We might always use hedges and boosters in text

The English-Swedish translation of hedges and boosters in an academic literature textbook
Abstract

This paper discusses the translation of hedges and boosters from English to Swedish in an academic textbook. In a statement, hedges express uncertainty and carefulness, while boosters are used to express certainty and confidence. The primary source in this paper is an academic textbook on English literature, which was translated by the author of this paper to analyse how hedges and boosters and their expressions are translated. The different categories of hedges and boosters discussed in the analysis are: verbs, both auxiliary and lexical, adverbs, adjectives, nouns, phrases, and prepositions. The study is carried out using linguistic studies, translation studies, corpora, and dictionaries.

Hedges and boosters are frequent features in the source text, hedges being slightly more frequent than boosters. The most commonly used hedges are the auxiliary verbs *might* and *would*, and the adjective *some*. The most frequent boosters are the auxiliary verbs *will* and *must*, and the adjective *very*. Most of the hedges and boosters are translated with literal translation, but transposition and omission occur as well. Even though most hedges and boosters are translated, the analysis shows that no word or phrase exists purely as a booster or hedge, as they depend on the text’s context.

Key words

Hedging, boosting, boosters, academic discourse, translation, English, Swedish
# Table of contents

1 Introduction  
   1.1 Aim and research questions 2  
   1.2 Material and method 2  

2 Theoretical background 4  
   2.1 Hedges 4  
   2.2 Boosters 6  
   2.3 Translation strategies 7  
   2.4 Previous studies 9  

3 Analysis 12  
   3.1 Modal auxiliary verbs 13  
      3.1.1 Would & will 14  
      3.1.2 Might, may, must, and can 16  
   3.2 Lexical verbs 19  
   3.3 Adjectives 22  
      3.3.1 Some and few 22  
      3.3.2 Possible and apparent 23  
   3.4 Adverbs 24  
      3.4.1 Often and frequently 26  
      3.4.2 Perhaps/maybe, probably, and always 27  
   3.5 Nouns, Pronouns, and Phrasal hedges 28  

4 Conclusion 31  

List of references 33
1 Introduction

The ability to express uncertainty or certitude is pivotal when it comes to academic discourse, no matter the subject. Authors of all academic fields must distinguish facts from opinions and analyse their statements in compelling yet moderate ways. A way to do this is by using hedges and boosters:

[They] indicate the degree of commitment, certainty and collegial deference a writer wishes to convey, signalled by items such as possible, might and clearly. [The] balance of these epistemic categories plays an important role in conveying the extent of author commitment to text content, and observing interactional norms of rhetorical respect. (Hyland, 2004:112–113).

Their importance for the context of a text means that boosters and hedges are essential during the translation process as well, as translators want to convey the same message in their target text as the author wanted to convey in the source text. How boosters and hedges are translated depends mainly on which language pair is concerned, as that determines how many synonyms can be used for the same hedge/booster, but also which word it is, what context the word is used in, and even who the translator is. This paper will therefore investigate the translation process when translating hedges and boosters in a text translated by the author of this paper.

Even though a fair number of studies have been carried out on hedging and/or boosting (e.g., Axelsson, 2013, Hyland, 1998a, 1998b 2000, 2004, Kranich, 2011, Lakoff, 1973), few have researched the use of hedging and boosting in academic writing on literature, particularly where hedges and boosters are affected when translating an academic text on English literature. Academic texts on literature, such as literature textbooks, are often based on general thoughts and opinions on works of fiction. Authors may use hedges if they feel the necessity to ‘weaken’ these opinions and not state something that may be too controversial or debatable, also to give the reader room for their own interpretations. Using boosters in literature textbooks and academic texts on literature may then assert to the reader that the author can be trusted as educated on the subject, as someone who can support their statements.

A translator may want to keep their translation as close to the original in style, meaning and intention, and still be comprehensible and clear. To do this, the translator must distinguish between a pragmatic approach, where the focus is on the function of the text, and a semantic approach, where a specific component in the text conveys significance (Ingo, 2007:87, 127). Hedges and boosters present challenges in the translation process, like identification, which can be difficult especially as some words or phrases used as hedges can also be used as boosters
(e.g., must, will) and vice versa (Hyland, 1998a, 1998b). The translator also must decide whether the hedge or booster is necessary, fits in the target text, or should be omitted or changed to another word-class. As hedges and boosters express the writer's degree of confidence, they “play a significant role and constitute central pragmatic features in the process of engaging, influencing and persuading readers to assent to the writer's claims” (Sanjaya, 2013:5).

1.1 Aim and research questions

This study aims to examine the translation process when translating hedges and boosters in an academic text on English literature. Through identification and counting, the following word-classes of hedges and boosters will be discussed: verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns, pronouns, and phrasal hedges. As hedges mainly express uncertainty, and boosters express certainty, I want to know whether it affects the translation task. The following research questions will be addressed:

- How many hedges and boosters have been transferred from the source text to the target text?
- Which translation strategy is most common when translating hedges and boosters?
- How does the translation of hedges compare to the translation of boosters?
- How are hedges and boosters translated in the target text compared to previous studies?

Studies on fictional literature do not always have a clear answer to ideas and questions, where one thing is right, and another is wrong. A hypothesis is, therefore, that hedges are required and often used so as not to imply something that can have several answers and thus lose credibility. Boosters are then used when there is a correct answer to increase trust in the reader that the author knows the subject. A weakness in this study that may influence the results of the study is that the translation of the analysed text is done by me, the author of the paper. In the next section, 1.2, material and method will be discussed to better understand what sort of sources will be used to answer the research questions and which method will be used to collect the data for the analysis.

1.2 Material and method

The source text (henceforth ST) and material that is the focus of this study is the textbook *English Literature: A very short introduction* by Jonathan Bate, published in 2010 by Oxford University Press as part of their series “A very short introduction”, which is written “for anyone
wanting a stimulating and accessible way into a new subject… written by experts” (Bate, 2010: Preface). The part that is translated for this paper is chapter 2, “What it is”, where Bate discusses what can be said to be ‘real’ literature. The target reader for this book is the secondary school and university students with previous basic knowledge, but also others who are interested in English literature and have knowledge of some of the major authors. The target text (henceforth TT) is suited for the same readers as the ST.

The text aims to inform and educate the reader on English literature. It has what Ingo (2007:127) would describe as an informative function, meaning a focus on pragmatic features. The translator should aim to convey the same clear, accurate, and unambiguous information in the TT as in the ST. To some degree the ST also has an expressive function, meaning that the language communicates emotions and has a subjective way of relating to the subject. The main aim of the translator is, thus, to create the same feeling for the TT’s reader as the ST’s reader felt (Ingo, 2007:128). Because the functions are both informative and expressive, the style is somewhat informal. The ST has a formal vocabulary and no contractions; however, as mentioned before, the author uses a personal style and is engaged in the topic with less distance than the average scientific text (Hellspong & Ledin, 2018:207f). Using hedges, the author makes himself more objective in the text, while many of the boosters in the ST serve as subjectivity markers.

The secondary material used in this paper are studies on hedges and boosters, and some material on how they are translated in general. The main source is Hyland’s (1998a) study on hedges in research articles. The ST has been translated with the help of dictionaries, parallel texts, English and Swedish corpora, and studies on translation methods.

The main corpus used in this paper is Språkbanken Text, where I conducted a parallel search for the English hedge or booster and compared it with the translation in the TT and the number of times it was used as a translation in the parallel texts. I also searched for how frequent some words were in Swedish academic texts by narrowing down the corpus queries to academic texts, in order to compare synonyms and see which ones that were the most common. For the TT to be as consistent and straightforward as possible, all text was translated by me, including the quotes from fictional literature, even though they may have had a translated version before this study was conducted. The fact that the ST was translated by the author of this paper may be problematic for the analysis. Whether a hedge or booster should be translated or not was analysed during the translation process and decided by me, which may affect the results gathered in the analysis and in turn affect the end discussion. It is also difficult to assess if the
hedges and boosters were subconsciously translated more because of the study, or if the number of hedges and boosters in the ST transferred to the TT would have been the same in any other context.

The analysis of hedges and boosters is based on the translation of chapter 2 (pp. 40–56) in Bate’s (2010) textbook. The hedges and boosters in the ST have, in order to be analysed, been counted, defined, and divided into word-classes manually. The only aid used was a Swedish and an English dictionary, to be able to correctly define and categorise them. The hedges and boosters will be categorised according to the word-classes: verbs, adverbs, adjectives, nouns, pronouns, and as phrasal hedges. There was also one case of a prepositional hedge, but it will not be discussed further since it cannot be considered typical of the ST. Verbs will be further divided into modal auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs, but will not be separated in Table 1. The decision of categorising the hedges and boosters by word-class was made because it was the most natural connection between the hedges and boosters.

The analysis comprises a quantitative and a qualitative section. The quantitative section describes the frequency of both general and distinctive hedges and boosters in the ST. How many hedges and boosters have been transferred from the ST to the TT is shown in Table 1 in the analysis. There is also a comment on the frequencies of the translation strategies. The qualitative section consists of in-depth discussions of the more frequent hedges and boosters, and each sample discusses different possible translation strategies. The examples in this section were picked because they represent the most frequent or noteworthy examples of hedges and boosters in the ST.

In the next section, hedges and boosters will be defined and explained by using previous studies focused on hedges and boosters in academic texts. The strategies used for translating the ST and previous studies on translating hedges and boosters will be described and discussed as well.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Hedges

The term hedging has been in the linguistic lexicon since 1972, when George Lakoff introduced it for the first time, and has since received several different definitions. Lakoff describes them as “words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy” (Lakoff, 1973:471). Words like *maybe, mostly, might* and *can* are used as linguistic devices in statements to abstain from them.
Hedges “express tentativeness and possibility in communication” and refer to words or phrases used to remain impartial to a statement either because of uncertainty in the subject or the necessity to not fully commit to the idea (Hyland, 1998b:1). A hedge, in this study, is defined as a word or phrase that communicates doubt, hesitancy, carefulness or uncertainty about a statement’s validity.

Because the number of different definitions of a hedge is so vast, Markkanen and Schröder (1997:6) observe that “almost any linguistic item or expression can be interpreted as a hedge”. A word or phrase cannot be a hedge by nature but can become a hedge in a specific context. A defined list of hedge terms can therefore not be made. However, this is noted as an advantage, as it actualises “an important aspect of communicative behaviour” (ibid.). Hellspong and Ledin (2018:171) connect hedges to the aspect of power and authority, where people who are at a disadvantage tend to hedge more than a person with greater influence. This can be seen in informal conversation, where hedges are studied and discussed continually because of their high frequency. In writing, however, they are reviewed and discussed because they are perceived as a highly important component of any argumentative text (Hyland, 1998b:9). Academic discourse that is not considered confrontational is also dependent on softening and/or modifying statements to instil trust in the reader (Hyland, 2000:179). With every definition of what a hedge is, comes an explanation of what it is used for and, therefore, also a reason for why they are essential. With the use of hedges, scholars can create interactively and rhetorically acceptable statements, conveying both authors’ confidence and an attitude to the readers (Hyland, 1998a:350). More definitions and ways hedges are used will be discussed further in the analysis in Chapter 3.

Whether a text is argumentative or not is less relevant as an author still wants the information they present to be believed. That is why the importance of hedges and the role they play in academic and scientific texts may be a reason for the author of the ST, Bate (2010), to use hedges in the ST. For the information in the text to appear trustworthy, the reader must feel that they can trust the author, and an author who is open to other explanations and answers to the questions is easier to trust. This means that hedges are key to the reader’s trust. Markkanen and Schröder (1997:5f) refer to hedges as a strategy using manipulative and evasive language to say less than what is meant, leaving the reader in the dark. However, Markkanen and Schröder (1997:10) also claim that hedges are “motivated” by the want to be polite or be accepted by the community.
Why a scholar decides to use hedges in their sentences is a question only they can answer (sometimes not even them), and as translators, we are, of course, able to speculate. A theory of why Bate (2010) uses hedges in the ST can be because literary work is open to several different interpretations, and he may feel the need for a safety net. Most of the interpretations on literature studies are personal readings and are therefore highly subjective, which make them open to all kinds of interpretations:

As Spillner (1983, 35) points out, in text in which the use of experimental data and logical deduction are not so important, the style of the writing becomes an essential element in achieving credibility. The convincingness of an argument in such texts depends on the use of linguistic devices, including hedges. (Markkanen and Schröder, 1997:10).

Most of the statements and conclusions written by Bate are, as a result, debatable, and he would be incautious to state them as concrete facts.

2.2 Boosters

Boosters are different but still as important and can be described as somewhat the opposite of hedges. Instead of communicating uncertainty and carefulness, boosters add confidence to a statement’s validity. Words like must, will, truly or obviously provide the author with the means to convey assertiveness and communicate a message they can stand by with a confident attitude. This study defines boosters as a word or phrase that expresses confidence, certainty, and emphasis about a statement’s validity.

As mentioned in section 2.1 on hedges, Hellspong and Ledin (2018:171) see a connection between hedges and power, but they also see this connection with boosters. A person with authority is more likely to use boosters when communicating with a person they view as beneath them as a way of “sticking their chin out” (ibid. [my translation]) and showing power, reliability, and confidence. Boosters may seem like an offensive and risky strategy (Hyland, 1998a:353) as they highlight the credibility of a statement in an intense way and, as a result, end any discussion before it has even begun.

Boosters are less frequent in academic writing than hedges, which Hyland’s (1998a:356) analysis of 56 different research articles shows. In his study, he found almost three times as many hedges compared to boosters. However, while boosters often make sentences less accessible to the reader’s own interpretation with their way of disregarding possible alternatives, Hyland (1998a:350) still finds that they mark involvement and solidarity with an audience, stressing shared information, group membership, and direct engagement with readers. In addition, a writer needs to offer a level of certainty with their statement, and that is where
boosters are used (Sanjaya, 2013:3). A text full of either hedges or boosters would become the opposite of confident or trustworthy, where too many hedges will make the author seem too insecure and unreliable. At the same time, too many boosters can make the writer seem arrogant and egoistic.

2.3 Translation strategies

When translating the ST, a great number of both hedges and boosters were noted and it became clear that all of them required individual attention to be correctly translated, keeping the style, and meaning of the ST. Several aspects must be considered when translating a non-fictional text and when translating hedges and boosters: different translation strategies are required in different contexts. Perkins (1983:26) suggests that the process of analysing word-meaning can be divided between two sorts of people: “those which assign a meaning to a word in isolation from a specific context of use, and those which regard the meaning of a word as being largely, if not entirely, dependent upon a specific context of use” (ibid). As a translator, one must fulfil both roles, especially when translating hedges and boosters.

The translation strategies used in this paper are a selection of syntactic and semantic strategies, originally proposed by Vinay and Darbelnet (1989), Newmark (1969), and Catford (1965), and later defined by Chesterman (1997:87–116). The syntactic strategies relevant for this study are:

- **literal translation** – As close to the form of the source language as possible but still grammatically correct in the target language. Example:

  ST: Wir wünschen Ihnen einen guten Flug mit Austrian Airlines.
  TT: We wish you a pleasant flight with Austrian Airlines. (1997:94).

  Chesterman’s literal translation is an interpretation of Newmark’s (1989) and Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1969) concept of literal translation.

- **transposition** – When a word-class is changed to another word-class, e.g., noun to verb, or verb to adjective. Examples:

  ST: Es sind dies informativ gestaltete Hinweise auf ... [adverb]
  TT: Both deal in a highly informative way with ... [adjective]
  ST: Durch Einbeziehung von Mietwagenfirmen ... [noun]
  TT: Car rental companies have been incorporated ... [verb] (1997:95)

  This is the interpretation proposed by Chesterman (1997:95) of the term coined by Vinay and Darbelnet (1969).
- **unit shift** – When a grammatical unit is changed to another unit, e.g., a word translated to a phrase. Examples:

  ST: Wir akzeptieren folgende Kreditkarten und ersuchen Sie, jene, mit der Sie Ihre Rechnung begleichen wollen, anzukreuzen.
  TT: We accept the following credit cards. Please mark the one which you would like to have charged. (1997:96) [One sentence to two; German clause becomes English sentence.]

  ST: ... eine Dienstleistung, die wir *gemeinsam* mit Swissair anbieten.
  TT: ... a service which we are offering *in conjunction* with Swissair.

  [German word to English phrase; this also incorporates a transposition, from adverb to noun.] (1997:96).

  Unit shift is an interpretation by Chesterman (1997) of the term originally proposed by Catford (1965:80), who describes it as “changes of rank – that is, departures from formal correspondence in which the translation equivalent of a unit at one rank in the SL is a unit at a different rank in the TL”.

  The semantic strategy used for this study is:

  - **synonyms** – Choosing a synonym or near-synonym instead of the ‘obvious’ equivalent, e.g., to avoid repetition. Examples:

    ST: Diese Ausgabe von SKY LINES...
    TT: ... the present issue of SKY LINES
    ST: ... auf Seite 97 dieser SKY LINES Ausgabe.
    TT: ... page 97 of this magazine.

    [The English uses two near-synonyms for the single German term, within the same text.] (1997:102).

  According to Chesterman (2002, in Chesterman & Wagner 2002:61), these strategies may be either obligatory or optional, depending on the language pair, where some strategies are compulsory to use when translating certain language pairs, while other language pairs have the option to choose more freely, and being “a matter of translator’s choice and judgement” (Chesterman & Wagner, 2002:64). It may also depend on what kind of text type it is. Literal translation is more commonly used in some translations (e.g., legal), while other texts use more adaptive strategies (e.g., literature for children). Chesterman (ibid.) therefore believes that it is difficult to produce “guidelines” and suggests that there can merely be “general recommendations”. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:34) believe that literal translation does not “involve any special stylistic procedures. If this were always the case […] translation would
lack an intellectual challenge since it would be reduced to an unambiguous transfer from SL to TL” (ibid.). Chesterman (1997:13) sees this as a disadvantage as it takes “one particular type of translation – literal translation – and sets it up as one end of a single dimension. This rather prejudges the whole issue and, prevents us from looking at other dimensions” (ibid.).

When translating hedges and boosters, Chesterman’s (1997) outlines of these strategies have been essential when creating a TT that carries the same message and information as the ST but still sounds natural and grammatical in the target language. In this paper, literal translation occurs when the translation of the hedge or booster has a structure and a lexical and pragmatical function as close to the ST as possible. Ingo (2007:133) mentions the pragmatic approach of translation, where the translator’s prime focus is to make the TT, both in terms of style and content, fit into the culture of the target language. Transposition, as mentioned above, is defined as one word-class being changed to another word-class. The units in a text are morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. Unit shift in this paper is defined as when a hedge or booster working as one unit in the ST is translated with another unit in the TT. Synonyms are used in the translation to avoid repetition and if there is a synonym that better fits the context and style. Some boosters and hedges have been translated with synonyms or unit shifts. Transposition has also been used, although in very few examples.

The translation of hedges and boosters in the ST was one of the principal challenges in the translation process. Which ones should be translated, and how does one do this in the best way? Based on the discussion of translation strategies and previous studies on the translation of hedges and boosters, there is no clear, specific rule to answer that question. It can be argued that hedges and boosters should be transferred within the bounds of possibility from the ST to the TT for the tone and message to remain as similar as possible to the original. A further discussion on this can be found in the analysis in section 3.

2.4 Previous studies on the translation of hedges and boosters

Previous studies of hedges and boosters in translation have concluded that there is a significant contrast in how hedges and boosters are used in different languages and whether they are translated or not. Kranich’s (2011:94) research shows how there is a notable variation in how German and English scientific texts use them. This difference is, according to Kranich (2011:95), a challenge for translators in this language-pair, which makes them involve a cultural filter, and the translators translating from English to German also often translate to something
with a higher assertiveness. Kranich (2011:78) mentions culture to be important, especially when translating hedges. She gives the example of how a translation from English to German omits the modal verb *may*, changing the sentence from ‘may solve’ to ‘löst’ (solves) “does this mean that the translator has made a mistake” (ibid.)? Kranich does not think so, instead explaining it as “an application of a cultural filter”, where the English text uses the hedge *may* according to Anglophone communicative preferences, while the German text presents a factual statement because of the assumption that German readers anticipate “relevant information in a more direct way” (ibid.). However, Markkanen and Schröder (1989, referred to in Kranich, 2011:95) conclude that German texts use hedges more frequently than English texts. There are, however, more researchers who agree with Kranich, such as Ríos (1997), who found in his research, as well, that with the language-pair English to Spanish, the Spanish translations lacked many of the hedges found in the English original. Herriman (2014:28) found, in line with Kranich (2011), a significant difference in the use of hedges and boosters in non-fiction texts and their translations from Swedish to English. In her study, texts translated to Swedish had a higher number of boosters, while boosters in translations from Swedish to English often were omitted, and in some cases even replaced with hedges. The examples of hedges and boosters shown in her paper are, however, all literally translated:

(1) Lying just south of the Thames in west London, Richmond Park is the most “natural” and largest of the London Royal Parks and *without doubt* the one which holds the most wildlife interest. Strax söder om Themsen i sydvästra London, är Richmond Park den mest ‘naturliga’ och största av Londons kungliga parker och *utan tvivel* den som är intressantast ur viltsynpunkt. (Herriman, 2014:8)

Even though their papers were limited, Kjellström (2019) found that Swedish TTs had added instances of hedging devices, despite there being none in the English original texts:

(2) This included Main Streets of numerous western mining areas […]. Hit *kan* huvudgatorna i flera västliga gruvområden räknas […]. (Kjellström, 2019:12)

Axelsson’s (2013) paper, on the other hand, showed that most hedges were kept in the translation from English to Swedish, and only a small number were omitted:

(3) This led inevitably to a respect and reverence for the creatures inhabiting what *must* have been perceived as a sacred landscape. Detta medförde ofrånkomligen en respekt och vördnad för varelserna som bebodde det heliga landskapet. (Axelsson, 2013:21)
Modality is an important concept of translation, and modality is closely connected to hedges and boosters, according to Takimoto (2015:95). He defines modality as being related to a writer’s (or speaker’s) attitude regarding a theory’s truthfulness, the same way hedges and boosters are connected to the writer’s perspective regarding ideas. Lagervall (2014:22) agrees with this and explains modality as an item that refers to what the author/speaker wants to mediate and how they want it to be perceived. When discussing modality, one often connects it to modal verbs. Aijmer (1999) believes that “there is a strong tendency in many languages to express epistemic modality in modal verbs” (1999:303). However, she also found that, because of typological reasons, these tendencies can be weaker in Swedish than for example English, as Swedish instead has plenty of epistemic modal particles. Lagervall (2014:22), however, states that these meanings can be expressed in many ways and not just with verbs. Aijmer (2002:97) also connects modality to translation and points out that “since modality does not add anything to the propositional content of an utterance, it often disappears in the translation. Epistemic certainty/uncertainty, in particular, is a fuzzy concept” (ibid.). As an example, Aijmer (2002:99) mentions surely, which can be used to express both certainty and uncertainty. The use of surely in a sentence can be interpreted as the speaker being uncertain, “since it would have been more economical to use a bare assertion” (ibid.). A translation may be used to disambiguate the meaning, but a translation can also be as ‘fuzzy’ as surely. Aijmer (ibid.) states that the Swedish translation can imply certainty with translations such as: definitivt, utan tvivel, and naturligtvis. However, the translation can also imply uncertainty with translations such as: väl, visst, nog and måste:

(4) SURELY THE SENATOR might have argued a little more, said the Daimon Maimas. NOG BORDE VÅL senatorn ha protesterat lite mer, sa Daimon Maimas. (Aijmer, 2002:101).

Because of this, a modal device in, for example, English, may not have a ‘direct correspondence’ in Swedish (2002:97). Therefore, an omission of hedges or boosters is possible during translation, as the hedge/booster rarely makes a difference in the information provided, only in the certainty from the speaker/writer providing the information. The translation process is especially important in scientific discourse as the information transmitted has a ‘higher value’ than that of, for example, literary fiction. How the text is translated matters for how the reader takes in the transferred information and understands it.
A conclusion that can be drawn from this is that there is a significant difference in the use of hedges and boosters across languages. English could be considered a language with higher use of hedges, even though Kjällström’s (2019) paper disagrees with this finding. Also, there are some indications that Swedish texts use more boosters, but more research is required to properly analyse the differences when translating hedges and boosters. The findings in the translation for this paper will be discussed and analysed in Chapter 3 below.

3 Analysis

This section will analyse the different hedging and boosting categories, based on word-class, and discuss different translation strategies. Each word-class will have a few examples of both hedges and boosters and their translations will be discussed in-depth. A general discussion of a conclusion based on the quantitative data will then be provided. The frequency of hedges and boosters in each category, with the number of translations, is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Number of hedges/boosters in ST, categorisation, and translation frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hedges in ST</th>
<th>Boosters in ST</th>
<th>Hedges translated to the TT</th>
<th>Boosters translated to the TT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of words in the ST</td>
<td>5,878</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hedges/boosters</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbs</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrasal hedges</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preposition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that 162 hedges and boosters were found in the ST and 152 of them were translated, which means that 10 hedges and boosters were omitted. From section 3.1 to 3.5, a selection of hedges and boosters and their translations from each category will be discussed. Most of them are only used once in the ST. Only a few of them have been chosen to be included as examples in the analysis, due to the limitation of this paper. The selected examples from each
category will be those with the highest frequency in that specific category. Verbs will be explored separately for modal auxiliary verbs and lexical verbs, even though they are not separated in Table 1. Due to the low frequency of phrasal hedges, pronouns, and nouns, they will be discussed together and only in short as they cannot be considered typical of the ST. The favoured translation strategy for hedges and boosters was literal translation. Out of the 152 hedges and boosters that were translated, 95 were translated with the strategy literal translation. 24 hedges and boosters were translated with unit shift, transposition was used for 20 translations, and synonyms was chosen 13 times.

During the translation process, it soon became evident that hedges were much more frequent than boosters in the ST, which is in line with Hyland’s (1998a, 2000) studies on hedges and boosters in academic discourse. Both hedges and boosters have a variety of ways in which they are expressed in the ST, for example through verbs (H: might, B: must), adjectives (H: unlikely, B: substantial), adverbs (H: potentially, B: indeed), and nouns (H: theory, B: (in) fact). Hedges are also expressed in the ST as phrasal hedges (a number of), pronouns (many), and a preposition (according to). Two hedges were found expressed as two different word-classes: some (adjective and pronoun) and claim (verb and noun). These will be discussed further in the analysis. Again, it is important to keep in mind that the ST is translated by the same person as the author of this paper. This will most likely affect the results and should be considered when reviewing the results of the analysis.

The next two sections present an examination of the word-classes with the highest frequency of hedges and boosters found in the ST: verbs. These will be analysed by using different examples from the ST and TT, discussing translation strategies, and comparing alternative translations.

3.1 Modal auxiliary verbs

Hyland (1998b:130) found adjectives, nouns, and adverbs to be the most common grammatical classes to express hedges in the corpus he investigated, with 53%. The percentage is almost the same in this paper, where adjectives, nouns, and adverbs together represent 51% of the hedges. When looking at the word-classes individually, the most common grammatical category in the ST representing hedging was verbs. Modal auxiliaries were much more frequent than lexical verbs. Perkins (1983:104) notes that modal auxiliaries are the most direct way to express modality in English. Epistemic modality involves three kinds of judgements towards a proposition: certainty, doubt, and guesses. “These are identified as speculative, deductive, and
assumptive and overlap with hedges and boosting” (Takimoto, 2015:96). Markkanen and Schröder (1997:6) state that when it comes to hedges, one of the most important concepts is modality and that they, like hedges, vary a lot in terms of reference.

The modal auxiliary verbs are can, could, should, would, might, may, must, will, shall, and ought. In earlier corpus studies, modal auxiliaries have shown a pattern of being much more common in informal writings and speech (Hyland, 1998b:105). Hyland (ibid.) states that will and can are two modal verbs found in speech twice as many times as in writing. May and must, however, are more frequent in writing than speech. Butler (1990, cited in Takemoto 2015:97) found in their research that the most frequent modal auxiliaries were may, can and will. Will is also the most frequently used booster in the ST and will, together with would, be analysed in the next section.

3.1.1 Would & will

The booster will and the hedge would are found in the ST and translated in the TT with various Swedish auxiliaries, and some were omitted. The number of times the verbs occur in the ST and how they were translated (or omitted) is shown in Table 2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>will</th>
<th>kommer (att): 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Omitted: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>would</td>
<td>skulle: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skulle kunna: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kunde: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Omitted: 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would and will were the most frequent modal auxiliaries in the ST – would the most frequent hedge, and will the most frequent booster. The observation that would is the most frequent modal auxiliary verb agrees with Hyland’s (1994:246, 1998a:356, 1998b:107f) and Sanjays’s (2013:159) findings showing that would is one of the most frequently used hedges in written discourse. Would can be described as “the tentative version of will” (Sanjaya, 2013:162). Will is also one of the most frequent boosters in several studies (Hyland, 1998a; Hyland, 2000; Takimoto, 2015). Compared to would, though, will expresses a confident prediction and Hyland (1998b:115) acknowledges it as similar to must because they can both be viewed as a verb that communicates decisions and conclusions as undebatable. Must is, however, not as associated
with the future as will is. In the ST, will was found acting as a booster 10 times, as in example (5):

(5) [p. 33] What, then, is the antithesis to Knowledge, which will define what Literature is books of?

Example (5) is translated with literal translation. Unit shift could be argued as a strategy as the word will is translated to the verb phrase kommer att, but Chesterman’s (1997) definition of literal translation is that it should be literal but still grammatically correct, so it is difficult to say whether (5) should be counted as unit shift, or just literal translation that follows the grammatical rules. Chesterman (1997:9) states that:

[i]f your view of translation is that you carry something across, you do not expect that this something will change its identity as you carry it. … Source text and target text are “the same”. Exactly what this “sameness” consists of is, of course, open to endless debates.

Komer att was chosen as translation because it got over 70,000 hits as a translation in Språkbanken Text, compared to the synonym ska which got a little over 2,000 hits. Kommer att in (5) could have been omitted (and definiera changed to definierar), and the sentence could still work, as it does not change the meaning of the sentence to omit it.

Perkins (1983:51) compares will with would, viewing would as a more ‘conditional’ counterpart of will. Would is translated with skulle in most translations of the ST, but some cases are translated with the grammatical mood skulle kunna in the TT:

(6) An alternative approach, equally contrary to the spirit of Mr Gradgrind, would be to define literature as those books that seem positively to invite the performance of amazing tricks of interpretation, analogous to the riding stunts of the circus people.

Ett alternativt tillvägagångssätt, som även det går emot Gradgrinds anda, skulle kunna vara att definiera litteratur som de böcker som positivt tycks bjuda in till fantastiska tolkningsknep, likartat med cirkusfolkets ridkonster.

Would in (6) is translated with the strategy synonym and unit shift as it translates from one word to the verb phrase skulle kunna. Chesterman (1997:95) describes unit shift as a common occurrence in translations because there are many ways a unit shift can occur. However, in the translation for this paper, almost all cases of unit shift with hedges and boosters were from a word to a phrase or vice versa. Would is in this context a vague hedge and skulle kunna can
easily be described as an indirect and very cautious hedge, according to Hellspong and Ledin (2018:171), where they give the example “det skulle nog kunna vara gott…” (ibid.). An alternative translation of would could be kunde. When comparing frequencies in Språkbanken Text, skulle kunna got 1,788 hits as a translation for would, while kunde got 1,694 hits. Simply skulle as a translation, however, got over 43,000 hits, which is why (6) is also an example of the synonym strategy. Skulle is used as a translation for would 6 times out of 13 in the TT, which is why it felt important to use a synonym to avoid repetition. Hyland (1998b:119) mentions must together with will and would as being underrepresented as hedging markers in scientific research articles. This may be because will and must possess this other function as boosters and, therefore, can be perceived by the reader as something other than what the author intends, and they are for that reason not used as much. Hyland (1998b:113) also states that the corresponding modal auxiliary to would is might, as they are both the main grammatical expression of hypotheticality and often occur together with the lexical verbs be, appear or suggest. Must and might will, together with may and can, be discussed in the next section.

3.1.2 Might, may, must, and can

Because can is similar in use and translation of might and may, and found the least number of times, can will only be discussed in short. Their frequency and how they are translated are shown in Table 3 below:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>might:</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kan: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skulle kunna: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kanske: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>may:</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kan: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>must:</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>måste: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tvungen att: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>can:</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kan: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>skulle kunna: 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May and must were almost exclusively translated with the Swedish auxiliaries kan and måste, respectively, as exemplified in (7) and (8):

(7) [p. 30] Conversely, the over-elaborate style of some literary works may be a positive impediment to pleasure.

Samtidigt kan den överarbetade stilen hos vissa litterära verk i stället bli ett avgörande hinder för läsnöjet.
You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead.

Hyland (1998b:116) observes may as a modal verb that is distinctively frequent in academic papers compared to other genres, which agrees with Takimoto’s (2015) research. In several studies, may as a hedging device was one of the most frequently used modal verbs (Sanjaya, 2013; Hyland, 1998a, 1998b; Kjellström, 2019) and is often considered the ‘prototypical hedge’ (Hyland, 1998b:116). Aijmer (1999) found that may is not always translated to Swedish with kan, noting that it often translates with the adverb kanske. She points out that this might be because, at the time of her study, the epistemic meaning of kan might not be the same as with kanske, which Hyland (1998b) believes to be the same with can. May, according to Aijmer (1999), can also be translated with skulle kunna, or with the combination of a modal and an adverb, kan kanske. She argues that the epistemic function of kan may be emphasised by adding the adverb kanske, making it more of a hedge (ibid.).

Both may in (7) and must in (8) are translated literally, even though Chesterman (1997:23) is critical of literal translation being used all the time. He gives the example of Vinay and Darbelnet (1969, referred to in Chesterman, 1997) who coined the term literal translation and, like Newmark (1981), believe that:

[One] should translate as directly as possible, only having recourse to more indirect procedures when the result of direct procedures are plainly inexact or ungrammatical. … One simply translates as literal as possible, for unmotivated changes (“freedom”) lead to inexact, less-than-optimal, translations. (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1969, referred to in Chesterman, 1997:23)

However, as mentioned, this paper only analyses the translation of hedges and boosters, which are not considered in Chesterman’s (1997) research. Dolet ([1540] 1992; in Chesterman, 1997:23) argued that translators should not translate word for word and make them “slaves to the original[s]” (ibid.), which shows how difficult it can be for translators to navigate between what should and should not be done while translating. Must could be translated with the synonym behöver, but Svenska Akademien (SO, 2021) defines måste as ‘vingad till’ as in ‘being necessary’. Behöver is defined as ‘behov av’ (ibid.). The must in (8) is focused on the necessity, where måste would signal that, while behöver would signal a need. Merriam-Webster defines necessity as ‘something that is necessary’, while need is defined as ‘being in need/want of’, which is why måste was chosen. As with will, must is a modal verb that can be either a
booster or a hedge (Perkins, 1983), although the latter alternative is found less often (Hyland, 1998b:108f, Kranich, 2011).

Hyland (1998b:116) states that may is interchangeable with might to declare possibility, where the possibilities might convey are a bit more distant and conditional than may. Might and may can, in most cases, be translated with the same words in the TT: kanske, kan, kunde, and skulle kunna, which agrees with other translations done in similar studies (Axelsson, 2013; Kjellström, 2019). Might is translated to the TT with the adverb kanske (‘maybe’), skulle kunna, and kan, the latter sense being the most frequent transfer from the ST to the TT, as seen in (9):

(9) Your first answer to the question ‘what is literature?’ might well be ‘literature is novels, poems and plays’. Ditt första svar på frågan ”vad är litteratur?” kan lika gärna vara ”litteratur är romaner, dikter och pjäser.”

As with may and must, might in (9) is translated with the strategy literal translation. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:34) see literal translation as a “unique solution which is reversible and complete in itself” (ibid.). However, Chesterman (1997:12) sees “literal” as

an unfortunate term: for some it means "word-for-word and therefore ungrammatical, like a linguist's gloss"; for others it means "the closest possible grammatical translation, probably not sounding very natural". In both cases, the stress is on closeness to the original form.

It is therefore difficult, and especially with modal verbs, to know what is counted as literal, since there are several options that can be translated from English to Swedish, which may or may not be “reversible”. Aijmer (1999) found kunde to be the most frequent translation of might, rather than kan, because might works as the past tense of may. This is not the case with the translation in this paper. Kunde could have been used, but other elements in the sentences using might and relating sentences are either in the present tense or suggest that might is used as such and are therefore translated to the TT with kan.

As mentioned, might is translated to the TT with the corresponding Swedish kan (‘can’). Lagervall (2014:287) states that the verb kunna is one of the most common modal auxiliaries in Germanic languages and can be used as either a modal auxiliary or an independent verb. However, the independent verb has disappeared in today’s German and English, being replaced with other verbs, for example, know in English (ibid.). Can in (10) is translated using literal translation with the verb kan:
According to Hyland (1998b:107), *can* only expresses epistemic meaning in negative or interrogative contexts, although Aijmer (1999:317) argues that *can* is never epistemic in English, while *kan* in Swedish is epistemic because *kan* is further advanced in its grammaticalization than *can*. *Can* has the possibility to express ability and clarity, where it is not a hedge. However, this does not mean that it cannot be used to express objective opportunity or possibility, which it is in the ST. The use of literal translation in this case can be considered a better fit when considering the arguments from Hyland (1998b) and Aijmer (1999), as *can* in the ST is not a strong hedge. If one were to translate *can* with unit shift or transposition instead and translate with *skulle kunna* or *kanske kan*, the TT would express a stronger hedge than the ST, because as mentioned, Aijmer believes that *kanske* can be used to make *kan* a stronger hedge. The literal translation is often preferred by translators and translations scholars, such as Newmark (1981, cited in Chesterman 1997), who believes that literal translation should, whenever possible, always be favoured and even calls it “the only valid method of translation” (ibid.). Chesterman (1997:13), however, views this as a little extreme and argues for a balance between the strategies. As previously mentioned, modal verbs and lexical verbs have been separated for a clearer analysis, and in the next section, 3.2, lexical verbs will be discussed.

3.2 Lexical verbs

Only nine lexical verbs are found in the ST, seven hedges and two boosters. In Table 4, all the lexical verbs used as hedges and boosters can be seen with their translations in the TT. None of the verbs appeared more than once as hedges and none have been omitted. As mentioned, the translation is translated by me, meaning that the verbs could have been translated differently, and this must be considered when considering the findings.
Table 4: The lexical verbs functioning as hedges/boosters in the ST and their translation to the TT.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>seem: 1</td>
<td>verkar: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think: 1</td>
<td>tänka: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claim: 1</td>
<td>påstå: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asserted: 1</td>
<td>hävdade: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assumed: 1</td>
<td>antogs: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>said: 1</td>
<td>sägs: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deemed: 1</td>
<td>ansågs: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>find: 1</td>
<td>finner: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reveal: 1</td>
<td>avslöjar: 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hyland (1998b) found that lexical verbs acting as hedges was the most common word-class in English with hedges. This was not the case in the ST. Lexical verbs such as *seem, suggest,* and *find* are, according to Hyland (1998b:119), the most typical method of expressing mitigation. These verbs can reveal a writer’s confidence in a statement and these verbs therefore allow the reader to evaluate the statement’s certainty or uncertainty. Hyland (ibid.) mentions that lexical verbs as hedge markers are quite frequent in academic discourse, especially *calculate, speculate, assume,* and *indicate,* but *assume* (in past participle) is the only one of the four found in the ST. While hedges like *guess, reckon,* and *feel* are very common in speech, *appear* and *assume* “occur overwhelmingly more often in writing” (Hyland, 1998b:127), and especially in academic writing (ibid.). As seen in Table 4, this was not the case in the ST.

In (11), *deemed* is translated with the strategy literal translation:

(11) All other gospels and epistles were henceforth deemed apocryphal or non-canonical.  
[Alla andra evangelier och epistlar ansågs hådanafter tvivelaktiga eller icke-kanon.]

*Deemed* and *ansågs* are here used as hedges to ‘protect’ the author from showing whether he believes these opinions or not, because if taken out, a reader can believe that the author agrees with the stated fact. A synonym could be *betraktades* (‘regarded’), but it was found fewer times as a translation for *deemed* than *ansågs* in Språkbanken Text. Chesterman (1997:10) points out that even though literal translation, or equivalence, has long been viewed as the only correct strategy, it is now declining. He states that “the only true test of equivalence would therefore be invariable back-translation”. However, he views this as “unlikely to occur except in cases of a small set of lexical items” (ibid.), or in legal texts (Chesterman & Wagner, 2002). This means that it can occur when analysing small lexical items such as hedges and boosters, which may explain why most of the hedges and boosters are translated with literal translation.
*Claim* is one lexical verb that seems noticeably under-represented in academic writing (Hyland, 1998b:127). However, in this paper, *claim* is one of few lexical verbs that is found more than once as a hedge, albeit only once as a verb (its use as a noun will be discussed in 3.5), as seen in example (12):

(12) Few people, however, would want to *claim* that the label on a can of baked beans is *literature*. Få människor skulle dock *påstå* att etiketten på en burk vita bönor i tomatsås är litteratur.

In (12) *claim* has been translated with the strategy literal translation with the Swedish *påstå*, but it would also work to translate it with *hävda*, as they are synonyms. When looking up *påstå* in SAOL (Svenska Akademiens ordflista), the synonym they use to describe what it means is *hävda*, and when looking up *hävda* they use *påstå* as a descriptive synonym. This means that either one of them could have been chosen, so they were instead compared in Språkbanken Text. *Påstå* was chosen after being compared in Språkbanken Text, where *påstå* received almost 463,000 hits, while *hävda* had about 318,000 hits. Encyclopædia Britannica’s online dictionary define *claim* as a verb when used before the object of the sentence, which in (12) is the label on a can of baked beans. Its presence is therefore important to understand the context.

Chesterman (1997:187) mentions the Translator’s Charter (published in 1984) from the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT, International Federation of Translators), that specifies their views of the rights and duties of translators. A clause in FIT states that:

> [e]very translation shall be faithful and render exactly the idea and form of the original — this fidelity constituting both a moral and legal obligation for the translator. A faithful translation, however, should not be confused with a literal translation, the fidelity of a translation not excluding an adaptation to make the form, the atmosphere and deeper meaning of the work felt in another language and country. (FIT, 1984. In Chesterman, 1997:187).

While Nabokov ([1955] 1992, in Chesterman, 1997:13–14) believes that any translation, except literal translation, should be viewed as imitation, parody, or adaption, Chesterman instead sees literal translation as a question of definition. *Claim* in (12) is defined as ‘to assert in the face of possible contradiction’ (Merriam-Webster). Compared to the *claim* functioning as a noun in (20), *claim* in (12) cannot be omitted and still be faithful to the idea of the original. In the next section, 3.3, adjectives, and especially the adjectives *some, few, apparent, and possible*, will be analysed.
3.3 Adjectives

Adjectives were found 18 times, and, in Table 5 below, the different adjectives and their frequency in numbers are shown together with their translations in the TT. As words have many different meanings, what feels right for one translator might feel wrong for another, and vice versa.

Table 5: The adjectives functioning as hedges/boosters, how many times they are used in the ST and their translations in numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Frequency in ST</th>
<th>Translation in TT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>few:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>några: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>få: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some:</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>någon: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vissa: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unlikely:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>osannolikt: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possible:</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>möjligt: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>putative:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>förmodade: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lengthy:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>längre: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>various:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ett antal olika: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implied:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>underförstådda: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intended:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ha för avsikt: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alleged:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>påstås: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>substantial:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>betydande: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apparent:</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>tydlig: 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most frequent adjectives found in the ST were some, few and possible. Both some and few can function as adjectives and as pronouns. In the next section, however, some and few working as adjectives will be analysed.

3.3.1 Some and few

Adjectives like some and few have an effect of vagueness if they modify a noun phrase. Kjellström (2019:7) defines them as strategies applied by the author to “avoid using specific numerical expressions” (ibid.). Some and few were the most frequent adjectives when counted as adjectives, as can be seen in examples (13) and (14):

(13) And yet, a few lines later, ‘it survives, / A way of happening, a mouth’.
[p. 37]

(14) Some people believe that the Russian-born Vladimir Nabokov was the most stylish English-language novelist of the 20th
[p. 30]
century, while others find his style too clever by half.

Few in (13) is translated using transposition. It shifts from the adjective few to the pronoun några. Chesterman (1997:95) states that transposition often involves a change in structure as well, but that is not the case in (13). Some in (14) is translated with vissa – a literal translation, as it is translated with its closest Swedish equivalent (Chesterman, 1997). The Swedish translations in (13) and (14) are synonyms. An alternative translation to both (13) and (14) could be the pronouns en del, några or somliga, which are also relatively close in meaning but are used differently depending on context. In Språkbanken Text, vissa got almost 5 million hits, while några got around 11 million hits. En del only got a little over 3.5 million and somliga 77,000 hits. Some as an adjective is defined as ‘one or other; an undetermined or unspecified’ (Oxford Dictionary), which is what the adjective some functioning as a hedge does and is supposed to do as a hedge. Encyclopædia Britannica’s online dictionary states that some as an adjective should always be used before a noun. This is also what makes it different from some functioning as a pronoun, which is discussed in section 3.5. Few functioning as an adjective was defined by Merriam-Webster as ‘at least some but indeterminately small in number – used with a’, which it does in (13) and is one way of determining the difference between few as an adjective and a pronoun. All few in the ST were, however, found working as adjectives.

3.3.2 Possible and apparent

Possible was a frequent hedge in Hyland’s (1998:130f) study. In the ST it was only found two times and both times transferred to the TT with the adjective möjligt, like in example (15):

(15) One possible answer would have been to say of literature what had often been said of poetry.  Ett möjligt svar kunde ha varit att säga om litteratur vad som ofta har sagt om poesi.

Possible is translated with literal translation to möjligt. It is, however, possible to use synonyms that would all work in the context, and if the three possible in the ST were closer together, a synonym would probably have been chosen. When comparing möjligt, tänkbart and alternativt with the translation possible in Språkbanken Text, the two latter alternatives were only found about 26 and 5 times, respectively, while möjligt was translated to possible over 8,000 times. Possible is, according to Hyland (1998b:131f), close in meaning to the auxiliary verbs can and may, and is a way for the author to express an opinion and remain neutral since it does not “refer to physical objects in the real world, but to … second or third order entities, i.e., states of affairs or abstract propositions which may or may not exist” (ibid.). Möjligt is used in the same way.
Apparent is often used as a hedge (Hyland, 1998b:131f), but in the ST, it is used as a booster, as seen in (16):

(16) The fallacy in this fantasy becomes apparent when we reflect on the origin of the word ‘canon’.

Villfarelsen i denna fantasi blir tydlig när vi funderar på ursprunget till ordet ”kanon.”

With the help of the verb becomes, apparent is made a booster as it shows the author’s attitude in the sentence. Perkins (1983:81) observes apparent as a subordinate category of modal expressions, which are distinguished by the fact that it requires some sort of “human perception” (ibid.). It is used to make someone observe something “[as] ‘apparent’, ‘clear’, ‘evident’, or ‘obvious’” (ibid.). Apparent has a stronger connotation than, for example, its synonyms visible or noticeable and makes the sentence less neutral. Apparent is translated with literal translation but could also be translated with the synonyms märkbar or uppenbar. Tydlig got almost 405,000 hits in Språkbanken Text, compared to märkbar that only got a little more than 23,000 hits. Svenska Akademien (SO, 2021) defines märkbar as ‘som kan uppfattas med sinnena’ (Lit. that can be perceived with the senses) or ‘påtaglig’ (lit. notable/perceivable), while tydlig is defined as ‘lätt att uppfatta med (någon av) sinnena’ (lit. easy to perceive with the senses) or ‘uppenbar’ (lit. obvious). When comparing these definitions, ‘uppenbar’ is the closest to how Perkins (1983:81) define apparent, as he, among other things, defines it as ‘obvious’.

3.4 Adverbs

Adverbs were the second most frequent hedging and boosting category, which agrees with Hyland’s (1998b:134) and Kjellström’s (2019) findings, and were found 59 times in total, 39 being hedges and 20 boosters. 4 boosters, but no hedges, were omitted. The different adverbs used as hedges and boosters and their number of appearances in the ST and what they are translated with are shown in Table 6 below:
Table 6: The adverbs functioning as hedges/boosters, how many times they are used in the ST and their translations or omissions in numbers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adverb</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rarely:</td>
<td>sällan: 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>almost:</td>
<td>nästan: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potentially:</td>
<td>potentiellt: 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(more) often:</td>
<td>ofta: 1</td>
<td>för det mesta: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>oftast: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perhaps:</td>
<td>kanske: 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maybe:</td>
<td>kanske: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nearly:</td>
<td>nästan: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually:</td>
<td>vanligtvis: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes:</td>
<td>ibland: 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather:</td>
<td>kanske: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partly:</td>
<td>delvis: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slightly:</td>
<td>lite: 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general:</td>
<td>rent generellt: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the early:</td>
<td>det tidiga: 2</td>
<td>tidigt: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quite:</td>
<td>ganska: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solely:</td>
<td>enbart: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frequently:</td>
<td>oftare: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not to be entirely:</td>
<td>inte vara helt: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not fully:</td>
<td>inte fullt: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after all:</td>
<td>trots allt: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theoretically:</td>
<td>teoretiskt: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probably:</td>
<td>troligen: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very:</td>
<td>själva: 1</td>
<td>väldigt: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>allra: 1</td>
<td>Omitted: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the very least:</td>
<td>om inte annat: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Omitted: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of course:</td>
<td>självlart: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indeed:</td>
<td>faktiskt: 1</td>
<td>Omitted: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>always:</td>
<td>alltid: 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>surely:</td>
<td>säkerligen: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too:</td>
<td>för: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>truly:</td>
<td>sant: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precisely:</td>
<td>just: 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never:</td>
<td>aldrig: 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In both Hyland’s (1998b) study and the ST, adverbs were the category with the most diverse set of examples in words and phrases. Kjellström (2019:14) suggests that the high number of adverbs can be because of their flexibility, as they can modify adjectives, verbs, other adverbs, clauses, and whole sentences, and is “thus a convenient way for the author to hedge the
information that is being stated” (ibid.). The most frequent adverbs found by Hyland (1998b:134f) were probably, relatively, apparently, essentially, and generally. Only probably was found in the ST, but only once. Instead, the most frequent adverbs in the ST were often, perhaps, usually, sometimes, always, and very. Sanjaya (2013) found more adverb boosters than adverb hedges, but this was not the case in the ST. In the next two sections, often, frequently, perhaps, maybe, always, and probably will be discussed.

### 3.4.1 Often and frequently

Adverbs like *often* or *frequently* may not always seem like hedges, but Sanjaya (2013:77) states that they “behave much like hedges in that they enable the writers to avoid making categorical statements”, which they do in the ST in examples such as (17), (18), and (19):

(17) Fiction is *often* based on fact, and factual writing may use as many literary techniques as fictional.

(18) There was a time when the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher were staged *more frequently* than those of Shakespeare.

(19) … its transmission down the ages has *more often* been from memory and repetition than text and publication …

Example (18) uses the strategy literal translation. Example (17) and (19) use unit shift, as (17) shifts from the adverb *often* to the adverb phrase *för det mesta*. One could also translate *often* in (17) with *vanligtvis*, but it can be argued that *vanligtvis* is a vaguer hedge than the phrase *för det mesta*. Example (18) uses literal translation, where *more frequently* is translated to *mycket oftare*. Merriam-Webster defines *frequently* as ‘at frequent of short intervals’, while SAOL defines *oftare* as ‘vid tätt upprepade tillfällen’. These definitions are very close, just formulated a little differently, and *mycket oftare* can, therefore, be considered a good choice for translating *more frequently*. *Ofta* could have been used in (18), but since *often* is found five times as a hedge in the ST, it felt repetitive to translate them the same every time, even if they were not close to each other in the text.

Example (19) is translated with unit shift. The adverb phrase *more often* is translated to the adverb *oftast*, which is defined in SAOL with the synonym ‘vanligen’. In (19), *often* could
be translated with *vanligen* or *vanligtvis*, but that would change both tone and meaning, as both are often translated with *usually*, according to Språkbanken Text, and can therefore be argued as adverbs that express higher frequency than *oftast*. Example (19) could be deemed as literal translation as *oftast* could be considered to be the formal equivalent version of *more often*, meaning it aims to be the same meaning and form, which Chesteman (1997:9,13) believes to go hand in hand with literal translation. However, since it shifts from an adverb phrase to an adverb, unit shift can be viewed as a more unarguable strategy.

### 3.4.2 Perhaps/maybe, probably, and always

*Perhaps* and *maybe* are synonyms and are found in the ST three times and one time respectively, and are translated with *kanske*:

(20) They *perhaps* forget that a work of literature is not a living organism: it is the product of a writer’s craft.  

(21) … *maybe* even to resist the knowledge and the intentions of its author.  
[p. 38] … *kanske* till och med motstå författarens kunskap och intentioner.

*Kanske* was chosen as translation in (20) and (21) because it got a considerably higher number of hits in Språkbanken Text (15 million) than *möjligen* (371,824), which is a synonym and the synonym used by SAOL to describe the adverb *kanske*. This led to the conclusion that *kanske* is more common in all sorts of written text and therefore should be the prime translation. Both (20) and (21) use the strategy literal translation. Because of the large number of interpretations that can be made by different people when reading the same text, “researchers are advised to say *perhaps something is*” (Sanjaya, 2013:2) or *maybe it is like this*, instead of stating that things are a certain way without allowing other or further readings of the statement. Herriman (2014:22) believes that hedges such as *kanske* (‘perhaps’/’maybe’) is a way to subdue a proposition and signal ”the writer’s lack of commitment”.

*Always* as a booster is translated in the TT with *alltid*, and *probably* as a hedge is translated with *förmodligen*, as shown in examples (22) and (23) below:

(22) Judgements regarding style are *always* subjective.  

(23) De Quincey was *probably* thinking  
[p. 35] De Quincey tänkte *förmodligen* …
Even though Chesterman (1997) is sceptical of some scholars’ (like Newmark) idea that literal translation “has the status of a default value” (Chesterman, 1997:94), *always* in example (22) can be defined as being translated using literal translation. *Alltid* is defined in SO as ‘vid varje tillfälle’ (‘on every occasion’) or ‘under alla omständigheter’ (‘during every circumstance’). This definition is coherent with what the English text wants to convey and can therefore be considered a sufficient example. The booster *always* is translated with *alltid* in (22), which it is in the other two ST instances as well. *Alltid* was chosen as it is the most regular translation of *always* and got the most hits in a formal context in Språkbanken Text (6380), compared to synonyms such as *jämt* (31), or *ständigt* (189).

Example (23) also illustrates literal translation. Hyland (1998b) found *probably* to be one of the most commonly used adverbs functioning as hedges. He divides adverbs into groups depending on what they express. *Probably* is in the largest group of adverbs that “simply expresses doubt without carrying implications about the truth of the statement, or the sense in which it is seen to be true or false” (ibid.:136). *Probably* could have been translated with adverbs such as *troligen* or *antagligen*. SO describes *troligen*, *förmodligen*, and *antagligen* almost the same way: ‘med ganska hög sannolikhet’. *Förmodligen* was, however, chosen as translation in the TT as it still got a much larger number of translations in Språkbanken Text. In the next section a short analysis will be made on nouns, pronouns, and phrasal hedges, with focus on the noun *claim* and the pronoun form of *some*.

### 3.5 Nouns, Pronouns, and Phrasal hedges

As previously noted, there are too few cases of nouns, pronouns, and phrasal hedges in the ST to be counted as a relevant and typical occurrence. In Table 7 below, the nouns, pronouns and phrasal hedges found in the ST and their translations in the TT are shown.
Table 7: Nouns, pronouns and phrasal hedges found in ST and what they are translated to in the TT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Phrasal hedges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claim: 1</td>
<td>Omitted: 1</td>
<td>Some: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>några: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>något: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ett flertal: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fact that: 1</td>
<td>det faktum att: 1</td>
<td>Most: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No more than: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In fact: 1</td>
<td>faktiskt: 1</td>
<td>Many: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not merely: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Half at random: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Refers to: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As many ... as :1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By this account: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In this case: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If you will: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Among the most: 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Claim* is an interesting word as it has previously been discussed as a verb, but it is also used in the ST as a noun:

(24)  
[p. 34]  
De Quincey was probably thinking of the elevated *claim* that opens Wordsworth’s sonnet to the painter Benjamin Robert Haydon, ‘High is our calling, Friend! – Creative Art’.

De Quincey tänkte förmodligen på hur Wordsworth upprymt började sin sonett till målaren Benjamin Robert Haydon med: ”Vårt kall är högt, min vän! – Kreativ konst”.

Encyclopaedia Britannica’s online dictionary states that *claim* functioning as a verb should be used before the object of the sentence, which can be one way of determining whether *claim* is a verb or a noun. An alternative translation could be the noun *påståendet* or using transposition and use the verb *påstod*. Adding *påståendet* or *påstod* could instead be argued as adding a stance taken by the author that he does not agree with Wordsworth. The omission of *claim* and using the verb *började* just makes the sentence a fact that this is the way Wordsworth’s sonnet starts.

In Språkbanken Text, *påståendet* was found as a translation for the noun *claim* 27 times, while *påstod* was found 4 times. These low numbers can be argued as validating the decision of omitting *claim*. The decision to omit can also be validated by Chesterman’s (1997:182) notion of responsibility. In the same way that speakers are held accountable for when they speak and
when they are quiet, translators are also responsible for what they write and decide to add, omit, or change (ibid.). This agrees with Ingo (2007:124), who points out that omission occurs when semantic components are not translated to the TT, either intentionally or not, which results in information loss. He believes the intentional omission only should happen when the rhythm of the sentence demands it, or if the semantic information is supplied by the context of the sentence (ibid.), which is the case with example (20), further validating the choice of omitting claim. It also reasons with the idea that literal translation is not always needed, as the focus of the translation should be the message or meaning of the ST (ibid.), which is still present in the TT.

Some was found in the ST functioning as both an adjective and a pronoun, but some as a pronoun was found more often than some as an adjective:

(25) But great literature shares some essential characteristics with great artworks in other media. Men framstående litteratur delar några grundläggande karaktärsdrag med framstående konstverk i andra medier.

Some functioning as a pronoun in (25) is translated with literal translation to the pronoun några. While Vinay and Darbelnet (in Chesterman, 1997) argue that literal translation should be used primarily and used as a sole strategy in a translation case, Chesterman (1997) argues for a balance and for finding different options. As with the adjective some, an alternative translation to the pronoun some in (25) could be transposition to en del vissa, but also ett par or ett antal. Några was chosen as translation because it got the highest amount of hits in Språkbanken Text (11 million), which is already discussed in section 3.3.1. Encyclopædia Britannica’s online dictionary defines some as a pronoun as ‘an unspecified amount or number of people or things’. Their definition of some as an adjective is that it should always be used before a noun, which can be one way of defining when some is used as a pronoun. In (25), some is used before the adjective essential.

Examples (24) and (25) show, together with, for example, will and must, that hedges and boosters are not fixed by word or word-class, as they can be used in different word-classes and still represent a hedge/booster or be used as both a hedge and a booster. It all comes down to context, where one must look at the whole sentence before it can be decided what the author is trying to say. The next section will discuss and summarise the research questions and the findings in the analysis.
4 Conclusion

The study shows that verb hedges and boosters were the most frequent (61 items), especially modal auxiliary verbs (52 items). Only 9 verb hedges and boosters were lexical verbs. Adverbs were the second most common word-class in both boosters and hedges, with a total of 57 items. Adjectives were only frequent with hedges (21 items), not as boosters (2 items). The only word-class with more boosters than hedges were nouns, but only 2 booster nouns compared to 1 hedge noun. Phrasal hedges, and hedges and boosters working as nouns, pronouns, and prepositions were uncommon or non-existent in the ST and can therefore not be considered typical of the ST.

Most hedges and boosters were transferred to the TT from the ST, with omission occurring only 10 times on a total of 162 boosters and hedges. Omission occurred more often when translating boosters than when translating hedges, compared to Herriman (2014), who found a significantly higher number of boosters in the Swedish translations compared to the English original texts, which can be because boosters are not always necessary to still show confidence in statements. Chesterman’s (1997) suggestion that literal translation only is used when involving small cases of a few lexical items agree with the findings of this paper, as hedges and boosters can be considered small cases of lexical items and were mostly translated with literal translation.

The translation strategy most frequently used to translate hedges and boosters was literal translation. A few hedges and boosters were omitted. Very few transpositions, where the word-class in the ST is different from the one in the TT, were used. Unit shifts and synonyms also occurred rarely. There was no difference in translation strategy when it came to translating boosters compared to hedges. The only difference was the number of omissions, where boosters were more frequently omitted, yet not in any significant numbers. The data shows that the strategies and translation choices were similar in most secondary sources.

The findings in this paper do not agree with previous studies, such as Kranich (2011), Ríos (1997), and Herriman (2014), who found a significant difference in the use of hedges and boosters between Swedish and English texts and other language pairs. The result of this paper is closer to the findings of Kjellström (2019) and Axelsson (2013), who found their texts close in the number of hedges and boosters used in translation, with a few omissions, like in this paper. This might be because this paper, like Kjellström’s (2019) and Axelsson’s (2013) papers, is limited, while Kranich (2011), Ríos (1997), and Herriman (2014) had more texts and translations to compare, but not texts of the same genre, which also makes a difference for the
findings. Another reason may be because the translation was done by the same person who wrote this paper, which may affect the results both unconsciously and knowingly.

As mentioned, the findings of this study are limited. A word generally used as a hedge can, in another context, be used as a booster, and vice versa. There are also cases where a hedge or booster can function as more than one word-class, such as *some* and *claim*. The text translated was only one chapter and secondary sources on boosters were few, which made it difficult to make a full conclusion on anything involving hedges and boosters in translation. This made it particularly difficult to state a conclusion on hedges and boosters in literary studies, as well. An analysis on hedges and boosters in translations would benefit from being examined in a larger study with several different translations between Swedish and English, as only one translation of a single chapter is inadequate to gather sufficient and distinct results. Also, further theoretical studies on the translation of hedges and especially boosters would be useful. Since this paper focuses on translation from English to Swedish, it would be interesting to do further research on other language pairs.
List of references

Primary source


Secondary sources


**Internet resources and corpora**


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