Translating a Guidebook

– How to Deal with Idioms and Metaphors, Temporal Deictic Expressions and References to Culture-specific Phenomena

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Abstract
The purpose of the present study was to examine what methods might be employed in translation from English to Swedish of a guidebook on a foreign culture. Vinay and Darbelnet’s model for translation strategies, as presented in Comparative Stylistics of French and English. A Methodology for Translation (1995), makes up the primary theoretical basis of the study. It comprises direct translation methods – borrowing, calque and literal translation – and indirect methods – transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. Newmark’s solutions for translating metaphors (Newmark 2001) also proved useful – among them paraphrasing, replacing images with their corresponding target language images and omitting the metaphor. To obtain data I translated some passages from Borneo (2008). Different procedures employed were identified along with translation problems. The study deals with the translation of metaphors, deictic time references and various culture-specific phenomena. Most of the above-mentioned strategies were applied, without a recognizable systematic pattern, though. This study, however, merely scratches the surface of this rich and interesting source. To future translation students, guidebooks – due to their great variety of topics, often outlined by different writers, each with an individual style – are likely to offer many interesting translation issues, whether to do with terminology, grammar or stylistics.

Keywords
biological terms, deictic temporal words, figures of speech, geographical names, historical expressions, idiomatic phrases
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1 Introduction

1.1 Introductory Comment
Having done his best to make use of a Swedish-English dictionary when writing about his winter holiday in the north of Sweden, an upper secondary student produced the following sentence: *One afternoon we interpreted behind dogs.* As Swedes we understand that he meant to say that they *went skijoring,* “a sport in which a skier is pulled over snow or ice by one or more dogs” (Longman 2005:1547). What he had missed, however, was the imperative necessity of thoroughly considering the different alternatives offered in terms of choice of word.

Another means of translation, besides dictionaries, is machine translation, the use of which is discussed in *Can Theory Help Translators?* (Chesterman & Wagner 2002:123). Wagner mentions a system called Systran, used within the EU Commission, mainly to scan for information. Systran, however, in a similar way as dictionaries, has to be used in the right way, since it might otherwise produce hilarious translations, as is evident from the following example: “The name *M. Lange* in a French text was recently translated as *Mr Wrap a baby in swaddling clothes*” (ibid. p. 126).

Some people, hearing about “translation studies”, react with astonishment, due to the fact that, having themselves tried Google Translate, they have been confident that any modern translation is made with a proper computer program for translation – if not by the computer itself. From the above examples it is clear, though, that the need for trained human translators remains still today. Wagner describes this as “the ‘magic ingredient of translation’ … the thing left over that machines can’t do”, and she continues: “Translation means choosing: […] choosing the right register for the intended readers, choosing what to make explicit and what can remain implicit” (ibid. p. 132).

The matter of choice pervades translation. Apart from choices of the kinds just mentioned, the translator also has to make decisions concerning what to translate literally, how to deal with proper names, whether to change tense, number or definiteness and how to solve various structural problems. That the intricacies of translation are of interest to professional translators is no surprise, but the fact is that people in general seem to be fascinated too. This becomes evident for example when they express opinions on the “bad translations” that appear in the subtitles of films, thus implying they would have managed better themselves, a supposition which is likely to be mistaken.
In this paper I will focus on how to deal with translation of texts from guidebooks about foreign countries and cultures. Different translation problems will be illustrated with examples, which will then be discussed.

1.2 Aim
The aim of the present paper is to investigate what strategies may be used in translation from English to Swedish of a guidebook on a foreign country. Focus will be on how to deal with
(i) idioms and metaphors,
(ii) deictic references to time and
(iii) references to culture-specific phenomena, more precisely historical references, biological terms and geographical names.

1.3 Method
To obtain data for the present study I translated an English text on Borneo into Swedish. Concurrently, I identified the particular translation problems as well as the strategies employed to solve them. The source text (henceforth ST) and the target text (henceforth TT) will be discussed in further detail in Section 1.4.

In the translation of the ST various dictionaries, encyclopaedias, Internet sources and grammar books proved useful. Lexikon 2000 and the on-line version of Nationalencyklopedin proved invaluable both for checking up various facts and as providers of parallel texts on diverse matters. Browsing a great number of different Internet articles gave a good insight into what kinds of register and terminology tend to be used in Swedish parallel texts.

In the identification of the particular translation problems as well as the strategies employed to solve them different theoretical models were consulted. These will be described in Section 1.5.

1.4 Material
The ST consists of about ten pages on various topics from Borneo (Rowthorn et al. 2008), a comprehensive guidebook covering all of the issues usually brought up in guidebooks, such as history, geography, culture, activities and accommodation.

Borneo is intended for people from all over the world, i.e. people who master the English language well enough to read it. Judging by the kind of information that the book
provides, it primarily targets people travelling on their own, not on an organized package holiday, and its readers could be people of all ages. The purpose of *Borneo* is of course to guide and help visitors.

A typical linguistic trait of a guidebook is the frequent occurrence of references to time. Biological terms, pertaining to both the flora and the fauna, represent another distinctive feature. Further characteristics include the use of a great number of proper nouns, such as geographical names, nationality words and a variety of other denominations.

The present translation of *Borneo* is intended for the same kind of readers as the original guidebook, with the obvious difference that it turns to those with too little knowledge of English to cope with the original text, but with a thorough knowledge of Swedish.

### 1.5 Background Theory

The theoretical model on which the present study is primarily based was presented by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:30–42), who suggested a primary division into *direct translation* and *oblique translation*, also called *indirect translation*.

One common method of direct translation is *literal translation*, meaning that the text is translated word-for-word (ibid. p. 33), e.g. *mangrove swamp*, which becomes *mangroveträsk*.

Another direct translation method is *borrowing*, which is when a word is transferred directly into the target language, without any change, (ibid. p. 31–32), e.g. the Swedish word *ombudsman*, which has been borrowed into English.

A third method of direct translation is *calque*, which is when a whole phrase or structure from one language is translated literally, word for word, to another language, as with *do it yourself*, which becomes *gör det själv* (ibid. p. 32–33).

Indirect translation comprises four methods, one of the most common being *transposition*. This is when a word from one word class is replaced with a word from another without changing the meaning (ibid. p. 36), e.g. when *it is hardly surprising* that is rendered *är det knappast en överraskning att*, where the ST adjective *surprising* becomes a TT noun phrase, *en överraskning*.

A second method of indirect translation is called *modulation*, which means a change of perspective (ibid. p. 36); an example of this is the translation of *bad for every purpose as inte bra till någonting*, where we go from positive (*bad*) to negative (not good).

A third method of indirect translation, namely *equivalence*, is used especially in the translation of idioms and proverbs, where you might have to use a different style or structure.
to achieve the same effect as the ST (ibid. p. 38). An example could be *swear like a trooper*, which corresponds to Swedish *svära som en borstbindare*.

The fourth and last method of indirect translation in Vinay and Darbelnet’s model is *adaptation*. This strategy is a kind of adaption that can be used when a situation referred to in the ST is unknown to the target readers. To achieve an equivalent effect on the target readers the translator then has to adapt the situation. This can be done in the three following ways: firstly, by means of adaptation, i.e. replacement of reference to a source culture phenomenon with reference to a similar phenomenon in the target culture. Ingo (2007:153) exemplifies by describing how in a translation the favourite dish that a Swedish person might miss when abroad could be meatballs, whereas to an Italian these meatballs are not likely to arouse the same feelings – instead the dish would have to be replaced by e.g. pizza. Secondly, the situation can be adapted by a clarifying addition, i.e. making the unknown notion clear by keeping it, but adding an explanation. Thirdly, omission of unnecessary and presumably confusing details may be the method to resort to in certain cases.

In addition to their seven translation methods Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:15-16) also discuss *servitude*, i.e. the “unalterable facts of the linguistic system” that the translator is obliged to submit to, as opposed to *option*, i.e. the optional changes and choices of vocabulary and style made according to the translator’s own liking.

Besides Vinay and Darbelnet’s model presented above, the following standard solutions for translating metaphors recognized by Newmark (2001:108–111) also form part of the theoretical background:

(a) reproducing the same image in the TT
(b) replacing the ST image with the corresponding target language image
(c) reducing the metaphor to sense (i.e. rendering the meaning without caring about the metaphor) or to literal language, perhaps replacing it with a simile (i.e. a different rhetorical device, where something is compared with something else, for example an expression like ‘as white as snow’)
(d) retaining the metaphor or transforming it to a simile but also adding an explanation
(e) paraphrasing the metaphor
(f) explicating the meaning of words contextually or extra-contextually and
(g) omitting redundant metaphors.

According to Newmark, a prerequisite of the use of method (a) or (b), though, is that the TT and the ST images are comparable in frequency and currency within the register; the
equivalence can still be far from accurate, though, but is often close when the metaphors originate from the same topic. Elements such as context, style, desired effect, target group and translator decide what method will be chosen in each case.

1.6 Specific Concepts of Relevance for the Present Study

In Section 2, Analysis, the terms *idiom*, *metaphor* and *deictic* will be used – terms that are not exact and therefore call for a definition.

In the present study the term *idiom* refers to “a group of words whose meaning cannot be predicted from the meanings of the constituent words, as for example *(It was raining) cats and dogs*” (Collins 1982:728), in the sense ‘It was raining very heavily’. The derivatives *idiomatic* and *idiomaticity* will be made use of too.

The term *metaphor* is used concerning a wording in which a phrase is applied to an object or situation that it does not literally denote, in order to imply a resemblance (ibid. p. 927), for example *in the lion's mouth* meaning ‘in an acutely dangerous position’.

The word *deictic*, finally, denotes a word, such as *here* or *tomorrow*, whose reference is dependent on where or when the word is used. In the present study this term will be used about references to time, such as *in two years*; this is a deictic expression in that it takes the *now* of the utterance as a reference point when referring to the future.

2 Analysis

The following analysis is divided into three main parts, viz. Idioms and Metaphors (2.1), Deictic References to Time (2.2) and Culture-specific Terminology (2.3). Each section will present examples, discuss the translation method applied and explain the translation opted for.

2.1 Idioms and Metaphors

The reason why both idioms and metaphors are here dealt with under one common heading is that the line between the two is not clearly defined. Thus it can be maintained that since they do overlap it would not be purposeful in this context to keep them apart, but rather it is smooth to discuss them in the same section.

As stated above, proverbs, idioms and metaphors are often translated by means of the indirect translation method called *equivalence*. This choice appears very natural since, firstly,
the meaning of the group of words that constitute an idiom cannot be derived from putting together the direct translations of the separate words, and secondly, the aim of equivalence is to achieve the same effect in the TT as in the ST, even though this often means using quite a different structure or style.

Keeping in mind then that idioms and metaphors do overlap, especially as regards dead metaphors – i.e. metaphors that have been in use for so long that we are no more conscious of the image (Newmark 2001:106) – we will first look at some idioms as they appear in (1) – (4):

(1) indigenous peoples who’ve been on the scene for at least 40,000 years (12)
    inhemska folkslag som har levt på ön i minst 40 000 år
(2) People realise you’ve gone out of your way to get here (30)
    Folk förstår att man verkligen har ansträngt sig för att komma hit
(3) … Sandakan still holds its own in the league tables (133)
    Sandakan … håller fortfarande ställningarna mot andra städer
(4) Accepting an invitation to join the dance and making a fool of yourself are … (34)
    Att tacka ja till en inbjudan att delta i dansen och att göra bort sig är …

Since it is essential to deal carefully with every idiomatic expression in its own special way, these fixed expressions were firstly looked up in a monolingual dictionary to guarantee a correct understanding. The following explanations were given in Longman (2005):

(1) be/come on the scene – to be or become involved in a situation, activity etc;
(2) go out of your way to do something – to do something with more effort than is usual or expected;
(3) hold your own (against somebody) – to successfully defend yourself or succeed in a difficult situation, competition etc;
(4) make a fool of yourself – to do something stupid that you feel embarrassed about afterwards and that makes you seem silly.

When I had checked the expressions in the monolingual dictionary, it posed little of a problem using a bilingual dictionary to find the idiomatic equivalence of every idiom – or dead metaphor – in the target language, in order to render the meaning to everyone’s satisfaction. In example (1), however, the context made clear that the scene referred to ‘Borneo’ or ‘the island’, ön, and therefore the verb levt (been living) seemed more suitable than a mere varit (been), suggested by the dictionary.
The chances of translating a metaphor exactly appear to be extremely limited, though, a fact implying that Newmark’s method of reproducing the same image (cf. Section 1.5) can be used only on rare occasions, one of which is exemplified in (5):

(5) five islands that lie a stone’s throw from the waterfront (102) fem öar som ligger ett stenkast från stadens sjösida

However, the second method brought forward by Newmark, i.e. replacing the ST image with the corresponding target language image, exemplified in (6) and (7), is employed frequently. These examples also show that the symbolism used in different languages might be based on quite different images, which has been pointed out by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:253).

(6) this biodiversity hangs in the balance (21) denna artrikedom hänger på en skör tråd
(7) The … rainforest that once blanketed the island … has been cut right back to the spine of the island (12) Den … regnskog som en gång täckte ön … har avverkats utom i själva hjärtat av ön

In example (6), where it goes about the future of Borneo’s biodiversity, the ST uses the image of the scales with the implied meaning of ‘happy ending’ in one pan and ‘bad ending’ in the other – or conservation vs. consumption. The target language instead has the image of something dangling from a fine thread and therefore being at great risk.

For idiomaticity in the target language, the bodily image in (7) called for another part of the body, so the word for ‘heart’ – hjärta – was substituted for the ST spine, referring to the innermost part of the island. It could be argued, though, that the ‘heart metaphor’ does exist in the source language too. In Longman (2005:753) one of the definitions of ‘heart’ reads “the middle part of an area furthest from the edge”, and an example given is an old house at the heart of an ancient forest, so it seems as though it would have suited very well here. By opting for spine instead of heart, however, the ST writer – thus creating his own original metaphor – might have wanted to refer to a possible shape of the area where the rainforest is still left, i.e. long and narrow; this is supported by the following lines from the ST: “intensive logging and development of oil-palm plantations nearby have left wildlife trapped on the flood plain along the final third of Sungai Kinabatangan’s 560 km … a narrow strip of riverine forest” (Borneo, p. 143). The usual figurative sense of spine in both English and Swedish, however, is “anything resembling the spinal column in function or importance” (Collins 1982:1403). This definition corresponds very well with how the Swedish word for
spine is used in metaphors, e.g. describing the Swedish steel industry as the ryggrad of the country’s economy. A recent example is “Professorer är akademiens ryggrad”, declared by Professor Stephen Hwang, Vice-Chancellor of the Linnaeus University, at the Academic Ceremony on May 20, 2011 (Hilda Frankki, Barometern, May 21, 2011). This figurative sense of ryggrad being well established in the Swedish language explains why employing the original ST metaphor in the TT was discarded.

Now let us consider the metaphorical expressions in (8) – (11), all of which exemplify the replacement of the ST metaphor with the corresponding target language metaphor:

(8) adventure travellers … are making tracks to Borneo (12)  
äventyrslystna resenärer … styr kosan mot Borneo

(9) the perfect place to catch your bearings (88)  
ett idealiskt ställe för att orientera sig

(10) But the wharves have moved to the outskirts of town, paving the way for waterfront redevelopment (133)  
Men hamnanläggningen har flyttat till utkanten av staden, vilket banat väg för en upprensning av området längs vattnet

(11) a chain saw biting into a towering rainforest giant (21)  
en motorsåg som äter sig fram genom stammen på en regnskogsjätte

Newmark (2001:109) contends that the meaning or tone is slightly changed as soon as a metaphor is rendered with the corresponding target language image. This could be noticed for example in (8) above, where the ST metaphor is colloquial whereas the TT phrase is not; on the contrary the TT expression might be somewhat outdated. The choice of styr kosan mot is still warranted, however, because a simple Google search resulted in no less than 235,000 hits, which proves that the phrase is really in use; moreover, for the entry make tracks for Collins (1979:1537) gives the explanation to go or head towards, and – finally – one of the translations of the phrase head for in Norstedts on line reads styra [kosan] mot.

In (9) the technical term bearing, indicating “a direction or angle that is shown by a compass” (Longman 2005:114), is used metaphorically, referring to a person’s position, situation or orientation, a sense that could be translated into the corresponding TT phrase för att orientera sig.

In (10) the verb pave is not used in its original meaning, viz. “to cover a path, road, area etc with a hard level surface such as blocks of stone”, but is instead part of the metaphor pave the way for something, which is defined “to make a later event or development possible by producing the right conditions” (ibid. p. 1207). This corresponds very well with the Swedish expression bana väg för. A Google search of this phrase resulted in 1,820,000 hits, among them the headline “Flyttrockad ska bana väg för nya bostäder på Väster” (ekuriren.se), where the expression is used in the same way as in the above example.
Although the ST image in (11) on the whole works fine in the TT too, this metaphor called for a change of verb, and this modification involved a kind of modulation, namely from the ST non-durative verb *biting* to the TT durative verb *äter*, describing a process.

According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:253) a translator may have to substitute a ST symbol for quite a different TT symbol to avoid surprising the reader by the use of too unsuitable or diverging an image. Bearing this in mind, let us consider the following example:

(12)  Bird-watchers commonly spot all eight varieties of Borneo’s hornbills … and, with elephant luck, Storm’s stork (143)

Fågelskådare lyckas ofta få syn på Borneos alla åtta slags näshornsfåglar … och, med en enorm portion tur, Storms stork

This could possibly be regarded as an original metaphor, and should thus be translated literally, since this would enrich the target language – all according to Newmark (2001:112), who concedes, though, that if an original cultural metaphor appears “a little obscure”, it can be replaced with a descriptive metaphor or even reduced to sense. The premodifier *elephant* being known as a very large animal, it can be assumed that the phrase in (12) is meant to express “very good luck”. In the target language there is the very colloquial expression *svintur*, meaning “kolossal tur” (SAOL 2006), where *svin-* has lost some of its original semantic meaning and functions only as an intensifying premodifier or prefix. Although the ST phrase in (12) is also colloquial, the degree of informality is even higher – too high – with *svintur*, which led to the choice of another image than the animal metaphor, namely that of a very big portion – *en enorm portion*. Discussing symbols, Newmark (2001:108) points out that animals as symbols “can be transferred provided there is cultural overlap”, which, however, did not appear to be the case here. Moreover, it could be added that the Swedish word *elefanttur*, a direct translation of *elephant luck*, where ‘tur’ is rendered with its meaning ‘tour’, would certainly be misleading, since that refers to the tours arranged for tourists in Asia, where you actually ride on an elephant, a fact that is easily confirmed by a quick Google search. Finally, the ST metaphor in (12) might also allude to the belief in the elephant as a symbol of good luck, a notion originating in the Hindu religion (History of Elephant. www).

Thus it is clear from (12) that even when a dictionary does provide a corresponding target language image, this might not always function very well – it may sound unidiomatic, outdated or too unusual, or it might have the wrong style, as with *svintur*, the use of which would have rendered the resulting sentence stylistically awkward. With reference to the different translation methods for metaphors mentioned above (Section 1.5) let us therefore have a closer look at (13) – (15), all of which were translated with a reduction to sense and/or
a paraphrase, although the dictionary does offer corresponding metaphors, that were, however, rejected.

(13) you can … scuba dive and snorkel to your heart’s content

(14) if you stray from the beaten track

(15) It’s a sure bet that politics will follow …

For (13) there is the target language metaphor av hjärtans lust, which at first sight might seem appropriate. When I had read the text again, though, keeping in mind the translator’s freedom “to choose from among the available options” (Vinay & Darbelnet 1995:16), this metaphor did not appear the most suitable choice for the context – sounding somewhat out of date or maybe only having the wrong style. However, the dictionary also provides the expression så mycket man vill. Following Vinay and Darbelnet’s different steps for the translator, however, I had now got to the stage where one should “evaluate the stylistic effects” (ibid. p. 30), and although there is nothing wrong with this second expression, my preference was the paraphrase så mycket man bara önskar.

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Also for example (14), the beaten track, there is a corresponding image in the target language, namely allfarvägen (or the plural form allfarvägarna), but since Newmark (2001:108) claims that metaphors that do not “come naturally to you” should not be used, allfarvägen was rejected in favour of another fixed expression, namely the synonym turiststråken, to which was added the premodifying de vanliga.

Example (15) presents a difficulty in that it is tricky to find a TT expression that is really suitable. Both det är säkert som amen i kyrkan and det kan man slå sig i backen på were considered but discarded as not belonging to the right register, sounding somewhat obsolete or at least slightly outdated. In accordance with the advice by Newmark cited above, I resorted to the translation method called reduction to sense, which in (15) resulted in opting for det kan man vara övertygad om, meaning ‘you can rest assured that this is so’.

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Occasionally, we come across a metaphor for which no corresponding target language image presents itself, as with (16) below. In our attempt to achieve an equivalent effect we then have to reduce the metaphor to sense and simply render its meaning. In those cases the following words of Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:211) can offer good support: “We must remember that metaphors are means and not ends in themselves. Translators must reproduce the meaning above everything else, and metaphors wherever possible”.

(16) Sabah has ballooned from less than a million residents in 1980 to an estimated 2.5 million today. (30)

For the entry balloon the Longman dictionary (2005:100) provides the synonym explode and the example The company’s debt has ballooned in the past year. Since there is no target language metaphor with the image of a balloon rising towards the sky, the ST image was rendered har skjutit i höjden. It is worth noting that although these expressions – idioms in both languages – are not semantically the same, they still rest on the same overall conceptual metaphor of up and down. Lakoff and Johnson (1980:14 ff.) describe these as orientational metaphors, and exemplify by “up-down” and the notion that “more is up; less is down”, e.g. “The number of books printed … keeps going up” and “The number of errors he made is incredibly low.” By opting for this expression the translator – though devoid of a target language image with a balloon – might still gain certain satisfaction from having at least contrived to use a conception that the two languages have in common, in this case the metaphor of “up and down”. However, a real reduction to sense of this ‘balloon metaphor’ might have resulted in har ökat drastiskt or a similar expression.

Paraphrasing, finally, seems to be the only way of tackling some metaphors, which can be illustrated by the two following examples:

(17) If you attend a ceremony, you’ll be expected to drink. Accepting an invitation to join the dance and making a fool of yourself are sure crowd-pleasers. (34)

(18) … Borneo is the showplace for aspirations of weaving a cohesive social fabric from many different threads (30)

Although the source language gerund crowd-pleasing has a corresponding adjective in the target language, i.e. publikfriande, there is no noun suitable as a translation of crowd-pleaser
in the sense it is used in (17). If we were to say *publikfriare, this would sound as a word referring to a person, but here the ST noun refers to a behaviour. Consequently, it would be possible to render the ST word with an adjective and a noun, e.g. publikfriande beteende. In the above context, however, there is a crowd but no audience as such – it is about a tourist invited to attend a ceremony with the indigenous people. Moreover, publikfriande has negative connotations that are not there in the ST. Therefore, I opted for a paraphrase, which involved replacing the ST compound with a TT noun postmodified by an infinitive phrase.

A literal translation of (18), weaving a cohesive social fabric from many different threads, would read att väva en sammanhängande samhällelig väv av många olika trådar. This was ameliorated by the following measures: the compound samhällsstruktur was chosen instead of samhällelig väv, an improvement in style and smoothness as well as in sense, since society is made up of a structure but hardly of a fabric. The noun threads, known to be used figuratively, was instead rendered as uppfattningar, since the context here is about unifying the opinions of numerous groups of people – the two following sentences describe the fact that there is very little group tension on Borneo, although there are more than 200 different groups of people. Furthermore, referring to these peoples’ unity, the adjective sammanhållen (rather than sammanhängande) was chosen to describe the nature of their society. Finally, the adverb samman was added to assure a figurative interpretation of weave.

Closing the present section, I may conclude that the translation of metaphors and idioms is indeed a delicate task. Newmark (2001:113) describes it as “the epitome of all translation, in that it always offers choices in the direction either of sense or of an image, or a modification of one, or a combination of both … and depending, as always on the contextual factors, not least on the importance of the metaphor within the text”.

2.2 Deictic References to Time
As stated above (Section 1.4), a characteristic of a guidebook text is that it is filled with time references – deictic as well as non-deictic. In the following, deictic references to time will be looked at, since these are the ones that might present translators with a problem. Naturally, various methods have to be adopted, depending on the kind of temporal expression being dealt with.

Temporal expressions encountered in the present ST could be classified into the following three categories:
temporal expressions that refer to a specific point in the past,

(ii) temporal expressions intended only as approximations, although they are deictic in nature, in that they refer either to a point in the past (localised a certain number of years back from a default ‘now’) or to the present time (the default ‘now’) and

(iii) deictic temporal expressions where the exact position of the temporal reference point is relevant.

For the sake of clarity all these categories will be exemplified below, although some of them, naturally, do not pose problems to the translator. Let us begin by considering three examples of category (i), all of which express time rather precisely:

(19) Founded in 1964, SORC occupies a 40 sq km corner of (138)

(20) commemorated 50 years of independence on 31 August 2007 (30)

(21) Maliau Basin … that was only properly explored in the late 1980s (86)

Despite a few minor adjustments made for idiomaticity, these examples posed no problems in terms of how to deal with the time reference as such.

The following temporal phrases, (22) – (24), examples of category (ii), are also easy to deal with. For these too a direct translation method can be applied.

(22) indigenous peoples who’ve been on the scene for at least 40,000 years (12)

(23) Once boasting the world’s greatest concentration of millionaires … Sandakan still holds its own … (133)

(24) 15,000 orangutans are left in the wild, compared with 250,000 a century ago (139)

The minor changes needed in dealing with these examples, such as the word order of (23), are obligatory changes due to differences between the language systems, referred to by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:15) as “a complex of servitudes to which we have to submit”.

In the three following examples, also from category (ii), the deictic expressions refer to the present time with seemingly exact words that are in reality quite approximate, however. These expressions too are easy to render with a corresponding phrase from the target language.

(25) These days, cranky old men … will … be decrying the current high cost of living (21)

Nuförtiden sitter de gnälliga gamla gubbarna … och klagar på dagens höga levnadsomkostnader
The reasons behind the unproblematic nature of the two categories exemplified so far are of two different kinds. The expressions belonging to category (i) are not deictic and consequently remain the same regardless of the time of the utterance. The temporal phrases in category (ii) are very approximate; this means that they are not affected by a minor discrepancy of a couple of years, i.e. between the publishing year of the ST and the TT respectively. Furthermore, the sort of definite phrases that in practice refer to an indefinite point of present time are easy to render with the equivalent target language expression, thus retaining the same kind of approximation.

Most of the time, however, deictic expressions of time – more precisely expressions from category (iii) – do cause some kind of translation problem. Therefore, let us look at some deictic expressions from this category, where the exact position of the temporal reference point is of relevance. In (28) and (29) the adjective current and the adverb currently require some due reflection.

(28) These days, cranky old men … will most likely be decrying the current high cost of living, due to the rise in the price of crude oil (21)

(29) In Sarawak, the Bakun Hydroelectric Project is currently in the final stages of construction. (21)

Borneo, the present ST, was published in 2008. What time could current (28) and currently (29) then refer to? Suppose they both concern the year 2007. Since the cost of living always seems to either remain high or, in due time, increase, I decided to go with the situation as it was a couple of years ago, when the book was written. Thus, current was rendered with an equivalent expression, but transposed for idiomaticity to the TT noun dagens.

As regards the Hydroelectric Project, supposedly in the final stages of construction in 2007, I did make an effort to find out whether it has been finished or not. This search was performed by browsing a great number of articles on the Internet. Nowhere, however, did it say that the project was finished; on the contrary, it seemed that there had been some kind of standstill: “The project is expected to be completed by 2011” (Bakun Dam.www). Having taken this into account as well as considering that this concerns “the second-largest dam in
Asia outside China” (Borneo 2008:21), I gathered that it is still not fully completed. Consequently, the factual ST situation was kept in the translation; for idiomacity, however, the method of modulation was applied, thus turning the ST subject to a TT object.

However, among all the deictic references to time, there are more problematic issues to deal with, namely all those different facts that are closely related to – or dependent on – the temporal conditions. All information should, of course, be as correct as possible, but some sorts of facts are more intimately connected to the expressions of time. Let us have a look at some examples.

: (30) Indonesia is poised to overtake Malaysia as the top palm-oil producer sometime this decade ...
(35) ... Indonesien ... gick om Malaysia som största palmoljeproducent år 2006

In this case it was possible to check the palm oil production in the world with a couple of Internet sources (Indonesia: Palm Oil Production Prospects Continue to Grow. www and Palm Oil. Regional Production. Indonesia. www), which clearly stated that Indonesia surpassed Malaysia in 2006. Naturally, this sentence thus had to be updated in the translation, including the most recent information available. This adaption entailed changing the ST present tense, is poised to overtake, to a TT past tense, gick om, as well as replacing the approximate temporal phrase of the ST, sometime this decade, with the definite expression of time of the TT, namely år 2006. Incidentally, it could be noted that apparently the writer of this part of Borneo either finished this section of the book a few years before it was published in 2008 or did not check up on facts very carefully.

The facts in the two following examples were also somewhat revised after having been carefully examined by repeated e-mail contacts with the authorities concerned:

(31) Sabah has ballooned ... to an estimated 2.5 million today. (30)
(32) Borneo ... has experienced increased population growth since 1980, with its population doubling to 18 million people today. (30)

According to the Malaysian authority dealing with statistics (wanrahim@stats.gov.my), contacted at the beginning of 2011, the population of Sabah has increased to 3,219,100 inhabitants. Consequently, the figure in (31) had to be updated, since population figures should, of course, always be as recent as possible, and even more so when presented together with temporal adverbs referring to today, such as idag and dagens. The exact figure in (32)
proved to be 17,854,800 inhabitants. Knowing this, I chose to specify this information a little more than was done in the ST.

Translating time-related facts, however, sometimes offers more problematic situations than those above. Adapting the sentences in example (33) required a succession of changes:

(33) In Malaysia, the current government of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is going through a difficult period as it has been hit by several scandals in the last year... Religious freedom in Malaysia is becoming another contentious issue due to several high-profile incidents in the last two years. (21)

Firstly, the ST expression current poses a problem, since the entity it modifies, the government of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, is no longer in charge of the country. Accordingly, current could not be directly translated but had to be replaced by förra in the TT. Secondly, since the ST was published in 2008, this passage is likely to have been written in 2007; the difficult period that the current government is going through therefore ought to have been in 2007, and maybe the year after. As this remains somewhat unclear, though, the ST temporal phrase, in the last year, was rendered in a less detailed way, namely mot slutet. Thirdly, the ST present tense, is going through, was replaced by the TT past tense, hade. Furthermore, the second half of the first ST sentence in (33), a causal subordinate clause, reading as it has been hit by several ..., was smoothly rendered with the TT prepositional phrase, med åtskilliga ..., thus avoiding the use of a subordinate clause that would have had to be in the past perfect tense and inevitably resulted in an unnecessarily heavy sentence – an optional structural change within the translator’s right to choose the stylistically most suitable wording (Vinay & Darbelnet 1995:15).

Not only the first sentence in (33), but also the second ST sentence called for a modification of the tense, which led to the ST present tense phrase, is becoming, being replaced by the TT present perfect, har kommit att bli. The fairly approximate final temporal expression in (33), incidents in the last two years, presumably referring to 2007 and 2006, was rendered freely with händelser före nuvarande premiärministerns tillträde.

It stands to reason that the translator – in the same way as the original authors of a guidebook – is responsible for providing the reader with as correct and updated information as possible. Having said this, though, it could be added that there is a limit to what amount of time could actually be put into researching every single detail. As Chesterman puts it: “The translator’s job is to translate what is relevant” (Chesterman & Wagner 2002:10). This is why
the method of omission sometimes comes in handy, also when dealing with temporal expressions. In this context, let us consider the following examples:

(34) *The latest research estimates* perhaps as few as 15,000 orangutans are left in the wild, compared with 250,000 a century ago. (139)  
*Forskare har nyligen beräknat att* det kanske inte finns mer än 15 000 vilda orangutanger kvar, jämfört med 250 000 för hundra år sedan.

(35) *The next two decades or so* will determine the fate of hundreds of species unique to Borneo. (21)  
*De närmaste årtiondena kommer att bli avgörande för hundratals arter unika för Borneo.*

(36) *Deforestation and the success of Christian missionaries over the last century has resulted in fragmented communities and …* (35)  
*Den omfattande skogsskövlingen och de kristna missionärens framgångar har lett till att samhällen splittrats och …*

In view of the time perspective in (34) stretching over a century in the comparison of the number of orangutans, one or two years should not make any considerable difference. However, the method of omission was employed here, thereby leaving out the problematic word *latest*, since there is no guarantee that this is still the *latest* research on this matter. Also, since this estimation has already been made, obviously, it is in some sense the past tense, which is why a structural change was required; thus the ST present tense, *estimates*, was rendered *har beräknat* in the TT, i.e. with the present perfect; this is the solution used “to describe something that has (or has not) happened at an unspecified time in the past and is often related in some way to the present“ (Estling Vannestål 2007:181). To compensate for the omission of the premodifier *latest*, however, an addition of the temporal adverb *nyligen* (*‘recently’*) was also made. Thus the time of the research becomes somewhat more specified within the unspecified period of time.

In example (35), *the next two decades or so*, a precise figure, *two*, has been made less definite already in the ST by the use of the modifying addition *or so*, thus making the phrase synonymous not with ‘20 years’ but with ‘roughly 20 years’. However, both the numeral and the additional *or so* were omitted from the TT, since they do not really add any information but are pleonastic. Instead the noun phrase itself, *de närmaste årtiondena*, with the plural noun together with its premodifier, expresses almost exactly the same kind of rough estimate.

In (36) the deictic word posing a problem is, of course, *last*. The question is whether *the last century* refers to the 19th or the 20th century. Considering the publishing year of *Borneo*, i.e. 2008, the expression *last century* ought to mean the 20th century. And in one section of *Borneo* dealing with religion it says that missionaries have converted many Dayaks to Christianity and that this work still continues in remote areas (p. 36). In short, the missionary work goes on still today, i.e. in the 21st century. A lot of Protestant mission in Asia was,
however, performed in the 19th century (Lexikon 2000); in *Progress of the Borneo Mission* (1850) it reads “During the two years and a half that the Mission has been in operation here …”, which shows that the missionaries were active also in the middle of the 19th century. Thus there is reason to believe that the author – having the 19th century in mind but still, like many of us, being stuck in the 20th rather than the 21st century – automatically referred to the 19th century as the *last century*. Since the reference of *last century* is unclear, though, and this temporal expression is not really necessary in the context where it appears, the decision was made to adapt this sentence by applying the method of omission.

Finally, there are quite a number of temporal phrases referring to various phenomena in history. These, however, belong to the culture-specific area and will therefore instead be dealt with below.

### 2.3 Culture-specific Phenomena

The following analysis of translation of references to culture-specific phenomena will be confined to three areas, viz. historical references (Section 2.3.1), biological terms (Section 2.3.2) and geographical names (Section 2.3.3).

#### 2.3.1 Historical References

What must certainly be contemplated when translating the three following examples is whether the TT reader can be considered versed enough in history to grasp the historical references.

(37) Borneo was one of the great prizes of the *imperial age* (12)  
Borneo var ett mycket eftertraktat område under kolonialtiden

(38) Since steamship times, coal miners have been digging into Kalimantan. (35)  
I Kalimantan …, och kolgruvorna har varit igång sedan ångfartygens tid

(39) Residential longhouses, where people actually live, may disappoint if you’re expecting something *out of the Rajah Brooke era* (34)  
Om man som besökare förväntar sig någonting ursprungligt, blir man kanske besviken på bostadsåkhusen, där folk faktiskt bor.

Although it may very well be that the ST readers are somewhat more acquainted with notions such as *the imperial age* – since e.g. an English history book is likely to go deeper into such heroic periods than a Swedish one – both *the imperial age* and *steamship times* could be judged as rather general expressions, for which a direct translation method could be applied. Bearing in mind that the translated guidebook targets the same kind of readers as the ST, we can thus assume that most of its readers will be educated enough to comprehend the notions
of (37) and (38). However, since the Swedish term *imperialism* has further connotations, as in ‘USA-imperialismen’ (Lexikon 2000), the more neutral *kolonialtiden* was chosen.

Example (39) on the other hand calls for a different translation method, since a direct translation would in all likelihood leave the TT reader in the dark. How many Swedes, if any, have heard of James Brooke, “an independently wealthy, India-born son of a British magistrate” (*Borneo* 2008:25), who in 1841 became the first white raja of Sarawak? Faced with situations like this, presumably unknown to the TT readers, the translator has to employ some kind of adaption. As described above (Section 1.5) this can be achieved in three different ways: (i) adaptation, i.e. replacement of the phrase by one with the right cultural connotation, e.g. rendering (39) as *någonting från Oskar I:s tid*, which was, however, rejected immediately, since it would be farfetched to mention a Swedish king in connection with Borneo; (ii) clarification, i.e. keeping the unknown notion but adding an explanation, which in this context would have risked to entail too heavy a sentence; and (iii) omission of unnecessary information, which was the method settled for in this case, resulting in a mere *ursprungligt*, instead of a translation of the long phrase *out of the Rajah Brooke era*. I can do nothing but agree with Andrew Chesterman: “Good professional translators go to the level of precision needed, not beyond it” (Chesterman & Wagner 2002:11).

2.3.2 Biological Terms
Since the ST is a guidebook addressing tourists with an interest in nature, it contains a great number of biological terms, pertaining to both the flora and the fauna, many of which are well known, but less common terms occur frequently too; some of the latter are shown in (40) – (44), all of which were easily checked in Norstedts dictionary:

(40) *pterodactyls* (12) *flygödlor*
(41) *monitor lizard* (141) *varan*
(42) *proboscis monkey* (143) *näsapa*
(43) *hornbills* (12) *näshornsfåglar*
(44) *oxbow lakes* (143) *korvsjöar*

Nowadays, the Internet proves an indispensable tool for obtaining answers to all kinds of questions. When the following biological terms, i.e. (45) – (48), were not to be found in any of my dictionaries, I tried the search engine Google. Entering the term *flat-headed cat* was rewarded with no less than 1,520,000 hits. Since it was the Swedish term that was coveted, the
subheading “Sidor skrivna på svenska” in the pop-up menu was chosen, offering as much as 891 results. The first site, “Kattdjur”(www), which proved very useful and also seemed reliable, provides a list of 36 cat species with the names in Latin, English and Swedish as well as photos that have been taken from the Cat Specialist Group (www) and Big Cats Online (www). Both the species first looked for, i.e. *flat-headed cat*, and *marbled cat* were represented in the list with the Swedish terms *platthuvudkatt* and *marmorkatt* respectively.

(45)  *flat-headed cat* (143)  *platthuvudkatt*
(46)  *marbled cat* (143)  *marmorkatt*
(47)  *samba deer* (143)  *sambarhjort*
(48)  *strangler figs* (12)  *stryparfikus*

Entering (47), *samba deer*, resulted in as many as 1,650,000 hits. However, among the first eleven entries the term proved to be written alternately *samba* and *sambar*, with an *r*. This inspired me to make a quick check with the Swedish encyclopaedia Lexikon 2000, that proved to have an entry on *sambarhjort*, which meant that *samba deer* no longer posed a problem.

Number (48), *strangler figs*, proved tricky, since it could refer to various plants. Google provides 234,000 results for this term. The first of these is Wikipedia, the entry of which begins: “Strangler Fig is the common name for a number of tropical and subtropical plant species, including some banyans and unrelated vines, namely: *Ficus Aurea* also known as the Florida Strangler Fig …” (Strangler fig. www). The ensuing article describes a “common ‘strangling’ growth habit”, where the “seedlings grow their roots downward and envelop the host tree while also growing upward”. (ibid.) This description and the translation of the word *strangler* – not to mention the photographs in the Gallery section of the article – convinced me that the most suitable term would be *stryparfikus* (Florida strangler fig. azote. www). However, I have also seen *gylfenfikus* (tyda.se. www) – cf. its Latin name *Ficus aurea*. This term, though, does not by far describe this species as accurately as its competitor *stryparfikus*.

In the introduction to this paper I asserted that there is definitely a need for trained translators, since laymen’s use of dictionaries, the Internet or even a programme for machine translation will leave a number of translation problems unsolved. So far, however, we have seen that although there still has to be an actual human being making the choices and decisions, dictionaries together with different Internet sources often prove fairly sufficient. Nonetheless it must be pointed out that the present ST also offers a large number of tricky terms posing delicate problems in a translation. To start with let us have a look at the following example:
This coral-fringed pinnacle … offers some fantastic wall-diving and plenty of large pelagic species. (86)

Denna korallklädda pelare … erbjuder enastående väggydning och rikligt med stora, havslevande arter.

The problematic term here is *pelagic*. Norstedts on line only gives the related term *pelagisk*. This term being unknown to me, I looked it up in Norstedts svenska ordbok, where it says: *som hör till havet*. Lexikon 2000 states: *pelagisk säs en organism vara som lever i havets fria vattenmassa*. Nationalencyklopedin on line has the following entries: *pelagisk – om en organism som lever i pelagialen, and pelagialen – pelagiska zonen, de fria vattenmassorna i hav och insjöar; vanligen omfattas inte gränsytorna mot luft respektive botten*. Still, the suitable Swedish term was not in sight. Rendering *pelagic* as *som lever i havets fria vattenmassa* would not be possible, since it is too clumsy; *arter som hör till havet*, which is somewhat smoother, would not be very informative – any tourists traversing half the globe to dive in the clear waters of the Celebes Sea off the east coast of Borneo naturally expect that there will be living species in the water. Finally, I consulted a colleague, a widely-travelled biology teacher and diver, who advised me to render ST *pelagic* with the Swedish word *havslevande*. This term, with the underlying meaning “not found near the shore, nor near the bottom of the sea”, might not be all that more informative; however, it is a lot smoother than all the above and, presumably, correct too.

Sometimes the problematic issue is not that of finding a corresponding term; rather it is to decide whether or not an existing term makes sense to the target reader. This is the case with (50), which appears in the introductory section of the ST, a passage with the purpose of enticing the reader to come to the island of Borneo:

(50) Borneo is … It is towering dipterocarp trees shrouded in a lattice of strangler figs (12)  
Borneo är också högvuxna regnskogsträd insnärda i ett virrvarr av stryparfikus

Having asked around but failing to find anyone who was familiar with the literally translated Swedish term *dipterocarp*, I decided to adapt the translation to the readers of the TT by the method of omission, i.e. the actual term was omitted, whereas the impression of the *towering … trees* was hopefully preserved by the rendering *högvuxna regnskogsträd*.

2.3.3 Geographical Names
In this section some geographical names will be discussed from one or two aspects, viz. the translation of them as such, as well as the grammatical context in which they appear and how this context might differ between the ST and the TT.
In the abundance of geographical names encountered in the ST one firstly recognizes those that are well known and established both in the source language and in the target language, and that, consequently, do not present a problem for the translator – names such as *Borneo*, *Vietnam* and *Indonesia*.

Secondly, there are those names, familiar or not, whose different elements are rendered with a direct translation, either literally, as in (51) below, or with a combination of literal translation and a loan of the part constituting the actual name, as is the case with (52) – (54).

(51) *Southeast Asia* (139)                      *Sydostasien*
(52) *the Sulu Sea* (86)                           *Suluhavet*
(53) *the Mahakam River* (35)                     *Mahakamfloden*
(54) *the Crocker Range* (88)                     *Crockerbergen*

In (54) *the Crocker Range* was translated *Crockerbergen*. But sometimes the name *Crocker Range* appears in the target language too, as in “Åk i en timme upp 1 500 m.ö.h. på Crocker Range där vi påbörjar vår trek nedåt” (Crocker Range djungel-trek. www). In Lexikon 2000 (in an entry on Borneo) *Crockerbergen* is used with a clarification: “ligger på Crockerbergen, den östligaste bergskedjan”. For the TT, however, the combination of loan and literal translation without the clarifying addition was the smoothest solution.

Thirdly, we meet with a number of geographical denominations presumably quite unknown to most TT readers, such as (55) – (57); no attempts were made at translating these names, however; instead each of them was transferred directly to the TT as a kind of loan-word borrowed in its original form and with the educational task of introducing the reader to a “new” place.

(55) *Pulau Sipadan* (86)                        *Pulau Sipadan*
(56) *Kota Kinabalu ... KK* (88)                  *Kota Kinabalu ... KK*
(57) *Sungai Menungal* (143)                      *Sungai Menungal*

It could be noted, though, that at the back of *Borneo* there is a short alphabetical glossary, where the interested reader can find the meanings of *pulau* ‘island’, *kota* ‘fort; city’ and *sungai* ‘river’, which appear in the above examples, thus representing the names of an island, a town and its colloquial equivalent as well as a river. In a full-length translation of *Borneo* a similar wordlist would probably serve a useful purpose.

A great number of geographical names are rendered almost the same in the TT as in the ST, i.e. with only minor adaptive alterations. Let us consider the following examples:
In the first version of this translation the ST abbreviation \textit{mt} for \textit{mount} in (58) was adapted to the TT reader by being written out, so as not to irritate any reader with an abbreviated form, possibly unknown; the word \textit{mount} was kept, though, presumably being recognized by most readers as it appears in ‘Mount Everest’, the highest mountain in the world. Later I learned, however, that the Swedish name of the mountain in example (58) is nothing but \textit{Kinabalu} (Lexikon 2000 Världsatlas), and with that \textit{mount} had to be omitted, naturally.

In the almost literal translation of (59) the change consists in a transposition, whereby the ST noun \textit{China} was transposed to the TT adjective \textit{kinesiska}. In (60) an addition was needed for idiomaticity, namely the words \textit{delen av}.

Despite the information given in the context, talking of \textit{lilla Sapi} (61) without mentioning what \textit{Sapi} is would certainly sound strange, as though it were about a little cat, dog or even a baby. That explains the clarifying addition of the word for \textit{island}, i.e. \textit{ön}. Moreover, (61) is an example of modulation, which means that the point of view changes from the ST to the TT. In the ST the little island, \textit{Tiny Sapi}, is the subject and the sentence continues: \textit{has a good beach} .... The TT sentence that starts \textit{På den lilla ön Sapi} then continues: \textit{är stranden fin} .... After the modulation the role of the subject has been taken over by the beach, \textit{stranden}, whereas \textit{Sapi} is now part of a prepositional phrase functioning as an adverbial. This modulation was performed for stylistic reasons. The ST repeats the verb \textit{has} about three consecutive islands, whereas the translated version uses three different verbs, i.e. \textit{har}, \textit{erbjuder} and \textit{är}. Naturally, the above modulation was used to avoid the repetitious style of the ST and to attain variation, an aesthetic quality usually strived for by translators.

Although different in the original, the two following expressions are rendered identical in the TT:

(62) \textit{Peninsular Malaysia} (21) \hspace{1cm} \textit{Malackahalvön}

(63) \textit{the Malay Peninsula} (33) \hspace{1cm} \textit{Malackahalvön}

Referring to this part of Malaysia as \textit{Malackahalvön} might be perceived as somewhat inadequate, however, because the peninsula is in fact divided between two countries, Thailand in the north and Malaysia in the south, and we only want to refer to the Malaysian part of the
peninsula. Another option, more ‘official’ too maybe, would have been Västmalaysia (Lexikon 2000), but Malackahalvön seems just that bit better, partly because people recognize the name and know where it is, partly because both ST expressions actually do include the ST equivalent of the TT word halvö.

Another tricky geographical term appears in (64), in which the ST writer describes the size of an enormous dam, currently under construction, by saying that it will flood an area the size of Singapore. Translated directly, this is likely to cause some confusion to the TT reader. A better understanding could, however, often be achieved by means of an adaptation, which in this case would mean replacing the not very familiar place name with something suitable from the target culture instead. Accordingly, Öland was substituted for Singapore, since Öland is an island well known in the target culture and therefore likely to make more sense to the TT readers, among whom the size of Singapore might not mean very much.

(64) an area the size of Singapore (21)       ett område något större än halva Öland

Going on to consider some of the grammatical structures in which the geographical terms appear and how these might differ between the source language and the target language, let us have a look at (65) and (66), two examples of a transposition of the ST word Borneo:

(65) travellers to Borneo (88)          Borneoresenärer
(66) your typical kedai kopi (coffee shop) in Borneo (21)          det typiska Borneocaféet (kedai kopi)

The same change occurs in both examples. In the TT the geographical word constitutes the attributive first part of a compound; in the ST, on the other hand, Borneo is the head of a prepositional phrase functioning as a postmodifier of a noun, viz. travellers and kedai kopi (coffee shop) respectively. (The bold type indicates that the words are italicized in the ST.)

Another difference between the original and the translated version concerns the use of the ‘s genitive and the of-construction. Whereas the ST alternates between the genitive and paraphrasing, the TT seems to prefer the genitive to a paraphrase, as in example (67) and (68):

(67) Borneo’s biodiversity (30)           Borneos biologiska mångfald
(68) the natural environment of Borneo (12)  Borneos natur

As a rule when a noun refers to a person, an animal or a geographical name the genitive is used (Estling Vannestål 2007:117), but it is also possible to combine the of-construction with

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a geographical name, as in (68), where the ST writer is likely to have used the of-construction for variation or some other stylistic reason.

There are other instances too, where various kinds of ST constructions are replaced with a TT genitive construction, which is demonstrated in example (69) – (72):

(69)  ... Sabah’s capital city of Kota Kinabalu lays claim to one of the best locations of any city in Southeast Asia (88)  ...
   ... har Sabahs huvudstad, Kota Kinabalu, ett av de bästa lägena bland Sydostasiens städer

(70)  the people who call Borneo home (12)  
     Borneos bofasta befolkning

(71)  to provide East Malaysia with a large increase in electrical-generating capacity (21)  
     att öka Östmalaysias kapacitet för elproduktion avsevärt

(72)  Sabah has ballooned from less than a million residents (30)  
     Sabahs invånarantal har skjutit i höjden och gått från mindre än en miljon invånare

The change of construction in (69), from a prepositional phrase to a noun in the genitive, was prompted by a wish to achieve fluency in the TT, which called for rephrasing. Of course, it would have been possible to keep a more direct translation, that is …lägena av alla städer i Sydostasien, but since “translators must pay particular attention to the options” (Vinay & Darbelnet 1995:16), I opted for the solution that seemed the smoothest and most idiomatic.

In (70) the geographical word, Borneo, is the object of a relative clause functioning as a postmodifier in a noun phrase. Again, the reason for the paraphrase is mainly that of style and smoothness. A more direct translation, such as folk som kallar Borneo (för) *hem(ma), simply would not be idiomatic. The adjective bofasta, however, is a lot smoother and collocates nicely with the genitive form of Borneo, which in its turn is better than using a prepositional phrase; compare den bofasta befolkningen på Borneo to Borneos bofasta befolkning, which comes out both shorter and smoother.

The next ST example, that is (71), contains a verb construction that leads to some difficulty, namely to provide ... with a large increase in ... capacity. Choosing a suitable construction to achieve idiomacity in the TT also leads to a paraphrase, which in turn entails changing the geographical expression into the genitive form.

Regarding (72) an addition was needed in the target language, since it is not the Malaysian state of Sabah that has ballooned – rather its total population has; this explains the addition of invånarantal, which became the subject in the TT. As a consequence, Sabah, in its new attributive function as a premodifier of the TT subject, took on the genitive form.

Finally, let us touch briefly upon a category of geographical names that appear in constructions with of. These are quite common in the ST. Consider the following examples:
As a rule, expressions like these were translated directly but with the preposition left out, as in (73) and (74), although a minor addition was made in (74); sometimes, though, the generic noun was left out, as in (75), often for stylistic reasons – this, however, is merely a question of a finishing touch and therefore no translation problem as such.

3 Conclusion

As stated in the introduction of the present paper my purpose was to investigate what strategies may be used in translation from English to Swedish of a guidebook on a foreign culture. In order to obtain the data needed for the study I translated some passages from Lonely Planet’s guide Borneo (2008), which deals with various issues, such as nature, population and history. Moreover, I read a number of parallel texts, mainly articles on the Internet, to improve my knowledge of certain topics dealt with by my ST, as well as to gain a better insight into what vocabulary and style that tend to be used in Swedish texts of this kind.

In the analysis I looked at idioms and metaphors, deictic references to time and references to culture-specific phenomena, i.e. historical references, biological terms, exotic terms and geographical names.

Vinay and Darbelnet’s model for translation strategies, as presented in Comparative Stylistics of French and English. A Methodology for Translation (1995), forms the primary theoretical basis of my investigation. This model identifies the use of either direct translation, i.e. literal translation, borrowing and calque, or indirect translation, i.e. transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. In addition to this, Vinay and Darbelnet also bring out the difference between on the one hand ‘servitudes’, i.e. the rules that are due to the differences between the two languages and that the translator is obliged to follow, and on the other hand ‘option’, i.e. the translator’s freedom to opt for the expression preferred. Furthermore, Newmark’s standard solutions for the translation of metaphors, as presented in A Textbook of Translation (2001), proved useful.

Faced with the task of having to conclude my findings, I have to concede that a certain feeling of confusion presents itself. In response to the question framed under Aim above –
what methods could be used in the translation of guidebooks – the answer will have to be: All methods. At least it seems as though I employed all kinds of procedures presented in the above-mentioned specialist literature. The translator’s freedom of option, emphasized by Vinay and Darbelnet, was also made use of, e.g. when choosing between stylistically different wordings. However, to accomplish a detailed and systematic account of what method tends to be used for each specific kind of translation problem, it might be better either to concentrate on no more than one of all the aspects I looked at, or to choose one strategy only, and study in what situations this might be applied. Also, a more extensive text material would be necessary to achieve reliable results.

Still, some general tendencies can be noted – one of which is that the direct strategies tended to be used only rarely, e.g. in dealing with names, whereas all the indirect strategies were constantly made use of, mainly transpositions and different kinds of adaptions. In addition, several optional changes were performed, i.e. for reasons of idiomaticity and/or style. Sometimes different methods were also combined. The principal conclusion that immediately suggests itself is that in order to solve all the various translation problems that appear in a sentence, several different translation procedures are usually applied in an intricate pattern, not unlike the lattice of the strangler figs, to use a phrase from the ST. Judging by this result, the reasoning in the introduction of this paper, i.e. that translation is no one-track occupation that can be fulfilled by a computer, seems to have been proven. Presumably, it could be inferred that the nuanced manifoldness of the translation process together with the unpredictability of the activity rather point in the direction that in the society of today and of the near future there is and will be a great need for skilled translators.

The present study, however, only managed to scratch the surface of this huge area of fascinating linguistic work. It is reasonable to assume that the problems that appear in translation of the varied sections of guidebooks, will offer no less fascination to any linguist with an interest in translation theory than will the biological treasures of unexplored tropical seas to a skin diver enthusiast. The most interesting area of those that were looked into in this study is also what I would like to suggest for further investigation, and that is how to deal with deictic expressions of time and with time-related facts in general.
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