Reader Address and its Translation in a Gardening Guide

Pronouns, Modals and Imperatives

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Abstract
This study examines the translation of three forms of reader address from English to Swedish in a gardening guidebook – the pronoun you as a second person reference and generic reference, modal verbs, and imperatives. The translation was made by the author of this study. The aim of the study is to investigate how the three forms of reader address is translated. The quantitative analysis shows that the most used form of reader address out of the three investigated are imperatives, while the pronoun you followed closely behind. While modal verbs were used frequently in the ST, the modality was not translated in the TT. The qualitative analysis shows that the pronoun you was translated into second person du, third person generic man or was omitted in the translation in almost equal measure. How the pronoun you was translated in the TT depended on how the translator interpreted the author’s target audience. Only two modal verbs occurred frequently in the ST, and in the TT they were either translated as modal verbs or into present tense. Lastly, the imperative verbs were most commonly translated as imperatives in the TT. About 10% were translated into tensed verbs. Furthermore, half of that was translated to form suggestions.

Key words
Reader address, modal verb, imperative verb, pronoun you, second person pronoun, generic pronoun, translation
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1 Introduction

Texts can be varied in an infinitive number of ways, from genre and subject to style, purpose, length, and form. But one thing that all written texts have in common is that there is an author and an intended reader. What the relation between these two parties looks like can vary a lot, depending on the purpose of the text and the intended readership. Some texts openly acknowledge their readers throughout the text, while others are impersonal and do not acknowledge their readers at all.

Reader address can vary depending on what kind of text it is, who it is targeted towards, and its purpose. For example, according to Biber and Conrad (2019) academic writing hardly ever uses personal pronouns, but passive verb constructions are quite common (ibid.: 118). Different news texts use personal pronouns more regularly than academic writing, but it is most common in conversations (ibid.), where passive constructions are not as common.

When translating the material for this study, the pronoun you was used often by the author to address the reader. It was then observed that you was not simply literally translated into the Swedish second person pronoun du all the time, which became the inspiration to investigate how reader address is translated. In example (1), your is translated with sina, which is the third person generic pronoun in a reflexive form. In the source text (henceforth called ST), your directly address the reader, making every individual reader feel like they are the one being addressed, while in the target text (henceforth called TT), sina instead makes the text more hypothetical as it makes a generic reference.

(1) Starting your own seeds is a great way to get a jump on the season.

Att driva upp sina egna plantor ifrån frö är ett bra sätt att komma i gång med odlingssäsongen tidigare.

Reader address can be both direct and indirect. The direct kinds are, among others, uses of proper nouns and pronouns, as in example (1), and imperatives. But indirect address does not address the reader at all, like modal verbs. Modal verbs are, in the strictest of senses, perhaps not a true form of reader address, since their use do not address the reader, but rather indicate the writer’s thoughts. However, the addressee receives and needs to correctly interpret, which qualifies it as a topic in this paper on reader
address. The modal verbs can convey different levels of surety of something they know or think they know. For example, in (2) the author conveys their knowledge that standing water has the potential to cause problems. It is not expressed as a certainty, but as a possibility. But the modal verb *can* is not translated in the TT. In cases like this, I’m curious to see how this affects the translation, if are any nuances lost in the TT, or if the meaning comes across anyway.

(2) Most soil types are fine, but standing water *can* be problematic, so be sure to find a spot that has good drainage.

De kan växa i de flesta jordtyperna, *men de väldränerad plats.*

Another direct form of reader address is imperatives. Imperative verbs form commands and are commonly used to express actions that need to be performed and therefore occur regularly in instructive texts. However, in example (3) the imperative is translated into present tense ‘prefer’ instead. This raises the question if changing the imperative mood is a common translation in Swedish instructive texts.

(3) For varieties that have larger seeds and will be started in bigger pots, like vines and squash, *use* a high-quality potting soil.

Sorter som har större fröer och som ska odlas i större krukor, som rankor och zucchini, *föredrar* planteringsjord av hög kvalité.

This study will focus on three different forms of reader address, namely the pronoun *you*, imperatives, and modal verbs.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to investigate different forms of reader address in a gardening guide and to analyse how they have been translated in the TT. The different forms of reader address that will be examined are the pronoun *you* as both specific and generic reference, verbs in the imperative mood, as well as the use of modal verbs. The material for this study is made up of
the linguistic features from a gardening guidebook and my own personal translation thereof. This study will focus on the following research questions:

1. How are the investigated forms of reader address translated in the TT?
2. Which one of the investigated forms of reader address is the most common one in the TT? Does it differentiate from the one in the ST and if so, why? What impact does it have on the translation?
3. Do the modal verbs change their form of modality as they are translated, and in that case how?

1.2 Material
The material for this study is taken from a gardening book called *Cut Flower Garden: Grow, Harvest, and Arrange Stunning Seasonal Blooms*, by Erin Benzakein (2017). It describes how to grow a cutting garden as a layperson. The material is approximately 10 pages long and the TT is based on my own translation. The pages were taken mostly from the first half of the book, using a selection of different texts (step-by-step instructions, flower portraits, and to-do lists) to get a varied spread of texts that is representative for the entire book.

The ST is suitable for the study of reader address because it is information-heavy and full of instructions. The text targets the reader often, which means that it is easy to find data to analyse in the text. In the 1970s, Reiss founded an organisational system for texts, depending on their function and purpose; the informative, the expressive and the operative text types. The ST belongs to the operative text type (Reiss, 1977: 108–109), where the focus is to encourage the reader to act on what they read, and the language is often dialogic (ibid.). Different registers and genres have different linguistic markers (Biber and Conrad, 2019: 2). For example, the ST is written in an informal style unlike, for example, academic prose which makes it logical that the registers address readers in different ways (ibid.: 114).

Gardening guides can be defined as instructive texts that are a resource for experienced gardeners or people who are interested in learning how to garden. It is a nonfictional genre that explains how to seed, plant, grow, harvest, and use plants in your garden. The subject can vary between growing vegetables and becoming self-sustaining, how to landscape beautiful flower beds that attract pollinators or to grow cut flowers. The main purpose of a gardening guide is to instruct gardeners on how to seed, plant, grow, and care for plants in a user-friendly and pedagogical way, to aid gardeners in their gardening goals.
Erin Benzakein is a world-renowned flower farmer who is passionate about making the florist business sustainable. The intended reader of the book is anyone who is interested in gardening and how to grow their own flowers and is suitable for both beginners and experts. While the text can be specialized in some portions, the technical terms are explained, leaving the book accessible to all readers who are interested in the subject. While the text is of the operative text type, like most texts it also holds elements of all of Reiss’s different text types (Reiss, 1977: 108–109), because the text is informative in the sections that are purely factual and expressive where the author tells of her anecdotes and teachings (ibid.). The purpose of an operative text is appellative, which means that the author appeals to the receiver of the text. In the case of the ST, Benzakein is trying to inspire and influence her readers to act in a certain way – which is to follow the instructions she gives in her book.

The translation of the text is made with this purpose in mind and aims to preserve the appellative function and pedagogical address to the readers. The author of the book lives in the northwest corner of Washington State. The different climates between the northwest Washington and Sweden might require some changes in the translation to suit the Swedish target audience, and different cultural growing practices can make certain adaptations necessary for the translation, to ensure that the translation is relevant to the target reader and their culture and climate.

1.3 Method
The data for this study was collected manually. The ST was read through multiple times, searching for the different linguistic features of study, to guarantee that no data went by unnoticed. The data was then registered in a table with their respective translations and divided into categories based on their linguistic feature of study and how they were translated. On the topic of modal verbs, it was a conscious decision to limit the study to only include what Eppler and Ozón (2013) called “primary modal verbs”, so the so-called “semi-modals” like need or ought to were excluded. This was done to narrow down the focus of the discussion. Modals that expressed negation (won’t) or contraction with the subject (you’ll) were included when gathering the results. When gathering the data for the study of the pronoun you, all contracted forms were included in the study. It is worth mentioning that this is a small-scale study conducted by a student translator without a lot of practice in conducting their own study.
As discussed in the material section before this, I considered which text type the ST in question was, and how it affects the translation. Apart from this, three literary parallel texts were also used: Året i en liten trädgård (Dahlin & Oscarsson, 2022), Karl Fredrik Mitt blomsterår på Österlen (Karl Fredrik, 2022) and Odla blommor (Wendelbo, 2022). Furthermore, when needed, I also complemented the parallel texts with online articles from gardening magazines such as viivilla.se and växtlivet.se. The use of parallel texts is important for this study to determine how the topic of gardening is spoken about in the target language and is used frequently to compare my translation to other current texts. The encyclopaedia NE.se was also used throughout the translation process to accurately translate the names of different flowers and gardening verbs and tools.

The study has both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis, to provide the reader with well-rounded results which are examined from different angles. The quantitative analysis displays an overview of the three different areas of study (imperatives, pronouns and modal verbs) while the qualitative analysis discusses different examples and how they were translated, going into more depth.

When translating the TT, Nord’s instrumental translation was used. The translation strategy was introduced in her book Text Analysis in Translation (2005) and was used to make the TT feel like it was written in its original language. Nord’s definition of an instrumental translation is that it “[…] is intended to fulfil its communicative purpose without the recipient being conscious of reading or hearing a text which, in a different form, was used before in a different communicative situation” (Nord, 2005: 81). This means that the TT should be written in such a way that the TT readers will believe it to be an original text that has not been translated. To achieve this, I had to consider a few important aspects which were of concern while translating the ST. The author of the ST calls herself an ecological and sustainable flower farmer, so I can only assume that she wants the translation of her book to reflect that. But due to the fact that the author is American, a few cultural practices have had to be considered, such as water use, plastic use, and the use of toxic substances such as chlorine in farming, which all differ in comparison to Swedish cultivation practices. These matters differed so greatly that they could not be translated literally and still feel like an original text in the TL, so adaptations had to be made in the TT.

Following the introduction, the theory necessary for this paper will be described. The theory begins with describing reader address, and then the research on the pronoun you is divided into two sections as specific or generic reference, followed by modal verbs and
imperatives. Then the results will be discussed, and the paper is completed with the conclusion section.

2 Theoretical Framework

This section will detail theory on the subject reader address, first by discussing reader address in general, before going into research about different kinds of reader address in detail.

Reader address refers to different forms of written utterances that are directed at the reader of the text. A written text can address its readers in different ways, such as using proper nouns, different kinds of pronouns, or “people nouns”, which denote groups of people, such as people, guests, women, children, men, the congregation. These forms of address are quite easily detected in texts and give the reader a clue to who the intended addressee is. Readers can also be addressed by imperative verbs since they act as a call to action for the reader. Some texts do not seem to address their readers at all, but simply discuss the topic in an objective tone.

In the ST, Cut Flower Garden, the author addresses the reader both by the use of pronouns and by using imperative verbs in the instructions which are for the reader to follow. This is something that gardening guides do to help readers with their work. In a study on the translation of instructive texts, Vandepitte (2008) found that instructions are written as explicitly as is necessary and are often written in short and simple sentences. Steps are ordered logically, often chronologically, and imperative verbs are the clearest means to express the series of actions that need to be performed (ibid.). And positive audience orientation means that the instructive texts create a positive experience for the reader, by creating a safe and positive space, according to Whalen (1996). Vandepitte (2008) claims that this is done by addressing readers personally and present arguments for why the instructions should be followed, and by positively confirming their actions (ibid.: 73), which is following the instructions.

As previously mentioned in the introduction, this paper will examine reader address in the forms of the pronoun you as a specific and generic reference, imperative verbs, and modal verbs.

2.1 You as a Second Person Pronoun

The pronouns relevant to this study are the pronouns that indicate the receiver of information, the second person, both singular, plural and generic. According to Eppler and Ozón (2013:23f),
possessive and reflexive pronouns are closely related to personal pronouns in syntax and appearance, which makes them worth including as a second-person reference in this study. Table 1, which is borrowed from Sjöberg-Hawke (2018:17), displays the second-person personal pronouns in both English and Swedish.

Table 1. Second-person personal pronouns in English and Swedish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EN/SE</th>
<th>personal</th>
<th>possessive</th>
<th>reflexive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person singular</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>du</td>
<td>dig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person plural</td>
<td>EN</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>er</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Sjöberg-Hawke got the data for English from Eppler & Ozone (2013:24 table 2.1) and for Swedish from Larsson (n.d.) and Smitterberg (2013)

As can be seen from Table 1, the lexeme *you* can refer to many people in English and does not have just one equivalent lexeme in Swedish. Since Swedish has more pronouns to choose from to refer to a recipient in different situations, it allows the speaker/writer to be very precise in who they are addressing. But the English pronoun *you* is ambiguous in its meaning, since it can refer to both singular and plural addressees, and needs to be decided based on the context it appears in (Altenberg, 2005:117). While there is no ambiguity in regard to singular or plural in Swedish due to the fact that Swedish pronouns make distinctions between singular and plural, subject and object form, it can instead force the writer to specify who they address, one person or a group of people (‘*du*’ or ‘*ni*’) (Sjöberg-Hawke, 2018: 18).

Address in English is expressed by pronouns, first names, last names, and titles to indicate degrees of closeness. But English only has one pronoun of direct address, *you* (Norrby, 2015: 1-2). In the TL, the lexeme *you* correspond to the singular pronoun *du* and the plural pronoun *ni*. But it can also be translated as the Swedish generic pronoun *man*, whose official, formal
translation is the generic pronoun one in the SL (ibid.). The pronoun one did, however, not occur in the ST once, so a comparison between the translation into man from you vs one is unfortunately not possible in this study.

2.2 You as a Generic Pronoun

When the pronoun you is used as reader address, it does not always refer to one specific person (singular) or a specific group of people (plural). Instead, it can be used as a generic pronoun to refer to a group of people in general that remains unspecified (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 103). It is related to the use of the more formal pronoun one, which is less prototypically used than you, according to Huddleston and Pullum (ibid.). The common generic pronoun in Swedish is the third-person pronoun man. According to Altenberg (2005: 93), the generic man is very common in Swedish, whereas the English formal pronoun one is often replaced by you, we and they in informal language (ibid.:94).

You as a generic reference can arguably help to create a sense of connection between people and ideas, according to Orvell et al. (2020: 31038). Research shows that the use of generic-you is a way for people to generalise from their own experiences (Orvell et al., 2017). For example, if a person loses their job, they might say “it makes you feel betrayed”. What Orvell et al. (2020) propose, is that the use of generic-you to refer to people in general affects whether an idea carries resonance, i.e., a sense of connection (ibid.). Orvell et al. base their hypothesis on two reasons. The first reason is that generic-you convey the idea that ideas are generalisable. Instead of expressing information that only applies to a particular situation (e.g. “Leo broke your heart”), the generic-you expresses information that is timeless and applicable across contexts (e.g. “Eventually you recover from heartbreak”). The second reason is that the generic-you is expressed with the same word (“you”) that is used in non-generic circumstances to refer to the addressee (Orvell et al. 2020: 31038). According to Orvell et al. this means that even when you is used generically, the association to its specific meaning may pull in the addressee, which can heighten resonance (ibid.). This reasoning could possibly be applied to most circumstances where address is used. While this study by Orvell et al. (2020) focuses on the resonance between people and ideas, it could be said that “ideas” is a loose term, and that this could be applied to the use of reader address in texts as well, and more particularly in gardening guides.

In the results of his study, Altenberg could see that the Swedish man was more frequent than the English one, which he says is a clear indication of its versatility (2005: 98).
Altenberg (2005: 100) found in his study that the most common translation of the pronoun *one* was *man* in Swedish. The other translations of *one* could be grouped into two broad categories: either another pronoun than *man* is used, (such as *en* “one”, *vi* “we”, *du* “you”, *jag* “I”), or a general noun in subject position, such as *människor* “people”, or the Swedish text is reorganized so that no generic subject is needed (Altenberg, 2005:100f). The translations which were reorganized without pronouns instead used an impersonal *det* (“it”), subjectless non-finite clauses or the subject was omitted and instead replaced by another clause element, such as an object or an adverbial or into agentless passives in Swedish (Altenberg, 2005:102f). While this study by Altenberg is about the generic pronoun *one*, which is more formal than *you*, it is still included in the present study due to the fact that it studies the translation of a generic pronoun from English to Swedish. In this case, the most important difference to remember is that *one* is more formal than *you*, which might affect the comparability between how *you* and *one* are translated.

As derived from the results in Altenberg’s (2005) study, many pronouns can be used to indicate generic reference. But not all generic references includes the speaker. *You* and *man* can, but does not necessarily have to, include the speaker in the address. As can be seen in example (4) from Altenberg (2005: 104) below, the generic reference *man* is translated as the pronoun *they*, which excludes the speaker from the reference. And example (5) by Altenberg (ibid.), shows a case where the generic reference *man* is translated into *we*, which includes the speaker.

(4) Gammalt släppte *man* ålar i brunnar, det visste han. De skulle hålla rent från mask och småkryp. (KE1)  
He knew that in the old days *they* used to let eels into wells to keep them clean of worms and insects.

(5) Jag är känd som en person som alltid håller vad jag lovat. Jag tror att *man* ibland måste följa sin instinkt. (MS1)  
I’m known for invariably keeping appointments. But I believe we sometimes have to follow our instinct.

Apart from the varying degrees of inclusiveness of the generic pronouns, it is important to highlight their stylistic differences. The stylistic differences differ between the TL and the SL.
According to Altenberg (ibid.), this is partly because of their different registers – one is considered relatively formal while man is neutral. The different pronouns also hold slightly different stylistic differences in the target language (TL). The pronoun man is versatile, which makes it widely used and applicable in different circumstances (Altenberg, 2005: 94). The pronoun you as a generic reference is more colloquial and familiar (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 103).

2.3 Modal Verbs

The modal verbs are an indirect form of reader address since the utterance does not actually address the reader but conveys the writer’s feelings and opinions. The reader will then need to interpret the writer’s intended meaning, which makes it an indirect form of reader address. While there are many grammatically distinct properties of the modal verbs, such as their subject-auxiliary inversion, negation, and how they do not have secondary inflectional forms such as gerund participle (*musting) or past participle (*will must), the modal auxiliary verb’s ability to express the grammatical category mood, or modality, is what is interesting (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 38f). Modality mainly deals with the contrasts between what is factual vs. non-factual, and what is asserted vs. non-asserted (ibid.: 53). See for example (6) by Huddleston and Pullum (ibid.), where they explain the differences between non-modal and modal.

(6)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-modal</th>
<th>Modal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>a. She saw him</td>
<td>b. She <em>must</em> have seen him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>a. He leaves today</td>
<td>b. He <em>must</em> leave today</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In i., the (a) is presented as matter of fact, the (b) as an inference and the (c) as a possibility. In ii., the (a) holds the force of an assertion, while (b) is a kind of directive, posing as an obligation, and (c) is a permission. And while the possibility in example (6 i.c.) could also be expressed by an adverb (*Perhaps she saw him*), an adjective (*It’s possible that she saw him*) or a noun (*There’s a possibility that she saw him*), it is the modal verbs that will be investigated in this study (Huddleston and Pullum, year: 53).
Modal verbs in English can be divided into three categories based on what meaning they convey: epistemic, deontic and dynamic (Eppler and Ozón, 2013; Huddleston and Pullum, 2005), and can express different things like possibility, necessity, obligation, permission, and direction among many things (Eppler and Ozón 2013:109). As described by Huddleston and Pullum (2005), epistemic modality expresses meanings of necessity or possibilities given what we know or what we think we know (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 54). Deontic modality relates meanings of requirement or permission. In *He must have overslept*, ‘must’ is epistemic. The modal is non-factual, because you cannot be certain that he overslept, it is simply something you have inferred. But in *He must apologise*, ‘must’ is deontic because it expresses an obligation. The dynamic interpretation attributes properties or abilities to people (ibid.). Some examples are ambiguous, and the intended meaning has to be inferred. In the sentence *She can drive*, ‘can’ can mean both deontic or dynamic modality. Deontic modality assigns permission for her to drive, while the dynamic one attributes her with the ability to drive – she knows how to drive (ibid.: 55).

Then there is the modal verb *will*. English does not have a future tense, but can talk about future time in many ways, and one of them is through the use of the modal verb *will*, but despite this it is considered a marker for mood and not a marker for tense (Huddleston and Pullum, year: 56). To include *will* in a sentence makes it less assured than a sentence without it, see for example *She left Paris yesterday* vs *She will have left Paris yesterday*. The difference between the two is that the sentence without a modal reads like a fact, and the sentence with a modal reads like an inference. The difference between the two sentences is one of epistemic modality, not of time (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 56f).

There are nine modal verbs, five in the present tense, and four in the past tense, as is displayed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present tense</th>
<th>Past tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will</td>
<td>would</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shall</td>
<td>should</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may</td>
<td>might</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>must</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data from Eppler and Ozón (2013: 32).
For a successful translation of a modal verb, you have to know what the intended meaning is to translate it correctly, since the interpretation of modals can be ambiguous (Huddleston and Pullum, year: 55). As described by Leech (2004), while most modals have a few different meanings, all have one that is more common, and it is important to remember that the distinctions between the different meanings are not always “clear-cut.” For that reason, it is better to think of the contrasts of meaning as a scale of similarity and difference (Leech, 2004: 73, Wärnsby, 2006: 26–39).

Take for example the modal verb can in example (7). According to Leech (2004), can have three possible meanings: possibility (very common), ability (common) and permission (less common). In a. the meaning is ‘It is possible for even expert drivers to make mistakes’, in b. the meaning is ‘Paula knows how to…’, and in c. the meaning is ‘You’re allowed to stay…’ (Leech, 2004:74f).

(7)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>a. possibility</th>
<th>b. ability</th>
<th>c. permission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Even expert drivers can make mistakes.</td>
<td>Paula can’t sing, but she can play the guitar.</td>
<td>You can stay as long as you like.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In her study, Rehn (2016: 25) found that modal verbs are translated differently depending on if their meaning is epistemic, deontic or dynamic, and that the translation of the modal verbs can and may are the same. Their epistemic translation is kan, the deontic translation is either får or kan, (depending on if it is a direct or indirect permission) and the dynamic translation is kan. Must is translated as either måste or ska, depending on the level of obligation and certainty of judgement, shall being translated as ska or into present tense and should into bör or borde (ibid). In Rehn’s study, the modal verb will had the highest number of possible translations, which indicated that will is a complex modal verb that can hold different meanings. A central epistemic will can be translated as bör, lär, nog/ säkert into Swedish, while an epistemic prediction can be translated as kommer att or into present tense, while conditional epistemic meanings are either translated into past tense, present tense or as kommer att, while both the deontic and future meaning of will can be translated as ska or into present tense (Rehn, 2016: 25).
In a study by Kjellström (2019), where the translation of modal verbs was discussed, Kjellström refers to Aijmer (1999), and how may is often translated into kan in Swedish, and sometimes as the adverb kanske (Aijmer 1999, in Kjellström 2019: 15). Kjellström also refers to Aijmer (ibid) when she mentions that, while less common, it is also possible to translate may as a modal verb and adverb combination, kan kanske or by using two modal verbs stacked on each other skulle kunna (ibid.). According to Kjellström (ibid.), the modal verb may is translated as kan in over 80 % of 50 random examples from the LEGS learner corpus (Ström Herold & Levin, 2018).

2.4 Imperatives

The imperative mood is one of three grammatical moods in the English language, and it expresses commands or requests, unlike the indicative mood which expresses factual assertions (Eppler and Ozón, 2013: 74f). Because of this they are often used when giving instructions, as imperatives are the easiest way to express that an action needs to be performed (Vandepitte, 2008: 72). For further detail on Vandepitte, see section 2.

Imperatives are the only type of clause in English that does not require an overt subject, simply because the implied addressee is always the second person pronoun you, in either its singular or plural form. It is also the only pronoun imperatives can take (Eppler and Ozón, 2013:200). According to Teleman et al. (1999), the subject is implied in the Swedish as well, because the imperative form of the verb presupposes that the one being addressed is listening (1999: IV: 709). However, the use of a pronoun in combination with an imperative makes the information more forceful and emphatic, as can be seen in example (8) below, from Eppler and Ozón (2013:200):

(8) You (,) pipe down.

Just like Swedish imperative forms do not take any inflectional endings (Teleman et al, 1999: IV: 549), neither do English imperatives (Eppler and Ozón, 2013: 74). In English the imperative mood takes the infinitive form (ibid.: 69).

The use of imperatives as reader address was investigated in Sjöberg-Hawke’s study on reader address (2018), where the results indicated that imperatives were more common in
English texts than in Swedish texts or English translations. According to Sjöberg-Hawke, this indicates the reasonable assumption that imperatives are a preferred choice for reader address (2018:24f). In the translation of the English texts into Swedish, the 76 imperatives were translated into imperatives in Swedish 68 times, without a verb 5 times, and into verbs in the simple present tense 3 times (ibid.: 30), as can be seen in example (9) from Sjöberg-Hawke below:

(9) Efter bron fortsätter huvudturen till vänster och bakom de låga byggnaderna.

After the bridge, continue the main tour to the left and behind the low rows of houses.

While this is only one paper on the translation of imperative verbs between English and Swedish, it is relevant to the investigation of this paper since it provides a point of reference and comparison.

3 Analysis

The selected material from the ST which this study is based on consists of 7,210 words, and the translated TT is 7,004 words. Within these chapters, a total number of 124 imperatives, 104 modal verbs, and 102 uses of 2nd person personal pronouns were found. They correspond to approximately 17.1 imperatives, 14.4 modal verbs and 14.1 occurrences of the pronoun you per 1,000 words. In comparison, Sjöberg-Hawke (2018), who examined both 2nd person personal pronouns and imperatives in her study of direct reader address, found 4.7 2nd person personal pronouns per 1,000 words, and 17.0 imperatives per 1,000 words in her examined source material (2018: 47). Since both studies focus on reader address in an informative text type with an informative and instructive function (Sjöberg-Hawke, 2018: 4), Sjöberg-Hawke’s study is relevant and interesting to consider for comparative purposes, as both the 2nd person pronoun and imperative verbs, overlaps between the two studies.

From these results (also summarised in Table 3), we can see that the most common form of reader address in the text was the use of imperative verbs, while modal verbs and the 2nd person pronoun you tied closely for second place. The greatest deviation in the results is the translation of modal verbs, because the number of translated modals from the ST was much lower in the TT, while the other two categories remain quite similar in use between the ST and
the TT. It is of course important to note here that the pronoun *you* does not occur in the TT at all, but that it refers to a translation of the pronoun *you* in the TT. It is also interesting to note that it seems to be a higher number of pronouns in the TT than in the ST, by a small number. This will be addressed in the next section about the pronoun *you*.

Table 3. Results from the study of the ST, in both number and normed frequency per 1,000 words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form of address</th>
<th>ST number</th>
<th>Frequency per 1,000 words</th>
<th>TT number</th>
<th>Frequency per 1,000 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperatives</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modals</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronoun <em>you</em></td>
<td>101</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next part will analyse each form of address separately, in order to investigate the different forms of reader address that have been studied in this paper. It will also analyse how they have been translated in the TT. The analysis section will begin with an analysis of the pronoun *you*, as both second person reference and generic reference only to continue with modal verbs and end with an analysis of the imperative verbs.

3.1 Pronoun *You*

This section will give an overview of the different forms of the second person pronoun *you* in the ST and how they were translated in the TT. The pronoun *you* also occurred in the form *your*, and in the contracted forms *you’re* and *you’ll*, which are included in the study, as previously mentioned. The pronoun *you* was used 101 times in the ST, and was found to be translated in several different ways; as *du* (including the second person possessive pronouns *din*, *ditt* and *dig*), as the generic third person pronoun *man* (including the third person (generic) possessive pronouns *sina* and *ens*), as nouns in the definite form in the TL. Pronouns were omitted and added in different places for syntactic reasons, and translated as passive constructions. These results differ quite a lot from the results Sjöberg-Hawke gathered in her study, where her translation categories of *you* were *du*, *finns*, *prepositions*, *ligger*, *man*, *stanna vid* and *rör sig* respectively (Sjöberg-Hawke, 2018: 30). Of course, this difference can depend on the rather varying topics of study.
Table 4. Translation of the pronoun you in the TT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TT translation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Frequency per 1,000 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generic pronoun – <em>Man</em></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second person singular – <em>Du</em></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite form of the noun</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omission</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Added</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive construction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>105</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4, we can see that the most common translation of *you* in the TT is the generic pronoun *man*, followed closely by the second person singular pronoun *du*, which only occurred one time less than *man*. The third most common translation strategy for *you* was for it to be removed from the TT and instead translate the noun into the definite form in the TL, and this was done 12 times. 10 times the pronouns were omitted from the translation completely from the translation, which is counteracted by 6 instances where additional pronouns were added in the TT for syntactic reasons. The least common translation was to not translate the pronoun and turn the sentence into a passive construction.

In the ST, *you* is the only pronoun that is used to address the readers, whether it refers to singular 2nd person *you* (‘du’), or third person generic where the addressee is also included (‘man’) (Norrby: 2015: 1f). In example (10), the *you* has been translated into the TL generic pronoun *man* (more formally ‘one’), because the advice is a generalisable idea that every reader can connect to (Orvell et al. 2020: 31038). If this instead had been translated as *‘du’* (you sg), the advice would instead apply to every reader directly *‘du får vad du betalar för’*. While this
would be a viable translation option as well, if this had instead been translated into *du*, it would single out every reader individually and lose the sense that it gives generally applicable advice.

(10) *You* get what *you* pay for, so don’t go *Man* får vad *man* betalar för, så välj inte det for the cheapest option. billigaste alternativet.

The second most common translation of *you* was into the second person singular pronoun *du* in the TT, which can be seen in example (11). Since the pronoun *you* in English can mean both second person singular and plural as well as generic reference (Eppler & Ozón, 2013; Huddleston & Pullum, 2005), it is not obvious to translate this into the singular reference. However, since this is a case where the author wishes to appeal to the readers directly, the singular reference was the most appropriate option in this context (Altenberg, 2005:117). The singular reference gives the impression of a direct address to the reader, and the reader will hopefully take this advice personally and reflect more than if this was a generic reference.

(11) Before *you* go crazy sowing seeds in late winter and early spring, it’s important to know just how early *you* can start- if in doubt, ask *your* local Master Gardener group or staff at a trusted nursery for the expected last frost date. Innan *du* går loss på frösådderna tidigt på våren, är det viktigt att *du* har koll hur tidigt *du* kan börja. Om *du* känner *dig* osäker kan *du* fråga personalen på handelsträdgården när sista frosten brukar ske.

As can be seen in example (12), the English ST uses the pronoun *your* to describe ownership of things, whereas in the Swedish TT, the definite form of the noun is used instead of the pronoun, *‘moisten the potting soil’*. However, according to Estling Vannestål (2007: 520), English tends to use possessive pronouns in expressions with for example body parts, clothes, or other things, where Swedish instead uses the definite form of the noun (ibid). Since the definite form of the noun is more common in the target language, the TT was translated accordingly (ibid.). While the use of *your* (*‘din’*) here does not necessarily have to be the typical English device of addressing things by possessive pronouns that Estling Vannestål (2007) describes. It could be a deliberate stylistic device made by the author to create a connection to
her readers. But to translate this directly as *din planteringsjord* (‘your potting soil’) would sound strange in Swedish. Instead, the direct reader address was removed in the TT and replaced with a noun in the definite form, which made the text more neutral.

(12) 1. Moisten your potting soil, until it’s thoroughly damp, but not dripping wet. 1. Vattna *planteringsjorden* till den är genomfuktig men inte för blöt.

Example (13) shows an example of omission that has occurred in the translation from the ST to the TT. The ST instructions specifically address the reader by using the pronoun *you*, but it has been omitted completely from the TT. The TT instead says, ‘Place the ninebark foliage stems so that they’re arching in the same way as the crabapple branches, but without hiding them.’ The TT has removed the direct reader address and instead made the command indirect by not addressing the reader but phrasing the instructions as a suggestion.

(13) Place the ninebark foliage stems so that they’re arching in the same way as the crabapple branches, making sure *you* don’t cover up the crabapples.

In example (14) we can see an example of a sentence where an extra pronoun was added to the TT where there was none in the ST. In the TT, the double pronouns are necessary to make the sentence syntactically correct in the TL.

(14) Direct seeding can be done by hand, but if *you* have more than a dew tiny rows to do, use a walk-behind seeder, like the Earthway (see “Resources”, page 304), to make this chore a snap. Direktsädd kan göras för hand, men om *man* har mer än ett par korta rader, så är det enklare att använda *sig* av en liten såmaskin för att snabba på processen.
The fifth translation category was passive construction, which is exemplified in (15), where the pronoun *you* was not translated in the TT. The pronoun *you* was omitted, which resulted in the reader address being excluded in the TT. Instead of saying *you need*, the translation instead says *'The seed flats and pots need a drainage tray to stand on […]’*. This shifts the focus of the text away from the reader’s need and instead places the focus on the inanimate objects. To reorganize the sentence in Swedish so that the generic subject is omitted and replaced by another clause element, in this case the object, was a translation option that Altenberg (2005: 102) also found in his study. However, this was on the translation of the more formal generic pronoun *one*, instead of *you*, which should not disqualify it as a credible source in this study, since both *one* and *you* can act as generic pronouns, which makes it comparable.

(15) In addition to seed flats and pots, you need drainage trays to set the containers on, as well as some type of plastic covering to keep up the humidity seeds need to germinate properly.

To sum up section 3.1, the pronoun *you* can be translated in quite a few ways, and it is not so straightforward as assuming that *you* always means *du* in Swedish. In this section, it was concluded that *you* can be translated as both *du* and *man*, and that the pronouns can be omitted to make the sentences passive or translate the nouns into the definite form. But it was also made clear that sometimes the pronouns were omitted completely from the translation, while at other times additional pronouns needed to be added to make the TT syntactically correct.

3.2 Modal verb

As previously stated, modal verbs are not related to reader address per se, but modals do have a sliding scale of meanings that can vary from suggestions to recommendations or rules. As the reader of an instructive gardening text, it is important to correctly interpret where on this scale the text falls. For clarification, this study has looked at how modal verbs in the ST have been translated in the TT which means that the study has not investigated any possible modality in the ST that has been expressed through nouns, adjectives, or adverbs rather than modal verbs.
This is because the aim of the study is to investigate modal verbs and their translation, not how modality in general is expressed. This was also a way to keep the study focused. The results of the study found that modal verbs were used 104 times in the English ST, which was 7,210 words long in total. But it is in the modal verbs the biggest difference between ST and TT can be found, because in the TT only 65 cases of these 104 modals were translated. That is a significant deviation from the ST, and also from the other linguistic features which were much closer in number between the ST and TT (see Table 3.) This was a surprising result which might be due to the analysis of modal verbs here and not including all modality. Perhaps the great deviation depends on modality being expressed through a different word class such as verbs or adverbs. Not all modal verbs in the SL were translated into modal verbs in the TL. They could also be rewritten as other clause constructions or omitted. Table 5 below illustrates the number of occurrences of each modal verb that were found in the ST. As we can see, the two most used modal verbs from the ST were can and will, with a considerable gap down to the other modals, where we also found that shall and might did not occur at all.

Table 5. How often the modals were used in the ST.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modal</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Frequency per 1,000 words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shall</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Might</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Must</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The modal verb *can* occur 47 times in the ST, with a normed frequency of 6.2 in 1,000 words. Out of these 47 occurrences, *can* was translated into the Swedish modal verb *kan* 41 times. As we can see in examples (16), and (17), the *can* has not been translated by a modal verb into the TT. In example (16), the *can* have epistemic meaning, since it expresses a possibility that is not based on fact. It is translated into a Swedish that-clause where the modality is removed, and the modal verb *can* is instead translated as 'a cozy spot to put them on'. This translation removes the modal element in the TT that was present in the ST, which makes the translation more straightforward. The politeness and hedging which is expressed in the beginning of the sentence by *If you have a [...]* remains in the translation by the use of *om* ('if'), but the modality is removed completely, not expressing any interest in the possible factualness of a warm spot to place the seedlings. This means that the epistemic meaning has been lost in the translation.

(16) If you have a cozy spot where you *can* tuck a few trays, like on top of the refrigerator or radiator, this heat will encourage seeds to sprout more quickly. 

Om du har en ombonad plats *att ställa dem på*, som ovanpå ett kylskåp, ett element eller golvvärme så hjälper värmen fröna att gro snabbare.

In example (17) the modal verb again expresses epistemic modality, since it relays what we know or what we think we know (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 54). The modal is not translated in the TT, but the corresponding section in the TT is translated into a subclause, which is opened with the subjunction *eftersom* ('since' or 'because'). This *eftersom* is instead given as an explanation that annuals tolerate colder temperatures, and not as a possibility that they tolerate colder temperatures. This means that the modality is removed from the TT, and the meaning is slightly altered. This also means that, since the possibility is removed, the reader should understand this to be fact, and not a possibility.

(17) I sow hardy annuuals that *can* handle colder temps and bloom early—such as larkspur, love-in-a-mist, and false Queen Anne’s lace—as soon as the spring equinox arrives, followed by a

Jag börjar så härdiga annueller som riddarsporre, jungfrun i det gröna, och blomstermorot vid vårdagjämningen, *eftersom de tål lägre temperaturer*.
second and third sowing of the same plants a few weeks later.

Sedan sår jag en eller två omgångar till av samma sorter ett par veckor senare.

The modal verb *could* was used three times in the ST, and in two cases it was translated with the modal verb *kan* in Swedish, and one time with a temporal clause, as in example (18). The TT removes the factor of uncertainty from the ST and instead translated it as a fact *when the soil starts to become dry*, which means that the indirect address that the reader needs to interpret in the ST is not translated in the TT. In a previous study by Rehn there were no occurrences of the modal *could* (Rehn, 2916: 10), but Kjellström (2019) had 9 occurrences of *could* in her ST (ibid.: 10). In one of her examples, she could omit the modal verb *could*, because it was used as a hedge. The meaning of the modal was instead preserved through the adjective *possible* in the ST, which translated as the adjective ‘*möjligt*’ in the TT (Kjellström, 2019: 11). Based on the low number of occurrences in my ST on a gardening guide and Rehn’s ST on investment fund prospectus, the low number of occurrences might indicate that it is not very common in instructive texts.

(18) 10. Check the seedlings daily, and when the soil starts to become dry (which *could* be every day or two), water with a very gentle spray from a hose or watering can.

10. Titta till plantorna varje dag, och när jorden börjar bli torr efter en dag eller två, vattna med en väldigt försiktig stråle från en vattenkanna, eller med lågt tryckt från en vattenslang.

The modal verb *will* was the second most used modal verb, after *can*. It was used 44 times and was translated in a few different ways in the TT. It was most often translated as *kommer att*, as can be seen in example (18), it was rewritten into *present tense* as in example (19), translated into the Swedish modal verb *kan* which is shown in example (20), and it was also omitted from the TT.

In example (19), nothing remarkable has happened. The modality that is expressed through *will* is preserved in the translation into *kommer*, which means that the meaning from the ST is well preserved in the TT. The modal is epistemic in this case, since it expresses knowledge (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005), and the translation in example (18) corresponds
with Rehn’s (2016) findings that epistemic will can be translated as kommer att or into present tense.

(19) Try to catch weeds while they are young and easy to remove, or you will be stuck with hours of backbreaking work that would have taken just minutes weeks before. Försök att rensa ogräset när det är nytt och lätt att få loss, annars kommer du få slita i flera timmar med ett jobb som hade kunnat klaras av på bara ett par minuter veckan innan.

In example (20), the modal verb will was translated into present tense, which, as previously mentioned, corresponds with Rehn’s (2016) results of will in her study on modal verbs. However, the modality is not transferred into the TT. The translation reads One is rewarded with [...] So here the TT has added reader address in the form of a pronoun, which makes the text address the reader explicitly, unlike in the ST.

(20) Spending a little extra time on this step, and really doing it right, will pay off throughout the rest of the year with an abundance of blooms and foliage. Det är värt att lägga extra tid på det här steget och att göra det noggrant. Man blir belönad med ett överflöd av blommor och växter under resten av året.

In example (21), the modal verb will (‘kommer’) was translated into the Swedish modal verb kan (‘can’). Interestingly, while the modality remains in the translation, the degree of certainty in a certain outcome has changed. The will in the ST indicates certainty of the future outcome, but the kan (‘can’) in the TT rather represents a possible future outcome that is not as certain. While the ST says this will happen, the TT instead says this can happen. However, the modality remains despite the different degrees of certainty in the ST and the TT, since both still express something we “know or think we know” (Hudleston and Pullum, 2005: 54).
If needed, in autumn, divide any mature plants that have become crowded or aren’t producing well (this will happen after 8 to 10 years).

As can be seen in example (22), the modal verb will in the TT is not translated into a modal verb in the TT. Instead, the TT translated the modal meaning into present tense – the warmth encourages the seeds to grow. The translation of will into present tense was a result that Rehn (2016: 25) found in her study as well.

The modal verb would was found three times in the ST, and it was translated in three different ways in the TT. In example (23), we can see that there is no modal verb or other way of expressing modality in the TT, which means that it was omitted in the translation. As Leech (2004) claimed, while most modal verbs have a few different meanings, all have one that is more common, and it is best to think of modal verbs as a scale ranging from similarity to difference (Leech, 2004: 73). The most common meaning for would is skulle in the TL. If that were used, example (22) could have ended up like Det skulle tekniskt sett vara […], but that would mean the same thing as what it says now, it is just longer. No loss of information occurred in the translation in its present state, which is why the modal was omitted.

In example (24) the would, which according to Wärnsby expresses reasonable inference (Wärnsby, 2006: 26), is translated into the Swedish modal verb kunna, which means that the modality is preserved in the translation, as well as the hypothetical nature of that it expresses.

And in example (25), the modal verb would is translated into the present tense in the TT, with a subjunction and a subclause, just like in the ST. The TT instead says so that they don’t topple over the edge. This means that the modality is not transferred in the TT. The would in
the ST intimate that the flowers will topple if they are not secured, while the TT does not intimate anything but rather state a fact.

(23) That *would* technically be the last date you could plant that crop for the season.

(24) Try to catch weeds while they are young and easy to remove, or you will be stuck with hours of backbreaking work that *would* have taken just minutes weeks before.

(25) Compress a piece of chicken wire into a ball and push down into the vase to help anchor the weighty blossoms and branches that *would* otherwise topple out.

Det är tekniskt sett det sista datumet du kan plantera den sorten för säsongen.

Försök att rensa ogräset när det är nytt och lätt att få loss, annars kommer du få slita i flera timmar med ett jobb som *annars hade kunnat klaras av* på bara ett par minuter veckan innan.

Forma en bit hönsnät till en boll och tryck ner den i vasen för att hjälpa till att hålla de övertunga blommorna och grenarna på plats så att *de inte ramlar över kanten*.

The modal verb *should* was used four times in the ST, and it was translated into the modal verb *bör* twice, omitted once, and translated as an imperative once in the TT. The two occurrences of *may* were both translated as *kan* in the TT. The one occurrence of the modal *must* was translated by the corresponding modal verb, *måste*, in the TT, and the two modal verbs *shall* and *might* did not occur in the ST at all. These are not exemplified in the qualitative analysis because of space constraints, and because of their analysis being so straightforward.

3.3 Imperative verbs

Verbs in the imperative mood were used 120 times throughout the ST, and there was an obvious rise of imperatives in the instructive portions of the texts, such as the step-by-step instructions on how to put together a flower arrangement. Out of the 120 occurrences of imperatives, they were translated as imperatives in the TT 110 times. These other 10 occurrences were translated either as a tensed verb, phrased as a suggestion, or not translated.

Table 6. Translation strategies for imperatives in the TT.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TT</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Frequency per 1,000 words.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperatives</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finite verbs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omitted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>120</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be discerned from Table 6, the most common translation of verbs in the imperative mood was to keep the imperative mood in the TT. The ‘omitted’ category is called such, self-explanatorily, because the imperative verb was not translated into the TT. That one occurrence was a reassurance on the author’s side, telling the reader ‘don’t worry’, which was omitted from the translation to make the paragraph less wordy. The difference between the categories ‘finite verbs’ and ‘suggestions’ is that in the ‘suggestions’ category, the TT was translated into suggestions formed by the use of modal verbs, as can be seen in examples (26) and (27). The tensed verb category is called such because the verb is translated as a declarative, and not framed as a suggestion, see example (28).

In comparison to Sjöberg-Hawke’s (2018) study of reader address, she had a frequency of 12.5 imperatives in her TT (ibid.: 47), and she identified the translation strategies imperatives, no verb, and verbs in simple present (ibid.: 30). These translation strategies can perhaps be said to be equivalents of the identified strategies in this study, except for the fact that I have separated all tensed verbs into two separate categories, depending on if they are framed as suggestions or declaratives. The ‘no verb’ and ‘not translated’ correspond, as well as the ‘simple present’ and ‘tensed verbs’, where the difference is that I wanted to have one big category for all conjugated verbs no matter their tense.

In example (26), a set of instructions is issued toward the reader, describing the best way to plant a peony plant. As can be seen, there are four imperative verbs in the example, and all four cases are translated as imperatives in the TT. As described by Vandepitte (2008: 72), the instructions follow the pattern that is common for instructive texts. While the sentences are not necessarily short, they are written simply to make them easy to follow, and imperatives are used
as it is the clearest way to describe actions that should be performed by the reader to fulfil the
instructions (ibid.).

(26)  *Dig* a hole two to three times as wide as the root, and *amend* the soil […].

*Pay special attention* to planting depth – if roots are planted too deeply they won’t flower properly, so *nestle* the roots just below the soil surface.

*Gräv* ett hål som är två till tre gånger bredare än rotklumpen och *förbättra* jorden […]. *Var noggrann* med planteringsdjupet – om rotsystemet planteras för djupt så kommer inte växten att blomma ordentligt. *Se till* att rötterna bara är precis under jordytan.

In examples (27) and (28), the imperatives have both been translated by using the Swedish modal verb *kan*. This changes the mood from an imperative into an indicative sentence, which means that the order which was issued in the ST is removed and instead expresses factual assertions (Eppler and Ozón, 2013: 74f). Due to the use of the modal verb *kan* (‘can’) in the translation, the TT has been phrased as recommendations or suggestions. Changing the translation from an imperative into an indicative sentence that uses a modal verb not only removes the order from the instruction, but it also softens the strength of the utterance from certain facts into a non-asserted statement (Huddleston and Pullum, 2005: 53).

(27) On the other hand, slow-growing plants like perennials can take a couple of weeks to germinate, so *sow* them indoors 10 to 12 weeks before the last spring frost date.

Men perenner som tar längre tid på sig att gro kan man börja så inomhus tio till tolv veckor före sista frosten.

(28) Once you know your last frost date, *check* the back of each seed packet for days-to-harvest to figure out how many weeks early you can get them started indoors.

Example (28) shows that the imperative verb is translated into an indicative mood, which can be seen by the use of a verb in the present tense in the TT. Unlike in examples (26) and (27), example (28) is not framed as a suggestion, but as a statement of fact. Instead of the imperative verb from the ST, the translation says prefers a high-quality potting soil. This makes the sentence indicative, since it relays the information like a factual statement (Eppler and Ozón, 2013: 74). What this does to the translation is that it removes the order to the reader, which means that there is no reader address. That reader address is instead converted into a fact, and the reader will need to deduce for themselves to buy potting soil if they want their plants to thrive.

(29) For varieties that have larger seeds and will be started in bigger pots, like vines and squash, use a high-quality potting soil.

Sorter som har större fröer och som ska odlas i större krukor, som rankor och zucchini, föredrar planteringsjord av hög kvalité.

The most common translation strategy of imperative verbs in this study was by translating them as imperatives in the TT, which interestingly coincides with Sjöberg-Hawke’s (2018) results on her study of reader address, where imperatives were more used in texts in English than in Swedish. Since imperative verbs are an important part of expressing actions that need to be performed, and are common in instructive texts (Vandepitte, 2008: 72), it is not unexpected that 110 imperatives out of 120 were kept as imperatives in the translation. In the remaining ten cases, the imperatives were translated as declarative sentences instead. While the overall pattern that can be seen in examples (26) to (29) is that imperatives are most commonly translated as they are, what can be discerned is that turning them into declaratives, with tensed verbs, frames orders into advice or suggestions instead.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to examine how different forms of reader address (imperative verbs, the pronoun you, and modal verbs) have been used in a gardening guide and how they have been translated from English into Swedish. An overview of the ST revealed that imperative verbs were the most used feature of the three, which aligns with the results from
Sjöberg-Hawke’s study on walking guidebooks (2018: 34). The uses of modal verbs and 2nd person pronouns were used almost exactly as much. The biggest difference was the large discrepancy between the number of modal verbs in the ST and how few of those modals were translated into modals in turn in the TT. This might be due to omission on the translator’s part, or because the analysis of the TT did not include modality that was not in the form of a modal verb.

The translation of the pronoun you resulted in three different categories, and the most frequent translation was into the generic pronoun man, followed shortly thereafter by du. The third category was omission, where the pronoun you was omitted in the translation, where the sentences instead were written without reader address. For example, nouns were written in the definite form and took the subject position in a sentence, or the sentences were rewritten into passive sentences. The decision whether to translate you into du or man was not determined by previous research, but instead on a basis of interpretation, which was more suitable on a case-by-case basis, with the help of parallel texts.

The translation of modal verbs resulted in three different categories, and the most frequent one was where the modals were translated into modals in the TT as well. The other two categories were rewritten into different clause-constructions or omitted. The modal verbs were the category which displayed the biggest difference between the ST and the TT, which might probably be so because I investigated if the modals from the ST were translated into modals in the TT. Also, as I focused on the translation of modal verbs into other modal verbs, I investigated form over meaning, not looking at modality being expressed through nouns, adverbs, or adjectives.

The most common form of reader address in this study was the use of imperatives, in both the ST and the TT. The translation of imperatives resulted in four different categories, and the biggest category was when imperatives were translated into imperatives in the TT. The other three identified kinds of translation were as tensed verbs, phrased as suggestions, or not translated at all. As the use of imperatives is common in instructive texts (Vandepitte, 2008), it is not a surprise that the use of imperatives remained in the translation into the TT.

The parallel texts were of great use when translating the content of the ST, and Nord’s instrumental translation strategy helped when translating the culturally differing cultivation practices (Nord, 2005).

As a concluding remark, it is important to remember that this paper is written by a student translator, and that the study is based on the material translated by that same student translator. This might have influenced the results and any conclusions drawn from them. While all the
separate subjects of study in this paper have been extensively researched as individual subjects in various disciplines, not a lot of research could be found on the translation of the various subjects as a form of reader address. This might indicate that the topic of reader address would be open to future studies, to further expand on our understanding on the translation of different kinds of reader address from English to Swedish.
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Parallel texts and dictionaries


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