Terminology and cultural references in a text on human trafficking
Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse what strategies may be the most suitable ones when dealing with problems in the translation of a text on human trafficking. The focus of the study is how to translate terminology related to human trafficking, but also on how to deal with references to culture-specific phenomena. In order to find possible solutions for translation problems in the text, different dictionaries and term banks were used, as well as parallel texts and different translation strategies.

The analysis is based on the translation strategies laid down by Vinay and Darbelnet, Ingo and Newmark. The findings of the study show that a number of different translation strategies had to be applied in order to solve the different translation problems. Regarding the translation of terminology, modulation, equivalence, addition and omission were the most useful strategies, as well as using parallel texts. The strategies found most useful in translating culture-specific phenomena were modulation, equivalence and addition, but componential analysis, transference and established translations were also used. Factors that decided what were the most appropriate strategies to apply in the different instances were the aim of the text, the perspective of the target reader and parallel texts.

Key words: references to culture-specific phenomenon, equivalence, modulation, addition, omission, parallel texts, transference
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1 Introduction

Even though human trafficking has existed for a long time, it is only recently that this issue has been on the agenda in both the EU, the UN and in many different countries all over the world. As a result, there are an increasing number of documents, texts and speeches being written on the matter – material that needs to be translated into various languages, in order to be accessible to all parties involved. These, in turn, contain references to acts, documents and positions, which is another challenge for the translator when moving the text to a new cultural setting. This is what the present paper will be about: the translation of text of this kind.

The two areas of interest in this paper is the translation of terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena together with different strategies used to deal with these issues. The first part of the analysis will focus on the translation of human trafficking-related terminology and the second part on translation of culture-specific phenomena.

2 Aim

The present paper aims to discuss what strategies may be used in translating a text on human trafficking from English into Swedish. The focus will be on how to translate terminology related to this topic, but also on how to adapt the text culturally. As regards the latter aspect, focus will chiefly be on how to deal with the names of different authorities, positions, acts and documents, but also on how to deal with certain more general cultural phenomena.
3 Method and material

3.1 Method

The primary material used for this paper was collected by translating an English text on human trafficking into Swedish. During this process, all the different problems regarding the translation of terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena were noted down. From these, a selection of terms, essential to the subject, as well as a number of instances where the text needed to be adapted culturally, were chosen for the qualitative analysis. Many interesting examples had to be left out, however, due to the limited scope of this paper.

In order to deal with the two problem areas terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena, a number of dictionaries, thesauruses, Internet sites and term banks were consulted to find equivalent translations. Furthermore, a number of Swedish thesauruses as well as dictionaries were used during the process for the purpose of varying the language and finding the correct idiomatic expressions and nuances. In order to have a full understanding of different terms and what they refer to, a number of parallel texts in English were read. To be able to get an idea how these terms were most commonly expressed in the target language, a great deal of Swedish parallel texts were studied as well. For full details on the parallel texts used, see the List of References. Simultaneously, material on translation theory was studied in order to support the analysis.

The method used in this study is qualitative, which suits the aim of this paper: to discuss different translation strategies that may be used in a translation of a text of this kind. If, on the other hand, a quantitative method had been used, the chosen translations would have been based entirely on how frequently the words occurred in different sources. Instead, different factors like idiomacy and whether the word had become an established term or not were taken into account.

The analysis is based on the author’s own translation, which means that the result may have been different if it had been translated by someone else.
3.2 Material

This paper is based on a translation of the first chapter of the book Not for Sale. This is a non-fiction book about human trafficking, written by the journalist David Batstone. He gives information about human trafficking and slavery and discusses it from a global perspective. Informative non-fiction sections are woven together with real-life stories of victims as well as of people working against slavery and human trafficking.

Not for Sale was first published in 2007, but the translation that will be discussed in the analysis is based on the revised edition from 2010. As far as I am aware, the book has not yet been translated into Swedish.

The target reader of the source text (henceforth the ST), is anyone who is civic-minded and takes an interest in international social issues. The aim of the book is to inform, discuss and create awareness of the problem of human trafficking, in Batstone’s own words: “to be a handbook for the modern-day abolitionist” (2010: 14). Consequently, the book has both an informative and an expressive function. According to Ingo, a text with an informative function has a neutral and objective tone and the main focus is on the content and on conveying knowledge. A text with an expressive function, on the other hand, also conveys feelings and gives the author’s subjective view (2007: 127‒128). Both of these characteristics apply to Not for Sale. The author accounts for important facts and data at the same time as he strongly argues for his point. He almost implores the reader to take action by giving colourful examples to point out to the reader how we all may be supporting human trafficking in our daily lives without being aware of it.

With the different sections of the book follow different styles. The informative and sometimes historical sections are written in a somewhat more formal tone, whereas the sections based on interviews are written in a less formal language. The overall impression, however, is that the book is written in a neutral style, not chiefly aimed at reaching professionals who may encounter the issue through work, but rather to serve as an eye opener for people in general.

Even though the informative sections of the ST contain many terms related to the global industry of human trafficking, it still does not take an expert to understand the book, due to the numerous examples from real-life stories.
The target text (henceforth the TT) has the same audience in mind as the ST. Thus, it has a wide scope, aimed at anyone who is interested in social and international issues. The aim for the translation has therefore been to keep the same style in the TT as in the ST. Yet, as far as the international aspect is concerned, the readership of the TT is narrowed down due to the fact that the text is in Swedish, a small language mainly read by people living in Sweden and Finland.

4 Theoretical background

4.1 Translation strategies

This section will account for different translation strategies that may be relevant when dealing with terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena in the translation of a text on human trafficking. The strategies that will be presented here are the strategies identified by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 39–40), by Ingo (2007) and by Newmark (1993).

Vinay and Dalbénnet’s strategies, first, are divided into two categories: direct translation and oblique translation. These are further divided into seven different procedures, each of which will be accounted for below.

Direct translation comprises borrowing, calque and literal translation. When borrowing is used, a word in the source language is directly transferred to the target language. This may be necessary in cases where there is a lexical gap in the target language, like with the Russian concepts glasnost and perestroika, which do not exist elsewhere. Borrowing is also common with technical words in different fields, like software and Internet. In some instances it may also be a conscious choice on the part of the translator to use a borrowed word in order to create a local touch and atmosphere – as in using hamburgers and hot dogs in a Swedish text about America, even though their counterparts, hamburgare och varm korv, already exist in Swedish.

The next procedure, calque, is a special type of borrowing. Here a word or a phrase is borrowed from another language and then its components are translated literally word-
for-word. This can be seen with the English word *sky-skrapa*, which is calqued into *skyskrapa* in Swedish, *sky* being the Swedish word for English *sky*, and *skrapa* being the word for *scrape*. Another example of calque is when the English word *developing country* becomes *utvecklingsland* in Swedish, since *utveckling* is the Swedish word for English *developing*, and *land* is the Swedish word for *country*.

The third procedure is *literal translation*, also called word-for-word translation, where the translation closely follows the lexical form of the source language. This is the strategy that Vinay and Darbelnet consider to be the ideal translation method as long as the translation sounds natural and results in idiomatic and grammatically correct language. An illustration of literal translation could be *I walked to a mall* translated into *Jag gick till ett köpcentrum*, where each word corresponds exactly in the two languages.

If, however, a direct translation turns out to be inappropriate with regard to grammar, or for semantic or pragmatic reasons, *oblique translation* has to be applied instead. This translation strategy in turn involves four different procedures: *transposition*, *modulation*, *equivalence* and *adaptation*.

*Transposition*, first, is when one part of speech is changed for another, but the sense remains the same. An example of a transposition is the verb phrase *He pioneered*, translated with the noun phrase *He was the first*. The same semantic content is conveyed even though the part of speech has been changed.

The next procedure, *modulation*, is when the meaning of a word or a phrase is seen from another perspective. Here the change occurs on a semantic as well as a formal level, as in *It is common* vs. *It is not unusual*, or as in *I gave it to you* vs. *You received it from me*. From a semantic point of view, the first of these examples illustrates a shift from positive to negative, and the second a change from sender-to-receiver to receiver-to-sender, whereas from a formal point of view, the component words have been changed in both examples (1995: 39–40).

Another procedure commonly used is *equivalence*. There are many interpretations as to what this strategy involves, but according to Vinay and Darbelnet this is when the pragmatic information is conveyed but where the semantic meaning is changed. This is a particularly useful and common strategy in the translation of idioms and set expressions (1995:33-34). For instance, the Swedish idiom *lägga benen på ryggen*, literally meaning
‘lay your legs on your back’, does not have any semantic equivalent in English. Instead, the semantically unrelated expression *take to one’s heels* is used in English for the intended pragmatic meaning – namely ‘to hurry’. Thus, the same pragmatic meaning is conveyed and figurative speech is used in both languages, but without using semantic counterparts.

The last of Vinay and Darbelnet’s procedures is *adaptation*, which may be applied when a phenomenon in the source culture does not exist in the target culture. The translator could then use another situation or image to create the same effect. For instance, *macaroni and cheese* in an American ST could be translated into *makaroner och köttbullar* (‘macaroni and meatballs’) in a Swedish TT (Ingo 2007: 153-54).

In addition to Vinay and Darbelnet’s various strategies, Ingo brings up *addition* and *omission* (2007:123-24). *Addition* is when new, significant components are added in the TT. Sometimes a word is added to give the TT more fluency, but most commonly, additions are made because the translator deems it necessary to explain certain points more in detail, since the new target readers are in a completely different environment, with a different culture compared to the original target readers. An example of addition is for instance a Swedish text on the royal family where Carl XVI Gustaf is mentioned. Here you may have to add *the Swedish king*, in the English text. Hence, by adding information, the translator adjusts the text to the new target readers, in terms of comprehensibility.

*Omission* is the opposite situation: when loss of information occurs because some components of the ST are not included in the TT. This can take place for pragmatic reasons, because some information is deemed irrelevant and the translator needs to save space or wants to focus on what could be of interest to the target reader. Moreover, omissions can also be used for the sake of rhythm and coherence or for structural reason. For instance, in the Swedish sentence *Hon berättade för mig*, the verb requires a preposition which the English counterpart *told* does not. Therefore, for structural reasons, the preposition has to be omitted in an English TT, resulting in: *She told me*. According to Ingo (2007:124), this strategy must be used with care and on well-considered grounds and not because of the translator’s convenience or negligence.

The last two strategies to be mentioned here are *transference* and *componential analysis*, brought forward by Newmark (1993:96). These are the two different alternatives
he suggests the translator use in cases where the ST refers to phenomena specific to the source culture. *Transference* is Newmark’s version of Vinay and Darbelnet’s strategy of borrowing, mentioned previously. It has the advantage of being pragmatic and to the point. Another reason for using transference can be to add a local touch to the text. The disadvantage, however, is that it can obstruct the message and prevent understanding if the new target reader does not know what the transferred elements mean.

*Naturalization* is a continuation of transference, in cases where a word from the source language first is adapted to the pronunciation system of the target language and then to its morphology (Newmark 1988:82). An example illustrating this point is the Swedish word *ombudsman*, translated into a Russian text as омбудсмен, written with Russian morphology (ombudsmen in latin letters) and where there is a slightly changed pronunciation at the end of the word (from –man to –men).

*Componential analysis*, at the other end of the scale, is what Newmark (1993:96) regards as the best procedure when it comes to translation of culture-specific elements. With this method the message is emphasized, at the expense of culture. The disadvantage, however, is that it is not as economical as transference.

Componential analysis is based on a component, or word, that is common in both the source and the target language, to which an extra contextual component, or word, is added. Another example illustrating componential analysis is the Russian word *дacha*, translated into English. A дача used to be a recreational home for the Russian aristocracy and later the working classes, whereas in modern times it has come to refer to the extravagant houses owned by the wealthy. Thus, the common component in both source and target language is *house*, дом, to which *summer* is added, or *for the wealthy* resulting in: summer house or house for the wealthy.

### 4.2 Terminology

Terminology can be defined as “words and phrases used in a particular business, science, or profession” (Macmillan 2002: 1481) or “the technical or special terms used in a business, art, science, or special subject” (Merriam-Webster 2013). Terminology exists within all fields in society: in law, politics, technology, religion etc. It enables
professionals and laymen to define what they mean and minimize misunderstanding. It is also an economic way of writing and speaking, since all characteristics or components of the relevant concept are encapsulated by a single word.

From a translator’s point of view, established terminology can make the process of translation easier and faster. However, in this globalized world, with its constant flow of new products, inventions and ideas, there is a never-ending need for new words and terms. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that a translator is familiar with different methods of searching for terminology and strategies for creating new terms. Some such strategies, suggested by Ingo (2007:229), will be accounted for below.

First, one can use specialized dictionaries to see if there is an established translation. One of the biggest problems when searching for terms even in specialized dictionaries, however, is that dictionaries quickly become out-of-date and they seldom manage to keep up with the pace at which new words are created. Another problem is that a term could also just recently have begun to be used in the source language so that no counterpart has yet become established in the target language (Ingo 2007:107).

Both of the problems mentioned above can be solved by using term banks. A term bank is a site where a large collection of terms and definitions are gathered in one place, which anyone can access (Rikstermbanken 2010). Usually the term banks cover a number of different areas of society while others are more specialized. The purpose is to ensure and facilitate a consistent use of the same term with the advantage that new terms can easily be added. Yet other solutions can be to consult a specialist in the field, as well as reading parallel texts in the target language to see if there is a new term already in use that can be regarded as a recognised translation (Ingo 2007:107). This strategy is also supported by Chesterfield and Wagner (2002:73), who regard the use of parallel texts in the target language to be one of the best methods to find appropriate terms and vocabulary.

If none of the above measures help, a new term may have to be created. This can be achieved in a number of different ways, for instance by using one of the different direct procedures established by Vinay and Darbelnet – *borrowing, calque* and *literal translation* (1995, see also Section 4.1). Another way can be to make a compound word by combining two separate words, resulting in a compound word that may have a completely different meaning than the isolated words originally had. This can, for
instance, be seen in *white-collar*, which is only remotely – metonymically – connected to the literal meaning of *white* and *collar*. Yet other ways of creating new terms can be to add a prefix or suffix. An example of this is that adding the prefix *multi-* to the word *touch* results in the term *multi-touch*, which refers to a touch sensing technology nowadays used in numerous devices on the market.

### 4.3 References to culture-specific phenomena

Something happens to a text when it is taken from its original environment and moved to another. The author wrote the text with a certain readership in mind, a readership with certain values, ethics, customs, religion, humour and standard of living in mind. In a new environment, with a new readership, the factors mentioned – the contextual factors – will no longer be the same. According to Ingo (2007: 126-127), this is something that needs to be addressed by the translator. He or she now has to establish whether there are such differences that make it necessary to adapt the text in some way. Generally, the further the cultures are located from one another geographically, the greater the need to modify the content.

First, the translator needs to identify what and where any cultural gaps may be. There may be lexical gaps related to food terms: *tagliatelle*, or ecology: *monsoon*, or the way we structure our society: *the Parliament* in the United Kingdom and *Riksdagen* in Sweden. Once the cultural gaps are identified, there are usually two options available for the translator: *transference* or *componential analysis* (Newmark 1993:96, see also Section 4.1). As was pointed out in Section 4.1, *transference* has the advantage of keeping the local touch and being to the point, but still *componential analysis* generally is to be preferred regarding culture-specific elements according to Newmark.

Newmark (1993:99-101) also points out that everything depends on the readership when selecting translation method. If we turn to the world of politics and administration, there are usually many components in a text that are culturally bound and not always easily translated. He states that for an educated readership, transference is to be preferred in such documents. An example illustrating this is *Riksdagen* in Swedish, which is kept in its original form in English. The more specialised the readers are, the more one should strive
for transference, whereas this may not be necessary with informal or colloquial texts. Instead, an explanatory comment is preferably added if required for the general reader: ‘Riksdagen, the Swedish Parliament’.

Sometimes the name does not even need to be transferred in popular texts, but a functional or cultural equivalent may be enough. A functional equivalent is when a foreign word is translated with a culturally neutral word that focuses on the functional properties, like translating Riksdagen, from the previous example, as the Swedish Parliament. A cultural equivalent is when a cultural word from the source language is translated by using a cultural word from the target language, as Home Office in an American ST, translated into Inrikesdepartementet in a Swedish TT.

5 Analysis

In this section, different examples of terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena in the ST will be presented and analysed. Furthermore, the different translation strategies that were used or considered in the process will be discussed.

5.1 Terminology

As previously stated, terminology exists within every sphere of society; this is also the case when discussing the global industry of human trafficking. The ST contains plenty of terms, of which the unquestionably most central term is trafficking, occurring fourteen times in different constructions: trafficking, human trafficking, sex trafficking, drug trafficking, trafficking ring and trafficking in persons. Trafficking is a word frequently used in Swedish as well. However, the difference between the source language and the target language is that in English trafficking is often used with a premodifying noun or a post modifier, whereas trafficking always is used on its own in Swedish, without a premodifier, which will be exemplified further on.
Two different constructions with trafficking occur in the ST, denoting the same concept: *trafficking in persons* and *human trafficking*. However, the former construction *trafficking in persons*, is only used in the ST as the name of a report, *the Trafficking in persons (TIP) Report*, (see Section 5.2) and as a name of an authority, *Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons*. In all instances, in describing the growing slave trade as such, *human trafficking* was the term used in the ST.

As stated previously, *trafficking* is a word used in the target language. The question was thus whether to apply the borrowing strategy and use this English form of the word, or whether there was any established Swedish translation. As different dictionaries were consulted, one of which was *Norstedts engelsk-svenska ordbok*, it was found that none of them listed the term *trafficking*. As mentioned in Section 4.2, Ingo stresses that with the constant rise of new terminology, dictionaries quickly become outdated and term bases may be a more reliable source. When the Swedish term base Rikstermbanken was consulted, it was found that it translated *trafficking* as *människohandel*. This word was also found as an entry in *Svenska Akademin8s ordlista*, SAOL, while neither of these two sources listed *trafficking* as a translation. When parallel texts were read, it was found that both *människohandel* and *trafficking* were used in Swedish in newspapers and on the Internet. However, in documents and publications by Swedish authorities and, most importantly, in directives from the EU (EUR-Lex) and the UN (UNICEF), *människohandel* was the word consistently used. This was also a word found in EU’s multilingual term base IATE. Thus, since *människohandel* was the term used in the dictionaries, as well as a term base and documents, it was decided that this word would be used throughout the TT:

(1) That gesture exposed him or her to the ugly undercurrent of *human trafficking*. Den gesten gjorde att han eller hon fick uppleva de lömska krafter som ligger bakom *människohandel*.

To sum up, a premodifier is often used in English with the word *trafficking*, resulting in words like *human trafficking*, *sex trafficking* and *drug trafficking*, whereas when the word *trafficking* is used in Swedish, it only refers to human trafficking.
The person behind the act of trafficking is called *a trafficker* in the ST. This term cannot be found either in Swedish dictionaries or in Swedish term banks, nor does it seem to appear in Swedish parallel texts. Consequently, borrowing did not seem to be an option in this case. However, an educated guess, based on the findings for the term *människohandel*, was that *människohandlare* would be the term used in these contexts. As it turned out, this seemed to be the actual case; *människohandlare* was the term consistently found in parallel texts (polisen and lansstyrelsen online). Consequently, this was finally the natural choice for the TT:

(2) No nation wants to be known as a haven for slaveholders and traffickers.

Another recurring word used in the ST is the verb *traffic*. At first glance it might not seem a challenge, since the term for the corresponding noun is already found in the target language – namely *trafficking*. According to Norstedt’s dictionary, the translation of *traffic* is *sälja, handla, driva handel*, verbs used in everyday language but not established as terms. In cases like this, where there does not seem to exist a specific corresponding term in the target language, Ingo (2007: 107, see also Section 4.1) suggests that parallel texts be used in order to find out which word or expression is generally used. When newspapers and web sites discussing human trafficking were studied, it was found that both *sälja* and *traffickera* were used in the sense to *traffic*. The latter of these two, *traffickera*, is a calque (cf. Section 4.2). However, this word does not seem to be frequently used in official documents and texts; a Google search only gave one single hit in an official publication (more precisely Länsstyrelsen 2011). Instead, when the action to *traffic* somebody was described or mentioned, the most common Swedish word used in official texts and documents is *sälja*.

On the one hand, one could reason that since the intended target readers or the TT are people in general, a word used in newspapers should rather be considered the norm for the TT than official documents. On the other hand, one may assume that a foreign source of information, which the Swedish newspapers use for their articles, is seldom translated into
Swedish by a translator. This is, however, the case with Swedish authorities. An educated guess is therefore that terms are more commonly borrowed in newspaper articles without there being a recognised translation, than is the case with official texts and documents. If the word or term is not yet commonly used, this can give the impression that the text is translated, which is not an effect strived for. Due to this, together with the fact that traffickera is not frequently used in regular speech, the conclusion was made that the word cannot be seen as a term that has been fully established and accepted in the target language yet. As all of this was taken into consideration, the results found in official documents, for instance published by the Swedish government and the Police, were given more weight and authority than those found in newspapers. On those grounds the translation chosen here was sålja, rather than traffickera:

(3) She was trafficked to another country, where she did not understand the culture of laws (…)

Hon såldes till ett annat land där hon inte förstod hur lagarna fungerade (…)

The solution chosen, såldes, in Example 3 did, however, not work in all instances in the TT:

(4) Yet she received news from her family in India that the minister had trafficked two of her cousins into the United States to take her place inside his home.

… men så hörde hon från sin familj i Indien att prästen hade smugglat två av hennes kusiner till USA för att ta hennes plats i huset.

In Example 4, and on numerous other occasions in the ST, the verb trafficked is used together with the preposition into. To make a direct translation in the TT would give us hade sålt två av hennes kusiner in i USA (…), which would not be idiomatic Swedish. If, on the other hand, one would translate the TT as hade sålt….till USA”, it would appear as though they were sold to the administration of the US. Consequently, a word other than
sälja had to be used in this case. The action described by the word traffic is the action of trading humans illegally, and consequently hade smugglat was considered an alternative. This phrase would not only solve the prepositional problem, but also convey the illegal connotation of hade sålt. However, the choice was not evident since hade smugglat only describes one part in the chain of trafficking a person, whereas traffic incorporates the full process of illegally transporting a person from one place to another for exploitation purposes. According to a handbook on human trafficking and prostitution (Länsstyrelsen 2010: 47), smuggling someone does not necessarily involve exploiting the person or smuggling the person against his or her will, which is a prerequisite when defining a case as trafficking. Another difference is that smuggling means transferring someone over international borders, whereas trafficking can be transporting a person to another location within the same country. Nevertheless, smuggla was the verb used in the end, since it both solved the prepositional problem and managed to convey the illegal sense of to traffic.

The final term in the ST that involved the term trafficking was anti-trafficking measures:

(5) … a strong UN initiative that aims to nurture effective anti-trafficking measures across borders. … ett kraftfullt FN-initiativ för att effektivisera åtgärder mot människohandel mellan olika länder.

To use literal translation here would have the benefit of being one single word, but would, however, have resulted in too heavy a construction: människohandelsåtgärder. Instead a preposition was added, resulting in a smoother construction, which was the reason why this solution was chosen for the TT. This changed the part of speech resulting in a transposition according to Vinay and Darbelnet.

The term that probably occurs most times in the ST is abolitionist. If this word were to be transferred directly into Swedish in the TT, it would certainly fit well with the Swedish grammar structure and therefore sound natural. However, this is not a word often used in the target language and it is not found in Swedish dictionaries or in term banks. When making a thorough search for abolitionist on the Internet, it resulted in a number of
hits, but not so many of which were reliable sources. There were more search results for the word *abolitionism*, which the Swedish encyclopedia *Nationalencyklopedin* translates into *upphävande, avskaffande* and explains as “motstånd mot slaveriet”.

One strategy, as stated by Vinay and Darbelnet (1995:39-40), is to transfer the word directly into the target language and then add an explanatory comment – an addition. This may have worked with abolitionism, which is an abstract phenomenon, but using *abolitionist* when describing a person would sound odd in Swedish and could easily give the impression of the text being a translation. An illustration of this is *He is a real abolitionist*, translated into *Han är en riktig abolitionist* in Swedish. Furthermore, since *abolitionist* is not yet established in the target language, there is a risk that the general target reader would not understand the word. Therefore, this solution was discarded.

Considering the fact that the intended target readers are people in general, *slaverimotståndare* seems to be a suitable equivalent; it is transparent and serves an explanatory function. It does not represent the same semantic content, but it does convey the intended pragmatic information:

(6) **This book aims to be a handbook for the modern-day abolitionist.**

(7) **An abolitionist organization called "International Justice Mission" (IJM) instigated a raid on the rice mill…**

When *abolitionist* is used as a premodifier, the translation is not as easily dealt with as in cases where it is used as a nominal head (as *slaverimotståndare* in (6)). Consider the following example:

In Example 7, the target language word that was opted for in Example 6 – viz *slaverimotståndare* – has been used as a premodifier, to replicate the ST structure.
However, this has lead to a very complex construction, rendering the TT sentence heavy and unidiomatic. Consequently, the translation used for abolitionist when it functions as a nominal head (as in Example 6) does not quite work when it is used as a premodifier, and so, another solution has to be found in this case. One such solution could be to use transference, as in abolitionistorganisationen. However, this rendering must be discarded too, for the reasons discussed above: abolitionist is a word that is not commonly used – hence probably not commonly understood – in the target language. Another solution would be to abandon the one-word premodifier construction all together, and instead use a postmodifying relative clause, constituting a descriptive equivalent (Newmark 1993: 100-101) of abolitionist. This was the solution finally opted for in the TT, since it caters for both idiomaticity and target reader comprehension:

(8) An abolitionist organization called "International Justice Mission (IJM)"

Another central word in the ST is the term exploitation, used in different forms. According to Norstedt’s dictionary, a correct translation of the nominal form of this word would be exploatering in Swedish. This was also found in parallel texts. Another word that was also used was utnyttjande, which was found in an important UN document, as well as in other documents of authority. However, when consulting IATE, it was found that up until 2010, exploitation was translated as utnyttjande, when the term was replaced with exploatering in accordance with a new EU directive (http://iate.europa.eu). This has also influenced Swedish legislation and, as a result, exploatering has become increasingly used in the target language in general in the last few years. Due to this trend, exploatering was the term chosen for the TT, even though utnyttjande would be equally correct:

(9) Many people bristle to hear the word slavery used to describe the modern practice of exploitation.

Många blir upprörda när de hör ordet slaveri användas för att beskriva dagens form av exploatering.
A methodical search through a number of different sources showed the same result regarding the term *sexual exploitation*; this term has undergone the same change in recent years as was discussed in Example 9. Owing to this, the former term *sexuellt utnyttjande* has now been replaced with *sexuell exploatering* in the Swedish Penal Code. Therefore, the latter term was the one opted for in Example 10:

(10) ... and now volunteers her time to prevent more vulnerable women from falling into sexual exploitation and enslavement.

We have now seen that the nominal form *exploitation* is generally best translated with *exploatering*. As regards the verbal form – *exploit* – on the other hand, the corresponding Swedish verb *exploatera* did not appear as the best solution. Norstedt’s dictionary gives us both *exploatera* and *utnyttja*. If one consults the internet based version of Swedish Academy Dictionary, SAOL, it has an entry on the word *exploatera*, described as *utnyttja, hänsynslöst dra fördel av*. As we have seen, parallel texts demonstrate that *exploatering* tends to be the preferred choice in Swedish, in cases where we are dealing with the nominal form of the ST word (i.e. *exploitation*). As regards the verbal form, on the other hand, parallel texts often shift to use the verb *utnyttja* instead. Consequently, this was also the solution used in the TT:

(11) We learn how the slave traders they resist use power and violence to exploit the weak.

(12) … used her sexually and exploited her labor.
Countries involved in human trafficking are often referred to as source, transit and/or destination countries. The literal translations of these terms – ursprungsländer, transitländer and destinationsländer – were not found in Swedish dictionaries but a Google search yielded a number of hits on websites such as UNICEF, Polisen (the Swedish police website) and EUR lex (the official EU site, where legal EU documents can be found). In these sources they were always referred to as ursprungsländer, transitländer and destinationsländer. Only one hit was found for the abbreviated forms in parallel texts: ursprungs-, transit- och destinationsländer. Many of the instances where the full forms were used, the abbreviated forms could have been used instead. Given that this was the most common solution in parallel texts, this was the solution chosen for the TT too:

(13) These nations may be source, transit, or destination countries for victims of human trafficking.  
Dessa länder kan vara ursprungsländer, transitländer eller destinationsländer för människor som fallit offer för människohandel.

An example of a term the translation of which could be found only through the use of parallel texts was bonded labour. This proved to be one of the most difficult terms in the ST since this phenomenon is not frequently heard of or written about. By reading about the term in English, to get an understanding of what it denoted, it was finally possible to search for a corresponding term in the target language. The sources describing the phenomenon showed some differences depending on which part of the world that was described, but all had in common that the victim of bonded labour had a debt.

Words like skuldslavar and skuldslovari were used in several Swedish sources. During the translation process, it also turned out that EUR-lex listed three different official sources using skuldslovari: a Swedish government bill, the Swedish government’s webpage and a text book on social studies. IATE had entries on bondage translated as skuldslovari, skyldighet att utföra arbete såsom betalning för skuld och träldom för skuld. This must be considered synonymous to bonded labour. Even though ‘skuldslavar’ and
‘skuldsalveri’ is nothing frequently debated in Sweden, the words themselves are evidently the terms used in these contexts. Consequently, this was also the translation eventually used in the TT:

(14) Bonded labor has existed for centuries

(15) The tale of Bonda, a slave I met during my travels to India, graphically illustrates the plight of a bonded laborer.

5.2 References to culture-specific phenomena

There were some instances where the TT had to deviate from the ST out of consideration for the target reader. This is illustrated in Examples 16-18 below:

(16) …as many as seventeen thousand new victims are trafficked across our borders each year.

Example 16 illustrates the fact that the ST is written for an American audience. Since the TT would be read in a Swedish context, by a Swedish readership, the word our had to be replaced with the country it was referring to instead. Keeping our would change the meaning into describing how many people are trafficked into Sweden. Hence, a modulation had to take place, changing the point of view.
In Example 17, there were a few different options at hand. First, by simply translating literally, there would be a risk that the target reader would feel excluded and that the topic was not of his or her concern. A second option was to change *the United States* into *Sweden* in order to adapt the ST to the target reader’s context. However, since Sweden is not mentioned previously in the text, this would seem odd. A third option would be a general solution referring to any country, thus using a modulation where the perspective was changed from particular to general. This solution was the one opted for in the TT, in an attempt to convey the meaning of *even*, like ‘the one you least expect’:

(17) The exhaustive research that the State Department conducts makes it clear that slavery plagues every country, *even the United States.*

(18) Unable to do so, she stopped another passing motorist and implored him to *dial 911* and report a kidnapping in progress.

A third example of an instance in the text that had to be adapted due to cultural differences is the mentioning of 911. Again, there are a number of different solutions at hand. First, one could keep 911 and literally translate it thus into the TT:

(18) Unable to do so, she stopped another passing motorist and implored him to *dial 911* and report a kidnapping in progress.

This would give the text an American colour and let the reader meet the source culture. However, there was an evident risk that all target readers would not know that 911 is the American emergency number and thereby the meaning would be lost. A literal translation might also make it evident that the TT was a translation. Therefore, some kind of adaption...
was required. The second option at hand was therefore to transfer 911 into a Swedish context, by using the Swedish emergency number instead:

(19) Unable to do so, she stopped another passing motorist and implored him to dial 911 and report a kidnapping in progress.

När hon inte lyckades stannade hon en förbipasserande bil och sa åt föraren att ringa 112 och anmäla en kidnappning.

This is what in Vinay and Darbelnet’s terms would be an adaptation. This is used when there is a gap between the source and target culture, and a similar reference from the target culture is used instead. By changing the emergency number used in the USA into the one used in Sweden the message would come across to the reader and the same effect would be created. However, since other parts of the text revealed that the described situation was not taking place in a Swedish setting, the sudden reference to a typically Swedish phenomenon would have given an inconsistent impression.

As we have seen, neither a literal translation nor an adaptation of the emergency number is appropriate in this situation. However, if one analyses the ST, the actual phone number is not the important thing in this example, but rather what it would result in. Therefore, after some consideration, a third option was chosen: to call the police. Thus, by using equivalence, the intended pragmatic meaning was conveyed at the same time as the cultural conflict was eliminated:

(20) Unable to do so, she stopped another passing motorist and implored him to dial 911 and report a kidnapping in progress.

När hon inte lyckades stannade hon en förbipasserande bil och sa åt föraren att larma polisen och anmäla en kidnappning.

Ingo states that every country has its own symbols of moral courage or of what is considered as a heroic act (2007:151). He points out that, since such symbols are
culturally bound and not possible to transfer, the translator must decide whether to use an explanatory note, an addition, omission or adaption. In the ST, we encounter this kind of instance when three historic persons are listed – more precisely Harriet Tubman, William Wilberforce and Frederick Douglass – all of whom have their contribution to end slavery in common. This illustrates well when a cultural adaption is necessary, as we cannot assume that either of these persons is known to the general target public.

As stated by Ingo, one strategy in an example like this could be to leave out the names, but in this case that would mean having to skip a whole sentence. Since parallels were drawn to these historic characters later in the text, this would not have been a wise solution. Instead, an addition in the form of an explanatory note was initially added within commas after each person: “*en Harriet Tubman, som lyckades befria hundratals amerikanska slavar, eller en William Wilberforce, som var en av de starkaste krafterna till att slaveriet avskaffades i Storbritannien, eller en Frederick Douglass, som leddes rörelsen för att avskaffa slaveriet i Amerika*”. However, since this strategy doubled the number of words, it did not turn out to be a smooth adaption. Hence, a more economic strategy was finally chosen: a footnote at the bottom of the page:

(21) I felt like I had gone back in time and had the great privilege of sharing a meal with a Harriet Tubman or a William Wilberforce or a Frederick Douglass.

Det kändes som om jag hade förflyttats bakåt i tiden och hade den stora förmånen att bryta bröd med en Harriet Tubman, en William Wilberforce eller en Frederick Douglass1.

1 Dessa var alla tre människorättskämpar som på olika sätt arbetat för att avskaffa slaveriet.

The ST contained a number of proper names of acts and documents, many of which the target readers could be assumed not to have heard of. The first document mentioned in
the ST was the * Trafficking in persons (TIP) report*. This report is a measure taken by the US government to list countries according to their efforts to fight human trafficking in their own countries. The Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet refers to the report as *USA:s traffickingrapport* and *USA:s årliga rapport om människohandel*. The Swedish government, on the other hand, refers to it as *USA:s Trafficking in Persons Report* in a press release; that is, they use the name unchanged. As we saw in Section 4.3, Newmark points out that in situations like these, there are two options at hand: *transference* and *componential analysis*. Transference has the benefit of enabling the reader to identify and recognize the relevant document, but the disadvantage that the reader may miss out on important information due to not understanding the meaning of the name. *Componential analysis*, on the other hand, uses a component from the target language that the reader is familiar with. Thus understanding is emphasized but the solution is not as economical (1993:96). Since both of these solutions were found in parallel texts, the solution eventually opted for was to apply a componential analysis with the addition of the name of the document within commas. The explanatory component was used with the target reader in mind, and the English name added due to its official status. The solution finally chosen was, however, to omit the abbreviation in brackets, in order not to make the text more complex than necessary:

(22) To that end, one of its most potent tools is a report called *the Trafficking in persons (TIP) Report*, published annually since 2001 as mandated by the U.S. Congress


The name of a document that dated back to Lincoln’s days – *the Emancipation Proclamation* – proved to be particularly difficult to find a translation for initially. When it was looked for in different sources, it turned out that this document was not described
many times in the target language. Nationalencyclopedin had an entry for *the emancipation* but without mentioning the proclamation. According to Nordstedt’s dictionary, *proclamation* translates as *kungörelse* as well as *proklamation* in Swedish. A Google search using *emancipationskungörelsen* gave a limited number of hits but considerably more was found for *emancipationsproklamationen*. The latter version illustrates the procedure of transference – or to be precise, of naturalization (Newmark 1988:82 See also Section 4.1). This procedure is also what Newmark suggests as the preferred option in historical as well as in political contexts, especially if the terms are transparent and no accepted translations exist (1993:101). Since both *emancipation* and *proklamation* are used as separate words in Swedish, and the readers would be able to understand the meaning of it, the combination of the two was used in Example 23. However, due to the fact that rules regarding capitalization are not the same in the source and target languages, the Emancipation Proclamation was spelled with a lower case in the TT:

(23) Hence, modern slavery cannot be eliminated with a single stroke of the pen like what Abraham Lincoln achieved when he signed *the Emancipation Proclamation.*

The next document name to be discussed is *the Slavery Abolition Act*, which refers to a British act, dating almost 200 years back in time. The term *abolition* has already been discussed above, where the conclusion was made that one cannot expect the target readers to have a notion of what this term denotes. Hence, a literal translation was never strived for, since it would neither be comprehensible for the target reader, nor idiomatic. As Newmark (1993:101) suggests, when no accepted term exists, a descriptive or functional equivalent can be used instead – especially if it is a popular text as is the case with our ST and TT. Thus, just as in Example 8, a postmodifying relative clause describing the concept was the solution opted for in the case of *the Slavery Abolition Act*:
It certainly was a momentous day in 1833 when the British parliament passed *the Slavery Abolition Act* (...)

Newmark (1993:100) states that if there is a recognised translation that the readership can understand, then this method of translation is to be preferred for political institutions. This is illustrated in Example 25, where the recognised translation *utrikesminister* is used in order to refer to the *Secretary of State*. Both titles refer to equivalent positions at the same level in the source- and target culture:

(25) Hillary Rodham Clinton U.S. Secretary of State

Hillary Clinton, USA:s *utrikesminister*.

Since the ST in Example 25 explained which country the Secretary of State represented, no addition had to be made in the TT. However, this was implied in the ST in the next example. Even though there had been references to the USA previously in the text, one cannot assume that the target reader automatically would understand that this is the country referred to, since the author of the ST brings up examples from many different parts of the world. Therefore, in order to clarify to the Swedish target reader which *Department of Justice* was being referred to, the addition strategy was used by inserting the premodifier *amerikanska*:

(26) Ambassador Luis CdeBaca, a former prosecutor in *the Department of Justice*, currently holds the post.

Ambassadör Luis CdeBaca, tidigare åklagare vid *det amerikanska* justitiedepartementet, är den som har tjänsten för närvarande.
6 Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to analyse which translation strategies may be the most suitable ones when dealing with terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena in the translation of a text on human trafficking. First, a text on human trafficking was translated from English into Swedish to serve as the primary material for the analysis. In the process, specific instances of problems concerning terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena were randomly chosen for a qualitative analysis.

In order to solve all the different translation problems, a number of translation strategies had to be used. These were strategies laid down by Vinay and Darbelnet, by Ingo and by Newmark. Regarding the translation of terminology, Vinay and Darbelnet’s strategies literal translation, modulation and equivalence and Ingo’s addition and omission were the most useful strategies. Using parallel texts often proved to be the most practical and common strategy in finding possible solutions regarding the translation of terminology.

From a general point of view, the strategies found useful in translating culture-specific phenomena were modulation, equivalence and addition, although in the specific case of proper names, recognised translation, componential analysis, transference and established translation were also used. Factors that decided the most appropriate strategy were, among other things, the use of parallel texts, the perspective of the target reader, as well as the aim of the text.

In conclusion, my findings were that a whole range of different strategies had to be applied in order to solve the translation problems regarding terminology and references to culture-specific phenomena presented in this paper. However, the material of this study is limited. If other texts on human trafficking had been translated, other terms and examples may have been selected for the analysis, and thus the result may have been another. Nevertheless, my conclusion is that having knowledge of translation theory in general and different strategies in particular, will be of use to anyone aspiring to become a translator.
List of references

Primary source


Secondary sources


**Parallel texts**


