Lost and gained in translation
Pragmatic markers in an English source text and its Swedish target text

Author: Cecilia Ek
Supervisor: Magnus Levin
Examiner: Jukka Tyrkkö
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Abstract

This study analyses the translation of some pragmatic markers in an informal English non-fiction text and its Swedish target text. The pragmatic markers in focus are interjections, modal adverbs and question tags, and the sources of the Swedish modal particle *ju* are also analysed. While pragmatic markers are more common in spoken language or fiction, in this case they were considered important to the interpersonal function and casual style of the non-fiction text. The results were also compared to data from a non-fiction parallel corpus. In total, the ST contained 31 of the selected types of pragmatic markers, compared to 29 in the TT. However, there were considerable variations between types of marker, with less than a quarter being translated as the same type (e.g., interjection as interjection); this reflects the fact that the two languages inherently prefer different types of markers in some cases, with question tags being considerably more common in English, while the modal particles were the most common pragmatic markers in Swedish. There were no zero translations of pragmatic markers, indicating that they were not considered as superfluous or optional as might be indicated in previous research. The fact that *ju* most commonly had a zero source (in the corpus examples as well), and so was ‘added’ in translation, illustrates the lack of clear translation equivalents for many common pragmatic markers, as well as the translator’s attempt to domesticate the TT.

Key words
Pragmatic markers, modal particles, translation, English, Swedish, zero translation

Thank you…

…to the team at the Oslo Multilingual Corpus for allowing me access to the ESPC, and to my fellow students for your encouraging comments.
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1. Introduction

When we say things like “the word lagom only exists in Swedish,” we make the common mistake of assuming a one-to-one correspondence in meaning between languages. Gellerstam (2005: 204) suggests that there is “a clear tendency to look for one single standard translation for a word” because that is often how we start learning languages: using dictionaries, memorising lists of words and their foreign equivalents, which are often given without any synonyms or context. This, in Gellerstam’s opinion (ibid.), often causes what has come to be known as ‘translationese’: a target text where the source language shines through, to the extent that the text becomes unidiomatic, if not ungrammatical. One example of this might be the use of question tags to express modality in Swedish; Gellerstam suggests that the idiomatic way of translating English question tags into Swedish is generally to use words such as ju, väl and nog, rather than tags like eller hur? (2005: 207).

While one-to-one correspondence is elusive enough among seemingly straightforward nouns and verbs, when taking into consideration semantic overlap and culturally specific connotations, it is virtually non-existent among words such as prepositions, and expressions like idioms and metaphors. One particularly interesting group of words are the so-called pragmatic markers or discourse particles. Pragmatically speaking, these can for example have subjective functions, that mark the speaker’s own attitude to what is said, and interactional functions, that mark speaker assumptions about “the hearer’s relation to the proposition” (Andersen 2001: 69). Such words, like well, really, for God’s sake, right? and so on, will have a range of meanings depending on their context. A subcategory of pragmatic markers are the so-called modal particles, such as the above Swedish ju, väl and nog, which lack formal English counterparts, according to Aijmer & Altenberg (2002: 29) among others.

Several scholars have tried first to define and categorise pragmatic markers and then to investigate how they are translated between various languages that may inherently prefer certain types of markers to other ones. This can be illustrated by the translation of a typically English marker, a question tag, into a typically Swedish marker, a modal particle, as seen in (1) (from the ST and TT analysed in this study).

(1) There are plenty of screamingly insecure married people out there already, you know? Världen dräller ju redan av vansinnigt osäkra gifta människor.
A lot of research in this area appears to be based on data from either spoken language (e.g. Andersen 2001; Schriffin 1987) or fiction (e.g., Mattsson 2009); many of the studies cited below also appear to primarily have made use of the fiction part of corpora (e.g. Aijmer 2016) or at least both the fiction and non-fiction parts (e.g. Aijmer & Altenberg 2002). This is unsurprising, as the markers are typical of casual language and interaction rather than, say, academic texts. However, certain non-fiction texts address the reader more or less directly, or contain direct quotes of spoken language, and thus make use of pragmatic markers. This may be true of biographies, editorials, self-help books and so on to various extents, and it was therefore considered of interest to analyse the translation of such markers in a work of non-fiction.

1.1 Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to analyse the translation of certain pragmatic markers from English to Swedish (see inclusion criteria in section 2.1), and the English sources of the Swedish TT modal particle ju, in a non-fiction text with a rather casual tone.

This study will answer the following research questions:

- How are interjections, modal adverbs and question tags translated into Swedish?
- What ST words, phrases or clauses are translated into the modal particle ju in the TT?
- What patterns, if any, can be found of more or less common translation equivalents?

1.2 Material

The source text for the translation analysed in this study is chapters 3 and 9 from Kate Harding and Marianne Kirby’s 2009 book Lessons from the Fat-o-sphere: Quit Dieting and Declare a Truce with Your Body. It could be categorised as a cross between a motivational handbook and an argumentative text, laced with biographical anecdotes. As such, it is both informative, argumentative and instructive. The style is mostly casual, with a personal tone that gives the impression of the authors trying to have a friendly chat with the reader, using direct questions, self-mention and invariant question tags (see 2.3.3 below), but the tone is also rather academic in places, with occasional citations from scientific journals and including clauses such as the speed at which your desires are met will be directly proportional to the amount of effort you put out. The target reader could be described as educated, fairly open-minded, and interested in the
fat-acceptance movement; indeed, the authors do explicitly address the reader with the words “Yeah, I called you fat” in the introduction.

The motivation for this choice of ST was that its style means that there is a potential for it containing a high enough number of pragmatic markers despite it being a work of non-fiction. It was translated with a Swedish target audience similar to that of the ST in mind.

1.3 Method

In her analysis of pragmatic markers, Estling Hellberg (2013: 4–5) used theory and previous research as tools to help her find strategies for translating the markers. A different approach was used in this case, as the translation was done first and the results then analysed and compared to previous research.

1.3.1 Translation strategy

My translation strategy was based on Nord’s principle of functionality, or that “the translation purpose determines the choice of translation method and strategy” (2006: 142). Nord discusses four different textual functions, two of which are the expressive and appellative ones (ibid.: 134). These are particularly interesting for the purposes of this study, as they concern the sender’s and receiver’s respective attitudes towards a proposition; examples of the former include interjections and expressions of opinion (ibid.: 137) and the latter covers appeals to the reader such as imperatives, questions and modal verbs like should (ibid.: 138). Nord suggests that an expressive phrase such as an interjection can be “transferred” into the TL without any need for explicitation or explanation (ibid.: 140), while the appellative function relies on the reader’s cooperation and is thus more dependent on shared background knowledge, value systems and the like (ibid.). This means that the translator will either have to adapt the ST appeal to the target culture, or explain the original expression and thereby change its function (e.g. by explaining why a pun is funny in the SL, rather than exchanging it for a joke with a similar function in the TL) (ibid.). As Nord points out, the choice depends on what the function of the TT is. In this case, as the aim was to maintain the original function and style of the ST, with its high level of suggested reader interaction, the option of culturally adapting certain expressions was selected; Nord (ibid.: 141) acknowledges that this is similar to what Venuti (1995: 20) terms a domesticating translation strategy. This also applies to parts of the text with a purely referential function. For example, a
ST phrase such as *if bunny slippers count toward the No Shirt, No Shoes, No Service rule at your local grocery store* presupposes certain information that the TT reader probably lacks, and this would remind the reader that the original text was written with ‘someone else’ in mind. The translation *om det skulle funka att gå och handla i kanintoofflor* could be described as a cultural adaptation: a pragmatic equivalent to the ST but clearly not a semantic one. This strategy was highly relevant for translating the pragmatic markers: maintaining the original function, in this case, could be interpreted as ‘what words would they have used if they had written the text in Swedish?’.

### 1.3.2 Data analysis

After translating the text, the question was how to select the pragmatic markers for analysis. This required a working definition and selection criteria based on previous research (see 2.1 below). Once a definition was in place, the relevant pragmatic markers of the ST were identified and their translations analysed. The relevant modal particles of the TT were also identified and their sources in the ST analysed. The COCA corpus and Korp corpus tool (both online) were used for comparison and support in the qualitative analyses. The COCA, or Corpus of Contemporary American English, was considered appropriate as the ST analysed in this study is a contemporary American English work. The COCA consists of over 520 million words of texts and spoken material dating from 1990 to 2015; the sources are an equal mixture of fiction, popular magazines, academic and newspaper texts. Korp is a tool for searching up to 232 different Swedish corpora; in this case, the newspaper, magazine and blog sources were selected\(^1\), adding up to around 2,000 million words, with most of the material dating from 1990 to 2017.

Again, like Estling Hellberg (2013), I used the English-Swedish Parallel Corpus, or ESPC (online), for qualitative as well as quantitative comparison with my results where applicable. The corpus contains both English and Swedish STs and their respective TTs in the other language, making it possible to search for sources of a translated word as well as translations of a known source word. While Estling-Hellberg (2013) only used the fiction part (as pragmatic markers are more common in e.g. dialogue and casual language), I decided to only use the non-fiction part, for a more relevant comparison with my own data, even though that part was likely to yield fewer examples. The ESPC non-fiction part contains just under 1.5 million words in total, with English STs, Swedish TTs, Swedish STs and English TTs in roughly equal

\(^1\) More specifically, the selected corpora were Finlandssvenska texter (excluding Skön- och facklitteratur), Sociala medier, Tidningstexter and Tidskrifter.
proportions; the text samples date from 1980 onwards and include scientific and legal
Although the different sample sizes of my ST (consisting of around 4,800 words) and
the ESPC made any straightforward quantitative comparisons impossible, the ESPC was
still considered useful for comparing the distribution of different translation and source
alternatives.

2. Background theory

In this section, a working definition of pragmatic markers is proposed, and the selection
of markers analysed in this study is motivated. The difficulties in translating pragmatic
markers in general are briefly discussed, and the functions and translation issues of the
specific groups of markers selected for analysis are described.

2.1 Defining pragmatic markers

A full account of all the different suggestions of how to define and categorise these
words is beyond the scope of this essay. As Brinton (1996: 30) puts it, “the definitions
of pragmatic particles found in the literature seem to bear little resemblance to one
another”, and if anything, the selection has become even wider since 1996. For the
purposes of this study, a definition is nevertheless required as a basis for selecting
appropriate words for analysis, and for ease of comparison with the findings of previous
studies.

2.1.1 Definition and selection of pragmatic markers in general

The term ‘pragmatic marker’ (which appears to have been coined by Brinton (1996))
was chosen over the other commonly used ‘discourse marker’, as the latter arguably has
stronger spoken-language connotations and does not describe the functions of these
markers as clearly. A much-cited definition of discourse markers is Schriffin’s
“sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk” (1987: 31). This appears
to mainly reflect the functions that Brinton (1996: 29) calls textual, rather than
interpersonal, and Schriffin discusses e.g. connectives like and, but and or, even though
she does bring up “meta-knowledge of speaker/hearer shared knowledge” in the context
of markers such as I mean and you know (1987: 268). Brinton also notes that many
previous researchers have seen these words (regardless of what they have called them)
as “primarily structural” with functions such as providing cohesion and coherence, or
marking turn-taking in spoken discourse (ibid.: 30–31). This is further supported by Fraser’s (2009: 296) definition of discourse markers and “discourse structure markers” as subtypes of pragmatic markers that function as links between discourse segments, a view largely shared by Aijmer, Foolen & Vandenbergen (2006: 101). Fraser’s examples of discourse markers include so, anyway and as a result (2009: 296). The other function of pragmatic markers, the interpersonal one, Brinton describes as “the expression of the speaker's attitudes, evaluations, judgments, expectations, and demands, as well as of the nature of the social exchange, the role of the speaker and the role assigned to the hearer” (ibid.: 38). These could be exemplified by Fraser’s other suggested types of pragmatic markers, including “Basic Pragmatic Markers” such as please and I promise, “Assessment Markers” like sadly, and “(Non)Deference Markers” like sir or you jerk (2009: 295–296). With regard to syntax, Kaltenböck, Keizer & Lohmann discuss pragmatic markers as “extra-clausal constituents” that are set off from the rest of the clause and thus both grammatically and semantically optional (2016: 1–6).

Depending on context and mode of analysis, a range of criteria and characteristics of pragmatic markers have thus been suggested. Brinton lists some of the most frequently proposed criteria, as used by various scholars (1996: 33–35):

- Pragmatic markers are mainly used in spoken rather than written discourse, and generally not deemed appropriate in formal writing.
- They have little or no lexical or grammatical meaning (although this has been the subject of some debate), making them optional elements often occurring ‘outside’ the rest of a syntactic structure.
- They are a diverse group of often multifunctional words and structures, and can include anything from short interjections up to whole clauses.

As no spoken data will be analysed in this study, the first criterion is less relevant, although the connection between pragmatic marker content and level of formality of a written text was one of the reasons for selecting the ST in question. Based on the other criteria and functions discussed by Brinton, however, a simple working definition of pragmatic markers for this study would be words, phrases or clauses that have an interpersonal function, while being grammatically and semantically optional in the context. The interpersonal function covers expressions of speaker attitude as well as attempts at reader ‘interaction’ and assumptions made about what the reader thinks,
knows or should know. (This excludes the textual or discourse markers, like *now* and
*so.*) The definition covers a wide range of markers, but interjections, modal adverbs and
question tags were considered particularly interesting from a translation perspective,
and these were consequently the subtypes of markers selected for analysis in this essay.
Firstly, single-word markers, like interjections (especially highly multifunctional ones
such as *well*), were found to be more difficult to translate than whole clauses with a
pragmatic commentary function. Secondly, the multifunctionality of modal adverbs like
*of course* meant that it was easier to compare different translations of the same word,
which would hardly have been possible with more varied pragmatic expressions, and it
also allowed me to compare my findings to previous studies. Thirdly, as question tags
appear to be considerably more common in English than in Swedish, and their ‘correct’
translation has been debated, they, too, were included in the analysis. Finally, Swedish
modal particles and their sources were of interest, as will be discussed below.

### 2.1.2 Definition of modal particles

Defining modal particles, in comparison to pragmatic markers in general, is relatively
easy. They are common in German, Dutch and the Scandinavian languages, while
English is generally considered to lack such particles, according to e.g. Aijmer &
scholars consider them a subcategory of pragmatic markers, with similar functions:
according to Schoonjans (2015: 4), for example, the modal particles “mark the speaker’s
position towards the content of his utterance, how this content relates to the context, or
how the hearer is expected to react”, which is clearly in line with the interpersonal
functions of pragmatic particles described above. As Schoonjans also notes, the
particles have no inherent propositional meaning but rather gain their meaning from
whichever context they appear in (ibid.), and, like other pragmatic markers, they are
consequently optional in the sense that they are “not part of the truth-conditional
content” of an utterance, as Aijmer (2009: 111) puts it. However, modal particles have
some important distinguishing features. Schoonjans (2015: 4) and Aijmer (2016: 151)
agree that syntactically, they always have their place immediately after the finite verb,
in contrast to other pragmatic markers, such as interjections and modal adverbs, which
can appear clause-initially or outside the rest of a clause (ibid.: 151–152). To illustrate
this difference, *Of course, we can sell the house* could be rewritten as *We can, of*
course, sell the house or We can sell the house, of course, but Vi kan ju sälja huset cannot be rewritten as e.g. *Ju vi kan sälja huset.

2.2 The optional aspect
In summary, pragmatic markers can convey the speaker’s attitude towards the proposition, as well as assumptions about the hearer’s knowledge and attitude. While the markers can thus be used for such diverse purposes as politeness, expression of surprise, requests for further information and so on, they are at the same time considered optional. Aijmer (1996: 400) explains how after all in (2) does not contribute to the content of the utterance, and could thus be removed without making the sentence ungrammatical or changing the meaning:

(2) That annoyed her even more, because, after all, they were her foxes. [Aijmer 1996: 400]

This means that after all here is optional, but it still has a function, i.e. to indicate “the existence of adequate evidence” (ibid.). As Brinton puts it, the marker is “grammatically optional and semantically empty [but not] superfluous” (1996: 35); indeed, omitting pragmatic markers may render an utterance unnatural, awkward or impolite, and according to Mattsson, the markers are valuable as they provide information about the speaker or the context (2009: 12). The functions of certain markers will be discussed in more detail below, as an understanding of their function is key in analysing their translation.

2.3 Translation of pragmatic markers in general
Pragmatic markers are generally considered difficult to translate; Aijmer & Altenberg describe them as “highly language-specific” (2002: 19) and observe that elements of a language that “do not contribute to the propositional content” can be impossible to translate due to their lack of precise equivalents (ibid.: 29). They do point out that full equivalence between languages is uncommon and often restricted to well-defined terms, and partial equivalence is more common by far (2002: 20–21). Altenberg, who studied adverbial connectors, found that no translation equivalents had a mutual correspondence over 80%, and argues that omission or greater variation in translation indicates either that the words in question are less important, i.e. that they do not greatly change the
meaning of the utterance, or that there is a gap in the ‘system’ of one of the languages (1999: 255).

Aijmer & Altenberg found that ‘optional’ words, in this case adverbial connectors that, just like pragmatic markers, do not “contribute to the propositional content” of the text, were often omitted even when a good TL equivalent existed; the authors conclude that these elements would probably have been considered redundant, based on contextual information, and thus omitted in the TT (2002: 22–23). In other cases, however, zero translation could be put down to non-equivalence (ibid.: 24). Non-equivalence could also lead to great variation in translation (ibid.: 25), which is in line with Altenberg’s above point about gaps in the system. In Mattsson’s study of the pragmatic markers well, you know, I mean and like, only half of the markers were translated, but this could be partly due to spatial restrictions, as her data consisted of subtitles (2009: 274). An interesting phenomenon is what could be termed the opposite of zero translation: Aijmer & Altenberg (2002: 35) observe that an item such as well, which lacks any straightforward equivalent in Swedish, was often inserted into English TTs “for naturalness” even when it had no clear source in the original. Similarly, Aijmer (1999: 306) mentions an example where the modal particle ju was added to the translated modal verb:

\[(3)\] Someone may have heard Någon kan ju ha hört något

[Ameka 1999: 306]

Below, I will outline previous research and conclusions regarding some of the most commonly and extensively analysed markers that also appear in my own material. As the Swedish modal particles ju and väl are discussed as target rather than source items in this study, the focus is on their functions in relation to potential English equivalents, rather than on previous analyses of how they have been translated into English.

2.4 Functions and translation of specific groups of markers

2.4.1 Interjections

Grammars tend not to devote much space to interjections; Quirk et al. (1985: 74) do not define them, but describe them as “grammatically peripheral” with little connection to the rest of a sentence. Ameka defines interjections as “words which can stand on their
own as utterances and which refer to mental acts” (1992: 111). They are easily
categorised as pragmatic markers, as all their functions as listed by Norrick (2009: 867–
869), such as expressing surprise, expressing positive or negative emotions, or
addressing and involving the listener, are connected to speaker attitude or interaction,
and they are generally syntactically independent of the rest of a sentence (ibid.: 867).
Examples include yeah, well, hey, oh boy and damn (ibid.: 887). As Norrick (ibid.: 867)
points out, interjections are generally associated with spoken language, and could thus
be seen as markers of informality in a written context.

While an interjection like hey often has an interactive function, calling for the
hearer’s attention, more or less creative expletives say more about the speaker’s
emotions or reactions (ibid.: 869). An interesting example is why: in its use as an
interjection rather than a question, the OED (online) describes it as “an expression of
surprise […] either in reply to a remark or question, or on perceiving something
unexpected”, while Norstedts (2010) adds indignation and protest to its uses, and
suggests Swedish translations such as nej men or ju:

(4) Why, a child knows that! Det vet ju minsta småbarn!
[Norstedts 2010]

The Cambridge Dictionary (online) additionally describes the exclamation why as
stylistically “mainly US or old-fashioned”.

Well as a pragmatic marker has been much analysed; Aijmer, Foolen &
Vandenbergen (2006: 110) describe it as “notoriously vague and versatile”. Mattsson
points out that while the marker is optional, it still carries a certain level of meaning,
and removing it can make the utterance sound awkward (2009: 78). Aijmer &
Vandenbergen (2003: 1124) find that well can have a textual function, in line with those
of discourse markers rather than pragmatic markers as described in section 2.1, but that
it can also work pragmatically as a marker of politeness, as an interjection, or as an
expression of deliberation and hesitation. These authors decide to view well as an
“interpersonal element” which brings the speaker’s subjective assessment of “the truth
value of the proposition” into the context (ibid.: 1127), but note that it can also function
as a politeness marker or a hedge (ibid.: 1128), to “negotiate common ground,” and to
express various different stances depending on the context, including agreement,
acceptance, disagreement and resignation (ibid.:1129). Aijmer, Foolen & Vandenbergen
(2006: 110) put it more concisely when they claim that the core meaning of well is
acceptance, or “knowing this, accepting this as a starting point, there is something else I want to say”.

In their analysis of zero translations of pragmatic markers, Aijmer & Altenberg (2002: 33) found that well was omitted in the Swedish TTs in 21% of the instances, and that the word was otherwise translated in 29 different ways. The zero translation was the most common alternative, which the authors put down to the lack of a clear corresponding lexical item in the TL (ibid.). They also note that, for the same reasons, well does not occur as often in English target texts as in source texts (ibid.: 35).

Interestingly, one of their examples illustrates the point that excluding a pragmatic marker, while not altering the propositional meaning, still affects the utterance as a whole:

(5) “Well, hi there!” she said “Hej, hej!” sade hon muntert

As Aijmer & Altenberg point out, the TT here might come across as “less polite and more abrupt” than the ST (2002: 35).

2.4.2 Modal adverbs

According to Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 767), modal adverbs, like surely and probably, are generally adverbs that express “the speaker’s assessment of the truth of the proposition”. As Quirk et al. (1985: 438) observe, the definition and classification of adverbs in general is not straightforward. Many different subcategorizations can be found in the literature, and there is also considerable overlap between form and function as several scholars (see e.g. Suzuki 2015) use the terms ‘adverb’ and ‘adverbial’ essentially synonymously. Thus, while e.g. of course, after all and in fact could be considered prepositional phrases functioning as modal adverbials, they are treated as modal adverbs in this study, based on the discussion of such fixed phrases as modal adverbs in previous research (e.g. Aijmer & Altenberg 2002: 25) and the fact that they are classified as adverbs by Quirk et al. (1985: 663).

The classification and analysis of modal adverbs as pragmatic markers has also caused considerable scholarly discussion. Aijmer (2002: 251) describes how actually, for example, has taken on a pragmatic marker function through a process known as grammaticalization, but notes that it might not be very easy to determine when it is used
in its original adverb sense (meaning ‘in actuality’) and when it has a more interpersonal and pragmatic function (ibid.: 252–253). Consequently, she decides to use position in the sentence as a criterion, with the clause-initial or -final positions indicating pragmatic-marker function, while actually appearing inside the clause is treated as an ‘ordinary’ adverb affecting some part of the clause (ibid.), which is in line with Kaltenböck, Keizer & Lohmann’s discussion of pragmatic markers as “extra-clausal constituents” (2016: 1–6).

Altenberg (1999: 257) mentions after all, an “explanatory” adverb that could be used as a pragmatic marker as it indicates a presupposition of known information and thus mostly serves as a reminder. According to the Cambridge Dictionary (online), it can be used “to add information that shows that what you have just said is true”, while one of the meanings listed by the OED (online) is “in spite of any indications or expectations to the contrary”. Going back to Aijmer’s example (2) above, the suggestion that after all indicates “the existence of adequate evidence” could be said to combine the Cambridge and OED definitions: it reminds the reader of a fact that s/he is expected to be aware of.

Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen (2002–2003: 18–19) discuss of course, a marker that indicates that the speaker is certain of the proposition and may also include an assumption that the hearer should accept or already know what is being proposed (ibid.: 20). This marker can also be used when the speaker and hearer are not actually in agreement but the speaker wishes to imply that this is the case (ibid.), as a way to persuade the hearer or as a form of politeness (ibid.: 34). The most common Swedish translations of of course in Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen’s study were the adverbs naturligtvis, förstås and givetvis. Other translations were clausal expressions, such as det är klart att, and modal particles such as ju (2002–2003: 22 & 27). Förstås was more common in the fiction corpus, which could be expected as it is less formal than givetvis or naturligtvis. Also, zero translations were more common in the Dutch non-fiction TTs than in the fiction corpus, which was put down to the lower need for interpersonal markers in non-fiction (2002–2003: 22). The modal particle ju, in contrast to the adverb naturligtvis, was considered to place more emphasis on shared knowledge and to be less emphatic (ibid.: 28). Finally, so-called explicitation phrases, that “reveal the translator’s interpretation of the pragmatic meaning of of course,” such as det är klart att, were more common in fiction than in non-fiction (ibid.: 28–29).
2.4.3 Question tags

Andersen (2001), among others, has analysed question tags as pragmatic markers. To clarify the terminology, a tag question consists of an anchor and a question tag; as Baker (2015: 315) puts it, if the anchor is positive, the question tag is normally negative and vice versa: You’re tired, aren’t you? This type of question tag is called ‘canonical’.

Another type of tag, which is more relevant to the material discussed here, is the ‘invariant’ tag; this is independent of the proposition or syntax of the anchor, as in Baker’s example You told him, right? (ibid.), and a stronger indicator of informality than a canonical tag (ibid.: 316). Andersen describes right? and you know? as “interactionally meaningful markers” that have the function of involving the hearer, while not necessarily asking for the hearer’s actual opinion (2001: 70). Norrick suggests that tags “signal perceptions of knowledge” (1995: 688): in an example such as It’s not raining, is it? the speaker is uncertain of something but assumes the hearer to possess more information on the subject, thus inviting the hearer to share that information (ibid.: 689). On the other hand, the tag okay? is described by Stenström, Andersen & Hasund (2002: 178–179) as a way of checking for hearer objections against a non-negotiable proposition, and it is often used when giving instructions, without any softening function. Essentially, it means that “[the proposition] is true and you’d better admit it” (ibid.: 180).

Axelsson (2009: 82) notes that Swedish does not generally use canonical tag questions in the way that English does, but that it does have invariant tags and otherwise uses e.g. modal adverbs in place of a question tag (ibid.: 84). In Axelsson’s analysis of Swedish translations of English canonical question tags, around half of these were translated as invariant question tags such as eller hur? or va?, while the second most common structure was the modal particle väl (ibid.: 90). Aijmer similarly found question tags to be the most common translation equivalent of Swedish väl (2015: 177). Axelsson points out that the Swedish target texts contained noticeably more invariant tags than the Swedish source texts, indicating that the tags are overused in translation (2009: 98); she also notes that the only Swedish modal adverbs translated as question tags were the modal particles ju and väl. As mentioned in the introduction, Gellerstam goes as far as implying that only modal adverbs should be used as Swedish translations of question tags; as he acknowledges that invariant tags such as eller hur? do occur in Swedish original texts, this does appear rather a drastic recommendation (2005: 207–208).
Norrick has analysed the question tag *huh?* in some detail, describing several different functions of this American invariant tag which he characterises as “more like a universal, uncoded grunt than a proper lexical item of English” (1995: 689). Functions include the indication of uncertainty and request for further information, as described above, but *huh* is also commonly added to convey irony and invite the hearer to agree with the speaker (ibid.: 690). For example, a statement such as *Nice car, huh?* invites the hearer to agree that the car is actually nice, or that it most certainly is not, depending on the tone of the speaker (and the state of the car). Norrick also notes that this tag, in his spoken language material, nearly always elicited a response from the hearer, making it a strongly involving feature of conversation (ibid.).

An interesting alternative to question tags is what Petersson & Josefsson (2010) call “Yes/No-question operators”, or clause-initial equivalents to question tags, such as the Swedish *nog* and *visst* (ibid.: 184). Thus, the utterances *Filmen var bra, eller hur?* and *Visst var filmen bra?* are considered functional equivalents. Like *huh*, *visst* as a question operator is described as strongly involving (ibid.: 184).

### 2.4.4 Swedish modal particles

The modal particles discussed in the present study are *ju*, meaning essentially ‘as you and I both know’, according to Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999: 114), and *väl*, which could be paraphrased as *I suppose* or *I guess*, according to Aijmer (2015: 174). As mentioned above, most authors agree that the modal particles are formally different from other pragmatic markers in that they are less syntactically flexible. Svensson points out that they cannot be placed clause-initially, and that they cannot be used on their own, unlike adverbs such as *maybe* or *of course* (2009: 148); she connects this to the multifunctionality of *ju* and the fact that it gains its meaning from the context. She also compares her findings to Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson’s above definition and observes that her data contains many examples of *ju* being used in situations where the listener cannot actually know anything about the events described (ibid.: 149). In this type of context, Svensson argues that the speaker uses *ju* to invite agreement from the listener (ibid.: 150), or even as a power strategy to support their own opinion in an argument (ibid.: 158–159); by referring to something as implicitly true, and indicating that the listener should also know this to be true, any arguments to the contrary are undermined. This is in line with Aijmer’s description of *ju* as a subjectivity marker.

---

2 Norrick spells it *hunh* to convey the nasal sound.
indicating “the speaker’s assumption that something is generally known or follows from the preceding discourse” (1999: 306). Svensson also observes that *ju* can be used to indicate a logical connection between clauses (2009: 161) or to remind the listener of something previously experienced or agreed on (ibid.: 163).

Aijmer & Altenberg (2002: 32) analysed the English sources of *ju* in Swedish translations in the ESPC (using both the fiction and the non-fiction parts) and found that the particle was more commonly added (i.e. had no clear equivalent in the source text) than translated, and that this was often the case when the ST contained a modal verb like *might* or *could*, or the word *know*.

Compared with *ju*, the modal particle *väl* expresses less certainty. Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999: 116) point out that it often involves an element of appealing to the listener for agreement or for further information. Aijmer describes additional functions such as hedging (2015: 180) and challenging a supposedly disagreeing listener (ibid.: 184).

3. Results and analysis

In several cases the same lexical item could be classed as a pragmatic marker in certain contexts and not in others. For example, *well* as a manner adverb (in e.g. *if your friends know you well*) clearly did not count as a pragmatic marker. Similarly, *väl* as a manner adverb (*om dina vänner känner dig väl*), as well as in the sense of *once* (*när de väl var smala*), did not qualify as modal particles. Modal adverbs that were set off from the rest of the clause by commas were analysed as pragmatic markers, based on Aijmer’s and Kaltenböck, Keizer & Lohmann’s discussions of extra-clausal elements (see 2.1.1 and 2.3.2). Thus *probably in some of you probably think she’s insane* was not considered a pragmatic marker, while *of course in those errors, of course, will be yet more crappy exercise experiences* qualified for analysis.

3.1 Translation of pragmatic markers from English ST into Swedish TT

Modal adverbs were the most common pragmatic markers in the ST, making up two thirds of the total, with interjections and question tags contributing roughly 15% each (see table 1). All pragmatic markers were translated, but they were not all translated as pragmatic markers: one marker was translated as an explicitation phrase, and some of
the TT modal adverbs would not be regarded as pragmatic markers if the same criteria are used for the TL as for the SL (see section 3.1.2). However, two types of markers that appeared in the TT but not in the ST were modal particles and Yes/No-question operators, with modal particles being the most common type of pragmatic marker in the TT (even excluding the additional nine modal particles that had a zero ST source, see section 3.2).

Table 1. ST pragmatic markers and their translations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST pragmatic markers</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Translated as</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interjections</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Interjections (3), modal particles (2), modal adverb (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-clausal modal adverbs</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Extra-clausal modal adverbs (4), other modal adverbs (9), modal particles (6), explicitation phrase (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question tags</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Question tag (1), modal particles (3), Yes/No-question operator (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong> that qualify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this sample is too small for any conclusive quantitative analysis, the ST interjections were most commonly translated as the same TT structure (in half of the six cases), with only four of the 20 ST modal adverb markers translated into the same structure, and only one of the ST question tags remaining a question tag in the TT.

3.1.1 Interjections

The interjections found in the ST were *hoo boy*, *why*, *oh yeah*, *for Pete’s sake*, *well* and *hey*. To begin with *hoo boy*, it could be seen as a marker of strong emphasis and personal involvement:

(6)  Sure, we knew some people really seemed to enjoy sports as recreation, but *hoo boy*, we weren’t among them. Okej, vi visste ju att vissa människor verkliga verka gilla att hålla på med sport på fritiden, men *oj* vad vi inte hörde till den kategorin.

The authors have not settled for the common *oh boy*, but further tried to accentuate the interjection in a spoken-like way; there are 21 hits for *hoo boy* in COCA, compared to 363 for *oh boy*. The TT interjection *oj* could not be similarly adjusted; instead it was combined with an unusual syntactic construction. *Oj vad jag/vi inte* had no hits in Korp, but around 40 hits on Google, meaning that it, like *hoo boy*, is unusual but not completely original.
The use of *why* as an interjection in the ST context is clearly highly ironic, as can be seen in (7). It is in line with the OED’s (online) suggested meaning of surprise, even though it here expresses mock surprise, almost to the point of indignation, another meaning that was proposed by Norstedts (2010). The American and old-fashioned stylistic connotations of *why* suggested by the Cambridge Dictionary (online) are clearly not transferred to the TT.

(7) Crazy, huh? *Why*, it’s almost like people, left to their own devices, will seek pleasure and avoid pain!  
Visst är det knäppt? Det är *ju* nästan som om folk skulle söka efter njutning och undvika smärta om de själva fick välja!

This translation of *why* as *ju* is partly in line with Aijmer & Altenberg’s (2002: 32) observation of the use of *ju* as a marker of emphasis. With regard to Svensson’s (2009: 150) findings, it appears to add more of an element of inviting the listener to agree than the ST has. Interestingly, the implication of shared knowledge is what seems to convey the ST sense of mock surprise, but in a somewhat backward way: here, *ju* suggests that the speaker and the hearer share some knowledge that is to the contrary of the proposition.

The one instance of *well* was also translated as *ju*, as can be seen in (8).

(8) It’s hard not to take that personally, because, *well*, it is personal.  
Det är svårt att inte ta det personligt, för det är *ju* personligt.

12 instances of *well* as an interjection, as opposed to e.g. a manner adverb or a noun, were found in the ESPC. Three had zero translations and the rest were for the most part translated as pragmatic markers such as *jo*, *nåväl* and *nåja*. The two extra-clausal examples are included here.

(9) [ESPC] Henry had a tendency not exactly to lie, but, *well*, to exaggerate a little.  
hade Henry en benägenhet att inte precis ljuga, men *kanske* överdriva litet.

(10) [ESPC] The programme is, *well*, not exactly a forgery  
Programmet är, *ja*, om inte precis en förfalskning

In (8), (9) and (10), *well* could be removed from the ST, and its translation equivalent from the TT, without changing the meaning of the utterances or making the sentences ungrammatical. Pragmatically, however, it serves to soften the impact of an otherwise
somewhat harsh proposition, which could be seen as a form of hedging or politeness in line with what Aijmer & Vandenbergen (2003: 1128) propose, while at the same time conveying an element of acceptance such as Aijmer, Foolen & Vandenbergen (2006: 110) describe, suggesting that while the proposition might not be very pleasant, it is still the case. This latter function is arguably emphasised in the translation of *well as ju* in example (8); the modal particle implies not only that the authors accept something to be the case, but that the reader should know this as well, following the core meaning ‘as you and I both know’ mentioned above.

*Oh yeah* in (11) appears to convey a somewhat ironic afterthought; according to Norrick, it can indicate “that the speaker has just remembered something” (2009: 884). It was translated as an interjection, *just det*, which conveys essentially the same combination of afterthought and emphasis.

(11) It’s because your teeth aren’t white enough, your skin isn’t smooth and clear, your hair is the wrong color, you smell funny, you’re not wearing the right bra. […] And *oh yeah*, it’s because you’re too fat.

While Norstedts and SAOB (online) only mention the emphasis function, a Korp search confirmed that *och just det* is indeed used to mark afterthought (e.g. *och just det, får ju inte glömma fyrverkerierna*). *Javisst ja* would have had a stronger element of “sudden remembrance” (SAOB online) but expressed less emphasis, and *just det* also has an element of confirmation (ibid.), which could imply previous hearer knowledge.

The interjection *for Pete’s sake* in (12) reflects the emotional involvement of the speaker mentioned by Norrick (2009: 867). It was translated as a similarly weak expletive, appealing to higher powers, with *Pete* and *jösse* being euphemisms of *God* and *Jesus*, respectively, according to the OED (online) and SAOB (online).

(12) You are not a brain in a jar, *for Pete’s sake*; your body is you. If someone doesn’t want it, then she doesn’t want you.

This is an example of adaptation to the target culture, or a clear case of domestication according to Venuti (1995: 20); explaining the etymology of the ST expression would not have fit with the function of the TT.
Hey was described in section 2.3.1 as having a mainly interpersonal function (Norrick 2009: 869), used to get the listener’s attention. In (13), however, its function seems to be more of an acknowledgement, in line with that of granted, or sure, which is discussed below, and this is reflected in the translation into visst.

(13) Unless someone actually takes the time to write back and say, “NO THX UR UGLY” (and hey, it’s the Internet, so we have to admit that could happen) […] Om någon inte faktiskt gör sig besväret att svara ”NÄ TACK DU E FUL” (och visst, det är ju internet, så vi måste erkänna att det skulle kunna hända) […]

A ‘dictionary’ translation such as hallå would not have been idiomatic in this case. An alternative could have been to omit visst and settle for just ju, which here implies a logical connection, as described by Svensson (2009: 161).

In summary, Nord’s idea that the explicitly expressive function can be simply “transferred” into the TT (2006: 140) was challenged by these interjections, as even the expletive (for Pete’s sake) had to be adapted for the target culture. This might not have been the case for all interjections, but it highlights the fact that their functions can be both subtle and complex and thus pose a challenge to the translator.

3.1.2 Modal adverbs
The extra-clausal modal adverbs found in the ST can be seen in table 2.

Table 2. The ST modal adverbs and their TT equivalents. Note that ju (as a modal particle) automatically qualifies as a pragmatic marker.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST modal adverb</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>TT equivalent follows inclusion criteria</th>
<th>TT equivalent = pragmatic marker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>of course</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>förstås, ju</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4 (ju)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obviously</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>ju, uppenbarligen, det är klart att</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (ju)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>okej, visst</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in fact</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>faktiskt</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indeed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>förvisso</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maybe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>kanske</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after all</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ju</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>really</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>faktiskt</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fortunately</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>som tur är</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unfortunately</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>tyvärr</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most common modal adverb was *of course*, defined by the OED (online) as ‘naturally, as might be expected from the circumstances’. It occurred extra-clausally in the ST five times and was translated as a modal adverb (*förstås*) once and a modal particle (*ju*) four times.

(14) And those errors, *of course*, will be yet more crappy exercise experiences

(15) *Of course*, no matter how much you believe that, rejection still sucks

In (14) and (15) above, *ju* could be interpreted as a stronger indicator of shared knowledge than *förstås*, as Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen (2002–2003: 28) suggest. The reader can be expected to know that rejection sucks (which is also indicated by *still*) but may not be aware of what will happen when they try different types of exercise. However, the distinction is not overly sharp and *ju* and *förstås* are arguably interchangeable in these examples. In contrast, the 41 hits in the ESPC were mainly translated as *naturligtvis* or *givetvis* (31 instances in total) and never as *ju*. All of these results agree with Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen’s findings (2002–2003), indicating that the ST analysed in this essay could be considered less formal or more personal in its address than most of the ESPC non-fiction corpus texts: *förstås*, *ju* and explicitation phrases were more often associated with more informal contexts and a greater need for interpersonal markers than *naturligtvis* or *givetvis* (ibid.: 27–29).

*Obviously*, a synonym of *of course* according to the OED (online), occurred three times, with three different translations: *ju*, *uppenbarligen* and *det är klart att*; the ESPC contained no extra-clausal examples of *obviously*. (16) was the only example of a pragmatic marker translated as an explicitation phrase.

(16) Relationships are work, *obviously*, but no one is paying you to put up with a shitty one.

While Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen (2002–2003: 28–29) argue that a phrase like the *det är klart att* involves an element of interpretation of pragmatic meaning, it does not add any information that is only implied in the ST, and it could be seen simply as a way of rephrasing a potential synonym like *förstås* to fit the TT structure better.
Sure occurred four times, but its translation was less varied, with three instances of visst and one of okej. Interestingly, sure was also the only modal adverb that consistently kept its pragmatic marker status in the TT. This is if the same criteria are applied to the TT as to the ST, which would not necessarily be logical, as the SL might allow extra-clausal modal adverbs to a greater extent than the TL. It is thus not clear whether several of the pragmatic markers have been lost in the translation, if the TL simply requires different inclusion criteria, or if the inclusion criteria used in this study are lacking. In the case of sure, however, there was formal ST-TT correspondence: all instances of sure were extra-clausal, just like all its translations okej and visst:

(17)  
\begin{quote}
Sure, some people of a more Puritanical bent might find shame to be a powerful motivator, but most of us don’t. 
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
Visst, vissa människor med en mer puritansk läggning kanske ser skam som kraftigt motiverande, men de flesta av oss gör det inte.
\end{quote}

Okej and visst are essentially interchangeable in the TT examples; okej is synonymous with javisst according to SAOB, but a Korp search indicates that visst is roughly twice as common in a structure such as Okej/Visst, det * kanske inte..., with around 200 hits compared to 80 for okej (e.g. Okej, det blev kanske inte så fint and Visst, det skulle kanske inte bli så snyggt). The choice of one or the other could be arbitrary, as in (17) above, or depend on adjacent words: Jo, visst and och visst were considered more idiomatic than Jo, okej or och okej.

3.1.3 Question tags
The ST did not contain any canonical question tags, but five invariant tags: huh?, you know?, right? (two instances) and get it?. One of these was translated as an invariant tag and three as the modal particles väl or ju. This is in line with Axelsson’s (2009: 90) results, as she found that invariant tags and the modal particle väl were the most common translations of English question tags. Her suggestion that question tags are overused in Swedish TTs cannot be confirmed or rejected based on a sample as small as this.

The fifth question tag, huh in (18), was translated as a Yes/No-question operator, visst.
When you love doing something, you want to do it. Go figure! And, if you miss some time at yoga class because life got in the way, you start to miss the activity—which motivates you to start doing it again. Crazy, huh?

The function of *huh* in this context is clearly more to convey irony and invite the reader to share the irony than to ask for information, as described by Norrick (1995: 690), who also suggests that *huh* has a strongly involving function, which may be the reason why the authors have chosen it over a canonical tag such as *isn’t it*. The modal adverb *visst* in the TT, meaning ‘certainly, to be sure’ according to Norstedts (2010), functions as the clause-initial equivalent to a question tag described by Petersson & Josefsson (2010: 184), with a strongly involving function similar to that of *huh* (ibid.).

Both instances of *right?* were translated as *väl*, as in (19):

(19) if you aren’t going to sit around putting off your life until you are thin (and you aren’t, *right?*)

Here, *right?* (combined with directly addressing the reader with *you*) is both asking the reader for information and confirmation: the authors are not certain what the answer will be, but they expect or ask the reader to agree. Thus, one function of the tag is clearly to involve the reader, as Andersen (2001: 70) points out, and the translation as *väl* is in line with its function as an appeal to the reader (Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson 1999: 116) and even with Aijmer’s suggested function of challenging a potentially disagreeing reader (2015: 184), giving the markers in both ST and TT an essentially imperative function. This is similar to the function of *get it?* in (20) below, and of its translation as the invariant tag *okej?*. Even though the ST tag is more semantically straightforward, and could be rephrased as *Do you get it?*, while *okej?* is more vague, they both carry a strong imperative, almost threatening, implication (as in the COCA example *You don’t discuss this with him, get it??*).

(20) And if someone doesn’t want you, then it follows that you don’t want him or her—*get it?*  Om någon inte vill ha dig, så innebär det att du inte vill ha honom eller henne, *okej?*

In this context, a translation using *väl* was considered too tentative; it would be asking the reader for confirmation, while *okej?* as a question tag indicates a stronger
presupposition of agreement. Its function appears to be in line with that of the English okay? tag, described by Stenström, Andersen & Hasund (2002: 180) as conveying that “[the proposition] is true and you’d better admit it”. This Swedish use was confirmed by corpus hits such as Nu har vi talat färdigt om det här, okej? and Jag kunde inte låta bli, okej? (Korp). In contrast, you know? in (21) is less imperative and mainly indicates “meta-knowledge of speaker-hearer shared knowledge”, as Schriffin (1987: 268) puts it, even though it invites agreement (ibid.: 279) and reader involvement, in the same way as right? above.

(21) We promise we aren’t going to repeat the same old crap about how you have to love yourself before someone will love you. There are plenty of screamingly insecure married people out there already, you know?

Vi lovar att vi inte kommer att komma med samma gamla tjat om att du måste älska dig själv innan någon annan kan älska dig. Världen dräller ju redan av vansinnigt osäkra gifta människor.

The translation as ju and the conversion of the question into a statement in the TT reflects this function, and the use of ju here is clearly in line with its basic meaning, i.e. ‘as you and I both know’ as stated by Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999: 114).

In summary, question tags are a clear example of what Nord (2006: 138) terms the appellative function, as they aim to involve the reader in the text. Most of these were formally adapted to the TL, as question tags are much more common in the SL, while modal particles and Yes/No-question operators are characteristic of the TL. These translations, like huh? as Visst and right? as väl, also illustrate the gap between the pure semantic content and the pragmatic function of many markers.

3.2 The English ST origins of the Swedish TT modal particle ju

There was a total of 18 instances of ju in the TT. As table 3 shows, the most common source of ju was zero, i.e. the particle was ‘added’ to the TT. Modal adverbs, notably of course, were the second most common source. Similarly, zero source was by far the most common in the ESPC material. The ESPC contained no interjection or question tag sources, but a handful of other types of sources, e.g. emphatic do and conjunctions as and since, that added together were slightly more common than the modal adverb sources. As the word counts in table 3 show, the TT had a proportionally much higher frequency of ju, meaning that the actual numbers of this text and the ESPC cannot usefully be compared; however, the distribution of the different sources was still
considered interesting, especially the fact that zero source was the most common in both cases.

*Table 3. ST and ESPC sources of ju*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>ESPC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal adverbs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of course</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obviously</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after all</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interjections</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>why</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question tags</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you know?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of words</td>
<td>4808</td>
<td>364648</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparison with Aijmer & Altenberg’s analysis of zero sources of *ju* (2002: 32), these ST examples did not contain any modal verbs, but five of them included some form of the verb *know*. This reflects the definition of *ju* as ‘as you and I both know’ as proposed by Teleman, Hellberg & Andersson (1999: 114): it is inserted where the shared knowledge of the author and reader is explicitly mentioned, as in (22), or implied, as in (23).

(22) Fat people don’t jog. Everybody knows that.
(23) and hey, it’s the internet och visst, det är *ju* internet

A part of the explanation for these occurrences of *ju* in translation is the same as what Aijmer & Altenberg (2002: 35) observed regarding the addition of *well* to English TTs: it is added “for naturalness”. A statement such as *Det vet alla* could simply be considered unnatural without *ju*. This can be seen as a type of adaptation to the TL, or a
highly domesticating translation strategy in Venuti’s terms (1995: 20). In some of the cases, the use of *ju* also corresponds to Svensson’s suggested function of convincing the reader or supporting an argument (2009: 158); the addition of *ju* implies that this is something that the reader should know already, as in (24), or serves to make new information more convincing, as in (25).

(24)  You are not a brain in a jar, for Pete’s sake  
Du är *ju* för jösse namn inte en hjärna i en burk  

(25)  But as with job hunting, networking never hurts, and you never know who’s going to have the right lead.  
Men precis som när det gäller att leta jobb är det aldrig fel att nätverka, och du vet *ju* aldrig vem som kommer att leda dig på rätt spår.

The modal adverbs that occurred as sources of *ju* were *of course*, *obviously* and *after all*. As mentioned in 3.1.2, the meanings of the former two are largely synonymous, with the OED (online) defining both as “naturally, as might be expected from the circumstances”. The Cambridge Dictionary (online) lists the additional meaning “what you are saying is […] already known” for *of course*, which is even more in line with the presuppositions of *ju*, and which might explain why this was the most common modal adverb source of the particle. As Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen (2002–2003: 34) observe, *of course* can be used to persuade the reader, just like Svensson (2009: 150) describes that *ju* can invite agreement even when there is no actual shared knowledge. In (26), the reader might not find it so obvious what the next question is, but the use of *of course* and *ju* indicates that they should:

(26)  *Of course*, the obvious question now is, even if you can’t totally control the outcome, how can you go about looking for a good partner?  
Nu är *ju* den uppenbara frågan hur du ska göra för att börja leta efter en bra partner, även om du inte helt och hållet kan styra resultatet.

In contrast, in (27), *ju* is *not* synonymous with *förstås* or a phrase like *det är klart att*.

(27)  And that was the last time she thought about jogging for many, many years. *After all*, she was fat. Fat people don’t jog.  
Och det var sista gången hon kom på tanken på att jogga på många, många år. Hon var *ju* fet. Feta människor joggar inte.

As mentioned in 2.2.3, Altenberg (1999: 257) describes *after all* as explanatory, and as a reminder of previously known information; the Cambridge Dictionary (online) states
that it can be used “to add information that shows that what you have just said is true”.
This is in line with Aijmer’s (1999: 306) and Svensson’s (2009: 161) observations that
ju may indicate a logical connection between clauses. In (27), after all and ju serve to
remind the reader of previously given information (another function described by
Svensson (ibid.: 163)), and this information (that the author is fat) supports the
statement in the previous sentence (the author did not jog for a long time).

An interesting grey area is those cases where a pragmatic marker in the ST has
been translated ‘separately’, but where ju has also been added, as in (28) and (29) (see
also (13) above).

(28) Sure, we knew some people really seemed to enjoy sports as recreation
Okej, vi visste ju att vissa människor verkligen verkade gilla att hålla på med sport på fritiden
(29) Now, obviously, jogging isn’t for everyone, and some of you probably think she’s insane.
Nu är ju uppenbarligen inte jogging något som funkar för alla, och vissa av er tycker nog att hon är galen.

After some deliberation, these cases were counted as zero sources of ju in the
quantitative analysis. Four such cases where found in the ESPC, all translations of after
all, which was rendered as ju…trots allt or när allt kommer omkring…ju:

(30) we are only here on a five-year term
[ESPC] after all
vi är ju bara här för en femårsperiod
trots allt
(31) After all, the reactor is of Russian design.
[ESPC] När allt kommer omkring är ju reaktorn
av rysk utformning.

In the ESPC cases as well as the examples from my TT, it could be argued that one or
the other translation would have sufficed, and either ju or the more ‘direct’ translation
of the modal adverb could have been omitted. Instead, the impression is that the TT
includes both a (more) semantic and a pragmatic translation of the same ST word. This
could be seen as a lack of translator skill, or simply as an addition of ju for naturalness,
as in the other examples above.

Two interjections, well and why, were translated as ju (see section 3.1.1). As a
translation of why, ju indicates shared knowledge and marks emphasis as well as invites
In contrast, it is not listed as a potential translation of well (ibid.), and none of the ESPC
examples of well were translated into ju. The fact that this translation was considered
functional may reflect the ‘vagueness and versatility’ of well described by Aijmer,
Foolen & Simon-Vandenbergen (2006: 110), even though the hedging implication of *well* (as discussed in 2.3.1) is lost, with *ju* again indicating shared knowledge and inviting reader agreement. This function is more straightforwardly in line with the source *you know?*, the only question tag that was translated as *ju* and which bears a strong literal resemblance to the core meaning ‘as you and I both know’.

4. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to analyse the translation of certain pragmatic markers from English to Swedish, and the English sources of the Swedish TT modal particle *ju*. 20 of the 31 ST interjections, extra-clausal modal adverbs and question tags were translated into Swedish as some form of pragmatic marker, but the correspondence between ST and TT was low regarding type of marker: less than a quarter of the ST markers were translated into the same structure (e.g. interjection as interjection), and the most common target items overall were modal particles, which the SL lacks.

While 11 of the ST markers could be considered lost in translation, another 9 were added to the TT, meaning that the total numbers of markers were roughly equal in the ST and TT. The fact that these numbers include different subcategories of markers reflects the difficulties in defining the markers. Different definitions and inclusion criteria would affect both the quantitative and qualitative results, as could be seen in the analysis of the modal adverbs; the issues of how comparable the SL and TL are, and to what extent syntactic criteria are useful in defining pragmatic markers, are interesting complications of matters.

Aijmer & Altenberg mention redundancy and lack of clear translation equivalents as reasons for zero translation (2002: 22–24), and Aijmer & Simon-Vandenbergen found zero translations to be more common in non-fiction than in fiction, reflecting a lower need for interpersonal markers (2002–2003: 22). The fact that there were no zero translations of any pragmatic markers suggests that none of these words were considered redundant, and that the transferral of the ST style and function into the TT relied on maintaining the interpersonal aspect; an effort was made to translate even those markers (like *well*) that had no straightforward Swedish counterpart. In this case, the lack of zero translations could obviously be a result of the translator’s special awareness of and focus on pragmatic markers. Nevertheless, the fact that none of the markers were considered redundant challenges the common description of them as optional, and the so-called lack of propositional meaning in an utterance thus does not
equate a total lack of meaning; as Brinton (1996: 35) puts it, optional does not equal superfluous. The nine instances where ju had a zero source could similarly indicate increased translator focus on such particles, but the fact that the ESPC had an even higher proportion of zero sources of ju suggests that it is more commonly simply inserted “for naturalness”, like Aijmer and Altenberg observe regarding well in English texts (2002: 35). This translator strategy is hard to back up using any theory other than simple domestication: it makes the text ‘sound more Swedish’.

The different translations of the same ST lexical items, like of course, and the various different sources of ju also highlight the lack of clear translation equivalents. As well as the common zero source, interjections, modal adverbs and question tags occurred as sources of ju. This reflects the challenges in translating pragmatic markers: even looking at several different and partly overlapping functions of the same word or phrase, dictionaries rarely list examples of all the possible functions or uses of these markers. The low mutual correspondence could reflect the low importance of pragmatic markers, and/or gaps in the system of the SL and TL, respectively, according to Altenberg (1999: 255). While the markers did not appear to be particularly redundant in this text, as the lack of zero translation indicates, their translations certainly reflect some known gaps in the systems, with the TL using fewer question tags and the SL lacking modal particles and Yes/No-question operators. However, more data would be needed for any proper conclusions to be drawn regarding mutual correspondence of any of the markers discussed in this study. The question tags predictably had the least formal ST-TT correspondence, with only one TT question tag; this is in line with Gellerstam’s recommendation that this English structure should normally be translated using Swedish modal particles (2005: 207), but Gellerstam does not mention the Yes/No-question operator, an alternative that also seems to work well as a Swedish equivalent. Of course and ju had the strongest correspondence of the markers analysed, but this could be because they were simply the most common markers in the respective texts.

Further research based on more data for each particular type of marker would help determine the degrees of mutual correspondence between markers in Swedish and English. Some fairly common interjections and question tags, such as hey and get it?, would benefit from further analysis, as their functions appear to be particularly difficult to determine based on dictionaries and corpora, leaving the translator to rely mostly on intuition. It would also be interesting to see how common Yes/No-question operators are as target or source items of certain question tags.
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