A Translation Study Focusing on the Translation of Adjectives and Constructions with *of*

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Abstract
This study analyzes the translation from English to Swedish of a text within the subject field of Women’s Studies, focusing on adjectives and constructions with of. The analyzed text is a chapter called Family Systems, Family Lives which can be found in the book Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions – Classic and Contemporary Readings, written by Susan M. Shaw and Janet Lee. In order to attain an idiomatically and grammatically correct TT, translation strategies put forth by Vinay and Darbelnet provided the basis for this study. Borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation, are translation strategies that are presented by Vinay and Darbelnet. These are briefly discussed in the theoretical section of this study. However, they were not all employed in the translation of adjectives and constructions with of. In the translation of adjectives, literal translation proved to be the most common translation strategy, but also transposition and modulation proved to be functional strategies in some instances. In addition to these strategies, equivalence was also employed in the translation of attributive adjectives in particular. Concerning the translation of constructions with of, the very same translation strategies, as in the translation of adjectives, were employed.

Keywords: Direct translation, oblique translation, omission, adjectives.
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1. Introduction

“Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style”

(Nida and Taber 1974:12)

Just as the quote above implies, translation means transferring the meaning of the source text (henceforth ST) into the target text (henceforth TT) with the aim of maintaining the message of the ST rather than the style. However, although the main thing is to retain meaning, the optimal translation is nevertheless a literal one – i.e. translating element by element and simultaneously reproducing the same message as in the ST. Unfortunately this is not always possible since the grammatical structure varies among languages and a literal translation would therefore not always result in idiomatically and grammatically correct expressions in the TL (Vinay 1995:31). Since almost everything that is expressed in one language can be expressed in another as well, it may seem easy to transfer a text from one language into another, this is however not always the case. Translators always encounter difficulties in a translation process. They are often faced with the frequently occurring dilemma of whether they are to make changes in the TT or not, in order to transfer the ST message in the most idiomatic way to the new target readers. Making changes in the TT is, however, favourable as long as the main message remains. Some changes involve omissions and additions, and changes of the original style in order for the TT to fit the new readers. According to many theorists, it is of great importance to maintain the structure of the original text when translating, however, it is just as important to convey the message in the most idiomatic and correct way in the TL (Newmark 1988:5).

The present study will focus on difficulties that may occur in the translation from English to Swedish of a text on Women’s Studies.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this study is to analyze the translation from English to Swedish of a text on Women’s Studies. The main aspects that will be focused on in this particular study are the following:

- The translation of adjectives
- The translation of constructions with *of*
How these aspects are dealt with in the translation process is also discussed in this study, as well as what translation strategies have been applied.

1.2 Method

In order to obtain data for the present study, I first translated an English text within the subject field of Women’s Studies into Swedish. During the translation process some difficulties occurred which I chose to specifically focus on, by identifying and categorizing the translation strategies employed in the resulting translation for these aspects. The aspects that are focused on are brought up under ‘aim’ above.

In the process of translating the English text into Swedish, several parallel texts were consulted in order to determine what kind of vocabulary and terminology is normally used in Swedish texts on the same subject. The parallel text that proved to be the most useful one in the translation process is a document compiled by Statistics Sweden (contains useful official statistics on family related topics) called *Family, Marital status and Consensual Union, Terms and definitions*, which contains many useful terms and definitions on this particular subject. Various documents compiled by the Swedish government, the European Commission and The Swedish Research Council for Gender Research, were also useful parallel texts. Furthermore, several websites were consulted in the translation stage, for instance alltomjämställdhet.se and bevaraäktenskapet.nu, which also provided some useful information, especially in terms of terminology. Additionally, various articles dealing with similar topics in newspapers such as *Världen idag* and *Yelah* were especially useful in terms of ensuring a correct understanding of the ST. A book called *Modrande och Praxis* written by Ulla M. Holm, was also used as a parallel text, especially for the last section of the translated chapter, which dealt with difficult terminology. The dictionary *Norstedts Ord* was of great importance during the process of translating, as unknown words and expressions could be looked up. *Oxford Advanced Learners dictionary* also proved to be useful in terms of ensuring the understanding of the ST words. The website *synonymer.se* constituted another useful aid, ensuring a varied language in the TT. It is also important to mention that searches have been made on Google and Statistics Sweden when comparing the frequency of various words and expressions, and deciding what translation to use.

When obtaining data about the translation strategies employed for the aspects I chose to focus on, Vinay and Darbelnet’s *Comparative Stylistics of French and English – A methodology for*
translation, provided the basis. The theoretical models on translation, such as direct translations and oblique translations will be further discussed in the section on Background, as will semantic omission.

1.3 Material
For this study, I have chosen to translate a chapter from a book called Women’s Voices, Feminist Visions – Classic and contemporary readings, written by Susan M. Shaw and Janet Lee. The book has been available for a number of years, but this particular edition was published in 2007 and is used in various Women’s Studies courses all over the US, with the purpose of informing the students about the role of women in the world. The book deals with different aspects of women’s lives and includes various interesting readings about women’s life experiences, both old and contemporary ones. The chapter that I have chosen to translate is called Family Systems, Family Lives and deals with the family as an institution in society, and women’s roles within the family system. The ST contains plenty of adjectives as well as numerous of-constructions that are used when expressing possession, among other things. Another characteristic feature of the ST is the abundance of other constructions with of, in addition to the of-constructions mentioned above.

The disciplines of Feminism and Women’s Studies are becoming increasingly popular courses at universities around Sweden; therefore I believe that this book would provide a perfect introduction to the subjects. Unfortunately it was not possible to translate the entire book in the limited time at hand for performing this study, but the translation of one single chapter was enough for me to find the book interesting and enlightening. The TT has the same purpose and target readers as the ST, except from the fact that the new target readers are Swedish university students who study Women’s Studies or Feminism. Concerning the language and level of style in the TT, it is rather similar to that of the ST. I have tried to keep the same formality and style in the TT, with the same amount of expressive language as in the ST. This has, however, not always been possible since the ST has a somewhat characteristic style that sometimes requires quite some reading between the lines.

2. Background
This section includes a discussion on translation theory, as well as relevant grammar definitions.
2.1 Translation theory

The practice of translation has been a subject of discussion ever since antiquity and has played an important role in the development of society (Venuti 2004:1). The view of translation has, however, changed over the years, which has consequently resulted in several theories about the discipline (Ingo 2007:15). Despite the fact that these theories differ in one way or another, the various theorists tend to utilize similar translation strategies although they might have different names for them. For instance, the phenomenon that occurs in a translation process when a word changes word class, is called *transposition* by Vinay and Darbelnet (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:36). Catford, on the other hand has named this phenomenon *shift*, which he additionally has subdivided into different groups of shifts depending on what level a shift has occurred on. More precisely, when a word changes word class from one language into another it is called a *class shift*, while a *unit shift* would involve a shift from a word class into a phrase or the other way around (Munday 2008:60ff).

According to Vinay and Darbelnet it is immensely important to learn all the rules concerned with translation in order to become a successful translator. One is that the translator must understand the text he or she is going to translate, in order to succeed in his or her task. Another rule is to have a perfect knowledge about the language system of both the source language (henceforth *SL*) and the target language (henceforth *TL*) (1995:8). Since there are so many different ways of expressing oneself in both spoken and written language, there are always several possible translations of any given text (Ibid:7). However, a translator always needs to take the situational factors into account, and in order to attain an idiomatically and grammatically correct translation, various translation strategies can be applied.

The analysis in section 3 will be based on the model of translation strategies put forth by Vinay and Darbelnet. On the most general plane, they suggest a division into, on the one hand, *direct translation*, and, on the other hand, *oblique translation*. Direct translation strategies include *borrowing*, *calque* and *literal translation*. Indirect translation strategies include *transposition*, *modulation*, *equivalence* and *adaptation* (Ibid:31ff). These translation strategies are further discussed below.

*Borrowing* is a translation strategy that translators usually need to employ when a word or expression does not have an equivalent in the TL. More specifically, the translator ‘borrows’ the ST word or expression and transfers it directly into the TT. Some borrowings eventually become
well-established in the TL. Tequila and déjà vu are two examples that are originally borrowings but that have eventually become widely used in Swedish, among other languages (cf. Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:31ff). They can now even be found in Swedish lexicons such as Norstedts Svenska Ord.

Calque is another kind of borrowing where the translator borrows an entire expression from one language and then translates it literally into the TT (Ibid:32). One example is the new Swedish word chefsnappning, which originates from the English bossnapping, i.e. the situation when employees take hostage of their employer in order to prevent discontinuation of their place of work (www.språkrådet.se).

Literal translation implies a word-for-word translation of one text (ST) into another (TT) and is only possible if the TT becomes completely grammatical and idiomatic in the TL. According to Vinay and Darbelnet this is the most common translation strategy when translating between languages with similar language structures. An example of literal translation is where are you, translated into var är du (cf. Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:33ff).

Transposition involves a change from one word class into another without a change in meaning. This translation strategy can either be obligatory or optional (Ibid:36). E.g. the noun dancer in you are a good dancer has become a verb in the Swedish translation du dansar bra. Since the English sentence can be translated literally as well, this is a case of optional transposition, as in: du är en bra dansare.

Modulation is another translation strategy which implies a semantic change – i.e. a change of the form of the message. This can either be obligatory when there is a fixed, corresponding expression in the TL, or optional as long as it is idiomatic in the TL (Ibid:36). Instead of translating it is not difficult to show literally, it can be translated into det är lätt att visa, which makes it an optional modulation.

Equivalence is another oblique translation strategy, which simply means finding the best equivalents to ST expressions and words and then transfer them into an idiomatically and grammatically correct TT. Onomatopoetic animal sounds are usually the best examples of equivalence (Ibid1995:38). For instance oink, the sound associated with pigs in English-speaking countries has the slightly different sound nöff as its equivalent in Sweden.

Adaptation is only employed by translators when the situation that is referred to in the ST is completely unknown to the target readers. In these cases the translators need to find another
equivalent situation that is familiar to the target readers. This translation strategy is most often applied in the translation of book titles, among other things (Ibid:39). E.g. the well-known book “Angela’s Ashes” is more known as “Ängeln på sjunde trappsteget” in Swedish.

In addition to Vinay and Darbelnet’s translation strategies, omission is another phenomenon that is worth mentioning in this study. A semantic omission is sometimes necessary in order to attain an idiomatic expression in the TL. However, it is important to remember that an omission only is acceptable if the message of the ST remains in the TT (Ingo 2007:124). As is shown in (1), an omission of the adjective related has occurred since it is completely unnecessary in the TL, i.e. it is evident from the word släkting, that these people are related. This is, however, the case with the English kin as well, but for some kind of reason the authors decided to emphasize it even more, by adding this premodifying adjective.

(1) …and it can be distinguished from an extended family in which a group of related kin, in addition to parents and children, live together in the same household. …och skiljer sig från en utvidgad familj där en grupp släktingar – inklusive barn och föräldrar – bor i samma hushåll.

2.2 Grammatical definitions

In the following two sections, adjectives and constructions with of will be further defined.

2.2.1 Adjectives

Adjectives are descriptions and classification of nouns and pronouns and have two main functions (Crystal 2004:166). An adjective occurring before a noun head in a noun phrase has an attributive function as it modifies the noun (premodifier), e.g. a primary institution. An adjective can also have a predicative function, exclusively when it occurs with copular verbs which is most frequently the verb be (Leech and Svartvik 1994:218ff), e.g. the family is constituted through general patterns of behaviour. In this case the adjective refers back to the subject, which makes it a subject complement, or more specifically, the whole adjective phrase – i.e. the adjective and its complement, together function as a subject complement. When adjectives have a predicative function they usually take a complement, i.e. they do not stand on their own and are followed by another structure which completes the adjective phrase (Estling Vannestål 2009:240ff), which in this particular case is a prepositional phrase. An adjective can also refer back to the direct object of a sentence which then makes it an object complement (Leech and Svartvik 1994:218ff), as in
supporters of the status quo [...] in society have made the term family values synonymous with traditional definitions of the family.

Some adjectives can only function attributively while others can only occur in connection with copular verbs, and never in front of a noun head in a noun phrase. This is true for both English and Swedish. An interesting aspect in the translation from English to Swedish is the fact that English adjectives that are followed by a noun, most frequently become compound nouns in Swedish (Estling Vannestål 2009:221), e.g. *educational opportunities* is translated into *utbildningsmöjligheter*.

There is an additional feature of adjectives that is worth mentioning for this particular study, namely that some verb participles with *-ed* and *-ing* endings may be used as adjectives (Crystal 2004:170). For instance: *shifting economies* and *a married couple*. In order to decide whether a word can be used as an adjective or a verb participle, there are some helpful ‘rules’ that can be applied. In many cases it can be helpful to use one of the general rules: a modification by *very* is possible, the adjective can occur with another adjective, or with another copula verb other than *be* (Greenbaum and Nelson 2002: 58ff).

However, it is not always possible to translate English adjectives literally into Swedish; sometimes the translator needs to reformulate the entire adjective phrase into another phrase that is more idiomatic in the TL. How the translation of adjectives is dealt with and what translation strategies are applied will be discussed in the analysis in section 3.

### 2.2.2 Constructions with of

*Of* is an English preposition that can be found within various expressions which has several equivalents in the Swedish language (Ljung and Ohlander 1992:266). Primarily, *of* is a *simple preposition*, i.e. occurs alone, but can also occur as a part of a *complex preposition*, i.e. occur with one or two additional words, (Crystal 2004:190) e.g. *of course* and *in spite of*. Furthermore, as any other preposition, *of* usually has a prepositional complement as well, i.e. words that immediately follow the preposition (Estling Vannestål 2009:363), as in *traditional definitions of the family*, and which most frequently is a noun phrase. Additionally, some constructions with *of* in the English language, form compound nouns in Swedish, e.g. *distribution of property* which has been translated into *egendomsfördelning*. 
Another frequently occurring construction with *of* in English, is the *of*-construction which is a special kind of construction that has several functions, of which one is to express possession with nouns: *the title of this chapter*. Expressions like this can usually be expressed as s-genitives as well (Estling Vannestål 2009:116): *this chapter’s title*. However, the *of*-construction is much more frequently used “when the “owner” is not a person, animal, collective noun or geographical name” (Ibid:119). Additionally, when the “owners” are a group of people in general, the *of*-construction is used rather than the genitive (Ibid:119). Since the Swedish language does not have a similar *of*-construction, these expressions are generally translated into s-genitives: *kapitlets titel* or rephrased into prepositional phrases: *titeln på detta kapitel*.

However, the *of*-construction does not only have a possessive function, but also concern other types of expressions. *Partitives*, constitute a group that consists of various expressions that can be used with uncountable nouns in English, when wanting to state the quantity: *a piece of information* (Svartvik and Sager 1996:132).

*Of*-constructions and other constructions with *of* will be further discussed in the analysis in section 3.

3. Analysis

This section is divided into two parts where each of the analyzed aspects is discussed, namely the translation of adjectives and the translation of constructions with *of*.

3.1 The translation of adjectives

As Nida and Taber state it is extremely important that a translator always respects the language that he or she is translating to; the grammatical rules in the TL need to be taken into consideration in order to attain a correct and idiomatic translation (1974:4). Despite the fact that adjectives are used in practically the same way in both English and Swedish, there are exceptions (Estling Vannestål 2009:230). Therefore a literal translation has not always been the best solution in this particular study, even though it was implemented in the major part of the translation, since “[l]iteralness should only be sacrificed because of structural and metalinguistic requirements and only after checking that the meaning is fully preserved” (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:288).

As discussed earlier, adjectives have two main functions; they can either have an *attributive* or a *predicative* function. This section is therefore divided into two sections; the first one dealing
with the translation of attributive adjectives and the other dealing with the translation of
predicative adjectives.

3.1.1 Attributive adjectives
Since adjectives with an attributive function are used in a similar way in both English and
Swedish (Ljung and Ohlander 1992:159), it was possible to translate the majority of the
adjectives literally, which consequently did not cause any problems. One example of literal
translation can be seen in (2) below. Example (2) furthermore exemplifies two adjectives that can
only be used attributively in both languages.

(2) The family experience is also affected by the state and its legal and political systems.
    * the systems are legal and political

Hela familjekonceptet påverkas även av staten och dess rättsliga och politiska system.
* systemen är rättsliga och politiska

A literal translation was the most frequently applied translation strategy in the translation that
provided the basis for this study. However, there were instances where a literal translation was
not the optimal solution since it did not result in an idiomatic and grammatical utterance (cf.
Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:36). Example (3) below clearly shows that a literal translation of the
English sentence containing the adjective *late*, would not become as idiomatic if it was translated
literally, nor would it be grammatical in the TL. The translation strategy applied in this example
is modulation. This example (3) is an optional modulation decided on by the translator. The
sentence could perfectly well have been translated to something closer to the ST: *som oftast
förlorar auktoritet senare i livet*, and which would be both grammatically and idiomatically
correct even in the TL. Another interesting aspect in this particular example is the fact that the
English attributive adjective has become a predicative adjective in the Swedish translation.

(3) Older family members (although not the aged, who often lose power in late life) tend
to have more power than children...
    * förlorar auktoritet i sent liv

Äldre familjemedlemmar (men inte de gamla vilka oftast förlorar auktoritet då de blir äldre)
brukar ha mer makt än barn...

* förlorar auktoritet i sent liv
Furthermore, English adjectives followed by nouns are another frequent occurrence in the ST, which resulted in compound nouns in the Swedish translation. A fundamental grammatical rule in the Swedish language is to use compound nouns whenever possible. The pronunciation and the emphasis of the word, usually helps to decide whether it should be a compound noun or not (Språkrådet 2008:127ff). Additionally, there are numerous examples when two Swedish nouns need to be joined with an s to become grammatically correct compound nouns, and thus facilitate the pronunciation of the word (Svenska Språknämnden 2005:50). Example (4) and (5) below show two common transpositions, i.e. the English adjectives followed by noun have changed into compound nouns in the Swedish translation. The only thing that distinguishes example (4) from (5) is the fact that the latter of the two show two Swedish compound nouns, where the two nouns have been joined with an additional s.

(4)  
nuclear family  kärnfamilj
    civil society  medborgarsamhälle

(5)  
social institutions  samhällsinstitutioner
    societal understandings  samhällsuppfattningen

Additionally, there are a few instances where an English attributive adjective followed by a noun has been translated into a compound noun, and in addition to this, has been somewhat modulated in order to be idiomatically correct in the TL. In both examples the modulation applied is optional and a literal translation of the words in italics is just as possible. However, in the first example (6) fattigdomsstrecket is the most common word to use in this particular construction, judging from searches on Google, whereas fattigdomsnivån is a more general term referring to the total number of poor people in an area. Concerning example (7), a literal translation would have worked just as well. The translation would then have resulted in, en del av, which parenthetically is much more frequent than en procent av, judging from searches performed on Google. The latter is also a literal translation, maybe even closer to the ST than the former, except from the fact that del would be the most idiomatic translation in this case; it is after all one of the many senses of percent. However, in order to transfer the somewhat formal ST language into the TT, en bråkdel av seemed to be the optimal alternative.
…households headed by women have about half the income and less than a third of the wealth (assets) of other U.S. households and are three times as likely to be at or below the poverty level.

…hushåll som sköts av kvinnor har ungefär hälften av den inkomst och mindre än en tredjedel av de tillgångarna som andra hushåll i USA har, och det är tre gånger så stor sannolikhet att de befinner sig på eller under fattigdomsstrecket.

* fattigdomsnivå

…because she makes a small percentage of her partner’s salary as a dentist.

…eftersom hon endast tjänar en bråkdel av sin partners tandläkarlön.

or liten del

Attributive adjectives followed by a noun were not always translated into compound nouns but rather into common nouns as in (8) below. Superlative adjectives most often function as heads of abstract noun phrases (Greenbaum and Nelson 2002:69) as in this example. The translation strategy used in this case is modulation, which more specifically is an obligatory modulation, since a literal translation would not have resulted in a properly fluent expression, nor would it have become grammatically correct in the TL. Furthermore, this expression is an established one in the Swedish language and should therefore be used (cf. Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:37).

…people who adopt a child of another race are often accused of not taking into account the best interests of their children.

…personer som adopterar ett barn med annan etnisk bakgrund beskylls ofta för att inte se till barnens bästa.

* bästa intressen för sina barn

A characteristic feature of many attributive adjectives in written English is the fact that they sometimes appear after the head of the phrase (Ingo 2007:187), as in example (9). Even though this is not as common in the Swedish language, the original structure with the adjectives appearing after their head noun, was still kept in example (9). The reason is simply that the original structure makes it much more fluent in this rather long sentence. Although the ST structure was transferred to the TT, this sentence was not entirely translated by means of literal translation. With the purpose of producing a fluent and correct language in the TT, transposition had to be applied as well. As is illustrated in (9) below, the English adjectives educational and financial, which both refer back to the head of the phrase, have been transposed into nouns in the TT. This was, however, optional as can bee seen below, where the adjective financial might as
well have been translated into an adjective in the TT. On the other hand, a literal translation of *educational* would have resulted in a somewhat unidiomatic expression, so a transposition of both adjectives was therefore the optimal solution in this particular case.

(9) Power for the complement is to a large extent based on the goodwill of the head as well as the resources (*educational* and *financial* in particular) that the complement brings into the relationship.

In some instances the adjectives in the ST could not be literally translated into the TT because of readability and idiomatic reasons. In these cases, the adjectives were either transposed into a more suitable phrase, or omitted if they were considered unnecessary and irrelevant in the TT. According to Ingo, an omission is not a problem as long as the ST message still remains (2007:286). Example (10) includes three different attributives that all have been translated differently. The adjective *intentional* has undergone a transposition and changed into a dependent clause, with the intention of transferring the ST message in a clearer way. The second adjective in the same example (10), *economic*, has been omitted in the TT because the premodifier is completely unnecessary in the Swedish language. It is, after all, evident from the word *försörjare* that this is a person who provides the family with money, among other things. In order to adapt this word into the TT context, a last element was added, *-rollen*, which consequently resulted into a compound noun, *försörjarrollen*. This example is therefore a result of modulation. The ST message remains; it is only conveyed in a slightly different way in the TT. The last adjective in (10), *domestic*, has undergone a transposition and changed into a prepositional phrase in the TT. This was a decision made by the translator and is therefore an optional transposition. However, in order to attain a more fluent sentence, a prepositional phrase was decided on.

Example (11) illustrates an omission of an adjective. Swedish people would never use the word *gift* for couples that were not *legally* married; therefore the adjective is unnecessary to transfer. Furthermore, at the webpage of Statistics Sweden it is evident that *gifta* never needs a premodifier; i.e. searches for *lagligt gifta* did not result in any hits at all. However, this does not
mean that the premodifying adjective never occurs in other contexts, but it certainly is not necessary in this case.

(10) Alternatively, it might mean an *intentional* sharing of responsibilities such that one partner agrees to be the *economic provider* for a period of time and the other agrees to take on *domestic responsibilities*…

Alternativt kan det innebära *att man kommer överens om* att den ene ska ta på sig *försörjarens* under en viss tid, medan den andre ska ta på sig *ansvaret för hemmet*…

(11) …provides certain benefits to *legally* married couples.

…ger särskilda förmåner till gifta par.

By entirely keeping to the ST structure, the result can sometimes become somewhat “unsuitable, unidiomatic or awkward in the TL” (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:36). Therefore a reformulation is occasionally required in order to obtain an idiomatically correct TT. In some of the instances a small reformulation has occurred which has consequently resulted in an omission of the adjective, as in the example (12) below. This is, however, an optional omission, i.e. the adjective could have been transferred into the TT as well, simultaneously as the structure would have changed slightly. Additionally, the predicative adjective in the ST would then become an attributive adjective in the TT. Moreover, another omission has occurred in (12), which does not concern adjectives but is still worth mentioning. *Writing for Ms. Magazine* has been omitted since this magazine would not be familiar to the target readers anyway. Furthermore, this omission does not affect the message of the sentence and is therefore not that important.

(12) As the reading “Cheaper than a Cow” by Miranda Kennedy, a journalist *based in* New Delhi writing for *Ms. Magazine*, demonstrates

Precis som *New Delhi journalisten* Miranda Kennedy visar i sin artikel ”Billigare än en ko”…

or *New Delhibaserade journalisten*

In some instances the attributive adjectives were translated into prepositional phrases with a noun phrase complement as in (13). The translation strategy applied in this case is transposition and in this particular case an obligatory transposition has occurred. A direct translation of *an absent father* would have worked as well in the Swedish language as well; however it would not result in an idiomatic utterance in this particular construction. (14) also exemplifies an obligatory
transposition since a literal translation would not result in a correct utterance, and therefore requires a reformulation; in this case the ST adjective has been translated into a prepositional phrase, *familjer bestående av flera kärnfamiljer*. The translation that has been decided on can be found on the webpage of Statistics Sweden where *a multigenerational family* is defined as ‘a family consisting of several nuclear families’. Despite the fact that the Swedish expression may not to be as recognized yet, this particular example might after all also be an example of equivalence.

(13) …in most states lesbian mothers (although often mothering with a female partner who also parents) are legally understood as single mothers: women parenting with an *absent* father.

(14) As a result, this diversity of families includes single parents, extended and *multigenerational* families, lesbian and gay families with and without children, people (single or not and with or without children) living in community with other adults, grandparents raising grandchildren or nieces and nephews, and so forth.

Another, perhaps not that frequently occurring, transposition in this study is where the attributive adjectives have been translated into relative clauses, as in (15) below. This exemplifies an optional transposition. A literal translation of *living wage* would have resulted in a compound noun *levnadslön* in Swedish, which could have worked just as well. However, according to searches on Google, this is not as frequent as the reformulated version that was eventually decided on.

(15) It is well known that the most effective anti-poverty program for families is one that includes educational opportunities, a *living* wage with benefits, and good quality child care.
In short, the translation strategies that were most frequently applied in the translation of attributive adjectives are literal translation, transposition, modulation and equivalence.

3.1.2 Predicative adjectives

The amount of adjectives with a predicative function is much smaller compared to the previous group of attributive adjectives, in the ST as well as in the TT. The majority of these adjectives are subject predicative, i.e. adjectives that refer back to the subject of the clause (cf. Estling Vannestål 2009:68). According to Vannestål this type is more common than the form where the adjective is relating to the object of a clause, i.e. object predicative (2009:68). As was mentioned earlier, there are some adjectives that can only function predicatively, however, in this particular study there were hardly any such instances. The few predicative adjectives that occurred can usually have both functions, i.e. it is most often possible to express the same thing using an adjective in the attributive function as well, as in (16) below. The translation strategy used in this case is literal translation.

(16) These occupations are very gender segregated…
    or gender segregated occupations

A literal translation was applied in most of the instances in the process of translating predicative adjectives into Swedish adjectives, as in (17). As with the attributive adjectives, the translation of predicative adjectives did not cause any major problems.

(17) …when they want to be more actively involved in their children’s lives.
    …när de vill vara mer aktivt engagerade i sina barns liv.

Despite the fact that the majority of the predicative adjectives were translated literally, this was not always the optimal solution. As (18) below shows, modulation is another translation strategy that was occasionally applied. In this particular case, the modulation applied is optional since a
literal translation would have worked perfectly well. However, judging from searches on Google, *flytande gräns* does not seem to be as common as *inte lika tydlig gräns*.

(18) In addition, the boundaries are *more fluid* between women’s paid work and home life than between men’s.

Vidare är gränsen mellan kvinnornas förvärvsarbete och livet i hemmet *inte lika tydlig* som i männen’s fall.

*or flytande gränser*

Furthermore, some transpositions have also occurred during the translation process where a predicative adjective has been changed into another word class in the TT, in order to attain an idiomatic utterance. As (19) below shows, the English adjective *able* has changed into a noun in the TT, and in (20), the full copula-subject complement structure in the ST, has been replaced with a verb and an adverbial in the TT.

(19) This means, for example, that working-class women’s lack of flexible work scheduling affects how families are *able* to meet their needs…

Detta innebär exempelvis att arbetarklasskvinnors brist på flexibel arbetsplanering påverkar familjernas möjligheter att tillgodose sina behov…

(20) Traditional myths about the normative family are *rampant* in the United States.

Traditionella myter om den normativa familjen *sprider sig okontrollerat* i USA.

In short, the few predicative adjectives that actually occurred in this study, were mainly translated literally, but there were also some cases of modulation and transposition.

### 3.2 The translation of constructions with *of*

The English language is full of constructions with the preposition *of*. As was mentioned earlier the *of-construction* is one group among these constructions. These are mainly used when expressing possession of inanimate things. However, this ‘rule’ is not always the most reliable, since the s-genitive occasionally appears in connection with inanimate things as well. The context and the rhythm of the text usually determines how to express possession (Svartvik and Sager 1996:156), as does the style of the text (Altenberg 1982:125).
Section 3.2.2 will deal with other constructions that occurred in the ST of this study, which all include the preposition of. Which these are and how they were translated will be discussed under Other. But first, we will start with of-constructions.

3.2.1 Of-constructions
Although both forms of expressing possession, i.e. both the s-genitive and the of-construction, tend to be equally common in the English language (Ingo 2007:186), the of-construction is the most common form in the ST of this study. Since the Swedish language does not have a corresponding of-construction, a reformulation needs to be made, which most frequently involves an s-genitive, as in (21) or a prepositional phrase, as in (22). The translation strategy applied in example (21) is transposition; the English of-construction, consisting of a noun phrase, complemented by a prepositional phrase, has become a noun phrase in the translation, or more specifically, the head noun has become an s-genitive.

Example (22) could have been translated into an s-genitive as well, but the sentence would have become somewhat strained and clumsy. As an alternative, a prepositional phrase proved to be the optimal alternative in this particular example. The translation strategy employed in this case is literal translation. Furthermore, since Swedish s-genitives and prepositional phrases are the optimal correspondences to the English of-constructions, these examples may also be seen as a result of equivalence.

(21) …the specific needs and desires of human beings…
(22) These changes are related to the increased economic independence of women.

As mentioned above, a translator always needs to take the context into consideration when translating a text. An optimal translation does not always involve a literal translation; sometimes it is essential to disregard the structure of the ST and try to make the TT more fluent instead. As can be seen in (23) below, the English sentence includes one of-construction that first of all has undergone a transposition where the of-construction, consisting of a noun phrase complemented by a prepositional phrase, has become noun, or more specifically a pronoun in the TT. The reason
why the noun has undergone a modulation from *working-class women* to *deras* was simply an attempt to avoid repetition since the same noun is mentioned in the beginning of the sentence as well. However, this is a result of optional modulation that was decided on by the translator. As has already been discussed, the English *of*-construction most often becomes an s-genitive in Swedish; therefore this example may also be a result of equivalence.

(23) This means, for example, that *working-class women’s* lack of flexible work scheduling affects how families are able to meet their needs, as does the *lower pay of working-class women*, making them less able to afford quality daycare.

Other *of*-constructions, that according to Altenberg are obligatory, involve partitives (1982:27), i.e. countable expressions that are used with uncountable nouns (Crystal 2004:121). These partitive constructions are however not that frequent in the ST that provided the basis for this study. As can be seen in (24) below, the English uncountable noun *work* has a determiner in the form of a partitive noun followed by *of: amount of*. The preposition *of* that usually joins two nouns in an *of*-construction generally disappears in the translation from English to Swedish (Ljung and Ohlander 1992:67), which has also happened in this particular case. In addition to this, the noun *amount* has disappeared in the translation as well. The reason is simply that the TT would not result in an idiomatic utterance if the noun was to be transferred. In short, a literal translation has occurred except from the fact that the construction *amount of* has been omitted. In other words, this is simply the way the English expression is transferred into Swedish.

(24) It has justified the enormous *amount of work* we do in the home…

“Expressions denoting place of origin” is another type of *of*-construction according to Altenberg (1982:30). As is shown in (25), the *of*-construction does not give an exact explanation of where this child is from; however, it is clear that the child has another origin than the adoptive parents. In order to translate this *of*-construction, a literal translation was adapted in order to attain the
most idiomatic result in the TT. As already mentioned, a prepositional phrase is most often the nearest equivalent to the English of-construction when an s-genitive is not appropriate. Additionally, another translation strategy had to be employed in this particular sentence. The English noun race was translated into a more appropriate equivalent in the TL, namely etnisk bakgrund. A literal translation of the English noun would have resulted in a somewhat derogatory expression in the TL. That is, the word race is not that widely used in the Swedish culture when referring to people’s origin, or it should, by all means, not be used (cf. www.cmr.nu).

(25) Interracial or lesbian couples or people who adopt a child of another race…

Par med olika härkomst, lesbiska par och personer som adopterar ett barn med annan etnisk bakgrund…

The last type of of-constructions that occurred in the ST of this study involve “[e]xpressions denoting quality” (Altenberg 1982:30), i.e. expressions that by some means describe its head as in (26) and (27) below.

(26) Similarly, higher unemployment among men of color as compared to White men impacts families…

or the men are coloured or coloured men

På liknande sätt har den höga arbetslösheten bland icke-vita män, en inverkan på familjer…

or färgade män

(27) Determining what kinds of families get to be counted as “real” families and determining whose “family values” are used as standards for judging others are heated topics of debate in the United States.

or (* the topic is debated or a debated topic

I USA pågår livliga debatter kring vilka familjer som räknas som ”riktiga” familjer och utifrån vilka ”familjevärderingar” man ska döma andra.

or livliga debattämnen

As Altenberg discusses in his study, this type of of-constructions can usually be rephrased into adjectives, either by using, in these cases the verb be, which results in predicative adjectives, or attributive adjectives when omitting the verb (cf.1982:31). What has happened in the translation of (26), is first of all, that the original of-construction, where in this case of color modifies the noun men (i.e. can be seen as a predicative adjective) has become an attributive adjective in the
TT, which thus is a result of a transposition. Secondly, color has undergone an optional modulation in order to attain the most idiomatic expression in the TL, although färgade could have worked as well. Furthermore, an omission of as compared to White men has occurred in the TT because of readability reasons.

As for (27) a minor omission has occurred here as well. As mentioned in connection to an earlier example, the preposition of between two nouns, tends to disappear in the translation to Swedish (cf. Ljung and Ohlander 1992:67). Additionally, the word topics has been omitted in the TT as an attempt of attaining a more fluent TT.Judging from searches on Google, livliga debatter is more frequent than livliga debattämnen. In short, this is a result of literal translation despite the omission of topic in the TT.

The translation of of-constructions resulted in many various constructions in the TT. The majority, however, were translated literally or was a result of transposition, modulation and equivalence.

3.2.2 Other

In addition to the of-constructions that were discussed above, there are other constructions with of in the English language. In the ST most of these were prepositional phrases complemented by noun phrases that were all predominantly translated literally into Swedish, as in (28) and (29). Since, however, the English preposition of has several equivalents in the Swedish language, the context had to be taken into account in order to produce a correct translation. Equivalence was therefore a complement to the literal translation strategy. The preposition of always has a corresponding equivalent in Swedish. That is, depending on the context, of almost always has only one possible equivalent in the Swedish language. The two following examples (28) and (29) are perfect examples of literal translations, complemented by equivalence. Both examples illustrate fixed equivalences in the TL, i.e. the prepositions used in the TT are the only ones that are idiometrically and grammatically correct in these particular constructions in the TL.

(28) …the meaning of marriage… …meningen med äktenskapet…

(29) …although an advanced industrial society, the United States has no national funding of daycare centers… Vidare, trots att USA är ett utvecklat industriksamhälle har landet ingen statlig finansiering av barnomsorg…
In other instances of translating prepositional phrases preceded by a noun phrase, the translation resulted in compound nouns, as can be seen below (30) and (31). The transpositions that have occurred are obligatory since fixed and established equivalents exist in the Swedish language (cf. Vinay and Darbelnet 1995:36). However, in (30) a literal translation would have been as comprehensible but simultaneously, rather clumsy and unidiomatic, whereas a literal translation of (31) would not work at all.

(30) In particular, the balance of power in marriage [...] depends in part on how couples negotiate paid labor and family work in their relationships.

Framförallt beror maktbalansen i ett äktenskap [...] delvis på fördelningen mellan, å ena sidan avlönat förvärvsarbetes och, å andra sidan, oavlönat arbete i hemmet.

or balansen av makt

(31) The notion of family – with all its connotations of love, security, connectedness and nurturing...

Familjebegreppet – med alla sina associationer till kärlek, trygghet, samhörighet och uppfostran...

* begreppet av familjen

Furthermore, some constructions with of were nominalizations i.e. clauses that have changed into noun phrases e.g. the running of in (32) and the raising of in (32). The ing-forms in these two examples are called verbal nouns, which is evident from the subsequent prepositional phrase with of and the fact that they can be premodified with an adjective, as can be seen in example (32), day-to-day. However, these verbal nouns can never be plural (cf. Svartvik and Sager 1996:121). The translation strategy that was optimal for (32) was transposition whereas example (33) is a result of equivalence. The verbal nouns, together with their complements, resulted in a relative clause in (32), and a fixed expression containing two common nouns in (33). Since the Swedish language has a preference for compound nouns, the compound noun hushållsskötseln would have worked just as well in the TT, but in order to attain a better flow in the sentence of the TT, a relative clause seemed to be the optimal solution in (32).

In (33), on the other hand, it was decided not to translate raising of children into barnuppföstran or uppfostrandet av barn since these choices would not have been as idiomatic in this particular context. Since home is included as a responsibility in addition to raising of children in this example, the Swedish translation hem och barn was an optimal translation. A
translation, closer to the ST structure, or more specifically a literal one, would also have worked and resulted in a perfectly correct TT. However, since there is an established expression for this, namely *hem och barn*, which is widely used in Sweden, this was the optimal alternative.

(32) Although the complement does tend to have control over the *day-to-day running of the household*…

Även om komplementet faktiskt tenderar att vara den som styr när *det gäller den dagliga skötseln av hushållet*…

*or* hushållsskötseln

(33) The traditional marriage contract assumes the husband will be the head of household with responsibilities to provide a family wage and the wife will take primary responsibilities for the home and *the raising of children*.

Det traditionella äktenskapsförbundet utgår från att mannen kommer att vara hushållets överhuvud med ansvar för att ekonomiskt försörja familjen medan kvinnan förväntas ta huvudansvaret för *hem och barn*.

*or* barnuppföstran *or* uppföstrandet av barn

In some cases the preposition *of* was a part of a *complex preposition*, i.e. prepositions that consist of two or more words (cf. Estling Vannestål 2009:364) as in (34) and (35). Since the Swedish language has corresponding equivalents, these expressions were translated accordingly.

(34) …it has kept women *out of* specific positions…

…den har det hållit kvinnor *borta från* vissa typer av arbete…

(35) *In terms of* power, there is a more equitable sharing in this model.  

*Vad beträffar* makt är det en mer rättvis delning i denna modell.

As already mentioned, the noun phrase was the most frequent prepositional complement in the ST that provided the basis for this study. However, there were also some *-ing* participles that followed the *of*-prepositions as in (36). These prepositional phrases were translated literally into prepositional phrases followed by *att*-infinitives.

(36) But junior partners do have the emotional stress and physical *burdens of working two jobs*.

Å andra sidan upplever underordnade partners känslomässig stress och fysisk *påfrestning av att ha två jobb*. 
A particularly large group of constructions with *of* were the one where the preposition functions as a link between two noun phrases; phrases of division, *kinds of* (37), phrases of partition, *part of* (38), and phrases of amount, *number of* (39) (cf. Leech and Svartvik 1994:60). All three constructions have been translated literally except from the fact that the preposition in (37) and (39) has been omitted in order to attain a grammatically correct expression in the TT. As Ljung and Ohlander emphasize, an omission of the preposition in this kind of constructions is a normal phenomenon in the translation from English to Swedish (cf.1992:67). Furthermore, another change has occurred in the translation in (38); *communities in society* has simply become *i samhället*, because *communities* and *society* are roughly the same thing, therefore both words do not need to be transferred into the TT. Even if the writers of the ST had a special intention with this “duplication”, it is not necessary in the TT. Concerning (39), the Swedish language has an established equivalent in this case, which has been used, i.e. despite the fact that this is a result of literal translation, *number* is not *nummer* in this particular case but rather *antal*, which is one of the many possible senses of *number.*

(37) …it has encouraged *all kinds of explanations* for why men are, and should be, in control in society.  
…den har alstrat *alla möjliga förklaringar* till varför män har och borde ha makten i samhället.

(38) …the family is the social unit where most people are raised, learn systems of belief, experience love, perhaps abuse and neglect, and generally grow to be *a part of communities in society.*  
…är familjen den sociala enhet där de flesta människor växer upp, lär sig att känna tillit, upplever kärlek, eller kanske misshandel och försommelse, och med tiden vanligtvis blir *en del av samhället.*

(39) Although a large *number of people* get divorced, this does not seem to indicate disillusionment with marriage…  
Även om ett stort *antal människor* skiljer sig verkhar detta inte tyda på en misstro gentemot äktenskap…

The translation strategies that were employed for the abundance of constructions with *of*, were most frequently literal translations, transpositions and equivalences.
4. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to analyze the translation from English to Swedish of a text within the subject field of Women’s Studies, focusing on adjectives and constructions with of. The theoretical method that provided the basis for this study, and the terminology used, was that of Vinay and Darbelnet. As was mentioned in the introduction to this study as well as in the theoretical background in section in 2.1, a literal translation is to prefer, according to Vinay and Darbelnet, but only as long as the translation results in an idiomatically and grammatically correct TT.

To conclude this study, some difficulties evidently occurred when translating the ST. As was mentioned at the beginning of this study, the ST has a characteristic style that requires quite some reading between the lines, which consequently may cause misinterpretations. However, difficulties are always encountered in a translation process.

Despite the fact that English and Swedish are relatively similar in terms of culture their grammatical language structures vary considerably. However, since both languages use adjectives in similar ways, a literal translation was the most frequently employed strategy in the translation process. However, when a literal translation did not prove to be the optimal solution, for instance when the translation did not result in an idiomatically and grammatically correct TT, other translation strategies were employed instead. These include, transposition, i.e. when a word changes word class when translated from one language into another or, as was recurring in this study, when a word changes into a phrase, or the other way around. The other frequently applied translation strategy in this study is modulation, i.e. the meaning of the message is transferred into the TT, but in a different point of view. Moreover, in the translation of attributive adjectives, in particular, some instances of equivalence occurred as well, i.e. corresponding ST words and expressions were transferred into the TT.

Concerning the translation of constructions with of, literal translation seems to be the most frequent translation strategy here as well. However, transposition, modulation and equivalence were also employed in order to attain a satisfactory TT. It is also important to keep in mind, that even though the TL structure “controls” the translation process, the final translation is most often also a result of the translator’s own experience and competence.
In conclusion, it seems as though Vinay and Darbelnet’s literal translation, which they strongly advocate, is the most common translation strategy for the translation of adjectives and constructions with *of*, when translating a text on Women’s Studies.
References

Primary source


Secondary sources


