maar ik kan niet langer wachten want ik heb haast* – I'm sorry, I can't wait any longer because I'm in a hurry. In the following example, which contains an exclamation, the indefinite article is required. *Wat heb ik een haast* – I'm in such a rush. *Zich haasten* renders 'to hurry up/along', e.g. *Ik moet me haasten want anders kom ik te laat* – I'd better hurry(up) or else I'll be late. If one is hurrying s.o. else, it is necessary to paraphrase, e.g. *Zij probeert haar oude moeder altijd op te laten schieten maar het lukt haar nooit* – She's always trying to hurry her elderly mother (up, along) but she never succeeds. (cf. *opschieten* on next page)

De haast is a noun meaning 'haste' or 'hurry' with quite wide application, e.g. *Er is geen haast bij* – There's no hurry (said to a shoemaker, for example, when one leaves s.t. to be repaired), *in grote haast* (in a great hurry/in great haste). In higher style the previous expression can be

² This expression belongs to a series of similar conjunctions: *wie...ook* (whoever), *waar...ook* (wherever), *wat...ook* (whatever), *welk(e)...ook* (whichever).

replaced by *in allerijl*. *IJlen*, as in *Hij ijlde naar binnen* – He hurried inside, is an infrequent, elevated synonym of *zich haasten*.

Haastig is a commonly used adjective/adverb meaning 'fast, quick(ly)' and thus only indirectly translates 'hurry' (cf. 'fast'), e.g. *Ze liep haastig de trap op* – She hurried/walked quickly up the stairs, *Ik heb een haastig antwoord op zijn brief geschreven* – I wrote a hasty/hurried reply to his letter, *Ik heb de brief haastig beantwoord* – I hastily replied to the letter. Note *Haastige spoed is zelden goed* – More haste less speed. In the last three examples *haastig* has negative connotations.

Colloquially one very commonly hears the verb *opschieten* meaning 'to hurry' in the sense of 'to get a move on', e.g. *Schiet op!* – Hurry up!, *Ben je nog steeds niet klaar? Je zult moeten opschieten* – Are you still not finished/ready? You'd better hurry up.

to hurt:

zich bezéren, blesséren, pijn doen, zeer doen, kwetsen, (zich) verwonden, wonden

Pijn doen is the most common translation of 'to hurt' as both a transitive and an intransitive verb, e.g. *Je doet me pijn* – You're hurting me(tr.), *Mijn been doet (zo'n) pijn* – My leg is hurting (so much)(intr.). Synonymous with intransitive *pijn doen* is *zeer doen* (*zeer* = sore), but this is not normally written.

Verwonden means 'to injure' and as such sometimes translates 'to hurt'; one can either 'injure/hurt' oneself (*zich verwonden*) or s.o. else (*verwonden*). *Zich bezeren* is synonymous with *zich verwonden*, the difference being similar to that in English between 'to hurt o.s.' and 'to injure oneself' respectively, e.g. *De aannemer heeft zich met zijn zaag bezerd/verwond* – The contractor has hurt himself with his saw.

Wonden, apart from meaning 'to wound', can render 'to hurt/injure' as in the following example where it is not a case of one person hurting/injuring another, e.g. *Niemand is in het ongeluk gewond* – Nobody was hurt/injured in the accident.

De blessure (injury), *blesseren* (to injure, hurt) and *geblesseerd worden* (to be injured, receive an injury) are stylistic variants of *verwonden/verwonding* commonly used with reference to sporting injuries, e.g. *de knieblessure* – the knee injury (football).

Krenken and *kwetsen* are used with reference to hurting people's feelings or pride, e.g. *Ze voelde zich daardoor gekrenkt/gekwetst* – She felt hurt

by that, *Met die opmerking heb je hem erg gekrenkt* – You hurt him dreadfully with that comment, *Gekrenkte trots* – hurt pride. But *de kwetsúúr* is synonymous with *de blessure*.

I

if:

als, indien, of, of dat, zo (niet/ja)

Normally the Dutch don't distinguish between 'if' and 'when' (cf. 'when'), e.g. *Als je mijn moeder ziet, wil je haar dan even zeggen dat ik vanavond pas laat thuiskom* – If/when you see my mother, will you tell her I won't be home till late tonight. If one really wishes to emphasise the hypothetical nature of the issue, *indien* can be used but is normally only encountered in higher style, e.g. *Indien de regering zulke maatregelen neemt, zullen de vakbonden staken* – If the government takes such measures, the unions will go out on strike.

When 'if' means 'whether' it must be translated by *of*, e.g. *De dokter weet niet of zij de operatie zal overleven* – The doctor doesn't know if/whether she'll survive the operation. As 'or' is also *of*, 'or if/whether' is *of dat*, e.g. *...of dat ze zal sterven* – ...or if/whether she'll die.

'If not' is *zo niet*, e.g. *Dat is best mogelijk, zo niet zeker* – That's quite possible, if not certain, *Wil jij dat boek lezen? Zo niet, mag ik het hebben?* – Are you going to read that book? If not, may I have it? The opposite to 'if not', which is 'if so', is *zo ja*, e.g. *Zo ja, mag ik het hebben als je ermee klaar bent?* – If so (= if you are), can I have it when you've finished with it?

to imagine:

zich indenken, zich verbeelden, zich voorstellen

The dominant word is *zich voorstellen*, e.g. *Stel je voor!* – Just imagine (that)!, *Dat kan ik me niet voorstellen*¹ – I can't imagine that, *Ik kan me precies voorstellen hoe je huis eruit ziet* – I can imagine exactly what your house looks like.

Zich indenken is 'to imagine' in the sense of 'to believe, conceive' whereas *zich voorstellen*, in addition to having this meaning (see the first two examples above), also has the more literal meaning of 'to picture to

¹ Notice the order of the reflexive and the object in the following examples:

Ik kan het me niet voorstellen

Ik kan me dat niet voorstellen

Ik kan me jouw huis niet voorstellen

With all reflexive verbs that also govern a direct object, e.g. *zich veroorloven* (cf. 'to afford'), only *het* precedes the reflexive pronoun; all other objects follow it.

oneself' (see example three above), e.g. *Ik kan me niet indenken/voorstellen dat het leven in China makkelijker is dan in Rusland* – I can't (bring myself to) believe that life in China is any easier than in Russia. As with *zich voorstellen*, it is commonly used in combination with *kunnen*.

Zich verbeelden is quite different in meaning from the above. It is said of s.o. who has a good imagination *Die heeft een rijkelgrote verbeeldingskracht* (= *fantasie*). This gives an indication of the connotations of *zich verbeelden*, e.g. *Die gek verbeeldt zich dat hij Napoleon is* – That madman imagines he's Napoleon, *Ze kon het niet geloven* (= *Ze kon het zich niet voorstellen*) *Ze dacht dat ze het zich verbeeld had* – She couldn't believe it. She thought she had imagined it. But note also the following negative connotation of this verb: *Wat verbeeldt ze zich?* – Who does she think she is?, *Ze heeft nogal wat verbeelding* – She's somewhat conceited.

immediately:

(zo) *dadelijk*, *direct*, (zo) *meteen*, *onmiddellijk*, *straks*, *zodra*

The dominant word is *onmiddellijk*. Of all the above options only *onmiddellijk* and *direct* can be used adjectivally, e.g. *De onmiddellijke/directe gevolgen van de aardbeving waren verschrikkelijk* – The immediate effects of the earthquake were terrible. As an adverb it is very commonly replaced by *meteen*, e.g. *Ik heb hem meteen/onmiddellijk geantwoord* – I answered him immediately.

But *zo meteen* and (zo) *dadelijk* mean 'presently, in a little while, soon', another synonym of which is *straks* (presently, soon, cf. 'soon'), e.g. *Moeder: Jantje, ruim je kamer eens op. Jantje: Ja moeder, dat doe ik (zo) dadelijk/zo meteen/straks* – Mother: Jantje, tidy your room up. Jantje: Yes mum, I'll do it in a little while. Here (zo) *dadelijk* and *zo meteen* are synonymous and mean 'soon, in a little while' whereas *straks* means 'later'; an appropriate response from the mother could then be *Niet straks, onmiddellijk*. *Direct*, like 'directly' in English, also translates the 'immediately', at once' that is not necessarily straight away, e.g. *Dat doe ik direct* – I'll do that directly/in a moment.

Zodra (= as soon as) translates the conjunction 'immediately' as in the sentence *Zodra hij thuis komt...* – Immediately he gets home...

to increase:

groter/hoger worden, stijgen, toenemen, vergroten, verhogen, vermeerderen

The intransitive verb *toenemen* (*nam toe, is toegenomen*) is quite common and although it can be used transitively using *doen* as an auxiliary, *doen toenemen*, this use of *doen* is limited to higher style, *De bevolking is de afgelopen tien jaar toegenomen* – The population has increased the last ten years (intr.), *Immigratie uit de Derde Wereld heeft de bevolking doen toenemen* – Immigration from the Third World has increased the population (tr.).

It is often simplest to paraphrase intransitive 'to increase' by using *groter/hoger/breder/dikker worden* etc. and transitive 'to increase' by *groter/hoger/breder/dikker maken* etc.,² e.g. *Dat gebouw is zelfs sinds vorige week hoger geworden* – The height of that building has increased even since last week, *De gemeente heeft deze weg breder gemaakt* – The council has increased the width of this road.

Vermeerderen is both a transitive and an intransitive verb meaning 'to increase, augment', but it is not uncommon for *verhogen* (to raise) and *vergroten* (to enlarge) to be used in certain contexts, e.g. *De regering heeft de prijs van benzine verhoogd* – The government has raised/increased the price of petrol. *Vermeerderen* would be wrong in this case but not in *Dat besluit heeft het aantal problemen alleen maar vermeerderd/vergroot/doen toenemen* – That decision has only increased the number of problems; nevertheless the least appropriate translation here is that with *vermeerderen*.

Stijgen (*steeg, is gestegen* – to rise) is the intransitive equivalent of *verhogen* (to raise), e.g. *De prijs van benzine is gestegen* – The price of petrol has increased.

the inhabitant:

de bewoner, de inwoner

The 'inhabitant, resident' of a house is a *bewoner* (< *bewonen* – to occupy) whereas the 'inhabitant' of a country or town is an *inwoner* (< *wonen in* – to live in), e.g. *De bewoner van dat huis is een krenterig oud mannetje* – The inhabitant of that house is a miserly old man, *Hoeveel inwoners heeft de stad Utrecht?* – How many inhabitants does the city of Utrecht have?

² Cf. 'to wake up' (*wakker worden/maken*) for a similar distinction between the intransitive and transitive forms of a verb that does not make the distinction in English.

to intend:

bedoelen, van plan zijn, voorhebben, het voornemen hebben, zich voornemen, voornemens zijn,

The most common expression is *van plan zijn*, which will very seldom leave one in the lurch, e.g. *Wat ben je vanmiddag van plan (om te doen)?* – What do you intend to do this afternoon?, *Is hij ook van plan om mee te gaan?* – Does he also intend going along?

Bedoelen, which means 'to mean' (cf. 'to mean'), can only translate 'to intend' when it can be replaced by 'to mean' in English, e.g. *Het was ook kwaad bedoeld* – It was intended/meant to be nasty. Also: *Dat was niet mijn bedoeling* – That was not my intention (*niet* can also go after *bedoeling*).

The various connotations of *voorhebben* can best be illustrated by giving examples, all of which have to do with intention; it is always followed by *met* + object: *Wat heb je voor met me?* – What do you intend to do with me?, *Wat denk je dat hij met de kinderen voorheeft?* – What do you think he intends doing with the kids?, *Die man heeft het goed/slecht voor met mij* – That man means/intends well (means well by me); *slecht* renders the opposite.

With the exception of *zich voornemen* (cf. 'to decide') the other two expressions with *voornemen* are pretty well synonymous and represent a somewhat more formal way of expressing *van plan zijn*, the connotation being 'to make up one's mind to do s.t., to be determined to do s.t.', e.g. *Hij heeft het voornemen (om)...te* – He intends/is determined to..., *Hij is voornemens (om)...te* – He intends to...

the interest, interesting, to be interested in:

het belang, de belangstelling, de interesse, de rente; belangwekkend, interessant; belangstellen in, belangstelling/interesse hebben voor, geïnteresseerd zijn in, zich interesseren voor; interesseren

Belangstelling and *interesse* are synonymous and equally common, whereas *rente* refers to 'interest' on money. Of the adjectives *interessant* (interesting) and *belangwekkend*, which are certainly not always interchangeable, the former is much more common and the latter is better avoided in this sense; it has connotations of 'important', e.g. *een belangwekkende uitvinding* – an interesting/important invention. *Belang* means 'interest' in the sense of 'in s.o.'s interest' (= to s.o.'s benefit), e.g. *Dit wordt gedaan in uw belang* – This is being done in your interest, *Ik heb er geen belang bij* – I have no interest in it/It is not in my interest (= I am not concerned/involved with it).

The various ways of expressing 'to be interested in' do not reflect different semantic connotations. All are relatively common, although *belangstellen in* is the least common, and therefore the student is likely to confuse them and end up with a contaminated form, usually entailing the use of the wrong preposition. *Geïnteresseerd zijn in* is the easiest to remember as it is the same as English and it will seldom let you down, e.g. *De vroegere koning van Zweden was erg geïnteresseerd in de archeologie* – The former king of Sweden was very interested in archeology. All the other options would have been correct in this example too: *Hij stelde veel belang in archeologie*, *Hij interesseerde zich heel veel voor archeologie*, *Hij had veel (geen) belangstelling/interesse voor archeologie* (geen renders the negative).

The simple transitive verb 'to interest' is *interesseren*, e.g. *Dat interesseert me (niet)* – That interests (doesn't interest) me. The expression 'to interest s.o. (in s.t.)' is also rendered by the verb *interesseren (voor)*, e.g. *Kan ik u voor een levensverzekeringsspolis interesseren?* – Can I interest you in a life assurance policy?

to introduce:

inleiden, introduceren, invoeren, (zich) voorstellen

'To introduce s.o.' is *voorstellen*. If that person is oneself, the verb is used reflexively, e.g. *Mag ik mijn vrouw/me voorstellen?* – May I introduce my wife/myself? *Zich voorstellen* also means 'to imagine'. (cf. 'to imagine')

The 'introduction' of a book is *de inleiding*. The verb *inleiden* thus has connotations of 'to usher in, initiate', e.g. *Wie gaat het debat over het volgende punt op de agenda inleiden?* – Who is going to introduce the debate on the following point on the agenda?, *inleidende opmerkingen* – introductory remarks.

Invoeren, which also means 'to import', translates 'to introduce' with reference to new ideas, methods, equipment etc. and the corresponding noun is *de invoering*, e.g. *De school heeft onlangs een heleboel nieuwe vakken ingevoerd* – The school recently introduced a lot of new subjects.

Introduceren translates 'to introduce s.o.' as in a compere introducing a celebrity, e.g. *Ik heb het grote genoegen u Toon Hermans te introduceren* – It gives me great pleasure to introduce Toon Hermans to you; Hermans is already known to the audience – it is merely a question of 'presenting' him.

J

the job:

de baan, de betrekking, de job, het karwei, de positie, de taak, de vacature, het werk

The dominant word is *baan*, which is commonly used in the diminutive if it refers to a job other than one's 9 till 5, five-day-a-week job, e.g. *Mijn dochter heeft een part-time baantje in een winkel* – My daughter has a part-time job in a shop, *Wat heeft u voor (een) baan?* (*Wat doet u voor werk?*) – What sort of job have you got? (= What sort of work do you do?)

A *betrekking* is synonymous with *baan* when referring to a 9 till 5 job, i.e. one's main form of employment, e.g. *Hij heeft een vaste betrekking in het onderwijs* – He has a permanent job/position as a teacher. A *betrekking* is generally a little more illustrious than a *baan* and thus a 'part-time job' is usually a *part-time baan(tje)* (but it is also possible to say *een deeltijdse betrekking*) – the use of the diminutive in this context can be significant in emphasising how minor a job is or just how part-time it is.

Job, pronounced as in English, is becoming more and more common these days. It is merely a trendy, colloquial synonym of *baan(tje)*.

'Job' in the sense of a well defined task, i.e. s.t. which is usually imposed upon the doer (also by oneself), is a *taak*, e.g. *Wat ik nu moet doen is een zware taak* – What I have to do now is a difficult job/task. If the task is a real 'chore', the term used is *karwei*, e.g. *Ik ben nu eindelijk klaar maar het was een heel karwei* – I've finally finished but it was a terribly difficult job (= took a lot of effort). A 'bob-a-job' (Boy Scouts) is *een heitje voor een karweitje*, where the diminutive reduces a *karwei* to a mere *taak*.

Sometimes we use the word 'job' to refer loosely to 'work'; this is then called *werk*, e.g. *U heeft heel goed werk gedaan* – You've done a very good job.

De positie is used in Dutch in much the same way as 'position' is in English to refer to a job, e.g. *Heeft u al een positie gevonden?* – Have you found a job/position yet?

Note: *De universiteit heeft een vacature* – The university has a vacancy/has a job going. The employment section of the classified ads. in a newspaper is entitled *vacatures*.

to join:

zich aansluiten bij, erbij komen zitten, vastmaken, verbinden, (zich) verenigen, lid worden van

The transitive verb 'to join' in the sense of joining/tying two pieces of string etc. is *vastmaken*, e.g. *Ik wil die twee stukken touw aan elkaar vastmaken* – I want to join/tie these two pieces of string together. *Verbinden* (*verbond, verbonden*) is used for 'joining/connecting' two separate things, e.g. *Twee zinnen worden verbonden door een voegwoord* – Two sentences are joined by a conjunction.

'To join' a club is *lid worden van* (= to become a member of), e.g. *Als je katholiek bent, mag je daar niet/geen lid van worden* – If you're catholic you are not allowed to join (it). A colloquial way of expressing the same thing is *Waarom ga je niet bij de padvinderij/zangvereniging?* – Why don't you join the boy scouts/the choral society?

'To join' a group or party of people is *zich aansluiten bij*, e.g. *De jonge man heeft zich bij de groep touristen aangesloten* – The young man joined the group of tourists. If one 'joins the ranks of' or 'follows' a political movement, this verb can also be used but if 'membership' is implied, the expression *lid worden van* is better.

Verenigen, as the etymology of the word suggests, means 'to join' in the sense of 'to make one of, unite', e.g. *Die twee landen zijn een tijdje verenigd geweest* – Those two countries were joined/united for a time. When people 'join/band together' *zich verenigen* is the required verb, e.g. *Die twee vakbonden hebben zich verenigd om meer druk uit te kunnen oefenen* – Those two unions have joined together to be able to exert more pressure. Also *in de echt verenigen* – to join in (holy) matrimony.

If one wishes 'to join' a group of people sitting together in a pub, for example, one could simply say *Mag ik er even bij komen zitten?* – May I join you?

just:

alleen maar, amper, even, gewoon(weg), juist, net, pas, zoëven, zojuist; eerlijk, fair, rechtvaardig; schelen...of

This word causes enormous problems because of the large number of very common (partial) synonyms, compounded by the fact that *juist* so resembles English 'just'. As an adverb the dominant word is *net* and when in doubt, *net* is possibly the safest option, e.g. *Ik heb hem net gezien* – I have just seen him, *Ik heb net genoeg geld* – I have just enough money. (cf. *amper* under 'hardly') Sometimes it occurs in combination with *zo* with

no difference in meaning, e.g. *Hij was zo net hier* – He was just here (= a moment ago).

Zoëven and *zojuist* are synonymous with *net* but are higher style with the latter being somewhat less bookish than the former, e.g. *Zoals u zoëven/zojuist gezegd heeft...* – As you just said...

Juist, however, usually has quite a different meaning. It is first and foremost an adjective meaning 'correct, right' (cf. 'right'), e.g. *Dit is het juiste (= goede) antwoord* – This is the correct answer. It is also used as an adverb meaning 'exactly, precisely', e.g. *Hij is toch Hongaar? (Dat is) juist (= precies)* – He's a Hungarian, isn't he? (That's correct) exactly. At times 'just' means 'exactly' and only in such cases should *juist* be used to translate it, e.g. *Dat is nu juist wat ik bedoel* – Now that's just what I mean, *Dat is het hem juist* – That's just it (= the point). Although one may occasionally hear *juist* being used where I have advised that one should say *net*, it is safer to stick to using *juist* in the few cases given here and not to copy the practice of using it instead of *net*.

As with *juist* and *zojuist*, *even* and *zoëven* are quite different in meaning from each other. *Even* is commonly used in combination with imperatives where it can mean 'just a moment', e.g. In the expression *Wacht (eens) even* – Wait (just) a moment, *even* can be said to be translating one very specific meaning of 'just'; compare also *Even hield hij zijn hand op haar arm, toen een auto voor hen langs wilde* – He put his hand on her arm for just a moment/momentarily when a car was about to pass in front of them. It is commonly used with imperatives and requests but only rarely does its meaning in such cases correspond with 'just', e.g. *Help hem even* – Do help him/Come on, help him, *Wil je het raam even dichtdoen* – Would you mind (just) shutting the window. In the previous example *even* renders not simply the 'just', which is optional, but in combination with *willen* it renders the 'mind' too; it is used to soften imperatives so that they don't sound too bossy.¹ *Even* thus very rarely translates 'just' and also very seldom means 'even'. (cf. 'even')

If 'just' means 'simply', as it very often does, the word required is *gewoon*, e.g. *Ben je ziek? Nee, ik ben (dood)gewoon/gewoonweg moe* – Are you sick? No, I'm just tired, *Hij heeft er gewoon(weg) niet aan gedacht* – He just didn't think of it. *Gewoon* is very common in Dutch and is sometimes overused in the way 'like' and 'sort of' are used to excess in

¹ *Even* is very common in spoken Dutch. It indicates short duration and/or the relative unimportance of the action concerned, e.g. *Als het je schikt kom ik vanavond even langs* – If it's all right with you, I'll pop in tonight (*even* = I won't stay long), *Waar is Jan? Hij is even een boodschap doen* – Where's Jan? He's just running a message (He'll be back soon).

inarticulate English. The *-weg* is an optional adverbial ending. (cf. 'normal' and 'ordinary')

Pas is sometimes interchangeable with *net* (and *zo pas* with *zo net*) but is best limited to the following contexts where only *pas* will do, e.g. *Dat kind is pas/net geboren* – That child has just been born, but *een pas geboren kind* – a newly born child (*net* would be wrong here). One of the meanings of *pas* is 'only' and thus it renders 'just' when that word means 'only' (cf. 'only') with reference to age, e.g. *Mijn kind is pas vijf* – My child is just/only five. Compare *Mijn kind is net/pas vijf geworden* – My child has only just (= recently) turned five.² *Pas* is always temporal, which is not necessarily the case with *net*. (cf. example two in the first paragraph)

Where 'just' means 'merely, only, simply' it is translated by the dominant word for 'only', *alleen maar*, e.g. *Ik heb vanmiddag eigenlijk niets uitgevoerd. Ik heb alleen (maar) zitten lezen* – Actually I didn't do a thing this afternoon. I just sat and read. *Gewoon* would not be incorrect here either.

Rechtvaardig is an adjective meaning 'just, fair, righteous' and the corresponding noun, *de rechtvaardigheid*, translates 'justice', e.g. *Wat het schoolhoofd gedaan heeft vind ik niet rechtvaardig/fair* – What the headmaster did isn't just/fair, I think. More common than *rechtvaardig* and the loanword *fair*³ as a translation of 'fair' in everyday situations is *eerlijk*, e.g. *Waarom heb jij meer snoepjes gekregen dan ik? Dat is niet eerlijk* – Why did you get more sweets than I? That's not fair.

The very idiomatic expression *Het scheelde niet veel/een haar/weinig of...* renders the idea that something 'just missed occurring', e.g. *Het scheelde niet veel of ik was erin geslaagd* – I just missed succeeding, *Het scheelde (maar) een haar of die kogel had hem geraakt* – The bullet just missed him.

² Where one finds *pas* being used in contexts where I advise using *net*, one may find that *pas* is not quite as recent as *net*, e.g. *Ik hem hem pas/net gezien* – *pas* means 'some time ago/recently' while *net* means 'just/very recently'. (cf. 'recently')

³ This word is commonly used in sport in the sense of '(not) sporting'.

K

to keep:

aanhouden, behouden, bewaren, handhaven, houden, onthouden, opbergen; blijven + verb, (alsmaar) door + verb

The dominant word is *houden*, the distinction between 'hold' and 'keep' often being of little importance, e.g. *Paspoort en instapkaart gereed houden* – Please keep passport and boarding card ready, *Wil je je boek terughebben? Nee, je mag het houden* – Would you like your book back? No, you can keep it. The possible ambiguity of 'keep', i.e. whether one can keep s.t. for good or not, is averted by the use of adverbs, as in English, e.g. *Wil je je boek nu terughebben? Nee, je mag het nog een tijdje houden* – Do you want your book back now. No, you can keep it for a while yet.

Bewaren means 'to keep in a safe place', e.g. *Ik wil dit geld niet op de bank doen. Waar kan ik het bewaren?* – I don't want to put this money in the bank. Where can I keep it?

Opbergen (*borg op, opgeborgen*) is close in meaning to *bewaren* but renders simply 'to keep' in the sense of 'to store', e.g. *Je moet aardappels ergens opbergen waar het niet te warm wordt* – You should keep potatoes somewhere where it doesn't get too hot, *Ik berg al mijn rommel op zolder op* – I keep/store all my junk in the attic. *Iets goed opbergen* can also render 'to keep in a safe place'.

Handhaven is the verb 'to keep, preserve, maintain' a situation as it is, e.g. *De Basken proberen hun taal te handhaven* – The Basques are trying to keep/preserve their language, *De vrede kon niet gehandhaafd worden* – Peace could not be kept/maintained.

Behouden is a very elevated (near) synonym of *houden* meaning 'to preserve, retain, conserve' used particularly with reference to value and dignity, e.g. *Ondanks alle devaluaties heeft de gulden zijn waarde behouden* – In spite of all the devaluations, the guilder has maintained/retained its value (*houden* is not possible here). It is not a common word and one must be careful where one uses it. The fact that *behoudend* is an adjective meaning 'conservative' sheds some extra light on the connotations of the word.

Iemand iets onthouden translates 'to keep (= withhold) s.t. from s.o.', e.g. *Die informatie heeft hij de politie echter onthouden* – However, he kept/withheld that information from the police.

If one 'keeps on doing s.t.' none of the above verbs, all of which are transitive, can be used. Dutch expresses this 'to keep' quite idiomatically. *Door*, more often than not preceded by *alsmaar*, added to a verb as a separable prefix, changes the meaning of that verb to render the fact that the action is continuing, e.g. *De gasten wilden weg maar de gastheer praatte (als)maar door* – The guests wanted to leave but the host just kept talking, *U hoeft niet te stoppen. Rij maar door* – You don't have to stop. Keep going (= drive on). *Waar is het postkantoor? (Gaat u) alsmaar rechtdoor* – Where's the post-office? Just keep going straight ahead.

Synonymous with *door* + verb constructions is the use of *blijven* + verb but this does not mean that both forms can be used with all verbs, e.g. *Hij bleef maar praten/proberen* – He kept on talking/trying. With *praten* in this example either *door* or *blijven* could be used but with *proberen* only the *blijven* construction is possible.

Aanhouden, which is a less common way of rendering 'to keep on doing s.t.' is dealt with under 'to continue'. It also renders 'to keep/bear left/right' in traffic, e.g. *Je moet alsmaar/steeds rechts aanhouden* – Just keep bearing right/Keep to the right; compare *In Engeland moet je links houden (= links verkeer)* – In England you have to keep to the left (right-hand drive traffic).

to kill: (cf. 'to die' for 'to be killed')

om het leven brengen, doden, doodmaken, doodschieten, doodslaan, ombrengen, slachten, vermoorden

Doden and *doodmaken* are synonymous but the latter is more commonly used, e.g. *De boer heeft de slang gedood/doodgemaakt* – The farmer killed the snake. One could perhaps say that *doden* is to *sterven* as *doodmaken* is to *doodgaan*. (cf. 'to die')

Doodslaan (sloeg, geslagen) is 'to kill' with connotations of 'to beat to death, strike dead', e.g. *Mijn opa zit de hele dag vliegen dood te slaan* – My grandad sits around killing/swatting flies all day.

Ombrengen is essentially synonymous with *doden/doodmaken* – although it is higher style – but is perhaps used more often with reference to people being killed; one would not, for example, *ombrengen* a fly, e.g. *Zijn hele familie is in de oorlog door de Viet Cong omgebracht* – His whole family was killed by the Viet Cong during the war. Stylistically on a par with *ombrengen* is the synonym *om het leven brengen*, a form which corresponds with *om het leven komen* (to die, cf. 'to die').

Vermoorden means 'to murder', with which English word it is synonymous. Similarly with *slachten*, which literally means 'to slaughter'. *Doodschieten* can be used to translate 'to kill' when the object has been 'shot dead', e.g. *De boer richtte zijn geweer op het konijn en schoot het dood* – The farmer aimed his gun at the rabbit and killed/shot it.¹

the/to kiss:

de kus, de zoen; kussen, zoenen

Very generally speaking one can say that these words are synonymous but there are cases where one very definitely gives a *kus* and not a *zoen*, the same distinction applying to the respective verbs. Whereas lovers may *kussen* or *zoenen*, if one 'kisses' the Pope's hand, only the former is appropriate, the connotations of the latter being too passionate in this context e.g. *De pastoor kustte de hand van de paus* – The priest kissed the Pope's hand, *Kom eens hier Frank en geef mamma een lekkere zoen/kus* – Come here Frank and give your mum a big kiss. A *kus* can be more refined than a *zoen* and there are people in Holland who regard the words *zoenen/zoen* as low class.

to know:

afweten, bekend zijn, (leren) kennen, kunnen, waarschuwen, (laten) weten

The dominant word is *weten*. *Weten* must always have an object and thus either *het* (unemphatic) or *dat* (emphatic) is inserted in contexts where an object or subsequent subordinate clause is lacking,² e.g. *Amsterdam is de hoofdstad van Nederland. Dat weet ik/Ik weet het* – Amsterdam is the capital of Holland. I know.

Weten + nog is a colloquial means of expressing 'to remember' (cf. 'to remember' and 'to forget'), e.g. *Weet je nog (wel)? Ja, ik weet het nog/Ik weet nog dat jij...* – Do you remember? Yes, I remember/I remember that you...

Kennen is the verb required when 'to know' relates to knowing or being acquainted with people, e.g. *Ken je hem? Ja, ik ken hem goed maar ik weet niet meer waar hij woont* – Do you know him? Yes, I know him well, but I

¹ Whereas the verb 'to shoot' in English can imply that s.o. or s.t. is killed by the action, *schieten* does not have that connotation without the addition of the prefix *dood-*, e.g. *De gevangene is doodgeschoten* – The prisoner was shot. What is more, you cannot simply *schieten* s.o. but must *schieten op* s.o. (to shoot at).

² It is very common for English-speaking students, having learnt that *het* is obligatory in a construction like *Ik weet het*, to insert a hypercorrect *het* when a subordinate clause follows, e.g. **Ik weet het dat hij morgen komt*.

no longer know where he lives. But there are cases where the difference between *weten* and *kennen* is not quite so obvious, e.g. *Ken je het postkantoor in Baarn?* – Do you know/are you acquainted with the post-office in Baarn? (= do you know what it looks like/know your way around it?), but *Weet je het postkantoor in Baarn? Nou goed, de bakkerij staat daar vlak naast* – Do you know the post-office in Baarn (= where it is)? All right, the bakery is next to it. This example illustrates that *kennen* is not in fact just limited to people; compare also *een gedicht/liedje kennen* (to know a poem/song). Although *weten* is the verb normally used with reference to knowledge, *kennen* is used of languages, e.g. *Ik ken een beetje Spaans* = *Ik kan een beetje Spaans spreken* – I know a little Spanish = I can speak a bit of Spanish, but *Weet je het Spaanse woord voor jongen?* – Do you know the Spanish word for boy?

'To know how to do s.t.' is frequently rendered by *kunnen* (= to be able), e.g. *Kun je zwemmen?* – Do you know how to swim? There are, however, cases where *weten* is possible and necessary, e.g. *Weet je hoe we (van) hier wegkunnen?* – Do you know how we can get away from here? (Only *weten* can be used before *hoe*, never *kunnen*)

Bekend zijn, apart from translating 'to be (well-)known', also means 'to know one's way around an area', e.g. *Pardon, meneer, bent u hier bekend? Ik zoek het postkantoor* – Excuse me, sir. Do you know your way around here? I'm looking for the post-office. *Nee, het spijt me, ik ben hier ook niet bekend* – No, I'm sorry, I'm a stranger here too. (= I don't know the way either).

Afweten van is an idiomatic expression meaning 'to know about s.t.', e.g. *Hij weet er niets van af* – He knows nothing about it (= a particular issue/has no expertise in that field/hasn't been told about it), *Hoe maak je nasi goreng? Nou, daar weet ik alles van af* – How do you make fried rice? Well, I know all about that. There is also the colloquial expression *Hij heeft er geen kaas van gegeten* which means 'He doesn't know a thing about it', i.e. He's lacking in expertise in a particular field.

Waarschuwen, the verb 'to warn', is sometimes synonymous with *laten weten* (to let know) where the meaning is 'to inform s.o. of s.t.', e.g. *De politie kwam binnen en de receptioniste ging de directeur waarschuwen* – The police entered and the receptionist went to let the manager know (inform), *Hij liet me weten (= waarschuwde me) dat hij niet van plan was om te komen* – He let me know that he didn't intend coming.

Leren kennen translates 'to get to know s.o.' (= to meet s.o. for the first time; cf. 'to meet'), e.g. *Waar heb je haar leren kennen?* – Where did you meet/get to know her?

L

to land:

belanden, landen, neerkomen, neerstrijken, terechtkomen

The main difficulty here is one of literal versus figurative meaning. Landing of aeroplanes is *landen*, e.g. *Vlucht 823 van de KLM is geland* – KLM flight 823 has landed, *Het toestel landde op een verlaten vliegveld in het oosten van het land* – The plane landed at a deserted airfield in the east of the country. Compare *Het belandde in een meer* – It landed (= ended up, came to rest) in a lake, *Hij heeft een politieagent beledigd en is in de bak beland* – He insulted a policeman and landed in the clink. In the previous two examples *belanden* is synonymous with *terechtkomen*, e.g. *Het kwam in een meer terecht*.

It is also possible to use *neerkomen* with reference to planes but this is not the official term used at airports as it has similar connotations to *terechtkomen* (i.e. unintentional landing), e.g. *Het vliegtuig kreeg boven de Middellandse Zee problemen en kwam in het water neer/landde op het water* – The plane had trouble over the Mediterranean and landed in the water (= ended up)/landed on the water.

Neerstrijken (*streek neer, is neergestreken*) is used of birds and insects that 'land' or 'settle' on water, a branch etc., e.g. *De sprinkhanen streken neer in de akker en begonnen de oogst te verslinden* – The locusts settled/landed in the field and began to consume the crop.

Note that all four verbs are conjugated with *zijn*.

to last:

duren, meegaan, uithouden, volhouden

This is a very difficult concept to render in Dutch. 'To last' with reference to time/duration is *duren*, which also translates 'to take' in the meaning of 'to last' (cf. 'to take'), e.g. *Hoe lang duurt de film?* – How long does the film last?, *Hoe lang zal het duren?* – How long will it take?, *Het duurde veel te lang* – It took much too long. Note the following idiomatic use of *duren* in combination with a negative and the conjunction *of*: *Het duurde niet lang of de misdadiger werd gearresteerd* – It wasn't long before the criminal was arrested. (compare *schelen of under 'just'*)

With reference to products 'lasting', the verb *meegaan* is the verb required, e.g. *Dit afwasmiddel gaat veel langer mee dan andere merken* – This detergent lasts much longer than other brands.

With reference to people 'lasting' in trying circumstances, *volhouden* (*hield vol*, *volgehouden*) is the correct translation, e.g. *Ik kan twee kilometer lopen maar vier hou ik niet vol* – I can walk two kilometres but I wouldn't last four (= see it through, keep it up). In both Dutch and English one can express a similar idea with *uithouden* (to hold out), e.g. *Dat hou ik niet uit* (= *Dat hou ik niet vol*) – I won't hold out/last (the distance).

last: (for 'at last' and 'lastly' cf. next item)

afgelopen, *gister-*, *jongst*, *jongstleden*, *laatst*, *nieuwst*, *verleden*, *vorig*

'Last week/month/year' is either *verleden week/maand/jaar* or *vorige week/maand/vorig jaar* but the latter are more common in speech: *Verleden* is indeclinable but *vorig* requires an *-e* before common gender nouns.

In combination with days of the week, months of the year or holidays both *verleden* and *vorig* are possible but most usual is *afgelopen*, e.g. *afgelopen zaterdag* (= *vorige week zaterdag*, *zaterdag voor een week*) – last Saturday, *afgelopen maart* (= *maart vorig jaar*, *vorig jaar maart*) – last March, *afgelopen kerst* – last Christmas. Also *de afgelopen week* – the last week.

In very formal style (in letters, for example) one hears *jongstleden*, abbreviated to *jl.* in letters, e.g. *jongstleden maandag* or *maandag jongstleden* (compare 'Monday last'), *Naar aanleiding van uw brief van 10 mei jl.* – With reference to your letter of the tenth of May (last).

'Last night' is either *gisteravond* or *vannacht*, usually the former. If one means 'last evening', i.e. before lights out, *gisteravond* must be used, but if one means 'late last night' after one had gone to bed, *vannacht* is the appropriate word, e.g. *Gisteravond hadden we bezoek* – Last night we had visitors, *Ik kon vannacht niet slapen* – I couldn't sleep last night. The same distinction applies to *vanavond/vannacht* (tonight).

'Last' as an adjective outside the above expressions of time can also cause problems because in English there is an ambiguity which does not exist in Dutch: 'In my last letter to him I wrote that...' *vorig* must be used if the meaning is 'previous' but *laatst* is required if it means the 'last/final' letter that I ever wrote to him. The same distinction thus applies to 'last Sunday' (*vorige/afgelopen zondag*) and 'the last Sunday in May' (*de laatste zondag in mei*) because *laatst* is a superlative and *afgelopen/verleden/vorig* are

not. But note *de laatste/afgelopen weken/maanden* (the last weeks/months) e.g. *Ik heb de laatste/afgelopen paar weken niets van hem gehoord* – I haven't heard anything from him the last few weeks (= recently). (*de laatste tijd* = lately, recently, cf. 'recently')

If 'last' means 'latest, most recent', although *laatst* is used with this meaning too, as is *jongst*, *nieuwst* is the best translation, e.g. *de nieuwste/jongste aflevering van die televisiereeks* – the latest episode of that tv series, *Heb je Woody Allens nieuwste film gezien?* – Have you seen Woody Allen's last/latest/most recent film?, *Ik heb het gelezen in het jongste artikel van Chomsky* – I read it in Chomsky's latest article. (cf. 'recent')

(at) last, finally:

eindelijk, *ten laatste*, *tenslotte*, *tot slot*, *uiteindelijk*

The 'at last' or 'finally' that one expresses with an air of relief, as in 'And finally he showed up' is always *eindelijk*, e.g. *En eindelijk kwam hij opdagen*.

Uiteindelijk, on the other hand, expresses 'eventually', e.g. *Wat wil je uiteindelijk met je graad gaan doen?* – What do you want to do with your degree eventually?¹

If there are no connotations of relief, the word that is required is most likely to be *tenslotte*, which is sometimes written as two words, e.g. *En ik wil tenslotte zeggen, dames en heren...* – And finally I would like to say, ladies and gentlemen... (A less common possibility here would be *tot slot*); *Wat heeft hij tenslotte gedaan?* – What did he finally do/What did he do in the end? This example ends up very close in meaning to *Wat heeft hij uiteindelijk gedaan?* – What did he eventually do?

When enumerating a list of things which have been numbered firstly, secondly, thirdly and 'finally' (i.e. lastly), for example, one says either *ten laatste* or *ten slotte*, both of which are compatible with *ten eerste*, *ten tweede*, *ten derde* etc.

It should be noted that *tenslotte* is also the most common way of expressing 'after all' in Dutch, e.g. *Je zult het hem uiteindelijk moeten vergoeden want jij was tenslotte schuldig/had tenslotte de schuld* – You'll eventually

¹ Note that *eventueel* does not mean 'eventually'. It is used adverbially and adjectivally to express a possibility or an alternative, e.g. *Hij komt maandag of eventueel dinsdag* – He's coming on Monday or possibly Tuesday/or alternatively on Tuesday, *De eventuele gevolgen daarvan moeten nog onderzocht worden* – The possible/potential consequences thereof still have to be investigated.

have to reimburse him for it because it was after all your fault. In this sense *tenslotte* is sometimes replaced by *per slot van rekening*. (cf. 'after all')

late:

(te) laat, vertraagd worden, vertraging hebben, wijlen

When one is 'late' in Dutch, one is *te laat*, e.g. *Het college begon om tien uur maar ik kwam te laat* – The lecture began at ten o'clock but I arrived late, *De film begon vijf minuten te laat* – The film began five minutes late; compare the semantically different *De film is laat begonnen* – The film began late (i.e. at midnight). *Te* is not necessary if *laat* is qualified in some other way, e.g. *Waarom was je zo laat?* – Why were you so late?

Trains, planes etc. *hebben vertraging* (to be late) or *worden vertraagd* (to be delayed), e.g. *De trein uit Italië heeft drie uur vertraging* – The train from Italy is three hours late, *Vlucht 311 uit Moskou is (met twee uur) vertraagd* – Flight 311 from Moscow has been delayed (by two hours).

The formal word *wijlen* translates 'late' with reference to deceased people but appears in a word order different from English, e.g. *wijlen de heer/mevrouw R.M. de Smet* – The late Mr./Mrs. R.M. de Smet.

to laugh (at):

glimlachen (naar/tegen), *lachen* (om), *toelachen*, *uitlachen*

'To laugh at s.t.' is *lachen om* (*lachte*, *gelachen*), e.g. *Wij hebben zo om die grap gelachen* – We laughed at that joke so much. 'To laugh at s.o.' in the sense of 'to ridicule s.o.' is *uitlachen*, e.g. *Ze lachen me uit* (= *Ze vinden me belachelijk*) – They're laughing at me (= They find me ridiculous). *Lachen om* can also have a personal object, in which case it means laughing at s.o. because he is funny, not at his expense, e.g. *We lachen om jou, niet om de flauwe grap die je net verteld hebt* – We're laughing at you, not at the weak joke you just told. Note: *hard lachen* (to laugh hard), *hardop lachen* (to laugh out loud, cf. 'loud').

If someone looks at you and you 'laugh/smile' in return, the expression required is *iemand toelachen* or *glimlachen tegen iemand*, e.g. *Ik lach je tóe, niet uit* – I'm smiling, not laughing, at you, *Ik lachte hem toe = Ik glimlachte vriendelijk tegen hem*² – I smiled at him. *Glimlachen naar* also exists but is of shorter duration than *glimlachen tegen*; it is similar to the

² *Lachen* (*lachte*, *gelachen*) is still partially irregular but *glimlachen* (*glimlachte*, *geglimlacht*) is entirely weak and not separable.

distinction between *naar iemand kijken* and *iemand aankijken*. (cf. 'to look at')

Zich doodlachen means 'to split one's sides laughing'. There are numerous other expressions in Dutch with this meaning (e.g. *schateren/gieren van het lachen* – to roar/shriek with laughter) but this is a good stand-by.

'To laugh to o.s.' is in *zichzelf lachen* the expression *binnenpretjes hebben* renders 'to chuckle to o.s.' (while thinking of s.t. funny).

to learn:

aanleren, *afleren*, *leren*, *vernemen*

The dominant word is *leren*. 'To learn s.t. by heart' is *iets van buiten/uit je hoofd leren*,³ e.g. *Hij had als kind de hele bijbel van buiten/uit zijn hoofd geleerd* – He had learnt the whole Bible by heart as a child. (cf. 'memory') 'To learn to do s.t.' is *iets leren doen* (without *te*), which requires a double infinitive construction in the perfect, e.g. *Ik heb leren zwemmen* – I have learnt to swim. The verb 'to teach' is also commonly *leren*, thus *Ik heb hem leren zwemmen* – I taught him to swim. (cf. 'to teach')

The distinction between *leren* and *aanleren* is subtle. The latter has connotations of 'to acquire by learning', e.g. *Het is niet zo makkelijk om een nieuwe taal aan te leren* – It's not so easy to learn/acquire a new language (*leren* is possible here too), *Dat is een aangeleerde vaardigheid/smaak* – That's an acquired skill/taste.

If one has forgotten s.t. that one has learnt there is a special verb, *verleren*, e.g. *Fietsen verloor je nooit* – You never forget how to ride a bike. (cf. 'to forget') 'To unlearn' something one has previously learnt is *afleren*, e.g. *Dat heb ik verkeerd geleerd en nu moet ik het op de één of andere manier afleren* – I learnt that incorrectly and now I have to unlearn it somehow.

Vernemen renders 'to learn' s.t. in the sense of being told about it, i.e. hearing about it, and is dealt with under 'to hear'. (cf. 'to hear')

³ In more formal style one hears *uit het hoofd leren*.

(at) least:

althans, minstens, niet in het minst, op z'n minst, tenminste

The most commonly used word to render 'at least' is *minstens*; identical in meaning and almost as commonly used is *tenminste*, which is sometimes written as two words, e.g. *Het land werd geregeerd door een oeroude koning die minstens/tenminste 90 was* – The country was ruled by a terribly old king who was at least 90.

Op z'n minst is close in meaning but can differ from the above in rendering the English 'at the very least', e.g. *Hoeveel ga je hem geven voor die prachtige antieke kast? Je moet hem er op z'n (aller)minst/ minstens f5000 voor geven* – How much are you going to offer him for that beautiful antique cupboard? You'll have to give him 5000 guilders for it at the very least.

Althans is probably the hardest of the options listed above for English people to learn to use. It usually stands at the beginning of a sentence and relates back to something just stated which the speaker then further qualifies, e.g. *Hij wil al zijn schulden terugbetalen. Althans, dat is wat hij mij verteld heeft/Dat is wat hij mij althans verteld heeft* – He wants to pay back all his debts. At least that's what he told me. *Althans* can always be replaced by *tenminste* (but not *minstens*).

Niet in het minst renders 'not (in) the least', e.g. *Hij is er niet in het minst bang voor* – He's not in the least afraid of it.

Cf. *ruim* under 'about'.

to leave:

achterlaten, afgaan, laten, nalaten, opstappen, uitgaan, verlaten, vertrekken, weggaan

The dominant word is *laten* (*liet, gelaten*), which also translates 'to let' (cf. 'to let'), e.g. *Laat het op tafel liggen/in de hoek staan* – Leave it on the table/in the corner, *Mijn zoontje laat me nooit met rust* – My little boy never leaves me alone/in peace. *Achterlaten* renders 'to leave' a person in the sense of 'to leave behind', e.g. *Koningin Beatrix ging met vakantie naar Oostenrijk en liet de kinderen in Nederland achter* – Queen Beatrix went off to Austria on holidays and left the children (behind) in Holland. 'To leave s.o. in the lurch' is *iemand in de steek laten*.

Verlaten is a transitive verb and must always be accompanied by an object, whether it be a place or a person, e.g. *De man ging het postkantoor binnen en verliet het onmiddellijk weer* – The man went into the post-office and

left it again immediately, *Ik heb mijn vrouw verlaten* – I have left my wife (i.e. for good, compare *iemand achterlaten* above). The latter example, meaning separation of husband and wife, can also be expressed by *bij zijn vrouw/haar man weggaan* – to leave one's wife/husband. With reference to 'leaving' rooms and houses it is more usual to use *uitgaan* (the opposite of *ingaan*, cf. 'to enter') than *verlaten*, e.g. *Hij ging de kamer uit/Hij verliet de kamer* – He went out of the room/He left the room, *Hoe laat ga je 's ochtends de deur/het huis uit?* – What time do you leave home/go out the door in the morning? (*verlaten* is not possible here)

Weggaan and *vertrekken* (*vertrok, is vertrokken*) are intransitive. The latter is often confused by non-natives with *verlaten*, which is always transitive. Note that 'to leave' a town or country in the sense of 'to depart from' is rendered by *vertrekken uit*, e.g. *Ze zijn om tien uur uit Venetië vertrokken/weggegaan* – They left Venice at ten o'clock. *Weggaan* and *vertrekken* are more or less synonymous but are not generally speaking interchangeable: trains, buses etc. *vertrekken* and people either *vertrekken* or *weggaan*, e.g. *Hoe laat vertrekt de bus/je vader?* – What time is the bus/your father leaving? Using *vertrekken* with reference to the father here implies he is going on a trip, not simply leaving for work, home etc. which would require *weggaan*, *Mijn vader gaat om zeven uur weg* – My father leaves at seven o'clock. 'To leave home' is *van huis (weg)gaan*, e.g. *Mijn vader gaat om zeven uur van huis (weg)* – My father leaves home at seven o'clock. *Uit huis weggaan* refers to a child leaving home for good, *Jan was achttien toen hij uit huis wegging* – Jan was eighteen when he left home.

'To leave school' in the sense of stopping school is *van school (af)gaan* (compare *van huis [weg]gaan* above), e.g. *Mijn neef is vorig jaar van school (af)gegaan* – My cousin left/finished school last year. But a 'school leaver' is *de schoolverlater*.

'To leave' s.o. money in a will, for example, is *nalaten*, e.g. *Hij is vorig jaar overleden en heeft zijn vrouw geen cent nagelaten* – He died last year and didn't leave his wife a penny. *Nalaten* also has another meaning. (cf. 'to neglect')

Opstappen is a colloquial word for 'to leave, get going', e.g. *Nou zeg, het is al erg laat. Ik moet opstappen* – I say, it's already quite late. I'd better leave/be going. *Ik moet weg*, where the *gaan* is understood, is also possible.

legal:

legaal, wettelijk, wettig

The distinction between *wettelijk* and *wettig* is difficult. *Wettig* has connotations of 'legitimate' (= lawful, approved by law), e.g. *Dit document is niet wettig* – This document isn't legal, *Dat geld was wettig betaalmiddel tijdens de Japanse bezetting* – That money was legal tender during the Japanese occupation, *Dat is een onwettig huwelijk* – That's an illegal/illegitimate marriage; an 'illegitimate child' is *een onecht/onwettig/buitenechtelijk kind*, the first alternative being the most usual and the others sounding rather formal.

Wettelijk means 'statutory' (= as laid down in the law), e.g. *Dat is de wettelijke wachtperiode/snelheid* – That's the legal/statutory waiting time/speed, *We moeten wachten tot er een wettelijke regeling komt; voor die tijd bestaat er geen wettig/onwettig* – We'll have to wait until there's a statutory regulation; until then there's no such thing as legal/illegal.

Legaal/illegaal are used in all cases not covered by the above and mean 'allowed/prohibited by law', but *illegaal* is more commonly used than *legaal*, e.g. *In dit land is het illegaal om op de stoep te parkeren* – It's illegal to park on the sidewalk in this country. But in natural speech one is more likely to hear *verboden* or *tegen de wet* than *illegaal*.

to let:

binnenlaten, laten, loslaten, toelaten, verhuren

The dominant word is *laten*, e.g. *Laat me alsjeblieft naar de bioscoop gaan* – Please let me go to the cinema, *Laten we vanavond thuisblijven* – Let's stay home tonight. *Laten* also commonly translates 'to leave'. (cf. 'to leave')

Toelaten actually means 'to admit, permit' and only rarely translates 'to let', e.g. *Dat soort dingen laten ze hier niet toe* – They don't let that sort of thing happen here (= don't permit/allow); in higher style it is interchangeable in this sense with *toestaan*, but not in the sense of 'to admit', e.g. *Ik ben tot de universiteit toegelaten* – I've been admitted to (the) university.

Binnenlaten is 'to let in' (= enter), e.g. *Laat me alsjeblieft binnen* – Please let me in.

Loslaten renders 'to let s.o. go' (= free), *Laat me los* – Let go of me, *Hij heeft een week in voorarrest gezeten maar toen moest de politie hem*

loslaten – He was held in custody for a week but then the police had to let him go.

Verhuren is 'to let' in the sense of 'to rent, hire'. (cf. 'to hire')

to lift:

hijzen, (op)heffen, oplichten, opstijgen, (op)tillen, omhoog-

The dominant word is *(op)tillen*, the *op* rendering 'up' as in 'to lift up'; sometimes *omhoog* (= *in de hoogte*) is also used in collaboration with verbs to render the same thing, e.g. *De reus tilde zijn hand op/omhoog, pakte de kabouter bij de kraag en wierp hem uit het raam* – The giant lifted up his hand, took hold of the gnome by the collar and threw him out of the window. *(Op)tillen* is the verb required when referring to lifting (heavy) objects, e.g. *Wil je me even helpen deze tafel op te tillen?* – Would you mind helping me lift this table (up)?, *De patiënt kon met moeite zijn hoofd van het kussen optillen* – The patient had trouble lifting his head (up) off the pillow, *Hij tilde de zak op zijn rug* – He lifted the bag on his back, *Dat kan ik alleen niet tillen* – I can't lift that on my own; in these two examples *tillen* can also translate as 'to carry'. It seems that where 'up' is omitted in English, so *op* is omitted in Dutch; where it can be inserted in English, it must be inserted in Dutch. *Tillen* could be used of a crane but more usual would be *hijzen* (*hees, gehesen*) (= to hoist).

In many contexts *(op)tillen* and *(op)lichten* are interchangeable,⁴ e.g. *Licht/til je voeten op* – Lift your feet (up) (i.e. because you're dragging them or because I want to put a cushion under them), *Als je die asbak even oplicht/optilt kan ik het tafelkleed rechtekken* – If you lift up the ashtray, I'll be able to straighten the table-cloth.

Dictionaries may suggest *(op)heffen* as a means of translating 'to lift (up)' but this is rarely the case. Note, however, *de heftruck* – fork-lift.

'To lift off' (= take off) of a plane is *opstijgen* (*steeg op, is opgestegen*). (cf. 'to rise')

⁴ I have had difficulty in pinpointing the difference between *(op)lichten* and *(op)tillen*. The consensus of opinion is as follows. The former is less usual, possibly a bit old-fashioned and the latter implies, if anything, more effort. In addition, *lichten* (without *op*) is found in many standard expressions, e.g. *het anker lichten* – to lift anchor, *een bezonken schip lichten* – to lift/raise a sunken ship.

to light:

aansteken, ontsteken, opsteken

The most common word for 'to light', i.e. set fire to s.t., is *aansteken* (*stak aan, aangestoken*), e.g. *Ze stak een kaars aan* – She lit a candle. It is also used with reference to cigarettes and cigars except when 'to light up a cigarette/cigar' is synonymous with 'to smoke a cigarette/cigar', in which case the verb required is *opsteken*, e.g. *Hij was zo zenuwachtig dat hij een sigaretje moest opsteken* – He was so nervous he had to light up (= to have/smoke) a cigarette. Note *de aansteker* (cigarette lighter). *In brand/de fik steken* (the latter is coll.) is a common way of expressing 'to set alight/fire to'. (cf. 'to burn')

An elevated synonym of *aansteken* is *ontsteken* – compare 'to light' and 'to ignite' in English. When driving into a tunnel in Holland the sign reads *Ontsteekt uw lichten* – Put on your lights; in speech one would say *Doe uw lichten aan*. (cf. 'to put on') As *ontsteken* literally means 'to ignite', the ignition of a car is *de ontsteking* which in a figurative sense also translates 'inflammation'.

to like:

bevallen, graag + verb, graag willen, houden van, lusten, mee-/tegenvallen, mogen, smaken, aardig/leuk/lekker vinden

This is an exceedingly difficult word to translate. The dominant word is *houden van* but as it also means 'to love' (cf. 'to love'), it is often better avoided with reference to people if it is necessary to avoid that ambiguity, e.g. *Ik hou van sinaasappels* – I like/love oranges; in this example it is unimportant whether one interprets *houden van* as meaning 'like' or 'love'; the same applies to *Ik hou van mijn moeder* – I love my mother/like my mother a lot. (cf. 'to love')

There are two ways of saying 'to like' of people which avoid the connotation of 'love', (*graag*) *mogen* and *aardig vinden*, e.g. *Ik mag hem heel graag/ik mag hem niet, ik vind hem erg aardig/ik vind hem niet aardig* – I like him/I don't like him, *Ik mag hem wel* – I quite like him. This is an idiomatic use of *mogen* which is reserved exclusively for liking people. *Leuk vinden* can be applied to anything at all, including people but not food, e.g. *Vond je de film/picknick/avond/zeeman wel leuk?* – Did you like the film/picnic/evening/sailor?⁵ (cf. *lekker vinden* in the next paragraph) (cf. 'nice')

⁵ Use of *aardig vinden* is not limited to people; it can also be used of things although in such cases *leuk vinden* may be a safer option, e.g. *Ik vond dat boek/die hoed ook wel aardig* – I quite liked that book/hat too.

As has been implied above, *houden van* can be used with reference to food, but there is another possibility, *lusten*, e.g. *Lust je Chinees eten?* – Do you like Chinese food? Another common way of expressing 'to like' food is with *lekker vinden*, e.g. *Vind je Chinees eten wel lekker? Smaken* (lit. to taste, intr.) is sometimes used idiomatically in contexts where we would say 'like' in English, e.g. *Laat het jelu smaken* – I hope you like it (= enjoy it), *Heeft het gesmaakt?* – Did you like it? (= lit. Did it taste good?). (cf. 'to taste')

Bevallen (with *zijn*) is to be compared with *gefallen* and *plaître* in German and French respectively, as it is usually used as an impersonal verb, e.g. *Het leven in Australië bevalt me best* – I really like life in Australia, *Hoe beviel het (je) in Spanje?* – How did you like (it in) Spain? The former example could also be expressed as *Ik hou van het leven in Australië*. But although *bevallen* is usually used impersonally; it can take a personal subject, e.g. *Ik geloof dat ik ze goed bevallen ben want ze willen dat ik nog eens langskom* – I think they liked me because they want me to come again. It is not however common to use *bevallen* personally in this way.

The extremely idiomatic *mee-* and *tegenvallen* (with *zijn*), although not primarily meaning 'to (dis)like', can have this meaning in some contexts, e.g. *Ik dacht dat ik China verschrikkelijk zou vinden maar het viel eigenlijk wel meelen het viel inderdaad niet mee* – I thought I'd hate China but I quite liked it really/and I didn't like it either, *Ik dacht dat ik China heerlijk zou vinden maar het viel (me) vreselijk tegen* – I thought I'd love China but it didn't appeal to me/I didn't like it (note the use of the optional indirect object pronoun with *tegenvallen*). *Meevallen* is used when things turn out better than expected and *tegenvallen* is the opposite.

'To like **doing/to do** s.t.' can be expressed in two ways. The simpler and more common way is to use *graag* in combination with the verb in question, e.g. *Ik lees graag* – I like reading/to read, *Dat kind speelt graag in de zandbak* – That child likes playing in the sandbox. In the first example 'reading' can be seen as a noun and therefore it is also possible to say *Ik hou van lezen*. It is also possible to express the latter example with *houden van*, but only with an *er* construction which is the other way of translating 'to like doing/to do', e.g. *Dat kind houdt ervan (om) in de zandbak te spelen*.⁶ Compare: *Ze houdt van een koude douche* – She likes a cold shower, *Ze neemt graag 's ochtends een koude douche*/*Ze houdt ervan om 's morgens een koude douche te nemen* – She likes taking a cold shower in the morning.

⁶ Although the *om* is shown here as being optional, in practice such constructions are now beginning to sound rather unnatural without *om*, although the traditional purist in Holland has long argued that *om* should be omitted where *om....te* does not mean 'in order to', in which case the *om* has never been optional.

'Would like' is worthy of special mention as it occurs so frequently and is a somewhat difficult construction in Dutch. Compare the following synonymous expressions involving *graag willen*:

Ik zou graag een kopje koffie willen (hebben).

Ik wou graag een kopje koffie (hebben).

The question 'What would you like?', to which the above could feasibly be the answer, has quite a different form, however: *Wat wil je (drinken)?* or *Wat zou je willen drinken?* (i.e. no *graag*). In a shop, for example, where an assistant may ask 'What would you like?' the question would be *Waarmee kan ik u van dienst zijn?* or *Wat zoekt u?* and the answer would be one of the above *graag willen* constructions (cf. 'to serve'). Note the following example: *Ik reis vrij veel maar niet zo veel als ik (wel) zou willen* – I travel a lot but not as much as I would like to (no *graag*). If you 'want' or 'would like' s.o. else to do s.t., a *dat* construction must be used in Dutch, e.g. *Ik wou graag dat je me meer hielp met mijn huiswerk, moeder* – I would like you to help me more with my homework, mother.⁷ Thus *Ik/hij wil dat jij...etc.* renders 'I/he want(s) you to...etc.'

to listen:

aanhoren, af luisteren, beluisteren, luisteren (naar), meeluisteren, toehoren

The dominant word is *luisteren*, e.g. *Vader zit naar de radio te luisteren* – Father is listening to the radio, *Luister eens* – Listen here. As with *antwoorden op* and *beantwoorden* (cf. 'to answer'), the prefix *be-* makes a transitive verb of the root form *luisteren* and therefore does away with the necessity to use a preposition, e.g. *Ik heb die uitzending beluisterd en vond hem erg interessant*. *Luisteren naar* would not be incorrect here either. On the whole the difference is one of style, *beluisteren* being more formal, but in the following example, where the object is a **person**, only *luisteren naar* is possible: *We hebben vroeger op oudejaarsavond altijd naar Wim Kan geluisterd/de show van Wim Kan beluisterd/naar de show van Wim Kan geluisterd* – We always used to listen to Wim Kan on New Year's Eve/to Wim Kan's show on New Year's Eve.

Afluisteren is 'to listen in' where one shouldn't, i.e. 'to eavesdrop', e.g. *Zijn telefoongesprekken worden door de politie afgeluisterd* – His telephone is being tapped by the police; *af luisteren* has connotations of espionage etc. But where s.o. is simply 'eavesdropping' or 'listening in' to your conversation, it is more appropriate to use *meeluisteren*, e.g. *Kijk eens Jan, die dame zit mee te luisteren* – Look Jan, that woman is listening in to us/eavesdropping.

⁷ With the insertion of *zo*, e.g. *Ik wou zo graag dat je...* the meaning changes to 'I wish you would...'

Aanhoren, which has several other meanings as well (cf. 'to hear'), translates 'to listen' in the following idiom above all: *niet om aan te horen zijn* – to be unbearable to listen to, e.g. *Die muziek is gewoon niet om aan te horen* – That music is just unbearable (= I can't bear listening to that music). In the following example the connotation of *aanhoren* is that one 'listened' in the sense of 'to hear s.o. out', *Ik heb zijn hele verhaal aangehoord want hij had een praatpaal nodig* – I listened to his whole story (= heard him out) because he needed to talk to someone.

In elevated style one may occasionally hear *toehoren* being used as a synonym for *luisteren*, but the noun *toehoorder* (listener) has a different connotation from the usual word *luisteraar*: a radio announcer will address his *luisteraars* but a speaker at a meeting or conference will address his *toehoorders* (= *het gehoor* – audience); in that context the audience can also be said to have *toegehoord* rather than to have *geluisterd*.

(a) little, small:

klein, -je, piepklein; een beetje, een woordje/mondje; weinig

The adjective 'little, small' is rendered by *klein*, which is simple enough. (Note that *smal* means 'narrow') Nevertheless, one must keep in mind that the Dutch have a strong preference for using the diminutive ending, particularly in speech, even in contexts where it has connotations other than simply making something small. In this regard it is a reasonably reliable rule of thumb always to diminutise the noun concerned where in English it is preceded by 'little' or 'small'; it is not at all unusual to use both *klein* and the diminutive ending in combination with each other, whereas it is not quite as usual to use *klein* without also diminutising the noun, e.g. *Hans en Grietje ontdekten een (klein) huisje in het bos dat helemaal van speculaas gemaakt was* – Hansel and Gretel discovered a little house in the forest that was completely made of gingerbread. *Piepklein* renders 'tiny, very small' and is also best used in combination with the diminutive.

'A little (bit)' is rendered by *een beetje*, e.g. *Ik ben vandaag een beetje ziek*. Only with reference to languages one can replace *een beetje* with *een woordje*, e.g. *Spreek je Nederlands? Och, een beetje/woordje* – Do you speak Dutch? A little/a word or two, *Hij spreekt een aardig woordje/mondje Nederlands* – He speaks a little Dutch/His Dutch isn't bad (ironical understatement).

Weinig is quite different in meaning from *een beetje*. It translates 'little' (= not much) as opposed to 'a little', e.g. *We hebben van de winter erg weinig regen gehad* – We've had very little rain this winter. Compare *Ik*

heb weinig geld (I have little money/not much money) and *Ik heb een beetje geld* (I have a little money).

to live:

leven, in leven zijn, logeren, wonen

This distinction between *leven* and *wonen* is common to many European languages: *leven* means 'to be alive' and *wonen* means 'to dwell, reside', e.g. *Willem de Zwijger leefde in de zestiende eeuw en hij woonde vrij lang in Delft* – William the Silent lived in the sixteenth century and he lived in Delft for quite some time. Although the previous sentence illustrates the basic difference between the two, a distinction which is usually obvious, there are occasions where *leven* must be used where one may be led to think by the rule given above that *wonen* would be required; this occurs in contexts where the connotation of 'to live' is 'to spend one's life', e.g. *Magellaan was een Portugees maar hij leefde in Spanje* – Magellan was a Portuguese but he lived in Spain, *Jij zou nooit in de tropen kunnen leven als je niet tegen vochtigheid kunt* – You could never live in the Tropics if you can't take humidity.

In leven zijn means 'to be alive' as opposed to being dead, a more elevated synonym of *leven*, e.g. *Is je moeder nog in leven/Leeft je moeder nog?* – Is your mother still alive?

Leven is also used with reference to animals 'living' in trees, underground etc., e.g. *Het vogelbekdier leeft onder de grond* – The platypus lives underground.

Logeren is 'to stay/spend the night' at s.o.'s house or in a hotel, e.g. *Wij gaan voor een week naar Engeland en zullen bij mijn broer logeren* – We're going to England for a week and will be living/staying at my brother's place. (cf. 'to stay')

These days the English loanword *live* is used with reference to tv and radio programmes which are broadcast 'live'; as the Dutch pronounce it [laif], it is also frequently written *life*.

to look:

eruitzien, kijken

There are countless expressions involving the verb 'to look' (+ a preposition) with an almost infinite number of ways of rendering them in Dutch. Consequently 'to look' is subdivided here into 'to look' and 'to look after, around, at, for, forward to, like, up.'

The verb 'to look' in the sense of 'to use one's eyes', not followed by a prepositional object, is rendered by *kijken*, e.g. *Ik durf niet te kijken* – I don't dare look, *Kom eens kijken* – Come and have a look, *Ik ben wezen/gaan kijken* – I went and had a look.

To look' in the sense of 'to have the appearance' is *eruitzien*, e.g. *Dat ziet er lekker uit* – That looks nice. (cf. 'to look like' and *staan under* 'to suit')

to look after:

letten op, passen op, zorgen voor

Letten op and *passen op*, not to be confused with *opletten* and *oppassen*,⁸ mean 'to look after s.t.' in the sense of 'to mind' (i.e. a baby, pet, shop), e.g. *Ga jij de boodschappen doen. Ik zal op de kinderen letten/passen* – You go and do the shopping. I'll look after the kids.

To look after s.t. or s.o.' in the sense of 'to take care of' is *zorgen voor*, e.g. *Hij zorgt heel goed voor zijn oma* – He really looks after/takes care of his grandma. With reference to people it can be replaced by *verzorgen* in higher style. *Zorgen voor* can also be used figuratively of things, e.g. *Haal jij de was van de lijn terwijl ik voor het eten zorg* – You fetch the washing from the line while I look after/take care of the food. (cf. 'to care')

to look around:

omkijken, om zich heen kijken, rondkijken

Each of these three verbs expresses a physically different action depending on what one is doing with one's body: *omkijken* is 'to look over one's shoulder', e.g. *Hij hoorde iets achter zijn rug bewegen en keek om* – He heard something moving behind him and looked around.

Om zich heen kijken means 'to look right around oneself through 360°', e.g. *Hij bleef staan en keek om zich heen. Hij was inderdaad verdwaald* – He stopped and looked (all) around. He had indeed lost his way.

Oppassen voor means 'to watch out for', e.g. *Pas op voor de hond* – Watch out or/beware of the dog; compare *Pas alsjeblieft op de hond* (< *passen op*) – Please mind/look after the dog. The distinction between *opletten* (to watch out) and *letten op* (to mind, pay attention to) is similar to that between *oppassen* and *passen op*. Note *Pas op/let op/kijk uit* – Watch out/be careful (< *oppassen/opletten/uitkijken*). *Uitkijken naar* also means 'to look out for s.t., be on the lookout for s.t.', e.g. *Vader zal uitkijken naar een tweedehands Renaultje voor me* – Dad is going to look out for a second-hand Renault for me.

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omkijken, om zich heen kijken, rondkijken

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Rondkijken translates the figurative 'to look around' as in a shop or at a fair etc., e.g. *Voordat ik iets koop wil ik even rondkijken* – Before I buy anything I want to have a look round/look around.

to look at: (cf. 'to watch')

aankijken, bekijken, gadeslaan, inkijken, inzien, kijken naar, kijken op, een kijkje nemen

The subtle distinction made in English between 'looking' and 'watching' (i.e. the latter referring to looking at s.t. for a prolonged period of time) does not exist in Dutch and therefore the expression *kijken naar* translates both 'to look at' and 'to watch' (cf. 'to watch'), e.g. *We kijken naar een voetbalwedstrijd op de televisie* – We're watching a football match on television. The expression 'to watch tv' has now become *televisie kijken*, where the preposition *naar* is optional if referring to what one is doing at a particular moment, e.g. *We zitten (naar de) televisie te kijken* – We're watching tv; but if referring to one's usual practice of an evening, it is omitted, e.g. *Wij kijken 's avonds televisie* – We watch tv in the evenings.⁹

The distinction between *kijken naar* and *aankijken* on the one hand, and *kijken naar* and *bekijken* on the other, can be difficult for speakers of English to grasp. The object of *aankijken* is usually a person and it translates 'to look at s.o.' if one is looking another person in the face, eye to eye, e.g. *In de trein zat ik tegenover een oudere dame die me de hele weg naar Edam zat aan te kijken* – In the train I sat opposite an elderly lady who sat there looking/staring at me all the way to Edam, *Hij durfde me niet aan te kijken* – He didn't dare to look at me/look me in the eye. *Kijken naar* refers to looking in the direction of s.o. or s.t., e.g. *Hij stapte in, ging naast mij zitten, keek naar me en ging toen tegenover me zitten* – He got in, sat down next to me, looked at me and then went and sat (down) opposite me, *Hij keek naar me om mijn aandacht te trekken* – He looked at me to get my attention. Note the very common idiomatic exclamation *Kijk eens aan* – Well, take a look at that/Have you ever!

Whereas the object of *aankijken* is usually a person, as mentioned above, the object of *bekijken* is never personal; it refers to looking at s.t. in the figurative sense (= examining), e.g. *Ik kan het je nog niet zeggen want ik moet de zaak nog goed bekijken* – I can't tell you yet because I've got to have a good look at the matter, *Hoe je het ook bekijkt...* – However you look at it...(an issue), *Ik wil de vaas goed bekijken voordat ik hem koop* – I want to look at the vase before I buy it; here one wishes to subject the vase to more than a cursory glance and thus *bekijken* is more appropriate than

⁹ This distinction applies only to this verb; *Wij luisteren naar muziek* – We listen/are listening to music, for example, requires *naar* in both cases. (cf. 'to listen')

kijken naar although the latter would not be wrong here and would render much the same meaning. (Compare *studeren* and *bestuderen* under 'to study')

Just with reference to books, it is preferable to use *inkijken* or *inzien* instead of *bekijken* when taking a good look at a book, e.g. *Ik wil er/het nog even inkijken/ik wil het nog even inzien voordat ik het koop* – I want to have a look at it before I buy it¹⁰; *een kijkje nemen in* could also be used here (see below). *Inkijken* can also render 'to look on', i.e. to share s.o. else's book, e.g. *Mag ik bij jou inkijken?* – Can I look on with you (= share your book? This could also be expressed as *Mag ik (met je) meekijken?*

Kijken op is used only for 'looking at' maps as well as at watches and clocks in order to find out the time, e.g. *Zullen we even op de kaart kijken waar dat stadje ligt?* – Shall we look at the map to see where that town is situated?, *De leraar keek op zijn horloge en toen, zonder iets te zeggen, verliet hij ineens het lokaal* – The teacher looked at his watch and then, without saying anything, he suddenly left the classroom. This verb is used figuratively, not unlike English, with reference to looking twice at money, i.e. (not) worrying about what things cost, e.g. *Hij kijkt op een cent* – He looks twice at his money/is stingy, *Hij kijkt niet op een dubbeltje meer of minder* – He doesn't look twice at his money/isn't stingy.

A formal means of expressing 'to watch', in the sense of 'to observe', is *gadeslaan* (*sloeg gade, gadegeslagen*) which has definite connotations of watching/observing intently, e.g. *Gadegeslagen door 6000 toeschouwers heeft Pat Cash Ivan Lendl verslagen* – Watched by 6000 spectators Pat Cash beat Ivan Lendl.

'To have/take a look at s.t.' is *een kijkje nemen* (usually without an object in Dutch) which is not nearly as common in Dutch as the corresponding English idiom, e.g. *Heb je ons nieuwe huis al gezien? Als we tijd hebben zullen we (er) morgen een kijkje nemen* – Have you seen our new house yet? If we've got time, we'll take a look at it tomorrow.

to look for:

zoeken (naar), op zoek zijn naar

The difficulty here is constituted by when to and when not to use *naar* before the object of the verb *zoeken*. When one is looking for things which are lost (i.e. *zoek zijn*), one has the choice of either inserting it or omitting

¹⁰ Strictly speaking there is a syntactical difference between *Ik wil er nog even inkijken* (< *kijken in*) and *Ik wil het nog even inkijken* (< *inkijken*) but in practice it is frequently ignored and one sees *Ik wil er nog even inkijken*.

it, e.g. *Ik zoek (naar) mijn muts* – I'm looking for my cap. If a firm is 'looking for' a secretary, for example, *naar* would be omitted, as to include it would imply that the one they have is lost. In fact, this applies to anything one is 'looking for' or 'seeking' that has not been lost but which one simply wishes to acquire, e.g. *Hij heeft zijn geluk in Australië gezocht* – He sought/looked for his fortune in Australia, *Ik zoek een baan* – I'm looking for a job. Compare *Hij zoekt zijn vader* (He's somewhere around here, i.e. not really lost) and *Hij zoekt naar zijn vader* (The father is missing).

Op zoek zijn naar is simply a periphrastic synonym of *zoeken (naar)* and is similar in feeling to 'to go in search of', e.g. *In Djakarta waren we op zoek naar antiquiteiten uit het koloniale tijdperk* – In Jakarta we were looking for/went in search of antiques from the colonial era.

to look forward to:

uitzien naar, zich verheugen op, tegemoet zien

The most common expression in the sense of looking forward with pleasure to some future event is *zich verheugen op*, e.g. *De kinderen verheugen zich al op de vakantie* – The children are already looking forward to the holidays. *Uitzien naar* is used with the same meaning, although it is not nearly as common as *zich verheugen op*, e.g. *De kinderen zien al uit naar de vakantie* – The children are already looking forward to the holidays.

A rather formal expression meaning 'to look forward to', not in the sense of with pleasure but simply with expectation of a future event, is *tegemoet zien*, e.g. *De eerste minister heeft verklaard dat het land een rooskleurige toekomst tegemoet kan zien* – The prime minister declared that the country can look forward to/expect a rosy future. In formal correspondence this verb is also used in the following standard expressions, *Graag zien wij een spoedig antwoord tegemoet/Uw spoedig antwoord graag/gaarne tegemoetziende* – Looking forward to hearing from you soon, although the Dutch sounds much more formal than this.

to look like:

eruitzien, lijken op.

If s.o. has an inherent or physical resemblance to s.o. else the verb required is *lijken op*, e.g. *Je lijkt sprekend op je moeder/koningin Beatrix* – You look so like your mother/Queen Beatrix. If 'to look like' refers to a temporary resemblance due to one's dress, *eruitzien* is required, e.g. *Je*

ziet er uit als een hoer – You look like a whore.¹¹ With reference to things, as opposed to people, looking like other things, both *lijken op* and *eruitzien* are used with no difference in meaning, e.g. *Dit is van plastic maar het lijkt op metaal/het ziet eruit als metaal* – This is made of plastic but it looks like metal. When no comparison is being made and 'to look like' means 'to seem' and is followed by a clause, this is a case for *eruitzien*, e.g. *Het ziet er naar uit dat het gaat regenen* – It looks like/as if it's going to rain. (cf. 'to appear')

to look out: (cf. footnote under 'to look after')

to look up:

nakijken, naslaan, opkijken, opzoeken

'To look s.t. up' in a dictionary etc. is most usually *opzoeken*, e.g. *Ik heb het in het woordenboek opgezocht* – I looked it up in the dictionary. *Naslaan* (sloeg na, nageslagen) has this meaning too but is rather formal and has given rise to *het naslagwerk, -boek* (reference work, book). *Nakijken* is similar in meaning to *opzoeken* in this sense but implies checking what you thought was right is indeed correct, e.g. *Ik weet het zeker maar ik wil het toch wel even nakijken* – I know for sure but I'll look (= check) it up anyway. *Opzoeken* is also used 'to look up' people, i.e. to visit (cf. 'to visit'), *Toen hij in Amerika was heeft hij zijn tante opzocht* – When he was in America he looked up his aunt. *Nakijken* on the other hand also means 'to correct' exam papers etc. (cf. 'to correct')

'To look up' in the literal sense of 'to lift one's head' is *opkijken*, e.g. *Hij zat te lezen en toen ik binnenkwam keek hij niet eens op* – He was reading and when I came in he didn't even look up. It is also used figuratively meaning 'to be surprised/amazed, sit up in amazement', e.g. *Daar zal je moeder wel van opkijken* – That's going to surprise your mother. Compare *Daar hoor ik van op* – I'm surprised to hear that. (cf. 'to surprise')

to lose, lost:

kwijt raken/zijn, verdwalen/verdwaald, verliezen/verloren, wegraken, zoekraken, zoek zijn

Although the dominant word for 'to lose' is *verliezen* (*verloor, verloren*), the adjectival past participle 'lost' can be rendered in various ways in

¹¹ The Dutch are very inconsistent in their writing of this word; one sees both *eruitzien* and *er uitzien* as well as *je ziet eruit alsof je ziet er uit alsof...*

Dutch. *Kwijt zijn* is a common synonym of *verliezen* (or strictly speaking of *verloren hebben*) but it also means 'to be rid of', which *verliezen* does not, e.g. *Ik ben mijn pen kwijt/Ik heb mijn pen verloren* – I've lost my pen,¹² *Nu zijn we die verschrikkelijke burens eindelijk kwijt* – We've finally got rid of those terrible neighbours. Compare *kwijtraken* – 'to get rid of', e.g. *Hoe kunnen we die burens kwijt raken?* – How can we get rid of those neighbours?

'To lose' one's husband, child etc. through death is also *verliezen*, e.g. *Die vrouw heeft haar man in de oorlog verloren* – That woman lost her husband during the war. (*Zijn* is not possible here as the auxiliary as *zijn* implies negligence.)

*Kwijt zijn*¹³ refers to the action of 'having lost s.t.' (i.e. the state of the owner) and *zoek zijn* refers to 's.t. being lost' (i.e. the state of the object), e.g. *Als je iets kwijt bent, is het zoek* – If you have lost something, it is lost/missing, *Ik ben mijn pen kwijt/Mijn pen is zoek* – I can't find my pen. *Zoek zijn* implies more that something has been mislaid or is temporarily missing, rather than that it has been lost for good, which is expressed by *verliezen*.

'To lose one's way' is *verdwalen* (with *zijn*) (= *de weg kwijt zijn/raken*), e.g. *We zijn zondag in het bos wezen wandelen en we zijn verdwaald/de weg kwijtgeraakt* – We went walking in the forest on Sunday and got lost.

The figurative meaning of 'to be lost', as for example when watching a film with a complicated plot, has to be expressed in a round about way, e.g. *Ik snap deze film niet meer* – I'm lost = I don't understand this film any more, *Ik ben de draad (van het verhaal) kwijt* – I've lost the thread (of the story). Note *de kluts kwijt zijn* – to lose one's bearings/be disoriented.

¹² The ANS p.522 refers to a subtle distinction between *verliezen* conjugated with *hebben* and that conjugated with *zijn* and gives the following examples and explanation: *Waar heb je je horloge verloren? In het zwembad bij het verkleiden* – Where did you lose your watch? At the swimming pool while changing, *Ik kan je niet zeggen hoe laat het is, want ik ben mijn horloge verloren* – I can't tell you the time because I've lost my watch. In the former sentence there is somewhat more emphasis on the action of losing whereas in the latter it is the lost state that is emphasised. (cf. 'to forget') In short: one will hear both *zijn* and *hebben* being used indiscriminately, but it is safer to stick to *hebben*.

¹³ Although strictly speaking the distinction between *kwijt raken* and *kwijt zijn* is as explained in this section, one regularly hears the Dutch using *kwijt raken* intransitively in the sense of *kwijt zijn*, e.g. *Je moet opletten want anders raakt het kwijt* – You'd better be careful because otherwise it'll get lost. This seems to be a contamination of the forms *anders raak je het kwijt/anders raakt het weg; wegraken*, and the synonym *zoekraken*, are intransitive.

loud, aloud:

fel, hard, hardop, lawaaierig, luid, luidruchtig

The dominant word is *hard*; if a tv, radio or voice is 'too loud', it is *te hard*, e.g. *Je praat te hard* – You're talking too loudly, *Je moet die muziek niet zo hard zetten* – You shouldn't play that music so loudly.

'A loud voice' can be either *een harde* or *een luide stem* (more positive connotation than *hard*) and there is a standard expression *met luider stem* – in a loud voice. Colloquially *hard*, which also commonly translates 'fast', is more common than *luid*. (cf. 'fast')

'To say s.t. aloud/out loud' is *iets hardop zeggen*, e.g. *Zeg dat nog eens hardop* – Say that again aloud, as is 'to laugh out loud', e.g. *Hij lachte hardop toen hij het nieuws hoorde* – He laughed out loud when he heard the news; *luid lachen* is also possible if referring simply to the volume of the laughter, while *hard lachen* renders 'to laugh heartily'. If one 'thinks/prays aloud', this too is *hardop denken/bidden*. Similarly, *hardop lezen* means 'to read out/aloud' for/to oneself but 'to read s.t. out/aloud' for/to s.o. else is *iets voorlezen*, e.g. *Theo, lees eens voor wat er in dat briefje staat* – Theo, read out (aloud) what's written in that note. (cf. 'to read')

'Loud' in the sense of 'noisy' is *luidruchtig* or *lawaaierig* (cf. 'noise'), the former referring to voices and the latter to general racket, e.g. *De kinderen zijn zo luidruchtig* – The children are so loud/noisy/boisterous, *Ik vind het hier te lawaaierig* – I find it too noisy here.

'Loud' with reference to colours is *fel*, e.g. *Wat vind je van mijn nieuwe jurk? Ik vind de kleur eerlijk gezegd te fel* – What do you think of my new dress? To be quite honest, I find the colour a bit loud.

to love:

beminnen, houden van, lief hebben

The dominant word is *houden van*, which also commonly translates 'to like' (cf. 'to like'), e.g. *Ik hou van jou* – I love you, *Ik hou heel veel van mijn oma* – I really love my grandma, *Ik hou van Zwitserland* – I love/like Switzerland.

Beminnen sounds a bit poetic and is more likely to be heard in songs than in real life, just as *de minne* (love) is no longer used, only *de liefde*. *Iemand lief hebben*, the object of which is always a person, as is the case with *beminnen*, also sounds somewhat literary and old-fashioned.

the luck, lucky:

het beste, het geluk, de mazzel, (de) pech, (de) sterkte, het succes; boffen, geluk hebben, gelukwensen

Although the dominant word for 'luck' is *het geluk*, the corresponding adjective, *gelukkig*, usually means 'happy, fortunate(ly)', not 'lucky', although on occasions the distinction can be academic, e.g. *Dit is een gelukkige dag voor mij* – This is a happy/lucky day for me. (cf. 'happy') The dominant translation of 'to be lucky' is thus *geluk hebben*, e.g. *Jij hebt geluk gehad, zeg* – Gee, you've been lucky, but colloquially one frequently hears *boffen*, *Wat heb je geboft, zeg* – Gee, you've been lucky, *Ik heb zo geboft dat ik die baan gekregen heb* – I was so lucky that I got that job. Thus a 'lucky dog, pig' etc. is either a *geluksvogel* or a *bofkont* (coll.). Note also *Wat een bof(fer)* – What a stroke of luck. 'To be unlucky', however, is *pech hebben*, e.g. *Wat een pech!* – What bad luck, *Pech gehad!* – Stiff cheese/Too bad,¹⁴ *Ik heb een beetjelontzettende pech gehad* – I've had a bit of/terrible bad luck.

If one wishes s.o. '(good) luck', there are several things one can say: if s.o. is about to do an exam or attempt any feat that requires a certain amount of effort, a common expression of solidarity is *sterkte* (lit. I wish you strength). Another very general way of wishing people luck is with *'t beste* (= all the best) or *succes (met je examen)*. There is also an expression *iemand geluk (toe)wensen* (to wish s.o. luck), e.g. *We hebben het paar heel veel geluk (toe)gewenst met hun plannen* – We wished the couple good luck with their plans. The verb *gelukwensen* has assumed a meaning closely related to 'to congratulate'. (cf. 'to congratulate')

In colloquial Dutch the Yiddish/Hebrew word *mazzel* can replace *geluk* in the expression *geluk hebben*, e.g. *Dan heb je mazzel gehad, hè?* – Then you were lucky, weren't you?¹⁵

the lunch, lunchtime, to have lunch:

de lunch, het middageten, het middagmaal; tijdens de lunch, in de lunchpauze, tussen de middag; koffiedrinken, lunchen, tussen de middag eten, het middageten gebruiken/nuttigen

There is a variety of expressions involving the term 'lunch' which are rendered in a number of ways in Dutch. Depending on whether one is referring to the meal itself, whether it's hot or cold, to the time at which

¹⁴ The American expression 'too bad', where in British English one says 'what a pity/shame', is *wat jammer*.

¹⁵ *De mazzel* is also one of the many colloquial ways of saying 'good-bye' (compare 'bye, ta ta, toodalloo' etc.), e.g. *de mazzel, dáág, doe, doei*.

the meal is enjoyed or to the eating of the meal, one needs to make a choice from the above options.

The meal is these days usually referred to as *de lunch*.¹⁶ *Het middageten* is the word that was formerly used when the general populace had the main meal of the day (= *warm eten*)¹⁷ at midday. Nowadays that tradition tends to be found only in rural areas,¹⁸ e.g. *We doen de boodschappen na het middageten/na de lunch* – We'll do the shopping after lunch. Note that articles are always used with meals. *Het middagmaal* is not a common expression, nor is the word *maal* itself. (cf. 'meal')

The most usual way of saying 'at lunchtime' is *tussen de middag*, e.g. *Ik ga tussen de middag naar huis* – I'm going/go home at lunchtime; you may or may not be implying here that you are going home to have lunch; if you are, the sentence could be translated as 'I have lunch at home'. Compare *Waar zullen we tussen de middag eten?* – Where will we have lunch?, which could also be expressed as *Waar zullen we lunchen?* *De lunchpauze* can only be used with reference to the time workers and students get off to have lunch, e.g. *Alle leerlingen moeten tijdens de lunchpauze/middagpauze op school blijven* – All students have to stay at school at lunchtime/during the lunch break. *Tijdens de lunch* – which can be on a park bench – can mean much the same thing but can also be synonymous with *tijdens het middageten* (if it's a hot meal, e.g. Sunday lunch/dinner, and thus not on a park bench) and mean 'during the course of the meal', *Tijdens de lunch/het middageten* (= *onder het eten*) *stond hij op en verliet hij de kamer zonder te zeggen waarom* – During lunch (= during the meal) he got up and left the room without saying why.

Dictionaries and older grammars inform the student that *koffiedrinken* can mean 'to have lunch'.¹⁹ It may once have had that meaning but does not any more. Nowadays it simply means 'to have coffee' and as such commonly renders what the British would call 'morning/afternoon tea', e.g. *Kom morgen bij me koffiedrinken/op de koffie* – Come to my place for morning tea tomorrow. If you were inviting someone to come and have an informal lunch, you would be more likely to say *Kom morgen een*

¹⁶ Both *lunch* and *lunchen* are pronounced as if the vowel is a Dutch *u* (i.e. [œ]) and the *ch* is pronounced as [ʃ] or in substandard Dutch even tends to [s].

¹⁷ The Dutch, to whom even the thought of a cooked breakfast is anathema, have one hot meal a day and two bread meals (*broodmaaltijden*). Thus one may be asked in the evening *Heb je vandaag al warm gegeten?* – Have you had a hot meal, meaning in effect 'Did you have a *middageten* or simply a *lunch*?', although a *lunch* can be a cooked meal too. Thus one commonly hears *We gaan brood/warm eten vanavond* – We're having bread for dinner/We're having a hot/cooked meal tonight.

¹⁸ Thus I have even heard people suggest that *middageten* is lower class (compare 'tea' and 'dinner' in British English).

¹⁹ Nevertheless one may still find restaurants offering a light lunch called a *koffietafel* or *koffiemaaltijd* consisting of bread, cheese and sliced meats.

boterham bij me eten, as such a lunch would most likely be predominantly a bread meal in Holland. Otherwise one can say *Kom volgende week eens bij me lunchen* or *Kom volgende week eens tussen de middag bij me eten* – Come to my place for lunch some time (= *eens*) next week.

Like the word *middageten* itself, the expression *het middageten gebruiken/nuttigen* (to have lunch) sounds rather formal and can of course only be used with reference to a hot meal, e.g. *Na de vergadering hebben alle deelnemers aan het kongres het middageten gezamenlijk in het Erasmusgebouw genuttigd* – After the meeting all delegates to the conference had lunch together in the Erasmus Building.

M

to make:

doen, fabriceren, klaarmaken, maken, opmaken, vervaardigen, zetten

The dominant word is of course *maken*. As in German, where 'to do' is just as frequently rendered by *machen* as by *tun*, one will find the Dutch doing this on occasions too, but the practice is not nearly as common as in German (cf. 'to do') and tends to be limited to set expressions, e.g. *je huiswerk maken* – to do your homework. 'To make a bid' at an auction, for example, is *een bod doen*, e.g. *Ik heb een bod gedaan voor de auto maar het was niet hoog genoeg* – I made an offer for the car but it wasn't high enough. And in the expression 'to make a choice' one has the choice of *maken* or *doen*, e.g. *Je moet nu een keuze maken/doen* – You'll now have to choose/make a choice. But *maken* can also mean 'to repair' where the context makes it clear, e.g. *Oom, mijn fiets is kapot. Kunt u hem maken?* – Uncle, my bike is broken. Can you repair it?

'To make' tea or coffee is usually rendered by *zetten* but *maken* will be heard, e.g. *Ik ga koffie zetten* – I'm going to make some coffee, *het koffiezetapparaat* – coffee making machine.

'To make' a bed is *opmaken*, e.g. *Pietje, maak je bed alsjeblieft op* – Pietje, make your bed, please.

'To make' a meal is *klaarmaken*, e.g. *Ik moet het (avond)eten klaarmaken* – I must make dinner. Note: 'to make a cake' – *een cake bakken*.

'To make s.t. up', as in to invent a story/excuse, is *verzinnen* (*verzon, verzonnen*), e.g. *Dat verhaal heb je doodgewoon verzonnen, hè?* – You simply made up that story, didn't you? *Fabriceren* is also used with this meaning, similar to 'to fabricate' in English. But as a factory is *de fabriek* in Dutch, *fabriceren* is also 'to make' in the sense of 'to manufacture', the most usual translation of which is *vervaardigen*, e.g. *Vervaardigd in Duitsland* – Made in Germany, *Dit is Nederlands fabrikaat* – This is a Dutch product/was made in Holland. Note also *Wat voor merk is het?* – What make/brand is it?

'To make a decision' is *een beslissing nemen* which corresponds with what is said in many parts of the English-speaking world, i.e. 'to take a decision'.

to manage, the manager:

beheren, besturen, voor elkaar krijgen, lukken, redden, runnen, versieren, weten te; de beheerder, de bestuurder, de directeur, de manager

Besturen has strong connotations of 'to govern' (cf. 'government' and 'to drive'), e.g. *Het land wordt door een linkse regering bestuurd* – The country is run by a leftist government. Both *besturen* and the related noun *bestuurder* can also be used with reference to businesses, but in that sense one more commonly hears the loanwords *runnen* and *directeur/manager* these days, e.g. *Hij is bankdirecteur* – He is a bank manager, *Hij runt de hele zaak in zijn eentje* – He manages/runs the whole business on his own. The *directeur* (fem. *directrice*)¹ is the big boss whereas departmental/sectional managers are *managers*, i.e. a *directeur* is a *manager* but not all *managers* are *directeurs*. *De directie* renders 'management', e.g. *De directie heeft besloten om hem te ontslaan* – (The) management has decided to sack him.

Beheren, while not normally applied to managing a business, can be used in other contexts where the sense of 'to administer' is implied, e.g. *De penningmeester van een vereniging beheert het geld* (= *houdt toezicht op het geld*) – The treasurer of a society manages/administers/controls the money. As the previous sentence exemplifies, *beheren* has distinct connotations of 'to control'; compare *Het valt onder mijn beheer* – It is in/under my control (= I'm in charge of it), but 'under control' (i.e. the opposite of 'out of control') is *onder controle*. As with *besturen*, there is also a noun *beheerder* (manager, director, administrator), but a *beheerder* in the sense of 'manager' is less than a *directeur*. (compare *manager* above)

'To manage to do s.t.' is expressed by *weten te* + infinitive or simply by *kunnen* + infinitive, e.g. *De gevangene heeft weten te ontsnappen* – The prisoner managed to escape, *Ik heb het probleem niet kunnen oplossen* – I haven't manage to solve the problem. *Lukken* can also express this 'to manage', e.g. *Het is me niet gelukt* – I didn't manage to (do it). (cf. 'to succeed' and 'to fail')

'To manage' in the sense of 'to achieve' or 'to pull s.t. off' can be expressed by *voor elkaar krijgen*² or (much more colloquially) *versieren*, e.g. *Hoe heb je dat voor elkaar gekregen/Hoe heb je dat versierd?* – How did you manage that?

¹ Recently the word *het schoolhoofd* (headmaster) has been replaced in official jargon by *directeur*; the feminine in this case is avoided.

² Note that in natural speech the word *elkaar* is usually pronounced *mekaar*.

Redden, or sometimes even *zich redden* (i.e. when there is no other direct object), render 'to manage' in the sense of 'to cope', e.g. *Zal ik je de koffer helpen dragen? Dank je, ik red het wel* – Can I help you carry the suitcase? No thanks, I'll manage/cope, *In China kun je je altijd wel redden zelfs als je de taal niet spreekt/(ook)al spreek je taal niet* – You can always manage/cope/get by in China even if you don't know the language.

the map:

de (land)kaart, de plattegrond

A map of the world, a country or region is a *landkaart*. If it is obvious from the context that the *kaart* (= lit. card, chart, cf. 'ticket') that one is talking about is a 'map', i.e. that the 'card/chart' has been defined, one should omit the prefix *land-*, e.g. *Voordat we van de zomer naar Marokko gaan, moeten we een kaart kopen* – Before we go to Morocco this summer, we must buy a map.

A 'wall map' is a *wandkaart* (never a *muurkaart*, cf. 'wall'), where once again context should make it obvious whether one means a 'chart' or a 'map'.

A 'map' of a town, i.e. a street guide, is a *plattegrond*; it is not normal to use *kaart* in this sense, e.g. *Ga maar een plattegrond halen bij de VVV*³ – Go and fetch a map from the tourist bureau.

to marry, the marriage:

hertrouwen, trouwen (met), huwen, een huwelijk aangaan, in het huwelijk treden; de bruiloft, het huwelijksfeest, de trouwerij, de trouwpartij

There are two roots meaning 'to marry' in Dutch, *huwen* and *trouwen*. The latter is the everyday word, whereas the former, and all expressions derived from it, are very formal; the only exception to this is *het huwelijk* (marriage, i.e. the institution of marriage); a 'marriage' in the sense of a 'wedding' is a *de bruiloft/het huwelijksfeest/de trouwpartij/trouwerij*. It is not uncommon to see on official forms *gehuwd/ongehuwd* (married/unmarried) whereas in speech one would always ask *Bent u getrouwd?* – Are you married?

In het huwelijk treden is similar in style and connotation to 'to enter into marriage/wedlock'; the same applies to *een huwelijk aangaan*.

³ The *Vereniging voor Vreemdelingenverkeer*, which is represented throughout Holland, is always simply referred to as *de Vee Vee Vee*, (written VVV).

Hertrouwen renders 'to remarry', e.g. *Hij is hertrouwd* – He has remarried/got married again. (cf. 'again')

'To be married to s.o.' is *getrouwd zijn met iemand*. In fact, whereas in English you 'marry s.o.' (i.e. direct object), in Dutch you *trouwen met* s.o., e.g. *Hij gaat met haar trouwen* – He's going to marry her. Strictly speaking *trouwen* is only used transitively (i.e. without *met*), when it refers to the priest marrying people, e.g. *Welke dominee heeft jullie getrouwd?* – Which minister married you? (cf. 'priest'), but it is not uncommon to come across cases of *met* being omitted where I have prescribed it here, e.g. *Winnie was pas 20 toen ze de 35-jarige Mandela trouwde* – Winnie was only 20 when she married the 35-year-old Mandela.

Cf. *aangetrouwd* under '(the) relationship, related to'.

to matter:

geven, hinderen, schelen, uitmaken, iemand om het even zijn

'To matter' is a verb that is usually expressed in the negative as in 'It doesn't matter'. This saying can be translated in various ways: *Het hindert niet, het geeft niets, het maakt (mij) niet(s) uit*; these three are completely synonymous except that by inserting an object pronoun in the last option one renders 'It doesn't matter to me/I don't care. (cf. 'to care' for a related use of *geven*) The more or less synonymous expression in English, 'to make no difference', exists in Dutch too, e.g. *Dat maakt geen verschil* – That doesn't make any difference/That doesn't matter. Note *Voor mij maakt het veel verschil* – It matters to me/makes a big difference to me.

'It doesn't matter to me' (= I don't care) is usually expressed by (*kunnen*) *schelen*, e.g. *Het kan me niet(s) schelen*. There is an array of words used in combination with *schelen* to emphasise how little one cares, ranging from mild to crude in much the same way as English 'I don't give/care a hoot/damn etc.: *Het kan me geen donder/barst/fluit/bal/moer/flikker/hol/reet schelen* (in ascending order of crudity). Synonymous with *iemand niet kunnen schelen* is *iemand om het even zijn*, e.g. *Het is mij om het even wat je doet* – It doesn't matter to me (= It's all the same to me) what you do.

the meal, mealtime, to have meals:

de etenstijd, het maal, de maaltijd; het ontbijt, ontbijten; de lunch, het middageten, het middagmaal; het avondeten, het avondmaal, het diner; nuttigen

Not only the words 'meal' and 'mealtime' are dealt with here but also the names of various meals, a potentially confusing issue in Dutch.

A 'meal' in general is a *maaltijd*; it does not mean 'mealtime', despite appearances; that is expressed by *de etenstijd*. The word *maal* in this sense is rarely used. (cf. 'time') The same applies to the compound nouns formed from it, *avond-* and *middagmaal* (cf. 'lunch'); in fact the former is now virtually always associated with the eucharist, e.g. *het Heilig Avondmaal* (Holy Communion), *het Laatste Avondmaal* (the Last Supper).

Het ontbijt is the only word for 'breakfast', which should cause no problems, and 'to have breakfast' is expressed by the verb *ontbijten* (*ontbeet, ontbeten*), e.g. *Ik heb nog niet ontbeten* – I haven't had breakfast yet, *Wat heb jij voor het ontbijt gehad?* – What did you have for breakfast?

In adverbial expressions of time incorporating the names of meals, the definite article is always used, e.g. *na het ontbijt* – after breakfast, *vóór het avondeten* – before dinner.

Expressions involving the word 'lunch' and 'lunchtime' are dealt with under 'lunch'.

The evening meal is most usually referred to as *het (avond)eten*, e.g. *Ik moet nog iets voor het avondeten kopen* – I still have to buy something for dinner. Note the following expressions where *avondeten* is avoided: *Wat eten jullie vanavond?* – What are you having for dinner?, *'s Middags eet ik brood en 's avonds eet ik vlees en groente (... eet ik warm)* – I have bread for lunch and meat and veg. for dinner (I have a hot/cooked meal). *Nuttigen* is a very elevated word for 'having' meals, e.g. *Het nuttigen van meegebrachte eetwaren is verboden* – It is not permitted to consume your own food (on sign in railway dining car). (cf. 'lunch')

Het diner (dim. *dineetje*), does not refer to the evening meal in general but to a particular (chic) 'dinner'; the verb *dineren* also only applies to 'dining' in the social sense, not simply having dinner/supper/evening meal, e.g. *Mijn baas heeft mij op een heerlijk diner getraceerd* – My boss treated me to a delicious dinner, *Wij hebben in een sjiek Frans restaurant gedineerd* – We dined in a posh French restaurant.

An informal way of expressing 'to have a meal' is *een hapje eten*, e.g. *Kom vanavond een hapje bij ons eten* – Come and have a bite with us tonight.

Note: *onder het eten* – during the meal.

to mean, the meaning:

bedoelen, betekenen, menen, (willen) zeggen; de bedoeling, de betekenis, de mening

The subject of *bedoelen* is always a person, e.g. *Wat/hoe bedoel je?* – What/how do you mean?, *Ik bedoel dat ik er geen geld voor heb* – I mean that I haven't got any money for it. The noun *bedoeling*, however, does not mean so much 'meaning' as 'intention', e.g. *Wat is de bedoeling daarvan/uw bedoeling?* – What is it for/What is your intention?, *Hij heeft goede bedoelingen* – He has good intentions, thus *Hij bedoelt het wel goed* – He means well. This could, however, also be rendered by *menen*. (cf. below)

The subject of *betekenen*, meaning 'to mean' in the sense of 'to signify', is always a thing, e.g. *Wat betekent dat woord?* – What does that word mean? It can only have a personal subject in the following sense: *De koningin betekent heel veel voor de Engelsen* – The queen means a lot to the English. The dominant expression for 'meaning' is *de betekenis*, e.g. *De betekenis van die uitdrukking is als volgt* – The meaning of that expression is as follows. *Betekenis* also means 'significance'.

Menen is the least common of the three words discussed so far. The dominant meaning of *menen* is 'to think' (cf. 'to think'). It only translates 'to mean' in the very specific sense of 'to seriously mean', e.g. *Ik hou van jou. Meen je dat (echt)?* – I love you. Do you (really) mean that/Are you serious?, *Hij zei dat hij je haat maar hij meent het niet* – He said he hates you but he doesn't (really) mean it. *De mening* has nothing to do with 'meaning'; its connotation is derived from the dominant meaning of *mening* mentioned above and thus it translates 'opinion', e.g. *naar mijn mening* (in my opinion = what I think, cf. 'opinion'). The following colloquial expression with *menen* is quite common: *Ik heb een gratis vlucht naar Rome gewonnen. Je meent het* – I have won a free flight to Rome. You're joking/having me on.

The abbreviation 'i.e.' is *d.w.z.* in Dutch, short for *dat wil zeggen*. Although the expression literally means 'that is', it can on occasions be used to render 'that means' (= *dat betekent*), e.g. *Ik moet op mijn broertje passen en dat wil zeggen dat ik niet naar het feestje kan gaan* – I have to look after my little brother and that means I can't go to the party, *Wat wil dat dan zeggen?* – What does that mean then? (= what's the significance of that fact?), *Wat wil je daarmee zeggen?* (= *Hoe bedoel je?*) – What do you mean by that/What are you getting at?

There is also a very common colloquial expression where *zeggen* renders one particular meaning of 'to mean', e.g. *Jan: Ajax heeft gewonnen. Piet: Ajax zegt me niks* – Jan: Ajax (a football team) has won. Piet: Ajax doesn't mean anything to me (= I don't know what it is), *Zegt je dat wat?* – Does that mean anything to you?

the meat:

het vlees, de vleeswaren, het wild

Although there is only one word for 'meat', *vlees*, and that in itself constitutes no problem at all, the names of meats in Dutch are compound nouns formed from *vlees* and in each instance the medial sound in the compound varies. Note the following: *het kalfsvlees* (veal), *lamsvlees* (lamb), *paardevlees* (horse), *rundvlees* (beef), *schapevlees* (mutton), *varkensvlees* (pork). Although strictly speaking 'venison' is *reeëvlees* (lit. deer meat), 'game meat' as a whole is referred to as *wild*.

'Cold sliced meats', which are sold per 100 grams (*per ons*),⁴ are called *vleeswaren*.

to meet:

(af-, op-)halen, bijeenkomen, kennis maken met, leren kennen, ontmoeten, tegemoetgaan/-komen, tegenkomen, vergaderen

The dominant word is *ontmoeten* which is used for prearranged meetings. A sentence such as 'I met him in town', where it is implied that one 'met s.o. by chance', i.e. 'bumped into s.o.', **may** be rendered by *ontmoeten* but more specific and thus unambiguous is *tegenkomen* (with *zijn*), e.g. *Ik ben hem in de stad tegengekomen* – I met/bumped into him in town.

'To meet' s.o. formally, i.e. when one is introduced to s.o., is also *ontmoeten* or more formally *kennis maken met*, e.g. *Heeft u mijn vrouw al ontmoet?* / *Heeft u al kennis gemaakt met mijn vrouw?* – Have you met my wife yet? (= Have you been introduced to her?), *Ja, we hebben elkaar een keer in Frankrijk ontmoet* – Yes, we met in France once.

With reference to a couple first 'meeting', *leren kennen* is used, e.g. *Waar hebben jullie elkaar leren kennen?* (= *Waar kennen jullie elkaar van?*) – Where did you two meet/meet each other? It does not necessarily have romantic connotations and can simply refer to friends having met.

⁴ Officially the terms *ons* and *pond* (500 grams) have been abolished and may no longer be used on price tags in shops but people still regularly use them in speech.

Af- and *ophalen* both mean literally 'to pick s.o. (or s.t.) up' and thus only render 'to meet s.o.' in the following sense: *Vader, ik ben op het station. Goed jongen, dan kom ik je daar afhalen* – Dad, I'm at the station. Very well my boy, then I'll meet you there. There is in fact a very subtle distinction between *afhalen* and *ophalen*: *afhalen* implies that the person (or thing) one is going 'to pick up/meet/fetch' is waiting for one, whereas that is not the case with *ophalen* and thus, as the following examples illustrate, *ophalen* is unlikely to render 'to meet',⁵ e.g. *Ik ga naar het postkantoor om het pakje af te halen* – I'm going to the post-office to pick up/fetch the parcel (it's waiting for me there), *Ik ga naar de bank om geld (op) te halen* – I'm going to the bank to fetch some money, *Mijn auto doet het niet. Hindert niet. Ik kom je (op)halen* – My car has broken down. Doesn't matter. I'll come and get you/pick you up, *Ik zal je morgen om acht uur ophalen* – I'll pick you up tomorrow at eight. Note *iemand van school halen* – to pick s.o. up from school. (cf. 'to pick up')

Bijeenkomen (noun *de bijeenkomst*) means 'to meet' in the sense of a group 'gathering (together)' to celebrate or demonstrate, for example, whereas *vergaderen* (noun *de vergadering*) means 'to meet' in the sense of holding a formal meeting to discuss an issue, e.g. *De deelnemers aan het congres zullen om tien uur in de aula bijeenkomen/vergaderen* – The delegates to the conference will gather/meet in the great hall at ten o'clock.

Tegemoetgaan/-komen regularly render figurative 'to meet' as in *aan iemands eisen/wensen tegemoetkomen* (to meet s.o.'s demands/wishes), *iemand een eindje tegemoetkomen* (to meet s.o. part of the way), *de dood tegemoetgaan* (to go towards one's death) but *de dood vinden* (to meet one's death, to die).

to melt:

dooien, ontdooien, smelten

Smelten (*smolt, gesmolten*) is used both transitively or intransitively with reference to butter, metals etc. As the intransitive verb *smelten* designates a change of state, it always take *zijn*, e.g. *Mijn ijsje is gesmolten* – My icecream has melted, but *Ik heb een beetje boter gesmolten voor op de pannenkoeken* – I've melted a bit of butter to put on the pancakes (tr. use). Also *Ik smelt van de hitte* – I'm melting/dying from the heat.

Dooien (with *hebben*), *ontdooien* (with *hebben* or *zijn*) and *wegdooien* (with *zijn*), whose dominant meaning is 'to thaw', are thus used in contexts

⁵ There is a further distinguishing connotation between these two verbs: *afhalen* implies to pick up and take back with you, whereas *ophalen* implies to pick up and continue on with.

where melting relates to ice, snow etc. When snow and ice lying on the ground begin 'to melt/thaw', one can say *De dooi is ingezet* – It has begun to thaw or *Het dooit/heeft gedooit* – It's thawing/has thawed (impersonal) but *wegdooien* (with *zijn*) is used when the subject is other than an impersonal *het*, e.g. *Het ijs in de sloten is nu helemaal weggedooit/ontdooit* – The ice in the ditches has now completely melted. *Ontdooien* must be used with reference to freezers and their contents and can be used transitively either on its own (with *hebben*) or by coupling it up with causative *laten*, e.g. *Het vlees is ontdooit* – The meat has thawed/been defrosted, *Ik moet het vlees (laten) ontdooien* – I must thaw/defrost the meat, *Ik moet de koelkast laten ontdooien* – I must defrost the fridge.

the memory:

het geheugen, de herinnering, de nagedachtenis; uit je/het hoofd, van buiten

One's 'memory', i.e. one's capacity to remember, is *het geheugen*, e.g. *Mijn moeder heeft zo'n slecht geheugen* – My mother has such a bad memory. 'A bad/nice memory (of)' in the sense of s.t. one does (not) like to think of, is *een slechte/leuke herinnering (aan)*, given that *herinneren aan* is the verb 'to remind s.o. of s.t.' (cf. 'to remind')

Nagedachtenis renders memory as in 'in memory/remembrance of', a standard expression in Dutch too, *ter nagedachtenis aan/van*, but *van* is more common.

To know or quote s.t. 'from memory' is *uit je/het hoofd* (less commonly *van buiten*), where the form with the possessive pronoun is the more usual, e.g. *Hij wist het allemaal uit zijn hoofd* – He knew it all by heart/had memorised it all. *Van buiten* is used in combination with *kennen*, *uit je hoofd* with *weten*.

the middle, centre, middle (adj.), in the middle of:

het centrum, het middelpunt, het middel, het midden; half, medio, midden, middel, middelbaar, middelst; midden in, te midden van, in het midden van

This is a difficult concept to translate into Dutch. The dominant word is *midden*, e.g. *Ga eens in het midden staan* – Go and stand in the middle. *Hij woont in het midden van het dorp* – He lives in the middle/centre of the village. But the 'centre' of a large town or city is *het centrum*, i.e. 'the centre of town' = *het centrum*; one does not talk of *het centrum van de stad*, but of *het centrum*, which can **only** refer to a city centre. *Midden*

thus translates both 'middle' and 'centre'; *middelpunt*, although literally meaning 'central point', is often translated by 'centre', e.g. *Hij staat in het middelpunt van de belangstelling* – He's the centre of attention/interest; it is also used in mathematics to render 'centre/middle' of a circle etc.

As a noun *het middel* virtually never means 'middle'; *het midden* will normally be the word you require. The dominant meanings of *middel* are 'means' and 'waist'. (cf. 'waist') But compounded with other words, as in the afore-mentioned *middelpunt*, *middel* can mean 'middle'. Mediaeval languages, for example, are referred to as *Middelnederlands* (Middle Dutch), *Middelengels* (Middle English)⁶; also *de middeleeuwen* (Middle Ages).

The word *middelbaar* is most commonly used in the following expressions, e.g. *het middelbaar onderwijs* (secondary education), *van middelbare leeftijd* (middle aged).

The adjective *middelst* (= middlemost) belongs in a series with *onderst* and *bovenst*, e.g. *Zitten mijn sokken in de onderste of in de middelste la? Ze zitten in de bovenste* – Are my socks in the bottom or the middle drawer? They're in the top one.

The adjective 'middle' or 'central' in geographic names is rendered by *Midden*, a word which is not otherwise used adjectivally, e.g. *het Midden-Oosten* (Middle East), *Midden-Amerika* (Central America), *Midden-Europa* (Central Europe), *Middeneuropese tijd* (Central European time).⁷ Also *de middenklasse* – the middle class(es).⁸

'In the middle of' with reference to place can simply be *in het midden van*, as illustrated above, but *midden in* (preposition) and *middenin* (adverb)⁹ are also frequently used, e.g. *Hij stond midden in de menigte/in het midden van de menigte* – He was standing in the middle of the crowd, *Hij stond er middenin/stonde in het midden* – He was standing in the middle. Compare *Hij liep er middendoor* – He walked (right) through the middle

⁶ The terms 'ancient' and 'modern' with reference to languages are rendered by *oud* and *nieuw* respectively, e.g. *Oudgrieks* (Ancient Greek), *Nieuwijlands* (Modern Icelandic).

⁷ There is no corresponding adjectival form of *Midden-Oosten* and *Midden-Amerika* akin to our forms 'Middle Eastern' and 'Central American'. Note the need for a hyphen in the nominal forms but the lack of one in the adjective. This applies to all such compound geographic designations, e.g. *Zuid-Afrika* but *Zuidafrikaans*.

⁸ *De middenstand* does not mean 'middle class' but is a collective term for the self-employed, small entrepreneurs, tradespeople.

⁹ Cf. 'close' to compare a similar distinction between *dicht bij/dichtbij* and *vlak bij/vlakbij*.

(of a crowd). When followed by a month, 'in the middle of' is simply *midden*, half or in higher style *medio*, e.g. *Die belasting moet vóór midden/half januari betaald worden* – That tax has to be paid by the middle of January.¹⁰

Te midden van is used figuratively in the sense of 'in the midst of, amidst', e.g. *Te midden van zijn familie voelde hij zich veilig* – He felt safe in the midst of/amidst his family.

the/to mind:

de geest, het gemoed, het hoofd, het verstand; bezwaar hebben, denken om, geneigd zijn, hebben tegen, hinderen, oppassen, passen op, verzinnen; -minded

The 'mind' is a very difficult concept to render in Dutch. In fact there is no direct equivalent and each instance of 'mind' has to be expressed in terms relevant to the context. Dictionaries give *gemoed* as being one translation of the concept but in practice this word is rarely used at all. *Geest* and *hoofd* are sometimes appropriate, e.g. *Ik zie het voor mijn geestes oog* – I can see it in my mind's eye,¹¹ *Opa is al 90 maar zijn geest is nog helder* – Granddad is 90 but his mind is still all right, *Mijn hoofd zit vol andere dingen* – My mind is full of other things, *Dat zit in je hoofd* – That's in your mind.

There is no exact equivalent in Dutch of English '-minded' as in 'computer-minded', 'photo-minded' etc. and thus the Dutch have borrowed this suffix, e.g. *computer-minded, foto-minded* (pron. as in Eng.).

Verstand is the word required when 'mind' means one's sanity, e.g. *Hij heeft zijn verstand verloren* – He's lost his mind/is out of his mind, *Hij is niet bij zijn volle verstand* – He is not in his right mind. Also *Hij is niet goed bij zijn hoofd/niet goed snik* – He's out of his mind.

'To have a mind to do s.t.' is *geneigd zijn* (lit. to feel inclined) or *zin hebben in iets* (lit. to feel like, cf. 'to feel'), e.g. *Ik ben zwaar geneigd om niet te gaan* – I have half a mind not to go, *Ik heb (er) wel zin (in) om te gaan* – I do feel inclined to go.

Apart from the guidelines given above, it is almost impossible to prescribe how to translate 'mind'. The following examples will give an indication of some of the possibilities: *Ik heb al besloten* – My mind is already made up

¹⁰ Compare *begin/eind januari* – at the beginning/end of January.

¹¹ Cf. footnote under 'to feel' for an explanation of why 'can' is not translated.

(= decided), *Het kwam niet bij mij op om het zo te doen* – It didn't enter my mind to do it like that, *Onthou dit* – Bear this in mind (= remember), *Ik ben het volgende van plan* – I have the following in mind, *Waar denk je aan/Wat zit je dwars?* – What's on your mind?

The verb 'to mind' also has to be rephrased to make it translatable. 'To mind' children, i.e. to take care of them, is *passen op*. (cf. 'to look after') If one asked s.o. 'to mind' one's car, this would also be expressed by *passen op*, e.g. *Pas alsjeblieft op mijn auto* – Please mind my car, but if one shouted the warning 'Mind the car', this would be expressed by *oppassen voor*, i.e. *Pas op voor de auto* (cf. 'to look out for'); also *Pas op je hoofd* – Mind your head. This last example could also be expressed as *Denk om je hoofd*. (cf. 'to remember')

'To mind' in the sense of 'to object to s.t.' is *iets hebben tegen*, e.g. *Heeft u er iets tegen?* – Do you mind?, *Ik heb er niets tegen dat je met mijn dochter uitgaat* – I don't mind you going out with my daughter. *Hinderen* can also be used in such cases, e.g. *Hindert het u als ik rook?* *Nee, dat hindert niet* – Do you mind if I smoke. No, I don't mind (lit. it does not matter, cf. 'to matter') or *Heeft u er bezwaar tegen als ik rook?* *Nee, ik heb geen bezwaar*.

to miss:

missen, ontbreken, niet treffen, vermissen, verzuimen

'To miss' a bus, train, class, film etc. is *missen*, e.g. *Ik mag die trein niet missen* – I mustn't miss that train. The same word is used if one is 'missing' or 'longing for' another person, *Ik miste mijn vriendin toen ik in Italië zat* – I was missing my girlfriend when I was in Italy. 'To miss' an opportunity or a class by neglect or on purpose can also be expressed by *verzuimen*, but this is not commonly used in Dutch in this sense, e.g. *Ik heb dus alweer een prachtgelegenheid verzuimd/gemist* – I have once again missed a golden opportunity. Note *het schoolverzuim* – school absenteeism. (cf. 'to neglect')

If a person is 'missing', *vermissen* is the verb required, e.g. *Hij wordt vermist* – He is missing (expressed by a passive in Dutch). 'Missing' of things can also be expressed by *vermissen*, if for example the object is thought to have been stolen, e.g. *Er wordt een woordenboek uit de bibliotheek vermist* – A dictionary is missing/has gone missing from the library. But 'missing' of objects in the sense of being 'lost' is dealt with under 'to lose'.

Ontbreken (*ontbrak/ontbroken*), which literally means 'to be lacking', translates 'to miss' when there are connotations of 'lacking, failing,

wanting', e.g. *Er ontbreken een paar bladzijden uit dit boek* – A few pages are missing from this book, *Het enige wat er hier ontbreekt is mensen* – The only thing that's missing here is people. This is an impersonal verb and thus 'I am missing/lacking etc.' is rendered by an object pronoun, e.g. *Ik heb alles maar één ding ontbreekt me nog, een auto namelijk* – I have everything but I'm still missing/lacking one thing – that is a car.

Treffen and *raken* translate 'to hit' one's target whether one is shooting, throwing a stone or slapping s.o. Therefore if one 'misses', the expression required is *niet treffen/raken*, e.g. *De kogel heeft hem niet getroffen/geraakt* – The bullet didn't hit (= missed) him, *De leraar probeerde het kind te slaan maar heeft hem gelukkig niet geraakt* – The teacher tried to hit the child but fortunately he missed. In the previous example only *raken* can be used as it refers to striking with a hand; for a bullet or stone either verb can be used.

mister, sir, the man, the gentleman:

de gentleman, de heer, (de) meneer/mijnheer

Just as French *monsieur* is used as a title before a person's name (= Mr.), or independently in direct address (= sir), or as a noun meaning 'the man, gentleman', so too is *meneer*, which is modelled on the French word. *Meneer* has a parallel in *mevrouw*, both of which are perhaps more common than *man* and *vrouw*. (cf. 'woman') One can best explain this use of *meneer* instead of *man* by referring to the difference in connotation in English between 'lady' and 'woman'; we often regard the latter as a little blunt or crude. The Dutch think the same of *vrouw* and thus frequently replace it with *mevrouw*; we do not have the same problem with 'man' in English, but the Dutch are consistent and use *meneer* in contexts where, if the person being referred to were a lady/woman, they would use *mevrouw*, e.g. *Er is een meneer aan de deur die wil weten of we oude kranten hebben* – There's a man at the door who wants to know if we have any old newspapers.

Heer is about as uncommon in Dutch these days as 'gentleman' is in English; it means more 'master, lord (also God)' and often smacks of the gentry, e.g. *de heer des huizes* – the master of the house. Note *Dames en heren* – Ladies and gentlemen (in a speech). Toilets are also marked *Dames* and *Heren*, never **Vrouwen* and **Mannen*.

If the Dutch ever wish to make the point that s.o. is a 'real gentleman', i.e. that he has impeccable manners etc., they may resort on such occasions to the word *gentleman* (= *een echte heer*).

But the real difficulty here is how to translate the word 'mister' as a title when it precedes a surname and how one expresses 'sir(s)' in letters. When addressing a certain Mr. Smit directly, one refers to him as *meneer Smit* (notice the small letter); when referring to him in conversation with s.o. else, one can also call him *meneer Smit* but in higher style one frequently hears *de heer Smit*, e.g. *Zou ik de heer Smit even kunnen spreken?*¹² – May I speak to Mr. Smit? (on the phone to his secretary), *Goede morgen, meneer Smit. U spreekt met De Bruin* – Good morning Mr. Smit. It's Mr. de Bruin speaking.¹³

On an envelope one addresses a letter to *De heer Smit*, but the letter itself begins with *Geachte heer Smit*; if in the course of the letter one wishes to address him by name again, one uses *meneer Smit*, e.g. *Ik had u nog willen verzoeken, meneer Smit, om mij nog een exemplaar van uw boek te sturen* – In addition I would like to ask you, Mr. Smit, to send me another copy of your book.

In business letters addressed to a firm and thus not to one person in particular, i.e. in cases where in English we write 'Dear Sirs', one can choose in Dutch between *Mijne heren* and *Geachte heren*.

Mijnheer is the now archaic predecessor of *meneer*, but one may still meet it from time to time. If found in writing at all, it is pronounced as *meneer*.

(the/at the/in a) moment:

eens, *even(tjes)*, (*op*) *het moment*, *momenteel*, (*op*) *het ogenblik*; *zodra*, *zojuist*; *straks*, *zo (meteen)*

Ogenblik and *moment* are synonymous, *Heb je een ogenblik/moment voor me?* – Can you spare me a moment? The dominant translation of 'at the moment' is either *op het moment* or *op het ogenblik*, and *momenteel* is slightly higher style for the same thing, e.g. *Ik ben momenteel/op het ogenblik bezig* – I am busy at the moment. Of course one has the option of saying *op dit/dat ogenblik/moment* too if the context demands it.

'Just a moment' is rendered either by *eens*¹⁴ or *even(tjes)* or even *eens even(tjes)*, e.g. *Wacht eens/even/eventjes/eens even/eens eventjes/een ogenblik(je)* – Wait (just) a moment/jiffy; *even(tjes) wachten* is also

¹² It is also higher style in such contexts to omit the preposition *met* after *spreeken*. Notice, however, that this is not possible in the second part of the example given.

¹³ The Dutch, like other Europeans, are not at all loath to referring to themselves by their surname without any title at all; females do this too. Thus, when answering the phone, for example, it is quite normal to simply say your surname rather than saying hello or rattling your telephone number off at an intelligible speed as we so often do.

¹⁴ In these examples *eens* is pronounced [əs].

possible (but *eens* is not possible here), *Ga daar eens eventjes zitten* – Sit down there for a moment, *Ik ben maar eventjes/een ogenblikje bij mijn grootmoeder geweest (eens not possible here)* – I was only at my grandma's for a moment. If s.o. is calling you and you can't come immediately, an appropriate response is *Ogenblik(je), moment(je)* – Just a moment.

'In a moment' meaning 'soon, presently' is *straks*, *dadelijk* or *zo meteen*. (cf. 'immediately')

'The moment he arrived...' requires the subordinating conjunction *zodra* (lit. as soon as), e.g. *Zodra hij er aankwam...* – The moment he got there... (cf. 'immediately' and 'soon')

more:

langer, (*niet*)*meer*, *min of meer*

One should consult an advanced grammar of Dutch for details on the rare occasions where one may form the comparative of adjectives and adverbs by using *meer* instead of the suffix *-er*.

In expressions of time, i.e. when one has been somewhere or goes somewhere for 'more' than a week/month/hour etc., 'more' is translated by *langer* or *meer*. There can be a distinction; in the following sentences the use of *meer* instead of *langer* is more emphatic, e.g. *We hebben langer/meer dan een week in de bergen doorgebracht* – We spent more than a week in the mountains, *Ik heb langer/meer dan een uur op je staan wachten* – I waited for you for more than an hour. But if these sentences are negated, *langer* is preferable.

Conversely, however, when something is 'no longer' the case, the Dutch say *niet meer*, just as we in English have the option of expressing it as 'no more' too, but in Dutch one has no choice, e.g. *Zij wonen er niet meer* – They no longer live there/They don't live there any more.

'More or less' is expressed the other way round in Dutch, *min of meer*.¹⁵

¹⁵ There are several expressions consisting of two nouns that have the opposite order in Dutch from English: *dag en nacht* (night and day), *peper en zout* (salt and pepper), *vraag en aanbod* (supply and demand), *mijn oom en tante* (my aunt and uncle), *mijn vader en moeder* (my mother and father) and *pa en ma* (mum and dad).

most(ly):

op z'n hoogst, hoogstens, hooguit; meestal, de meeste, het meest(e); grotendeels, vooral, voornamelijk

For the relatively rare use of *meest* in forming the superlative of adjectives and adverbs (compare *meer* above) instead of the suffix *-st*, one should refer to an advanced grammar of Dutch. Note, however, the following independent superlative of the adverb, *het meest(e)*, which is used as follows: *Mijn kinderen houden allemaal van films maar ik hou er het meeste van (van allemaal)* – My kids all like films but I like them (the) most (of all). 'At the most' is expressed in several ways with derivatives of *hoog*, e.g. *Je moet er op z'n hoogst/hoogstens/hooguit een tientje voor betalen* – You should pay ten guilders for it at the most.

The other 'most' that is dealt with here is that which means 'the majority of', where once again Dutch requires a definite article, unlike English, e.g. *De meeste kinderen zijn ziek* – Most of the children are sick. 'Most of them' when referring to people is *de meeste van ze/hen* but with reference to things it is *de meeste ervan*, e.g. *De buurvrouw heeft een heleboel eieren gratis van een boer gekregen en ze heeft de meeste ervan aan mij gegeven* – The lady next door got a lot of eggs for nothing from a farmer and she gave most of them to me.

'Most of the time', a structure which is identical in English to the above 'most of the children', is usually expressed by a separate adverb in Dutch, *meestal* (= *de meeste tijd*), e.g. *Die kinderen zijn meestal ziek* – Those kids are sick most of the time. *Meestal* corresponds to English 'mostly', but only in the temporal sense (= usually, more often than not), e.g. *Ze zijn meestal ziek in de winter* – They are mostly sick in winter; in the following example 'mostly' is not temporal and is therefore expressed differently: *Er waren vooral/voornamelijk/grotendeels Duitsers op de kermis* – There were mostly Germans at the fair.

For American 'most' as in 'Most everybody has a tv' cf. 'almost'.

the motor-bike, scooter:

de autoped, de bromfiets, de brommer, de motor, de scooter, de snorfiets, de step

A larger motor-bike above 50cc, as used by the police for example, is a *motor(fiets)*. The plural of this word is *motors* whereas the plural of *mótor* meaning 'engine, motor' is *motóren* (stress on second syllable).

Because one only needs to be sixteen in Holland to ride a motor-bike under 50cc and one does not need a licence for it, the Dutch see such small

motor-bikes as a separate entity and have a special word for such a bike which is also often permitted to share the *fietspaden* with push-bikes; it is called a *brommer* or *bromfiets*, named after the infernal racket such bikes make (*brommen* – to buzz). Some English-speaking countries know such small motor-bikes, which usually have pedals too, as 'mopeds'.

A few years ago a smaller category of moped was introduced which one does not need to wear a helmet when riding. It is under 20cc and is called a *snorfiets*.

A 'scooter' is also called a *scooter* in Dutch, but the child's toy by that name is a *de step* or *de autoped*.

to move:

(zich) bewegen, (op)schuiven, overplaatsen, verhuizen, verplaatsen, verzetten

The dominant word is *bewegen*. The difficulty with this word is to know when to use it reflexively. If the verb has an object, there is of course no problem, e.g. *Beweeg je arm* – Move your arm (around). But when it is used intransitively with reference to animate beings *zich* is required and is omitted with reference to inanimate objects moving, e.g. *Beweeg je niet*. *Er zit een slang onder je stoel* – Don't move (animate). There's a snake under your chair, *Ik was zo bang dat ik me niet durfde te bewegen* – I was so afraid I didn't dare move/animate; compare *De gordijnen bewogen ineens en ik wist dat er iemand achter stond* – The curtains suddenly moved and I knew that someone was standing behind them (inanimate), *Het leek wel of de hond dood moest zijn want hij bewoog niet meer* – It seemed as if the dog was dead because it was no longer moving (inanimate, i.e. dead). *Maar ineens bewoog hij zich* – But all of a sudden it (i.e. the dog) moved or *Hij bewoog zich niet* – It didn't move (both animate).

If one 'moves' or 'shifts' something by pushing or shoving it, the verb is *schuiven* (*schoof, geschoven*), e.g. *Zullen we de tafel opzij schuiven?* – Shall we move/shift the table to one side. If one goes to sit down in a cinema, for example, and wishes those already seated 'to move/shift up', the verb one requires is *opschuiven*, e.g. *Schuif eens op, jongens* – Move up, you guys.

'To move house' is *verhuizen* (takes *zijn*), which illustrates one of the meanings of *ver-*, i.e. to change, e.g. *De burens zijn gisteren verhuisd* – The neighbours moved yesterday.

'To move' s.t. from one place to another is *verplaatsen*, e.g. *De leraar wil dat al deze stoelen verplaatst worden naar de andere kant van het lokaal* –

The teacher wants all these chairs moved/shifted to the other side of the classroom. One can also *verzetten* a chair but this does not refer to shifting it from A to B, e.g. *Je moet je stoel even verzetten want het kleed zit omhoog* – You'll have to shift/move your chair because the rug is caught in it (= *anders zetten*, cf. *zetten* under 'to put'). Both *verplaatsen* and *verzetten* illustrate the function of *ver-* mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Overplaatsen refers to 'transferring' people, e.g. *Jij wordt overgeplaatst naar een ander kantoor* – You're being moved/transferred to another office.

N

narrow:

bekrompen, eng, klein, nauw, smal

The opposite of *breed* (wide) is *smal*, e.g. *De gang in dit huis is te smal* – The passage in this house is too narrow. *Nauw* can also translate 'narrow' in the physical sense but unlike *smal*. It refers to 'narrowness' in all directions, not just width, e.g. *een nauwe ruimte* – a narrow (= confined) space. But *nauw* is also frequently used figuratively, in which case it normally translates 'close' (cf. 'close'), e.g. *nauw verwant* – closely related. *Een te nauwe broek* (pants that are too tight) also gives some idea of connotations of the word.

Eng is seldom used in the sense of 'narrow' (cf. *de zeeëngte* – narrows, strait). Its dominant meaning is 'creepy, eerie, scary', e.g. *Wat een enge vent* – What a creepy guy, *Ik vind het doodeng als ik op het dak moet klimmen om de schoorsteen schoon te maken* – I get scared when I have to get up on the roof to clean the chimney.

'Narrow' with reference to people, i.e. in the sense of 'narrow-minded', is *bekrompen*.

near:

bij, *dicht bij*, *nabij*, *vlak bij*, *in de nabijheid*/*buurt van*

Dicht bij, *nabij* and *vlak bij* all mean 'close to' and are dealt with under that lemma. A sentence such as 'He was standing near/at the window' would normally be *Hij stond bij het raam*. To use *dicht* or *vlak* in combination with *bij* would be more emphatic (compare 'right near the window'), where *vlak bij* is closer than *dicht bij*. In the sentence *Hij parkeerde bij het postkantoor*, *bij* means as much 'at' as it does 'near', the distinction being insignificant.

In higher style one may hear *in de nabijheid van* (lit. in the vicinity of). More colloquial is *in de buurt van* (lit. in the neighbourhood of) being used where 'near' would suffice in English, e.g. *Marijke woont in de buurt van (= bij) Apeldoorn* – Marijke lives near Apeldoorn, *Marijke woont bij mij in de buurt* – Marijke lives near me/in my neighbourhood.

The adjective 'near' is *nabij*, e.g. *de nabije toekomst* – the near future. For 'nearest' as an adjective cf. 'next' and 'close'.

necessary:

benodigd, hoeven, nodig, noodzakelijk(erwijs), (niet) per se

'Necessary' in the sense of 'needed' is *nodig* (cf. 'to need'), e.g. *Heeft hij de nodige kennis daarvoor?* – Does he have the necessary knowledge/the knowledge needed for that?, *Het is helemaal niet nodig om je veiligheidsgordel om te doen* – It's not at all necessary to put your safety belt on,¹ *Kan ik u helpen? Nee, dat is niet nodig, dank u* – Can I help you? No, that's not necessary, thank you. But the expression 'That's not necessary' is frequently rendered by the verb *hoeven* (cf. 'to need'), e.g. *Dat hoeft niet, Het is heel zacht dus je hoeft geen jas aan* – It's quite mild so it's not necessary for you to put a coat on/you don't need a coat.

Noodzakelijk translates 'necessary' with reference to matters of necessity (= absolutely necessary, indispensable), but the distinction between it and *nodig* is difficult for speakers of English to appreciate; it is more emphatic than *nodig*, e.g. *Het is absoluut noodzakelijk dat het vóór maandag klaar is* – It's absolutely necessary that it be finished by Monday, *het hoogst noodzakelijke* – the barest necessities/essentials. In the sense of 'necessarily', a meaning which *nodig* never has, the adverbial ending *-erwijs* must be added, e.g. *Als je weigert om het te doen, volgt daar noodzakelijkerwijs (= vanzelf) uit dat je ontslagen wordt* – If you refuse to do it, it necessarily follows that you'll be fired.

'Not necessarily' is rendered by *niet per se*, e.g. *Jij hoeft het niet per se morgen in te leveren* – You don't necessarily have to hand it in tomorrow. This is not to say that *per se* is always used in combination with a negative but only when negated does it translate 'necessarily', e.g. *Waarom moest ze per se die dag terugkomen?* – Why did she have to return on that day of all days?

Both *nodig* and *noodzakelijk* are used adjectivally, as a couple of the examples above illustrate, but they have other more common functions as well. *Benodigd*, on the other hand, is only used adjectivally; it is not a very common word and has connotations of 'wanted, required', thus *benodigdheden* (accessories, requisites, necessities), e.g. *kantoorbenodigdheden* – office equipment.

the neck, throat:

de hals, de keel, de nek

The inside of one's 'throat' is one's *keel*, thus one has *een zere keel* (*keelontsteking*) – a sore throat (laryngitis). The outside of one's 'throat'

¹ Cf. 'on' for an explanation of the use of *om* here.

(the neck) is one's *hals*, thus a woman wears a *halsketting* (necklace) and a dog a *halsband* (collar). But the back or nape of one's 'neck' is one's *nek*, thus one has *een stijve nek* – a stiff neck. When one buys a chicken with giblets, for example, the *hals* is included.

A 'bottle-neck' in traffic is commonly referred to as *de bottle-neck* whereas the 'neck of the bottle' is *de hals van de fles* or less frequently *de flessehals*.

to need:

behoefte hebben aan, (be)hoeven, nodig hebben

As a transitive verb the dominant word is *nodig hebben*, which although written as two words, behaves like a separable verb, i.e. *nodig* is relegated to the end of the clause like a separable prefix, e.g. *We hebben nog één goede leerkracht nodig* – We need one more good teacher.

If one 'needs to do' s.t., *moeten* is required, e.g. *Jij moet naar de dokter* – You need to see a doctor. But when we in English negate 'must' by saying 'don't have/need to', so the Dutch negate *moeten* in such contexts by using *niet hoeven*, e.g. *Je moet haar een cadeau geven* – You should give her a present, *Je hoeft haar geen cadeau te geven* – You don't have/need to give her a present. (Compare *Je moet haar geen cadeau geven* – You mustn't give her a present, i.e. I advise you not to do so).² (cf. 'necessary' for further functions of *hoeven*)

Behoeftte hebben aan literally renders 'to be in need of' but may on occasions be used instead of *nodig hebben* if style requires it and meaning permits it (i.e. that there is a general, not just a momentary need), e.g. *De bevolking van Ethiopië heeft dringend behoefte aan meer voedsel* – The population of Ethiopia is in dire need of more food/urgently needs more food (*dringend* is used adverbially not adjectivally in the example given).

Behoeven replaces both *nodig hebben* (tr. verb) and *hoeven* (auxiliary verb) in higher style, e.g. *Dit kanaal behoeft maar een geringe verbreding* – This canal needs only minimal widening, *Vrouwelijke studenten (be)hoeven niet voor herhaling van dat gedrag te vrezen* – Female students don't need/have to fear that behaviour again.

² There are rare instances where *hoeven* is used without the presence of a negative. (cf. footnote under 'to prepare')

to neglect:

nalaten, verwaarlozen, verzuimen

The transitive verb is *verwaarlozen*, e.g. *Sinds hij verliefd geworden is verwaarloost hij zijn werk* – Since he fell in love he's been neglecting his work, *Het paleis is vreselijk verwaarloosd* – The palace is/has been terribly neglected.

'To neglect to do s.t.' is *nalaten* or *verzuimen*, e.g. *Hij had (aan) alle deelnemers aan het congres moeten schrijven maar hij heeft nagelaten/erzuid het te doen* – He should have written to all delegates to the conference but he neglected to do so.

the Netherlands, Low Countries:

Holland, Nederland, de Nederlanden, de Lage Landen

The official name of 'the Netherlands' is *Nederland*, a singular noun, e.g. *Nederland is lid van de EG* – The Netherlands is/are a member of the European Community. The most unambiguous term for 'the Low Countries', i.e. the Netherlands and Belgium together (and historically also Luxemburg), is *de Lage Landen*, but particularly in historical contexts they are often referred to as *de Nederlanden*, a plural. Ambiguity can arise with this term as *Nederland* too is sometimes called *de Nederlanden* in very formal contexts, e.g. *Beatrix, koningin der Nederlanden* – Beatrix, queen of the Netherlands (on Dutch coins), *Ambassade van het koninkrijk der Nederlanden* – Embassy of the kingdom of the Netherlands (on embassy name plate).

Colloquially, above all by those living in the the provinces of North and South Holland, *Nederland* is called *Holland*, but many people living in other parts of the country object to this substitution. Certainly the term *Holland* is used much less in Dutch than in English. To translate *Nederland* consistently with 'the Netherlands' in English sounds like translated Dutch – more often than not the most natural sounding translation is 'Holland', Dutch sensitivities about this term in Dutch having no relevance in English.

nevertheless:

(desal)niettemin, (des)ondanks, doch, (des)niettegenstaande, nochtans, toch

The dominant word is *niettemin*, but the modal particle *toch*, one of whose various meanings is 'nevertheless', is more commonly used; *niettemin* is higher style, e.g. *Het volk is tegen de uitvoer van uranium maar de*

regering gaat er niettemin/toch mee door – The people are against the export of uranium but the government is going ahead with it nevertheless/anyway; the difference in style between the two is very similar to that between 'nevertheless' and 'anyway' in the example given, except that *niettemin* is even less common than 'nevertheless'.

Desalniettemin is an even more elevated form but in addition the *desal*-can render the pronominal part of 'notwithstanding **all that**, for **all that**, despite **it**'. And so it is with the other options given above: they all are closer in meaning to 'despite', rather than to 'nevertheless', e.g. *ondanks* = in spite of, *desondanks* = in spite of it/that. (cf. 'in spite of') *Niettegenstaande* literally means 'notwithstanding'.

Doch is a coordinating conjunction, usually only heard in higher style, which means 'but, still, yet' and consequently is close in meaning to *toch*, an adverbial conjunction, e.g. *Hij heeft het beloofd doch hij heeft het niet gedaan* = ...*toch heeft hij het niet gedaan* = ...*en hij heeft het toch niet gedaan* = ...*maar hij heeft het niet gedaan* – He promised but/yet (= nevertheless) he didn't do it. (cf. '[in] spite of')

next:

aanstaande, daarna/daarop, dichtstbijzijnde, eerstkomende, eerstvolgende, naast, verderop, volgende

Some of the difficulties associated with the translation of 'next' are paralleled in the translation of 'last'. (cf. 'last')

The dominant word is *volgend*, although speakers of English often first resort to *naast* because of its partial homophony with 'next'. *Naast* is primarily a preposition meaning 'next to, beside', e.g. *Hij woont naast mij* – He lives next to me, and thus *hier-/daarnaast* render 'next-door', e.g. *Hij woont hiernaast* – He lives next door, *Op de hoek van die straat staat de school en hij woont daarnaast/ernaast* – On the corner of that street is the school and he lives next(-door) to that/it. (cf. 'close' for another function of *naast*)

All the other options given above render the adjective 'next' in various contexts and can prove to be confusing. When in doubt, use *volgend* and you will not often be wrong, e.g. *volgende week* (next week), *de volgende keer* (next time), *in het volgende hoofdstuk* (in the next chapter).

Eerstvolgend is used for time and refers to the minutes, hours, days etc. starting from now (cannot be used in past or future contexts), e.g. *De eerstvolgende dagen moet u in bed blijven liggen* – The next few days you'll have to stay in bed.

Komend and *eerstkomend* render 'next' from the time of speaking, e.g. *de komende weken* – the coming weeks (= the next few weeks), where *de eerstkomende weken* means the same thing but emphasises somewhat more that you mean the weeks immediately following the period being referred to. 'Next week/year' is normally *volgende week/volgend jaar*, but, as in English, can be expressed as *de komende week/het komende jaar*.

'Next' followed by a day of the week requires special attention. 'Next Friday', i.e. 'Friday of next week', is *volgende week vrijdag*, but 'next Friday', often somewhat ambiguous in English if one is talking on Wednesday for example, is *aanstaande vrijdag*. This is not at all ambiguous in Dutch; it means two days later. But just as we can say 'Friday next', so too it is common in Dutch to say *vrijdag aanstaande*, *op zondag tien oktober aanstaande*. I have included accents here, not because they are normally written, but to illustrate that the stress shifts in Dutch depending on whether the word stands before or after the noun. *Aanstaande* as a translation of 'next' is only used with days of the week.

'The next week, month, year' with reference to past time is *de week/maand/het jaar daarop/daarna*, e.g. *Hij is twee weken naar Italië geweest. De eerste week zat hij in Rome en de week daarop/daarna in Florence* – He went to Italy for two weeks. The first week he spent in Rome and the next week in Florence

Dichtstbijzijnde/-gelegen translate 'next' in the sense of 'closest' and are therefore superlative forms of *dichtbij* (close), as in 'the next/closest chemist shop'. (cf. 'close')

One may on occasions meet the adverb *verder(op)* rendering English 'next', e.g. *Zij wonen één straat verder(op)* – They live in the next street (*de volgende straat* would not be wrong here), *Dat vind je één alinea verder* – You'll find that in the next paragraph.

nice:

aardig, lekker, leuk, mooi, netjes

With reference to people the word required is *aardig*, e.g. *Wat een aardige man* – What a nice man, *Dat was niet erg aardig van jou* – That wasn't very nice of you. But a letter, or a nicely laid out garden can also be *aardig*.

Mooi translates 'nice' with reference to weather but can also refer to other things as long as there is no possibility of ambiguity due to its other meaning of 'pretty, beautiful', e.g. *Het was vandaag heel mooi weer* – The

weather was very nice today (cf. *lekker* below),³ *Dat is een mooi stukje werk* – That is a nice piece of work.

Lekker translates 'nice' in the sense of 'delicious', e.g. *Deze sinaasappel smaakt echt erg lekker* – This orange really tastes very nice. Colloquially one could refer to a girl as being *lekker* too, if one means 'nice' in the sense of 'attractive, sexy', e.g. *Zij is een lekkere meid* – She is a really nice/attractive girl; this could in fact also be said of a little girl meaning 'physically nice/pretty'. *Lekker* can be used instead of *mooi* with reference to weather too. *Lekker* also commonly qualifies adjectives and adverbs as 'nice and' does in English, e.g. *lekker warm* – nice and warm, *lekker hard* – nice and hard/fast, *lekker gemakkelijk* – nice and comfortable.

Netjes is actually an adverb and therefore cannot be used to translate 'nice' attributively before the noun. It has connotations of 'proper', well mannered' or 'neat' (the attributive adjective is *net*, not a common word meaning 'proper'), e.g. *Je mag niet met je vingers eten. Dat is niet netjes* – You mustn't eat with your fingers. It's not nice, *Wat heb je je kamer netjes opgeruimd* – How nicely you've tidied up your room.

Leuk is possibly the most commonly used adjective in Dutch – compare the use of 'nice' in English. It is pretty well universally applicable and can translate all meanings of 'nice', such as those given above for example, although it is not usual to use it with reference to food or weather, e.g. *een leuke man* – a nice man, *een leuke film* – a nice film, *een leuke dag* – a nice day, *een leuk feestje* – a nice party. In any context not covered by the other words described above one should be safe using *leuk*.

the night, tonight, last night:

de avond, de nacht; vanavond, vannacht

The Dutch are much more particular about the distinction between 'night' and 'evening' than we are in English. *Nacht* is only after one has gone to bed and the period prior to that is *avond*. Consequently 'tonight', if one means 'this evening', is *vanavond*, e.g. *Wat doe je vanavond?* – What are you doing tonight? *Vannacht*, on the other hand, means 'later on tonight, in the depths of the night' or the next morning one can refer to the night that has just passed (last night) as *vannacht*, e.g. *Ik heb vannacht niet goed kunnen slapen* – I wasn't able to sleep properly last night. But 'last night' which means 'the evening of the day before' is *gisteravond*, e.g. *Wat heb je gisteravond gedaan?* – What did you do last night?

³ Notice that one says *Het was mooi/slecht weer*, not **Het weer was mooi/slecht* as in English.

It is worth noting in this context that *goede nacht* is not normally used in Dutch. The appropriate saying when one is going to bed is *wel te rusten* or more colloquially *slaap lekker/ze*. To visitors departing after spending the evening at your place you say *tot ziens* or *dáág* (and they to you too).

the noise, noisy:

het geluid, de herrie, het lawaai; gehorig, lawaaiig, luidruchtig; geruisloos

A 'noise' in the sense of a 'sound'⁴ is *geluid*, e.g. *De televisie maakt een heel vreemd geluid* – The tv is making a strange noise/sound.

'Noise' in the sense of 'din, racket' is *lawaai*, e.g. *Onze burenen maken te veel lawaai* – Our neighbours make too much noise. A synonym of *lawaai* is *herrie*. Contrary to expectations, although the inconvenience is caused by *lawaai*, 'noise pollution' is *de geluid(s)hinder*.

The neighbours referred to above are *lawaaiig* (noisy), or less commonly *lawaaiig*. 'Noisy' in the sense of 'loud, boisterous' is *luidruchtig* (cf. 'loud'), i.e. a 'noisy' person. But if a house is 'noisy', i.e. has thin walls, the term required is *gehorig*, e.g. *Ik heb een leuke zolderkamer maar hij is wel erg gehorig* – I have a nice attic room but it is very noisy.

'Noiseless(ly)' is *geruisloos* (from *ruisen* – to rustle).

normal(ly):

gewoon, gewoonlijk, normaal, normaliter

If 'normal' means 'ordinary, usual', the word most commonly used is *gewoon*, e.g. *Het is een heel gewoon huis* – It's a very ordinary house, *In Engeland is het dragen van een schooluniform heel gewoon/ normaal* – It is perfectly normal to wear a school uniform in England. (cf. 'ordinary') But just as we can say 'normal' or 'usual' in sentences like this, the Dutch also often use *normaal* instead of *gewoon*. But when 'normal' means literally that and cannot be replaced by 'usual', only *normaal* can be used in Dutch too, e.g. *Dat kind is niet normaal (= abnormaal)* – That child is not normal. The two grades of petrol/gasoline are called *normaal* and *super*.

⁴ Note that it is only 'sound' in the sense of 'noise' that is rendered by *geluid*. 'Sound' in the sense of 'the sound of her voice', where it cannot be replaced by 'noise', is *de klank*. The 'sound (quality)' of a radio or tv is also *de klank* but the 'volume' knob is marked *geluid* and 'A silent movie is one without sound' – *Een stomme film is er één zonder geluid*.

Generally speaking *normaal* occurs much more frequently as an adjective than as an adverb, although in the standard expression *normaal gesproken* (generally speaking, as at the beginning of this sentence) for example, it is used adverbially. The dominant word for 'normally, usually, ordinarily, generally' is *gewoonlijk* (notice that there is thus a distinction here between the adverb *gewoonlijk* and the adjective *gewoon*, a rare occurrence in Dutch), e.g. *Zij blijft vrijdags gewoonlijk thuis* – She normally/usually stays home on Fridays. In higher style one hears *normaaliter*, in effect the adverbial equivalent of the adjective *normaal*: whereas *gewoonlijk* is never used as an adjective, *normaal* is sometimes used as an adverb, e.g. *normaal gesproken* – generally speaking. (cf. 'just' for an adverbial use of *gewoon*)

the note:

de aantekening, het bankbiljet, de boodschap, het briefje, de noot, de nota, de notitie, de ondertoon

If one writes a 'note' to someone it is a *briefje*; a *brief* would be a whole letter. *Briefje* can also refer to the little piece of paper a message is written on, e.g. *Hier, schrijf je adres op dit briefje* – Here, write your address on this bit of paper. A '(bank)note' of a given denomination is a *briefje*, thus *een briefje van tien (gulden)* (a ten guilder note), although a 'banknote' as such is called a *bankbiljet*.

A student's 'notes' are his *aantekeningen*, a word which is always used in the plural in this sense.

A 'footnote' is a *voetnoot* (always with the prefix *voet*) whereas *noot* on its own will normally refer to a musical 'note' (or a 'nut').

The figurative meaning of 'note' as in 'a note of dissatisfaction/fear' is *ondertoon*, e.g. *Er was een ondertoon van angst in haar stem* – There was a note of fear in her voice.

'To take note of s.t.' is either *notitie/nota nemen van iets*. (cf. 'to notice') *Notitie* also occurs in *het notitieboekje* (note book) and *een notitie maken* (to make a note). *Nota* on the other hand is not otherwise commonly used as a translation of 'note'. If one makes or writes down a 'note', this is usually a *boodschap* (lit. message, cf. *briefje*).

The phrase *nota bene*, considered somewhat learned in English, is much more common in Dutch and can render English 'to note', e.g. *Dit hotel is veel luxueuzer dan dat en is nota bene ook goedkoper* – This hotel is much more luxurious than that one and is, take note/I'll have you note/I might add, cheaper too.

to notice:

zich aantrekken, bemerken, nota/notitie nemen van, (op)merken, zien

The dominant word is *opmerken*, which can have strong connotations of 'to observe', e.g. *Ik was er ook die avond maar ik heb hem niet opgemerkt* – I was there that night too but I didn't notice him. But *opmerken* also translates 'to remark' (*de opmerking* – the remark), "*Maar dat is niet waar,*" *merkte iemand op* – "But that isn't true", somebody remarked.

As a translation of 'to notice', *merken* is not as concrete as *opmerken*, which refers to actually seeing things, i.e. perceiving them with one's eyes, e.g. *Ik heb gemerkt dat je de laatste tijd wat vrolijker bent* – I have noticed that you've been somewhat jollier lately, *Hij heeft mijn vrouw indirect beledigd maar zij merkte het gelukkig niet* – He insulted my wife indirectly but fortunately she didn't notice it.

Bemerken is not at all common. The same applies to the noun *bemerking* (remark). As a verb one will usually hear *(op)merken* being used and as a noun *opmerking*.

When 'to notice' is synonymous with 'to see', which is very often the case, the most natural translation is *zien*, e.g. *Toen hij zag dat de politie hem stond op te wachten, rende hij weg* – When he noticed that the police were lying in wait for him, he ran away. *Zien* could also have been used in the first example above.

(*Geen*) *nota/notitie nemen van* renders 'to notice' only in contexts where the meaning is 'to take note of', e.g. *Ik zag dat de vertrektijd veranderd was maar ik heb er eigenlijk helemaal geen notitie van genomen* – I saw that the departure time had changed but I didn't really take any notice of it at all (= I didn't mentally register it). If one 'takes no notice of s.t.' in the sense that one ignores it, the following extremely common idiom is used: *In dat hotel mocht ik niet zonder stropdas naar binnen maar daar heb ik me niets van aangetrokken* – I wasn't allowed into that hotel without a tie, but I took no notice of that.

now, nowadays, from now on, till now:

nu, nou, thans, hoor; heden ten dage, tegenwoordig, vandaag de dag; vanaf nu, van nu af aan, voortaan; tot nu toe, tot dusver(re), tot op de dag van vandaag

The dominant word for 'now' is *nu*. In colloquial speech one may hear *nu* being pronounced as *nou* but it is seldom written. When 'now' does not literally mean 'at this moment', i.e. when used as a modal particle, one always says *nou* (a spoken form), e.g. *Kom nou, schiet op* – Come on now,

get a move on, *Nou, wat gaan we doen?* – Well now, what are we going to do? Compare *Wat gaan we nú doen?*/*Wat gaan we nou dóen?* – What are we going to do **now/do** now? (*nu* = time, *nou* = modality)

Hoor is extremely commonly used after a direct or implied imperative, in which case it functions as a modal particle analogous to English 'now', e.g. *Let op, hoor* – Watch out now, *Als je het afgeleverd hebt, moet je wel terugkomen, hoor* – Once you've delivered it, you'd better come straight back now (= do you hear!).

Thans is only used in very high style as a synonym for *nu*.

Tegenwoordig renders 'nowadays, these days', *De jeugd van tegenwoordig is niet zoals vroeger* – Young people nowadays aren't the way they used to be. *Heden ten dage* (*heden* is an archaic word meaning 'today', cf. 'today') is quite high style meaning the same thing as is *vandaag de dag*.

Van nu af aan is the dominant expression for 'from now on'; *vanaf nu* is just slightly less common and *voortaan* is definitely higher style, corresponding in connotation to 'henceforth, in future'. (cf. 'from', 'in future')

The dominant expression for '(up) till now' is *tot nu toe* (never pronounced as **tot nou toe*). Only marginally less common is *tot dus ver* (more elevated *tot dusverre*) and if being very emphatic, one can say *tot op de dag van vandaag* (to this very day), e.g. *Tot op de dag van vandaag is het niemand gelukt om dat record te breken* – To this day no-one has succeeded in breaking that record. (cf. 'still')

the number:

het aantal, het cijfer, het getal, het nummer, het tal, het telwoord

'Numerals' are *telwoorden* and thus 'cardinal numerals' are *hoofdtelwoorden* and 'ordinal numerals' are *rangtelwoorden*, e.g. *Ik ben Frans aan het leren en moet als huiswerk de telwoorden leren* – I'm learning French and have to learn the numerals for homework.

The 'number' of one's house, one's telephone 'number' or a lottery ticket 'number' (i.e. a number allotted to s.t. or s.o.) is a *nummer*, e.g. *Op welk nummer woon je?* – What number do you live at?, *Wat is het nummer van de rij waar we nu zitten?* – What's the number of the row we're sitting in now?, *Wat is je telefoonnummer?* – What is your telephone number? If a distinction needs to be made, one's local code or prefix is *het netnummer* or *het kengetal* whereas one's own number is *het abonneenummer* (lit.

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subscriber's number). 'To number' the pages of an essay etc. is *nummeren*.

A 'number' in the sense of a (mathematical) figure is *cijfer*, e.g. *Dit is het cijfer 2* – This is the number/figure 2, *553 is een getal van drie cijfers* – 553 is a number consisting of three figures/digits. *Cijfer* is also used in Holland to translate 'mark' as in one's mark for a given subject, e.g. *Wat voor cijfer kreeg je voor wiskunde?* – What mark did you get for mathematics?⁵

Outside the compounds given below, *tal* is really only used in the elevated expression *tal van* (a number of = numerous), e.g. *Tal van mensen hebben die film al gezien* – Numerous people have already seen that film. It also occurs in the word *elftal* meaning 'football team' because of the number of players involved in European football, and occurs as an ending in the words *inwonertal* (the number of inhabitants = *het aantal inwoners*), *het kindertal* (the number of children), *het leerlingental* (the number of pupils). Similarly it can be used in combination with numbers to render 'about', *een tiental mensen* – about ten people. (cf. 'about')

'A number of' which does not mean 'numerous' (cf. *tal*), is *het aantal*, a very commonly used word, e.g. *Een aantal leerlingen moet schoolblijven* – A number of students have to stay behind at school,⁶ *een aantal jaren geleden* – a number of years ago.

A *getal* is an arithmetical number, thus if you add up 'numbers', *Dan tel je getallen op* and '(un)even numbers' are *(on)even getallen*. If one has a 'head for numbers' one has *een goed geheugen voor getallen*. There is also a standard expression *in groten getale* (with archaic case endings) – in great numbers, e.g. *Surinamers zijn in groten getale naar Nederland verhuisd* – Surinamers moved to Holland in great numbers.

⁵ In Holland marks for school and university subjects are given out of ten, with the top mark being ten.

⁶ *Een aantal* + plural noun is usually followed by a singular verb in Dutch whereas a plural verb is more common in English; compare also *Tien procent van de studenten is gezakt* – Ten percent of the students have failed. It should be added that a plural verb after *aantal* does occur in spoken Dutch too.

O

obviously, evidently, apparently:

blijkbaar, duidelijk, kennelijk, klaarblijkelijk, schijnbaar

The meanings of *blijkbaar* and *schijnbaar* are related to those of *blijken* and *schijnen*. (cf. 'to appear' and 'to seem') Whereas *schijnbaar* means 'apparently' (i.e. it would seem), a meaning more commonly expressed by *kennelijk* (*Je bent mijn naam kennelijk vergeten* – Apparently you've forgotten my name), *blijkbaar* leaves no room for doubt and is thus akin in meaning to 'obviously, evidently', e.g. *Als hij het heeft kunnen doen is het duidelijk/blijkbaar niet erg moeilijk* – If he was able to do it, it clearly/obviously isn't very difficult. Compare *Daaruit blijkt dat het niet moeilijk is* – That just goes to show/prove that it isn't difficult. *Duidelijk* is an extremely commonly used word which renders English 'clearly', as in the above example, but also as in *Spreek duidelijker* – Speak more clearly. In the clause *Het is duidelijk dat...* – It is clear/obvious that..., it is not possible to use *blijkbaar*; this is a standard expression. (cf. 'clear[ly]' and *het blijkt dat* under 'to appear')

Klaarblijkelijk is a less common variant of *blijkbaar*.

the/to offer:

de aanbieding, het bod, het aanbod; aanbieden, bieden, een bod doen, een offerte doen

The dominant verb is *aanbieden* (*bood aan, aangeboden*), e.g. *Ze hebben hem de post van directeur van het bedrijf aangeboden* – They offered him the position of head of the firm. Often in English we express 'to offer' using the noun, e.g. 'I made him an offer of some money'; in Dutch one sticks to the verb, i.e. *Ik heb hem wat geld aangeboden*. This is necessary because the nouns *aanbieding*, *aanbod* and *bod* all have other connotations. Note that *het offer* means 'sacrifice'.

Aanbod (no plural) is the noun required if *aanbieden* isn't used, e.g. *Hij vroeg of ik niet met ze op vakantie wilde, maar ik kan van dat vriendelijke aanbod geen gebruik maken* – He asked if I wouldn't like to go away on holidays with them but I can't avail myself of that kind offer. *Aanbod* also occurs in the expression *vraag en aanbod* (supply and demand) where it translates 'supply', i.e. that which the manufacturer can 'offer' or 'supply' to satisfy a demand.

Aanbieding is most commonly heard in everyday speech in the sense of 'special (offer)' in a shop sale, e.g. *Speciale aanbiedingen* – Specials/On offer, *Die zwembroeken zijn nu in de aanbieding* – Those swimming trunks are now on (the) special/in the sale/on offer.

Bod (no plural) is virtually always used in collaboration with the verb *doen* and thus comes close in meaning to 'bid'. It is in fact the verb used when one 'makes an offer/bid' at an auction, e.g. *Ik heb het eerste bod gedaan* – I made the first offer/I bid first.

The word *offerte* is most commonly heard in the expressions (*een*) *offerte doen* – to make an offer, to submit a quotation/to quote (for a job)/tender, and *offerte vragen* – to call for tenders/invite offers.

The distinction between *aanbieden* and *bieden* is not always easy for speakers of English to grasp. The most frequent match for 'to offer' is *aanbieden* whereas *bieden* often has connotations of 'to bid' and thus overlaps with *een bod doen*, e.g. *Ga je op die auto bieden/een bod doen op die auto?* – Are you going to bid on that car/make a bid for that car? If you 'offer' s.o. your arm or some money, either *aanbieden* or *bieden* could be used whereas the figurative meaning in the following example can only be rendered by *bieden*: *De elektronika biedt tegenwoordig mogelijkheden genoeg* – Electronics offers lots of possibilities these days. Note the difference between *hulp bieden* (to lend assistance) and *hulp aanbieden* (to offer to help).

often:

dikwijls, vaak

Although these two words are completely synonymous, these days *vaak* is more common than *dikwijls* (pron. [dikvøls]). When using the comparative and superlative of 'often', only *vaker/het vaakst* are possible.

on:

aan, om, op, tegen

It is not the intention in this book to deal with prepositional usage, which belongs mainly to the realm of grammar, but there are a couple of simple, useful tips on translating 'on' which are worthwhile mentioning here.

Generally speaking a horizontal 'on' is *op* and a vertical 'on' is *aan*, e.g. *Er lag een briefje op (de) tafel* – There was a note on the table, *Er hing een klok aan de muur* – There was a clock on the wall. In addition one can say that if s.t. is 'on the edge of' s.t. else, the word required will be *aan*, e.g.

aan de rand van de stad – on the edge of (the) town, *aan de kust* – on the coast, *aan de overkant van de gracht* – on the other side of the canal; compare *op het strand* – on the beach, *op een eiland* – on an island, *op de hoek* – on the corner.

Although, as illustrated above, things normally hang *aan* the wall (clocks, paintings), a wall-hanging requires *tegen*, e.g. *Ik heb een kleed tegen de muur gehangen* – I've put a rug on the wall.

A further difficulty with *aan* and *op* arises when it comes to translating 'at'. A figurative 'at' is very often *aan*, e.g. *aan het begin* – at the beginning, but compare *op het ogenblik* – at the moment, whereas with reference to place it is frequently *op* that is required, or sometimes *bij*, e.g. *een klop aan/op de deur/tegen de muur* – a knock at the door/on the wall, *op het station/postkantoor/de bank* – at the station/bank/post-office, *bij Harrods* – at Harrods, *bij de brug* – at the bridge (cf. 'near'), but *op de brug* – on the bridge. *Aan de universiteit* (at university) is figurative, i.e. s.o. is a student there, whereas *op de universiteit* is literal, i.e. s.o. is physically there at the moment as opposed to being at home.

With reference to items of apparel and personal adornment, it is possible to have things *aan*, *om* or *op*. (cf. 'to put on') One only has hats, caps and spectacles *op*, so that does not constitute a problem. The real difficulty is the distinction between things which one has *aan* and those which one has *om* (i.e. around): coats, shirts, trousers, scarves and shoes one has *aan*, but (safety) belts, ties, necklaces, bangles, nappies/diapers and watches one has *om*, e.g. *Wat heb je een leuke halsketting om* – What a nice necklace you've got on, *Heb je dit overhemd ooit aan gehad?* – Have you ever had this shirt on?, *Hij had zo'n gek petje op* – He had such a strange cap on. It should be noted that rings one has *aan*, not *om*.

once:

een/één keer, eenmaal, (wel) eens, ooit, vroeger

The dominant expression is *een keer*, e.g. *Ik heb het een keer geprobeerd* – I tried it once/at some stage. If the 'once' is emphatic, i.e. once and definitely not a second time, one uses the form *één keer*, pronounced with the necessary emphasis.

A rather formal synonym of *één keer* is *eenmaal*, always pronounced but (normally) not written *éénmaal*. (cf. 'time') It is used at auctions for example: *eenmaal, andermaal, verkocht* – going once, going twice, sold. It is not infrequently heard, even outside formal contexts, in contexts where English 'once' is used as a conjunction; in such cases it must be used in combination with the conjunction *als* (when), e.g. *Als we dit eenmaal*

achter ons hebben zal ik me gelukkiger voelen – Once we've got this behind us, I'll feel a lot happier.

Eens (pron. [əs]) renders 'once' in the standard expression *er was/waren eens...* with which fairy tales begin, e.g. *Er was eens een koning die zeer rijk was* – There was once a rich king/Once upon a time there was a king who was very rich.

But in addition to the above clearly defined use of *eens* as a translation of 'once', the word is found ubiquitously in Dutch with a modal function, with or without the addition of *wel* (i.e. *wel eens*). Although this issue, which it is impossible to do justice to here, does not strictly speaking warrant treatment under the lemma 'once', I devote some attention to it at this point because it is such an important expression in Dutch. The addition or omission of *wel* affects the modality of the statement. *Eens* on its own is close in meaning to *een keer* (= some time, cf. above), whereas in combination with *wel* the connotation is vaguer or more general, e.g. *Ik heb eens een brief van haar gekregen* – I got a letter from her once/at some time,¹ *Ik heb wel eens een brief van haar gekregen* – I've occasionally received a letter from her/I received a letter from her at some time or other. The example given in the first paragraph could also read *Ik heb het eens geprobeerd*; the meaning is not necessarily 'one time' (= *één keer*) but simply 'I tried it', possibly on more than one occasion – it could be omitted with little change to the meaning. It is even possible for *wel*, *eens* and *een keer(tje)* to be used side by side, e.g. *Wat is je kamer vies. Hij mag (wel) eens (een keertje) schoongemaakt worden* – Gee, your room is dirty. It could do with a clean some time, where (wel) *eens* (een keertje) emphasises the modality, i.e. should/ought to (future action).² Compare the following example in the past tense: *Ik heb dat boek wel eens (een keertje) gelezen* – I read that book at some time or other.

Modal *eens* can also refer to the future in the sense of 'at some time, one day', e.g. *U zult dit eens betreuren* – One day you'll regret this (stress on *eens*). (cf. 'just' and 'moment' for other examples of the modal use of *eens* and 'ever', and cf. 'past' and 'sometimes' for other examples of the use of *wel eens*)

Sometimes English 'once' means 'formerly, previously' in which case the Dutch often use *vroeger*, e.g. *Wij hebben er vroeger ook gewoond* – We lived there once too.

¹ *Eens* here could be replaced by *ooit* (cf. 'ever'), but *ooit* implies that the action occurred longer ago.

² The brackets around *wel* and *een keertje* are meant to indicate that either or both can be omitted without the sense being affected; the same applies to the diminutive suffix on *keer*.

Although the dominant meaning of *ooit* is 'ever', these days it is exceedingly commonly used in the sense of 'once'. (cf. 'ever') The following examples should illustrate this particular meaning of *ooit*, but in every case it is interchangeable with one of the above options: *Deze kerk was ooit (= vroeger) katholiek* – This church was once Catholic, *Die kat hebben we ooit (= een keer) van de burens gekregen* – We got that cat at some time or other from the neighbours, *U heeft ooit (= wel eens) gezegd dat...* – You once said that... With reference to past action one also hears *ooit eens* being used as a synonym of *wel eens*, e.g. *Ik heb het ooit eens geprobeerd* – I tried it at some time or other.

only:

alleen, alleen maar, enig, enkel, maar, nog maar, pas, slechts

The dominant word is *alleen*, which is usually used in combination with *maar*, but *maar* (lit. but) is also very frequently used on its own, e.g. *Ik heb alleen/alleen maar/maar tien gulden bij me* – I have only got ten guilders on me/All I've got is ten guilders.³ Stylistically it is advisable not to use *maar* on its own in a clause introduced by *maar* meaning 'but', e.g. *Hij dacht dat de hond hem wou bijten maar die wilde alleen (maar) geaaid worden* – He thought the dog was going to bite him but it only wanted to be patted (*alleen maar* is alright). A 'Staff only' sign must read *Alleen personeel*; here the inclusion of *maar* would sound too colloquial or even denigrating and **maar personeel* in this case is not possible – compare *Zij hebben hier niets te vertellen. Die zijn (alleen) maar personeel* – They have no say here. They are only staff. As a general rule of thumb one can say that in most cases the three are pretty well interchangeable, but the safest option in cases of doubt is *alleen maar*.

Keeping in mind that English 'merely' is often synonymous with 'only', *alleen maar* also translates 'merely', e.g. *In het Jappenkamp kregen ze alleen maar water en brood* – In the Japanese camp they merely got bread and water. The addition of *maar* gives a more conversational ring to the statement; omission of it sounds more like the sort of thing one may read.

In high style one hears the form *slechts*. It is semantically the same as the above. Similarly *enkel* in the sense of 'only' is limited to higher style (except in Belgium) but with other meanings (e.g. 'single') it is an everyday word. Note the expression *enkel en alleen* – purely and simply (= *louder*), but otherwise avoid *slechts* and *enkel* when translating 'only'. (cf. 'simple')

³ Perchance, because this example contains a numerical quantity, it is also possible to say *Ik heb nog maar tien gulden bij me*, the connotation of this being 'I've only got 10 guilders left'.

'Only' which means 'not until' is always *pas*, e.g. *Hij komt pas maandag/maandag pas* (either order, although the latter is more emphatic) – He's only coming on Monday/He's not coming till Monday. 'Only' with reference to someone's age (= just) is also *pas*, e.g. *Mijn dochtertje is pas zes* – My daughter is only/just six. As explained in footnote 2, because this is an expression where 'only' qualifies a numerical quantity, it is also possible to say *Mijn dochter is nog maar zes*. *Pas* will occasionally be found in combination with other expressions of time where it also has connotations of 'just', e.g. *Ik ben (nog) pas drie weken hier* – I have been here for only/just three weeks (cf. 'just'); compare *Ik ben hier nog maar drie weken* – I'll only be here for another three weeks.

If one has 'only just' done s.t., the Dutch see this as 'just' and consequently use either *pas* or more commonly *net*, e.g. *Ik heb net/pas (nog) gegeten* – I have (only) just eaten/had dinner. (cf. 'just')

The adjective 'only' is *enig*, e.g. *Zij is enig(st) kind* – She is an only child,⁴ *Dit is het enige geld dat ik heb* – This is the only money I have, *Het enige wat zij wil is trouwen* – The only thing she wants is to get married.

to open: (cf. 'to close')

opendoen, openen, opengaan, openmaken, openslaan, openstaan, openzetten, geopend/open zijn

As in the case of 'to close', the separable verb formed from *doen* is by far the most common word for 'to open'. It applies to windows, doors, books etc. *Openslaan* is also used with reference to books but it is more usual to use *opendoen*, e.g. *Sla/doe je boek open op bladzijde tien* – Open your book on page ten. (*Openen* is possible here too but is not used in the spoken language.)

Openzetten, always replaceable by *opendoen*, is synonymous with that verb with reference to windows but one would not *openzetten* a door one was about to walk through; that is definitely *opendoen*. But if one is sitting in a room and wishes to leave the door or window open/ajar, one could say *Zet de deur even open* – Open the door. In short, the result of *openzetten* is *openstaan*. (cf. next page)

⁴ *Enig* in this expression does not require the indefinite article. *Enig* as an adjective is also commonly used, especially by women (compare 'gorgeous'), to mean 'lovely, terrific', e.g. *Beps, je hebt vandaag een enige jurk aan* – Beps, you've got a gorgeous dress on today; also *Wat een enige man* – What an wonderful chap.

Openmaken, as with *dichtmaken*, implies that much more effort is required than is the case with doors and windows. It is used for bottles, jars, tin cans, parcels, letters, suitcases etc., e.g. *Wil je deze jampot openmaken?* – Will you open this jar of jam?

If a door or window, 'is open' one can use *openstaan*, e.g. *Doe de deur eens open, Jaap. Maar hij staat al open* – Open the door, Jaap. But it's already open, but it is also possible to say *Hij is al open*. 'To leave a door open' is *open laten staan*, e.g. *Er kwam iemand binnen die de deur wijdopen liet staan* – Somebody came in who left the door wide open.

When a door or a window seemingly 'opens' of its own accord, i.e. without an obvious agent, *opengaan* is required, e.g. *Toen ging de deur ineens open* – Then the door suddenly opened. One could also ask a shopkeeper *Hoe laat gaat u open?* – What time do you open?

Openen can be applied to doors, windows, bottles, tin cans etc. but it is best to follow the advice given above in such cases; it has an unnatural, formal ring to it and thus one finds on the doors of Dutch trains *Niet openen voor de trein stilstaat*. Where *openen* must be used, however, is figuratively with reference to new buildings and the like, e.g. *De koningin zal zaterdag het nieuwe ziekenhuis in Haarlem openen* – The queen is going to open the new hospital in Haarlem on Saturday. Note *Ik verklaar dit gebouw voor geopend* – I declare this building open.

The normal adjective is *open* which never takes -e as it ends in -en (*het open raam*), but one will often see *geopend* on shop doors, for example: *Geopend elke dag van tien tot twaalf* – Open every day from ten to twelve, *Dit museum is jaarlijks van april t/m (= tot en met) oktober geopend* – This museum is open annually from April to October (inclusive). *Open* is concrete, while *geopend* is more abstract.

Cf. 'to get' for *openkrijgen* (to get open).

the opinion:

de mening, de opinie, het oordeel; mijns inziens, volgens

The dominant word is *mening*, which, despite appearances, never means 'meaning'. (cf. 'to mean') But the expression 'in my/your/his opinion' is most usually translated using the preposition *volgens* plus a noun or object pronoun, i.e. *volgens mij/jou/hem*. In more elevated style, or where a synonym is required to avoid awkward repetition of the same expression, one hears *naar mijn mening/opinie/oordeel* (*oordeel* is particularly high style). Note also *Ik ben van mening/opinie/oordeel dat... (= ik vind dat)* – I am of the opinion that. (N.B. no definite article) Also only used in formal

contexts are the expressions *mijns inziens*, *zijns inziens*, *ons/onzes inziens* etc. meaning 'in my/his/our opinion'; they are commonly abbreviated in writing to *m.i.*, *z.i.*, *o.i.*

A 'difference of opinion' is *het meningsverschil* or *het verschil van mening*.

the/to order:

de bestelling, het bevel, de opdracht, de orde, de volgorde; bestellen, bevelen, commanderen

An 'order' in a restaurant or bookshop is a *bestelling* and the corresponding verb is *bestellen*, e.g. *Heeft u een omelet besteld, meneer?* – Did you order an omelette, sir?

An 'order' given by a boss to an employee is an *opdracht* (= task) whereas *bevel* (pl. *bevelen*) and the corresponding verb is *bevelen* (*beval*, *bevelen*) have an officious or military ring to them, e.g. *Ik ben niet van plan om gehoor te geven aan zijn bevelen. Ik laat me niet zo bevelen* – I have no intention of following his orders. I'm not going to be ordered around/given orders like that. To avoid this militaristic overtone 'to order' often needs to be paraphrased, e.g. *Voordat hij de brief openmaakte stuurde hij zijn assistent de kamer uit* – Before he opened the letter he ordered his assistant to leave the room, *Hij moest voor de rechter verschijnen* – He was ordered to appear in court.

'To order/boss about' is *commanderen*, e.g. *Ik laat me niet zo commanderen* – I'm not going to be ordered around/bossed about like that.

Both 'order' in the sense of 'law and order' as well as a 'religious order' is *orde*. In the former sense it is one of those abstract nouns which always take the definite article, e.g. *De politie heeft zijn (also haar) best gedaan om de orde te handhaven/herstellen* – The police did their best to preserve/restore (law and) order. This word is also used in the expressions *aan de orde van de dag* (the order of the day) and *tot de orde roepen* (to call to order).

'Order' in the sense of 'sequence' is *volgorde*, e.g. *in alfabetische volgorde* – in alphabetical order, *Leg de speelkaarten in volgorde neer* – Put the playing cards down in order. 'Word order' as a grammatical concept is *woordvolgorde*.

ordinary:

(dood)gewoon, gewoonlijk, ordinair

There is only one word for 'ordinary' and that is *gewoon*, with *doodgewoon* being a somewhat more emphatic form, e.g. *Hij is een (dood)gewoon iemand* – He's a (perfectly) ordinary person. (cf. 'person' for this use of *iemand*) 'Ordinary' is only worthy of mention here because of the tendency of English speakers to see *ordinair* as a synonym, which it is not. *Ordinair* means 'common, low class, vulgar'. (cf. 'common')

The couplet *gewoon/gewoonlijk* is a rare example of there being a distinction in Dutch between the adjective and the adverb; cf. 'normal(ly)' for *gewoonlijk* (= ordinarily, usually).

In addition, *gewoon* is used adverbially meaning 'just' in which capacity it is commonly (over)used as a filler word; compare English 'like, sort of, you know'. (cf. 'just')

original(ly):

aanvankelijk, oorspronkelijk, origineel

'Original' in the sense of the 'first' is *oorspronkelijk*, which is also the adverb 'originally', e.g. *Palestina is het oorspronkelijke vaderland van de joden* – Palestine is the original homeland of the Jews, *De joden hebben oorspronkelijk in het Heilige Land gewoond* – The Jews originally lived in the Holy Land.

'Original' in the sense of 'an original/unique idea' is *origineel*, e.g. *De jongste roman van Mulisch is erg origineel* – Mulisch's latest novel is very original. *Oorspronkelijk(heid)* occurs with this meaning too, e.g. *De hedendaagse kunst wordt gekenmerkt door het wanhopig streven naar oorspronkelijkheid/originaliteit* – Modern art is characterised by the desperate pursuit of originality. *Het origineel* renders 'the original' (copy of a document, film etc.).

Sometimes 'originally' means 'initially, in the beginning' in which case one says *aanvankelijk*. (cf. 'to begin')

(on one's) own:

alleen, op (je) eigen houtje, in/op je eentje, zelfstandig

If one does something 'on one's own', i.e. without assistance from anyone else, the appropriate expression is *in je eentje*, where the pronoun varies according to the person or persons concerned, as in English, e.g. *Ik heb*

ons vakantiehuisje helemaal in m'n eentje gebouwd – I built our holiday house entirely on my own/by myself.

If you live 'on your own', i.e. alone, *in je eentje* can also be used, but just as in English, *alleen* can be said as well, e.g. *Mijn moeder woont nu in d'r eentje/alleen* – My mother now lives on her own/alone, *Hij zit in z'n dooie eentje in Spanje* – He's all on his own in Spain (where the addition of *coll. dooie* emphasises the loneliness).

Zelfstandig can be used if there are connotations of 'independently', e.g. *Mijn zoon woonde tot een jaar geleden nog bij mij maar nu woont hij zelfstandig* – My son lived with me till a year ago but now he lives on his own/independently.

The expression *op (je) eigen houtje*, commonly confused with *in je eentje*, means 'off your own bat', e.g. *Ik kwam die dag laat thuis en Jan had het hele huis op (zijn) eigen houtje schoongemaakt. Hij had het bovendien ook allemaal in z'n eentje gedaan* – I got home late that day and Jan had cleaned the whole house of his own accord (= without being asked to). What's more he'd done it all on his own too. The two are distinctly different in meaning. One often hears the Dutch saying *op z'n eentje*, which is presumably a contaminated form.

P

to paint:

beschilderen, schilderen, verven

What an artist does is *schilderen* (= to create with paint) but if one paints a wall, cupboard, table etc. either *schilderen* or *verven* (= to provide with a coat of paint) can be used, e.g. *Rembrandt heeft de Nachtwacht geschilderd* – Rembrandt painted the Nightwatch, *Deze muur moet opnieuw geverfd/geschilderd worden* – This wall has to be repainted. Note: 'to paint' with reference to painting a house is always *schilderen*, never *verven*. Rembrandt was a *schilder* and the local painter (and decorator) is a (*huis*)*schilder*, however, and all forms of paint are *de verf* (*de verf/verven* also render the/to dye). (cf. 'tin')

Beschilderen is an example of the prefix *be-* being used as it was previously used in English, compare 'bespectacled' (= *bebrild*), i.e. with glasses on. Something which has been *beschilderd* has been 'painted on' (= provided with a painted decoration). It is often used adjectivally, e.g. *Dit is een handbeschilderde tegel* = *Deze tegel is met de hand beschilderd* – This is a handpainted tile; the tile *wordt beschilderd* and the illustration on it *wordt geschilderd*.

Note: *gebrandschilderde ramen* – stained-glass windows.

the paragraph:

de alinea, de paragraaf

An (often indented) 'paragraph' of writing starting on a new line is an *alinea* (pl. *alinea's*). *Paragraaf* (pl. *paragrafen*) refers to a section of text, frequently consisting of more than one paragraph, and sometimes introduced by the symbol § plus a number, e.g. the above *paragraaf* on 'to paint' consists of two *alinea's*.

to pass:

(*aan*)*geven, doorgeven, inhalen, langskomen, overgaan, passeren, verlopen, verstrijken, voorbijgaan/-rijden; slagen (voor), een voldoende krijgen*

'To pass an exam' is *slagen voor*, e.g. *Ben je voor het examen (ervoor) geslaagd?* – Did you pass the exam (it)? Note that it is a regular verb (not

to be confused with *slaan* – to hit) and it is conjugated with *zijn*. (cf. 'to fail')¹

'To pass, overtake' someone in a car is *inhalen*, e.g. *Je mag op deze weg niet inhalen* – You are not allowed to pass/overtake on this road. It also translates 'to catch up', both in a vehicle and in one's work if one is behind, e.g. *Ze heeft zo veel school gemist dat ze de anderen nooit zal kunnen inhalen* – She's missed so much school that she'll never be able to catch up with the others.

Langskomen/komen langs translates 'to pass by', either on foot or in a vehicle, e.g. *Ik kom er iedere dag langs op weg naar mijn werk/Ik kom iedere dag langs dat gebouw op weg naar mijn werk* – I pass by there/fit every day on my way to work/I pass (by) that building every day on my way to work. If there is no object, one is dealing with a verb *langskomen*, not *komen langs*. (compare *uit-/instappen* and *stappen uit/in* under 'to change' and cf. *langskomen* under 'to visit')

Synonymous with *langskomen* are *voorbijgaan/-rijden*, although the latter refers specifically to 'driving past', e.g. *Ik ga/rij er iedere dag voorbij = Ik kom er iedere dag langs* – I pass by there every day.

If one 'passes' a place in the sense of 'going too far, overshooting the mark', only *voorbijgaan/-rijden* is correct, e.g. *De bus had daar moeten stoppen maar hij reed de halte voorbij* – The bus should have stopped there but it went past the stop. Compare also *Hij zag me daar staan maar hij reed toch voorbij* – He saw me standing there but he drove right past me anyway, and *Ik stond er te wachten toen hij langsreed/voorbijreed* – I was standing there waiting when he passed by.

Passeren is used in a similar way to *voorbijgaan/-rijden* but simply expresses that one 'passes by' without the added connotation of overshooting the mark or leaving s.o. standing, e.g. *Elke dag passeer ik hem/dat gebouw* – I pass him/that building every day. *Passeren* is the only possible verb when one is figuratively 'passed by/over', e.g. *De man onder mij is vóór mij bevorderd dus voel ik me wel gepasseerd* – The man below me has been promoted so I feel I've been passed over.

The 'passing' of time is usually expressed by *voorbijgaan* or *verlopen* but in higher style one will hear *verstrijken* (*verstreek*, *verstreken*), e.g.

¹ *Slagen voor* (to pass) should not be confused with *slagen in* (to succeed in doing s.t., cf. 'to succeed'). It is also common to express 'passing' an exam as follows: *Heb je een (on)voldoende voor natuurkunde gekregen?* – Did you pass (fail) physics? Use this when mentioning the subject by name and use *slagen* when 'exam' is mentioned or implied, e.g. *Ben je voor (het) wiskunde(-examen) geslaagd/gezakt?* – Did you pass/fail (fail) the mathematics exam?

Sindsdien zijn vele maanden voorbijgegaan/verlopen/verstreken – Many months have since passed. For 'to pass/spend' some time in a place, cf. 'to spend'.

If one wants something to be 'passed' at the dinner table, the word required is *(aan)geven*, e.g. *Wil je me de boter eens (aan)geven?* – Would you pass the butter?, but *Hij pakte de boter en gaf hem door* – He grabbed the butter and passed it on. *Doorgeven* thus renders 'passing s.t. from person to person', e.g. *Zet je naam op deze lijst en geef hem dan door aan de anderen* – Put your name on this list and then pass it on to the others.

'To pass' in the sense of 'to blow over, wear off' is *overgaan* or *over zijn* but *voorbijgaan* can be used in this way too, e.g. *Ik voelde me vanochtend wat misselijk maar het ging gauw over/was gauw over/was gauw voorbij* – I felt a bit nauseous this morning but it soon passed, *Ze is op het ogenblik een beetje boos op me maar dat zal wel overgaan* – She's a bit angry with me at the moment but that'll pass.

'To pass away' meaning 'to die' is dealt with under 'to die'. (cf. 'to die')

(the) past:

het verleden, wel eens; afgelopen, langs, voorbij

As a noun 'past' is rendered by *het verleden*, a word which also exists as an adjective meaning 'last' (cf. 'last'), e.g. *Dat ligt nu allemaal in het verleden* – That is now all in the past. This could be expressed adverbially in the following way: *Dat is nu allemaal voorbij* – That is now all (in the) past. *Verleden* does render the adjective 'past' in *de verleden tijd* – the past tense. But the expression *in het verleden* (= *vroeger*) is the opposite of *in de toekomst* – in (the) future; often the Dutch use *wel eens* (lit. on occasions, now and again) where we in English often say 'in the past', e.g. *Ik heb daar wel eens wat gekocht* – I've bought things there in the past/on occasions. (cf. 'ever', 'once' and 'sometimes')

Voorbij also exists as a preposition meaning 'past, beyond', e.g. *Hij woont (iets) voorbij de kerk* – He lives (just) past/beyond the church.

The 'past' week is *de afgelopen week*. (cf. 'last')

'To come/drive/walk past' is expressed by *langskomen*, *-rijden*, *-lopen*. (cf. 'to pass')

the/to peel:

de dop, de pel, de schaal, de schil; afhalen, bladderen, doppen, pellen, schillen, vervellen

The distinction between *pellen* and *schillen* is a curious one for English-speaking people. If anything has to be 'peeled' with a knife, the verb required is *schillen* and the 'skin' or 'peel' is *de schil*, e.g. *Zowel de aardappels als de appels moeten geschild worden* – Both the potatoes and the apples have to be peeled. But if a potato is 'skinned' after it has been boiled, an easier process which could be done with one's fingers because the skin is much looser, *pellen* is used. But even mandarins, oranges and bananas, none of which are peeled with a knife, all have a *schil* and normally require the verb *schillen*, although it is conceivable that one will hear *pellen* (especially for a mandarin). Dictionaries give the noun *de pel* but this is not common and is best forgotten: even if one uses *pellen* to 'peel' a mandarin, what one removes is its *schil*. *De schil afhalen* (to take the skin/peel off) is synonymous with both *schillen* and *pellen*.

Pellen must be used, for example, for a hard-boiled egg or for peas. In addition, having cracked (*kraken*) a walnut or a peanut, *pellen* can be applied to the loose skin around the nut – once again because it is removed with one's fingers. But the 'shell' of an egg, nut or pea is its *dop* and therefore one can also use the verb *doppen* (to shell) for nuts and peas, but not eggs. Whereas an 'egg-shell' is an *eierdop*, after one has peeled it or cracked it open, what is left is *de schaal* (which can also be used instead of *dop*) and the soft skin underneath *de schilletjes*.

Vervellen renders 'to peel' only with reference to sunburnt skin, e.g. *Ik heb gisteren te lang in de zon gelegen en ben verbrand. Ik ga vast vervellen* – I lay in the sun too long yesterday and got burnt. I'm sure I'm going to peel.

Bladderen is used with reference to 'peeling' paint, e.g. *Kijk eens, de verf begint te bladderen* – Look, the paint is beginning to peel.

the penis:

de lul, de penis, de piemel, de pik

Just as there is a variety of words for the male anatomy in English, so Dutch too has several which vary in their crudity and application (compare 'backside'). *Penis* is a rather clinical word, as it is in English. *Piemel* (cf. *piemelnaakt* – stark naked) is the sort of word one uses when talking to children – compare 'doodle', 'pecker', 'willie'. Both *lul* and *pik* are quite crude and are the equivalent of 'prick' and 'cock'. The former is even used, just like English 'prick', to refer to a man one doesn't like, e.g.

Wat een lul van een vent – What a prick of a guy, although my impression is that the Dutch use this word a little more easily than we do 'prick' in English.

the person, people:

de bevolking, degene(n), het gepeupel, een ... iemand, men, de/het mens, de lieden, de lui, de persoon, het volk

The dominant word for 'person' is *de persoon* but for 'people' it is *de mensen*. *De mens* (with the definite article), which only rarely translates 'person', also means 'man, mankind, human being', e.g. *De mens is door God geschapen* – Man(kind) was created by God. *Het mens* usually refers to a woman, e.g. *Ik vind dat mens fantastisch voor haar leeftijd* – I think that woman is fantastic for her age. (cf. 'woman') It should be added that *het mens* is frequently used in negative contexts, e.g. *Ik vind dat mens onmogelijk* – I think that woman is impossible.

Iemand, usually preceded by *een* + uninflected adjective, is a common colloquial way of referring to a 'person' of either gender, e.g. *Wat een leuk iemand* – What a nice person = *Wat een leuk mens* (if female), *Hier woont een zeer rijk iemand* – A very rich person lives here. In such cases, however, the word *persoon* could also be used. *Het figuur* and *de vogel* are also commonly used with reference to people, with a negative connotation, e.g. *Wat een vreemd figuur/rare vogel* – What a peculiar person.

De lui and *de lieden* are essentially synonymous but the latter is high style; in speech one will only hear the former. *De lui*, although in turn more or less synonymous with *de mensen*, can replace *mensen* on occasions in much the same way as we can use 'folk' instead of 'people' in English, e.g. *In deze buurt wonen een heleboel rijke lui* – A lot of rich people/folk live in this neighbourhood. In the word *jongelui* (young people/men, youth) the adjective and the noun have become one to form a new concept. *Lui* is also the usual plural formation of professions ending in *-man*, often being replaced by *-lieden* in writing, e.g. *de timmerman* (carpenter) – *timmerlui/timmerlieden*, *de zeeman* (sailor) – *zeelui/zeelieden*.²

In formal contexts where 'person' means 'he who', *degene* (pl. *degenen*) is used, e.g. *Degene(n) die hier woont.(wonen)* – The person/people/those who lives(live) here. Another formal, impersonal way of expressing 'people' is with the pronoun *men* (one), e.g. *Men zegt dat hij erg rijk is* –

² It is not easy to know which nouns in *-man* take *-lui/lieden* in the plural in Dutch and which take *-mannen*; several words of more recent creation or words that don't necessarily denote a profession, take the latter, e.g. *voorman* (foreman), *vuilnisman* (rubbish man).

People say he's very rich. More colloquially this is rendered by *ze* (they), as in English, e.g. *Ze zeggen dat hij erg rijk is* – They say he's very rich.

When referring to the 'people' of a country, the word required is *het volk*, unless one means the 'population', in which case it is *de bevolking*, e.g. *Het Poolse volk was ervoor* – The Polish people were for it, *De bevolking van Nederland neemt af* – The population of Holland is decreasing.

Het gepeupel is a pejorative word that is best translated by the 'mob, masses, rabble, plebs'. It can thus translate 'people' when this connotation is intended, e.g. *De opinie van het gepeupel telt niet* – The opinion of the common people/masses doesn't count.

to pick up:

(af/op)halen, meenemen, oppikken, plukken, (op)rapen; van de haak nemen

'To pick up' s.t. off the floor is *oprapen*. (cf. 'to collect')

'To pick s.t. or s.o. up' in the sense of fetching them, is *halen*, *afhalen* or *ophalen*. (cf. 'to meet' for the subtle distinction between the latter two) *Halen* is literally 'to fetch' and *ophalen* has a variety of other meanings too, but the dominant meaning of *afhalen* is that given here, e.g. *Ik heb de opstellen bij de secretaresse gelaten. De studenten kunnen ze vanmiddag bij haar afhalen/halen* – I have left the essays with the secretary. The students can pick them up/collect them from her this afternoon.

Meenemen only translates 'to pick up' of hitch-hikers and 'to drop s.o. off' is *afzetten*, e.g. *Onderweg naar Amsterdam heb ik een lifter meegenomen en ik heb hem op de Dam afgezet* – On the way to Amsterdam I picked up a hitch-hiker and dropped him off at the Dam.

Oppikken is sometimes used in the sense of *oprapen* (especially of little things, e.g. *De vogel pikt de kruimels op* – The bird is picking up the crumbs) and *halen* (i.e. to collect s.t.), but it usually refers to 'picking up' a language or anything else one learns informally. In this sense it is the only possible translation, e.g. *Hij heeft de taal gewoon op straat opgepikt* – He just picked up the language on the street.

'To pick s.o. up' in the sexual sense must be paraphrased, e.g. *Waar heb je haar ontmoet/leren kennen?* – Where did you pick her up?

'To pick up' the receiver of a telephone is *de hoorn van de haak nemen*. (cf. 'to put down')

plukken is the verb 'to pick, pluck' of fruit.

the piece, slice:

de boterham, de plak, de snee, het stuk

The dominant word for 'piece' is *stuk*, e.g. *een stuk taart/vlees/pizza* – a piece of cake/meat/pizza. *Plak* refers to a 'slice' of cheese or of smallgoods/cold meats (*vleeswaren*), e.g. *een plak ham* – a slice of ham, and even *koek* (cf. 'cake') is cut into *plakken*. But a 'piece' or 'slice' of bread is *een snee brood*; in formal style this is sometimes written *sneede* from which the plural of *snee* is formed (i.e. *sneden*, pron. *sneeë*) although very commonly one hears *sneetjes* being used as the plural of *snee*.

The word *boterham*, although often translated as 'sandwich', is in fact a piece of bread with or without anything on it, although clearly intended to have s.t. put on it, e.g. *Hoeveel boterhammen eet je?* – How many slices of bread will you have? An English style sandwich, with a lid as it were, is called *een dubbele boterham*.

the place, room: (cf. 'room')

het oord, de plaats, de plek, de ruimte

The dominant word for both 'place' and 'room' (= space) is *plaats*, e.g. *Is er nog plaats voor mij?* – Is there still place/room for me?, *Wenen is echt een leuke plaats* – Vienna is a really nice place, where *plaats* = town. In a figurative sense 'place' is always translated by *plaats*, e.g. *in de eerste plaats* – in the first place, *In een Nederlandse zin staat het werkwoord meestal op de tweede plaats* – In a Dutch sentence the verb is mostly second (= in second place/position). Notice that other than in the expressions *in de eerste/tweede/derde plaats* etc., the preposition that most usually accompanies *plaats* is *op*.

Ruimte means 'room, space', but on a grander scale than is the case with *plaats*. In this sense it corresponds with German *Raum*. What Hitler went looking for in eastern Europe was *ruimte* for the German people and Australia too is a land of *ruimte*. If you have a 'spacious' apartment you can say *Ik heb erg veel ruimte in mijn woning*. 'Outer space' is also *de ruimte* (used with the definite article), e.g. *Deze mannen hebben acht maanden in de ruimte doorgebracht* – These men spent eight months in space.

Plek (coll.) is frequently interchangeable with *plaats* meaning 'place' but when in doubt it is safest to translate 'place, room' with *plaats* and 'spot'

with *plek*, but *plek* in the former meaning does seem to be gaining in popularity, e.g. *Is er nog plek/plaats voor mij* – Is there still room for me?, *Napoleon heeft precies op deze plek gestaan* – Napoleon stood on this very spot, *Dit is een leuke plek. Zullen we hier picknicken?* – This is a nice spot/place. Shall we have our picnic here? Compare Vienna in the example above which is *een leuke plaats* not *een leuke plek*, but then one would not refer to Vienna in English either as being 'a nice spot'. The expression 'on the spot' (i.e. here and now/there and then) is either *ter plaatse* or *ter plekke*.

Oord occasionally means 'place' but more usually renders 'resort', e.g. *een rustig oord* – a peaceful place, *het vakantieoord* – the holiday resort. On the whole it can be forgotten as a translation of 'place'.

to play:

bespelen, spelen

Difficulties arise with translating 'to play' when objects are mentioned. 'To play football/hockey/tennis/billiards/cards' is *voetbal/hockey/tennis/biljart/kaart spelen* but there are also verbs which have been formed from these nouns which are more commonly used, i.e. *voetballen, hockeyen, tennissen, biljarten, kaarten*.

If one can play a certain instrument, no article is required, e.g. *Speel je piano?* – Do you play the piano?, *Hij speelt zo mooi fluit* – He plays the flute so beautifully. But to play a particular piano, flute, guitar etc. is *spelen op*, e.g. *Er is al lang niet meer op deze piano gespeeld* – This piano hasn't been played for ages, *Waarom speel je niet meer op je gitaar?* – Why don't you play your guitar any more?

Bespelen is a less usual way of expressing *spelen op*, e.g. *Mozart heeft die viool een keer bespeeld* (= *op die viool gespeeld*) – Mozart once played (on) this violin.

the pot, pan:

de pan, de pot, de koekepan, de steelpan

With reference to kitchen 'pots and pans', the distinction we make in English between the two is not made in Dutch: all are *pannen*, regardless of shape or function, provided they are metal. A 'frying pan', although also often referred to simply as a *pan*, can be called a *koekepan* to distinguish it from a 'saucepan' if need be, just as a 'saucepan' with a long handle can be called a *steelpan* to distinguish it from other sorts of *pannen*. (cf. 'handle')

the power, strength, force:

het bewind, de dwang, het geweld, de kracht, de macht, de sterkte, de stroom, het vermogen

Having 'power' in the sense of being powerful is *macht*, e.g. *De president van Chili heeft veel te veel macht* – The president of Chile has much too much power. Thus *aan de macht komen/zijn* renders 'to come to power/be in power', a synonym of which is *aan het bewind komen/zijn* (lit. to be in government, cf. 'government'), and when a particular party is *aan het bewind* (in power/government), they are the people with the *macht*. *Macht* also renders 'power' in mathematics, e.g. $x^6 = x$ tot de zesde macht – x to the power of 6.

Kracht usually means 'strength, vigour' as in *Ik heb geen kracht meer* – I have no strength left (i.e. you're feeling weak because of sickness), *De kracht van die man is ongelooflijk* – The strength of that man is unbelievable; compare *Hitler had meer macht dan Mussolini* (= was *machtiger*) – Hitler had more power than Mussolini (= was more powerful).³ But there are contexts where *kracht* translates 'power', e.g. *paardekracht* – horse power (often abbreviated to *pk* and pronounced [pe:ka.]), *geesteskracht* – mental power/strength, *Deze motor heeft veel meer kracht dan die* (= is *krachtiger*) – This motor-bike has a lot more power than that one (= is more powerful). Note also *de zwaartekracht* – gravity, *de magnetische kracht* – magnetic force.

The adjective *sterk* means 'strong' but the noun derived from it, *de sterkte*, is not commonly used in the meaning of 'strength', nor is it used much at all in fact; the following examples illustrate that when one's physical strength is expressed adjectivally, *sterk* is required, but when expressed nominally, *kracht* is used: *Alleen hij was sterk genoeg om die rots op te tillen* – Only he was strong enough to lift that rock, *Alleen hij had genoeg kracht om die rots op te tillen* – Only he had enough strength to lift that rock. Whereas the adjective 'strong' is usually *sterk*, *krachtig* means 'powerful' or 'forceful', e.g. *Popmuziek heeft een sterke aantrekkingskracht op jonge mensen* – Pop music holds a strong attraction for young people, *een krachtig/sterke wind* – a strong wind, *windkracht 7* – wind force 7 (the way winds/wind strengths are measured on the Beaufort scale).

A very idiomatic use of *sterkte* worth noting is when it is said to s.o. about to do an examination, undergo an operation etc., e.g. *Sterkte (met je examen)!* – All the best for your exam, *Piet: Wat doe je? Jan: Ik ben mijn*

³ The following words also illustrate how similar *kracht* and *macht* are in meaning without being interchangeable: *de strijdkrachten* = *de krijgsmacht* (armed forces) consisting of *de land-, lucht- en zeemacht* (army, airforce and navy).

huiswerk aan het maken. Piet: Nou, sterkte d'r mee – Piet: What are you doing? Jan: I'm doing my homework. Piet: Well, good luck with it. It implies that a certain effort is required on the part of the person it is said to.

Geweld is best learnt as meaning 'violence' (= brute force). It can only render 'force' when there is a connotation of violence, e.g. *het geweld van een storm* – the force/violence of a storm, *De politie heeft geen geweld gebruikt* – The police exerted no force/refrained from violence. Note that the extremely common adjective *geweldig* has very little semantic similarity with the noun any more; it means 'tremendous, terrific' (usually positive), e.g. *een geweldig applaus* – an enormous applause, *een geweldige vent* – a terrific chap.

Macht, *kracht* and *geweld* can also mean 'force', depending on whether there are connotations of 'power', strength or 'violence' respectively, e.g. *de krijgsmacht* – the defence force(s), *Wanneer wordt die wet van kracht?* – When does that law come into force?, *iets met geweld gedaan krijgen* – to get s.t. done by using force/violence. But the word *dwang* also renders 'force' (compare *dwingen* – to force); it is the word required when the connotation is one of compulsion, e.g. *We hebben dwang op hem moeten uitoefenen* (= *We hebben hem moeten dwingen*) – We had to exert pressure on him/force him.

Vermogen, in addition to meaning 'wealth, fortune' is also sometimes used to translate 'power', but its dominant meaning in this sense is one of 'ability, capability, capacity', e.g. *het hefvermogen van een lift* – the (lifting) power/capacity of a lift (or capacity of any machinery), *Ik heb hem naar mijn beste vermogen proberen te helpen* – I have done everything in my power to help him (= to the best of my ability).

Stroom translates 'power' with reference to 'electricity'. In fact it would be quite common to use the word *electriciteit* to translate 'power' in this sense too, e.g. *De stroom/electriciteit is uitgevallen* – The power has gone off. Just in the word *de krachtcentrale* (power station) *kracht* also means 'electricity' but 'nuclear power' is *de kernenergie* and a 'power point' in the wall, for example, is *het stopcontact*.

to prefer:

aardiger/lekkerder vinden, *liever doen/hebben*, *prefereren*, *verkiezen* (boven), *de voorkeur geven aan*, *bij voorkeur doen*

'To prefer s.t. to s.t. else' is *verkiezen/prefereren* boven, e.g. *Ik verkies/prefereer Italië boven Spanje als vakantieland* – I prefer Italy to Spain as a place to spend one's holidays, but if what one prefers s.t. to is

not mentioned, one should avoid *verkiezen*, e.g. *Ik prefereer Italië* where what it is preferred to is obvious from what has gone before. Synonymous with *verkiezen/prefereren* (boven) is *de voorkeur geven aan* (boven), which is more common in the spoken language, e.g. *Ik geef de voorkeur aan Italië* (boven Spanje). (cf. final paragraph below)

As 'to prefer' means 'to like more', there is a direct connection between the various expressions for 'to like' in Dutch and the translation of 'to prefer'. (cf. 'to like') Thus if 'to like a person' is rendered by *iemand aardig vinden*, 'to prefer another person' can be rendered by *iemand anders aardiger vinden*. The same then applies to foods which one 'likes' (= *lekker vinden*) or 'prefers' (= *lekkerder vinden*), e.g. *Ik vind deze drop lekkerder dan die* – I prefer this licorice to that sort.

Similarly, *graag doen* was dealt with under 'to like' where one 'likes to do/doing s.t.' Thus 'to prefer to do/doing s.t.' is *liever doen*, e.g. *'s Avonds kijk ik graag televisie maar ik lees liever een boek als ik in m'n eentje ben* – In the evenings I like to watch tv but I prefer to read a book if I'm on my own. This is a more common construction than *Ik verkies om een boek te lezen* (note that when *verkiezen* is used in this way it is not interchangeable with *de voorkeur geven aan*). Compare the superlative form: *Maar ik ga het liefst vroeg naar bed* – But most of all I like to go to bed early. Note also the expression *bij voorkeur* (preferably), e.g. *Ik blijf bij voorkeur thuis* – I prefer to stay at home.

Following the pattern of *liever doen*, a common way of expressing 'to prefer s.t. to s.t. else' is by using *liever hebben*, rather than the options discussed in the first paragraph, e.g. *Ik heb Italië liever dan Spanje* – I prefer Italy to Spain; compare *Ik ga liever naar Italië dan naar Spanje* – I prefer going to Italy than to Spain.

pregnant:

drachtig, *jongen krijgen/verwachten*, *een kind verwachten*, *in verwachting zijn*, *zwanger*

The dominant word is *zwanger* (compare *de zwangerschap* – pregnancy) but it is not common to refer to a woman as being *zwanger*.⁴ Far more usual is to say *Zij is in verwachting* – She's expecting, and the alternative *Zij verwacht een kind* is about as common in Dutch as 'She's expecting a child' is in English. But *zwanger* is used in other expressions, e.g. *zwanger worden/in verwachting raken* – to fall/get pregnant, *een vrouw zwanger maken* – to make a woman pregnant.

⁴ The taboo on the word does now seem to be decreasing.

Drachtig zijn (lit. to be bearing) is only used for livestock. For small animals and pets one usually expresses 'pregnant' periphrastically, e.g. *De kat verwacht/krijgt jongen/De kat moet jongen krijgen* – The cat's expecting (kittens).

to prepare/be prepared:

bereid zijn, bereiden, (zich) gereedmaken, klaarmaken, (zich) prepareren, voorbereid zijn, (zich) voorbereiden

The dominant word is *voorbereiden*, e.g. *Een goede leraar bereidt al zijn lessen ruim van tevoren voor* – A good teacher prepares all his lessons well in advance. If one 'prepares oneself for s.t.', the appropriate form in Dutch is *zich voorbereiden op* and thus 'to be prepared for anything' is *op alles voorbereid zijn*, e.g. *Ik heb me op het komende examen voorbereid. Ik denk dat ik nu voorbereid ben op alles wat er gevraagd kan worden* – I have been preparing (myself) for the coming exam. I think I'm now prepared for anything they can ask, but *De leraar heeft zijn leerlingen erg goed voor het examen voorbereid* – The teacher has prepared his students very well for the exam. Note: *Ben je bereid om mij te helpen?* – Are you prepared (= willing) to help me?

Generally speaking one can say that *(zich) prepareren (op)* relates to *(zich) voorbereiden (op)* as *arriveren* does to *aankomen*, e.g. *Hij prepareert zijn lessen erg goed/Hij bereidt zijn lessen erg goed voor* – He prepares his lessons very well, *Ik heb me op het examen geprepareerd/voorbereid* – I've prepared for the exam.

A less common way of expressing 'to prepare' is *(zich) gereedmaken (voor)* (= to make ready). As a reflexive verb it differs from *zich voorbereiden (op)* in much the same way as 'to get ready for' differs from 'to prepare (oneself)'. As a transitive verb *gereedmaken* can be synonymous with *voorbereiden*, although with reference to food it is synonymous with *bereiden*. (cf. next paragraph)

With reference to 'preparing' food, a meal or a chemist's prescription one uses *bereiden*, but it is more usual to use *klaarmaken* (cf. 'to cook') for food, e.g. *Anneke moet het avondeten nog klaarmaken/bereiden* – Anneke still has to prepare dinner. Food can be *voorbereid* if it is 'prepared' some time before it is cooked, e.g. *Anneke heeft al het eten voor vanavond voorbereid. Het hoeft nu alleen nog maar klaargemaakt te worden* – Anneke has already prepared the food for tonight. Now it only needs/has to be cooked (= to be finished off, cf. 'to finish').

to prevent: (cf. 'to avoid')

behoeden, beletten, eraan doen, tegenhouden, (ver)hinderen, voorkomen

'To prevent something' or 'to prevent something from happening' is *voorkómen*, e.g. *Hoe kunnen we oorlog voorkomen?* – How can we prevent war?, *Hij heeft niet kunnen voorkomen dat zijn auto in de gracht viel* – He wasn't able to prevent his car falling into the canal, *Voorkomen is beter dan genezen* – Prevention is better than cure. If one cannot prevent s.t. (from) happening, this can be expressed by *eraan doen*, e.g. *Ik kon zien dat zijn auto in de gracht zou vallen maar wat kon ik eraan doen?* (= *Wat kon ik doen om het te voorkomen* – I could see that his car was going to fall in the canal but what could I do to prevent it/about it?

If one is 'prevented from doing s.t.' by another person or by circumstances, *verhinderen* and *beletten*, which are synonymous, are used, e.g. *Jij hebt/dat heeft mij niet kunnen verhinderen/beletten om het te doen* – You weren't/that wasn't able to prevent/stop me from doing it, *Ik heb hem verhinderd/belet om in het water te springen* – I prevented/stopped him from jumping into the water, *Je kunt me niet beletten/verhinderen meer vodka te drinken* – You can't prevent/stop me drinking more vodka. Also *Je kunt het niet beletten/verhinderen* – You can't prevent/stop it. These verbs thus render 'prevent' or 'stop' in the sense of 'obstruct'. Compare *Dat moeten wij zien te voorkomen* and *Dat moeten wij zien te beletten/verhinderen*: the former means 'attempt to avoid it' (i.e. in anticipation of s.t.) and the latter means 'attempt to prevent it happening' (i.e. actively obstruct it).

Very close in meaning to 'preventing s.o. from doing s.t.' is 'stopping s.o.'. This 'to stop' (cf. 'to stop') can be rendered by *tegenhouden*, e.g. *Je moet de oude man beletten/verhinderen om de deur uit te gaan* = *Je moet de oude man tegenhouden als hij de deur uit wil gaan* – You must prevent/stop the old man leaving the house (different syntax required with these two verbs).

The expression *verhinderd zijn* means 'prevented from coming because of a prior engagement', thus 'unable to attend', e.g. *De vergadering moet doorgaan hoewel de voorzitter verhinderd is* – The meeting will have to go ahead even though the chairman is unable to come.

There is also a verb *hinderen*, which can also mean 'to obstruct, impede, annoy' but not 'to prevent'. (cf. 'to mind' and 'to matter')

There is a verb *behoeden* which can occasionally be translated by 'to prevent'. It actually means 'to keep, preserve, watch over', e.g. *iemand voor gevaar behoeden* – to keep/preserve s.o. from danger, *God zal mij zeker daarvoor behoeden* – God will surely preserve me from that/

prevent that happening to me. It tends to have a biblical flavour. Note: *het voorbehoedmiddel* (contraceptive) and *de voorzorgsmaatregelen* (preventative measures).

the priest:

de aalmoezenier, de dominee, de kapelaan, de pastoor, de pastor, de predikant, de priester

Put in very simple terms, one can say that a 'catholic priest' is a *pastoor* and a 'protestant minister/reverend' is a *dominee*.⁵ *Meneer pastoor* and *dominee* are used as titles when addressing the men directly. This is not the case with *priester* and *predikant*, which can only refer to the profession of *pastoor* and *dominee* respectively, e.g. *Hij studeert voor priester/predikant* – He is becoming a priest/minister. Both a *kapelaan* (curate, i.e. assistant priest in R.C. church) and a *pastoor* are *priesters*. A 'chaplain' in the army, navy etc. is an *aalmoezenier* (Catholic) or a (*leger-/vloot-*)*predikant* (protestant), whereas a 'chaplain' at a school (not a concept in Holland) or university is best referred to as simply *de studentenpastor* (both RC and protestant), *de pastor van het bejaardentehuis* – the retirement home's chaplain.

private:

particulier, privaat, privé

There are many ways of expressing 'private' without using any of the above words, e.g. *een rustig plekje* – a private spot, *het familiehotel* – private hotel, but the above words are often confused by non-natives. *Privé* means 'private' in the sense of 'personal', e.g. *mijn privé-adres/privéleven* – my private address/life, *Dat vertel ik je niet want dat is privé* – I'm not telling you because that is private. The Dutch use the loanword *de privacy* as it is used in English.

Particulier is the opposite of *openbaar* (public), e.g. *Deze universiteit is een particuliere instelling* – This university is a private institution, *particuliere auto's/particulier bezit* – private(ly owned) vehicles/property of an individual.

Privaat is the least common of the three words given here and never needs to be used in preference to the others.

⁵ This is in fact a Latin vocative in origin. The written abbreviation of *dominee*, the equivalent of our Rev., is *Ds* which is derived from the Latin nominative, *dominus*.

the process:

het procédé, de procedure, het proces

There are also other words with which to translate 'process' but these three cognate forms are often confused. The dominant meaning of *proces* (stress on the second syllable) is 'trial' (in court of law), but it can also mean 'process', e.g. *een chemisch proces* – a chemical process.

But the dominant word in the sense of 'technique, manner of treatment', particularly in the industrial sense, is *procédé*, e.g. *Om bloemen te drogen moet men dit procédé volgen* – One should follow this process/procedure in order to dry flowers, *De vervaardiging van dit product is een geheim procédé* – The manufacture of this product is a secret process.

The previous example highlights another semantic problem with regard to these words because both *procédé* and *procedure* can translate 'procedure'. *Procedure*,⁶ in addition to meaning 'method' (the way s.t. is done), is very commonly used in Dutch where we might say 'rigmarole' or 'business', e.g. *Die hele procedure heeft vreselijk veel tijd gekost* – That whole process/procedure/business/rigmarole took a great deal of time (e.g. replacing a lost passport); of the three words covered here only *procedure* can be used in this case in Dutch (= *de rompslomp, de toestand, de zaak*). Also *de gebruikelijke procedure* – the normal procedure/routine.

on purpose, deliberate(ly):

expres, met opzet, opzettelijk

These three are very close in meaning. The most common and safest word to use, if an adverb is required, is *expres*, e.g. *Heb je expres of per ongeluk op zijn tenen getrapt?* – Did you tread on his toes (fig. and lit.) on purpose or by accident?, but also *Ik ben expres daarvoor gekomen* – I came expressly/specifically for that.

Met opzet could also have been used in the first example given above as it too means 'on purpose, intentionally, deliberately'. It simply is not used quite as frequently as *expres*.

Opzettelijk, although theoretically also able to be used as an adverb synonymous with the other two options given here, is rarely so used; compare the infrequent use of 'purposely' in the following example: *De VS hebben Teheran opzettelijk misleidende CIA-rapporten gegeven* – The

⁶ Pronounced more or less as in French with the stress on the penultimate syllable but sounding the final -e.

US purposely provided Tehran with misleading CIA reports. It is commonly used, however, to render the adjectives 'intentional, deliberate' because the other two words given above are adverbs, e.g. *een opzettelijke belediging* – a deliberate insult.

to put:

doen, hangen, leggen, smeren, steken, stellen, stoppen, zetten

This seemingly simple word is very difficult to render in Dutch. Just as with translating 'to be' (cf. 'to be'), the appropriate translation of 'to put' often depends on the physical position or nature of the object. In short, *iets wat ligt, leg je; iets wat staat, zet je, and iets wat zit, stop je*; this use of *leggen, staan* and *zitten* is dealt with under 'to be'. Thus, *Leg de boeken op tafel* – Put the books on the table, *Zet de borden op tafel* – Put the plates on the table, *Ik heb de stoel in de hoek gezet* – I put the chair in the corner, *Stop dit in je zak* – Put this in your pocket, i.e. the verb 'to put s.t. into s.t.'. The sentence *Hij heeft er veel geld in gestopt* (He put a lot of money in[to] it) is as ambiguous in Dutch as in English, i.e. either he stuffed a lot of money into a wallet or he invested a lot of money in a venture. In practice one will often be faced with translating 'to put' in contexts where it is not as obvious as in the above examples which Dutch verb is required, e.g. *Je mag je voeten niet op mijn nieuwe bank leggen* – You mustn't put your feet on my new couch. This example shows *leggen* being used for feet because they are not in their normal upright position; compare *Je mag geen voet over de drempel zetten* – You may not put/set a foot across the threshold here. Also *je naam/handtekening op iets zetten* – to put your name/signature on s.t.

In spoken Dutch, *doen* commonly translates 'to put' in contexts where otherwise *stoppen* would be required, e.g. *Doe die dingen in de la* – Put those things in the drawer, *Doe het in je zak* – Put it in your pocket.

If you 'put' sugar or milk in your tea, *doen* is the only possible translation as *stoppen* suggests 'putting' things into sealed containers, boxes, drawers etc. But sometimes there are ways and means of paraphrasing 'put'. If you 'put' your coat in the wardrobe, *hangen* would be appropriate (also *doen*), e.g. *Hang/doe je jas in de kast* – Put your coat in the wardrobe. If you 'put' butter on your bread and then some ham, *Je smeert/doet boter op je brood en dan leg/doe je er wat ham op*, but you can also *beboteren* (to butter) or simply *smeren* your bread, e.g. *Wil je even een boterham voor me smeren* – Will you butter a piece of bread for me/put some butter on a piece of bread for me?

Steken means 'put' usually only when there are connotations of 'sticking' or 'shoving' s.t. somewhere. *Steek het in je zak* is possible instead of the

more usual *stoppen*, as advised above, but in English we could also say here 'Stick it in your pocket'. Similarly with 'He put/stuck his hand up' where *steken* **must** be used in Dutch, e.g. *Hij stak zijn hand op*. *Steken* is commonly used of hands and arms, e.g. *je handen in je zakken steken* – to put your hands in your pockets.

Stellen only rarely translates 'to put'. It is best avoided except for the idiom *een vraag stellen* – to put/ask a question, e.g. *De leerlingen hebben hem zulke moeilijke vragen gesteld dat hij er geen antwoord op had* – The students asked him/put such difficult questions to him that he had no answers to them.

to put down

neergooien, neerleggen, neerzetten

Where under the previous lemma *leggen* or *zetten* are prescribed as the appropriate verb for 'putting' concrete objects, the prefix *neer-* is added to this verbs to render 'down', e.g. *Leg de schriften alsjeblieft op het bureau neer* – Please put the exercise books down on the desk, *Zet de stoelen hier neer* – Put the chairs down here. *Neerleggen* is also used for telephone receivers but if one puts the phone down in anger, *neergooien* is the appropriate verb, e.g. *Ik gooide de hoorn neer toen ze terugbelde* – I slammed the receiver down when she rang back.

to put on, take off, get (un)dressed:

aandoen, omdoen, uitdoen; aantrekken, uittrekken; aanzetten, uitzetten; afzetten, opzetten; zich aankleden, zich uitkleden

'To get (un)dressed' is discussed here with 'to put on' and 'to take off' as these expressions are often confused by speakers of English, giving rise to contaminated forms.

'To put on' items of apparel is *aantrekken* but equally commonly one will hear *aandoen*; exactly the same applies to *uittrekken* and *uitdoen*, e.g. *Ik ga mijn nieuwe jas aantrekken/aandoen* – I'm going to put my new coat on, *Mijn schoenen zijn nat. Ik moet ze uittrekken/uitdoen* – My shoes are wet. I'll have to take them off, *Ik heb niets om aan te trekken* – I have nothing to wear.

Certain items of apparel one has *om* rather than *aan*, as is discussed under 'on'. (cf. 'on') When 'putting on' such things the verb *omdoen* must be used, e.g. *Het kind is nat. Ik moet het/hem/haar een schone luijer omdoen* – The baby is wet. I'll have to put a clean nappy on (him/her). (cf. 'to change') Note that *doen om* translates the literal 'to put s.t. around s.t.' as

of paper or string around a parcel, e.g. *Je kunt beter nog een touwtje om dat pak doen* – You'd better put another piece of string on/around that parcel.

As far as apparel is concerned *op-* and *afzetten* apply only to 'putting on' and 'taking off' of headgear and spectacles, e.g. *Het is koud buiten. Je moet een muts opzetten* – It's cold outside. You must put a cap on. One can also use *op-* and *afdoen*. Note also *water opzetten* – to put the kettle on.

Zich aan- and *uitkleden* are the verbs 'to get dressed/undressed' e.g. *Je moet je vandaag warm aankleden* – You must dress warmly today, *Hij was te moe om zich uit te kleden* – He was too tired to get undressed/undress.

Zich omkleden/verkleiden render 'to change one's clothes'. (cf. 'to change')

Aan- and *uitzetten* do not refer to clothing but to 'putting on/off' of heaters, radios etc. and thus also render 'to turn/switch on/off'. They too are interchangeable with *aan-* and *uitdoen*, e.g. *Zet/doe de televisie aan/uit* – Put/turn/switch the tv on/off, *Waarom moet ik het licht uitdoen, moeder?* – Why do I have to put/switch/turn the light off/out, mother? (cf. 'to put out') Note: one uses *aan-/uitzetten* or *aan-/uitdoen* for radios, tv's etc., but for lights only *aan-/uitdoen* are possible; in other words, *aan-/uitdoen* are always correct. It is also possible to use *afzetten* instead of *uitzetten*, but *afdoen* doesn't exist in this sense.

'To put off, postpone' an engagement is *uitstellen*.

to put out:

blussen, doven, uitdoen, uitdraaien, uitmaken, uitschakelen

The verbs *uitdoen*, *uitdraaien* and *uitschakelen* render 'to put off', 'to turn off' and 'to switch' off respectively. Corresponding forms with *aan-* rendering the opposite also exist. *Aan-* and *uitdoen* are by far the most common with reference to electrical appliances, whereas in English we usually 'turn' or 'switch' a light etc. on or off. (cf. 'to light' for comments on *aansteken* and *ontsteken*)

Uitdoen /-*maken* are used for cigarettes and hearth fires but *doven* can be used here too. On a KLM flight the hostess asks: *U wordt verzocht alle sigaretten en sigaren te doven* – You are requested to put out/extinguish all cigarettes and cigars. But the verb applicable to extinguishing a brand (cf. 'fire') is *blussen*.

Q

the quarter:

het kwart, het kwartaal, het kwartier, het kwartje

The dominant word is *kwart*, which is also used in telling the time, e.g. *Een kwart van de leden is niet eens op komen dagen* – A quarter of the members didn't even turn up, *Het is kwart voor/over tien* – It is a quarter to/past ten.

English speakers often confuse *kwartier* (a quarter of an hour) with *kwart*, e.g. *Hij komt over een kwartier* – He's coming in a quarter of an hour's time, *Ik heb drie kwartier op je staan wachten* – I waited for you for three quarters of an hour. Note also *viijf kwartier = een uur en een kwartier*.

Kwartje refers to the 25 cent coin (Dutch currency) and is therefore analogous to the American 'quarter'. It is sometimes used after *twee* and *drie* to render 50 and 75 cents respectively, e.g. *Dat kost drie kwartjes, meneer* – That'll be seventy-five cents, sir.

Kwartaal means 'a quarter of a year' and is used in all contexts where we use *quarter* with this meaning, e.g. *Dit tijdschrift kost f55 per kwartaal/verschijnt eens per kwartaal* – This journal costs f55 a quarter/ appears quarterly.

quiet:

kalm(pjes), rustig, stil(letjes), vreedzaam, zacht(jes)

Both *stil* and *rustig* are very common and the two are interchangeable in many contexts. If one keeps in mind that *stil* also means 'silent'¹ (*stilte!* – silence!) and that *rustig* is derived from *rust* meaning 'rest, peace', one can acquire an appreciation of the difference if it is necessary to make such a distinction. If one is out of town on a farm, for example, and comments how 'beautifully quiet' it is, one can say *Wat is het hier heerlijk stil/rustig*, the former emphasizing the lack of extraneous noise and the latter emphasizing the 'peace and quiet' of it all, but if s.o. is regarded as being a 'quiet person', only *rustig* is appropriate, e.g. *Mijn oom is een rustig iemand* – My uncle is a quiet person, *Waarom ben je zo stil?* – Why are you being so quiet (i.e. saying nothing at the moment, not necessarily quiet by nature). *Rustig* seldom has a negative connotation whereas *stil* can, as

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illustrated in the previous examples. If telling someone to 'be quiet' (= shut up) or 'sit still', one says *wees stil* or *zit stil*.

Vreedzaam means literally 'peaceful' (opposite to 'violent', i.e. peace-loving) and, as in the case of the English word, it can mean 'tranquil, quiet' too, e.g. *een vreedzame coëxistentie/betoging* – a peaceful coexistence/demonstration, *een vreedzaam leven leiden* – to lead a quiet/peaceful life.²

Kalm, the literal meaning of which is obvious, can on occasions be used to render 'quiet' if a connotation of 'calm' is implied, e.g. *een kalm/rustig leven leiden* – to lead a quiet life, *Het is heerlijk kalm (= rustig) in dat dal* – It is beautifully quiet/calm in that valley. The imperative *Kalm jij!* means 'Be quiet!' or *Kalm aan!* (= *Rustig aan*) means 'Quieten/calm down!' (= don't get so excited).

The dominant meaning of *zacht* is 'soft' and thus it can refer to talking in a 'quiet/soft/gentle voice' or 'quiet/soft colours', e.g. *Ik heb een zacht stemmetje iets horen roepen* – I heard a quiet little voice call/cry something. Only *zacht* can be used here. Also *zachte muziek* – soft/quiet music.

The ending *-jes* is very commonly used in combination with *kalm*, *stil* and *zacht* (and less frequently *rustig*) when they are used adverbially. Normally one learns that there is no distinction in Dutch between the adjective and the adverb, but the frequent addition of this ending to a certain limited number of adjectives is an exception to that rule; this group constitutes one such exception. It must be said, however, that all four can also be used as adverbs without resorting to *-jes*, e.g. *Kalmpjes/rustigjes aan!* – Quieten down, take it easy, *Joop kwam erg laat thuis en moest heel stil(letjes)/zacht(jes) de trap op gaan om zijn moeder niet wakker te maken* – Joop got home terribly late and had to go up the stairs very quietly so as not to wake up his mother.

quite:

best, nogal, tamelijk, vrij; erg, heel, zeer; (niet) helemaal

The dominant words are *nogal* and *vrij*, which are usually interchangeable when qualifying predicative adjectives and adverbs, e.g. *Haar nieuwe jurk was nogal/vrij duur* – Her new dress was quite expensive, *Ik ben nogal/vrij vaak in Engeland geweest* – I've been to England quite often.

²In the first paragraph it was mentioned that *de rust* means 'peace', but *de vrede* does too: the former means 'peace' in the sense of 'peace and quiet' whereas the latter means 'peace' as opposed to war and is also used to render 'peace treaty', e.g. *De Vrede van Munster* – the (peace) Treaty of Münster (= *het verdrag* – the treaty).

Tamelijk, the dictionary meaning of which is 'rather' (cf. 'rather'), is usually interchangeable with both, e.g. *Het is nogal/vrij/tamelijk moeilijk om een verblijfsvergunning te krijgen* – It is quite/rather difficult to get a residence permit. But when 'quite' qualifies an attributive adjective (i.e. one followed by a noun to which it refers), we require a different word order in English, e.g. 'This is quite an old bed'. *Nogal* can behave in the same way in Dutch but *vrij* does not, e.g. *Dit is nogal een oud bed*, *Dit is een nogal/vrij oud bed* (*nogal een* is preferable to *een nogal*). The difference is purely syntactic, not semantic. *Vrij* must be followed by an adjective or adverb and therefore cannot be used in the following case: *Ik heb nogal honger* (a noun) – I am quite hungry; synonymous with this is *Ik heb vrij/tamelijk veel honger*.

I believe that it is possible for *vrij* to express a connotation that is not possible with *nogal* and *tamelijk*: when we qualify an adjective or adverb in English with the 'quite' which we pronounce in a drawn out fashion to emphasise that s.o. did s.t. 'q-u-i-t-e well' (but really it could and/or should have been better), *vrij* must be used and can also be pronounced in the same drawn out fashion as its counterpart in English, *Dat was vrij goed* (= *redelijk*) maar het had beter gekund – That was quite good but it could have been better.

Erg, heel and *zeer*, all of which mean 'very' (cf. 'very'), are mentioned here because on occasions in English we qualify an adjective or adverb with a 'quite', which usually means 'somewhat but not terribly', when we mean the opposite, e.g. *Het is erg duidelijk dat zij niet van die ziekte zal herstellen* – It is quite clear that she is not going to recover from that illness, *Zij is eigenlijk erg ziek* – She really is quite ill. If one uses 'quite' with this connotation (often emphasised), one really means 'very' and must say so in Dutch.

Sometimes 'quite' means 'totally, thoroughly, absolutely' (cf. 'completely'), in which case it is rendered by *helemaal*, e.g. *Hij is in de sloot gevallen en is helemaal nat geworden* – He fell in the ditch and got wet through, *Hij is helemaal gek, die vent* – He's quite off his rocker, that chap. But 'not quite' is *niet helemaal* (compare *helemaal niet* – not at all), e.g. *Deze zin is niet helemaal goed* – This sentence is not quite correct (compare *Deze zin is helemaal niet goed* – This sentence is not at all correct), *Ik ben nog niet helemaal overtuigd* – I am not yet quite convinced.

Best as an adverb, usually qualifying other adverbs and adjectives, is used a lot in colloquial Dutch. In this capacity it often renders 'quite', e.g. *Deze oefening is best (= vrij/nogal) moeilijk* – This exercise is quite difficult,

Hij had het best (leuk) gevonden als zijn dochter met de buurjongen getrouwd was – He would have been quite pleased if his daughter had married the neighbours' son.

R

rather:

eerder, liever, tamelijk

The 'rather' which qualifies adjectives and adverbs is *tamelijk*, e.g. *Dat is een tamelijk flauwe mop* – That is a rather weak joke. As this 'rather' is synonymous with 'quite', *nogal* and *vrij* can also render 'rather'. (cf. 'quite')

It is the distinction between *eerder* and *liever* that constitutes the difficulty here. If one would 'rather' (= prefer to) have or do s.t. 'than' have or do s.t. else, the expression required is *liever...dan*, e.g. *Hij zou veel liever hier willen wonen dan daar* – He would much rather live here than there, *Ik eet 's ochtends graag een eitje bij het ontbijt maar ik eet liever croissants als ik ze krijgen kan* – I like (having) an egg for breakfast but I'd prefer/rather (eat) croissants if I can get them. This 'rather' is the comparative of 'to like doing s.t.' and means 'to prefer doing s.t.' (cf. 'to like' and 'to prefer')

Eerder literally means 'sooner'; English 'rather' is often interchangeable with 'sooner' too, e.g. *Ik zou liever/eerder hier blijven* – I'd rather/sooner stay here. Although *eerder* and *liever* are interchangeable in this example, this is not by any means always the case. *Eerder* has connotations of 'more likely', e.g. *Zij zal eerder voor een Renault kiezen dan voor een Fiat* – She's more likely to choose a Renault than a Fiat. To use *liever* here would imply that that is what she would 'prefer' to do (i.e. volition) as opposed to what she is 'more likely' to do (i.e. force of circumstance). The distinction can be subtle, compare *Ik geloof hem eerder/liever dan jou* – I believe him sooner/rather than you, the latter meaning 'I would prefer to believe him' and the former meaning 'I am more likely to believe him'. In the following example only *eerder* is correct: *Hij was geen dominee maar eerder iemand die goed kon preken* – He wasn't a minister but rather/more someone who could preach well.

to read (aloud, out, out loud):

hardop lezen, uitlezen, voorlezen

The verb 'to read' as such presents no difficulties but if one 'reads s.t. aloud/out loud', a small problem arises, namely the distinction between *iets hardop lezen* and *iets voorlezen*. *Hardop* is best illustrated by looking at examples of other verbs it is more commonly used with, which will be found under 'loud, aloud'. *Hardop lezen* means 'to read out aloud' to

oneself. The usual way of translating 'to read aloud' to s.o. else is *voorlezen*, e.g. *Er staat een grappig artikel in de krant. Zal ik het je even voorlezen?* – There's a funny article in the paper. Shall I read it to you? *Ja, lees het even voor* – Yes, read it out. 'To read a child a story' is always *een kind een verhaaltje voorlezen* and 'to read aloud from a book' is *uit een boek voorlezen*. As some of the above examples illustrate, 'to read' in English commonly means 'to read aloud/out' without it being necessary to add an adverb; this is not so in Dutch.

Uitlezen renders 'to finish reading s.t.' (cf. 'to finish'), e.g. *Ik heb die dikke roman nu eindelijk uit(gelezen)* – I have now finally finished that thick novel. More often than not the *gelezen* is understood and thus not mentioned.

to realise:

zich bewust zijn/worden van, beseffen, (zich) realiseren, verwezenlijken

Broadly speaking *beseffen* is synonymous with *zich realiseren* and *realiseren* is synonymous with *verwezenlijken*. If one suddenly 'realises' s.t., i.e. becomes aware of it, either member of the former couplet is required, e.g. *Pas op dat ogenblik besepte (realiseerde) hij (zich) dat hij niet veel langer zou leven* – Not till then did he realise that he would not live much longer, *Dat had ik niet beseft/had ik me niet gerealiseerd* – I hadn't realised that, *In het Zuiderzeemuseum heeft men moeite zich te realiseren/te beseffen dat men zich in een museum bevindt* – In the Zuiderzee Museum it is difficult to realise that one is in a museum; in this example *zich realiseren* definitely sounds better.

Realiseren and *verwezenlijken*, on the other hand, relate to each other as *arriveren* does to *aankomen*, i.e. the difference is not one of meaning but of style. Both verbs refer to 'actualising' s.t. (= putting into practice, executing), e.g. *Het Deltaplan is nu na jaren verwezenlijkt/gerealiseerd* – The Delta Plan has now been realised/executed after many years (= *werkelijkheid/realiteit worden*). *Realiseren* can also be used in the financial sense of 'realising' profits, i.e. turning them into cash (= *in geld omzetten/te gelde maken*).

Zich bewust zijn/worden van means 'to be/become aware of' and is thus semantically very close to 'to realise'; in fact this is probably the most common way of rendering 'to realise' in Dutch, e.g. *Ik was het me op dat moment helemaal niet bewust* – I hadn't realised it at that point in time (= I didn't know about it), *Ik was me (er) toen helemaal niet (van) bewust dat*

hij het gedaan had – I hadn't then realised/wasn't then aware that he had done it.¹

Cf. *inzien* under 'to see'.

real(ly):

eigenlijk, echt, heus, werkelijk

The dominant adverb is *werkelijk* (compare *de werkelijkheid* – reality), which is also an adjective meaning 'real', e.g. *Wat is de werkelijke reden voor zijn ontslag?* – What is the real reason for his resignation?, whereas 'a real diamond' (= genuine) is *een echte diamant*; but *echt* is also correct in the first example. Compare *Hij is een rasechte Nederlander* – He's a real Dutchman (= through and through). We often use the adjective/adverb 'real(ly)' where the actual meaning (= *de eigenlijke betekenis*) is 'actual(ly)';² in such cases one is better off using *eigenlijk*, e.g. *Ik voel me eigenlijk te moe om naar de bioscoop te gaan* – I'm really feeling too tired to go to the movies/Actually I'm feeling too tired... To have used *werkelijk* here would have put a very heavy emphasis on how tired you feel, i.e. 'really far too tired'. (cf. 'actually') *Ik voel me echt te moe* has similar emphatic connotations to *werkelijk*. Compare the difference in meaning between *Hij is eigenlijk (helemaal) niet ziek* – His isn't really sick (at all), and *Hij is echt/werkelijk ziek* – He is really sick.

If s.o. tells you s.t. incredible to which you react by saying 'Really?', the most natural reaction in Dutch is *Echt (waar)?*, but *Werkelijk (waar)?* is also possible. This is a case where *eigenlijk*, just like 'actually', is impossible.

Heus is synonymous with adverbial *echt*, but it is rare as an adjective, e.g. *Ik heb het heus/echt niet gedaan* – I really didn't do it, *Is dat heus/echt waar?* – Is that really true.

¹ Two constructions are possible with *zich bewust zijn*, one with and one without *van*, e.g. *Dat ben ik me heel goed bewust/Daar ben ik mij heel goed van bewust; Ik was mij volkomen bewust wat mij te wachten stond/Ik was mij er volkomen van bewust wat mij te wachten stond.*

² The following example illustrates how semantically close English 'real(ly)' and 'actual(ly)' are: *Hij noemt zich Otto maar zijn eigenlijke naam is Rudolf* (= *hij heet eigenlijk Rudolf*) – He calls himself Otto but his real name is Rudolf (= actually his name is Rudolf).

recent(ly):

kort geleden, de laatste tijd, onlangs, pas, recent, recentelijk; jongst, laatst, nieuwst

The dominant adverb is *onlangs*, e.g. *Zij is onlangs bevorderd* – She was recently promoted, *Wij zijn elkaar onlangs in de stad tegengekomen* – We met recently in town. *Kort geleden* (not long ago), can be used instead of *onlangs* when this connotation is present, as can *laatst* (of late, the other day), e.g. *Ze is laatst nog bij me geweest* – She was here just recently. (cf. 'last')

Often 'recently' is synonymous with 'lately' in which case the dominant expression is *de laatste tijd*, e.g. *Dat kind is de laatste tijd wel wat lastig* – That child has been rather difficult lately. A synonym, assuming the literal meaning of the phrase suits the context, is *sinds korte tijd* (= for some time now), e.g. *Dat kind wordt sinds kort wel wat lastig* – Recently/lately that child has been getting rather troublesome.

The word *recentelijk*, although synonymous with *onlangs*, is not commonly used in that sense. It is, however, often used in combination with a past participle in which case it can render not only 'recently' but also 'newly', e.g. *Het kasteel is recentelijk/onlangs gerestaureerd* – The castle has been newly/recently restored. *Pas* is also synonymous with *recentelijk* and *onlangs* in the previous example. (cf. 'just')

The adjective *recent*³ is similar in meaning to the same word in English, e.g. *We hebben geen recent nieuws van hem ontvangen* – We have received no recent/new/fresh news from him = *We hebben de laatste tijd geen nieuws van hem ontvangen, Is het een oude of een recente film?* – Is it an old or a recent film?

The superlative of 'recent', i.e. 'the most recent' (= latest), is dealt with under 'last'.

to recognise:

erkennen, herkennen

'To recognise' another person etc. is *herkennen*, e.g. *Zij had een pruik op en dus heb ik haar niet herkend* – She was wearing a wig and consequently I didn't recognise her. But 'to recognise' in the political sense for example of one country recognising another, i.e. 'to acknowledge', is *erkennen*.

³ Note that the couplet *recent/recentelijk* is a very rare instance of there being a distinction in Dutch between the adjective and the adverb. Compare *gewoon/gewoonlijk* under 'normal'.

e.g. *Mijn recht op die erfenis wordt niet door mijn stiefbroer erkend* – My right to that inheritance isn't recognised by my step-brother.

to recommend:

aanbevelen, aanraden, recommanderen

The transitive verb is normally *aanbevelen* (*beval aan, aanbevolen*), e.g. *De verkoopster heeft dit produkt aanbevolen* – The shop assistant recommended this product, *Ik kan het je aanbevelen* – I can recommend it to you. But if one 'is advised to do s.t.' (= it is recommended that) *aanraden* is required, *Ik raad je aan om het te doen* – I recommend that you do it/I advise you to do it, *De dokter heeft aangeraden dat ik een week in bed blijf liggen/De dokter heeft me aangeraden om een week in bed te blijven liggen* – The doctor has recommended that I stay in bed for a week/The doctor advised me to stay in bed for a week. Compare *De dokter heeft hem een andere specialist aangeraden* – The doctor recommended another specialist to him, i.e. advised that he see another specialist, but *Kunt u iemand aanbevelen, dokter?* – Can you recommend someone, doctor? The second last example illustrates that *aanraden* can also be used transitively, but only when there is a connotation of advising to do s.t. (cf. 'to advise')

Recommanderen (noun *de recommandatie*), a synonym of *aanbevelen*, is best forgotten; it is not common.

Cf. also *adviseren* under 'to advise'.

to reflect:

reflecteren, terugkaatsen, weerkaatsen, (zich) weerspiegelen

If light, sound or heat are 'reflected' off surfaces, one can use either *terugkaatsen* or *weerkáatsen* (cf. footnote under 'again'), both transitively and intransitively, e.g. *De spiegel in de hoek weerkaatst het licht van de lamp/kaatst het licht van de lamp terug* – The mirror in the corner is reflecting the light from the lamp, *Het licht wordt door het water weerkaatst/teruggekaatst* – The light is/is being reflected by the water. *Weerkaatsen* is the more everyday word of the two and is the only possibility in *Het silhouet van de zwaan werd in het water weerkaatst* – The swan's silhouette was reflected in the water, where the object reflected is not cast back.

'To reflect' in the figurative sense is always rendered by the transitive verb *weerspiégelen* (= to mirror), e.g. *De romans van Dickens weerspiegelen de sociale omstandigheden van zijn tijd* – Dickens' novels

reflect/mirror the social circumstances of his time. If there is no direct object, the verb is used reflexively (cf. footnote under 'to feel'), e.g. *Zijn levensfilosofie weerspiegelt zich in deze roman* – His philosophy of life is reflected in this novel. In the sense of 'to mirror' this verb is also used to render the literal 'to reflect' where the verbs given in the previous paragraph cannot be used, e.g. *De omringende bomen weerspiegelden zich in het meer* – The surrounding trees were reflected/mirrored in the lake.

Reflecteren is occasionally used in figurative contexts where it overlaps in meaning with *weerspiegelen*, but it can also be used in a literal sense, in which case it is synonymous with *weerkaatsen* and *terugkaatsen*, e.g. *Het licht wordt door het water gereflecteerd/weerkaatst/teruggekaatst* – The light is reflected by the water, *Een reflector dient om licht te weerkaatsen/reflecteren/terug te kaatsen* – A reflector serves to reflect light. 'To reflect on s.t.' (= to ponder, consider) can also be rendered by *reflecteren op* although the usual expression is *nadenken over*. (cf. 'to think')

regular(ly): *geregeld, regelmatig*

The dominant adjective is *regelmäßig* and is not usually a source of difficulty, e.g. *'Werken' is een regelmatig werkwoord* – 'Werken' is a regular verb, *Waarom is je ademhaling zo onregelmatig?* – Why is your breathing so irregular?, *een regelmatige gebeurtenis* – a regular event (i.e. occurring at regular intervals, e.g. the first of each month).

Geregeld is also used adjectivally meaning 'regular' but with strong connotations of 'orderly, well-regulated', e.g. *Die man leidt een geregeld leven* – That man leads a regular/orderly/regulated life; *regelmäßig* would not be correct at all here but in the following example they are interchangeable with a theoretical difference in connotation: *een regelmatige* (= every Thursday)/*geregelde* (= frequent) *bezoeker aan het museum* – a regular visitor to the museum.

The same distinction exists between *regelmäßig* and *geregeld* as adverbs where *regelmäßig* means 'on a regular basis', i.e. once every week, every Tuesday etc. and *geregeld* means 'quite often, constantly', without a precise time being involved, e.g. *Ze krijgt regelmatig/geregeld geld van haar man* – She gets money from her husband on a regular basis/She regularly gets money from her husband, *Hij komt hier geregeld/langs* – He drops in regularly/frequently. In practice the distinction between these two words is getting lost; the same applies to the negated forms *onregelmatig* and *ongeregeld*.

the relation(ship), related to:
de betrekking, het familielid, de relatie, de verhouding, de verwantschap; aanverwant, verwant met/aan, verwanten

A 'relation' in the sense of s.o. you are related to (*iemand met wie je verwant bent*) is a *familielid* (pl. *-leden*).⁴ Note too: *Die is familie van mij/Die zijn familie van mij* – He is related to me/They are relatives of mine. A rather official, even legalistic sounding term for 'relatives' is *de verwanten*, which is usually only used in the plural. The 'relationship' (i.e. the manner/degree of being related to s.o.) between people is the *verwantschap*, e.g. *Wat is de verwantschap tussen jullie twee?* – What's the relationship between you? (= How are you related?), but this word can be synonymous with the first meaning of *verhouding* given in the next paragraph. (cf. 'family')

The 'relationship' one has with people in general is a *verhouding* or a *relatie*, both of which can also translate '(romantic) affair', e.g. *De chef heeft een goede verhouding/relatie met zijn personeel* – The boss has a good relationship with his staff, *De leraar heeft een keer een verhouding/relatie met een van zijn leerlingen gehad* – The teacher once had an (love) affair with one of his students. *Liefdesverhouding* renders 'love affair' if it is necessary to spell out what sort of a relationship it is. A fairly recent phenomenon and word is *de lat-relatie* – living apart together relationship (formed from the Eng. acronym); *lat-* is never prefixed to *verhouding*.

The 'relations' that one country has with another are *betrekkingen*, e.g. *buitenlandse betrekkingen* – foreign relations, e.g. *Nederland heeft tegenwoordig uitstekende betrekkingen met Duitsland* – The Netherlands these days has excellent relations with Germany, *Er bestaat een goede verhouding/relatie tussen die landen* – There's a good relationship between those countries.

The meaning of *verwant met* is illustrated in the first paragraph. *Verwant aan* means 'related to' with reference to anything other than people, e.g. *Duits is verwant aan Nederlands* – German is related to Dutch, *De zaak die we net besproken hebben is helemaal niet verwant aan de volgende kwestie* – The matter we have just been discussing is not at all related to the following question. 'Related languages/matters' (normally used as an attributive adjective) are *aanverwante talen/zaken* and *een aangetrouwde neef* is 'a cousin/nephew by marriage' (= related by marriage), *de visserij en aanverwante bedrijven* – fishing and related industries.

⁴ The members of a given nuclear family are *gezinsleden* – the distinction between *gezin* and *familie* is explained under 'family'.

to remember:

denken om, herdenken, zich herinneren, onthouden, nog weten; de groeten doen

The two dominant words are *zich herinneren* (compare *herinneren* under 'to remind') and *onthouden* and the distinction between the two constitutes a substantial difficulty for English-speaking people. The former means 'to recall, recollect' and the latter means 'to retain, keep in mind', e.g. *Ik kan me zijn naam niet herinneren* – I can't remember his name, *Hij heet Piet en ik hoop dat je het nu onthoudt* – His name is Piet and I hope you'll remember it now, *Onthou dit goed* – Remember this (well). (NB. *zich onthouden* has semantically nothing to do with this verb)

Colloquially it is not uncommon to hear *nog weten* being used as a synonym of *zich herinneren*, e.g. *Herinner je je zijn gezicht/stem? Weet je nog hoe hij er uitzag/praatte?* – Do you remember his face/voice? Do you remember what he looked like/how he talked?, *Weet je nog wel, moeder?* – Do you remember, mother? (e.g. how nice it was). As the examples illustrate, *weten nog* is not used when 'to remember' is followed by a direct object.

Colloquially one hears *denken om* being used as an imperative meaning 'remember/don't forget', e.g. *Denk erom!* – Remember/Don't forget (what I've just told you, i.e. the warning I've just given you), *Denk erom dat de winkels om vijf uur dichtgaan* – Remember/don't forget that the shops shut at five o'clock. In the previous example, where a *dat*-clause follows, *denk eraan* is also possible.

Herdenken actually means 'to commemorate' but sometimes we use 'to remember' in that sense, e.g. *Op 4 mei worden degenen die in de oorlog gevallen zijn herdacht* – On the 4th of May those who fell in the war are remembered, *De Dodenherdenking valt op 4 mei* – Remembrance Day is the 4th of May. Also *herdenkingszegels* (commemorative stamps).

(*Aan*) *iemand de groeten doen* translates 'to remember' in the sense of 'to give/relay one's regards to s.o.', e.g. *Doe (van mij) de groeten aan je moeder/Doe je moeder de groeten (van mij)* – Remember me to your mother/Give your mother my regards. Also *De groeten aan je moeder* – Regards to your mother.

to remind:

doen denken, helpen onthouden, herinneren

Herinneren aan (to remind of) is quite different from *zich herinneren* (to remember, cf. 'to remember'), *Jij herinnert mij aan mijn tante* – You

remind me of my aunt, *Herinner mij eraan dat ik Anneke om twee uur van school moet halen* – Remind me that I have to pick Anneke up from school at two o'clock; compare *Ik herinner me mijn tante niet meer* – I don't remember my aunt anymore. Note that in Dutch, unlike German, the object of *zich herinneren* is not preceded by *aan*, but that *aan* does translate 'of' after *herinneren*. (cf. 'memory')

Herinneren aan as used in the second example above, i.e. where one asks s.o. to remind one of s.t., can be replaced by *helpen onthouden* (lit. to help remember, cf. 'to remember'), e.g. *Help me onthouden dat ik Anneke om twee uur moet gaan halen* – Remind me that I have to go and fetch Anneke at two o'clock.

Doen denken aan is synonymous with *herinneren aan* but it cannot be used in the imperative, as in example two above, e.g. *Jij doet me denken aan mijn tante* – You remind me of my aunt. It seems to be somewhat more commonly used than *herinneren aan* in contexts where the two are interchangeable.

Note *de aanmaning* (the reminder), i.e. to pay an outstanding bill.

to rent, hire, lease, let:

huren, leasen, onderverhuren, pachten, verhuren, verpachten

If one 'hires' a car or 'rents' a house, the verb required is *huren*, e.g. *We hebben van de zomer een mooi huisje aan de kust van Normandië gehuurd* – We rented a beautiful little house on the coast of Normandy this summer. A 'rent-a-car' is a *huurauto* and 'the rent' or 'hire' one pays is *de huur*; you are therefore *de huurder* (hirer, tenant [in a house]). Note too *het huurcontract* – the lease, *te huur* – 'for rent/hire'. But the person who 'leases', 'lets' or 'rents out' the house is *de verhuurder* and the appropriate verb is *verhuren*, e.g. *Ik ga mijn vakantiehuisje aan mijn zwager verhuren* – I'm going to rent my holiday house to my brother-in-law, *het auto-verhuurbedrijf* – car rental firm. *Onderverhuren* expresses 'to sublet' and the person subletting is *de onderverhuurder*.

The relationship between *pachten* and *verpachten* is identical to that between *huren* and *verhuren*. In meaning the two are closer to 'to lease' than 'to rent/hire' because they imply renting by contract, as in leasing land or a farm, e.g. *De boer pacht dat land van zijn buurman/heeft dat land in pacht* – The farmer leases that land from his neighbour/has the leasehold on that land. A *pachter* is therefore a 'tenant farmer'. The person who 'leases' the land to the farmer *verpacht dat land aan de boer*.

The term *leasen* has entered the language through the business world but in Dutch it only has the narrower financial meaning and cannot replace *huren* in the contexts given above, e.g. *U kunt bij ons huren of leasen* – You can rent or lease from us (Renault advertisement).

to repair:

herstellen, maken, repareren, verstellen

Repareren is the dominant word with reference to cars and all forms of equipment. *Herstellen* is often synonymous with *repareren* but inherent in that word are connotations of 'to restore to a previous condition', e.g. *De vrede is hersteld* – Peace was restored, whereas 'to restore' of old buildings, antiques etc. is *restaureren*. As an intransitive verb it renders 'to recover' from an illness, e.g. *Ik ben weer helemaal hersteld* – I've completely recovered now.

Colloquially *maken* will be heard in the sense of 'to repair', or more commonly still 'to fix' or 'to mend', in contexts where it is obvious what it means and can't be interpreted as 'to make', e.g. *Papa, mijn fiets is stuk. Kan jij hem alsjeblieft voor me maken?* – Dad, my bike is broken. Can you please repair/fix it? (compare *de fietsenmaker* – bicycle repair man, *de schoenmaker* – shoe repair man)

'Repairing', 'mending' or 'patching' with reference to clothing that is torn etc. is *verstellen* or *maken*.

the/to report:

het bericht, het rapport, het verslag; berichten, zich aanmelden, (zich) melden, rapporteren, vermelden, verslaan, verslag doen/uitbrengen

A 'school report' is *het (school)rapport*, as is the 'report' prepared by a government body on an issue, e.g. *het rapport van de commissie Roethoff* – the report of the Roethoff committee/commission (i.e. a *rapport* is the result of investigation). *Rapport* is used in other senses too, in which case it is synonymous with either *bericht* or *verslag*, both of which are more common. *Bericht* means a 'news item', e.g. *het weerbericht* – weather report, whereas *verslag*, the connotation of which is a 'record of experiences', often has journalistic overtones too. Not only a journalist writes a *verslag* of an event but a radio or tv announcer's report is also a *verslag*, as is the 'account' one gives to s.o. of s.t. one experienced. But the compound noun 'newspaper/press report' is *het persbericht*. Also *de jongste berichten over de oorlog in Iran* – the latest reports of the war in Iran (= news).

From what was just said above the meaning of *verslag doen/uitbrengen* should be obvious; one is likely to hear the following on Dutch tv or radio: *En nu iets over de jongste aardbeving in Japan. Daan Meijer doet verslag* – And now something about the most recent earthquake in Japan. Daan Meijer reports/reporting, *Gisteren bracht D.M. daar een verslag over uit* – Yesterday D.M. reported on that/presented a report on that. Compare *Het persbureau bericht dat...* – The press bureau reports that, where *berichten* has connotations of 'inform, advise'. Also commonly heard on the news is *Uit Tokio wordt bericht/gemeld dat...* – It is reported from Tokyo that...

Rapporteren is synonymous with the various verbal expressions incorporating *verslag* but is not commonly used, e.g. *De commissie Roethoff zal direct aan de minister rapporteren/verslag(rapport) uitbrengen* – The Roethoff commission will report/present their report directly to the minister. The same applies to *verslaan; een voetbalwedstrijd verslaan* = *verslag doen/een verslag maken van een voetbalwedstrijd* – 'to cover/write an account of/report on' a football match; *maken* refers to a written report whereas *doen* can be oral or written.

Zich melden is the verb required when one 'reports' (i.e. registers, checks in situations where one is expected), e.g. *Als je naar de arts gaat, moet je je eerst melden en dan in de wachtkamer gaan zitten* – When you go to the doctor, you first have to report and then you go and sit in the waiting room.⁵ *Zich aanmelden* is very close in meaning to *zich melden* but is limited to specific official contexts such as 'registering' as a candidate for a job, as a volunteer for the army, i.e. where one is not expected but it is on one's own initiative, e.g. *zich aanmelden als vrijwilliger* – to register as a volunteer. *Melden* as a non-reflexive verb is also occasionally found in the sense of 'to report', in which case it is synonymous with *berichten*, e.g. *Heb je iets te melden?* – Have you anything to report?

responsible, the responsibility:

aansprakelijk, verantwoord, verantwoordelijk; de aansprakelijkheid, de verantwoording, de verantwoordelijkheid

The difference between these three is very subtle for speakers of English. It is probably correct to say that the dominant word is *verantwoordelijk(heid)* and that one should use it whenever in doubt, e.g. *Wie is verantwoordelijk voor deze afdeling van de fabriek?* – Who is responsible for this section of the factory? (i.e. who bears the responsibility), thus *het verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel* – sense/feeling of responsibility.

⁵ In this example *zich melden* is appropriate if a prior appointment has been made; if not, *zich aanmelden* would be required here.

Aansprakelijk(heid) on the other hand, although sometimes rendering English 'responsible/-ility', actually means 'liable/-ility', e.g. *Wie is nu voor dit auto-ongeluk aansprakelijk?* – Who is now liable/responsible for this accident?⁶ *Als je deze taak op je neemt, ben je overal voor aansprakelijk/verantwoordelijk* – If you take on this task you will be responsible for everything; *aansprakelijk* implies you will get the blame, i.e. will be liable if anything goes wrong. It has legalistic connotations whereas *verantwoordelijk* has moral connotations and thus corresponds very closely to 'responsible'.

Verantwoord is derived from a verb that has no direct equivalent in English but from which this past participle, which is also a translation of 'responsible', is derived. If you have collected money from colleagues, for example, to buy a watch for s.o. who is retiring and you then decide unilaterally to buy him some liquor with it instead, you could ask yourself *Maar kan ik dat verantwoorden?* – But can I justify that/account for doing that?, *Ik weet dat ik me daarvoor zal moeten verantwoorden* – I know that I will have to justify my action. If the colleagues are subsequently dissatisfied with what you do, they could complain *Maar dat was totaal onverantwoord (van je)* – But that was unjustified/irresponsible (of you); the distinction here between *onverantwoord* and *onverantwoordelijk* is subtle and hinges on the connotation 'justifiable' implicit in the former.

(to be) right: (cf. 'wrong')

correct, gelijk (hebben), gepast, goed, juist, rechts, terecht

The most usual word for 'right, correct' is simply *goed*, e.g. *het goede antwoord* – the right/correct answer. *Juist* (cf. 'just') also has this meaning.

*Correct/korrekt*⁷ is not a common word; it has connotations of 'as it should be/according to the rules of polite society, thus *correct gedrag* – correct behaviour.

'To be right' with reference to people is *gelijk hebben*, e.g. *Je hebt gelijk. Hij is inderdaad een verschrikkelijk iemand* – You are right. He is indeed a

⁶ WA (pron. [ve: a:]) is a common acronym for *wettelijke aansprakelijkheid*, the equivalent of 'third party insurance'.

⁷ These days there is tremendous inconsistency in Dutch with regard to whether such integrated loanwords (the so-called *bastaardwoorden*) are written with c's or k's. The spelling as recommended in the *Woordenlijst Nederlandse Taal*, Staatsdrukkerij, The Hague 1954, advocates the so-called *voorkeurspelling* (recommended spelling) but in the thirty odd years that have elapsed since, practice and theory have diverged, partially because that book, which is colloquially referred to as *Het Groene Boekje*, made it optional in many cases. The non-native shouldn't worry about it – the tide of time is on the side of k's, whatever one might find in prescriptive works.

terrible person, *Ik dacht dat we linksaf moesten en jij dacht rechtsaf maar ik had gelijk* – You thought we had to go left and I thought right, but I was right. There is an intensified variant of *gelijk hebben*, namely *groot/volkomen gelijk hebben*, e.g. *Hij had groot/volkomen gelijk dat hij weigerde haar meer geld te geven* – He was quite/perfectly right in refusing to give her any more money. Note *Mijn horloge loopt goed/gelijk (voor, achter)* – My watch is right (fast, slow).

One of the above examples illustrates that *rechts* only translates 'right' as the opposite of 'left'; note that it has a special form when used as an attributive adjective, e.g. *mijn rechterhand* – my right hand, *de rechterkant van de straat* – the right(hand) side of the street. But if *rechts* is used attributively with reference to a political persuasion, it simply takes an -e, e.g. *De Centrum Partij is een rechtse partij/de meest rechtse partij* – The CP is a party of the right/the most right-wing party.

Gepast renders 'right' in the expression *met gepast geld betalen* (to pay with the right money/exact change, as on buses). It also means 'right' in the sense of 'fitting, appropriate, acceptable', e.g. *Het is ongepast om te vloeken* – Swearing is not right, *Het is niet gepast om in een kerk hardop te praten* – It is not appropriate to talk out loud in a church. (cf. 'to try')

Occasionally 'right' means 'fair, just', e.g. It isn't right the way the Russians treat their Jews. This is dealt with under 'just'.

Note also *terecht* (rightly so, opposite *ten onrechte*), e.g. *Hij is (ten onrechte) ter dood veroordeeld, en terecht* – He was (wrongly) condemned to death, and rightly so.

to ring: (cf. 'to call')

(aan)bellen, luiden, opbellen, telefoneren

'To ring' in the sense of 'to telephone' is *bellen* or *opbellen*, the distinction being the same as English 'to ring' or 'to ring up'. 'To ring at s.o.'s door' is *aanbellen*, e.g. *Ik heb (bij haar) aangebeld maar er was niemand thuis* – I rang at (her)/the door but there was nobody at home. Outside the door of a dwelling that several families or individuals inhabit one will find *3x bellen (drie keer bellen)* – Ring three times; also *Ik heb twee keer gebeld. Heb je me niet gehoord?* – I rang the bell twice. Didn't you hear me?; *bellen* thus means 'to ring the bell' in this case, but it could of course also mean here 'I rang (= telephoned) twice' – context makes this clear, as in English.

A house has a *bel* at the front-door whereas a church has a (*kerk*)*klok*; 'to ring' that sort of bell requires *luiden* (= to toll), both as a transitive and as an intransitive verb, e.g. *Hoor je de klokken van de kerk luiden?* – Can

you hear the church-bells ringing? (intr.), *Wie gaat de klok nu luiden?* – Who's going to ring the bell? (tr.). The 'hunchback of Notre Dame', for example, is known in Dutch as *de klokkenluider van de Notre Dame*.

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the road, street, lane, path, driveway etc.:

de afrit, de autoweg, de hoofdweg, de inrit, de oprijlaan, de oprit, de snelweg, de weg, het wegdek, de zijweg, de laan, het pad, de straat

Weg (pl. *wegen*) means 'road' and *straat* means 'street'. Children play *op straat* (in the street) or *op de weg* (on the road). The definite article is always used with street and road names (also with the names of canals, squares, dams etc.) e.g. *Hij woont in de Molenstraat* – He lives in Molen Street, *Hij woont aan de Hoofdweg* – He lives on Main Road.

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room:

Kamer, het (klas-/les-)lokaal, de plaats, de ruimte, het vertrek, de zaal

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to run:

hardlopen, hollen, lopen, rennen, rijden, runnen

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sad:

bedroefd, droevig, treurig, triest, verdrietig

Verdrietig and *treurig* are the most common words in spoken Dutch, whereas *bedroefd* and *droevig* are more literary. *Bedroefd* implies 'sad' as the result of a specific cause, i.e. a temporary, not a permanent condition, whereas *treurig*, which is normally synonymous with *droevig*, can also be used figuratively just as 'pathetic' is in English, e.g. *Je kennis van het Nederlands is wel treurig, jongen* – Your knowledge of Dutch is pathetic, my boy. *Triest* is the least common of the options given here; it too is normally applied to situations rather than directly to people. Note also *verdriet hebben* – to be sad, troubled, grieved.

satisfied, pleased: (cf. 'to satisfy')

blij, genoegen doen/nemen, overtuigd, tevreden, voldaan

Literally *blij* means 'glad' (= pleased/happy, cf. 'happy') and *tevreden* means 'satisfied', but in practice the two overlap, even more in Dutch than in English. 'To be pleased **with** s.t.' entails not only a choice of adjective but also of preposition: *blij met/om* and *tevreden met/over*; one is seldom wrong if one sticks to *met* in both cases, e.g. *Ik ben erg tevreden/blij met je vooruitgang* – I am very satisfied/pleased with your progress, *Ik ben er erg tevreden over/blij om* – I'm very pleased/happy about it, *Ik ben (er) erg blij (om) dat je zo vooruitgegaan bent* – I'm very pleased that you have made so much progress. If a noun follows, as in the first example, always use *met*, although one may from time to time also see *over* with *tevreden* in such cases (but never *om* with *blij* if a noun follows), but do use *over* and *om* in *er* constructions followed by a subordinate clause; however, *Ik ben er erg tevreden/blij mee* (end of statement) is alright because it is simply a case of replacing the noun *vooruitgang* with the pronoun *er*.

Voldaan, the past participle of *voldóen* (cf. 'to satisfy'), means 'satisfied' in the sense of having gained satisfaction from having accomplished s.t., e.g. *Ik heb dit kippenhok helemaal in mijn eentje gemaakt. Ik voel me erg voldaan. Het heeft me veel voldoening gegeven* – I made this chicken pen entirely on my own. I feel very satisfied. It gave me so much satisfaction. 'Self satisfied' is either *(te) zelfvoldaan* or *tevreden met zichzelf*, which illustrates how close these words are semantically.

(*Geen*) *genoegen nemen met* is a somewhat elevated but not uncommon way of expressing that one is '(un)satisfied' with s.t., e.g. *Daar neem ik*

geen genoegen mee – I'm not satisfied with that/That won't do. Note the idiom *genoegen doen* (to be pleased), e.g. *Het doet mij veel genoegen u te mogen feliciteren met uw succes* – I am very pleased (It gives me much pleasure) to congratulate you on your success. (cf. 'favour' for another meaning of *genoegen*)

Occasionally 'satisfied' can mean 'convinced' in which case *overtuigd* must be used, e.g. *De jury was overtuigd dat hij schuldig was* – The jury was satisfied/convinced he was guilty.

to satisfy:

bevredigen, (dorst) lessen, tevreden stellen/zijn, (honger) stillen, voldoening geven/krijgen, voldoen aan

This lemma overlaps in content with the previous one. For example, if a particular task or accomplishment 'satisfies' one (i.e. gives one a feeling of satisfaction), then *voldoening geven/krijgen* is required, as illustrated above. But if one is performing a task or job for s.o. else and one hopes that it will 'satisfy' that person (= to give s.o. else satisfaction), the usual expression is *iemand tevreden stellen*, e.g. *Sommige mensen zijn moeilijk tevreden te stellen* – Some people are difficult to satisfy. It is quite common for 'to satisfy s.o.' to be expressed periphrastically with *tevreden zijn met* (cf. 'satisfied'), e.g. *Mijn zoontje heeft een ruit bij de burens gebroken. Ik heb het laten repareren en ik hoop dat ze daar tevreden mee zullen zijn* – My little boy broke one of the neighbour's windows. I've had it repaired and I hope that will satisfy them. The verb *bevredigen* very often has a sexual connotation but this is not necessarily the case, e.g. *Dat antwoord kan mij niet bevredigen (een bevredigend antwoord)* – That answer doesn't satisfy me (a satisfactory answer), *Zij is erg veeleisend en moeilijk te bevredigen/tevreden te stellen* – She's very demanding and difficult to satisfy (sexual/non-sexual). Also *zichzelf bevredigen* – to satisfy oneself (sexually, i.e. to masturbate), *de zelfbevrediging* – masturbation.

'To satisfy' requirements (= to measure up to certain demands) is expressed by *voldoen aan*, e.g. *U voldoet niet aan de eisen van deze baan* – You do not satisfy the requirements of this job. (compare *beantwoorden aan* under 'to answer')

'To satisfy' hunger is *stillen*, whereas 'to satisfy/quench' thirst is *lessen*, e.g. *Pas na drie hamburgers was zijn honger gestild* – Only after eating three hamburgers was his hunger/appetite satisfied.

'(Un)satisfactory' is normally expressed by *(on)bevredigend* but with reference to school marks the Dutch use the term *(on)voldoende* (lit.

[in]sufficient, cf. 'to fail'), e.g. *Je werk is onbevredigend* – Your work is unsatisfactory.

to save:

behoeden, besparen, bewaren, opsparen, redden, saven, sparen, uitsparen, verlossen

Redden is the verb used with reference to 'saving' s.o.'s life, e.g. *Zij heeft ons leven gered* – She saved our lives. In the religious sense of 'salvation' the verb required is *verlossen*, e.g. *de verlosser* – the saviour.

Besparen, opsparen, sparen and *uitsparen* all have to do with 'saving' money, time, effort etc. 'To save' (intr.) with reference to money is *sparen*, e.g. *Ik ben voor de vakantie aan het sparen* – I'm saving (up) for the holidays. *Opsparen*, unlike the English 'to save up', must have an object and therefore could not have been used in the previous example, e.g. *Je zult je geld moeten opsparen als je ook met vakantie wilt* – You'll have to save your money if you want to go on holidays too, *De boerin spaart potten op om er eigengemaakte jam in te doen* – The farmer's wife is saving jars to put home-made jam in. But *Ik spaar postzegels* – I save stamps (= collect, cf. 'to collect').

Besparen, on the other hand, renders 'to save' petrol, energy etc. (= to be careful with), e.g. *Men rijdt tegenwoordig niet meer zo veel als vroeger om benzine te besparen* – People don't drive as much now as previously in order to save (= conserve) petrol (= *Men bezuinigt op benzine* – People are economising on petrol); *energiebesparend* – energy-saving. *Besparen op* renders 'to save (money) on', e.g. *Ik rij nu veel minder om op benzine te besparen* – I'm now driving less to save money on petrol.

Besparen also renders 'to save, spare, preserve s.o. from s.t.', e.g. *Mijn oom heeft al mijn schulden voor me afbetaald en heeft mij een heleboel problemen bespaard* – My uncle paid off all my debts and spared/saved me (from) a lot of problems, *Je had me al die moeite kunnen besparen* – You could have saved me all that trouble.

Least common of the various words formed from *sparen* is *uitsparen*. It's most usual meaning is 'to leave open/blank' but it can mean 'to save, economise on' and as such is synonymous with *besparen*, e.g. *Door het zo te doen zullen we papier uitsparen/besparen* – In that way we will save on paper (= use less). Compare ...*zullen we op papier besparen* – ...we'll save money on paper.

Note the following additional use of *sparen*: *God spaar mij* – God spare me (compare *God reddel/beware/behoede mij* – May God save/preserve/

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Saven (*savede, gesaved*), pronounced as if it were **seven/seefde/geseefd*, is the term used these days in the computer world.

the school, university, college:¹

de akademie, de kleuterschool, de kostschool, de lagere school, de middelbare school, de hogeschool, het internaat, de universiteit

'Kindergarten' is *de kleuterschool* and 'primary school' is *de lagere school*, but under the most recent reforms in education in Holland the two have been amalgamated into *de basisschool*. A 'high school' or 'secondary school' is *de middelbare school*. The word *hogeschool* referred until very recently to a tertiary institution, e.g. *technische hogeschool* (technical college, i.e. post-secondary); there was formerly a distinction in Holland between *universiteiten* and *hogescholen* but lately the *hogescholen* have become universities. When Americans talk of being 'at school', where a Britisher would say he is 'at university', the expression in Dutch is usually *aan de universiteit* but *op school*, in addition to meaning 'at primary/secondary school', is also used colloquially to refer to university. (cf. 'on' for *op/aan*)

Post-secondary institutions of learning which do not qualify for the label of *universiteit* are frequently called *akademies* in Holland, e.g. *de pedagogische akademie* (*basisonderwijs*) – (primary) teacher training college (also called *de PA* or *PABO* and formerly called *de kweekschool*; the world of education in the Netherlands abounds with acronyms).

The word 'college' also means different things depending on which English-speaking country one lives in. University colleges as in Britain don't exist in Holland and one cannot render that concept in Dutch. If college means 'school' or 'university', then *school* and *universiteit* respectively are used. *Het internaat* and *de kostschool* mean 'boarding

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school', but they are relatively rare in Holland, as are private schools (*de particuliere school*) in the British sense.

the science:

de (natuur)wetenschap

'Science' in the general sense of 'knowledge' is *de wetenschap*, e.g. *de geesteswetenschappen* – human sciences/humanities/arts. The Dutch divide the sciences into *de alpha*-, *bèta*- and *gammawetenschappen* corresponding to the human, positive and social sciences respectively; it is possible to say, for example, *Ik heb alpha gedaan* (I did arts) or *Ik ben een beta-mens* – The sciences are for me. This specific meaning of 'science(s)', as illustrated in the previous example, cannot be rendered by *wetenschap*, a word which in addition to the general meaning of science as a whole thus also renders 'scholarship/knowledge'. 'Science' in the narrower sense and as a school subject is *natuurwetenschap*, which also means 'physics' (= *de natuurkunde*), but *natuurwetenschap* is used to refer to physics and chemistry (*de scheikunde*) combined; note also *de natuurwetenschappen* – the natural sciences.

A 'scientific' experiment or 'learned, scholarly' journal is *wetenschappelijk*. A person's work can be *wetenschappelijk* but not the person himself; thus 'He is not very scientific in his approach' must be rephrased: *Dat heeft hij niet erg wetenschappelijk aangepakt* – He didn't approach that very scientifically.

to see:

aanzien, bekijken, beschouwen, bezien, inzien, zien; begrijpen, snappen

Zien (*zag/zagen, gezien*) is the dominant word and does not normally cause any problems. The difficulty here is when to use the other options instead of *zien*. *Bekijken, beschouwen* and *bezien* are very similar in meaning, the first rendering 'to see' in the sense of 'to look at', the second rendering 'to regard, consider' (particularly people) and the third being rarely used, e.g. *Of het onderwijs in Nederland beter is dan in Engeland hangt ervan af hoe je het beschouwt/bekijkt* – Whether education in Holland is better than in England depends on how you see/look at it. In the following example, where the object is a person, *beschouwen* must be used: *Ik beschouw hem als de leider van de groep* – I see/regard him as the leader of the group/I consider him the leader. Other than in the following expressions, the word *bezien* can be forgotten: *Van ons standpunt bezien* – (Looking at it) from our point of view, *Dat valt nog te bezien* – That remains to be seen.

Inzien always renders 'to see' when it means 'to realise' (cf. 'to realise'), e.g. *Kun je nou niet inzien dat je dat niet had moeten doen?* – Can't you see that you should not have done that? (= don't you realise), *Ik heb eerst niet ingezien dat het niet serieus bedoeld was* – I didn't see at first that it wasn't meant seriously. But there are several other meanings *inzien* can have, e.g. *Ik zie de situatie/toekomst niet zo somber in* – I don't see the situation/future so pessimistically (= *Ik bekijk het niet zo pessimistisch*), *Ik kan het nut ervan niet inzien* – I can't see what the use of it is (= appreciate). For another meaning of *inzien*, cf. 'to look at'.

Aanzien and *zien aan* have a direct parallel in *aanhoren* and *horen aan* (cf. 'to hear'); both render 'to see/tell' s.t. about s.o. from looking at the person, the former referring to a permanent quality and the latter to a temporary quality, e.g. *Het is je aan te zien dat je geen Hollander bent* – One can see that you're not Dutch, *Het is aan je te zien dat je te veel gedronken hebt* – One can see that you've drunk too much.

'To see' that means 'to understand' is rendered by *begrijpen* or *snappen*, e.g. *Begrijp/snap je wat ik bedoel?* – Do you see what I mean? (cf. 'to understand')

to send:

opsturen, sturen, versturen, verzenden, zenden

The distinction here is generally speaking one of spoken or written style rather than of meaning. The dominant word is *sturen* and *opsturen* is to *sturen* as 'to send off' is to 'to send', e.g. *Ik heb de brief al (op)gestuurd* – I've already sent the letter (off). *Opsturen* can only be used with reference to mail and therefore 'I've sent Piet off to the shop' is *sturen*, not *opsturen*. 'To send s.t. to s.o.' is *iets naar iemand sturen*.

Versturen is more or less identical in meaning to *opsturen* as it is also only used with reference to letters, parcels etc. (compare English 'to dispatch')

Verzenden (*verzond, verzonden*) has the same meaning as *versturen* but is higher style; it has given rise to some common compounds, e.g. *het verzendhuis* – the mail-order firm (also *postorderbedrijf*), *de verzendkosten* – mailing/forwarding costs, but *een zending boeken* – a consignment of books. If ordering personally by phone one would normally simply ask *Zou u de boeken alstublieft per zeepost willen sturen?* – Would you please send the books by surface mail?, whereas in a letter to the firm, or certainly in the firm's letter to the customer, one may read *De door u geplaatste bestelling is op 16 oktober per luchtpost verzonden* – Your order was dispatched by airmail on the 16th of October, *Geld e.d. moet altijd aangetekend worden verzonden* – Money etc. must always be sent by

registered mail (particularly commonly heard in the passive as in these examples).

Zenden, although synonymous with *sturen*, is not common and is best avoided as a translation of 'to send'. It is, however, commonly used in the form *uitzenden*, rendering 'to transmit, broadcast, telecast' (*de zender* – broadcasting station), e.g. *Radio Nederland zendt niet meer uit op die golflengte* – Radio Nederland doesn't transmit on that wave-length any more, *Er is gisteren een prachtig sportprogramma door Radio Nederland uitgezonden* – Radio Nederland broadcast a terrific sports programme yesterday. Diplomats and the like who are 'sent/posted/dispatched' overseas *worden uitgezonden*. Thus also *het uitzendbureau* (employment agency for piecemeal work), *de uitzendkracht* (an employee sent by such an agency).

serious:

ernstig, serieus, au sérieux

The difficulty here is the distinction between *ernstig* and *serieus*. If s.t. 'serious' happens, it is *ernstig* and thus *Hij is ernstig ziek* – He is seriously ill, but if one asks s.o. to be 'serious' for a moment, *serieus* is required, e.g. *Is dit een serieuze brief of is het een grap?* – Is this a serious letter or is a joke?, *Serieus?* (= *echt/echt waar?*) – Seriously/really/honestly? Note: *aanzienlijke/ernstige schade* – serious damage.

Au sérieux is an adverb meaning 'seriously', most commonly used in the expression *iets/niemand (niet) au sérieux nemen* – (not) to take s.o. seriously, e.g. *Ik heb het eigenlijk alleen voor de grap gedaan maar iedereen heeft me au sérieux genomen* – Actually I only did it as a joke but everyone took me/it seriously.

to serve, the service:

bedienen, dienen, iemand van dienst zijn, helpen, opdienen, serveren, uitzitten, vervullen; de bediening, de dienst, de service(beurt), servicen, het servies

The difficulty here lies in the fact that 'to serve' serves (= fulfils = *vervult*) many different functions in English and each of those functions is rendered by a different word in Dutch. The dominant word is *dienen*, which is both transitive and intransitive. As a transitive verb it is only used with reference to serving God, a boss etc. *Het is zijn roeping om God te dienen* – It is his calling to serve God. But *dienen* is perhaps more commonly found as an intransitive verb, e.g. *Hij dient in het leger/Hij is in dienst* – He is (serving) in the army/He's doing his military service. It also

refers to domestic service, e.g. *Zij dient als kokkin op het paleis* – She's serving as a cook at the palace. *Dienst* is also the appropriate word when one has been of 'service' to others, e.g. *U bent mij ontzettend van dienst geweest* – You have been of great service to me. (cf. 'favour' for a related use of *dienst*). A 'church service' is *de kerkdienst* whereas a 'religion' is *de godsdienst*.

One will probably use *bedienen* more often than *dienen*, as it is a transitive verb and is thus the word required with reference to service industries (*het/de dienstverlenende bedrijf/industrie*), e.g. *De klant is nog niet bediend* – The customer hasn't been served yet, *Deze krachtcentrale bedient de hele provincie* – This power station serves the whole province. The 'service' one gets in a restaurant is thus *de bediening* and the 'service charge' is *het bedieningsgeld*, but *de fooi* (the tip) is a more usual word. Note also *de bediende* – the servant, *de kantoorbediende* – clerk, office-worker. But if a shop assistant asks if one is being served, the standard expression is *Wordt u al geholpen/bediend?* – Have you been served? (former in a shop, latter in a restaurant). A very formal way of expressing the same thing is *Waar kan ik u mee van dienst zijn?/Kan ik u van dienst zijn?/Waarmee kan ik u dienen?* (formal) – What can I help you with?/Can I help you?

Bedienen also commonly translates 'to operate' machines, e.g. *Wie gaat deze computer bedienen?* – Who is going to operate this computer? Compare this with the following meaning of *dienen* which is not unrelated to its function as explained in the first paragraph: *Deze computer dient hoofdzakelijk als tekstverwerker* – This computer serves (= functions) chiefly as a word processor. Note the following use of *dienen* as a modal, a use which has nothing to do with its meaning of 'to serve': *Deze computer dient (= moet) uitsluitend als tekstverwerker gebruikt te worden* – This computer must/may only be used as a word processor.

'To serve' as in 'Do you serve coffee here?' cannot be rendered by any of the above options. In Dutch this has to be paraphrased, e.g. *Kun je hier koffie krijgen?/Heeft u koffie?* But if one is putting on a meal and 'serves' soup before the main course, *opdienen* or *serveren* (more formal) are used, e.g. *Wie gaat de soep opdienen?* – Who's going to serve the soup?, *Pas anderhalf uur na het hoofdgerecht werd het nagerecht geserveerd* – One and a half hours after the main course the dessert was served. Thus the word for a 'waitress' is *de serveerster*, although a 'waiter' is either *de ober* (as a profession and used in direct address) or *de kelner* (as a profession).

The 'service' one does or does not get in a shop or restaurant, is either *de bediening* or *de service*, in which case the two are synonymous,² but this is not always the case; for example, the section in a large store where one pays accounts, registers complaints etc. is called *de klantenservice* and the 'service counter' is *de servicebalie*, whereas a 'self service shop' is *de zelfbedieningswinkel*. The 'service' performed on one's car is *de service(beurt)*, but there is no official equivalent of the English verb 'to service' a car etc. Although one will hear *servicen*, it is not in the dictionaries, e.g. *Mijn auto moet geserviced (worden)* – My car needs to be serviced. Otherwise this has to be paraphrased, e.g. *Mijn auto is aan een (service)beurt toe* – My car has to be serviced (= is due for a service), *Ik moet mijn auto naar de garage brengen voor een servicebeurt* – I have to take my car to the garage for a service.

Het servies refers to a 'dinner service', i.e. crockery.

'To serve time' in jail is *zitten* or *je tijd uitzitten*, e.g. *Hoe lang heeft hij in de gevangenis gezeten* – How long did he serve/spend in jail?, *Hij heeft het volle termijn uitgezeten* – He served the full time.

to shine:

blinken, glanzen, glimmen, poetsen, schijnen, schitteren

The dominant word is *schijnen* (*scheen, geschenen*), which is intransitive, e.g. *De zon schijnt door het raam* – The sun is shining through the window. If 'to shine' is used transitively in English, one has to paraphrase it to put it into Dutch, which is usually done by putting a preposition before what constitutes the direct object in English (compare *antwoorden* *op* under 'to answer'), e.g. *De soldaat scheen met een zaklantaarn door het raam* – The soldier shone a torch through the window. *Schijnen* and its derivatives also have a variety of meanings that have nothing to do with 'shining'. (cf. 'to appear', for example)

For 'to shine' shoes, silver etc. (i.e. a transitive verb), *poetsen* is required, but once such items have been 'cleaned' (= *poetsen*, cf. 'to clean'), they then *glimmen* (shine – *glom, geglommen*, intr.) and 'the shine' on them is *de glans*. Hence *glanzen* (intr.) renders 'to gleam, glow, glitter, sparkle' as of jewels and glass, e.g. *glanzend haar* – shining hair, *glanzend papier* – glossy paper, *glanzende ogen* – sparkling eyes; *glimmende ogen* is also possible but is negative (= gleaming eyes, as of a dirty old man for example), but in *Zijn ogen glommen van plezier* the word has a positive

² This would not in fact normally be expressed nominally but paraphrased as follows: *Je wordt hier prettig bediend/geholpen* (the former in a restaurant and the latter in a shop) – The service is good here.

connotation. As the above examples illustrate, *glanzen* is perhaps more commonly used as an adjective than as a verb.

Blinken (*blonk, geblonken*), an intransitive verb, must be used instead of *glimmen* when objects 'shine' by virtue of an inherent quality, i.e. not as the result of having been cleaned, as of lights in the distance, e.g. *De zon scheen zo op de ramen dat ze blonken* – The sun was shining on the windows in such a way that they shone. Compare: *Ik heb ze zo goed gepoetst dat ze glommen* – I cleaned them so well that they shone.

Schitteren is close in meaning to *glimmen* and *glanzen* but literally means 'to sparkle, twinkle' as of stars and jewels, e.g. *Kijk eens hoe de sterren schitteren* – Look at how the stars are twinkling/shining. *Schitterend* as an adjective is a common synonym of *prachtig* (beautiful, wonderful). Note *de zonne-/maneschijn* – sunshine/moonlight, *het sterrenlicht* – starlight.

the/to shit:

de drol, de kak, de keutel, de mest, de ontlasting, de poep, de schijt, de shit, de stoelgang, de stront, het uitwerpsel; poepen, schijten

As with the various words dealt with under 'backside' and 'penis', Dutch shows itself to be just like English in having a variety of words to express this earthy concept; the distinction between the options given here is naturally one of style rather than meaning, although *mest* tends to be reserved for farm animals and thus approximates English 'dung', e.g. *de koe(i)mest* – cow dung, *de paardemest* – horse dung; also *de kunstmest* – artificial fertiliser.

The crudest word is *stront*, which unlike English, is not used as an exclamation; none of these words are in fact.³ A daily topic of conversation in Holland today is the ever increasing quantities of *hondepoepe* that are being deposited on the streets of Dutch cities, *poep* being a word that is used quite liberally; it is not as harsh as *stront* and can thus perhaps be better equated with 'crap'. One could, for example, also ask a child *Moet je poepen?* without this sounding any stronger than 'Do you need to do a poo?' In a rage one may be inclined to say *Er ligt verdomme alweer stront op de stoep* – There's shit on the step again, for

³ The Dutch swear quite differently from us. They do not have our vast range of options, possibly because they do not resort as readily to bodily functions and the genitalia as we do. Recently many young Dutchmen have taken to using *shit*, which they use in situations where we in English would not dare to use it. This is presumably either because of their imperfect knowledge of English or, being a foreign word to them, it has a more euphemistic ring to it than it does in English. In Dutch too it is used as a synonym for 'hash' (*hasj*).

Christ's sake, whereas it may be referred to as *poep* if one were in a quieter frame of mind.

Kak is not terribly common as a synonym of *poep* and *stront*. When used in the literal sense it is quite a strong word but not when it is used figuratively with reference to putting on airs, e.g. *kale/kouwe kak* – what a lot of lah-di-dah nonsense, *bekakt* – uppity, stuck-up.

The noun *schijt*, although identical with *stront* in both meaning and feeling, is not common, but the verb *schijten* (*scheet*, *gescheten*) is used exactly as 'to shit' is in English. Note too *schijt hebben aan*, e.g. *Ik heb schijt aan die vent* – I don't give a shit about that guy.

There will be many contexts where neither *poepen* nor *schijten* are appropriate and yet there is no direct equivalent to our 'to defecate'. This must be paraphrased, e.g. *Hoe gaat het met de ontlasting/uw stoelgang, meneer?* – How are your bowel movements, sir? (nurse to patient).

The equivalent of 'turd' is *keutel* or *drol*, which is also used as a derogatory term with reference to men, contrary to what is said in the previous footnote (cf. also *lul* under 'penis'). Innocuous little 'droppings' are *keuteltjes*, e.g. *Ik heb wat muizekeuteltjes in de kast ontdekt* – I found some mouse droppings in the cupboard. A very respectable term for 'droppings/excrement' is *het uitwerpsel* (= excrement), virtually always used in the plural, e.g. *De uitwerpselen (= keutels) van een kangoeroe zijn niet langwerpig maar rond en hard* – The excrement/droppings of a kangaroo is/are not elongated but round and hard.

to shock, be shocked, frighten, be frightened:

afschrikken, *schokken*, *een schok/shock krijgen*, (*zich*) *schrikken*, *shockeren*, *verschrikken*; *bang maken*

Schrikken (*schrok*, *is geschrokken*), as opposed to the two derivatives of *schrikken*, is both intransitive and irregular, e.g. *Ik schrok toen ik het hoorde* – I got a shock when I heard it. It is very frequently used reflexively with all sorts of intensifiers, e.g. *Ik ben me (dood/rot/kapot/een aap/een beroerte) geschrokken* – I got a fright/shock (I nearly jumped out of my skin/was frightened to death); only the form with *dood* is likely to be encountered in the written language.⁴

Schrikken is often confused with *schokken*, a weak intr. verb meaning 'to shake', as in a building 'shaking' from an earthquake or s.o. 'shaking'

⁴ This is the only case I know of a reflexive verb taking *zijn*, presumably by analogy because *schrikken* and *zich schrikken* are identical in meaning.

from emotion ('to shake' a head or bottle, however, is *schudden* and 'to tremble' of people is *beven*), e.g. *Haar schouders schokten van het huilen* – Her shoulders were shaking from crying. 'To get an electric shock' is *een schok krijgen* (*de schok* = shock, jolt, but *de schrikdraad* – electric wire fence) whereas 'to get a shock/fright' is rendered by *Ik schrok (me kapot)*, as explained above; but 'I got frightened' is *Ik werd bang*. But *de schrik* can render 'the fright' too, e.g. *Ik moet nog bijkomen van de schrik* – I still have to recover from the fright. '(To be) shocked' (i.e. to react with disapproval) is rendered by *geschokt (zijn/reageren)*, e.g. *Hij reageerde geschokt toen hij van de aanslag hoorde* – He was shocked when he heard of the attack.

'To shock/get a shock' in the sense of moral outrage are rendered by the an English loanword, *een shock krijgen/shockeren*, e.g. *De hoertjes in de etalages in Amsterdam shockeren veel buitenlanders* – The prostitutes in the windows in Amsterdam shock a lot of foreigners.

'To frighten' as a transitive verb, i.e. as in 'You frighten me' is expressed quite simply by *bang maken* or is turned around and expressed in terms of 'to be afraid of' (*bang zijn voor/van*, cf. 'afraid').

Afschrikken is 'to frighten/scare off/deter' and is used both literally and figuratively just as the equivalent expression in English is, e.g. *We zullen nooit weer last hebben van beren*. *Ik heb ze de vorige keer afgeschrikt door een paar schoten te lossen* – We won't be bothered by bears again. I frightened them off last time by firing a few shots, *Hij had zijn auto willen vervangen maar de prijs van een nieuwe heeft hem afgeschrikt* – He had wanted to replace his car but the price of a new one frightened him off.

Verschrikken is a transitive verb meaning 'to frighten, startle, shock, scare' but is seldom if ever used – use *afschrikken* or *bang maken*. Note, however, *de vogelverschrikker* – scarecrow, e.g. *Deze vogelverschrikker schrikt de vogels helemaal niet af* – This scarecrow doesn't frighten the birds at all/doesn't frighten them off at all. *Verschrikt* as an adjective is also quite common, e.g. *Hij keek verschrikt (= geschrokken) op* – He looked up startled. Also *Hij ging onverschrokken voort* – He went on fearlessly/unflinchingly. (cf. 'terrible')

to shorten, abbreviate:

afkorten, *bekorten*, *inkorten*, *korten*, *korter maken*, *verkorten*

'To shorten' or 'cut down/back', i.e. to reduce in size from what was originally intended, is *verkorten*, e.g. *De werkweek moet verkort worden* – The working week has to be shortened, thus *Arbeidstijdverkorting* –

shorter working hours, a concept in present-day Dutch labour relations. Note also *een levensverkortende ziekte* – a fatal disease.

Inkorten can be applied to 'abridging' or 'shortening' a book, article, essay or speech; it is used when the item concerned is too long for the time or space available, but *verkorten* can also be used with reference to these things. Note that if a book *wordt ingekort* (is shortened), the 'abridged version' is always *de verkorte versie*. *Inkorten* can also refer to 'shortening' an item of apparel although *korter maken* is more usual in such cases. In fact *korter maken* is the safest expression to use in all contexts if one is in doubt as it is seldom if ever wrong, e.g. 'to shorten' one's hair, a piece of rope.

Bekorten is best forgotten as a translation of 'to shorten', although this is one of its meanings; in the following sentence, for example, it is interchangeable with *inkorten*: *De minister heeft zijn bezoek aan Japan moeten bekorten/inkorten* – The minister had to shorten his visit to Japan. *Bekorten* is more commonly used as in the following example: *Ik moet op gas bekorten* – I have to cut down/economise on gas.

'To abbreviate' a word is *afkorten* and an 'abbreviation' in that sense is an *afkorting*, e.g. *Arbeidstijdverkorting wordt als ATV afgekort*.

to show:

aantonen, aanwijzen, draaien, (zich) laten zien, (zich) tonen, (zich) vertonen, wijzen

This can be an exceedingly difficult word to translate but more often than not *laten zien* will suffice, even if other words may be correct too, e.g. *Laat je me je huis zien?* – Are you going to show me your house?, *Wat heb je in je hand? Laat eens zien* – What have you got in your hand? Show me. It can also be used reflexively, e.g. *Hij heeft zich sindsdien niet (meer) laten zien* – He hasn't shown his face since. (cf. *zich vertonen* below)

Draaien only translates intransitive 'to show' with reference to films, e.g. *Waar draait die film op het ogenblik?* – Where is that film showing at the moment? (cf. 'to turn' for other meanings of *draaien*) 'Showing soon' on a cinema billboard is *binnenkort (in dit theater) = komt binnenkort*. (cf. 'soon')

It is possible to use *laten zien* for 'to show' a film or slides but this is also the main function of *vertonen*, e.g. *Ik wil jullie de dia's van mijn reis vertonen/laten zien* – I want to show you the slides from my trip, but *Vanavond wordt er een film over Zuid-Afrika vertoond* – A film about South Africa is being shown tonight (*laten zien* is not possible in the

passive). *Vertonen* is also the verb required when s.o. or s.t. 'shows' certain qualities, e.g. *Dit huis begint allerlei gebreken te vertonen* – This house is beginning to show all sorts of shortcomings.

Zich vertonen is more or less synonymous with *zich laten zien*, e.g. *Hij durft zich niet in het openbaar te vertonen/laten zien* – He doesn't dare show himself in public (= appear), *In iedere stad waar de paus zich vertoondelliet zien, werd hij toegejuicht* – In every city where the Pope appeared he was cheered.

Tonen is usually synonymous with *laten zien* but is somewhat more formal, e.g. *Op één mei hebben de Russen duidelijk getoond/laten zien hoe goed ze voorbereid zijn op oorlog* – On the first of May the Russians clearly showed/demonstrated/displayed how well prepared they are for war. At a Dutch post-office, for example, where one is often required 'to show proof of identity', the sign reads *legitimatiebewijs tonen*, but the post-office employee is more likely to say *Zou u mij uw identiteitsbewijs willen laten zien?* – Would you please show me your identity document; this could apply to a conductor asking you to 'show' your ticket too. But just to confuse the issue, *op vertoon van uw identiteitsbewijs* is 'on presentation of your ID'.⁵ The 'bearer', as printed on a banknote, is *de toonder*. A shop counter⁶ in/on which goods are displayed is *de toonbank* because (originally) *Daar worden dingen in/op getoond/tentoongesteld*⁷ – Things are displayed/exhibited in/on it. But *tonen* is also used figuratively meaning 'to show' in the sense of 'to reveal, give evidence of', in which case it cannot be replaced by *laten zien*, e.g. *Hij toont meer sympathie voor mij dan voor mijn vrouw* – He shows a greater liking for me than for my wife, *Hij heeft er wel belangstelling voor getoond* – He did show interest in it.

A not so common use of *tonen* is as an intransitive verb where it is similar in meaning to *er uitzien* (cf. 'to look'), e.g. *Dat toont veel beter* – That looks much better/makes a better impression, or *Dat toont niet* – That doesn't look good/make a good impression. This use of *tonen* is limited to these two expressions in effect.

⁵ Compare the following too: *het vertoon van militaire macht* – show of military might. *Vertoon* is similar in meaning to 'show' as in '(just) for show' although the Dutch have borrowed this expression, e.g. *Het is alleen maar voor de show* – It's just for show; *Het is met veel vertoon gedaan* – It was done with a lot of show/ostentation, *louder vertoon* – all show (i.e. no essence).

⁶ In these days of self-service shops the *toonbank* (display counter) is fast disappearing. An information 'counter' or service 'counter', for example, is *de balie* (lit. the bar, as in a law court), e.g. *Vraag het aan de balie, mevrouw* – Ask at the counter, madame, whereas 'at the checkout counter' is rendered by *aan/bij de kassa*.

⁷ *Tentoonstellen* means literally 'to exhibit' and thus *de tentoonstelling* (exhibition). Also *uitstallen/uitstalling* (to/the display).

Zich (be)tonen is quite different in meaning from *zich vertonen/laten zien*. Like the second main function of *tonen* described two paragraphs above, it is used in **figurative** contexts to translate 'to show oneself', e.g. *Door mij zo te helpen heeft hij zich een echte vriend getoond/betoond* – By helping me like that he showed himself to be a real friend.

Aantonen translates 'to show' where it means 'to prove, demonstrate', e.g. *Voordat je trouwen mag moet je kunnen aantonen (= bewijzen) dat je nooit eerder getrouwd geweest bent* – Before you may marry, you have to be able to show/prove that you've never been married before, *Dat is niet waar en ik zal dat aantonen door...* – That is not true and I'm going to show that by..., *Deze film wil aantonen dat het wel mogelijk is om oorlog te voorkomen* – This film wants to show/demonstrate that it is possible to avoid war. Note the following alternative way of expressing this: *Uit zijn film blijkt dat...* – His film shows that...

Wijzen and *aanwijzen* literally mean 'to indicate, point (at/to/out)', e.g. *Kunt u mij de weg even (aan)wijzen?* – Can you show me the way?, *Ik zal je het postkantoor even (aan)wijzen* – I'll show you where the post-office is/point the post-office out to you. However, there is a slight distinction in meaning between the two: *aanwijzen* is used if what is being pointed out is in sight or on a map and is thus literally being 'pointed at/to', whereas *wijzen* here means 'I know where it is and I'll show you – follow me (i.e. the building is not in sight)'. 'To point to/at s.t. or s.o.', without this above connotation of pointing to indicate/show where s.t. is located, is *wijzen naar* even though it is in view, e.g. *Wijs niet zo naar mij* – Stop pointing at me like that (thus *de wijsvinger* – index finger). But in the following example *aanwijzen* is used because the connotation is one of 'indicating/pointing out who did do it': *Waarom wees je mij aan toen de leraar vroeg wie het gedaan had?* – Why did you point at me when the teacher asked who had done it?, Also *het aanwijzend voornaamwoord* (demonstrative pronoun).

shy:

schuchter, schuw, verlegen

The distinction between these three words is very subtle. The connotation of *schuchter* is 'hesitant', whereas that of *schuw* is 'timid, frightened by nature' (used usually of animals). *Verlegen*, the most commonly used of the three, refers to human bashfulness.

to sign:

ondertekenen, tekenen, een handtekening zetten

Strictly speaking, 'to put one's signature (*de handtekening*) on s.t.' is *ondertekenen* but one will frequently hear the prefix being omitted, e.g. *Zou u dit document even willen (onder)tekenen?* – Would you please sign this document? However, if literally translating 'to sign one's name' or 'to put one's signature on s.t.' use *zetten*, e.g. *Zou u uw naam/handtekening hier even willen zetten, meneer?* – Would you please sign your name here, sir?/Would you please sign/place your signature here?, i.e. it is not possible to **(onder)tekenen een naam/handtekening*.

the sign:

het bord, het seintje, het teken

A public 'sign' is *het bord*, e.g. *het verkeersbord* – the traffic sign, *Er hangt een bord in de bibliotheek waar 'stilte' op staat* – There's a sign hanging in the library with 'silence' on it.

Het teken means 'sign' in the sense of 'symbol, indication', e.g. *Dit tekenje % betekent procent* – This sign/symbol % means (lit. **signifies**) percent, *Het kleine aantal aanwezigen was een duidelijk teken dat er niet veel interesse was* – The small number of people present was a clear sign/indication that there wasn't much interest.

Het seintje (more common than *het sein*, which really means 'signal') is used in the sense of giving s.o. a 'sign' when to begin or when to keep quiet etc., e.g. *Laten we samen naar het feest gaan en als ik er genoeg van gehad heb, geef ik je een seintje* – Let's go to the party together and when I've had enough I'll give you a sign.

simple/simply:

domweg, (dood)eenvoudig, enkel (en alleen), (ge)makkelijk, gewoon(weg), (dood)simpel, zwakzinnig

The dominant word is *eenvóúdig*, as both an adverb and an adjective, e.g. *Dit probleem is eigenlijk doodeenvoudig/heel eenvoudig* – This problem is actually quite simple, *Ik kan het (dood)eenvoudig niet oplossen* – I simply can't solve it. As an adverb, as in the previous example, it is interchangeable with *gewoon(weg)* (cf. 'just') or *domweg* but as an adjective, as in the first example where it is synonymous with 'easy', it is just as commonly expressed by *(ge)makkelijk*.

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(Dood)simpel is only used adjectivally, in which case it is synonymous with (dood)eenvoudig. The prefix dood- can be added to emphasise how simple s.t. is, e.g. *Zwemmen is niet moeilijk. Het is doodsimpel* – Swimming isn't difficult. It's as easy as pie.

Enkel en alleen is semantically equivalent to English 'purely and simply' but is somewhat higher style in Dutch than that expression is in English, e.g. *Ik doe het enkel en alleen om mijn moeder tevreden te stellen* – I'm doing it purely and simply to satisfy my mother. Also in higher style or regionally one may find *enkel* being used adverbially where *eenvoudig* is more usual e.g. *Ik doe het enkel/eenvoudig (= alleen maar) om haar gelukkig te maken* – I'm simply doing it to make her happy. (cf. 'only')

Zwakzinnig means 'simple' in the sense of 'simple-minded', a meaning which *simpel* can also have if there is no ambiguity in the context.

since, because:

daar, omdat, sinds, sindsdien, sedert, sedertdien, want

'Since' as both a preposition and a conjunction is *sinds* or *sedert*, the latter being restricted to the written language, e.g. *Zij had haar moeder sinds/sedert de oorlog niet gezien* – She had not seen her mother since the war (preposition), *Ze had haar moeder niet gezien sinds/sedert de oorlog begonnen was* – She hadn't seen her mother since the war began (conjunction).

There is another conjunctive 'since' in English meaning 'because'. This word is *daar* in the written language or *want/omdat* in both written and spoken Dutch, e.g. *Daar/omdat hij weigerde om met pensioen te gaan, kon hij niet vervangen worden* or *Hij kon niet vervangen worden daar/omdat hij weigerde met pensioen te gaan/want hij weigerde met pensioen te gaan* – Since he refused to retire, he could not be replaced/He could not be replaced since/because/for he refused to retire. Note the different word-order after *omdat* compared with that after *want*.⁸

⁸ Although 'for' in the sense of 'because' is no longer everyday English, *want* (lit. 'for') is more common in Dutch than *omdat*, but there is a limitation on the use of both *want* and 'for' (should we ever use it), i.e. when a sentence begins with the subordinate clause, as in the first example given, *want* and 'for' cannot be used; but if that clause follows the main clause, as in the second example, *want* and *omdat* and 'for' and 'because' are interchangeable, English showing a definite preference for 'because' and Dutch showing a marginal preference for *want*. There are other instances where there can be a semantic distinction between *want* and *omdat*, but the issue is too complex and detailed to be covered here. (cf. *ANS*, p. 1159-1162)

Sindsdien/sedertdien are adverbs of time, e.g. *Ze heeft haar moeder sindsdien nooit weergezien/nooit meer gezien* – She has never seen her mother again since.

the size:

de afmetingen, het formaat, de grootte, de hoogte, de maat, de omvang

One's size in clothing is *de maat*, e.g. *Wat is uw maat?/Wat hebt u voor maat, meneer? Maat 36?* – What size do you take, sir? Size 36?

Grootte means 'size' in the sense of 'largeness'. One could buy *overhemden van verschillende maten* – shirts of various sizes, but *bomen van verschillende grootte/hoogte* – trees of varying sizes/height. (Size here may need to be further defined in Dutch, i.e. whether they are bigger or taller.)

Omvang means 'circumference, dimension', e.g. *Ze hebben in Hongarije ook een sportveld van deze omvang* – In Hungary they also have a sports ground of this size/dimension, *Een boek van deze omvang (= thickness)/grootte (= size) moet erg duur zijn* – A book of this size must be very expensive.

Afmetingen means 'dimensions' and like that English word is virtually always used in the plural, e.g. *Wat zijn de afmetingen van de kamer?* – What size is the room/What are the dimensions of the room?

Formaat has a somewhat different meaning from the cognate form in English. If we refer to the 'format' of a book in English we can be referring to more than its size; it can also mean the general layout and presentation of it, whereas in Dutch *formaat* means nothing more than 'size', *Ik hoop dat dit boek een keer in zakformaat verschijnt* – I hope a pocket sized edition of this book appears some time, *planken van verschillend formaat* – planks of different sizes.⁹

the skin:

het bont, de huid, de pels, de schil, het vel

At the risk of slightly oversimplifying the reality of the distinction between *huid* and *vel*, one can say that it is safest to always refer to human 'skin' as *huid*, although *vel* is common in certain standard expressions and

⁹ The Oxford Dictionary only recognises 'format' as meaning exactly what it does in Dutch, but in practice these days, probably due to the influence of computer language, the word definitely more commonly refers to the layout or presentation of s.t. (e.g. a document, tv show), not its size.

idioms, e.g. *Hij sprong bijna uit zijn vel* – He nearly jumped out of his skin (the Dutch expression refers only to rage), *het kippevel* – gooseflesh/bumps, *Ik heb mijn hand ontveld* – I've grazed my hand, but *Hij heeft een dikke huid* – He is thick-skinned. The clinical term is always *huid* and it is also the only word used in the many compound nouns that relate to human skin, e.g. *de huidcrème* – skin cream, *de huidaarts* – skin specialist, *de huidkanker* – skin cancer.

The 'skin' of an animal can be either *huid* or *vel*, the distinction being a little difficult for us to appreciate at times. Generally speaking one can say that if 'skin' in any given context can be replaced by 'hide' in English (i.e. tends to be thicker), the word required in Dutch is *huid*, e.g. *de olifantehuid* – elephant skin/hide, *de koeihuid* – cow skin/hide; compare *het konijnevel* – rabbit skin, *het hondevel* – skin/fur of a dog, which are thinner and supple. 'Pigskin' is *het varkensleer* (lit. leather) and 'sealskin' is *het zeehondenbont* (lit. fur, cf. 'coat'). Where we use the word 'pelt', i.e. with reference to a 'skin' with commercial value as a fur, the Dutch use *de pels*. The 'skin' of a drum is its *vel*, as is the 'skin' that forms on heated milk. Note *villen* (to skin), whether the animal has a *vel* or a *huid*, whereas *vervellen* ('to peel' as from sunburn) is dealt with under 'the/to peel', as is *schil* which is the 'skin' or 'peel' of fruit.

the sky:

de hemel, de lucht

The blue domeshaped tarpaulin covering the earth is *de hemel* and the space between us and it is *de lucht*. Consequently 'a star in the sky' is *een ster aan de hemel* whereas a 'cloud in the sky' is *een wolk in de lucht* and a plane flies *in/door de lucht*. 'Under the open sky' is either *onder de blote/vrije hemel* or *in de open lucht*. This is the theoretical difference between these two words as a translation of 'sky' but in practice one finds that the distinction is not always quite so clear-cut, particularly with reference to clouds, e.g. *(g)een wolk aan de hemel*, also *een wolkeloze hemel/lucht*.

De hemel, nearly always used with the article as is *de hel*, also translates 'heaven', e.g. *Als hij doodgaat gaat hij beslist niet naar de hemel maar naar de hel* – When he dies he certainly won't be going to heaven but to hell.

to sleep in, fall asleep:

inslapen, uitslapen, in slaap komen/vallen, zich verslapen

The constituent parts of *slapen* are *sliep/geslapen* and whereas *slapen* and *zich verslapen* both take *hebben*, the other options all take *zijn*.

'To sleep in' by accident, i.e. when the alarm-clock doesn't go off, is *zich verslapen* (i.e. to oversleep), whereas 'to sleep in' on purpose, i.e. to catch up on some shut-eye, is *uitslapen*. Thus, if arriving late for class, one says to the teacher *Het spijt me, meneer, ik heb me verslapen* – I'm sorry, sir, I slept in/overslept, but *Ik kom morgen wat later want ik wil uitslapen* – I'll be arriving a bit later tomorrow because I want to sleep in. (= to finish sleeping, cf. 'to finish')

Inslapen, despite appearances, is a formal word meaning 'to fall asleep' but is also a euphemism for 'to die'. (cf. 'to die') It is much more usual in everyday speech to use *in slaap vallen*, e.g. *Ik wilde opblijven totdat mijn dochter thuiskwam maar ik ben voor de buis in slaap gevallen* – I wanted to stay up till my daughter got home but I fell asleep in front of the telly. *In slaap vallen* is what comes over one when one is tired (i.e. involuntary) whereas 'to fall asleep' as a voluntary action is *in slaap komen*, e.g. *Ik kom 's nachts slecht in slaap* – I have trouble falling asleep (= getting to sleep) at night. Note *het inslaapmiddel* – soporific (drug).

to smell:

ruiken, rieken, stinken

As these three words stand above they are in ascending order of strength, the most usual word being *ruiken*. *Ruiken* is used both transitively and intransitively (compare 'to taste' where this is not the case), e.g. *Ruik deze bloem* – Smell this flower, *Die ruikt heerlijk* – It smells divine. *Ruiken* is in every way synonymous with English 'to smell' and can thus refer to both pleasant and unpleasant smells (the same applies to *de geur* – smell).

Rieken, an intr. verb, is only used with negative connotations (compare 'to reek/smack [of]') and in figurative contexts, e.g. *Dat riekt naar vriendjespolitiek* – That smells/smacks of nepotism.

Stinken is more or less synonymous with its English cognate (*de stank* – stench), but is more readily used in Dutch where in English we might prefer to say 'It smells bad/awful'. All three verbs are followed by *naar* when translating 'to smell/reek/stink of'.

so:

daarom, dus, het/dat, zo

Because the Dutch also have a word *zo*, it is very common for English-speaking people to equate it with 'so'; some English 'so's' overlap with *zo*, but most do not. If 'so' can be replaced by 'thus', it is usually *dus*, a word which for this reason is infinitely more common in Dutch than 'thus' is in

English,¹⁰ e.g. *Dus kom je niet/Je komt dus niet/Dus je komt niet, klopt dat?* – So you won't be coming, is that right? As 'so' often means 'thus' and 'thus' is often a less emphatic way of saying 'therefore', if one wishes to emphasise the connotation 'therefore' when translating 'so', *daarom* should be used, e.g. *...en daarom kom ik niet.* – ...and so/thus/therefore I won't be coming (referring to reasons just stated).

In the expressions 'I think/hope so', 'so' is rendered by *het* or *van wel*, e.g. *Ik denk/geloof het (wel) – Ik denk/geloof van wel*; compare also *Ik weet het* – I know. *Het*, as well as *dat* (depending on the sense), can on occasions render 'so' in the expression 'to do so', e.g. *Als hij zegt dat je de belasting moet betalen dan zou ik het/dat maar doen als ik jou was* – If he says you have to pay the tax, then I'd do so if I were you, *We hadden eerst naar huis willen gaan maar we hadden geen tijd om dat te doen (= we hadden er geen tijd voor)* – We'd wanted to go home first but we didn't have time to do so.

The dominant meaning of *zo* is 'in this/that way' (= *op deze/die manier*), e.g. *Je moet het niet zó (= op die manier) doen, maar zó (= op deze manier)* – You mustn't do it like that (= in that way) but like this (= in this way). Or when there is a contrast, as in the previous example, one can say *niet zus, maar zo*.

Zo does render 'so' in the expressions *zo veel/weinig/groot* etc. (so much/little/big etc.) but in *net zo groot als* (just as big as) it translates 'as'. Cf. 'soon' for another meaning of *zo*.

the society, company, community, congregation:

de gemeenschap, de gemeente, het genootschap, het gezelschap, de maatschappij, de samenleving, de vereniging

The 'society' in which we live is both *de samenleving* and *de maatschappij*; in this sense the two are synonymous and this is the only meaning of the former. *Maatschappij* also means 'company' (i.e. a business concern). *Gezelschap* renders 'company' in the sense of a group of people that one is together with, e.g. *Jullie zijn goed gezelschap* – You people are good company, *Je bent in goed/slecht gezelschap* – You are in good/bad company. Note: *Ik verwacht vanavond bezoek* – I'm expecting company tonight (i.e. visitors, cf. 'the/to visit').

The dominant meaning of *gemeenschap* is 'community', thus *De Europese Gemeenschap (de EG)* – European Community (EC).

¹⁰ In fact *dus* is frequently used to excess, it being a common filler in inarticulate speech akin to the way we use 'like' and 'sort of'. (compare *gewoon* under 'just')

Gemeente is used in the Netherlands to render a 'municipality', e.g. *de gemeente Baarn* – the municipality of Baarn, and thus the 'town/city council' is *de gemeenteraad*. But *gemeente* is also the word used for a '(church) congregation', e.g. *Onze gemeente krijgt volgende week een nieuwe dominee* – Our congregation is getting a new minister next week.

Vereniging renders 'society' in the sense of a 'club' or 'association', e.g. *De Internationale Vereniging voor Neerlandistiek* – the International Association for Dutch Studies. In the official name of some Dutch societies *maatschappij* is used in this sense too, e.g. *de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde* – the Dutch Literature Society, but the most usual meaning of *maatschappij* is that given above. A *genootschap* is also a society but has connotations of a closed club or organisation with certain firm statutes. It too occurs in the name of certain well-known associations, e.g. *het Historisch Genootschap* – the Historical Society, *een genootschap/vereniging van boekhandelaren oprichten* – to found a book-sellers' society/association/organisation. One is advised to regard *vereniging* as the general, all-purpose word in this sense.

some, a couple, a few:

de een of andere, een paar, enige, enkele, sommige, wat; het stel

'Some' causes the beginner no end of trouble. As a partitive, 'some' is frequently simply left untranslated, e.g. *Ik moet melk kopen* – I have to buy some milk, *Kun je me geld lenen?* – Can you lend me some money?, *Waar kan ik appels kopen?* – Where can I get some apples? In the examples given one could also have omitted 'some' in English but it is more frequently inserted than left out; the reverse is the case in Dutch. However, it is possible to render such 'some's' by *wat*, something which is done more frequently in speech than in writing, e.g. *wat melk/geld/appels*; it can be followed by both uncountable and countable nouns as the examples illustrate. When dealing with uncountable nouns (i.e. as with 'milk' and 'money'), if one has to render 'some' there is no way to do it other than by leaving it untranslated or using *wat*. But when dealing with countable nouns, if 'some' can be replaced by 'a few, a couple of' one can use *een paar* instead of *wat*¹¹ e.g. *Er komen vanavond een paar/wat kennissen langs* – Some/a few/a couple of friends are coming around tonight, *Hij heeft een paar/wat oude Oostenrijkse munten thuis. Ik heb er*

¹¹ Note that *een paar*, even more than English 'a couple of', can render both 'two' (= a pair) or 'a few', e.g. *een paar boeken* – a few/couple of books, *een paar schoenen* – a pair of shoes; strictly speaking this could also mean 'a few shoes' but context should make this clear. A 'couple' meaning 'two ([un]married) people' is *het stel*, e.g. *Rob en Miep zijn een aardig stel* – Rob and Miep are a nice couple. *Een stel* can also replace *een paar* in the sense of a few with reference to people, e.g. *Er komen vanavond een stel kennissen langs*.

ook een paar/wat – He has some old Austrian coins at home. I have some too. (cf. 'few')

Sommige is the word many non-natives reach for when required to translate 'some' but it only rarely renders 'some'. *Sommige* must only be used when the meaning is 'some are this but others are that', even if the 'others' are not mentioned but merely implied, e.g. *Auto's zijn nu veel duurder dan drie jaar geleden; sommige zijn twee keer zo duur geworden (en andere drie keer zo duur)* – Cars are now much more expensive than three years ago; some have got twice as expensive (and others three times as expensive), *Vandaag zijn sommige kinderen/sommigen thuis gebleven*¹² – Today some children/some stayed at home (but others did go to school).

Enkele is similar in meaning to *een paar*, the connotation being 'one or two', but belongs to a higher register e.g. *Enkele passagiers liepen lichte verwondingen op* – A few passengers received injuries; compare *enkele bezwaren* – some reservations with *een paar opmerkingen* – a few remarks. In speech *enig* (cf. 'only') is seldom used to render 'some', although it is more common in the sense of 'any', e.g. *Heb je enig idee?* – Have you any/some idea?¹³ *Nee, ik heb geen enkel idee* – No, I haven't the vaguest idea (*geen enkel* = not a single), *Dit was vroeger een stad van enige betekenis* – This was formerly a town of some importance.

Note the translation of 'some' in the following sentence: *De een of andere idioot heeft zijn auto voor mijn garage geparkeerd* – Some idiot has parked his car in front of my garage.

sometimes:

soms, wel eens

Usually one learns that *soms* means 'sometimes', as it does, and that's all one needs to know. It is worth noting, however, that *wel eens* frequently means 'sometimes' too, but it also renders 'once in a while', 'once or twice' (cf. 'once'); it is perhaps more commonly used in speech than *soms* in that sense, but *soms* is never wrong, e.g. *Als ik niet kan slapen lees ik*

¹² Note that *sommige*, *enkele* and *enige*, being indefinite pronouns, have in common with all other such words in that category ending in *-e* the fact that they end in *-en* when they stand independently (i.e. not followed by a noun which they qualify) and refer to people. The same applies to *andere(n)* which, for example, does not have an *-n* in the previous example, where it refers to 'cars', but does in this example, i.e. *...maar anderen kwamen wel naar school*.

¹³ It is a complexity of English that 'some' is replaced by 'any' in questions and with negatives. In Dutch this subtle distinction between 'some' and 'any' is unknown. The example given here is in fact the only case I know of where 'any' is rendered by its cognate form *enig*.

wel eens/soms een uurtje in bed – If I can't sleep I sometimes read for an hour or so in bed.

Note that in questions *soms* very often acts as a modal particle rendering 'perhaps, by chance', e.g. *Heb je soms een kwartje voor me?* – Have you by any chance got 25 cents I can have?

soon:

binnenkort, direkt, eerder, gauw, kort (daarna), liever, spoedig, straks, vroeg(er), weldra, zo, zodra, zo gauw, zo dadelijk, zo meteen

This is a difficult word to translate and requires paraphrasing in one's mind to determine what one means by 'soon' in a given context. If one means 'in a moment/minute', as in 'I'll do it soon/in a moment' one can choose between *direkt*, *straks*, *weldra*, *zo*, *zo dadelijk*, and *zo meteen*. The dominant expression is *straks*, although *zo straks* relates back in time (= 'just now' in the sense of 'a moment ago'). Whereas *dadelijk* and *meteen* mean 'immediately' (cf. 'immediately') in the sense of 'straight away', *zo dadelijk/meteen* are not so immediate and mean more 'presently/in a moment'. *Weldra* is only found in formal written language and is better avoided.

As the word suggests, *binnenkort* literally means 'shortly' and thus only renders 'soon' where it is interchangeable with 'shortly', e.g. *Ik verwacht binnenkort van hem te horen* – I expect to hear from him soon/shortly. *Straks* is more immediate (i.e. the same day) than *binnenkort*, which may be in a day or so.

Where 'soon' means 'quickly, fast' (cf. 'fast') the dominant word is *gauw*, e.g. *Je moet er gauw op reageren* – You'll have to react to it soon/quickly. Also *De tram kwam gauw* – The tram soon came. But *gauw* can also render 'soon' in the sense of 'shortly' too, e.g. *Wij hopen dat je gauw weer langskomt* – We hope that you will visit us again soon/shortly.

Spoedig as a translation of 'soon' is more or less synonymous with *gauw* but it is not as commonly used as that word in speech and unlike *gauw*, it can also be used adjectivally, e.g. *De buurjongen heeft een steen door het raam gegooid en is spoedig/gauw weer verdwenen* – The boy next door threw a stone through the window and soon (= quickly, cf. 'fast') disappeared, *een spoedig antwoord op een brief* – a quick answer to a letter, *Ik hoop dat je hier gauw op antwoordt/dat u hier spoedig op reageert* – I hope you reply to this soon/quickly; stylewise *spoedig* is the sort of word one is likely to find in a letter written in the *u* form. *Gauw/kort/spoedig daarna* all render 'soon after that, shortly thereafter'.

'Sooner or later' is *vroeger of later* or *vroeg of laat*. 'Sooner' meaning 'rather' is *liever* or *eerder* (cf. 'before'), e.g. *Ik was liever thuis gebleven* – I'd sooner/rather have stayed at home, *Ik had het liever/eerder verbrand dan aan hem gegeven* – I'd sooner have burnt it than given it to him. The two are often interchangeable in this sense but if there is a difference in meaning it is that *liever* literally means 'rather' (volition) and *eerder* means 'sooner' (temporal or force of circumstance). (cf. 'rather')

The subordinating conjunction 'as soon as' is *zodra* although colloquially one commonly hears *zo gauw (als)*, e.g. *Zodra ik hem zie, geef ik het hem* – As soon as I see him, I'll give it to him. Note that the second 'as' remains untranslated after *zodra* and can be omitted after *zo gauw*.

sorry:

kwalijk, pardon, sorry (hoor), spijten, zeggen

The most common word is *sorry*, which, as is so often the case with English loanwords in Dutch, is used differently than in English. In addition to meaning 'sorry' as an apology, it can also render English 'excuse me': if pushing one's way through a crowd, for example, the Dutch say *sorry (hoor)* or *pardón* where we would say 'excuse me'. If one trod on s.o.'s toes while pushing through a crowd, however, one could also say *sorry* or *pardon* or *Neemt u mij niet kwalijk/neem me niet kwalijk* (lit. don't take offence, please forgive me).

Although *het spijt melhem/ons (speet, gespeten)* renders 'I/he/we am/is/are sorry' and as such can be synonymous with *sorry hoor* as an apology for a committed offence, it is perhaps best to stick to using this expression when it is followed by a *dat* clause in which case one has no choice but to use it, e.g. *Het speet me dat ik niet kon komen* – I was sorry that I wasn't able to come.

It seems to be quite common in English these days to say 'sorry?' (with rising, interrogative intonation) when s.o. has said s.t. that one has not heard correctly and that should therefore be repeated, i.e. a 'sorry' that means '(Beg your) pardon. What did you say?' This is rendered by *Wat zegt u/zeg je?*

to speak, talk, gossip (about):

babbelen, bepraten, bespreken, kletsen, praten, roddelen, spreken

It is best to learn that *spreken* means 'to speak' and *praten* means 'to talk' although we tend to interchange 'speak' and 'talk' in English, e.g. *Ze spreken Nederlands met elkaar* – They speak/talk Dutch to each other, *Ze*

zitten met elkaar te praten – They are talking to each other.¹⁴ *Spreken* in the sense of 'to talk' is formal style; it can also render 'to give a talk', e.g. *De minister zal op de bijeenkomst spreken over ontwapening* – The minister will be giving a talk (= talking about) disarmament at the meeting. 'To speak/talk about' s.t. is thus *spreken/praten over* but just as 'to talk about' s.t. can be synonymous with 'discussing' it, the verb to discuss is *bespreken*. *Bepraten* also exists but is less common; it might be used to reduce the formality of the occasion, making it less serious. 'Talkative' is *spraakzaam, praterig* or *praatgraag*.

In the formal written language one will meet *spreken tegen/tot* meaning *zeggen tegen* (to say to), e.g. *'Kom terug', sprak/zei hij tegen/tot haar* – 'Come back', he said to her. Conversely *zeggen* renders 'to speak' in the expression *(om) zo te zeggen* – so to speak, although this is also expressed by *bij wijze van spreken*.

'To talk' in the sense of 'to chat, gossip' is *babbelen* or *kletsen* which have nominal derivatives just like *praten*, i.e. *het gebabbell/geklets* (chatter), *gepraat* (mere talk), *gesprek* (conversation); such *ge-* + verbal stem derivatives commonly have a negative connotation. Note also *de klets-/babbelkous* (chatterbox). 'To gossip' in the sense of 'to gossip maliciously about' s.o. is *roddelen over* (also *het geroddel* – malicious gossip).

the speech, talk, lecture:

het college, de lezing, de rede, de paper, de redevoering, het referaat, de speech, de spraak, de toespraak, de voordracht

A 'lecture' at university is a *college* (pseudo-French pronunciation with the final *-e* being sounded). A series of *colleges* goes to make up a course (thus *college lopen* – to be doing a course at university), e.g. *Ik loop college in Utrecht/bij professor Vos* – I'm attending/doing a (university) course in Utrecht/doing a course with Professor Vos. A one-off 'lecture' or 'talk' is a *lezing* or *voordracht*, but more commonly the former, e.g. *Onze buurman is in India geweest en hij heeft daar op onze school een lezing over gegeven* – Our neighbour has been to India and he gave a lecture/talk about it at our school. One can also deliver (= *houden* or *geven*) a *lezing* at a conference; these days that is also commonly referred to as a *paper* (pron. as in Eng.) can also be called a *referaat* (*een referaat houden over iets* – to give a talk/paper/lecture on s.t.). A 'guest lecture' at a university is *het gastcollege* even though it too is a one-off affair.

¹⁴ In fact the situation is not always this clear-cut in Dutch either, e.g. *Die meisjes praten onder elkaar Turks maar ze spreken (= kennen) wel Nederlands* – Those girls always talk Turkish together but can speak (do know) Dutch.

The most usual word for a 'speech', as given by a politician, is *toespraak* (*houden*), e.g. *De leider van die partij houdt vanavond een toespraak in het stadhuis* – The leader of that party is giving a speech/holding an address in the townhall tonight (= *Hij gaat ons toespreken* – He's going to address us/speak to us). A *rede* (*houden*) is essentially synonymous with *toespraak* but is not quite as commonly used. The '(policy) speech' with which the queen annually opens the Dutch parliament, for example, is called *de troonrede* and an 'inaugural speech' in academic circles is an *inaugurele rede*, but a 'valedictory lecture' is *het afscheidscollege*. Een *redevoering* (*houden*) is even more formal (= oration, address). '(In)direct speech' in the grammatical sense is *(in)directe rede* but a 'speech defect' is *het spraakgebrek*, *de spraak* being the word used with reference to one's 'speech' in the sense of the way one speaks; compare also *in het gewone spraakgebruik* – in everyday/colloquial speech, *de spreek-/schrijftaal* – spoken/written language.

Just with reference to small 'speeches' as delivered at weddings or when toasting s.o., the word *speech* (= *een korte toespraak*) is used. Note also *speechen* = *een speech geven* (to give a speech).

to spend:

besteden, doorbrengen, opmaken, overnachten, spenderen, uitgeven

The dominant word for 'to spend' money is *uitgeven*, e.g. *Ik heb tien gulden/al mijn geld uitgegeven* – I have spent ten guilders/all my money. The previous example with *al mijn geld* could also be expressed with *opmaken* (cf. 'to finish'), e.g. *Ik heb al mijn/het geld opgemaakt* – I have spent all my/the money. (cf. *smijten* under 'to throw')

When one 'spends money on s.t.' *uitgeven aan/voor* is always correct but *besteden aan* is sometimes possible too; the distinction is subtle, the former having neither positive nor negative connotations while the latter has positive connotations, e.g. *Hij geeft al zijn geld uit aan jenever* (contemptible)/*aan zijn kinderen* (commendable) – He spends all his money on jenever/his kids, *Hij besteedt al zijn geld aan zijn kinderen* – He spends all his money on his kids, *Dat geld is goed besteed* – That money was well spent. The following can all be synonymous with the reservation that the first example is positive and the other two are neutral: *Ik heb er tien gulden aan besteed/ik heb er tien gulden voor uitgegeven/betaald* – I spent ten guilders on it/paid ten guilders for it. *Besteden aan* is also used when one 'spends' time or energy on s.t., e.g. *Dit is een goed opstel. Je hebt er duidelijk veel tijd aan besteed* – This is a good essay. You obviously spent a lot of time on it /devoted a lot of time to it.

'To spend time' in a place is *doorbrengen* but it is common to avoid it altogether by simply using *zijn*, e.g. *Hoeveel weken heb je in Rusland doorgebracht?* – How many weeks did you spend in Russia? *Ik heb er een week doorgebracht* – I spent a week there, *Hoe lang was je in Rusland?* *Ik ben er een week geweest* – How long did you spend in Russia? I spent a week there. Note: *Ik heb net tien minuten aan de telefoon gezeten* – I just spent ten minutes on the phone (*doorbrengen* would also be possible here if it referred to a lengthy stretch of time, e.g. *het grootste deel van de avond*).

'To spend the night' is *overnachten*. (cf. 'to stay')

Semantically close to *besteden aan*, but not as common in everyday speech, is *spenderen aan*; however, it has connotations of 'to waste', e.g. *Ik heb er uren/de helft van mijn inkomen aan gepend* – I spent hours on it (It took me hours)/I squandered half my income on it.

the spice:

de specerij, de spijs, het kruid

Despite appearances, *spijs* never translates 'spice'. (cf. 'food') 'Spices' in the historical sense of the Spice Islands (*de Specerijeilanden*) and the spice trade (*de specerijenhandel*) are *specerijen*, a word which is usually found in the plural. But what one uses oneself in cooking is *kruiden*, a word which literally means 'herbs' but the distinction we make between 'spices' and 'herbs' is not made in Dutch. Thus both cinnamon and rosemary, for example, are *kruiden* and the mixture of spices with which the Dutch make *speculaas* is called *speculaaskruiden*. Note also *kruiden* (to spice), thus *te sterk gekruid* (too spicy) but '(chilli) hot' is *pedís*, an Indonesian word, or *scherp*.

(in) spite of, despite:

desondanks, ondanks

Ondanks is a preposition that should cause no problems, e.g. *Ondanks het vreselijke weer gaan we vanmiddag naar de dierentuin* – In spite of/despite the awful weather we are going to the zoo this afternoon. *Desondanks*, which non-natives often confuse with *ondanks*, renders 'in spite of it/that' (cf. 'nevertheless'), where an archaic genitive form of the article/demonstrative is used to render the pronoun; it is thus never followed by a noun, e.g. *Desondanks (= toch) hebben we ervan genoten* – In spite of that/all the same we enjoyed it. (cf. *toch* under 'nevertheless')

to spoil:*bederven, verwennen*

Bederven (*bedierf, bedorven*) is 'to spoil' in the sense of 'to ruin' or 'to rot'. As a transitive verb it takes *hebben* but as an intransitive verb it takes *zijn*, e.g. *Je hebt de hele avond bedorven door je zo te gedragen* – You spoilt/ruined the whole evening by behaving like that, *Dit fruit is bedorven* – This fruit has spoiled/rotted.

If one wishes to refer to s.o. 'spoiling' a situation it can also be done nominally by using the word for 'spoil-sport', *de spelbreker*, e.g. *Wij hadden reuzeplezier totdat jij binnenkwam. Jij was de spelbreker* – We were having great fun till you came in. You spoilt it/were the spoil-sport.

'To spoil' or 'mollycoddle' a person is *verwennen*, the past participle of which, *verwend*, is commonly used adjectivally, e.g. *Je hebt dat kind verwend* – You've spoilt that child, *Wat een verwend kind* – What a spoilt child. *Bederven* (adj. *bedorven*) can have this meaning too but *verwennen* is much more common.

the/to stay, remain:*blijven, logeren, overnachten, verblijven, vertoeven; het oponthoud, de stopover, de tussenlanding, het verblijf*

The dominant word is *blijven* (*bleef, gebleven*) which takes *zijn*. The distinction between *blijven* and *verblijven*, which takes *hebben*, is similar to that between 'to remain' and 'to sojourn'. *Verblijven* thus implies a stay of longer duration and is synonymous in this sense with *vertoeven*, but neither *verblijven* nor *vertoeven* is an everyday word (compare 'to sojourn'), e.g. *Hoe lang zijn jullie op mij blijven wachten?* – How long did you stay waiting for me?, *De koningin verblijft op het ogenblik in Porto Ercole* – The queen is currently staying in Porto Ercole; in everyday language one would simply use *zijn* or even *zitten*, e.g. *Piet is/zit op het ogenblik in Italië*. (cf. 'to spend time' under 'to spend')

Note that *verblijven* renders 'to remain' in certain set expressions employed in formal letters, e.g. *Ik verblijf met de meeste hoogachting/ Met dank verblijf ik...* – I remain yours faithfully...

'To stay', when staying or residing temporarily with s.o. is *logeren* (with a French *g*), e.g. *Wij gaan bij familie logeren* – We'll be staying with relatives. (cf. 'to live')

'To stay' somewhere in the sense of 'to spend the night' is *overnachten*, e.g. *We konden nergens in dat dorp overnachten* – We couldn't stay any-

where in that village. (*Blijven*) *slapen* may be more appropriate in certain contexts, e.g. *Kunnen we bij jullie (blijven) slapen?* – Can we spend the night at your place?

'The stay, sojourn' is *het verblijf*, a word which is much more commonly used than the corresponding verb, e.g. *Hij is voor een kort verblijf naar Nice gegaan maar is er de rest van zijn leven gebleven* – He went to Nice for a short stay but stayed there for the rest of his life. *Het oponthoud* has the same meaning as *verblijf*, although the latter is much more usual, but it can also mean a 'hold-up, delay' of a train or plane. It sometimes also renders a 'stay' in the sense of a 'stop-over' of some duration when travelling, although *de stopover* is now the most usual word in the world of air travel. If a plane merely touches down for refuelling, for example, and one does not actually stay over, *de tussenlanding* is used, not *stopover*.

still, yet:*al; (voor)alsnog, nog, nog altijd/steeds, tot nog toe; toch*

The dominant word is *nog*, e.g. *Hij is nog ziek* – He is still sick. Very frequently, however, *nog steeds*, a somewhat more emphatic form of *nog*, is used instead, e.g. *Hij is nog steeds ziek* – He is still sick. *Nog altijd* is synonymous with *nog steeds*, but is not quite as common.

Alsnog is similar in meaning to, but not always interchangeable with, *nog* (*altijd/steeds*), e.g. *Ze hebben vergeten de kwitantie te sturen, maar ze zullen het alsnog doen* – They have forgotten to send the receipt but they will (expressed verbally here in English). *Vooralsnog* (written style) on the other hand, is synonymous with *tot nog toe* (as yet, = up till now, cf. 'now'), although the latter is the dominant expression, e.g. *Hij is tot nog toe niet teruggekomen* – He hasn't returned as yet/He still hasn't returned.

The following use of 'yet' in questions, which is very close in meaning to 'already', is rendered by *al* in Dutch, e.g. *Is Piet al bij je geweest?* – Has Piet been to see you yet? (= Has Piet already been to see you?) (cf. 'already')

'Still' and 'yet' can mean 'nevertheless', in which case they are rendered by *toch*, e.g. *Zelfs als je het niet wilt doen, moet je het toch doen* – Even if you don't want to do it, you still have. (cf. 'nevertheless')

to stop: (cf. 'to end' and 'to finish')
aanhouden, afzetten, blijven (stil)staan, tot stilstand komen, ophouden, staken, stilhouden, stilzetten, stoppen, stopzetten, tegenhouden, uitscheiden

This is one of the most difficult words to translate into Dutch as the number of options given here indicates. The dominant intransitive verb is *ophouden* (*hield op, opgehouden*). It is usually conjugated with *zijn* in the perfect but will be heard with *hebben* on occasions; nevertheless, *zijn* is never wrong.¹⁵ It translates 'to stop' + verb (i.e. to stop doing s.t.); it is, as it were, the opposite of *beginnen* (*te*), e.g. *De straat houdt hier op/begint hier* – The street stops/begins here. The infinitive that follows *ophouden* is normally preceded by *met*,¹⁶ e.g. *Het is opgehouden met regenen* – It (has) stopped raining. *Hij is opgehouden met praten/huilen/roken* – He (has) stopped talking/crying/smoking. As *ophouden* is intransitive, a sentence such as 'He has stopped (it)', where 'it' can replace an infinitive where the action implied is understood (e.g. the *praten, huilen* or *roken* in the previous example), *ermee* replaces the object (compare *eraan/ermee* after *beginnen* under 'to begin'), *Rookt hij nog? Nee, hij is ermee opgehouden* – Does he still smoke? No, he's stopped, but also *Hij had een zaak in de stad maar hij is ermee opgehouden* – He had a business in town but has given it up (lit. has stopped it). *Hou op* – Stop (crying, nagging etc., cf. *uitscheiden* below), *Hou ermee op* – Stop doing that.

Zonder ophouden is a common adverbial expression meaning 'ceaselessly, without stopping', e.g. *Mijn moeder praat zonder ophouden* – My mother never stops talking.

¹⁵ Dutch reference works are very vague on this issue. Van Dale gives *Hij heeft* (or *is*) *met zijn winkel opgehouden*, for example, but in practice one rarely hears *hebben*. In this discussion of *ophouden* as a translation of 'to stop' one must not forget that there is also a homophonous transitive verb *ophouden* (+ *hebben*) which means 'to hold up, delay' and thus a sentence such as *Ik ben opgehouden* – I was held up, is the passive of that verb and is not relevant to the issue being discussed here.

¹⁶ Another difficulty associated with *ophouden* is whether the infinitive that follows it is preceded by *met* or *te*. Once again Dutch reference works shed no light on this issue other than to contradict each other. What follows is the only vaguely logical explanation I have been able to solicit from native-speakers. It seems that the distinction is existential: for example, *Hij is opgehouden met schrijven* – He's stopped writing, is definitely the form required when referring to s.o. having put his pen down for a moment but it can also refer to an author who has given up writing altogether, whereas *Hij is opgehouden te schrijven* only has the second meaning. Thus also *Hij is opgehouden te/met werken* mean he has given up work for good. Compare *Hij is opgehouden te slapen* (i.e. as a result of his illness he no longer sleeps at all any more); *Die krant is opgehouden met/te verschijnen* – That paper has stopped appearing, *Die vereniging is opgehouden te bestaan* – That association has ceased to exist, it would be incorrect to use *met*. The forms with *te* also sound more formal, e.g. *Het is opgehouden met/te regenen* – It has stopped raining, where the former is definitely more usual. To summarise, one can say that *met* is much more common than *te*, and that although *te* is often possible too, there are few cases where it is the only possible choice.

Stoppen is an intransitive verb, which, like *ophouden*, will be found with both *zijn* and *hebben* but more usually the former (cf. footnote 15). Although its application is in fact somewhat wider than what I describe here, if one sticks to the following rule one will seldom go wrong: *stoppen* renders intransitive 'to stop' of vehicles, e.g. *De ziekenauto stopte voor ons huis* – The ambulance stopped in front of our house, *Waar stopt de bus?* – Where does the bus stop? (but *de bushalte* – bus stop). Compare *zonder te stoppen* with *zonder ophouden* above, e.g. *We reden zonder te stoppen van Straatsburg helemaal terug naar Nederland* – We drove all the way back to Holland from Strassburg without stopping (but *zonder stoppen* is possible here too). *Hij is ermee gestopt* is synonymous with *Hij is ermee opgehouden* although this usage diverges from the above rule. (cf. also *stoppen* under *pauzeren* below)

Stilhouden (with *hebben*) is synonymous with *stoppen* as illustrated in the example above about the ambulance, the connotation being 'stopping temporarily'. It is not common.

Stilstaan renders 'to stop' where there is a connotation of 'to stand still, pause', e.g. *Zijn mond staat geen ogenblik stil* – His mouth doesn't stop/stand still for a moment, *De tijd staat nooit stil* – Time never stands still. *Stilstaan*, but also *blijven stilstaan*, is used of watches and clocks 'stopping', e.g. *De klok staat stil/is stil blijven staan* – The clock has stopped. This verb can in fact be applied to any machine that 'stops' (i.e. intransitive), e.g. *Niet openen voor de trein stilstaat* – Do not open before the train stops/has stopped (on the doors of Dutch trains). *Blijven (stil)staan* is also a common means of expressing 'to stop walking', e.g. *Toen hij bij het park kwam, bleef hij (stil)staan om naar een groep spelende kinderen te kijken* – When he reached the park he stopped to watch a group of children playing.

With reference to machinery and vehicles *stilstaan* refers to the condition whereas *tot stilstand komen* refers to the action e.g. *De trein reed binnen op spoor tien en kwam heel langzaam tot stilstand* – The train came in on platform 10 and came very slowly to a halt/standstill/stopped very slowly. The transitive equivalent is *tot stilstand brengen*, e.g. *De remmen weigerden en de trein kon niet op tijd tot stilstand gebracht worden* – The brakes failed and the train couldn't be stopped/brought to a halt in time. The transitive equivalent of *(blijven) stilstaan* on the other hand is *stilzetten*, e.g. *Hoe zet je deze pomp stil?* – How do you stop this pump? (With reference to machinery, i.e. 'to switch/turn off', one can also use *afzetten*, cf. 'to turn'). *Stopzetten* is particularly used for payments and traffic, e.g. *Omdat de koningin langs zou komen, heeft de politie het verkeer langs de route stopgezet* – Because the queen would be passing by, the police stopped the traffic, *De zoekactie werd stopgezet* – The search was stopped/called off.

Aanhouden (cf. 'to continue') only renders 'to stop' when one 'stops, hails' another car, e.g. *Hij had een lekke band en hield me aan om om hulp te vragen* – He had a flat tyre and stopped me to ask for help, *Onderweg naar huis heeft de politie mij aangehouden en wou mijn rijbewijs zien* – On the way home the police stopped me and wanted to see my licence.

Staken, apart from meaning 'to strike', can also translate 'to stop, leave off, suspend'. It can be used for example of payments, imports/exports, fighting, study etc., e.g. *Er zijn twee argumenten om het uitzetten van fazanten te staken* – There are two arguments for not releasing (= ceasing with the release of, to stop releasing) pheasants, *Toen ik langskwam, staakten ze hun gesprek (= hielden ze op met praten)* – When I walked past them they stopped their conversation (*staken* higher style). Note *Het staakt-het-vuren* – cease-fire, thus *Beide partijen hebben het vuren gestaakt* (= *Beide partijen zijn opgehouden met schieten*) – Both parties (have) stopped firing.

Uitscheiden (past tense not used)¹⁷ is usually only heard in the imperative form *Schei (ermee) uit*, which is synonymous with *Hou (ermee) op*, i.e. 'stop (it)', and the expression *Ik schei ermee uit* (= *Ik hou ermee op*) – I'm stopping (giving up doing s.t.). It is frequently heard in speech but is easily replaced by *ophouden*, which has a much broader application.

Where 'to stop' has a clear connotation of 'to pause, take a break' one can render it with *pauzeren*, e.g. *Zullen we nu even pauzeren om een kopje koffie te drinken* – Shall we stop now to have a cup of coffee (i.e. in the middle of a talk, for example). If one were out driving and made that suggestion one would say *Zullen we even stoppen...?* In the first example in this paragraph it would not be incorrect to use *ophouden* and, probably due to English influence, even *stoppen* is a possibility.

Tegenhouden means 'to stop s.o. doing s.t.' or 'to stop s.t. happening' in which case it comes close in meaning to 'to prevent' (cf. 'to prevent'), e.g. *Mijn dochter gaat trouwen. Ze is eigenlijk te jong maar ik kan haar niet tegenhouden* – My daughter is going to get married. She's really too young but I can't stop her, *De vakbonden willen staken en niemand kan ze tegenhouden* – The trade unions want to strike and nobody can stop them.

¹⁷ Colloquially one may hear *Ik ben ermee uitgescheeën* but this is not normally written, nor is the present tense for that matter.

strange, foreign, rare:
buitengewoon, buitenlands, eigenaardig, gek, merkwaardig, raar, typisch, vreemd, zeldzaam

The dominant word for 'strange' is *vreemd*. Although *vreemd* in the expressions *vreemde landen* (strange/foreign lands), *vreemde talen* (foreign languages) and *vreemd geld* (strange/foreign money) renders 'foreign', it does not otherwise normally correspond with 'foreign'; the dominant word for 'foreign' is *buitenlands* and 'the foreigner' is *de buitenlander*. *De vreemdeling* is the word for 'stranger', although in certain compounds, e.g. *de vreemdelingendienst* (aliens registration office) and *de VVV* (tourist bureau),¹⁸ the word means 'foreigner'. (cf. *bekend zijn* under 'to know')

If s.t. is 'strange', i.e. peculiar, there are a number of things one can say: *wat vreemd/gek/raar* (how strange/peculiar) are all very common and synonymous in this sense. (cf. 'curious') Note that this is the meaning of *raar* and that 'rare' is *zeldzaam*. Although the dominant meaning of *typisch* is 'typical', it is frequently used as a synonym of *vreemd* and *raar* (*gek* primarily means 'mad, crazy') but usually the context makes the meaning clear, e.g. *Ik vind haar een typische griet/gekke meid* – I think she's a weird bird, *Wat een typische reactie* – What a strange/typical reaction (ambiguous).

Eigenaardig means 'peculiar' and as such is usually interchangeable with *vreemd* and *raar*. *Merkwaaardig* is in turn synonymous with *eigenaardig* but is not as common.¹⁹

Occasionally 'strangely' can mean 'unusually', in which case it is best rendered by *buitengewoon* (extraordinary, uncommon, unusual), e.g. *Het was die ochtend buitengewoon stil op straat* – It was strangely/unusually quiet in the street that morning.

the student:
de leerling, de scholier, het schoolkind, de student(e)

The Dutch reserve the word *student* (*studente[s]* is the feminine [pl.]) for someone at a tertiary institution (i.e. at a *universiteit* or *akademie*). A 'school student' is a *leerling* (lit. pupil). *Schoolkind* (lit. schoolboy,-girl) refers to littles ones at a primary school, whereas *scholier* means 'school pupil' at either primary or secondary level; like their English counter-

¹⁸ Cf. footnote under 'the map'.

¹⁹ Theoretically this word also means 'remarkable, noteworthy' in Dutch, as in German, but in Holland, as opposed to Belgium, it is seldom used with that meaning.

parts, these two words describe a personal quality, not a relationship (i.e. to teacher or school). Thus one asks *Hoeveel leerlingen/kinderen zitten er in die klas?* – How many pupils/children are there in that class?; *school-kinderen/scholieren* and 'schoolchildren' are not possible here.

to study:

bestuderen, bekijken, blokken, instuderen, leren, studeren

The dominant word is *studeren* and can be used both transitively and intransitively, e.g. *Ik studeer Frans* – I'm studying French, *Laat me met rust. Ik moet studeren* – Leave me alone. I have to study. *Bestuderen* is a transitive verb used with reference to 'studying, poring over' reading matter or s.o. (intensively), e.g. *Ik heb dit artikel grondig bestudeerd en ik snap het nog steeds niet* – I have studied this article thoroughly and I still don't understand it, *Ze zat me de hele tijd te bestuderen* – She was sitting there studying me the whole time. *Bestuderen* is similar in meaning to *bekijken*. (cf. 'to look at')

Instuderen means 'to learn, drill, rehearse' and thus only translates 'to study' if that connotation is present, e.g. *Ik ben in een toneelstuk en moet mijn rol nog instuderen* – I am in a play and have to study/learn/rehearse my part.

On other occasions too we use 'to study' in English as a synonym for 'to learn'. In such cases the Dutch are more likely to use *leren*, e.g. *Ik moet dit hoofdstuk voor morgen leren* – I have to study this chapter for tomorrow.

Note *voor een tentamen blokken* – to swot/cram for an exam.

stupid, dumb, the stupidity:

dom, stom, de domheid, de stomiteit

There are more words in Dutch that render this concept, just as there are in English. In the sense of 'stupid' *stom* and *dom* are synonymous, but the former, which is perhaps a bit stronger, is more commonly heard despite the fact that it also renders 'dumb' as in *doofstom* (deaf and dumb, cf. the first footnote under 'quiet'). A couple of commonly heard synonyms are *Hij is niet goed wijs* and *Hij is niet goed bij z'n hoofd* – He's off his rocker.

The equivalent of 'dumbbell/idiot/blockhead' is *sufferd* or *stommeling/stommerd/stommerik* and the most usual word for 'stupidity' is *de stomiteit* although *de domheid*, which is milder and more polite, exists too, e.g. *Wat een stomiteit (= Wat stom [van mij/hem])* – How bloody stupid (of me/him etc.).

the subject:

de onderdaan, het onderwerp, het thema, het vak

A school 'subject' is *het vak*, with *hoofdvak* rendering 'main subject' or 'major' and *bijvak* rendering 'secondary subject' or 'sub-major/minor'.

Het onderwerp is the 'subject, topic' of a conversation or essay and also renders a grammatical 'subject'. *Het thema* is synonymous with the first meaning of *onderwerp* although *onderwerp* is the more usual word.

De onderdaan is 'subject' in the political sense of 'loyal subjects', e.g. *In de zestiende eeuw waren de Nederlanders onderdanen van de koning van Spanje* – In the sixteenth century the Dutch were subjects of the king of Spain.

to succeed: (cf. 'to fail')

lukken, slagen, succes hebben

'He succeeded (in doing s.t.)' type constructions can be expressed either by *lukken* or by *slagen* but the syntax differs in each case, e.g. *Het is hem gelukt (iets te doen)* or *Hij is erin geslaagd (iets te doen)*. As illustrated, *lukken* is an impersonal verb where the English subject occurs as an object in the Dutch and both verbs take *zijn*, e.g. *Het is de man gewoon niet gelukt om de top van de berg te bereiken* – The man simply didn't succeed in getting to the top of the mountain; compare *De man is er gewoon niet in geslaagd de top van de berg te bereiken*; also *Mijn broer was van plan om te emigreren maar het lukte hem niet/hij slaagde er niet in* – My brother intended emigrating but he didn't succeed/wasn't successful. Note also the following constructions with *slagen*: *Zijn eerste poging om de oceaan over te steken is niet geslaagd/Hij is niet geslaagd in zijn eerste poging om de oceaan over te steken* – His first attempt to cross the ocean didn't succeed/He didn't succeed in his first attempt to cross the ocean. (cf. 'to pass')

Succes hebben corresponds to 'to have success', e.g. *Ik heb het geprobeerd maar ik heb niet veel succes gehad* – I've tried it but I haven't had much success/been very successful. (cf. 'luck') *Succesvol* is usually only used adjectivally before the noun, e.g. *een succesvolle schrijver/loopbaan* – a successful author/career.²⁰

²⁰ The spelling *sukses/suksesvol* is not uncommon these days.

such:

dergelijk, soortgelijk, zo iets, zo'n, zulk

The dominant word is *zulk*, which behaves syntactically just as 'such' does in English, e.g. *Zulke grote tomaten vind je hier niet* – You won't find such large tomatoes here, *Zulk een boek heb ik nooit gelezen* – I've never read such a book. *Zulk een*, but not *zulk*, is now considered old-fashioned; in practice one would always use *zo'n* (pron. like *zoon*), e.g. *Zo'n boek heb ik nooit gelezen, Ik heb zo'n hoofdpijn* – I've got such a headache.

'Such a thing' (= something like that) is *zo iets*, e.g. *Hoe kun je nou zo iets zeggen?* – How can you say such a thing?

A more elevated way of expressing *zo'n/zulk een* + noun is *een dergelijk(e)* + noun, e.g. *Ik heb vorige week een dergelijk programma (= zo'n programma) op de televisie gezien* – I saw such a programme/a programme like that on tv last week. An even swanker form is *een soortgelijk(e)* + noun (= 'a – of that sort' = *net zo'n*). An elevated synonym of *zo iets* is *iets dergelijks*, often abbreviated in writing to *i.d.*

sudden(ly):

ineens, opeens, plots, plotseling

Ineens, opeens and *plotseling* are totally synonymous as adverbs and all are very common although the dominant word is probably *plotseling*. *Plotseling* is also an adjective, unlike the others, e.g. *De plotselinge dood van zijn vader heeft hem wel geschokt* – The sudden/unexpected death of his father did shock him. *Plots*, an adverb, is not commonly used, except in Belgium, where it is also used as an adjective.

to suggest, the suggestion:

suggereren, voorstellen; het idee, de suggestie, het voorstel

Voorstellen and *voorstel* are the dominant words and should be used where the meaning is 'putting a point forward', as the literal translation of the Dutch word implies. *Suggereren* and *suggestie* can be synonymous with the previous two but they also frequently contain a connotation of 'insinuation, intimation', e.g. *Wil jij met die opmerking suggereren dat ik onbekwaam ben?* – Do you mean to suggest/imply/insinuate by that remark that I am incompetent? If one simply means 'to suggest' in the literal sense, stick to *voorstellen*, e.g. *Ik stel voor om een kopje koffie te gaan drinken. Goed idee* – I suggest a coffee break. Excellent suggestion. As the second part of the previous example illustrates, there are contexts where 'suggestion' is most naturally rendered by *idee*, e.g. *Waar zullen we*

heen gaan? Heb jij een idee? – Where shall we go? Have you got a suggestion?

to suit:

passen, schikken, staan

Schikken is an impersonal verb meaning 'to suit' in the sense of 'to be convenient' or 'to be suited/suitable', e.g. *Ik kom morgen om tien uur? Schikt dat u?* – I'll be coming at ten tomorrow. Does that suit you?, *Hij had de kast met deze verf willen schilderen maar die is er gewoon niet voor geschikt* – He'd wanted to paint the cupboard with this paint but it simply isn't suitable.

Passen means 'to suit' only in the sense of 'to go/harmonise with' of clothing, colours etc., e.g. *Die das past niet bij dat overhemd* – That tie doesn't suit that shirt, *Dat past niet bij zo'n gelegenheid* – That doesn't suit/isn't appropriate for such an occasion; thus *(niet) passend* – (not) suitable, appropriate.

Staan is also an impersonal verb and translates 'to suit' with reference to clothing etc. 'suiting s.o.', e.g. *Hij is dit jaar heel veel afgevallen en het staat hem erg goed* – He has lost a lot of weight this year and it suits him very well, *Die jurk staat je erg goed* – That dress suits you very well/looks good on you; compare *Die jurk past je erg goed* – That dress fits you very well, 'to fit' being another meaning of *passen*. (cf. 'to try')

the/to surprise:

(zich) verbazen, verrassen, ophoren, opkijken; de verbazing, de verrassing

'To surprise' has two meanings in English. If it means 'to amaze, astonish', as it usually does, the word is *verbazen*, whereas if it means 'to take by surprise' or 'to pleasantly surprise s.o.', the verb is *verrassen*; the same distinction applies to the corresponding nouns, e.g. *Hij verbaasde me toen hij me vertelde dat hij zou gaan trouwen* – He surprised/amazed me when he said he was going to get married; compare *Het verraste me dat ze nu al gingen trouwen* – It surprised me that they were getting married now (i.e. a pleasant surprise); *tot mijn verbazing* – to my surprise/ amazement/ astonishment, *Ik heb iets leuks voor mijn man gekocht en ik ga hem er vanavond mee verrassen* – I've bought something nice for my husband and I'm going to surprise him with it tonight, *Het was een hele verrassing voor me* – I was pleasantly surprised/It was a pleasant surprise for me.

Zich verbazen, probably because it occurs rather early in Shetter's Dutch grammar, is continually used incorrectly by students for whom this book forms the first introduction to Dutch. Although it means 'to be surprised/amazed' it is far more usual to say *verbaasd zijn*, e.g. *Ik was verbaasd (om) te horen dat hij overleden was* – I was amazed to hear he had died.

Van iets ophoren/opkijken is a common idiomatic way of expressing 'to be surprised/amazed' in contexts where the meaning is 'to be surprised to hear/to see/learn', e.g. *Je vader kijkt er vast van op als hij hoort dat je werkeloos geworden bent* – Your father will be surprised when he hears that you're unemployed, *Daar hoor ik nou van op* – I'm surprised to hear that (= *Het verbaast me om dat te horen*).

to swear:

afleggen, vloeken, zweren

'To swear (at)' in the sense of 'to curse' is *vloeken (op)* and a 'swearword' is *een lelijk woord* or *een vloek*; *de vloek* also renders 'curse'.

'To swear' as in 'to swear' that s.t. is true is *zweren (zwoer, gezwoeren)*, e.g. *op de Bijbel/bij God zweren* – to swear on the Bible/to God, *Ik zweer bij mijn tandarts* – I swear by my dentist.

Een eed afleggen is 'to swear an oath', although the action one is performing is a form of *zweren*, e.g. *Je hebt een eed afgelegd. Je hebt dus gezwoeren om je land te verdedigen* – You took/swore an oath. You have thus sworn to defend your country. *Een eed zweren* is also possible.

T

to take, bring:

brenge(n), erover doen, duren, gebruiken, houden (voor), maken, (mee/weg)brenge(n), innemen, (mee)nemen, opvatten, opvoeden, vergen, verslijten (voor)

The dominant word is *nemen (nam/namen, genomen)* but there is a difficulty in Dutch with regard to the functions of *nemen* versus those of *brenge(n)*. In English the distinction is simple: things are 'brought towards' the speaker and 'taken away' from him. This does not apply in Dutch. If one 'takes' s.t. or s.o. somewhere, *brenge(n)* is required, e.g. *Breng het kind naar boven* – Take the child upstairs, *Breng deze lekkere dingen naar je grootmoeder, zei de moeder tegen Roodkapje* – Take these delicious things to your grandma, the mother said to Little Red Riding Hood. If one is going somewhere oneself anyway and 'takes' s.t. or s.o. along, then *meenemen* is used, e.g. *Neem het kind mee naar boven* – Take the child upstairs (with you). Thus also *iemand naar huis/het station brengen* – to take s.o. home/to the station.

The distinction between 'to bring/take along with one' is as in English and is rendered by *meenemen/-brengen*, e.g. *Ik breng vanavond een vriend mee* – I'll bring a friend (with me) tonight, *Ik neem je vanavond mee naar mijn ouders* – I'll take you (along/with me) to my parents' place tonight. Thus the following example contrasts with *iemand naar huis/het station brengen* in the previous paragraph: *Ik neem je mee naar huis/naar het station* – I'll take you home (with me to my place)/to the station.

'To take a photo' is both *een foto nemen* and *een foto maken*, e.g. *Hij heeft een foto van zijn oude school genomen/gemaakt* – He took a photo of his old school.

Gebruiken translates 'to take' with reference to 'taking' sugar or milk in one's tea or coffee, e.g. *Gebruikt u melk?* – Do you take milk? *Nemen* is correct here too and colloquially one also hears *moeten*, e.g. *Moet je suiker in je thee?* – Do you take/want sugar in your tea? (In Holland the host/hostess normally adds the milk and sugar and thus the question is regularly heard). Note too *Gebruikt u medicijnen?* – Are you taking medicine?

'To take/swallow' pills is *innemen* or *slikken* whereas only *innemen* can be used for other forms of medicine, e.g. *Ik moet drie keer per dag zo'n pil innemen/slikken* – I have to take such a pill three times a day, *Je zult er iets tegen moeten innemen/gebruiken* – You'll have to take something for it.

'To take a bus' is *een bus nemen* or *met de bus gaan*. (cf. 'to catch')

'To take' that refers to duration is *duren* (impersonal subject, cf. 'to last') or *erover doen* (personal subject), e.g. *Kunt u mijn schoenen repareren? Hoe lang duurt het?* – Can you repair my shoes? How long will it take?, *Het duurt in die winkel veel te lang om geholpen te worden* – It takes far too long to get served in that shop, *Hoe lang heeft u erover gedaan?* – How long did you take (to repair them)?, *Ik heb er maar twee uur over gedaan om van Amsterdam naar Maastricht te rijden* – I only took two hours to drive from Amsterdam to Maastricht (= *Het duurde maar twee uur van A. naar Maastricht*).

Opvatten renders 'to take' when it means 'to understand, conceive', e.g. *Je moet dat niet zo letterlijk opvatten* – You shouldn't take that so literally, *Ik heb het anders opgevat* – I took/understood it differently.

If s.t. 'takes' a lot of time, patience, energy etc., i.e. 'demands', the word required is *vergen* (cf. 'to demand') although for time rephrasing with *duren* is more colloquial. (cf. above)

Iemand verslijten voor (*versleet, versleten*) means 'to take s.o. for s.t.' but only where the connotation is negative, i.e. where one is taken for being s.t. less than what one is, e.g. *Hij heeft mij voor een leerling versleten maar ik ben leraar* – He took me for a student but I'm a teacher. If there is no negative connotation one uses *houden voor* or paraphrases it, e.g. *Hij hield me voor een Duitser (de baas)/Hij dacht dat ik Duitser (de baas) was* – He took me to be a German (the boss). But a Dutchman who harbours anti-German feelings could say *Hij heeft me voor een Duitser versleten* – He took me for/to be a German.

'To take off' one's clothes or individual items of apparel is *zich uitkleden* and *uittrekken* respectively. (cf. 'to put on')

'To bring up/raise' children is *opvoeden*, e.g. *Het is moeilijk om kinderen op te voeden* – It is difficult bringing up/raising children, *slecht/goed opgevoed* – badly/well brought-up.

tall:

groot, hoog, lang

People who are 'tall' are *lang* and thus one's 'height' is one's *lengte*. A 'tall' tree or building is *hoog* and its 'height' is its *hoogte*. But people can also be referred to as being *groot* which, like English 'big', can incorporate tallness.

the/to taste:

proeven, smaken; de hap, de smaak

With reference to food *smaken* is the intransitive and *proeven* the transitive verb, e.g. *Proef deze appel. Hij smaakt lekker, hè?* (= *Smaakt ie?*) – Taste this apple. It tastes delicious, doesn't it?

The 'taste/flavour' of the apple is *de smaak*, whereas 'Give me a taste of your apple' is *Geef me een hap(je) van je appel* (= *Mag ik je appel eens proeven?*).

Smaken is used transitively too but then only with the figurative meaning of 'to taste/enjoy' happiness, joy etc., e.g. *Nu heeft hij de vrijheid gesmaakt* – Now he's tasted freedom.

to teach, to lecture, the teacher, the lecturer:

bijbrengen, doceren, leren, lesgeven, onderwijzen; de docent, de hoogleraar, de juf, de kleuterleidster, de lector, de leerkracht, de leraar, de onderwijzer, de schoolmeester, de wetenschappelijk medewerker

The dominant word is *leren*, which also means 'to learn' (compare *lenen* – to lend, borrow), e.g. *Hij heeft mij Spaans geleerd/leren spreken*, He taught me Spanish/to speak Spanish, *Ik ga je wat leren* – I'm going to teach you something. Note that when one 'teaches s.o. to do s.t.', no *te* is required before the infinitive and in the perfect a double infinitive construction is required. (cf. *leren spreken* above)

A more formal expression meaning 'to teach' in the sense of 'to impart (knowledge)' is *iemand iets bijbrengen*, e.g. *Mijn opa heeft mij veel praktische dingen bijgebracht* – My granddad taught me many practical things.

If one is a teacher by trade, what one does is *onderwijzen* or *lesgeven*, more frequently the latter, e.g. *Ik moet vanmiddag weer lesgeven* – I have to teach this afternoon, *Ik hou van lesgeven/Ik geef graag les* – I like teaching, *Ik geef les in Duits/Ik onderwijs Duits* – I teach German. *Onderwijzen* must be used with an object, thus 'I teach' as an answer to the question 'What do you do for a living?' is *Ik geef les*. Note *het onderwijzend personeel* – the teaching staff (at any level of education). (cf. 'education')

A 'kindergarten teacher' is *de kleuterleidster* and a 'teacher' at a primary school is *de onderwijzer(és)* although a female (kindergarten/primary) teacher is commonly referred to by her pupils as *de juf* and addressed as *juf* (< *de schooljuffrouw*, cf. 'woman'). A 'teacher' at a high school is *de*

leraar (pl. *leraren*, fem. *de lerarés*, pl. *leraressen*)¹ but a general administrative sounding word for a 'teacher' at any level is *de leerkracht*, e.g. *Deze school zoekt twee nieuwe leerkrachten* – This school is looking for two new teachers. The term *leraar* can also cover *onderwijzers* and *leraren* collectively. *De schoolmeester* sounds as antiquated in Dutch as 'schoolmaster' does in English, but *de meester* is used with reference to a male primary school teacher; although now somewhat old-fashioned, it is still possible to refer to him as *meester Jansen*, as well as *meneer Jansen*. (cf. footnote under 'to manage')

The teaching staff at a Dutch university used² to be graded in the following way in ascending order of importance: *de wetenschappelijk medewerker*, *de wetenschappelijk hoofdmedewerker*, *de lector*, *de hoogleraar*. If I had to give British equivalents of these positions I would call them 'lecturer, senior lecturer, reader/associate professor, professor' respectively, but this is a little forced. It does indicate, however, that *lector* does not simply translate 'lecturer', but is in fact quite an illustrious position. A good general word for 'lecturer' or a 'teacher' at a university is *de docent* (fem. *docente*); note also *het docentschap* – lectureship, university teaching post, *doceren* – to lecture. (cf. 'lecture') One says of a professor *Hij is (een) professor/hogleraar in de natuurkunde* – He's a professor of physics, but only *professor* is used as a form of address or before his name. *Proféssor* (pl. *professóren*) is used as in England, meaning the man who holds the chair, not as in America where other ranks of the lecturing staff are called professor too.

to tell:

navertellen, vertellen, zeggen

Although one would normally equate *vertellen* with 'to tell' and *zeggen* with 'to say', it is not quite as straightforward as this because of the way we use 'to tell' in English. Generally speaking *vertellen* involves narrating a series of events whereas *zeggen* is used when what is told is brief, e.g. *Hij wilde me zijn naam niet zeggen* – He didn't want to tell me his name, *Zeg me waar je woont* – Tell me where you live, but *Vertel me wat je gisteren gedaan hebt* – Tell me what you did yesterday. *Vertellen* could, however,

¹ Note that a 'mathematics teacher' or a 'German teacher' is *een leraar wiskunde/Duits*; compare *een Duitse leraar* – a teacher of German nationality, although this is also heard with the meaning of 'a teacher of German'.

² In the mid-1980's, with the general reorganisation of the university system in Holland, the names of these ranks were in fact changed, but it may be some time before the new designations become commonplace outside the circle immediately affected: *lectoren* have been made *professoren*, whereas a *wetenschappelijk medewerker* is now called an *universitair docent* (een UD) and a *hoofdmedewerker* is called an *universitair hoofddocent* (een UHD).

also have been used in the second example and *zeggen* could feasibly have been used in the last example, but only in combination with the modal particle *eens*, e.g. *Zeg eens wat je gisteren gedaan hebt*. Nevertheless, the examples given above are a safe guide to correct usage even if the distinction is not quite so clear-cut in practice.

Navertellen means 'to retell, repeat' what one has heard, e.g. *Luister goed naar wat ze zeggen en dan moet je het mij komen (na)vertellen* – Listen well to what they're saying and then you must come and tell me/repeat it to me.

'To tell' as in 'I can tell (= see/hear) where you're from' is either *aanzien/zien aan* (cf. 'to see') or *aanhoren/horen aan* ('to hear').

terrible(ly), horrible(ly), awful(ly):

afschuwelijk, afgrijselijk, erg, ontzettend, verschrikkelijk, vreselijk

These words are all more or less synonymous, differing from each other only as much as 'terrible', 'horrible' and 'awful' do in English. *Erg*, although meaning 'terrible(-ly)', has weakened somewhat in meaning as it is now so commonly used with the meaning of 'very'. (cf. 'very') All these words, like their equivalents in English, are very frequently used as adverbs qualifying adjectives, e.g. *afschuwelijk duur* – terribly expensive, *verschrikkelijk mooi* – frightfully beautiful. *Afschuwendijk* and *afgrijselijk* have in common with 'horribly' that they can only be used when the context is negative (e.g. not **afgrijselijk/afschuwelijk leuk* – **horribly nice*, but *afgrijselijk/afschuwelijk duur*) but *erg*, *ontzettend*, *verschrikkelijk* and *vreselijk* can be followed by either a positive or a negative adjective, e.g. *vreselijk lekker* – really delicious, *vreselijk eng* – terribly frightening.

the/to test:

beproeven, (uit)testen, toetsen, op de proef stellen; de test, de toets, de proef, het proefwerk

The main difficulty here is the distinction between *(uit)testen/de test* (pl. *tests*) and *toetsen/de toets*. The former are loanwords from English that are very commonly used in Dutch. They tend, however, to be used more in technical contexts, as one might expect of an English loan, where, for example, new products are 'tested'; also 'to run a test on s.t.' A school 'test', on the other hand, is a *toets* and a student's knowledge, or the student himself, *wordt getoetst* (is tested). *Het proefwerk* also renders 'test(paper)', thus *een proefwerk opgeven* – to set a test.

De proef is a 'test' or 'experiment', particularly in chemistry and other such sciences. But the expression *op de proef stellen* is used with reference to people's qualities only, e.g. *Haar geduld is zodoende op de proef gesteld* – Her patience was tested/tried in the process. Note also *op proef zijn* (to be on probation, not in the legal sense but one's trial period in a job).

Beproeven occurs chiefly in standard expressions and is not needed as a translation of 'to test, try'. (cf. 'to try')

to thank, thank you, please:

bedanken, danken; bedankt, dank je (u) (wel), merci, alsjeblieft/alstublieft

In direct speech one says *Ik dank u* but in indirect speech one says *Ik heb hem bedankt*. Nevertheless, outside the standard expression *ik dank u*, one could use either *danken* or *bedanken* in direct speech in a context such as the following: *Ik moet u nog voor het cadeautje (be)danken* – I have yet to thank you for the present. Note also the standard expressions *Ik dank God dat...* – I thank God that..., *Dit heb ik aan u te danken* – I have you to thank for this (in both the positive and the negative sense), and thus *Waar heb ik dit aan te danken?* – What did I do to deserve this?

When saying 'thank you' to s.o. the normal expression is *dank u/je (wel)*. Note that the appropriate form is dependent on one's relationship with the speaker. The *wel* is optional but is more commonly used than not. *Bedankt* is also used to render 'thank you' and has the advantage that it can be used in both *jij* and *u* situations and is particularly useful where one cannot decide whether to use *jij* or *u* to the person being addressed. When one is in a situation where it is necessary to thank a whole number of people consecutively, as at one's own birthday party when receiving gifts for example, it can be handy to have a few synonyms up one's sleeve; on such occasions one can alternate *dank je wel*, *bedankt* and even *merci*. In a formal context one can also say *Ik dank u (wel/hartelijk/zeer)*.

It should be noted that when asked 'Would you like a cup of coffee?', for example, one responds with *alsjeblieft/alstublieft* or *(ja) graag* when answering in the positive and *(nee) dank je/u* when responding in the negative; *dank je/u* on its own is thus negative, unlike English 'thanks'. We in fact often use 'thanks' where we mean 'please'. While on this point it is perhaps as well to point out that when you hand s.t. to s.o. you are required in Dutch to say *alsjeblieft/alstublieft*. There is in fact no equivalent to this in English; at best we say 'Here/there you are'. The correct procedure for requesting and thanking is thus as follows:

Customer to grocer: *Geeft u mij een pond kaas, alstublieft*. (*alstublieft* can go either after *mij* or at the end, but never at the beginning, unlike English)³

Grocer to customer as he hands the cheese over: *Alstublieft, meneer*.

Customer: *Dank u wel*.

Grocer: *Tot uw dienst*.

There are several equivalents of 'You're welcome/Don't mention it'. Although *tot uw dienst* is the norm in a retail situation like the above (*tot je dienst* is not common), one otherwise has the choice of that expression or *geen dank, graag gedaan* or *niets te danken*.

the theatre:

de bioscoop, de schouwburg, het theater

Bioscoop means 'cinema' and thus only translates 'theatre' in the sense of 'picture theatre'. With reference to a 'playhouse theatre' *theater* and *schouwburg* are synonymous, although the latter is more common, and if the context makes it clear, *theater* can occasionally refer to a cinema, e.g. *Ik ga vanavond naar het theater/de schouwburg* – I'm going to the theatre tonight, *In welk theater/bioscoop draait die film?* – What theatre/cinema is that film showing in? It is advisable to avoid *theater* where one means a *bioscoop*.

then:

dan, destijds, toen, toenmalig, toentertijd

The dominant words are *dan* and *toen*. The word one uses to translate 'then' depends not just on sense but also on tense in Dutch. Broadly speaking one can say that if the verb in the clause in which 'then' occurs is in the past tense, the word is *toen*, whereas if it is in the present or future, it is *dan*, e.g. *Wat heb je toen gezegd?* – What did you say then?, *Wat ga je dan zeggen?* – What are you going to say then? But one must be careful because *toen* actually means 'then on that one occasion in the past' or 'at a particular point of time in the past'; if 'then' occurs in a sentence in the past tense but refers to **repeated** occasions, it is *dan*, e.g. *Vaak duurden hun reizen erg lang en dan kwamen ze terug met kostbare ladingen* – Often their voyages took a long time and then they returned (= would return)

³ *Graag* also frequently renders 'please', e.g. *Ik wou graag een pond kaas/Een pond kaas graag* – I would like a pound of cheese, please/A pound of cheese please; the *wou graag* is both 'would like' and 'please' wrapped up in one. Compare *Een kopje koffie? Ja (heel) graag* – A cup of coffee? Yes please. One could also say simply *Alstublieft* (= *ja graag*).

with valuable cargoes. The same distinction is made with *als* and *toen* meaning 'when'. (cf. 'when')

Toentertijd and *destijds* belong to elevated style and can translate 'then' although they literally render 'at that time (in the past), in those days'.

Toenmalig is an adjective and thus only translates 'then' on those rare occasions when it is used adjectivally, e.g. *de toenmalige minister-president van Nederland* – the then prime minister of Holland/the prime minister of Holland at that time.

Cf. 'already' for *toen al*, an expression which can also render 'by then', e.g. *De oorlog was toen al afgelopen* – The war had ended by then.

therefore:

daarom, dus, om die reden, vandaar

Dus, which is discussed under 'so', is a much weaker word in Dutch than 'thus' in English and therefore may not be quite strong enough to render 'therefore' in certain contexts (*dus* would have sufficed for the 'therefore' in the second line of this paragraph, however). When a clause starts with *dus* it is optional whether the subject and verb are inverted, e.g. *Dus zei ik.../Dus ik zei...*; but *daarom* behaves as an adverb and requires inversion, e.g. *Daarom zei ik...* *Daarom* is more definite, as is *vandaar*, whereas *om die reden* means 'for that reason' and simply expresses with a noun what *daarom* and *vandaar* do with the pronoun *daar*. *Vandaar* is always followed by a *dat* clause, e.g. *Vandaar dat ik zei...*

the thesis, essay:

de dissertatie, het essay, het opstel, het proefschrift, de scriptie, de stelling, de verhandeling, het werkstuk

Het essay refers to a longish 'essay' on a literary or scientific topic (compare *de essayist*), e.g. *een essay van Darwin over de evolutie* – an essay by Darwin on evolution. *Het opstel* is the 'essay/composition' which one writes as a student. *Het werkstuk* renders a (written) 'project' or 'assignment' as given to students to compile.

A 'doctoral/PhD 'thesis' is either a *dissertatie* or a *proefschrift*; the two are completely synonymous. Where one writes a mini thesis or extended essay as part of a degree, e.g. a BA thesis, the term *scriptie* is used; this is what Dutch undergraduates write as part of the requirement for the *doctoraalexamen* (not a doctorate, more BA honours). *Verhandeling* is best translated by 'treatise'; it is not used to refer to any thesis written as a

requirement for a degree but is more a paper or treatise on a given topic. A 'thesis' in the sense of a postulation or a proposition is *de stelling*, e.g. *de 95 stellingen van Luther* – Luther's 95 theses.

thin:

dun, mager, slank

People are *mager* (= *niet dik*) but things are *dun*, e.g. *Wat ben je mager geworden* – Gee you've got thin, *Het is maar een heel dun boekje* – It is just a thin little book. *Mager* also translates 'lean' of meat (= *niet vet*) as in 'lean times' as well as 'low fat', e.g. *magere yoghurt* – low fat yoghurt. *Mager* has negative connotations with reference to people, the positive term being *slank*; compare thin/slim, e.g. *een magere man* (a thin man), *een slanke man* (a slim man), *Ze was toen veel slanker* – She was much thinner/slimmer then.

to think:

(zich) bedenken, denken, geloven, zich indenken, menen, nadenken, overwégen, vinden

The main difficulty here is the result of the various prefixes that can be added to the dominant word *denken* and the prepositions that can follow it. When 'to think' expresses an opinion as in 'I think that...' one has the choice of *Ik denk/geloof/meen/vind dat...*,⁴ the most common being *geloven* and the most formal being *menen*. 'To think' meaning 'to be of the opinion' is most usually rendered by *vinden*, e.g. *De kinderen vonden het jammer dat de dag zo gauw om was* – The kids thought it was a shame that the day was over so quickly, *Hoe vind je dat? = Wat denk je daarvan?* – What do you think of that?: in these examples it is not possible to use *geloven* and *menen*. The previous example illustrates the meaning of *denken van*, i.e. what your opinion of s.o. or s.t. is, but 'to think of/about' s.o. or s.t. in the sense of 'to be pondering on/about' is *denken aan*, e.g. *Ik heb gisteren nog aan je gedacht* – I just thought about you yesterday.

Nadenken over also means 'to think about' with strong connotations of 'to consider, reflect on', e.g. *Ga je aan het einde van het jaar mee naar Indonesië?* *Ik moet er nog over nadenken* – Are you coming (with me/us) to Indonesia at the end of the year? I'll have to think about it.

⁴ The nuances of these words differ: *Ik denk dat hij morgen komt* contains an implied supposition; *Ik geloof dat hij morgen komt* implies that one knows (= has been told); *Ik neem dat hij morgen komt* implies doubt; although there is an element of doubt in all of them, that doubt is greatest in *menen*. *Vinden* cannot be used in this particular example, just a 'find' cannot be in the English equivalent.

There is also a verb *denken over*, meaning 'to think about', which is not synonymous with *denken aan* and which is frequently different in meaning from *nadenken over*, e.g. *Ik denk daar anders over dan jij* – I think/feel differently about it than you, and *Hij denkt erover een boot te kopen* – He's thinking of buying a boat. In the previous example *denken over* is synonymous with *overwégen* (*overwoog, overwogen* – to consider), e.g. *Hij overweegt een boot te kopen*. In the sentence *We hebben er lang over gedacht* – We thought about it for a long time (= considered), *denken over* is synonymous with *nadenken over*, but as the meaning here is 'to consider', *overwegen* can also be used, e.g. *We hebben het lang overwogen*.

'To think to oneself' is *bij zichzelf denken* (but *in/tegen zichzelf zeggen* – to say to o.s.).

Zich indenken does not translate 'to think' but rather 'to imagine'. (cf. 'to imagine')

Bedenken can mean 'to think up, concoct', e.g. *We hebben een leuk plan bedacht om meer geld te verdienen* – We've devised/thought of/concocted a great plan to earn some more money, *Ik kan geen voorbeeld bedenken* – I can't think of an example; compare *Ik weet nog wel een ander voorbeeld, maar ik kan er niet op komen* – I know another example, but I can't think of (= recall, find) it.⁵ *Bedenken* is also the word required in the expression 'If you think/consider that.../Considering that...', e.g. *Hij is nu zo gezond en als je bedenkt dat hij een jaar geleden op sterven lag, hou je het niet voor mogelijk* – He is now so healthy and when you think/consider that he was at death's door a year ago, you wouldn't think it possible, *Als je bedenkt dat zo veel mensen in Brazilië honger lijden, vraag je je af hoe ze nog in God geloven?* – Considering so many people in Brazil are starving, how can they still believe in God?

Zich bedenken means 'to reconsider, have second thoughts about', e.g. *Ik hoop dat ze zich zullen bedenken* – I hope they'll think differently about it/reconsider/change their minds. (cf. 'to change' for *van gedachten veranderen* – to change one's mind)

⁵ In the sentence with *bedenken* the implication is that you give up (because it is possible it doesn't exist), whereas in the sentence with *komen op*, it is on the tip of your tongue.

the threat, to threaten, threatening;
het dreigement, de bedreiging, de dreiging; bedreigen, dreigen; dreigend

'To threaten s.o. (with s.t.)' is *iemand bedreigen (met iets)* whereas 'to threaten (with s.t.)' or 'to threaten to do s.t.' is *dreigen (met)*, e.g. *Hij heeft haar (met ontslag) bedreigd* – He threatened her (with the sack), *Hij dreigde haar te ontslaan* – He threatened to sack her, but *Zij heeft zelf met ontslag gedreigd* – She threatened to resign; *Hij dreigde met een mes* – He threatened with a knife, but *Hij bedreigde haar met een mes*; also *Het dreigt te gaan regenen* – It's threatening to rain, thus *Het (het weer) ziet er dreigend uit* – It (the weather) looks threatening.

'A threat' uttered by one person to another is *het dreigement*, thus *loze dreigementen* – empty threats, e.g. *Hij heeft dreigementen tegen haar geuit/gebruikt* – He uttered/used threats against her. But 'the threat' (= danger) of nuclear war, pollution, flood etc. is *de dreiging*, e.g. *de oorlogsdreiging* (threat of war), *de dreiging van milieuverontreiniging* (threat of environmental pollution). However, one talks of *de Russische bedreiging* (the Russian threat) and in the following example, *Ze hebben ons bedreigd maar we trekken ons niets aan van die bedreiging* – They have threatened us but we aren't taking any notice of their threat, 'threat' is translated by *bedreiging* and not by *dreigement* because it refers to the act of threatening. Note also *De krokodillen in dit reservaat vormen een bedreiging voor alle andere dieren* – The crocodiles in this reserve pose a threat to all other animals, *bedreigde diersoorten* – threatened species.

to throw:
gooien, smijten, werpen

The dominant word is *gooien, werpen* being limited in use to certain standard expressions, e.g. *het anker werpen* (to cast/drop anchor),⁶ but in the formal written language it is used as a synonym of *gooien*. 'To throw a stone' is *een steen gooien* but 'to throw a stone/stones at s.o.' is *met een steen/stenen naar iemand gooien*, e.g. *Dat rotjochie heeft met stenen naar me gegooid* – That dreadful little boy was throwing stones at me. *Met de deur gooien* renders 'to slam the door'. (cf. 'to close')

Smijten means 'to fling, hurl' but commonly replaces *gooien* in colloquial Dutch e.g. *Die oude radio kun je beter wegslijten* – You'd be better off throwing that old radio away. Note *met geld smijten* – to throw one's money around/spend like crazy.

⁶ *Wegwerp-* occurs as a nominal prefix rendering 'disposable', e.g. *de wegwerpfles* – throw-away bottle.

the ticket:

de bekeuring, de boete, de bon, het kaartje, het plaatsbewijs, het ticket, het toegangsbewijs

The dominant word is *het kaartje*, a word which is always used in the diminutive with this meaning. But *kaartjes* are small and of the type one gets in a bus or at the cinema. The larger booklet type 'tickets' that airlines issue and that European railways dispense for international journeys are *tickets*. The words *plaats-* and *toegangsbewijs* (= proof of seating/right of entry) are limited to the written or formal language on the whole; although one buys a *kaartje* in the bus, on that ticket may be written *Men dient dit plaatsbewijs tot het einde van de reis te bewaren* – One is required to retain this ticket till the end of the journey.

Bekeuring and *boete* mean 'fine' and thus only render that specific sense of 'ticket', as does *de bon/het bonnetje*, e.g. *Ik heb mijn auto er te lang laten staan en heb dus weer een bekeuring/bon(netje) gekregen* – I left my car parked there too long and therefore got a ticket again.

the tile:

de (dak)pan, de plavuizen, de tegel

'(Roof)tiles' are *(dak)pannen* whereas modern ceramic, vinyl or cork floor or wall 'tiles' are *(vloer-, wand-)tegels*. The old-fashioned uneven 'floor tiles' found in farm houses, or even the rough slate floor tiles laid these days, are referred to as *plavuizen*, a word which is always used in the plural; they too may, however, be called *tegels*, a word which is also used with reference to a concrete 'slab' in a sidewalk. The many ornamental 'handpainted tiles' one sees in Holland are *handbeschilderde tegels*.

the time:

de keer, de maal, de tijd

'The time' meaning 'the occasion' as in 'once, twice, three times' is *keer*, i.e. *een keer, twee keer, drie keer*. Also *de eerste/tweede/derde keer*, *De eerste keer dat ik hem zag, wist ik niet wie hij was* – The first time I saw him I didn't know who he was. Just in the expression 'this time' one has the choice of *deze* or *dit keer/maal*. *Maal* is a formal synonym of *keer*, e.g. *eenmaal, tweemaal, driemaal* – once, twice, three times etc., *de eerste maal* – the first time. Both *keer* and *maal* are used to render 'times' in mathematical equations, e.g. *3 keer/maal 3 is 9* – three times three is nine (= three threes are nine). (cf. 'once')

'Time' in the general sense is *de tijd*, which is also used in the plural like English 'the times', e.g. *Wat vliegt de tijd* – How time flies, *De tijden zijn nu helemaal anders* – The times are quite different now, *de goede oude tijd* – the good old days. 'On time' is either *op tijd* or *bijtijds* (pron. [bətɛits]), but more usually the former, e.g. *De trein was op tijd* – The train was on time, *Ik zal je bijtijds waarschuwen* – I'll let you know in time.

the tin:

het blik, de bus, de pot, het tin, de trommel

A 'tin can' is *het blik*, thus *de blikopener* (can opener), but *blik* is also the substance such a can is made of, i.e. 'tin plate' (adjective *blikken*). Note that *het tin* (adjective *tinnen*) normally means 'pewter' (e.g. *een tinnen bord* – a pewter plate), but the 'tin mines' of Malaysia, for example, are *de tinmijnen*, *tin* being the raw metal extracted from the ground.

Trommel is a 'tin (container)' in which one keeps biscuits, cakes, sewing gear etc., e.g. *Neem één koekje uit de trommel en doe er het deksel weer op* – Take one biscuit from the tin and put the lid back on, *de broodtrommel* – bread bin.

Bus usually renders 'box' (cf. 'box') but can also refer to certain tin containers. A 'spray can', for example, is a *sputbus* and a 'tea caddy' can be called a *theebus*. The Dutch store their rusks (*de beschuit*) in a tall cylindrical tin called a *beschuitbus*, a form of 'canister', but it is sometimes also referred to as a *beschuittrommel*.

De pot only translates 'tin' with reference to 'a tin of paint' (*een pot verf*) but it is also possible to say *een blik verf*.

today:

heden, hedendaags, tegenwoordig, tot op de dag van vandaag, vandaag, vandaag de dag

The dominant word is *vandaag*. *Heden* is a formal written synonym of *vandaag*; also *hedenavond* = *vanavond* (tonight, this evening), *heden ten dage* (nowadays). (cf. 'nowadays' under 'now')

Hedendaags is an adjective meaning literally 'present-day, current, modern' but it can sometimes render 'today', e.g. *de hedendaagse jeugd/taal* – the youth/language of today, *hedendaagse kunst* – modern art.

Tegenwoordig as an adverb is a more common way of expressing *heden ten dage* (cf. 'nowadays' under 'now'); used adjectivally it is close in

meaning to *hedendaags* but the connotation is 'present' not 'modern', e.g. *de tegenwoordige situatie* – the current situation/situation as it is today; *de tegenwoordige tijd* – the present tense, *de tegenwoordige voorzitter* – the present/current chairman.

(al)together:

bij/met elkaar, gezamenlijk, samen, tezamen, überhaupt

The dominant word is *samen*. *Tezamen* is completely synonymous with *samen* in the meaning of 'together' but is much higher style. *Samen* is altogether a more common word than *tezamen* as it is also a very common verbal and nominal prefix that expresses 'togetherness'. *Samen is dat twintig gulden, alstublieft* – That'll be twenty guilders altogether please; this example illustrates that 'altogether' in its literal sense is also *samen* but 'altogether' as used by me several lines above is *überhaupt*, an indispensable German loanword whose meaning it is difficult to define.

Met elkaar (*elkaar* is pronounced colloquially *mekaar*) literally means 'with each other' but is frequently used where that meaning of 'together' applies, e.g. *Wij zijn samen/met elkaar naar de winkel gegaan* – We went to the shop together. One could also say here *We zijn gezamenlijk/met z'n allen/beiden naar de winkel gegaan*; *gezamenlijk* is a formal sounding word. *Samen* and *met elkaar* can even be used in combination without sounding tautological, e.g. *Wij vinden het leven samen met elkaar erg gezellig* – We are enjoying life together. The expression *Wij horen bij elkaar* (We belong/are together) is used, for example, as a reply to a shop assistant who attempts to serve separately two people who are together.

the tooth:

het gebit, de kies, de tand

The general word is *tand* and one can refer to one's 'teeth' collectively as *mijn tanden* or *mijn gebit* (= set of teeth), e.g. *Je hebt een erg goed gebit* – You have very good teeth. 'False teeth' are *het kunstgebit* whereas 'a false tooth' is a *kunsttand*.

Although all one's 'teeth' are *tanden*, when referring to individual teeth the Dutch distinguish between a *tand* and a *kies*, the latter literally meaning 'molar'. Although theoretically one can thus have either *tandpijn* or *kiespijn* (tooth-ache), the latter is more commonly used even if the ache is not in a molar, but *tandpijn* exists, e.g. *Ik heb (vreselijke) kiespijn* – I have a (terrible) tooth-ache.

the trip:

de rit, de reis, de tocht, het uitstapje, het uitje

A 'trip' that is a 'voyage' or a 'journey' is *de reis*, e.g. *In de zeventiende eeuw duurde de reis naar Indië langer dan zes maanden* – In the seventeenth century the journey to the Indies took more than six months, *De treinreis naar Groningen is erg lang* – The train trip to Groningen is very long. 'Trips' by train, even if over short distances, are always *reizen* whereas '(short) trips' by bus are *ritten* (see below), whereas a 'bus trip' to the Alps is a *busreis*. If one goes out in a car or on a bike etc. for the day, a 'day trip', one makes a (*dag*)*tocht*, *autotocht*, *bustocht*, *fietstocht*, *boottocht*, e.g. *We hebben vandaag een tocht naar Amsterdam gemaakt*. *waar we een rondvaart maakten* – We made a trip to Amsterdam today where we went on a canal trip. (*De rondvaart* as a translation of 'trip' is limited to this very specific meaning.)

If 'trip' means more specifically 'ride, drive' one should use *rit*, e.g. *Het was een lange rit naar huis* – It was a long drive/trip home. *Een ritje maken* means 'to go for a drive' which differs from *een tocht maken met de auto* as 'to go for a drive' differs from 'to make a trip by car'.

Het uitstapje, colloquially often referred to as an *uitje*, actually means 'excursion' but regularly renders 'trip' in the sense of *tocht*, e.g. *We hebben gisteren een uitstapje/tocht naar Marken gemaakt* – We went on an excursion/took a trip to Marken yesterday, *Het was een erg leuk uitje* – It was a really nice outing (an *uitje naar* somewhere is not possible).

the trouble:

de last, de moeilijkheid, de moeite, het probleem

'To go to a lot of trouble for s.o.' is *erg veel moeite doen voor iemand*, i.e. *moeite* means 'trouble' in the sense of 'effort', e.g. *Het heeft me heel veel moeite gekost* – It cost me a lot of trouble/effort. But if one has 'trouble' with people, machinery etc., i.e. problems, one renders 'trouble' with *moeilijkheden* or *problemen* (both always in the plural in such cases), e.g. *We hebben moeilijkheden/problemen met de werkster* – We're having trouble with the cleaning lady, *Hij heeft de laatste tijd veel moeilijkheden/problemen met zijn auto gehad* – He's had a lot of trouble with his car lately.

If 'trouble' means 'nuisance, inconvenience' one can translate it with *last*, e.g. *We hebben op het ogenblik last met de buren* (= *moeilijkheden/problemen met*) – We're having trouble with the neighbours at the moment, *Ik heb last van mijn voet* – My foot is troubling me/giving me trouble (< *last hebben van* – to trouble, bother [intr.]).

to try:

(aan-/op-)passen, beproeven, pogen, proberen, proeven, trachten, uitproberen

The dominant word is *proberen*. *Pogen* and *trachten* are both synonymous with *proberen* but belong to higher style. In the perfect tense one has the choice of two syntactical structures, either a double infinitive construction with *te* or the past participle plus an (om) *te* clause, e.g. *Hij heeft mij proberen/pogen/trachten te helpen* or *Hij heeft geprobeerd/gepoogd/getracht (om) mij te helpen* – He tried to help me.

'The try, attempt' is *de poging* and 'to make an attempt, have a try' is *een poging doen*, e.g. *De soldaten hebben een (vergeefse) poging gedaan om zich terug te trekken* – The soldiers made a (futile) attempt to retreat.

'To try on' clothing is either *passen* or *aanpassen*, with no difference in meaning, e.g. *Je moet de broek (aan)passen voordat je hem koopt* – You must try the pants on before you buy them. With items of clothing that one has *op* rather than *aan* (cf. 'on'), the appropriate verb is *oppassen*, e.g. *een bril/hoed oppassen* – to try on a pair of glasses/hat. *Passen* can also mean 'to fit' (cf. *de paskamer* – fitting room) or 'to suit' of clothing (cf. 'to suit'), unlike *aan-* and *oppassen*.

Beproeven only renders 'to try' where it means 'to test', e.g. *een nieuw radarsysteem beproeven* – to try/test a new radar system. It occurs too in standard expressions, e.g. *zijn krachten/geluk beproeven* – to try/test one's strength/luck. (cf. 'to test')

Proeven means 'to taste' (transitive) and thus only renders 'to try' where it can be replaced by 'to taste', e.g. *Wil je mijn taart even proeven?* – Will you try my cake? (cf. 'to taste')

to turn (around, on/off):

(aan-/uit)doen, afslaan, draaien, keren, (zich) omdraaien, (zich) omkeren, zich wenden tot, worden

This is a very difficult word to translate. The dominant word for 'to turn' is *draaien* and 'to turn s.t. around' is *omdraaien*. 'To turn around' of people is *zich omdraaien*, e.g. *Hij hoorde iets achter zich en draaide zich om* – He heard something behind him and turned around. (cf. 'to show' for another meaning of *draaien*)

Keren is very close in meaning to *draaien*. In as far as there is a difference in connotation between the two, one can say that *draaien* means 'to turn in circles' (e.g. the volume knob on a radio) and *keren* means 'to reverse,

(re)turn'. This distinction is reflected in *omkeren* and *zich omdraaien* (cf. 'to look around'), for example: *Hij was al halverwege thuis toen hij omkeerde en naar zijn kantoor terugreed* – He was already half-way home when he turned around and went back to the office; compare the example with *zich omdraaien* above. *Terugkeren* is the verb 'to return' (never *terugdraaien*) and is synonymous with *terugkomen* to all intents and purposes.

'To turn' in a car can be (om)keren or afslaan (*sloeg af, afgeslagen*). *Keren* is 'to make a u-turn', e.g. *Keren verboden* – No u-turns. 'To turn around' (in order to go back) is *omkeren*, as illustrated above, but 'to turn left/right' is *links/rechts afslaan*, e.g. *Je moet bij de volgende straat (links) afslaan* – You must turn (left) at the next street.

Generally speaking, wherever *zich omkeren* can be used, *zich omdraaien* can too, but the reverse is not the case.

Zich wenden tot renders 'to turn to' s.o. (for help etc.), e.g. *Daar zat ik zonder geld in het buitenland en kon me tot niemand wenden* – There I was in a foreign country without any money and no-one to turn to.

Worden only renders 'to turn' with reference to age, e.g. *Anneke wordt volgende week twaalf* – Anneke turns twelve next week.

'To turn on/off' of lights is *aan-/uitdoen*, which is also used for electrical appliances, but *aan-/afzetten* can be also used for appliances but not for lights; in other words *aan-/uitdoen* are always correct. Because light switches used to turn in a circle, one does still occasionally find *aan-/uitdraaien* being used in this sense although it is now somewhat old-fashioned, unlike English; nevertheless *aan-/uitdraaien* are still used with reference to a gas stove, as are *aan-/uitdoen*. (cf. 'to put on')

U

to understand:

begrijpen, verstaan, opvatten, snappen

The distinction between *begrijpen* and *verstaan* is difficult for speakers of English to understand (= *begrijpen*). *Begrijpen* means 'to comprehend, get the gist of', as just illustrated, whereas *verstaan* refers either to '(not) understanding' a foreign language or 'not being able to hear s.o.', e.g. *Als je Noors spreekt versta ik geen woord* – When/if you speak Norwegian I don't understand a word, *Zou je een beetje harder willen praten. Ik kan niet verstaan wat je zegt* – Would you mind talking a bit louder. I can't understand/hear what you're saying. *Ik begrijp je niet* means 'I don't understand you (what makes you tick, why you did s.t.) but *Ik versta je niet* means either 'I don't understand the language you're speaking' or 'I can't hear you'. *Begrijpen* is also frequently used with reference to (not) understanding a foreign language as in the example with Norwegian above but it could not, for example, be used in the following sentence: *Ik versta geen Frans* – I don't understand French.

It is common to hear people interspersing their narrative with *Begrijp je?* (Do you see?, Are you with me?). Also *Begrepen?* (Understood?). Colloquially *snappen* (= to get, dig) is commonly used instead of *begrijpen* but it cannot replace *verstaan*.

Opvatten can occasionally render 'to understand' where it means 'to interpret, conceive', e.g. *Dat kun je ook anders opvatten* – You can also understand/interpret/take that differently.

Verstaan onder translates 'to understand by', e.g. *Wat versta jij onder trouw?* – What do you understand by loyalty?

Misverstaan (to misunderstand) is not common in everyday language; one is advised to use *verkeerd begrijpen*, e.g. *Ze hebben mijn bedoelingen verkeerd begrepen* – They misunderstood my intentions. But the noun *het misverstand* (misunderstanding) is commonly used, e.g. *Het berustte op een misverstand* – It was the result of a misunderstanding.

to use:

aanwenden, benutten, bezigen, gebruik maken van, gebruiken, in gebruik nemen, profiteren van, uitbuiten, verbruiken

This verb is not quite as difficult as the number of options given above might imply because the dominant word, *gebruiken* (noun *het gebruik*) suffices in the vast majority of cases. (cf. *gebruiken* under 'to take' for an idiomatic use)

Verbruiken (noun *het verbruik*) actually means 'to consume' and most usually renders 'to use' with reference to petrol, gas or electricity use/consumption, e.g. *Deze oude auto verbruikt nu veel te veel benzine* – This old car now uses (= uses up, consumes) much too much petrol, *Van de winter hebben we voor verwarming minder gas verbruikt dan vorig jaar* – This winter we used less gas for heating than last year.

Despite the fact that *gebruik(en)* is the usual word for 'the/to use', another root meaning 'use' is *nut* (< *het nut* – use, usefulness) and thus 'to be of use' is *van nut zijn* and 'useful' is *nuttig*.

Benutten means 'to utilise, make use of, exploit' as of an opportunity or situation but more common in that sense are *gebruik maken van* and *profiteren van*, e.g. *Je moet van deze gelegenheid profiteren/gebruik maken* – You must make the most of this opportunity/take advantage of/make use of this opportunity. Where 'to exploit' is synonymous with 'to make use of', any of these three expressions can be used, but 'to exploit s.o. or s.t.' in the negative sense of 'taking advantage of s.o. or s.t. is *uitbuiten*.

Aanwenden is high style with connotations of 'to employ, exert (for a purpose)', e.g. *Hij heeft zijn invloed aangewend om de baan voor zijn zuster te krijgen* – He used/exerted his influence to get the job for his sister. It can always be replaced with *gebruiken*.

Bezigen, which is higher style and interchangeable with *gebruiken*, is used above all with reference to language, e.g. *Hij bezigt een nogal archaisch taalgebruik* – He uses rather archaic language.

In gebruik nemen, which means 'to start to use s.t. new', can translate simply 'to use' where this connotation is present as, for example, when a building or machine is 'not yet/already in use/being made use of', e.g. *Dit ziekenhuis is nog niet in gebruik genomen* – This hospital is not being used yet, *Die krachtcentrale is verleden jaar in gebruik genomen* – That power station was brought into use/came on line last year.

(to be) used to:

gewend (aan), plegen, verb + altijd, verb + vroeger

In English we have two 'used to's', each with different connotations. If one is 'used/accustomed to s.o. or s.t.' the normal expression is *gewend zijn aan*, e.g. *In het begin vond hij het leven in Nederland niet leuk maar hij is er nu aan gewend* – At first he didn't like life in Holland but now he is used to it. Notice the optional word order in the following sentence: *Ik ben nu aan haar gewend*/*Ik ben nu gewend aan haar* – I am used to her now; in the previous example the *gewend* could also have preceded *aan*. It is not uncommon for *aan* to be omitted, e.g. *Hij is het leven hier nu gewend* – He's now used to life here. Note *Dat zijn we van hem niet gewend* – We're not used to that sort of thing from him (= That's so unlike him), where *aan* would be impossible anyway.

The second 'used to' is as follows. 'Used to' is frequently used in English to render the imperfect of verbs while expressing that the action in question was either habitually or formerly performed, e.g. 'We often used to go to the movies with our uncle (habitually, as expressed by 'often'), 'We used to live in that street' (formerly). Dutch cannot express this verbally; in both cases adverbs, usually *vroeger*, must be used if it is important to get that connotation across,¹ e.g. *We gingen (vroeger) vaak met onze oom mee naar de bioscoop, Wij woonden vroeger in deze straat, Toen wij vorig jaar met vakantie in Frankrijk waren, ging ik (altijd) iedere dag zwemmen* – When we were on holidays in France last year, I used to go for a swim every day.

In very formal style one finds *placht/plachten*, the imperfect of *plegen*, being used with the meaning of 'used to', e.g. *In die tijd placht men anderen te helpen* – In those times people used to help others.

¹ Occasionally we use 'would' instead of 'used to' with exactly the same meaning, e.g. 'We would often go to the movies with our uncle'. The translation into Dutch remains the same as in the case of 'used to'. Cf. 'then' for the use of *dan* instead of *toen* and 'when' for the use of *als* instead of *toen* in such cases.

V

the variety:

de afwisseling, het assortiment, de sortering, de variatie, het variété, de variëteit, de verscheidenheid

Variëteit means 'variety' in the sense of 'species' (= *het ras/soort*), e.g. *Deze tulp is een nieuwe variëteit* – This tulip is a new variety. But *Er groeit hier een grote verscheidenheid aan planten* (= *veel verschillende planten*) – A great variety of plants grow here (= many different plants). (cf. 'different')

The 'variety, choice, range of products' available in a shop is *het assortiment* (less commonly *de sortering*), e.g. *Die winkel heeft geen groot assortiment* – That shop doesn't have a great variety. Note also *het varieert* – it varies, differs, fluctuates.

Variatie means 'variety' in the sense of 'alternation, variation, change', e.g. *Een mens heeft een beetje variatie* (= *afwisseling*) *nodig in het leven* – One needs a bit of variety/variation in life. Note *gevarieerd* (varied), e.g. *Het leven hier is niet gevarieerd genoeg* – Life here isn't varied enough.

Variété refers only to 'variety' in the world of show business, e.g. *het variétéprogramma* – variety programme; compare *Er is niet veel variëteit/afwisseling in dat programma* – There's not much variety in that programme. (cf. 'to change' for further meanings of *afwisseling*)

very:

erg, heel, zeer

The most common word is *erg*, which is never wrong. (cf. 'terrible') *Heel*, which is also very common, cannot be used after a negative, e.g. *Zij zorgde erg/heel goed voor de kinderen* – She looked after the children very well, but only *Zij zorgde niet erg goed voor de kinderen*. *Zeer* is synonymous with *erg* and *heel*, although it cannot be used with a negative either, but it is limited to formal style – except in Belgium.

It is not at all uncommon to hear the Dutch use *heel erg* together where we might say 'very, very + adjective', e.g. *Ze is heel erg ziek/mooi* – She's very, very sick/pretty.

There is an idiosyncrasy of *heel* that is worth commenting on. When *heel* occurs before an inflected adjective before a noun, strictly speaking it is an

adverb qualifying the adjective and should therefore not be inflected itself, but in colloquial Dutch it frequently takes an ending too, e.g. *Voor ons huis staat een hele hoge boom* (= *een heel hoge boom*)¹ – In front of our house there is a very tall tree. In a sense this is analogous to the colloquial English form 'real cheap food' (= really cheap) although the Dutch structure merely sounds colloquial, not sub-standard.

the/to visit:

bezoeken, bezoek/visite hebben, een bezoek brengen aan, op bezoek/visite gaan/zijn, langskomen/-gaan (bij), opzoeken

Although the dominant word is *bezoeken*, in practice 'visiting' is usually expressed periphrastically by one or other of the above options and thus it can be difficult to translate 'to visit'. One should avoid using *bezoeken* with reference to visiting people and limit it to countries (see below), museums, tourist attractions etc.,² e.g. *Ze hebben het Rijksmuseum niet eens bezocht* – They didn't even visit/go to the Rijksmuseum. 'Visiting' people is best expressed as follows: *Ik ga bij mijn tante op bezoek/visite* – I'm going to visit my aunt, *We hebben bezoek/visite* – We have visitors, *We krijgen vanavond bezoek* – We're expecting visitors/company tonight. (cf. 'guests')

Bij iemand langskomen/-gaan renders 'to pop in on s.o.', e.g. *Kan ik morgen bij je langskomen?* – Can I pop in on you tomorrow? The more formal 'Can I visit you tomorrow?' would be *Kan ik morgen (bij je) op bezoek/visite komen?* Also *Ik ben gisteren bij hem langsgedaan/ langsgeweest* – I went to see him yesterday.

Een bezoek brengen aan is very formal and is, for example, the expression used when heads of state 'visit' other countries, e.g. *Koningin Beatrix heeft een bezoek gebracht aan China* – Queen Beatrix visited China. One would **write** of oneself, however, *Ik heb China bezocht*, which can also be said of Beatrix in the previous example, but one is more likely to say *Ik ben in/naar China geweest/naar China gegaan*. (cf. 'to pass')

Opzoeken means 'to visit' in the sense of 'to look s.o. up' (cf. 'to look up'), an expression with which it corresponds exactly, e.g. *Kom je me opzoeken als je weer in Holland bent?* – Are you going to visit/look me up when you're in Holland again?

¹ The uninflected adverb in such cases even sounds affected.

² Note that formally *bezoeken* also translates 'to attend' with reference to schools and other institutions of learning, e.g. *Welke school heb je bezocht toen je in Amsterdam woonde?* – What school did you go to when you lived in Amsterdam?

W

the waist:

de broeksband, het middel, de taille

Het middel can only refer to the 'waist' of the body whereas *de taille* (pron. as in French) refers to both the part of the body (but only of a female) and the 'waist' of an item of clothing (usually but not exclusively female), e.g. *Hij wordt wat zwaar om zijn middel; van al zijn broeken moet de band wijder gemaakt worden* – His waistline is expanding a bit; the waistband on all his pants will have to be let out (< *de broeksband* – waistband).

to wait for:

opwachten, wachten op

The dominant expression is *wachten op*, e.g. *Ik sta al een uur op je te wachten/Ik wacht al een uur op je* – I've been waiting for you for an hour.

Opwachten (very frequently it occurs as *staan opwachten*) will occasionally be found in contexts where it does not differ in meaning from *wachten op*, but the latter is more usual, e.g. *De leraar stond zijn leerlingen op te wachten* (= *stond op ze te wachten*) – The teacher was waiting for his pupils, where there can be a connotation of 'waiting impatiently' in *opwachten* which is not necessarily present in *wachten op*. In other contexts *opwachten* can mean 'to lie in wait for s.o.', e.g. *Toen de inbreker de keuken inging stond de politie hem op te wachten* – When the burglar went into the kitchen the police were lying in wait for him there.

to wake up:

ontwaken, wakker maken/worden, wekken

The expressions one hears in everyday speech are *wakker maken* (tr.) and *wakker worden* (intr.), e.g. *Maak me alsjeblieft om zeven uur wakker* – Please wake me at seven o'clock, *Ik word altijd om zeven uur wakker* – I always wake up at seven o'clock.

Wekken is synonymous with *wakker maken*, but is not quite as commonly used, whereas *ontwaken* is synonymous with *wakker worden* but sounds quite poetic; compare 'to awaken'. An 'alarm clock' is *de wekker* and the Jehovah's Witnesses' magazine 'Awake' is called *Ontwaakt* in Dutch.

to walk:

gaan, gaan wandelen, lopen, een wandeling maken, wandelen

Strictly speaking *gaan* is 'to go' and *lopen* is 'to walk' (cf. 'to run'), but it is not uncommon to hear *gaan* where we would use 'to walk', e.g. *Zou je even voor me naar de winkel willen gaan om een fles melk te kopen?* – Would you mind walking/going to the shop for me to buy a bottle of milk. *Lopen* emphasises the fact that one is going on foot, e.g. *Ik denk dat ik ga lopen* – I think I'll walk/go on foot, *We zijn ernaartoe gelópen* – We **walked** there.¹ This could also have been expressed as follows: *We zijn er lopend naartoe gegaan*. Although there is an expression *te voet*, it is not commonly used and is better replaced by *lopend*, as in the previous example. If it is used at all, it will normally be in contrast to *met de auto/tram/fiets* etc., e.g. *Ben je op de fiets gegaan of te voet?* – Did you go by bike or on foot/or did you walk?

'To walk' in the sense of 'to hike', i.e. 'to go walking' (for one's pleasure), is *wandelen*, e.g. *Ik ben dikwijls in dat park gaan wandelen* – I have often gone walking/hiking in that park, *Ik heb dikwijls in dat park gewandeld* – I have often walked/hiked in that park. The fact that 'hiking' is often longer and more strenuous than 'walking' is a distinction which is not made in Dutch where one uses *wandelen* to express both concepts. Note *de wandelaar* – hiker, but a 'hitch-hiker' is *de lifter* (< *liften* – to hitch-hike).

'To go for a walk/stroll' is either *gaan wandelen* or *een wandeling (gaan) maken*, e.g. *Vader is er niet. Hij is gaan wandelen/aan het wandelen/is een wandeling gaan maken* – Dad isn't here. He's gone for a walk, *We hebben een wandeling langs de rivier gemaakt* – We went for a walk along the river.

the wall:

de muur, de wand

The 'wall' built around a garden, castle, town² etc. is a *muur*. The wall of a room is either a *muur* or a *wand* (a word which can also render 'partition') – the former is thus always correct and the latter is sometimes wrong. But in many common compound nouns involving 'wall', only *wand* is used, e.g. *de wandkaart* – wall map, *het wandkleed* – wall rug/hanging, *de wandklok* – wall clock.

¹ Notice that when one wishes to show that a particular word is emphasised in Dutch, it is usual to put an accent on the stressed syllable whereas in English we usually apply boldface, underline or use italics.

² The word *de stadswallen* renders 'ramparts', although the *de wal* otherwise usually refers to a 'quay' or an 'embankment'.

to watch:

bewaken, in de gaten hebben/houden, kijken naar, de wacht houden, waken

Where 'to watch' means 'to look at', *kijken naar* is the usual expression but it and other options are dealt with under 'to look at'. Where 'to watch' means 'to keep watch, guard', one can say *de wacht houden* (lit. to keep watch) or *waken* (to guard), both of which are intransitive, whereas *bewaken* is the transitive counterpart, e.g. *Wie z'n beurt is het om de wacht te houden/om te waken?* – Who's turn is it to stand guard/go on watch?, *Wie gaat de verzameling bewaken?* – Who is going to watch/guard the collection? Also *de waakhond* – watchdog, *de wachttorens* – watch tower, *de nachtwaker* – night watchman, *de bewaker* – guard.

'To watch' s.o. or s.t. in the sense of 'to keep an eye on' is *in de gaten houden/hebben*, e.g. *Ik heb de kinderen in de gaten gehouden/gehad terwijl ze in het water waren* – I was keeping an eye on the kids while they were in the water.

Cf. footnote under 'to look after' for 'to watch out'.

to water:

besproeien, sproeien, water geven

The everyday expression used for 'watering' plants is *water geven*, which must have an object, e.g. *Je moest je planten meer water geven* – You should water you plants more often. This is the only possibility with indoor plants, but if one 'waters' outside, whether using a sprinkler (*de sproeier*) or a hose (*de tuinslang*), in addition to *water geven* one can use *besproeien* in transitive situations and *sproeien* where there is no object, e.g. *Ik moet mijn rozen besproeien/water geven* – I must water the roses, *Ik moet even sproeien* – I'd better water. *Sproeien*, apart from being used intransitively as in the previous example, is used in the expression *de tuin sproeien* (to water the garden) and as the verb 'to spray' it is also used transitively when the direct object is the liquid that is being sprayed as opposed to what that liquid is being sprayed on, e.g. *Ik heb hier gif/water op gesproeid* – I sprayed poison/water on this, *Ik heb dit (met gif/water) besproeid* – I have sprayed this (with poison/water).

to wave:

wuiven, zwaaien

'Waving' in the sense of waving hello or goodbye to people is either *wuiven* or *zwaaien* and thus *iemand uitwuiven/-zwaaien* 'to wave goodbye to s.o.' (= to see s.o. off), e.g. *Ga je nu? We komen je uitwuiven/-zwaaien* – Are you going now? We'll come and wave goodbye. 'To wave at/to s.o.' is *naar iemand wuiven/zwaaien*, e.g. *Wuif/zwaai eens even naar mama* – Wave to mummy.

'To wave' one's arm, a weapon or any other object (about) is *zwaaien met zijn armen/met een pistool* etc., never *wuiven*, but 'the waving corn/wheat' is *het wuivende/golvende koren* (< *golvend* – undulating). *Zwaaien* also renders 'to sway', e.g. *De bomen zwaaiden in de wind* – The trees swayed in the wind.

when:

als, toen, (nauwelijks)...of, wanneer

When asking a question, both direct and indirect, one must use *wanneer*, e.g. *Wanneer is hij geboren?* – When was he born? (direct), *Ik weet niet wanneer hij geboren is* – I don't know when he was born (indirect).

As a subordinating conjunction 'when(ever)' can be either *wanneer* or *als*, e.g. *Ze is altijd in een slechte bui als/wanneer ze thuiskomt* – She's always in a bad mood when(ever) she gets home. *Wanneer* tends to be written more than said where it is synonymous with *als*, and *als* also means 'if', an ambiguity that is seldom of importance in Dutch. (cf. 'if')

When the finite verb of the subordinate clause introduced by 'when' is in the past, one must use either *als* (written language *wanneer*) or *toen*; if the action concerned occurred on one occasion in the past, use *toen*, but if it occurred on repeated occasions (i.e. = whenever), use *als* (compare *dan* and *toen* under 'then'), e.g. *Die middag wandelde hij door het park. Toen hij voorbijkwam, staakten de oude mannen hun gesprek* – He walked through the park that afternoon. When he passed, the old men stopped talking, *Hij wandelde elke middag door het park. Als hij voorbijkwam, staakten de oude mannen hun gesprek* – He walked (= would/used to walk) through the park every afternoon. When(ever) he passed, the old men would stop talking.

In the correlative couplet 'scarcely/hardly...when', 'when' is rendered by *of*. (cf. 'hardly')

whole, entire(ly):

algeheel, gans, geheel, heel, helemaal

The dominant word is *heel*, two other common meanings of which are 'very' (cf. 'very') and 'all' (cf. 'all'), e.g. *de hele dag* – the whole day (= all day), *de hele wereld* – the whole world. In the sense of 'whole, entire' it is only used adjectivally. Synonymous with this *heel* is *gans* but it sounds extremely formal, even archaic, although it is frequently used in speech in Belgium, e.g. *de ganse wereld*. On occasions one may find both *gans* and *heel* being placed before the article, but this is either literary or regional, e.g. *gans de wereld, heel de familie*. Note *de godganse/godganselijke dag* – all bloody day/the whole blessed day, which is used in the everyday language in Holland.

Geheel as an adjective is also synonymous with *heel* but is perhaps a little more emphatic (compare 'whole' and 'entire') and is also more formal, e.g. *de gehele wereld, het gehele/hele jaar door* – all year through/the whole year. *Geheel* is also used formally as an adverb meaning 'entirely', e.g. *Ik ben het helaas geheel vergeten* – Unfortunately I entirely forgot about it. In the spoken language, however, one would be more inclined to use *helemaal* or *totaal* for the adverb in such cases, e.g. *Ik ben het helaas totaal vergeten, Hij is nu geheel/helemaal genezen* – He is now entirely/completely cured. (cf. 'completely')

Algeheel is not a common word. It is an adjective meaning 'total, universal, general', e.g. *met algehele steun van allen* – with the total support of all concerned.

the woman, lady, wife, female:

de dame, de juffrouw, het mens, de mevrouw, de vrouw, het vrouwtje, het wijf(je)

The dominant word is *vrouw*, which also means 'wife' (*de huisvrouw* – house-wife). Very often, however, it is considered a little blunt to refer to a woman as a *vrouw*, as is the case in English too where we then resort to 'lady'. But *dame*, the literal translation of 'lady', is too formal in Dutch; it is the female counterpart of 'gentleman', e.g. *dames en heren* – ladies and gentlemen (direct address and on toilet doors). On occasions where *vrouw* is too blunt and *dame* is too formal, the Dutch use *mevrouw*, the use of which corresponds with that of *madame* in French, the word on which it has been calqued (compare *meneer* under 'mister'),³ e.g. *Er stond een mevrouw/vrouw voor mij in de rij die vreselijk dik was* – There was a

³ *Meneer* and *mevrouw* cannot be used in the plural.

woman standing in front of me in the queue who was terribly fat, *Kan ik u helpen, mevrouw?* – Can I help you, madam?

Colloquially one very often hears *het mens* (cf. 'people') being used with reference to a 'woman', e.g. *Juliana is een gezellig mens, niet waar?* – Juliana isn't a bad sort, is she?, *Ik kan dat mens niet uitstaan* – I can't bear that woman. *Mens* is particularly common when there is a negative connotation, as in the previous example; otherwise one would use *vrouw* (not *mevrouw*) or *wijf*, a word which always has derogatory connotations, e.g. *Wat een rotwijf* – What a bitch.

With reference to the 'male' and 'female' of animals, one says *mannetje* and *wijfje/vrouwtje*, e.g. *Is het een mannetje of een wijfje/vrouwtje?* – Is it a male or a female?, *Het is een mannetjesaap/wijfjesaap/vrouwtjesaap* – It's a he/she, male/female monkey. *Wijfje* and *wijfjes-* + animal name are more common than the *vrouwtje* forms.

A 'young woman' is *de juffrouw*, which can also mean 'schoolmistress'. (cf. 'teacher') It is also used as a form of direct address where we use 'Miss' in English. On an envelope to a 'miss' one writes *Mejuffrouw A. Smit* (formerly abbreviated to *Mej.*) whereas the letter itself starts with *Geachte juffrouw Smit*; when speaking to her directly, one also says *juffrouw Smit*. (compare *meneer/de heer* under 'mister') When addressing a married lady, one uses *mevrouw* in all cases, the abbreviated form of which is *Mevr.* The Dutch have recently also tried promoting *Mw* as the equivalent of our 'Ms.', as well as addressing unmarried women as *mevrouw*, but this is still very unnatural if one is addressing a sixteen-year-old shop assistant; convention still requires *juffrouw* in such a case, despite women's liberation.

the/to work, the worker:

de arbeid, het werk; arbeiden, doen, werken; de arbeider, de werker

The dominant words are *werk/werken/werker*, e.g. *Wat voor werk doe je?* – What sort of work do you do?, *Hij is een goede werker. Hij werkt hard* – He is a good worker. He works hard. The word *werkster* has taken on the specific meaning of 'the cleaning lady' (although she is often referred to as *de hulp* these days), whereas in *de maatschappelijk werkster* (social worker) it simply renders the feminine of *de maatschappelijk werker*.

Arbeid actually means 'labour' and thus *de arbeider* is a 'labourer/blue-collar worker' and *het arbeidsbureau* is 'the labour/employment exchange', *de Partij van de Arbeid* – the Labour Party. *Arbeiden* as a verb is very rare (thus *Arbeiders werken hard* – Labourers work hard) but the

adjectival present participle *arbeidende* is quite common, above all in the expression *de arbeidende klasse* – the working class. Despite the blue-collar connotation of *arbeid* and its derivatives in the above expressions, in certain compounds the word can refer to 'work' in general, although it does frequently correspond with 'labour', e.g. *arbeidsongeschikt* – incapable of working, *arbeidsintensief* – labour intensive; there are many such compounds.

'Homework' (from school) is *huiswerk* whereas 'house-work' is *huishoudelijk werk*.

With reference to machinery or appliances '(not)working' one can use *werken* but more common is *het (niet) doen*, e.g. *Dit koffiezetapparaat doet het niet meer/werkt niet meer* – This coffee machine doesn't work any more, *Het doet het wel/Het werkt wel* – It is working.

to write down:

neerschrijven, noteren, opschrijven

The dominant expression is *opschrijven* although *neerschrijven*, with which it is synonymous, is occasionally heard too. *Noteren* (cf. 'note') can be synonymous with *opschrijven* too where it means 'to note s.t. down' although it is also used figuratively meaning 'to take (a mental) note of s.t.', e.g. *Dat moet ik even noteren* – I must make a note of that (ambiguous = write it down or file it away in your memory), *Dat moet ik even opschrijven* – I must write/jot that down.

(to be) wrong/mistaken, the error/mistake:

fout, ongelijk, verkeerd, zich ver- + verb, zich vergissen; de fout, de vergissing

'The mistake' is *de fout*, e.g. *Je hebt drie fouten gemaakt in deze vertaling* – You have made three mistakes in this translation. *Fout* is also an adjective (and adverb) meaning 'wrong', e.g. *Deze vertaling is fout* – This translation is wrong, *Dit heb je fout gedaan* – You have done this wrongly/incorrectly. As an adjective it is more commonly used predicatively, as in the previous examples, than attributively, as in the following cases: *het foute antwoord* – the wrong answer, *een foute beslissing* – a wrong decision. As an attributive adjective *verkeerd* is more common than *fout* and is always correct, while *fout* is not always correct,⁴ but *verkeerd* is also always correct as a predicative adjective, e.g. *Dat is het verkeerde*

⁴ In *de verkeerde weg* and *het verkeerde woord* it is not possible to use *fout*; wrong in these cases refers to the wrong choice being made.

antwoord – That is the wrong answer, *Dat antwoord is verkeerd* – That answer is wrong. 'Right' and 'wrong' are thus *goed* (cf. 'right') and *fout/verkeerd*.

But what has been said above only applies to **things** being 'wrong'; people are not *fout* or *verkeerd*.⁵ If people are 'wrong', one has the choice of using *ongelijk hebben* (to be wrong) or *zich vergissen* (to be mistaken), depending on context, e.g. *Jij hebt gelijk en ik ongelijk. Ik dacht dat hij Jan heette* – You are right and I'm wrong. I thought his name was Jan, *Ik heb me vergist en nam de verkeerde straat* – I made a mistake and took the wrong street. The 'mistake' made here is a *vergissing* rather than a *fout*, whereas a 'spelling mistake' is a *spellingfout*.

There are a number of reflexive verbs starting with the prefix *ver-* which express that one has performed the action wrongly: *zich verkrijken* – to see s.t. wrongly, *zich verspreken* – to say s.t. wrongly, *zich verrekenen* – to make a mistake in calculating, to be out (in one's calculations, cf. 'to calculate'), e.g. *Weet hij niet hoe je het uitspreekt of heeft hij zich gewoon versproken?* – Doesn't he know how to pronounce it or did he simply make a mistake/slip? (cf. *zich verslapen* under 'to sleep in')

Cf. ' (to be) right' for *ten onrechte* (wrongly).

⁵ This statement is not quite true because it is still commonly said of people that *Hij was fout/verkeerd in de oorlog* but that means quite specifically 'He was pro-German', i.e. on the wrong side; *fout* is more common in this sense than *verkeerd*.

Y

the youth:

de jeugd, de jeugdige, de jongeling, de jongelui, de jongen, de jongeren

'Youth' meaning one's younger days is *jeugd*, e.g. *In zijn jeugd was hij een bekend voetballer* – In his youth he was a well-known football player, but *jeugd* is also a collective noun meaning 'young people', e.g. *de jeugd van tegenwoordig* – the youth of today. In this latter sense it is synonymous with *jongelui* (lit. young people), an expression which must be used when translating 'young people', e.g. *Jongelui houden van popmuziek* – Young people like pop music. *Jeugd* is also the main word that occurs in the many compounds incorporating 'youth', e.g. *de jeugdherberg* – youth hostel, *de jeugdorganisatie* – youth organisation, *de jeugdcriminaliteit* – juvenile delinquency, crime amongst young people. Occasionally one finds *jongeren* being used in such compounds where it is synonymous with *jeugd*, e.g. *het jongerenwerk* – youth work; it can also be used on its own to refer to 'young people', e.g. *Hij werkt graag met jongeren (= jongelui)* – He likes working with young people, but it is not a common word and it is safer to stick to *jongelui*.

De jeugdige (< adj. *jeugdig*) renders 'minor, youngster, juvenile'

When 'youth' refers to 'a young man/lad' it is most usual to refer to him as *een jonge man* or even simply as a *jongen* (boy) where in earlier times the word *jongeling* was used; it now sounds archaic, e.g. *Hij was toen een jongen van ongeveer vijftien* – He was then a youth/lad of about fifteen years of age.

English Index

Verbs are followed by 'to' and nouns are given without articles. Where the form of a word is ambiguous, (n) indicates 'noun'.

a couple 259
a few 259
abbreviate, to 249
about 1
accept, to 2
acceptable 2
actually 3
add, to 3
admit, to 4
advice 4
advise, to 4
afford, to 5
afraid 6
after 6
after all 7
again 7
agree, to 8
agreement 8
all 9
almost 10
aloud 155
already 11
also 12
altogether 290
anger 13
angry 13
announce, to 13
announcement 13
another 14
answer, to 14
apparently 82, 189
appear, to 15
appoint, to 16
appointment 16
approach, to 16
around 17
arrive, to 17
as 18
as well 12
ask, to 19
at first 93
at last 137
at least 140
avoid, to 20
awful(ly) 281
backside 21
be, to 21
because 254
before 24

begin, to 25
believe, to 26
belong, to 26
blind (noun) 27
blow, to 27
bone 28
bored 29
boring 29
both 29
bottom 21
bowl 69
box 30
break, to 31
bring, to 277
bring up, to 278
broken 31
brush 31
build, to 32
bum 21
burn, to 32
busy 34
buy, to 34
by the way 35
cake 36
calculate, to 36
call, to 37
cap 38
car 39
care, to 39
careful(ly) 40
catch, to 41
centre 167
certainly 62
change, to 41
chaplain 212
childish 44
childlike 44
claim 44
claim, to 44
clean, to 45
clear(ly) 46
clever 46
climb, to 47
close (to) 48
close, to 49
coat 49
cold drink 50
collect, to 51
collection 51
college 241
coloured 51
column 51
come home, to 52
come in, to 79
come upstairs/
downstairs, to 106
common 52
community 258

company 258
complete(ly) 52
congratulate, to 53
congratulations 53
congregation 258
consider, to 285
contain, to 54
continue, to 54
cook, to 56
copy 57
copy, to 57
correct, to 57
couple, a 259
cover 57
crisp 58
criticise, to 58
cry, the/to 59
curious 59
currency 59
curse, the/to 276
cut, to 60
dare, to 61
decide, to 61
decision 61
definite(ly) 62
deliberate(ly) 213
demand, the/to 64
deny, to 64
despite 265
dessert 65
destroy, to 66
die, to 66
differ, to - from 68
different 68
dirty 69
disagree, to 8
dish 69
distance 70
disturb 71
disturbance 71
do, to 71
drive, to 72
driveway 235
dry, to - (up) 73
dumb 272
during 73
eat, to 75
educated 76
education 75
embarrass, to 76
embarrassed 76
embarrassing 76
end, the/to 77
engaged 78
enjoy, to 78
enter, to 79
entire(ly) 303
envious 13

envy 13
error 305
especially 80
essay 284
even 81
ever 82
evidently 82, 189
exchange, to 41
experience, the/to 83
fact, in 3
fail, to 84
fall asleep, to 256
family 84
fast 85
favour 85
favourite 85
feed, to 86
feel, to 87
female 303
fence 88
few, a 88, 259
field 89
fight, the/to 89
finally 137
financially embarrassed 77
find (out), to 90
finish, to 91
finished 91
fire 92
first 93
firstly 93
flatter, to 93
flee, to 94
floor 94
flour 95
following 95
food 96
footpath 97
for (prep.) 97
for (conj.) 254
force 207
foreign 271
forget, to 98
freeze, to 98
fresh 99
friend 100
frighten(ed), to be 248
from 100
from now on 186
fruit 101
fun 102
funny 102
future, in (the) 102
gardener 103
gate 103
gather, to 51
gentleman 171
get, to 103

get in/out, to 79, 104
get on with s.o., to 105
get on/off, to 104
get (un)dressed, to 215
give, to 105
go, to 106
go home, to 52, 118
go in/out(side), to 79
go upstairs/
downstairs, to 106
gossip, to (about) 262
government 107
grain 108
greet, to 108
grow, to 109
guess, to 110
guest 110
half 111
hall 111
handle 112
hang, to 113
happen, to 113
happy 114
hard 115
hardly 115
hat 38
hate, to 116
have, to 116
head 116
hear, to 117
hide, to 117
hire, to 229
Holland 180
home 118
horrible(ly) 281
however 119
hurry, the/to 119
hurt, to 120
if 122
illegal 142
illegitimate 142
imagine, to 122
immediately 123
in fact 3
in spite of 265
increase, to 124
inhabitant 124
intend, to 125
interest(ing) 125
interested in, to be 125
introduce, to 126
jealous 13
job 127
join, to 128
just 128
keep, to 131
kill, to 132
kiss, the/to 133

know, to 133
lady 303
land, to 135
lane 235
last 136
last night 136, 183
last, to 135
last, at 137
late 138
laugh, to (at) 138
learn, to 139
lease, to 229
least, at 140
leave, to 140
lecture 263
lecture, to 279
lecturer 279
legal 142
let, to 142
let, to (i.e. rent out) 229
lift, to 143
light, to 144
like, to 144
listen, to 146
little 147
live, to 148
look, to 148
look, to (after) 149
look, to (around) 149
look, to (at) 150
look, to (for) 151
look, to (forward) 152
look, to (like) 15, 152
look, to (up) 153
lose, to 153
lost 153
loud 85, 155
love, to 155
Low Countries 180
luck(y) 156
lunch(time) 156
lunch, to have 156
make, to 159
man 171
manage, to 160
manager 160
map 161
marriage 161
marry, to 161
matter, to 162
meal(time) 163
meals, to have 163
mean, to 164
meaning 164
meat 165
meet, to 165
melt, to 166
memory 167

middle 167
 mind, the/to 169
 miss, to 170
 mistake 305
 mistaken, to be 305
 mister 171
 moment (the/at the/in a) 172
 more 173
 most(ly) 174
 motor-bike 174
 move, to 175
 name, to 37
 narrow 177
 near 177
 nearly 10
 necessary 178
 neck 178
 need, to 179
 neglect, to 180
 Netherlands 180
 nevertheless 180
 next 181
 nice 182
 night 183
 noise 184
 noisy 184
 normal(ly) 184
 note 185
 notice, to 186
 now(adays) 186
 number 187
 obviously 189
 occur, to 113
 offer, the/to 189
 often 190
 on 190
 once 191
 only 193
 open, to 194
 opinion 195
 order, the/to 196
 ordinary 197
 original(ly) 197
 own, on one's 197
 paddock 89
 paint, to 199
 paintbrush 31
 pan 206
 paragraph 199
 pass, to 199
 past 201
 path 235
 pavement 97
 peel, the/to 202
 penis 202
 people 203
 person 203
 pick up, to 51, 204
 pie 36
 piece 205
 place 205
 play, to 206
 please 282
 pleased 238
 pot 206
 power 207
 powerful 207
 prefer, to 208
 pregnant 209
 prepare, to 210
 prepared, be 210
 prevent, to 211
 priest 212
 private 212
 process 213
 purpose, on 213
 put, to 214
 put down, to 215
 put on, to 215
 put out, to 216
 quarter 217
 quick(ly) 85
 quiet 217
 quite 218
 raise, to 234
 raise, to (= bring up, rear) 278
 rare 271
 rather 221
 read, to (aloud, out, out loud) 221
 real(ly) 223
 realise, to 222
 recent(ly) 224
 recognise, to 224
 recommend, to 225
 reflect, to 225
 regular(ly) 226
 related, to 227
 relation(ship) 227
 remain, to 266
 remember, to 228
 remind, to 228
 rent, to 229
 repair, to 230
 report, the/to 230
 responsibility 231
 responsible 231
 ride, to 72
 right, to be 232
 ring, to 233
 rise, to 234
 road 235
 room (= space) 205
 room 235
 run, to 236
 sad 238
 satisfied 238
 satisfy, to 239
 save, to 240
 say, to 263, 280
 scarcely 115
 school 241
 science 242
 scooter 174
 see, to 242
 seem, to 15
 send, to 243
 serious 244
 serve, to 244
 service 244
 shine, to 246
 shit, the/to 247
 shock(ed), to (be) 248
 shorten, to 249
 show, to 250
 shut, to 49
 shy 252
 sidewalk 97
 sign 253
 sign, to 253
 simple/simply 253
 since 254
 sir 171
 size 255
 skin 255
 sky 256
 sleep, to (in) 256
 slice 205
 small 147
 smell, to 257
 so 257
 society 258
 some 259
 sometimes 260
 soon 261
 sorry 262
 speak, to 262
 special 80
 speech 263
 spend, to 264
 spice 265
 spite, in - of 265
 spoil, to 266
 start, to 25
 stay, the/to 266
 still 267
 stop, to 268
 strange 271
 street 235
 strength 207
 strong 207
 struggle, the/to 89
 student 271

study, to 272
 stupid(ity) 272
 subject 273
 succeed, to 273
 such 274
 sudden(ly) 274
 suggest, to 274
 suggestion 274
 suit, to 275
 surprise, the/to 275
 swear, to 276
 take off, to 215
 take, to 277
 talk 263
 talk, to 262
 tall 278
 taste, the/to 279
 teach, to 279
 teacher 279
 tell, to 280
 terrible(ly) 281
 test, the/to 281
 thank you 282
 thank, to 282
 theatre 283
 then 283
 therefore 284
 thesis 284
 thin 285
 think, to 285
 threat(ening) 287
 threaten, to 287
 throat 178
 throw, to 287
 ticket 288
 tile 288
 till now 186
 time 288
 tin 289
 today 289
 together 290
 tonight 183
 too 12
 tooth 290
 trip 291
 trouble 291
 truck 39
 try, to 292
 turn, to (around, on/off) 292
 understand, to 294
 university 241
 use, to 295
 used to, (to be) 296
 variety 297
 very 297
 visit, the/to 298
 visitor 110
 waist 299
 wait for, to 299
 wake up, to 299
 walk, to 300
 wall 300
 watch, to 150, 301
 watch out, to 149
 water, to 301
 wave, to 302
 way, by the 35
 wedding 161
 when 302
 whole 303
 wife 303
 woman 303
 work, the/to 304
 worker 304
 write down, to 305
 wrong, to be 305
 yet 267
 youth 307

Dutch Index

- aalmoezenier 212
aan 190
aan de hand zijn 113
aan zijn eind komen 66
aanbellen 233
aanbevelen 225
aanbieden 189
aanbieding 189
aanbod 189
aanbouwen 32
aanbranden 32
aanbreken 17, 25
aandoen 44, 71, 215, 292
aandurven 61
aangeven 199
aanhoren 117, 146
aanhouden 131, 268
aanhouden(d) 54
aankijken 150
aankleden, zich 215
aankomen 17
aankondigen 13
aankondiging 13
aankopen 34
aanleggen 32
aanleren 139
aankomen, zich 230
aannemelijk 2
aannemen 2
aanpassen 292
aanraden 4, 225
aanschaffen 34, 103
aansluiten, zich 128
aanspraak maken op 44
aansprakelijk 231
aansprakelijkheid 231
aanstaande 181
aansteken 25, 144
aanstellen 16
aanstelling 16
aantal 187
aantekening 185
antonen 250
aantrekken 215
aantrekken, zich 186
aanvaardbaar 2
aanvaarden 2
aanvangen 25
aanvankelijk 197
aanverwant 227
aanvoelen 87
aanwenden 295
aanwijzen 250
aanzetten 215
aanzien 242
aardig 182
aardig vinden 144
aardiger vinden 208
absoluut 62
acceptabel 2
accepteren 2
achterkant 21
achterlaten 140
achterste 21
achterwerk 21
advies 4
adviseren 4
afbouwen 32, 91
afbranden 32
afbreken 47
afdrogen 73
afgaan 106, 140
afgelopen 136, 201
afgrijpselijk 281
afhalen 44, 165, 202, 204
afklimmen 47
afkomen 106
afkomstig uit 100
afkondigen 13
afkondiging 13
afkorten 249
afkrijgen 91
afleggen 276
afleren 139
aflopen 77
afluisteren 146
afmaken 91
afmetingen 255
afraden 4
afraftering 88
afrekenen 36
afrit 235
afschrijf 57
afschrikken 248
afschuwelijk 281
afslaan 292
afspraak 16
afstand 70
afstappen 104
afstijgen 104
afwerken 91
afweten 133
afwisseling 297
afzetten 215, 268
akademie 241
akker 89
akkoord gaan met 8
al 9, 11, 97, 267
algeheel 303
aline 199
alle(n) 9
allebei 29
alleen (maar) 128, 193, 197
allemaal 9
allereerst 93
allerijl, in 119
alles 9
alreeds 11
als 18, 122, 302
alsjeblieft/alstublieft 282
alsmaar door + verb 131
alsnog 267
alsook 12
althans 140
altijd, nog 267
altijd + verb 296
alvorens 24
alweer 7
amper 115, 128
amuseren, zich 78
ander(e) 14
andere, de een of 259
ander(s) 68
anderhalf 111
aanspraak maken op 44
antwoord geven (op) 14
antwoorden (op) 14
apart 68
arbeid 304
arbeiden 304
arbeider 304
arriveren 17
assortiment 297
au sérieux 244
aula 111
auto 39
autoped 174
autoweg 235
avond 183
avondeten 163
avondmaal 163
baan 127
babbelen 262
bak 69
bakken 56
band 57
bang maken 248
bang zijn voor 6
bankbiljet 185
basisschool 241
beantwoorden 14
bedanken 282
bedankt 282
bedenken, (zich) 285
bederven 266
bedienen 244
bediening 244
bedoelen 125, 164
bedoeling 164
bedreigen 287
bedreiging 287
bedroefd 238
beëindigen 77
been 28
beetje, een 147
beginnen 25
begrijpen 242, 294
begroeten 108
beheerder 160
beheren 160
behoeden 211, 240
behoefte hebben aan 179
behoeven 179
behoren (tot) 26
behouden 131
beide(n) 29
bekend zijn 133
bekendmaken 13
bekendmaking 13
bekennen 4
bekeuring 288
bekijken 150, 242, 272
beklimmen 47
bekorten 249
bekostigen 5
bekritiseren 58
bekrompen 177
belanden 135
belang 125
belangstellen in 125
belangstelling 125
belangstelling hebben voor 125
belangwekkend 125
beletten 211
beleven 83
belevenis 83
bellen 37, 233
belletje geven 37
beluisteren 146
bemerken 186
beminnen 155
benaderen 16
beneden gaan/
komen, naar 106
benieuwd (naar) 59
benijden 13
benodigd 178
benoemen 16, 37
benoeming 16
benutten 295
bepaald 62
bepraten 262
beproeven 281, 292
bereid zijn 210
bereiden 210
berekenen 36
bericht 230
berichten 230
berijden 72
beschilderen 199
beschouwen 242
beseffen 222
beslissen 61
beslissing (nemen) 61
beslist 62
besluiten 61, 91
besluit (nemen) 61
besparen 240
bespelen 206
bespreken 262
besproeien 301
best 218
beste 156
besteden 264
bestellen 196
bestelling 196
bestijgen 104
bestrijden 89
bestuderen 272
besturen 72, 160
bestuur 107
bestuurder 72, 160
betalen 5
betekenen 164
betekenis 164
betrekking 127, 227
bevallen 144
bevatten 54
bevechten 89
bevel 196
bevelen 196
bevinden, zich 21, 90
bevolking 203
bevredigen 239
bevrozen 98
bewaken 301
bewaren 131, 240
bewegen, (zich) 175
beweren 44
bewering 44
bewind 107, 207
bewoner 124
bewust zijn/
worden, zich 222
bezeren, zich 120
bezet 78
bezien 242
bezig 34
bezingen 295
bezoek 298
bezoek hebben 110, 298
bezoek krijgen 110
bezoek, een - brengen
aan 298
bezoek, op - gaan/zijn 298
bezoek(er) 110
bezoeken 298
bezorgen 103
bezwaar hebben 169
bieden 189
bij 48, 177
bij elkaar 290
bij voorkeur doen 208
bijbrengen 279
bijdoen 3
bijeekomen 165
bijna 10, 115
bijvoegen 3
bijzonder 80
billen 21
binnengaan, naar 79
binnenkomen 79
binnenkort 261
binnenlaten 142
bioscoop 283
bips 21
bladderen 202
blazen 27
blesseren 120
blij 114, 238
blijkbaar 82, 189
blijken 15
blijven 21, 266
blijven (stil)staan 268
blijven + verb 54, 131
blik 289
blind (n) 27
blinken 246
bloem 95
blokken 272
blussen 216
bod 189
bod, een - doen 189
bodem 94
boete 288
boffen 156
boff(fer) 156
bol(letje) 116
bon(netje) 288
bont (n) 255
bont 51
boodschap 185
boos 13
boosheid 13
bord 69, 253
borstel 31
bot 28
boterham 205
bouwen 32
boven gaan/komen, naar 106
box 30
braden 56
brand 92
brand, in - staan 32
branden 32

Dutch Index

aalmoezenier 212
 aan 190
 aan de hand zijn 113
 aan zijn eind komen 66
 aanbellen 233
 aanbevelen 225
 aanbieden 189
 aanbidding 189
 aanbod 189
 aanbouwen 32
 aanbranden 32
 aanbreken 17, 25
 aandoen 44, 71, 215, 292
 aandurven 61
 aangeven 199
 aanhoren 117, 146
 aanhouden 131, 268
 aanhouden(d) 54
 aankijken 150
 aankleden, zich 215
 aankomen 17
 aankondigen 13
 aankondiging 13
 aankopen 34
 aanleggen 32
 aanleren 139
 aanmelden, zich 230
 aannemelijk 2
 aannemen 2
 aanpassen 292
 aanraden 4, 225
 aanschaffen 34, 103
 aansluiten, zich 128
 aanspraak maken op 44
 aansprakelijk 231
 aansprakelijkheid 231
 aanstaande 181
 aansteken 25, 144
 aanstellen 16
 aanstelling 16
 aantal 187
 aantekening 185
 antonen 250
 aantrekken 215
 aantrekken, zich 186
 aanvaardbaar 2
 aanvaarden 2
 aanvangen 25
 aanvankelijk 197
 aanverwant 227
 aanvoelen 87
 aanwenden 295
 aanwijzen 250
 aanzetten 215
 aanzien 242
 aardig 182
 aardig vinden 144
 aardiger vinden 208
 absoluut 62
 acceptabel 2
 accepteren 2
 achterkant 21
 achterlaten 140
 achterste 21
 achterwerk 21
 advies 4
 adviseren 4
 afbouwen 32, 91
 afbranden 32
 afdaalen 47
 afdrogen 73
 afgaan 106, 140
 afgelopen 136, 201
 afgrijselijk 281
 afhalen 44, 165, 202, 204
 afklimmen 47
 afkomen 106
 afkomstig uit 100
 afkondigen 13
 afkondiging 13
 afkorten 249
 afkrijgen 91
 afleggen 276
 afleren 139
 aflopen 77
 afluisteren 146
 afmaken 91
 afmetingen 255
 afraden 4
 afrastering 88
 afrekenen 36
 afrit 235
 afschrift 57
 afschrikken 248
 afschuwelijk 281
 afslaan 292
 afspraak 16
 afstand 70
 afstappen 104
 afstijgen 104
 afwerken 91
 afweten 133
 afwisseling 297
 afzetten 215, 268
 akademie 241
 akker 89
 akkoord gaan met 8
 al 9, 11, 97, 267
 algeheel 303
 alinea 199
 alle(n) 9
 allebei 29
 alleen (maar) 128, 193, 197
 allemaal 9
 allereerst 93
 allerijl, in 119
 alles 9
 alreeds 11
 als 18, 122, 302
 alsjeblieft/alstublieft 282
 alsmaar door + verb 131
 alsnog 267
 alsook 12
 althans 140
 altijd, nog 267
 altijd + verb 296
 alvorens 24
 alweer 7
 amper 115, 128
 amuseren, zich 78
 ander(e) 14
 andere, de een of 259
 ander(s) 68
 anderhalf 111
 aanspraak maken op 44
 antwoord geven (op) 14
 antwoorden (op) 14
 apart 68
 arbeid 304
 arbeiden 304
 arbeider 304
 arriveren 17
 assortiment 297
 au sérieux 244
 aula 111
 auto 39
 autoped 174
 autoweg 235
 avond 183
 avondeten 163
 avondmaal 163
 baan 127
 babbelen 262
 bak 69
 bakken 56
 band 57
 bang maken 248
 bang zijn voor 6
 bankbiljet 185
 basisschool 241
 beantwoorden 14
 bedanken 282
 bedankt 282
 bedenken, (zich) 285
 bederven 266
 bedienen 244
 bediening 244
 bedoelen 125, 164
 bedoeling 164
 bedreigen 287
 bedreiging 287
 bedroefd 238

beëindigen 77
 been 28
 beetje, een 147
 beginnen 25
 begrijpen 242, 294
 begroeten 108
 beheerder 160
 beheren 160
 behoeden 211, 240
 behoefte hebben aan 179
 behoeven 179
 behoren (tot) 26
 behouden 131
 beide(n) 29
 bekend zijn 133
 bekendmaken 13
 bekendmaking 13
 bekennen 4
 bekeuring 288
 bekijken 150, 242, 272
 beklimmen 47
 bekorten 249
 bekostigen 5
 bekritisieren 58
 bekrompen 177
 belanden 135
 belang 125
 belangstellen in 125
 belangstelling 125
 belangstelling hebben voor 125
 belangwekkend 125
 beletten 211
 beleven 83
 belevenis 83
 bellen 37, 233
 belletje geven 37
 beluisteren 146
 bemerken 186
 beminnen 155
 benaderen 16
 beneden gaan/
 komen, naar 106
 benieuwd (naar) 59
 benijden 13
 benodigd 178
 benoemen 16, 37
 benoeming 16
 benutten 295
 bepaald 62
 bepraten 262
 beproeven 281, 292
 bereid zijn 210
 bereiden 210
 berekenen 36
 bericht 230
 berichten 230
 berijden 72
 beschilderen 199
 beschouwen 242
 beseffen 222
 beslissen 61
 beslissing (nemen) 61
 beslist 62
 besluiten 61, 91
 besluit (nemen) 61
 besparen 240
 bespelen 206
 bespreken 262
 besproeien 301
 best 218
 beste 156
 besteden 264
 bestellen 196
 bestelling 196
 bestijgen 104
 bestrijden 89
 bestuderen 272
 besturen 72, 160
 bestuur 107
 bestuurder 72, 160
 betalen 5
 betekenen 164
 betekenis 164
 betrekking 127, 227
 bevallen 144
 bevallen 54
 bevechten 89
 bevel 196
 bevelen 196
 bevinden, zich 21, 90
 bevolking 203
 bevredigen 239
 bevrozen 98
 bewaken 301
 bewaren 131, 240
 bewegen, (zich) 175
 beweren 44
 bewering 44
 bewind 107, 207
 bewoner 124
 bewust zijn/
 worden, zich 222
 bezeren, zich 120
 bezet 78
 bezien 242
 bezig 34
 bezigen 295
 bezoeken 298
 bezoeken hebben 110, 298
 bezoeken krijgen 110
 bezoeken, een - brengen
 aan 298
 bezoeken, op - gaan/zijn 298
 bezoeken 110
 bezoeken 298
 bezorgen 103
 bezwaar hebben 169
 bieden 189
 bij 48, 177
 bij elkaar 290
 bij voorkeur doen 208
 bijbrengen 279
 bijdoen 3
 bijeenkomen 165
 bijna 10, 115
 bijvoegen 3
 bijzonder 80
 billen 21
 binnengaan, naar 79
 binnenvaren 79
 binnenkort 261
 binnenlaten 142
 bioscoop 283
 bips 21
 bladderen 202
 blazen 27
 blesseren 120
 blij 114, 238
 blijkbaar 82, 189
 blijken 15
 blijven 21, 266
 blijven (stil)staan 268
 blijven + verb 54, 131
 blik 289
 blind (n) 27
 blinken 246
 bloem 95
 blokken 272
 blussen 216
 bod 189
 bod, een - doen 189
 bodem 94
 boete 288
 boffen 156
 boff(fer) 156
 bol(letje) 116
 bon(netje) 288
 bont (n) 255
 bont 51
 boodschap 185
 boos 13
 boosheid 13
 bord 69, 253
 borstel 31
 bot 28
 boterham 205
 bouwen 32
 boven gaan/komen, naar 106
 box 30
 braden 56
 brand 92
 brand, in - staan 32
 branden 32

breken 31
 brengen 277
 briefje 185
 broeksband 299
 bromfiets 174
 brommer 174
 bros 58
 bruiloft 161
 buiten, van 167
 buiten gaan, naar 79
 buitengewoon 271
 buitenlands 271
 bus 30, 289
 buurt, in de - van 177
 cadeau 105
 cake 36
 centrum 167
 cijfer 187
 circa 1
 claim 44
 claimen 44
 clever 46
 colbert 49
 collectant 51
 collecte 51
 collectie 51
 collecteren 51
 college 263
 colonne 51
 column 51
 commanderen 196
 compleet 52
 continueren 54
 correct 232
 corrigeren 57
 cover 57
 curieus 59
 cursiefje 51
 daar 18, 254
 daarna 6, 181
 daarom 257, 284
 daarop 181
 dadelijk, (zo) 123
 dakpan 288
 dame 303
 dan 283
 dank je/u (wel) 282
 danken 282
 dat/het 257
 de een of andere 259
 definitief 62
 degene(n) 203
 denken 87, 285
 denken om 169, 228
 dergelijk 274
 desalniettemin 180
 desniettemin 180
 desondanks 180, 265
 destijds 283
 deur 103
 deviezen 59
 dichtbij/dicht bij 47, 177
 dichtdoen 49
 dichterbij komen 16
 dichtgaan 49
 dichtmaken 49
 dichtplakken 49
 dichtslaan 49
 dichtstbijzijnde 181
 dichtvriezen 98
 dienen 244
 dienst 85, 244
 dikwijls 190
 diner 163
 direct 123
 directeur 160
 direkt 261
 dis 69
 dissertatie 284
 docent 279
 doceren 279
 doch 180
 doden 132
 doen 49, 71, 159, 214, 304
 doen denken 228
 dom 272
 domheid 272
 dominee 211
 domweg 253
 dood, de - vinden 66
 doodeenvoudig 253
 doodgaan 66
 doodgewoon 197
 doodmaken 132
 doodschieten 132
 doodsimpel 253
 doodslaan 132
 doodvriezen 98
 dooiën 166
 door- 54
 door + verb 131
 door de week 73
 doorbrengen 264
 doorgaan 54
 doorgeven 199
 doorslag 57
 doos(je) 30
 dop 202
 doppen 202
 dorst lessen 239
 doven 216
 draad 108
 draaien 250, 292
 drachtig 209
 dreigement 287
 dreigen 287
 dreigend 287
 dreiging 287
 droevig 238
 drogen 73
 droog krijgen 73
 droog worden/zijn 73
 droogmaken 73
 drol 247
 druk 34
 duidelijk 46, 189
 dun 285
 duren 135, 277
 durven 61
 dus 257, 284
 dwang 207
 echt 223
 echter 119
 een man of 1
 een of andere, de 259
 een paar 88, 259
 een stuk of 1
 eenmaal 191
 eens 81, 172, 191
 eentje, in je 197
 eentje, op je 197
 eenvoudig 253
 eer(dat) 24
 eerder 24, 221, 261
 eerlijk 128
 eerst 93
 eerstens 93
 eerstkomend(e) 95, 181
 eerstvolgend(e) 95, 181
 eigenaardig 271
 eigenlijk 3, 223
 eind(je) 70, 77
 eind, een - maken aan 77
 eind, aan zijn - komen 66
 einde 77
 eindelijk 137
 eindigen 77
 eis 44, 64
 eisen 44, 64
 end 77
 end(je) 70
 eng 177
 enig 193
 enige 9, 259
 enkel 193
 enkel (en alleen) 253
 enkele 259
 er uitzien 15, 148, 152
 eraan doen 211
 erbij komen zitten 128
 erg 218, 281, 297
 erkennen 224
 ernstig 244
 eronderuit komen 20

erover doen 277
 eruitzien 15, 148, 152
 ervaren 83
 ervaring 83
 essay 284
 etage 94
 etagewoning 95
 eten 75, 86
 eten, te - geven 86
 eten, het 96
 etenstijd 163
 etenswaren 96
 eter 110
 even 18, 81, 128
 even(tjes) 172
 evenals 12
 eveneens 12
 exemplaar 57
 expres 213
 fabriceren 159
 fair 128
 familie 84
 familielid 227
 favoriet 85
 feite, in 3
 feitelijk 3
 fel 155
 feliciteren (met) 53
 fietsen 106
 fik, in de - gaan/staan 32
 finish 77
 flatteren 93
 formaat 255
 fotokopiëren 57
 fout 305
 fris 99
 fris(drank) 50
 fruit 101
 fruits de mer 97
 fruiten 56
 gaan 41, 79, 106, 300
 gaan, in de fik 32
 gaan wandelen 300
 gadeslaan 150
 gang 111
 gang, aan de - krijgen 25
 gans 303
 gast 110
 gat 21
 gaten, in de - hebben/
 houden 301
 gauw 85, 261
 gebak(je) 36
 gebeuren 113
 gebied 89
 gebit 290
 gebroken 31
 gebruik maken van 295
 gebruik, in - nemen 295
 gebruikelijk 52
 gebruiken 156, 277, 295
 gedurende 73, 97
 geest 169
 geheel 303
 geheugen 167
 gehorig 184
 gehuil 59
 gein 102
 geïnteresseerd zijn in 125
 gek 102, 271
 gekleurd 51
 geld 59
 geld, om - verlegen zitten 77
 geldeenheid 59
 gelijk 81
 gelijk hebben 232
 gelijkvloers 95
 geloven (= think) 285
 geloven aan/in 26
 geluid 184
 geluidshinder 184
 geluk 156
 geluk hebben 156
 gelukkig 114
 gelukwensen (met) 53, 156
 gemakkelijk 253
 gemeen 52
 gemeenschap 258
 gemeenschappelijk 52
 gemeente 258
 gemoe 169
 gênant 76
 geneigd zijn 169
 generen, zich 76
 genieten (van) 78
 genoegen 85
 genoegen doen/nemen 238
 genootschap 258
 gentleman 171
 geopend 194
 gepast 232
 gepeupel 203
 gerecht 69
 gereedmaken, (zich) 210
 geregeld 226
 geruisloos 184
 geschenk 105
 geschieden 113
 geschreeuw 59
 gesprek, in 78
 getal 187
 gevecht 89
 geven 105, 162, 199
 geven (om) 39
 geweld 207
 gewend aan 296
 gewoon 52, 184, 197
 gewoon(weg) 128, 253
 gewoonlijk 184, 197
 gezamenlijk 290
 gezelschap 258
 gezin 84
 gezinslid/-leden 227
 gil 59
 gillen 59
 gissen 110
 gister- 136
 glad 81
 glanzen 246
 glimlachen naar/tegen 138
 glimmen 246
 goed 232
 gooien 287
 gouvernement 107
 graag + verb 144
 graag willen 144
 graan 108
 graat 28
 grappig 102
 greep 112
 grein 108
 grillen 56
 groeien 109
 groeten 108
 groeten, de - doen 228
 grond 94
 groot 278
 grotendeels 174
 grootte 255
 groter worden 124
 gunst 85
 haast (= almost) 10
 haast (= hardly) 115
 haast hebben 119
 haasten, zich 119
 haastig 119
 hakken 60
 hal 111
 halen 41, 103, 165, 204
 half 111, 167
 hals 178
 hand, aan de - zijn 113
 handel/hendel 112
 handgreep 112
 handhaven 131
 handtekening zetten 253
 handvat 112
 hangen 21, 113, 214
 hap 279
 happy 114
 hard 85, 115, 155
 hardlopen 236
 hardop 155
 hardop lezen 221

haten 116
 hebben, in de gaten 301
 hebben tegen 169
 heden 289
 heden ten dage 186
 hedendaags 289
 heel 9, 218, 297, 303
 heengaan 66
 heer 171
 heffen 143
 heft 112
 heimwee 118
 heining 88
 hek 88, 103
 hekel, een - hebben aan 116
 helder 46
 helemaal 9, 52, 218, 303
 helft 111
 helpen 244
 helpen onthouden 228
 hemel 256
 hengel 112
 her- 7
 herdenken 228
 herinneren 228
 herinneren, zich 228
 herinnering 167
 herkennen 224
 herrie 184
 herstellen 230
 hertrouwen 161
 het eens zijn met/over 8
 het/dat 257
 heten 37
 heus 223
 hijsen 143
 hinderen 162, 169, 211
 hoe ... ook 119
 hoe...toch 119
 hoed 38
 hoekje omgaan 66
 hoeven 178, 179
 hoger worden 124
 hogeschool 241
 Holland 180
 hollen 236
 honger stillen 239
 hoofd 116, 169
 hoofdweg 235
 hoog 278
 hoogst, op z'n 174
 hoogleraar 279
 hoogte 255
 hoogstens 174
 hooguit 174
 hoor 186
 horen (aan, bij) 26
 horen 117
 houden 131, 236
 houden, in de gaten 301
 houden van 144, 155
 houden (voor) 277
 houden, wacht 301
 houtje, op eigen 197
 huid 255
 huilen 59
 huis 118
 huren 229
 huwelijk 161
 huwelijk, in het - treden 161
 huwelijk aangaan 161
 huwelijksfeest 161
 huwen 161
 idee 274
 iemand, een + adj. 203
 iemand om het even zijn 162
 iemand te duur zijn 5
 iemand van dienst zijn 244
 ijlen 119
 immers 7
 in 73
 indenken, zich 122, 285
 indien 122
 ineens 274
 informeren 90
 ingaan 79
 inhalen 199
 inhouden 54
 inkijken 150
 inkomen 79
 inkopen 34
 inkorten 249
 inleiden 126
 innemen 277
 inrit 235
 inruilen 41
 inslapen 66, 256
 instantie, in eerste 93
 instappen 104
 instemmen 8
 instuderen 272
 interessant 125
 interesse 125
 interesse hebben voor 125
 interesseren 125
 internaat 241
 introduceren 126
 invoeren 126
 invriezen 98
 inwoner 124
 inzamelen 51
 inzameling 51
 inzien 150, 242
 jaloezie 27
 jas 49
 -je 147
 jeugd 307
 jeugdige 307
 job 127
 jongeling 307
 jongelui 307
 jongen 307
 jongen krijgen/
 verwachten 209
 jongeren 307
 jongst 136, 224
 jongstleden 136
 juf 279
 juffrouw 303
 juist 128, 232
 jus 50
 kaart 161
 kaartje 288
 kado/kadootje 105
 kaft 57
 kak 247
 kalm(pjes) 217
 kamer 235
 kamp 89
 kampen 89
 kapelaan 212
 kapot 31
 kapotmaken 31
 kappen 60
 karwei 127
 keel 178
 keer, een/één 191
 keer, een 288
 keihard 85
 kennelijk 82, 189
 kennen 133
 kennis 100
 kennis maken met 165
 kennisgeving 13
 keren 292
 keutel(tjes) 247
 kies 290
 kijken 148
 kijken naar 150, 301
 kijken op 150
 kijken, om zich heen 149
 kijkje, een - nemen 150
 kind, een - verwachten 209
 kinderachtig 44
 kinderlijk 44
 kinds 44
 kist 30
 klaar 46
 klaar zijn met 91
 klaarblijkelijk 82, 189
 klaarmaken 56, 159, 210
 klaslokaal 235
 klein 147, 177
 kleinmaken 41

kletsen 262
 kleurrijk 51
 kleuterleidster 279
 kleuterschool 241
 klimmen 47, 104
 kloppen met 8
 kluif 28
 kluiven 29
 knap 46
 knapperig 58
 knippen 60
 knop 112
 koek 36
 koekepan 206
 koffiedrinken 156
 koken 56
 kolom 51
 kom 69
 komen 17
 komend(e) 95
 komisch 102
 kont 21
 kop 116
 kopen 103
 kopie 57
 kopiëren 57
 kopij 57
 koren 108
 korrel 108
 kort (daarna) 261
 kort geleden 224
 korten 249
 korter maken 249
 kost 96
 kostschool 241
 kracht 207
 krachtig 207
 krat 30
 kreet 59
 krijgen 103
 kritiek hebben op 58
 kritisch zijn 58
 kritiseren 58
 krokant 58
 kruid 265
 kruk 112
 kunnen 133
 kunnen opschieten met
 iem. 105
 kunnen vinden met
 iem. 105
 kunnen overweg met
 iem. 105
 kus 133
 kussen 133
 kwaad 13
 kwalijk 262
 kwart 217
 kwartaal 217
 kwartier 217
 kwartje 217
 kwast 31, 50
 kweekschool 241
 kweken 109
 kwetsen 120
 kwijt raken 153
 kwijt zijn 153
 laan 235
 laat, (te) 138
 laatst 136, 224
 laatste tijd 224
 lachen (om) 138
 Lage Landen 180
 lagere school 241
 lamellen 27
 landen 135
 landkaart 161
 lang 278
 langer 173
 langs 201
 langsgaan (bij) 298
 langskomen 37, 199
 langskomen (bij) 298
 last 291
 lat-relatie 227
 laten 140, 142
 laten + verb 103
 laten groeien 109
 laten komen 37
 laten staan 109
 laten weten 133
 laten zien, (zich) 250
 lawaai 184
 lawaaiig 155, 184
 leasen 229
 lector 279
 leegdrinken 91
 leerkracht 279
 leerling 271
 legaal 142
 leggen 214
 leiden 236
 lekker 182
 lekker vinden 78, 144
 lekkerder vinden 208
 leraar 279
 leren 139, 272, 279
 leren kennen 133, 165
 lesgeven 279
 leslokaal 235
 lessen 239
 letten op 149
 leuk 182
 leuk vinden 144
 leus 59
 leven 148
 leven, in - zij
 leven, om he
 leven, om he
 lezing 263
 lid worden van 128
 lieden 203
 lief hebben 155
 lievelings- 85
 liever 221, 261
 liever doen 208
 liever hebben 208
 liggen 21
 lijken 15
 lijken op 152
 limonade(siroop) 50
 logé(e) 110
 logeren 148, 266
 lokaal 235
 lol 102
 loochenen 64
 lopen 21, 106, 236, 300
 loslaten 142
 lucht 256
 lui 203
 luid 155
 luiden 233
 luidruchtig 155, 184
 luifel 27
 luik 27
 luisteren (naar) 146
 lukken 160, 273
 lul 202
 lunch 156, 163
 lunchen 156
 lunchpauze (in de) 156
 lusten 144
 luxaflex 27
 maaïen 60
 maal 163, 288
 maaltijd 163
 maar 193
 maat 255
 maatschappij 258
 macht 207
 mager 285
 maïs 108
 maïzena 95
 maken 71, 159, 230, 277
 makkelijk 253
 man, een - of 1
 manager 160
 mantel 49
 mantelpak 49
 markies 27
 mazzel 156
 mede 12
 medio 167
 meebrengen 277

haten 116
 hebben, in de gaten 301
 hebben tegen 169
 heden 289
 heden ten dage 186
 hedendaags 289
 heel 9, 218, 297, 303
 heengaan 66
 heer 171
 heffen 143
 heft 112
 heimwee 118
 heining 88
 hek 88, 103
 hekel, een - hebben aan 116
 helder 46
 helemaal 9, 52, 218, 303
 helft 111
 helpen 244
 helpen onthouden 228
 hemel 256
 hengel 112
 her- 7
 herdenken 228
 herinneren 228
 herinneren, zich 228
 herinnering 167
 herkennen 224
 herrie 184
 herstellen 230
 hertrouwen 161
 het eens zijn met/over 8
 het/dat 257
 heten 37
 heus 223
 hijsen 143
 hinderen 162, 169, 211
 hoe ... ook 119
 hoe...toch 119
 hoed 38
 hoekje omgaan 66
 hoeven 178, 179
 hoger worden 124
 hogeschool 241
 Holland 180
 hollen 236
 honger stillen 239
 hoofd 116, 169
 hoofdweg 235
 hoog 278
 hoogst, op z'n 174
 hoogleraar 279
 hoogte 255
 hoogstens 174
 hooguit 174
 hoor 186
 horen (aan, bij) 26
 horen 117
 houden 131, 236
 houden, in de gaten 301
 houden van 144, 155
 houden (voor) 277
 houden, wacht 301
 houtje, op eigen 197
 huid 255
 huilen 59
 huis 118
 huren 229
 huwelijk 161
 huwelijk, in het - treden 161
 huwelijk aangaan 161
 huwelijksfeest 161
 huwen 161
 idee 274
 iemand, een + adj. 203
 iemand om het even zijn 162
 iemand te duur zijn 5
 iemand van dienst zijn 244
 ijlen 119
 immers 7
 in 73
 indenen, zich 122, 285
 indien 122
 ineens 274
 informeren 90
 ingaan 79
 inhalen 199
 inhouden 54
 inkijken 150
 inkomen 79
 inkopen 34
 inkorten 249
 inleiden 126
 innemen 277
 inrit 235
 inruilen 41
 inslapen 66, 256
 instantie, in eerste 93
 instappen 104
 instemmen 8
 instuderen 272
 interessant 125
 interesse 125
 interesse hebben voor 125
 interesseren 125
 internaat 241
 introduceren 126
 invoeren 126
 invriezen 98
 inwoner 124
 inzamelen 51
 inzameling 51
 inzien 150, 242
 jaloezie 27
 jas 49
 -je 147
 jeugd 307
 jeugdige 307
 job 127
 jongeling 307
 jongelui 307
 jongen 307
 jongen krijgen/
 verwachten 209
 jongeren 307
 jongst 136, 224
 jongstleden 136
 juf 279
 juffrouw 303
 juist 128, 232
 jus 50
 kaart 161
 kaartje 288
 kado/kadootje 105
 kaft 57
 kak 247
 kalm(pjes) 217
 kamer 235
 kamp 89
 kampen 89
 kapelaan 212
 kapot 31
 kapotmaken 31
 kappen 60
 karwei 127
 keel 178
 keer, een/één 191
 keer, een 288
 keihard 85
 kennelijk 82, 189
 kennen 133
 kennis 100
 kennis maken met 165
 kennisgeving 13
 keren 292
 keutel(tjes) 247
 kies 290
 kijken 148
 kijken naar 150, 301
 kijken op 150
 kijken, om zich heen 149
 kijkje, een - nemen 150
 kind, een - verwachten 209
 kinderachtig 44
 kinderlijk 44
 kinds 44
 kist 30
 klaar 46
 klaar zijn met 91
 klaarblijkelijk 82, 189
 klaarmaken 56, 159, 210
 klaslokaal 235
 klein 147, 177
 kleinmaken 41

kletsen 262
 kleurrijk 51
 kleuterleidster 279
 kleuterschool 241
 klimmen 47, 104
 kloppen met 8
 kluif 28
 kluiven 29
 knap 46
 knapperig 58
 knippen 60
 knop 112
 koek 36
 koekpan 206
 koffiedrinken 156
 koken 56
 kolom 51
 kom 69
 komen 17
 komend(e) 95
 komisch 102
 kont 21
 kop 116
 kopen 103
 kopie 57
 kopiëren 57
 kopij 57
 koren 108
 korrel 108
 kort (daarna) 261
 kort geleden 224
 korten 249
 korter maken 249
 kost 96
 kostschool 241
 kracht 207
 krachtig 207
 krat 30
 kreet 59
 krijgen 103
 kritiek hebben op 58
 kritisch zijn 58
 kritiseren 58
 krokant 58
 kruid 265
 kruk 112
 kunnen 133
 kunnen opschieten met
 iem. 105
 kunnen vinden met
 iem. 105
 kunnen overweg met
 iem. 105
 kus 133
 kussen 133
 kwaad 13
 kwalijk 262
 kwart 217
 kwartaal 217
 kwartier 217
 kwartje 217
 kwast 31, 50
 kweekschool 241
 kweken 109
 kwetsen 120
 kwijt raken 153
 kwijt zijn 153
 laan 235
 laat, (te) 138
 laatst 136, 224
 laatste tijd 224
 lachen (om) 138
 Lage Landen 180
 lagere school 241
 lamellen 27
 landen 135
 landkaart 161
 lang 278
 langer 173
 langs 201
 langsgaan (bij) 298
 langskomen 37, 199
 langskomen (bij) 298
 last 291
 lat-relatie 227
 latel 140, 142
 laten + verb 103
 laten groeien 109
 laten komen 37
 laten staan 109
 laten weten 133
 laten zien, (zich) 250
 lawaai 184
 lawaaierig 155, 184
 lezen 229
 lector 279
 leegdrinken 91
 leerkracht 279
 leerling 271
 leegaal 142
 leggen 214
 leiden 236
 lekker 182
 lekker vinden 78, 144
 lekkerder vinden 208
 leraar 279
 leren 139, 272, 279
 leren kennen 133, 165
 lesgeven 279
 leslokaal 235
 lessen 239
 letten op 149
 leuk 182
 leuk vinden 144
 leus 59
 leven 148
 leven, in - zijn 148
 leven, om het - brengen 132
 leven, om het - komen 66
 lezing 263
 lid worden van 128
 lieden 203
 lief hebben 155
 lievelings- 85
 liever 221, 261
 liever doen 208
 liever hebben 208
 liggen 21
 lijken 15
 lijken op 152
 limonade(siroop) 50
 logé(e) 110
 logeren 148, 266
 lokaal 235
 lol 102
 loochenen 64
 lopen 21, 106, 236, 300
 loslaten 142
 lucht 256
 lui 203
 luid 155
 luiden 233
 luidruchtig 155, 184
 luifel 27
 luik 27
 luisteren (naar) 146
 lukken 160, 273
 lul 202
 lunch 156, 163
 lunchen 156
 lunchpauze (in de) 156
 lusten 144
 luxaflex 27
 maaïen 60
 maal 163, 288
 maaltijd 163
 maar 193
 maat 255
 maatschappij 258
 macht 207
 mager 285
 maïs 108
 maïzena 95
 maken 71, 159, 230, 277
 makkelijk 253
 man, een - of 1
 manager 160
 mantel 49
 mantelpak 49
 markies 27
 mazzel 156
 mede 12
 medio 167
 meebrengen 277

meegaan 135
 meel 95
 meeluisteren 146
 meemaken 83
 meemenen 204, 277
 meer 173
 meest(e) 174
 meestal 174
 meevallen 144
 melden, (zich) 230
 men 203
 meneer 171
 menen 87, 164, 285
 mening 164, 195
 meningsverschil 196
 mens 203, 303
 merci 282
 merken 186
 merkwaardig 59, 271
 mest 247
 met elkaar 290
 met opzet 213
 meteen, (zo) 123
 mevrouw 303
 middageten 156, 163
 middageten, het -
 gebruiken 156
 middageten, het -
 nuttigen 156
 middagmaal 156, 163
 middel 167, 299
 middelbaar 167
 middelbare school 241
 middelpunt 167
 middelst 167
 midden (in) 167
 midden, in het - van 167
 miden, te - van 167
 middenstand 168
 mijden 20
 mijnheer 171
 mijns inziens 195
 min of meer 173
 -minded 169
 minst, niet in het 140
 minst, op z'n 140
 minstens 140
 mislukken 84
 missen 170
 moeilijk 115
 moeilijkheid 291
 moeite 291
 mogen 144
 moment 172
 moment, op het 172
 momenteel 172
 mondje, een 147
 mooi 182
 motor 174
 munt 59
 muts 38
 muur 300
 na 6, 65
 naar 6
 naar beneden gaan/
 komen 106
 naar boven gaan/
 komen 106
 naar huis gaan 52
 naarmate 18
 naast 181
 nabij 48, 177
 nabijheid, in de - van 177
 nacht 183
 's nachts 73
 nadat 6
 nadenken 285
 naderbij komen 16
 naderen 16
 nadien 6
 nagedachtenis 167
 nagenoeg 10
 nagerecht 65
 nakijken 57, 153
 nalaten 140, 180
 naslaan 153
 natuurwetenschap 242
 nauw 47, 177
 nauwelijks 115
 nauwelijks ... of 302
 nauwkeurig 40
 navertellen 280
 Nederland 180
 Nederlanden 180
 neergooien 215
 neerkomen 135
 neerleggen 215
 neerschrijven 305
 neerstrijken 135
 neerzetten 215
 nek 178
 nemen 41, 277
 nemen, van de haak 204
 nerf 108
 net 128
 netjes 182
 niet helemaal 218
 niet in het minst 140
 niet lukken 84
 niet meer 173
 niet per se 178
 niet slagen 84
 niet treffen 170
 niettegenstaande 180
 niettemin 180
 nieuwsgierig 59
 nieuwst 136, 224
 nijdig 13
 nochthans 180
 nodig 178
 nodig hebben 179
 noemen (naar) 37
 nog 81, 267
 nog altijd/steeds 267
 nog een 14
 nog een keer 7
 nog eens 7
 nog maar 193
 nog weten 228
 nogal 218
 noodzakelijk(erwijs) 178
 noot 185
 normaal 184
 normaliter 184
 nota 185
 nota bene 185
 nota nemen van 186
 noteren 305
 notitie 185
 notitie nemen van 186
 nou 186
 nu 186
 nummer 187
 nuttigen 156, 163
 of 122, 302
 of dat 122
 offerte, een - doen 189
 ogenblik 172
 ogenblik, op het 172
 om 1, 17, 97, 190
 om die reden 284
 om een uur of 1
 om en nabij 1
 om ... heen 17
 ombrengen 132
 omdat 18, 254
 omdoen 44, 215
 omdraaien, (zich) 292
 omhakken 60
 omheining 88
 omhoog- 143
 omhooggaan 234
 omkeren, (zich) 292
 omkijken 149
 omkleden, zich 41
 omkomen 66
 omkopen 34
 ommezijde 21
 omroepen 13, 37
 omruilen 41
 omslaan 41
 omslag 57
 omstreeks 1
 omtrent 1

omvang 255
 omvatten 54
 omzeilen 20
 omzichtig 40
 ondanks 180, 265
 onder 73
 onderbreken 31
 onderdaan 273
 onderduiken 117
 onderstaand(e) 95
 ondertekenen 253
 ondertoon 185
 onderverhuren 229
 ondervinden 83
 ondervinding 83
 onderwerp 273
 onderwijs 75
 onderwijzen 279
 onderwijzer 279
 onecht 142
 ongelijk 305
 ongewoon 68
 ongeveer 1
 onlangs 224
 onmiddellijk 123
 ontbieden 37
 ontbijt 163
 ontbijten 163
 ontbreken 170
 ontdekken 90
 ontdooien 166
 onthouden 131, 228
 onthouden, zich 64
 ontkennen 64
 ontkomen 20
 ontlasting 247
 ontmoeten 165, 204
 ontraden 4
 ontslapen 66
 ontsteken 144
 ontvluchten 94
 ontwaken 299
 ontwijken 20
 ontwikkeld 76
 ontzeggen, (zich) 64
 ontzettend 281
 ooit 82, 191
 ook 12, 81
 oor 112
 oord 205
 oordeel 195
 oorspronkelijk 197
 op 190
 opbellen 37, 233
 opbergen 131
 opblazen 28
 opdienen 244
 opdracht 196
 opdrinken 91
 opdrogen 73
 opeens 274
 opeisen 44
 open zijn 194
 opendoen 194
 openen 194
 opengaan 194
 openmaken 194
 openslaan 194
 openstaan 194
 openzetten 194
 opeten 75, 91
 opgroeien 109
 ophalen 44, 165, 204
 ophangen 113
 opheffen 143
 ophoren 275
 ophouden 268
 opinie 195
 opkijken 153, 275
 opklimmen 47
 opleiding 75
 opletten 149
 oplichten 143
 opmaken 91, 159, 264
 opmerken 186
 opnieuw 7
 oponthoud 266
 oppassen 149, 169, 292
 oppikken 204
 oprapen 51, 204
 oprijlaan 235
 oprit 235
 oproepen 37
 opruimen 45
 opschieten 119
 opschieten, met iem.
 kunnen 105
 opschrijven 305
 opschuiven 175
 opsparen 240
 opstappen 104, 140
 opsteken 144
 opstel 284
 opstijgen 143, 234
 opsturen 243
 optellen 3
 optillen 143
 optreden 15
 optrekken 32
 opvangen 41
 opvatten 277, 294
 opvoeden 277
 opvoeding 75
 onvoldoende, een -
 krijgen 84
 opwachten 299
 opzet, met 213
 opzettelijk 213
 opzetten 215
 opzoeken 153, 298
 orde 196
 ordinair 52, 197
 origineel 197
 over 1
 over- 7
 overdag 73
 overeenkomen 8
 overeenstemmen 8
 overgaan 199
 overheid 107
 overigens 35
 overjas 49
 overkomen 113
 overliden 66
 overnachten 264, 266
 overplaatsen 175
 overschrijven 57
 overstappen 41
 overtuigd 238
 overwaaien 28
 overweg met iem.
 kunnen 105
 overwegen 285
 paar, een 88, 259
 pachten 229
 pad 235
 pan 206, 288
 paper 263
 paragraaf 199
 pardon 262
 particulier 212
 pas 128, 193, 224
 passen 275
 passen op 39, 149, 169
 passeren 199
 pastoor 212
 pastor 212
 pech 156
 pedagogiek 75
 pel 202
 pellen 202
 pels 255
 penis 202
 penseel 31
 per 100
 per se 178
 per slot van rekening 7
 permitteren, zich 5
 persoon 203
 pertinent 62
 pet 38
 piemel 202
 pienter 46
 piepklein 147

pijn doen 120
 pijnlijk 76
 pik 202
 plaats 205, 235
 plaats, in de eerste 93
 plaatsbewijs 288
 plak 205
 plan, van - zijn 125
 plattegrond 161
 plavuizen 288
 plegen 296
 plek 205
 plezier 102
 plots 274
 plotseling 274
 plukken 204
 plus/minus 1
 poep 247
 poepen 247
 poetsen 45, 246
 pogen 292
 poort 103
 positie 127
 pot 206, 289
 praten 262
 predikant 212
 prefereren 208
 prepareren, (zich) 210
 pret 102
 priester 212
 prik 50
 privaat 212
 privé 212
 proberen 292
 probleem 291
 procédé 213
 procedure 213
 proces 213
 proef 281
 proef, op de - stellen 281
 proefschrift 284
 proefwerk 281
 proeven 279, 292
 proficiat 53
 profiteren van 295
 pudding 65
 raad 4
 raadgeving 4
 raar 59, 102, 271
 race(n) 236
 raden 110
 rapen 51, 204
 rapport 230
 rapporteren 230
 realiseren 222
 recent 224
 recentelijk 224
 rechts 232
 rechtvaardig 128
 recommanderen 225
 reddten 160, 240
 rede 263
 reden, om die 284
 redevoering 263
 reeds 11
 reet 21
 referaat 263
 reflecteren 225
 regelmatig 226
 regering 107
 reinigen 45
 reis 291
 rekenen 36
 relatie 227
 rennen 236
 rente 125
 repareren 230
 rieken 257
 rijden 72, 106, 236
 rijk 107
 rit 291
 roddelen 262
 roep 59
 roepen 37, 59
 rolgordijn 27
 rolluik 27
 rond, in het 17
 rondkijken 149
 rondom 17
 rubriek 51
 ruiken 257
 ruilen 41
 ruim 1
 ruimte 205, 235
 runnen 160, 236
 rustig 217
 ruzie 89
 ruzie hebben/maken 89
 ruziën 89
 saai 29
 samen 290
 samenleving 258
 sap 50
 saven 240
 schaal 69, 202
 schamen, zich 76
 schelen 162
 schelen ... of 128
 schenken 105
 schijnbaar 82, 189
 schijnen 15, 246
 schijnt 247
 schijten 247
 schikken 275
 schil 202, 255
 schilderen 199
 schillen 202
 schitteren 246
 schok, een - krijgen 248
 schokken 248
 scholier 271
 school 241
 schoolkind 271
 schoolmeester 279
 schoonmaken 45
 schotel 69
 schouwburg 283
 schreeuw 59
 schreeuwen 59
 schrikken, (zich) 284
 schroeien 32
 schuchter 252
 schuil houden, zich 117
 schuim 116
 schuimlaag 116
 schuin 69
 schuiven 175
 schutting 88
 schuw 252
 scooter 174
 scriptie 284
 sedert 254
 sedertdien 254
 seintje 253
 serieus 244
 serveren 244
 service(beurt) 244
 services 244
 servies 244
 shit 247
 shock, een - krijgen 248
 shockeren 248
 simpel 253
 sinds 254
 sindsdien 254
 slaap, in - komen/vallen 256
 slachten 132
 slagen (voor) 199
 slagen 273
 slank 285
 slechts 193
 slee 39
 slim 46
 slot 77
 slot, op - doen 49
 sluiten 49
 smaak 279
 smaken 78, 144, 279
 smal 177
 smelten 166
 smeren 214
 smerig 69
 smijten 287
 smoren 56

snappen 242, 294
 snee 205
 snel 85
 snelweg 235
 sneuvelen 66
 snijden 60
 snoeien 60
 snorfiets 174
 sommige 259
 soms 260
 soortgelijk 274
 sorry (hoor) 262
 sortering 297
 sparen 240
 specerij 265
 speciaal 780
 speech 263
 spelen 206
 spenderen 264
 spijs 96, 265
 spijten 116, 262
 spoedig 85, 261
 spraak 263
 spreken 262
 springen 104
 sproeien 301
 staan 21, 54, 275
 staan, blijven 268
 staan, in brand/in de fik 32
 staat 107
 staken 268
 starten 25
 steeds 7
 steeds, nog 267
 steel 112
 steelpan 206
 steken 214
 steken, in brand/
 de fik 33, 144
 stel 259
 stellen 214
 stellen, op de proef 281
 stelling 284
 step 174
 sterk 207
 sterkte 156, 207
 sterven 66
 stijgen 47, 104, 124, 234
 stil(letjes) 217
 stilhouden 268
 stillen 239
 stilstaan 268
 stilstand 268
 stilzetten 268
 stinken 257
 stoelgang 247
 stoep 97
 stoffer 31
 stom 272
 stomen 45
 stommeling 272
 stommerd 272
 stommerik 272
 stommiteit 272
 stoornis 71
 stopover 266
 stoppen (= to put) 214
 stoppen (= to stop) 268
 stopzetten 268
 storen 71
 storing 71
 stoven 56
 straat 235
 straks 123, 172, 261
 strijd 89
 strijden 89
 stront 247
 stroom 207
 student(e) 271
 studententehuis 111
 studeren 272
 stuk (= broken) 31
 stuk 116, 205
 stuk, een - of 1
 stukmaken 31
 stukslaan 31
 sturen 243
 succes 156
 succes hebben 273
 sudderen 56
 sufferd 272
 suggereren 274
 suggestie 274
 taak 127
 taart 36
 taille 299
 tal 187
 tamelijk 218, 221
 tand 290
 te eten geven 86
 te laat 138
 te midden van 167
 te voorschijn komen 15
 tegel 288
 tegemoetgaan 165
 tegemoetkomen 165
 tegemoetziën 152
 tegen 1, 190
 tegenhouden 211, 268
 tegenkomen 165
 tegenvallen 144
 tegenwoordig 186, 289
 thuis 118
 teken 253
 tekenen 253
 telefoneren 37, 233
 telefoontje geven 37
 telen 109
 telkens (weer) 7
 telwoord 187
 ten eerste 93
 ten einde lopen 77
 ten laatste 137
 tenminste 140
 ten onrechte 233
 tenslotte 7, 137
 terecht 232
 terechtkomen 135
 terug- 7
 terugkaatsen 225
 terwijl 18
 test 281
 testen 281
 tevoren 24
 tevreden 238
 tevreden stellen/zijn 239
 tezamen 290
 thans 186
 theater 283
 thema 273
 thuis 118
 thuiskomen 52
 thuisland 118
 ticket 288
 tijd 288
 tijdens 73
 tijdens de lunch 156
 tillen 143
 tin 289
 toch 7, 119, 180, 267
 tocht 291
 toe(tje) 65
 toebehoren (aan) 26
 toegangsbewijs 288
 toegen 4
 toehoren 146
 toekomst, in de 102
 toelachen 138
 toelaten 4, 142
 toen 283, 302
 toen al 12
 toenemen 124, 234
 toenmalig 283
 toentertijd 283
 toespraak 263
 toets 281
 toetsen 281
 toevoegen 3
 tonen, (zich) 250
 toom 13
 toornig 13
 tot dusver(re) 186
 tot nog toe 267
 tot nu toe 186

tot op de dag van
 vandaag 186, 289
 tot slot 137
 tot stilstand komen 268
 trachten 292
 trap, de - afgaan/
 afkomen 106
 trap, de - op gaan/
 komen 106
 trek hebben in 87
 treurig 238
 triest 238
 trommel 289
 trottoir 97
 trouwen (met) 161
 trouwens 3, 35
 trouwerij 161
 trouwpartij 161
 tuinder 103
 tuinier 103
 tuinman 103
 tussen de middag 156
 tussen de middag eten 156
 tussen twee haakjes 35
 tussenlanding 266
 typisch 271
 überhaupt 290
 uit- + verb 91
 uit 100
 uit je/het hoofd 139, 167
 uitbranden 32
 uitbuiten 295
 uitdagen 61
 uitdoen 215, 216, 292
 uitdraaien 216
 uiteindelijk 137
 uiteten 75
 uitgaan 79, 140
 uitgaan op 77
 uitgeven 264
 uithouden 135
 uitje 291
 uitkleden, zich 215
 uitlachen 138
 uitlezen 221
 uitlopen op 77
 uitmaken 162, 216
 uitproberen 292
 uitrekenen 36
 uitschakelen 216
 uitscheiden 268
 uitslapen 256
 uitsparen 240
 uitstapje 291
 uitstappen 104
 uitstesten 281
 uittrekken 215
 uitwerpsel 247
 uitwisselen 41
 uitzetten 215
 uitzien, er 15, 148, 152
 uitzien naar 152
 uitzitten 244
 universitair
 (hoofd)docent 280
 universiteit 241
 vaak 190
 vacature 127
 vak 273
 vak(gebied) 89
 valuta 59
 van 100
 van buiten 139, 167
 van nee zeggen 64
 van nu af aan 102, 186
 van plan zijn 125
 van start gaan 25
 van tevoren 24
 vanaf 100
 vanaf nu 186
 vanavond 183
 vandaag 289
 vandaag de dag 186, 289
 vandaan 100
 vandaar 284
 vangen 41
 vannacht 183
 vanuit 100
 varen 106
 variatie 297
 variëte 297
 variëteit 297
 vast 62
 vastmaken 128
 vechten 89
 vechtpartij 89
 vel 255
 veld 89
 vellen 60
 veranderen 41
 verantwoord 231
 verantwoordelijk 231
 verantwoordelijkheid 231
 verantwoording 231
 ver- + verb, zich 305
 verbazen, (zich) 275
 verbazing 275
 verbeelden, zich 122
 beelding 123
 verbergen, (zich) 117
 verbeteren 57
 verbinden 128
 verblijf 266
 verblijven 266
 verbouwen 32, 109
 verbranden 32
 verbreken 31
 verbruiken 295
 verder + verb 54
 verder zeggen 3
 verderop 181
 verdieping 94
 verdrietig 238
 verdwaald 153
 verdwalen 153
 vereisen 64
 vereiste 64
 verenigen, (zich) 128
 vereniging 258
 vergaan 66
 vergaderen 165
 vergaren, (zich) 51
 vergen 64, 277
 vergeten 98
 vergissen, zich 305
 vergissing 305
 vergroten 124
 verhandeling 284
 verhangen, (zich) 113
 verheffen 234
 verheugen, zich 152
 verhinderen 211
 verhogen 124, 234
 verhouding 227
 verhuizen 175
 verhuren 142, 229
 verkeerd 305
 verkiesen (boven) 208
 verkleeden, zich 41
 verkondigen 13
 verkondiging 13
 verkorten 249
 verkrijgen 103
 verlangen 64
 verlaten 140
 verleden 136, 201
 verlegen 252
 verlegen maken 76
 verlegen zitten 76
 verlegenheid, in -
 brengen 76
 verlenen 105
 verleren 98
 verliezen 153
 verloochenen 64
 verloofd 78
 verlopen 199
 verlore 153
 verlossen 240
 vermaken 41
 vermaken, zich 78
 vermeederen 124
 vermelden 230
 vermenigvuldigen 57

vermijden 20
 vermissen 170
 vermogen 207
 vermoorden 132
 vernemen 117, 139
 vernielen 66
 vernietigen 66
 vernoemen (naar) 37
 verongelukken 66
 veroorloven, zich 5
 verpachten 229
 verplaatsen 175
 verrassen 275
 verrassing 275
 verrekenen, (zich) 36
 verruilen 41
 vers 99
 verscheiden 68
 verscheidenheid 297
 verschillen van 68
 verschillend 68
 verschijnen 15
 verschonen 41
 verschrikkelijk 281
 verschrikken 248
 verschroeien 32
 verschuilen, zich 117
 versieren 160
 verslaan 230
 verslag 230
 verslag doen/uitbrengen 230
 verslapen, zich 256
 verslijten (voor) 277
 verstaan 41, 294
 verstand 169
 verstellen 230
 verstoppen, (zich) 117
 verstoren 71
 verstoring 71
 verstrijken 199
 versturen 243
 verte 70
 vertellen 280
 vertoeven 266
 vertonen, (zich) 250
 vertraagd worden 138
 vertraging hebben 138
 vertrek 235
 vertrekken 140
 vervaardigen 159
 vervelen, (zich) 29
 vervelend 29
 vervellen 202
 verven 199
 vervensen 41
 vervolg, in het 102
 vervolgen 54
 vervullen 244
 verwaarlozen 180
 verwachten, een kind 209
 verwachting, in - zijn 209
 verwant 227
 verwanten 227
 verwantschap 227
 verwennen 266
 verwezenlijken 222
 verwisselen 41
 verwoesten 66
 verwonden, (zich) 120
 verzadigd 75
 verzamelaar 51
 verzamelen, (zich) 51
 verzameling 51
 verzenden 243
 verzetten 175
 verzingen 169
 verzoeken 19
 verzorgen 39
 verzuimen 170, 180
 vestibule 111
 vet 69
 vettig 69
 vies 69
 vinden 87, 90, 285
 vinden, het met iem.
 kunnen 105
 visite, op - gaan/zijn 298
 visite (hebben/krijgen) 110
 visite hebben 298
 vla(ai) 36
 vlakbij/vlak bij 47, 177
 vlam vatten 33
 vlees 165
 vleeswaren 165
 vleien 93
 vliegen 106
 vloeken 276
 vloer 94
 vloer, over de - hebben/
 komen 110
 vluchten 94
 vlug 85
 voeden 86
 voedsel 96
 voedsel geven 86
 voelen, (zich) 87
 voer/voeder 96
 voeren/voederen 86
 voetpad 97
 voldaan 238
 voldoen aan 239
 voldoende krijgen 199
 voldoende geven/krijgen 239
 volgend(e) 95, 181
 volgens 195
 volgorde 196
 volhouden 135
 volk 203
 volledig 52
 volstrekt 52, 62
 voltooid 52
 voltooiën 91
 voor 97
 voor elkaar krijgen 160
 voor het eerst 93
 vooral 80, 174
 vooralsnog 267
 voorbereid zijn 210
 voorbereiden, (zich) 210
 voorbij 201
 voorbijgaan 199
 voorbijrijden 199
 voor(dat) 24
 voordeel 85
 voordien 24
 voordoen, zich 113
 voordracht 263
 voorhebben 125
 voorheen 24
 voorkeur, bij - doen 208
 voorkeur geven aan 208
 voorkomen 113, 211
 voorlezen 221
 voornamelijk 174
 voornemen, het - hebben 125
 voornemen, zich 61, 125
 voornemens zijn 125
 voorstel 274
 voorstellen 274
 voorstellen, (zich) 122, 126
 voortaan 102, 186
 voortduren 54
 voortzetten 54
 voorzichtig 40
 vorig 136
 vraag 64
 vraag stellen 19
 vragen 19, 64
 vreedzaam 217
 vreemd 59, 271
 vreemdeling 271
 vreselijk 281
 vreten 75
 vreezen 6
 vriend(in) 100
 vriezen 198
 vrij 218
 vrijwel 10
 vroeg(er) 261
 vroeger 24, 191
 vroeger, verb + - 296
 vrouw(tje) 303
 vrucht 101
 vuil 69

- vuur 92
 waaïen 27
 waarschuwen 133
 wacht houden 301
 wachten op 299
 wagen 39
 wagen, (zich) 61
 wagon 39
 waken 301
 wakker maken/worden 299
 wand 300
 wandelen 300
 wandeling, een - maken 300
 wanneer 302
 want 254
 wassen (= to grow) 109
 wassen (= to wash) 45
 wat 259
 water geven 301
 wederom 7
 weer 7
 weerkaatsen 225
 weerspiegelen, (zich) 225
 weg 235
 wegbrengen 277
 wegdek 97, 235
 weggaan 140
 wegraken 153
 wei(de) 89
 weiland 89
 weinig 88, 147
 wekken 299
 wel eens 82, 191, 201, 260
 weldra 261
 wenden, zich 292
 wenen 59
 werk 127, 304
 werkelijk 223
 werken 106, 304
 werker 304
 werkstuk 284
 werpen 287
 weten 133, 228
 weten te 160
 wetenschap 242
 wetenschappelijk
 medewerker 279
 wettelijk 142
 wettig 142
 wezen 21
 wijf(je) 303
 wijlen 138
 wijzen 250
 wijzigen 41
 wild (n) 165
 wisselen 41
 woede 13
 woedend 13
 wonden 120
 wonen 148
 woordje, een 147
 worden 21, 103, 292
 wuiven 302
 zaal 111, 235
 zacht(jes) 217
 zagen 60
 zakken (voor) 84
 zeer 218, 297
 zeer doen 120
 zeggen 262, 280
 zeggen, willen 164
 zeker 62
 zeldzaam 271
 zelfrijzend bakmeel 95
 zelfs 81
 zelfstandig 197
 zenden 243
 zetten 159, 214
 zeur(piet) 29
 zich aankleden 215
 zich aanmelden 230
 zich aansluiten bij 128
 zich aantrekken 186
 zich amuseren 78
 zich bedenken 285
 zich bevinden 21, 90
 zich bewegen 175
 zich bewust zijn/worden v. 222
 zich bezeren 120
 zich generen 76
 zich gereedmaken 210
 zich haasten 119
 zich herinneren 228
 zich indenken 122, 285
 zich interesseren voor 125
 zich laten zien 250
 zich melden 230
 zich omdraaien 292
 zich omkeren 292
 zich omkleden 41
 zich onthouden 64
 zich ontzeggen 64
 zich permitteren 5
 zich prepareren 210
 zich realiseren 222
 zich schamen 76
 zich schrikken 248
 zich schuil houden 117
 zich tonen 250
 zich uitkleden 215
 zich ver- + verb 305
 zich verbazen 275
 zich verbeelden 122
 zich verbergen 117
 zich verenigen 128
 zich vergaren 51
 zich vergissen 305
 zich verhangen 113
 zich verheugen op 152
 zich verkleeden 41
 zich vermaken 78
 zich veroorloven 5
 zich verrekenen 36
 zich verschuilen 117
 zich verslapen 256
 zich verstoppert 117
 zich vertonen 250
 zich vervelen 29
 zich verwonden 120
 zich verzamelen 51
 zich voelen 87
 zich voorbereiden 210
 zich voordoen 113
 zich voornemen 61, 125
 zich voorstellen 122, 126
 zich wagen 61
 zich weerspiegelen 225
 zich wenden tot 292
 zien 186, 242
 zijn 21
 zijweg 235
 zin hebben in 87
 zitten 21, 54
 zitvlak 21
 zo 257, 261
 zo ... als 18
 zo dadelijk 123, 261
 zo gauw 261
 zo iets 274
 zo meteen 123, 172, 261
 zo (niet/ja) 122
 zo'n 1, 274
 zoals 18
 zodra 123, 172, 261
 zoek, op - zijn naar 151
 zoek zijn 153
 zoeken (naar) 151
 zoekraken 153
 zoen 133
 zoenen 133
 zoëven 128
 zojuist 128, 172
 zonnescherm 27
 zonwering 27
 zorgen voor 39, 40, 149
 zorgvuldig 40
 zowat 1, 10
 zuiveren 45
 zulk 274
 zwaaien 302
 zwakzinning 253
 zwanger 209
 zweren 276

For a speaker of English it is often very difficult to understand the difference in meaning between e.g. the Dutch words 'bloem' and 'meel'. This book seeks to supplement the information offered in English-Dutch dictionaries, which, due to the constraints of space applicable in all dictionaries, often provide too little additional information to help the learner choose the correct word for a given context. This is particularly the case with Dutch-English dictionaries as all but the very simplest have been written with only the needs of the Dutch learner of English in mind, not the reverse. This book describes how to use approximately 2500 common Dutch words, classified under about 500 English entries, many of them multiple. This list contains many of the common lexical pitfalls for English-speaking people learning Dutch. It is a useful addition to a good grammar and dictionary for any student of Dutch.

Bruce Donaldson is senior lecturer in Dutch in the Department of Germanic Studies and Russian at the University of Melbourne.

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