Examining the Translator's Solutions in Backman's *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer*

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Abstract:

This is a qualitative analysis of a translated short story and a comparison between the English translation and the Swedish original. This thesis examines how figures of speech and cultural elements are translated into another linguistic and cultural context, what kinds of translation strategies the translator has used and how those strategies either reveal or hide the translator's voice. Analyses of translations offer a better understanding of what translations are and how translators work. The material consists of a Swedish short story written by Fredrik Backman, *Och varje morgon blir vägen hem längre och längre*, and the English translation by Alice Menzies, *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer*. By analyzing the two texts sentence-for-sentence and comparing the translation to the original, several similarities and some subtle differences but no major changes were noted. The translator's consistent use of literal and equivalent translation makes her almost completely invisible and it also explains why the translation is extremely similar to the original. There are three reasons for the similarity between the translation and the original. First, the experiences and the emotions in the story are universal and therefore easy to transfer into any language and culture. Secondly, Backman's writing seems easy to translate, because it is not complex nor particularly experimental but rather belongs to the genre of airport novels. Thirdly, Swedish and English are both culturally and linguistically similar, which facilitates translation between the languages. For further research, analyses of this short story in other languages or translations of other works by Backman could offer more insight into how Backman's style of writing is translated into other languages. On a more general level, future studies could focus more on the translator's voice and how the translator's decisions affect the result.

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1. Introduction

Most of us come into contact with translation, in some form, in our everyday lives. For example, when watching a movie with subtitles, reading a translated book or the instruction pamphlet of a product we just bought. Due to globalization and people moving around more than ever, we all come into contact with other languages, cultures and belief systems, which means that we, consciously or not, engage with translation in one way or another (Bassnett 2014:1). Cronin (2003:34, cited in Bassnett 2014:143) argues that translation is not only a consequence of globalization, but an integral part of it as it makes all kinds of content available to more people. Therefore translation, and what exactly that entails, has become increasingly more important (Bassnett 2014:2). By analyzing all kinds of translations from different points of view and thereby adding to the field of translation studies, we will get a better and more diverse understanding of what translations are and how translators work.

There is a lot to read about translation theory, but perhaps not enough about the practical application of translation theory on different types of texts. Therefore it will be interesting to examine how translation theory can be applied to a specific genre and text as well as how translation theory can help us understand the translator's decisions and translation solutions. This thesis is an analysis of a translated short story and a comparison between the translation and the original. Hopefully, this thesis will add more practical information to the field of translation studies, and more specifically literary translation. Earlier studies have often focused on translation from a majority language, such as English, into a minority language. Venuti (2018:11) even states: "Since World War II, English has been the most translated language worldwide, but it isn't much translated into". Wright (2016:16-18) also discusses the lack of foreign literature available in English, because isolation is dangerous and "target cultures can benefit from the fresh ideas and insights and the different world views brought in by translations" (Wright 2016:17). That is why I chose a text where Swedish is the source language and English is the target language. This could add another interesting angle to the analysis.

This kind of analysis is also quite relevant at the moment, because recently people have shown more interest in translators and their work, e.g. interviews with translators on TV and in newspapers as well as discussions online about good and bad translations and subtitles (for example, the criticism of Netflix's subtitles for the popular series *Squid Game* (Lange 2021)). Although translators are starting to receive more recognition and appreciation for their work, they are still more often than not invisible. Therefore I was interested in analyzing translation

strategies and decisions in order to bring more attention to the translator's voice. I wanted to examine what kinds of translation strategies the translator uses in different situations, how the translator deals with problematic points, how visible the translator is in the text, what the differences and similarities between the translation and the original are and why these differences and similarities exist. By comparing the translation and the original, I also wanted to compare the translator's voice to the writer's. Why should we be interested in analyzing the translator's or the writer's voice? By analyzing the translator's choices and comparing them to the original, we learn more about the translation process: what the translator thinks is important and how the translator makes their choices and what they might be basing their choices on. When comparing the translation and the original, we can also learn more about the writer: how and why they express themselves the way they do and what they think is important in the text etc. By only working with two versions, the translation and the original, of the same short story, I will be able to do a deep, qualitative analysis. Therefore I decided to look at potential problematic points as well as try to identify the translator's voice and what makes the text easy to translate. My research questions are:

1. How are figures of speech translated?

The writer uses a lot of figures of speech in his texts and he usually comes up with his own metaphors and similes. Therefore it is interesting to examine how the translator has decided to transfer them.

2. How are cultural elements translated into another linguistic and cultural context?

Cultural elements are often problematic, because they are culture-bound and language-specific. Therefore I will examine what kinds of cultural elements might be problematic, why they might be problematic and how the translator works around these problematic points.

3. Is the translator's voice noticeable in any way and if so, how?

By studying the translator's choices, I want to bring attention to the (in)visibility of the translator.

4. What kinds of translation strategies are used?

Examining the translator's strategies and decisions gives us information about the translation process. Based on the information that we can gather from the translation strategies and the translator's decisions, we can draw our own conclusions and offer answers to all of the questions above.

5. What makes the original and the translation seem so similar?

My immediate impression of the translation was that it seemed extremely similar to the original, which made me question how that is possible. Therefore I want to try to find what it is that makes the translation so good, or perhaps what makes the original so easy to translate.

2. Theoretical Framework

Translation is a huge field, which encompasses theory and practice and deals with both literary and non-literary translations. Translation studies grew as a discipline in the 1980s and in the 1990s it was a global phenomenon (Bassnett 2014:25). Translation has not only become more important due to globalization, but it is also an essential part of it, making it possible for ideas to spread. This is where we might have to consider what exactly a translation is. According to Jakobson, there are three types of translation: 1. intralingual, which means rewording a text in the same language, e.g. when modernizing old texts; 2. interlingual, also known as translation proper, which is what we think of as translation, namely translation across languages and it involves interpreting and transferring; and 3. intersemiotic, also known as transmutation, which means "the interpretation of verbal signs by other, nonverbal sign systems" (Bassnett 2014:7). Intersemiotic translation, which also encompasses genre shifts such as film adaptation, challenges the boundaries of translation. Can we still consider this a type of translation? Pym states that "**a translation is a translation only for as long as someone assumes it is one**" (2014:73; original emphasis), which is not an unproblematic definition either considering pseudotranslations, i.e. "a text presented as a translation but which is actually a piece of original writing" (Bassnett 2014:29). This is where the voice of the writer and the voice of the translator become important in defining a translation. Many scholars refer to the translator as a mediator between the original and the translation. This means that a translation should contain multiple voices, because a translation communicates the ideas of the original writer through the translator's interpretation and reworking of the text. We will come back to the voice of the translator in a later section. Trying to define what a translation is proves to be quite a challenge. Perhaps looking at what sets translations apart from other kinds of texts will offer more insight.

Pym discusses the idea of universals of translation, i.e. "**a feature that is found in translations and not in other kinds of text**" (2014:75; original emphasis). He proposes the following universals: lexical simplification, explicitation, adaptation and unique items. By lexical simplification, Pym refers to the language in a translation being "flatter, less structured, less ambiguous, less specific to a given text, more habitual, and so on" (2014:76). Translations are also more explicit than other texts and they are often adapted to the target language and culture

(Pym 2014:76). The unique items that Pym (2014:77-78) refers to are linguistic elements that are considered unique to the target language, i.e. linguistic elements that are not found in the source language. These linguistic elements are often less frequent in translations compared to other texts (Pym 2014:77-78). Pym (2014) also discusses laws, i.e. why translations have specific features. Toury proposes two laws: the law of growing standardization, which refers to the translators' tendency to simplify the text and use more general language, and the law of interference, which refers to the translators' tendency "to bring across structures that are in the [source] text, even when those structures are not normal in the target language" (Pym 2014:78-79). Translations are often seen as inferior to the source text, which is not strange considering the universals of translations and that translations seem to be less complex and less creative. The question then becomes: Why do we translate?

There are many motivations for translating. First of all, translation is a means of spreading ideas, and translation has been essential in the transmission of knowledge, ideas and literature throughout history (Bassnett 2014:15). There is even a belief that "access to foreign literature and thought has the potential to improve the lives of individual human beings and of humankind" (Wright 2016:19). Translation also makes world literature possible as it builds bridges between cultures and it offers new perspectives on ourselves and others (Wright 2016:20), which leads to greater intercultural understanding and improved interpersonal and international relations (Wright 2016:28). Lefevere (1990, 1992) argues that "translation was a primary instrument through which one culture both learns about another, but at the same time constructs its image of that other culture" (Bassnett 2014:32). Translation can therefore be used to shape people's attitudes and it makes it possible to reach a wider audience, but it can also be used for political and ideological reasons, because "translation can be a way of assimilating and exerting control, a tool of persuasion, manipulation and evangelization and in the case of a bestselling book a way of making money" (Wright 2016:19). How things are presented to us affects our understanding of and attitudes towards others, and that is why translation can be used to push forward a certain agenda. Moreover, translators enjoy reading and they want to share the experience with others (Wright 2016:19). No one reads a text as carefully as a translator, which means that "[the translator] can afford the reader a more nuanced understanding of a text" (Wright 2016:54). And lastly, translation is also a way to document the source text (Wright 2016:58), because translation keeps texts alive.

2.1. Translation Theory

In this section we will look at what translation theory is and what it is useful for as well as examine some of the different approaches to translation and the idea of authenticity. Translation theories mainly discuss how people should translate. Questions relating to the translator's freedom, i.e. how much the translation may differ from the original, and whether the translator's responsibility is to the original writer or to the target language audience are the main issues being discussed (Bassnett 2014:4-6). The goal in translation theory is "to produce a comprehensive theory that can also be used as a guideline for the production of translations" (Lefevere 1978:234, cited in Bassnett 2014:16). However, scholars are not only interested in how to produce good translations, they are also interested in examining how texts are selected and what kind of impact translations can have (Bassnett 2014:16-21). Studying translation can tell us a lot about the culture from which the source text came and the culture that received the translation as well as what the role of the translator is (Bassnett 2014:35-36). Scholars want to identify different kinds of patterns in translation. There are, however, many different theories and approaches to translation and scholars do not agree on how translation should be done. Many translators also feel like the theories are not applicable and that theorists do not have an understanding of what translation is in practice. Wright (2016:8-9) states that there is a

> need to break down the unhelpful boundaries between theory and practice [because in] my own translation practice I have found a theoretical foundation to be invaluable and believe that it has made me a better translator, more confident in my choices.

2.1.1. Translation: Then and Now

Bassnett (2014:4-7) discusses how in early translation theories there was a strong inclination towards literal translation and the idea of keeping the original message intact. The discussion was mainly focused around arguments of whether word-for-word or sense-for-sense translation produced a better result. In the 1960s and 1970s, theories of equivalence became more prominent, once again moving a step further away from literal translation. Then came the Skopos theory, by Weiss and Vermeer, which argued that the function of the text should determine how it is translated. Translation theories have slowly moved from the idea of faithfulness to the original to considering the function and purpose of the text in its two contexts.

Bassnett (2014:11-12) simplifies translation theory by dividing it into two opposing sides, and she believes most translation theorists can be placed on either side. On one side we have the ones who focus on the problematic points of translation and believe that translation is bound to fail. And on the other side we have the ones who focus on finding solutions to translation problems and believe that translation enriches literary systems. The ones who focus on the problems and what is lost in translation, often regard translation as inferior to the original, while the ones who believe that translation adds something to both contexts, are more likely to view the translation as a text in its own right.

As mentioned above, scholars and theorists wanted to produce a comprehensive theory that could function as a guideline for translators, but "theories also emerge from specific cultural contexts at specific times, and are designed with a particular cultural purpose in mind, hence the impossibility of a universally acceptable approach" (Bassnett 2014:34-35). The ideals of translation, i.e. the criteria for what makes a translation good, according to which translators work, have changed over time and probably will keep changing (Bassnett 2014:81), which is also a reason for why it is impossible to produce universal guidelines for translation. Some other examples of reasons for why this is impossible are the differences between languages and cultures, which can cause various kinds of problems for the translator, and the type of text that the translator is working with, because every text type demands different things from the translator. The translator's tasks have also changed and the requirements and expectations are different nowadays, e.g. shorter time frames due to the need for instantaneous translation, a need for more intercultural knowledge in a globalized world or greater technology skills (Bassnett 2014:125-131). And that is why the translators themselves should decide how to translate.

2.1.2. Different Approaches to Translation

Firstly, we are going to examine the question of whether translation is a craft or an art form. Secondly, we will examine both the descriptive and the prescriptive approach as well as what some scholars have brought to the table. And thirdly, we will look at fluency, which has dominated the norms of translation of foreign works into English.

The two opposing sides of translation theory mentioned above could also represent the approaches to translation as either a craft or as an art form. Bassnett (2014:13) also briefly discusses these two sides. On one side, we have the people who think of translation as a

secondary activity and who believe that the translator should have less freedom in reshaping the text. Faithfulness to the original is considered important and producing a good translation requires craftsmanship. On the other side, we have the people who believe that the translator should have certain creative freedom and that the translator is reassembling the original work in another language rather than transferring meaning. Because the translation is a reworking of the original, the translator becomes responsible for this version of the text and thereby becomes a writer. For some people the translation will be their only contact with the original work, which means that the translator should try to produce the same reading experience for the target audience by any means.

Pym (2014:62-72) discusses the difference between the descriptive and the prescriptive approach. The descriptive approach deals with what translations are or what they could be, while the prescriptive approach deals with what translations should be. The descriptive approach is also more focused on the target culture and the function of the translation, rather than faithfulness to the original. More research, where scholars look at actual translations, is needed as the descriptivists want to know what translations are usually like. Descriptivists are not only interested in what translations are, how they are produced and how they are received, but they are also interested in the theoretical possibilities, i.e. what translations could be, and the norms such as what is expected of the translator, of the translation process and of the finished translation, i.e. what translations should be. However, determining what a good translation is can be a bit challenging, as was already mentioned, because it all depends on the cultural and historical context. To sum up, descriptivists are more concerned with the practice part of translation, while prescriptivists are more concerned with translation theories.

Many scholars claim that translation is based on interpretation, and in hermeneutics meaning is thought to come from active interpretation, which means that there is no objective understanding of a text (Pym 2014:99). That also means that a translation cannot be a perfect representation of the source text and that every translation is different, because it is based on the translator's subjective interpretation of the source text. According to deconstructionists, "language is not transparent to intentions, referents, or values" (Pym 2014:105) and therefore there is no such thing as stable meaning, i.e. "**translation as a form of transformation** rather than as any kind of meaning transfer" (Pym 2014:106; original emphasis). This means that meaning cannot be transferred from one language to another, because what we mean by what we say is dependent on the linguistic and cultural context. Therefore, from a functionalist point

of view, translation is about reproducing the aim or the purpose of the source text for the target audience (Bassnett 2014:148). So what it all boils down to is that translation involves interpreting the message of the source text and trying to convey it to the target audience in a suitable way. There are, however, a lot of opinions on how the translator should present it to the target audience.

When it comes to translation of foreign works into English, fluency seems to be extremely important. Venuti (2018:4-13) discusses what fluency is and what kinds of features a fluent translation typically has. In a fluent translation, the translator caters to the target audience, to a larger extent than might be necessary, i.e. domesticating the text, which we will come back to later. Venuti (2018) has observed that so-called fluent translations are supposed to be written in standard, modern English and the language should flow naturally and easily with semantic precision. He also found that a fluent translation should be intelligible and give the reader a clear idea of the original message. Based on what critics have commented on, a fluent translation should not be written in a specialized language and should not contain foreign words. The syntax should also not be too faithful to the original, otherwise it will sound less natural in the target language. The translator should also be invisible in a fluent translation, but Venuti (2018:13) argues that

> [b]ehind the translator's invisibility is a trade imbalance that underwrites [the domination of British and American culture and the English language globally], but also decreases the cultural capital of foreign values in English by limiting the number of foreign texts translated and submitting them to domesticating revision.

Instead, he argues that translations should be read as texts in their own right and that transparency, i.e. the invisibility of the translator, should only be considered a discursive effect rather than *the* way to translate.

2.1.3. Authenticity

The idea of originality and authenticity questions the existence of an original, because no text is ever completely original as language itself is only a 'translation' of the nonverbal world (Bassnett 2014:165) and everything that we say is a rephrasing of and in many ways related to what others have said, and this is called intertextuality (see Bakhtin 1981, Kristeva 1969; Roulet 1996). Authenticity relates to ideas of origin and antiquity as well as sincerity, creativity, originality and self-expression (Gill 2008), which makes authenticity relevant in

translation studies. Gill (2008) explains that "issues of authenticity arise in contexts which involve, or imply, present *separation* from some original or ideal, often with overtones of loss, corruption, distortion" (original emphasis). These words are often used to describe translations and the relation between the source text and the target text. Translations are often considered inauthentic in comparison to the source, which is often considered authentic. Gill (2008) argues that authenticity requires some sort of dichotomy, such as original versus copy, which means that the original can only be authentic if the copy is considered inauthentic.

Authenticity in translation deals with questions such as whether the translator can be considered a writer. At the moment, "the notion of authorial originality continues to stigmatize the translator's work" (Venuti 2018:6), i.e. translation is considered a secondary activity. In light of that, there are situations where a translation can assume the primary position.

> [Even-Zohar] sketched out three situations in which translations might acquire a primary position: when a literature is developing, when a literature perceives itself as weak or marginal and when a literature is going through a period of crisis or is at a turning point in its development. (Bassnett 2014:22)

Although many consider translations inferior, there is a lot to gain from the new ideas and information that enter another language or culture through translation (Bassnett 2014:174). Another issue is the question of whether the translation can be considered an authentic representation of the original. Because translations are dependent on the translator's interpretations and interpretations are based on individual values and experiences, there is a certain indeterminacy that will never go away, especially as there are always multiple possible interpretations (Pym 2014:89-90). Bassnett (2014:172) also points out that translation "has the capacity to alter, or even, to distort meaning". So how can we be sure that a translation is true to the source text? Pym (2014:97) proposes that sharing experiences is what communication is really about and that that is also how we overcome indeterminacy. In that sense, the translator might have more power than we think, especially in cases where there is no clearly identifiable original, because then it becomes the translator's responsibility to decide what to base the translation on, what they consider to make up the original (Bassnett 2014:119-120). Gill (2008) also states that "authenticity is not a property of things in themselves, but a human construction with a history, open to critical interpretation", which means that authenticity is judged based on prevailing norms in a particular setting and can therefore be questioned.

2.2. The Translation Process

In this section we will examine what the translation process generally looks like, how the translator works and the kinds of roles that the translator has to take on in order to produce a good translation. In the last section of this chapter we will also look at the translator's decision-making, e.g. how the translator chooses how to translate, what those choices are based on and how that affects the finished product and the target audience.

As we have established, the idea of translation is to transfer a message from one language into another by reworking the text for the target audience. Scholars do not agree on how much reworking the translator is allowed to do, but the general idea is that the original should be present in some way and that the translation is readable. One should always remember that a translation is only one of many possible representations of the original. While some scholars emphasize focusing on conveying the function or the purpose of the text, others believe that the function or the purpose of the translation can be different from the source text's (Pym 2014:43). In fact, that is also why translations of the same source text may be different from one another, because the purposes of the translations are different (Pym 2014:55). Some scholars believe that the translator should try to create a similar reading experience for the target audience, but as Wright (2016:85) put it,

> a translation is a special kind of text: a blended or hybrid entity that is connected in a unique way to a preceding text; a text that has multiple voices and that has undergone a process of mutation or transformation. It is therefore to be expected that the experience of reading a translation will differ from that of reading a non-translated text.

When trying to convey the source text writer's communicative intentions in another language, modifications are inevitable (Wright 2016:100).

2.2.1. The Different Roles of the Translator

The translator has to take on a number of roles to be able to produce a good translation. The translator is not only a writer, but also a reader, a multilingual and an expert in cross-cultural communication. A translator has many tasks and Holz-Mänttäri refers to them as 'translatorial action', which means all kinds of actions carried out by the translator (Pym 2014:50), such as finding a suitable translation strategy, rewriting texts or simply giving others advice (Pym 2014:55).

When talking about the translator as an expert in cross-cultural communication, it is the importance of both linguistic competence and contextual knowledge that is emphasized (Bassnett 2014:31). The translator needs

> to be aware of the dominant norms operating in both contexts [i.e. source and target culture], aware of the expectations of the receiving public of the source text before taking whatever decisions may be deemed necessary to ensure that the translation is accepted in the target culture. (Bassnett 2014:31-32)

On the one hand, if the translator does not conform to the norms of the target culture, the translation could suffer due to shifts in meaning (Bassnett 2014:132). On the other hand, being extremely faithful to the original will distort the reading and understanding of the translation (Bassnett 2014:133).

Translations are based on the translator's reading and interpretation of the source text, which makes reading one of the translator's most important tasks. The question is then, how do translators read? It seems like some translators like to do some research on the text or the writer that they are translating to get a better idea of how the writer expresses themselves, while others seem to like to jump right into translating and think of it more as recreating the same reading experience as they had for the readers of the translation (Cooke 2016). Wright (2016:156) argues that

> [r]eading for translation also means reading beyond the text that is to be translated: reading texts directly referenced by the source text; reading texts that explore or will explain concepts or images central to the source text; reading texts that provide points of comparison and contrast; reading biographically; reading other works by the same author that deepen the translator's understanding of the writer's 'mind-style'.

By gathering all this contextual knowledge it will be easier for the translator to interpret the source text and create a translation that would truly represent the original. Wright (2016:156) also states that when reading a text for translation, the translator has to identify potential problems and consider all the possible translations so that they can find the most appropriate one. The translator also has to decide how they approach the source text and what they intend to do with it. The position that the translator takes when reading affects the translation, because it determines how the source text is interpreted and how the message is relayed in the translation. Munday (2012:158) presents three different reading positions: 1. compliant, which means reproducing the ideology of the source text; 2. resistant, which means opposing the

ideology of the source text ; and 3. tactical, which means both reproducing and rewriting while adapting it to the target audience.

Venuti (2018) advocates for symptomatic reading, which refers to understanding the meaning of a text and what lies behind it, i.e. understanding the context and how culture affects us and our reading of texts. Symptomatic reading is not only recommended for the translator, but also for anyone reading a translation, or any other text. Translators and readers should "write and read translated texts in ways that recognize the linguistic and cultural differences of foreign texts" (Venuti 2018:34). Venuti (2018) claims that symptomatic reading could be a way to fight the dominance of transparency in translations, i.e. the invisibility of the translator, because the translator could become more visible as a mediator who provides the reader with the necessary contextual knowledge, which would give the reader a deeper understanding of the text.

2.2.2. The Work Process

According to Ingo (1991) the translation process can be divided into three stages: analysis, transferring and processing. In the analysis-stage the translator examines the text from different perspectives to get a complete overview of both the overall meaning and feeling as well as a more detailed understanding of the text (Ingo 1991:92-94). After the analysis the translator starts working on kernel sentences, which are basic and easy to translate; this stage is called transferring and happens mostly inside the translator's head (Ingo 1991:97, 166). The kernel sentences make up the basis for the processing stage (Ingo 1991:166), where the translator then produces a good translation that sounds natural in the target language and which corresponds as much as possible to the original text (Ingo 1991:216).

In the translation process the translator has to look at both the micro- and the macrocontext. The microcontext refers to single sentences or collocations, while the macrocontext refers to the text as a whole (Fawcett 1997). Because "if the translator [...] handles sentences for their specific content alone, the outcome will involve a loss of dimension" (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:115). Therefore, understanding the context and being able to read between the lines is crucial in translation. It is impossible to write everything down, which means that there is usually room for interpretation in any text. When reading a text one has to find the connections between the sentences to fill in the blanks to understand the full meaning of the text and the writer's intentions, i.e. reading between the lines is necessary to fully understand the text.

Misinterpreting the text could also affect the outcome, as it causes negative shift in the translation, which means that a part of the meaning is lost in translation. Bassnett-McGuire (1987:115) refers to Popovič's three types of negative shift:

> 1. mistranslation of information; 2. 'subinterpretation' of the original text [which means not having completely understood what is being said and therefore not being able to interpret the full meaning of it]; 3. superficial interpretation of connections between intentional correlatives.

However, all translations or versions of the same text have something in common and that is called the invariant core (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:87). That is why it is necessary to find the core meaning or feeling in the text. This also applies to instances when the text is difficult to translate; by finding the invariant core and recreating the text in another language the translator can work around untranslatable passages.

Another important aspect of translation that Fawcett (1997:27) brings up is Saussure's idea of langue and parole and the relationship between these two. When translating one has to think about langue, which refers to language as a system, e.g. finding equivalent terminology, and parole, which refers to how the language is used, e.g. understanding the contexts and functions of specific utterances (Fawcett 1997:27). The translator should always seek to make the finished product as good as possible and whether that means translating literally or more generally completely depends on what kind of text is being translated and for what purpose. Translation is never a straightforward process, because all languages are different (Bassnett 2014:3), but formulating possible translations and selecting the most appropriate one is part of the translation process (Pym 2014:1). This also means that a translation is hardly ever a perfect representation of the original text (Ingo 1991:19). The translator also has to identify the intended evaluation, which refers to the writer's attitudes, opinions, values and point of view as well as how the relationship between the reader and the writer is constructed (Munday 2012:20-22). When a text is translated, the evaluation automatically shifts, at least to some degree, as the translator becomes the 'writer' (Munday 2012:29). So when the translator has identified the intended evaluation, they have to transfer it appropriately with consideration to the values of the target audience and culture (Munday 2012:29). This may cause problems for the translator, who might have to find another, more appropriate way to convey the message to the target audience (Munday 2012:29). In conclusion, there are a lot of things that the translator has to think about when translating, but with experience the translation process becomes less painstaking.

Pym (2014:79-80) lists some of the results that multiple studies of novices versus experienced translators have revealed. Compared to novices, experienced translators tend to use more paraphrasing and they are able to process larger units at a time. Experienced translators spend more time reviewing their work but make fewer changes than novices. Experienced translators also tend to read faster, which means that they can spend more time on the target text. They are more aware of contexts and seem to consider the purpose of the text more. As a result of translation experience, they are able to rely more on their memory rather than needing to look things up. Experienced translators are also able to shift between automatized tasks, which they have more of than a novice, and conscious problem-solving without any trouble. They also tend to show more realism, confidence and critical attitudes in their decision-making compared to novices.

Cooke (2016) conducted interviews, with people working as professional translators, for a newspaper article and the interviews revealed that the translators shape their translation and base their choices on what the text sounds like in their head. It seems like creating a similar reading experience for the target audience is their main goal. Many of the interviewees stated that when reading the source text they hear the language of it, of the 'speaker', and then they try to find a similar voice in the target language. Mauthner, one of the interviewees, said that:

> As a translator, my task is to hear a text with its flow, rhythm, syntax, register and diction, to hear it anew in my head. The work is to re-invent the text. I want the new reader to hear the text the way I hear it when I read it in French, with its texture and colour, like stepping into a painting, a land and soundscape.

2.2.3. The Decision-Making

Munday (2012:16) discusses how the translator should approach the task of translating, and he argued that the translator should always approach it with the belief that the writer's choices are meaningful. The translator has to reveal and understand those choices, which they can do by asking questions such as "Why this wording rather than another? What choices did the writer have at each point? What is the function of the writer's choice? And what form of communication is produced by this choice?" (Munday 2012:16). When the translator has a clear idea of how the writer made their choices, the translator has to try to recreate those choices in an appropriate way in the target text. Both the conscious and unconscious decisions that the

translator makes are meaningful, because they represent the translator's interpretation of the source text.

However, understanding the writer's choices is not enough to create the best translation possible, but the translator has to consider many other aspects as well, both in the source context and in the target context. The translator has to treat the source text and culture with respect, but they also have to consider the target audience and their expectations. Some texts are more difficult to translate and require more careful consideration than others. Among other things, the translator has to consider what type of text they are working with and base their decisions on that (Pym 2014:46). Reiss recognizes three different types of texts: informative, which is content-focused, expressive, which is form-focused, and operative, which focuses on effect and function (Pym 2014:46-47). According to Weiss and Vermeer's Skopos theory, the purpose of the target text should have priority in the translator's decisions (Pym 2014:46). When the purpose or the function of the target text is more important than faithfulness to the original, the translator is also allowed more freedom in their decision-making. The target audience is another factor that affects the translator's decisions (Munday 2012:89-90). For example, the translator has to think about who the target audience is and whether or not some kind of background information or explanation is necessary. Translators of prose often use devices such as glossaries, additional explanatory sentences, substitution or omission of problematic points to help the target audience with contextual information in foreign texts (Bassnett 2014:109-110). When it comes to specific word choices, the translator has to consider the formality of the word, accuracy, connotations and associations, functional equivalence and operational suitability (Munday 2012:113). Ideally the translator's choice would meet every criterion (Munday 2012:113), but that is not always possible. It is also worth mentioning that the translator's decisions are culture-bound (Pym 2014:67), i.e. the translator's decisions depend on the situation and on the translator's own experiences and interpretation.

The translator's decisions matter, because they may cause translation shifts, i.e. structural differences between the original and the translation (Pym 2014:64). The possible reasons for translation shifts, i.e. causal factors (Pym 2014:66), are many, but usually the translator has encountered some type of problem and it is when the translator has tried to work around the problem that translation shifts emerge. In the following section, we will look more closely at translation problems, what they are and why they occur. When the translator runs into a problem, they could look for solutions in parallel texts, i.e. "non-translational target-language

texts on the same topic as the source text" (Pym 2014:12), or they might turn to intertextual solutions, i.e. "procedures adopted in other translations by other translators" (Munday 2012:112). This could sometimes seem like a good solution, but it is important to note that using intertextual solutions also "constrains the translator's choices" (Munday 2012:112). And as Pym (2014:102) states: "future decisions will be entirely determined by the previous ones".

2.3. Translation Problems

When translating a text from one language into another, facing problems is inevitable. There could be all kinds of problems that the translator has to work around, but usually translation problems refer to something being 'untranslatable'. Catford recognizes two types of untranslatability: linguistic and cultural (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:32). Linguistic untranslatability refers to there being no lexical or syntactical substitute, while cultural untranslatability refers to a word or a concept having various meanings or interpretations depending on the culture and the context in which it appears (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:32-34). This does not mean that it is impossible to get an adequate translation. The lack of lexical or syntactical substitutes just means that the translator has to look for other solutions.

Firstly looking at linguistic untranslatability, the translator has to remember that the relation between words and what they refer to is arbitrary (Ingo 1991:19) and what that entails is what Fawcett (1997:5-6) says about the relation between the signifier, the word for an idea or a concept, and the signified, what the word refers to. This relation is socially constructed and therefore the word for a specific concept might not completely coincide with the word for that concept in another language (Fawcett 1997:5-6). The reason for that is that the meaning of the word may vary in different contexts, e.g. a corresponding word may be either more or less specific in other languages or the closest equivalent word could have different connotations in other languages, thus not having the ability to express the exact same meaning or feeling. Our experiences are also mostly based on our immediate environment and therefore some experiences may not be universal, which in translation means that a corresponding expression in the target language may not always exist (Ingo 1991:18), and in such cases other solutions are necessary. Wordplay is another challenge for the translator, puns or words with double meanings can be hard to translate as they are very specific to the source language and there is usually no equivalent counterpart in the target language (Bassnett 2015:157-162). Idioms, proverbs and jokes are also very language-specific, which means that they can cause problems for the translator (Bassnett 2014:147). Whenever the translator is faced with a translation

problem, they have to figure out what the most appropriate solution to the problem is. When talking about loss and gain in translation, it is important to note that what is believed to have been lost in translation is usually replaced with something else, which fits the new context, or made up for in another way, e.g. explanations provided by the translator (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:30).

No matter what kind of text the translator is working with, culture cannot be overlooked, and various cultural factors have to be taken into account, because language and culture are so tightly bound together (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:32-34). This brings us to the second type of untranslatability, namely cultural untranslatability. How we see the world around us is heavily influenced by our culture and even how we express ourselves differs from culture to culture, which is something that the translator has to take into consideration (Ingo 1991:19). And as Bassnett (2014:8) describes it: "even small children learn very quickly that some things can be said in one of their languages that cannot be reproduced in the same way in their second language". Everything from understanding what the grammatical structures in a language look like to knowing how experiences are expressed through language is important knowledge for someone working as a translator, since these things may differ quite a lot between various cultures (Ingo 1991:19). When translating meaning into another language, changes such as semantic compromises, transposition, modulation, paraphrasing and compensation are common (Low 2008:12-13), because the translator is not only translating language but also culture, so these types of changes are often necessary to achieve naturalness in the target language (Fawcett 1997:37). A translated text that seems to originally have been written in the target language should be the ultimate goal for any translator, as that is a sign of a successful translation. However, if the translator manipulates the source text beyond what is linguistically necessary, it is called intervention (House 2008:16, cited in Munday 2012:19). This might happen when an interpretation of the source text is very subjective or the translator has specific intentions for the target text. Intervention may be conscious, but there is also unintentional intervention, e.g. 'distortion' caused by the translator's conscious and unconscious choices (Munday 2012:19-20).

Munday (2012:84-87) briefly discusses how interviews with translators about problematic points have revealed that translation problems are often caused by false friends, culture-specific terms, "lexical items that occupy different semantic spaces in the two languages" (Munday 2012:86), e.g. a term in the source language corresponds with several different terms in the

target language, and "polysemous words where the correct translation equivalent is contextually motivated" (Munday 2012:86), e.g. words that carry different connotations or attitudes and therefore require (subjective) interpretation.

2.4. Translation Strategies

There is no such thing as a translation where information is neither lost nor added and where there are no changes whatsoever to the form compared to the original (Ingo 1991:16). Translation is also not only about transferring meaning from one language to another, but it involves extralinguistic criteria as well, because the culture in which the language exists plays a huge part in creating the social reality of the speakers and therefore the translator cannot isolate the text from its cultural context (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:13-14). The goal, when translating, should be to create a text where the reading experience is as close as possible to that of the original text (Rayor 2016). Sometimes that involves significant changes, especially if the text is culturally bound. Bassnett (2014:32) argues that "[t]ranslation is by its very definition, a form of textual manipulation in that it involves the rewriting of a text written in one language for a new set of readers in another language with different expectations", which often requires reworking of the text. The translator uses different translation strategies depending on what they are trying to do and how they see fit. For example, certain things can be translated quite literally, while other things have to be reworded, and that is where the different translation strategies come in. Pesonen (2008:6) also states that "[t]he [translation] strategies chosen influence the end result deeply, and contribute to making the translator visible in one way or another", because the translation strategies represent the translator's voice and are the result of the translator's decision-making. In the following sections, we will examine different translation strategies.

2.4.1. Literal Translation versus Free Translation

Literal translation is quite self-explanatory and refers to transferring meaning literally. Free translation refers to other kinds of translation solutions. When translating more freely, the translator is able to adapt the text to the target audience and make the language more natural, according to target language rules. Free translation requires more careful consideration and decision-making. Munday (2012:149) also states that "[a]t critical points literal translation may be a risk-reduction strategy", because by translating literally the translator avoids making a potentially bad choice.

There are many different types of solutions that the translator can use in order to create the best translation possible. Pym (2014:12-13) lists a number of solutions, in the order from closer to the source text to closer to the target culture: loans, calques, literal translation, transposition, modulation, correspondence and adaptation. Loans are taken directly from the source text in the form that they appear there, which means that an explanation might be necessary, e.g. as a footnote. Calques and literal translations are both word-for-word translations (Fawcett 1997:35-36), but literal translations allow a little more room for change, in the sense that the sentence can be altered slightly so that it sounds more natural in the target language. Pym even states that "the use of **loans and calques** is only legitimate when there is not a more natural equivalent available" (2014:13; original emphasis), because loans and calques make the language in the text less fluent as well as make it obvious that the text is a translation, which translators often try to avoid. Transposition means making grammatical changes such as switching grammatical categories to make the language more natural and modulation means making adjustments for discursive conventions (Pym 2014:12-13). These sorts of changes aim to make the language more natural in the target text while still maintaining faithfulness to the original. Correspondence, which most scholars refer to as equivalence, means using corresponding expressions to convey the meaning and feeling of the source text. We will look more closely at equivalence in section 2.4.3. Adaptation means using words or concepts that have loosely equivalent cultural functions to convey the same meaning (Pym 2014:13). When talking about adaptation, Pym (2014:13) states that "there are many very vague equivalents available, and translators can spend hours exploring the possibilities", which means that the further we move away from literal translation, the more possible translations there are and the more the translator has to think about the effects of their choices. Pym (2014:103) also states that "solutions [may be] only right or wrong to a degree, on some levels but not on others" (Pym 2014:103), which means that the translator cannot take every aspect of the translation and the context into consideration and there is never a perfect translation; the translator can only try to make the best choices possible, because every choice will be good in some respects but bad in others.

2.4.2. Foreignization versus Domestication

We have already touched on the subject of foreignization and domestication, but the aim of this section is to elaborate on what these translation strategies actually are and how the use of either foreignization or domestication affects the target text. Domestication means making the text more familiar to the reader, while foreignization means introducing the reader to a new

environment, i.e. "[d]omestication brings the writer to the reader, but [f]oreignization takes the reader to the writer" (Binfor 2019). As mentioned before, domestication has been prevalent in translations of foreign works into English. When domesticating a text, the translator makes certain changes to adapt the text to the target audience. These changes include, among other things, removing or replacing culturally specific elements or elements that might be considered offensive or inappropriate by the target audience, relocating the story to a domestic setting, using more everyday language and manipulating the text so that it fits grammatical and stylistic norms in order to make it more readable for the target audience (Wright 2016:43-46). Foreignization is where the familiar and the strange collide, meaning that the words and the syntax may be familiar but the location, the customs, the food etc. may be unfamiliar (Wright 2016:48-50). Schleiermacher (1992 [1791]:52, cited in Bassnett 2014:17) argued that translations should give readers "an enjoyment of foreign works as unadulterated as possible", which means bringing the reader to the writer and the original context, i.e. foreignization.

Both domestication and foreignization have their pros and cons. For example, domestication is thought to make the text more accessible to the target audience and is therefore "the route to commercial success" (Wright 2016:43), but there is also a risk of 'over-translating', which means explaining too much to make it easier for the reader but achieving the opposite effect instead. With domestication there is also a risk of ethnocentric translation (Pym 2014:99-100), which means that the translator shows a lack of respect for other cultures. While foreignization could lead to greater intercultural understanding by offering the reader a less altered look into the writer's world, "[f]oreignizing translations that are not transparent, that eschew fluency for a more heterogeneous mix of discourses, are equally partial in their interpretation of the foreign text, but they tend to flaunt their partiality instead of concealing it" (Venuti 2018:28-29). What he means by this is that all translations, irrespective of the degree of faithfulness to the original or how transparent they seem, are subjective interpretations made by the translator, i.e. the translator will consciously or unconsciously position themselves in relation to the subject and express an attitude towards it, which means that the readers of the translation will never have access to just the writer's ideas. Wright (2016:53) also points out that both domestication and foreignization "can undermine the stylistic integrity of the foreign text", which means that neither strategy ensures a perfect representation of the original, because both strategies change the perspective, from the writer's to the translator's.

There are also two other terms that are related to domestication and foreignization, namely localization and internationalization. According to some sources the term localization is almost synonymous with domestication, i.e. content is not only translated but also modified to suit the intended audience (GALA n.d.), and what that exactly means is that the content is "[reshaped] so that the local public feels as if you've built the content especially for them" (Clear Word Translations 2017). Other sources, e.g. Pym (2014), treat localization and internationalization as larger processes, where translation is only part of the process. According to Pym (2014:118), localization means adapting a product (sometimes text) for a new situation or locale, which refers to a set of linguistic and cultural parameters, and internationalization means generalizing a product so it fits multiple languages and cultures without having to be re-designed (Pym 2014:119), which makes it faster and easier to localize when necessary. Pym (2014:122) explains that the difference between translation and localization is that translation happens after the source text is produced and that translation is based on the source text, while localization means re-thinking how a text is produced.

Standardization and diversification are also mentioned in some sources. Standardization refers to making the translation more generally accepted, e.g. by standardizing the language and using a more neutral style, while diversification refers to using more specialized language and adapting the text for the intended purpose (see Pym 2014:78-79; Munday 2012:51, 90, 111; Gambier & Doorslaer 2012:159). So to summarize, the translator can choose to make the text more accessible to readers who are not familiar with the source culture by adapting the text for the target audience by explaining concepts, replacing specific elements or generalizing the text.

2.4.3. Equivalence

Finding equivalent expressions requires more knowledge of the target language than literal translations do (Fawcett 1997), which means that the translator has to put more thought into the translation if they were to choose this strategy. For example, when translating idioms the translator has to find a corresponding expression in the target language as literal translations would not make sense (Fawcett 1997:38-39). Kade (1968, cited in Pym 2014:29) proposes five types of equivalence: 1. one-to-one, where "[o]ne [source]-language item corresponds to one target-language item" (Pym 2014:29); 2. one-to-several, where one item in the source language corresponds with several items in the target language; 3. several-to-one, where several items in the source language correspond with one item in the target language; 4. one-to-part, where "[o]nly partial equivalents are available, resulting in 'approximate equivalence'" (Pym

2014:29); and 5. one-to-none, where there are no equivalent expressions. In the case of one-to-several, the translator has to consider which translation suits the context the best and in the cases of one-to-part and one-to-none, the translator might have to think of other solutions.

The idea of equivalence assumes that "what we say in one language *can* have the same value (the same worth or function) when translated into another language" (Pym 2014:6; original emphasis). This is referred to as natural equivalence, i.e. the idea that "things of equal value are presumed to exist *prior* to anyone translating" (Pym 2014:6; original emphasis) and that it does not matter what the source language or the target language is as it is not about exact values but the idea that there is always a corresponding form, reference or function (Pym 2014:6-9). However, complete equivalence is not possible as "different languages express different views of the world" (Pym 2014:9) and individual words have different associations and connotations (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:15). Therefore equivalent translations should aim at creating "*equivalent effect*, i.e. that the relationship between receiver and message should aim at being the same as that between the original receivers and the SL [source language] message" (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:26; original emphasis). This type of equivalence is called dynamic equivalence (Wright 2016:29). Pym (2014:24-26) also brings up directional equivalence, which refers to there being multiple possible translations and that the translation is an active decision by the translator, which also means that two translations of the same text rarely look the same. Directional equivalence also means that translating back and forth between languages and still expecting the same outcome is impossible as there is no 'natural' equivalence (Pym 2014:24-26). Thus finding the 'right' equivalent translation might not be so easy.

2.4.4. Repackaging

In this section we will look at some of the ways in which the translator could repackage the message, i.e. what can the translator do if literal translation or equivalence is not possible? Some words or concepts might not be translatable and therefore have to be substituted, preferably with something that is still in some way related to the original message, but which makes sense in the new context and is understood by the target audience. Such changes include adaptation, where the text has been changed to make sense in the culture of the target language (Fawcett 1997:39), reduction, which means that any information that is deemed unnecessary is omitted (Fawcett 1997:45-47), modulation, which means using figures of speech such as antonymy, metaphors, synecdoche etc. to change what is said without deviating too much from the original (Fawcett 1997:37-38) as well as diffusion and condensation, which refer to

rewording the original message so that the text is either longer or shorter respectively (Fawcett 1997:47-49). Diffusion and condensation could also be called amplification and reduction (Pym 2014:14). Pym (2014:14, 25) also suggests these solutions: explicitation, where the translator specifies implicit things in the source text, implicitation, where the translator makes explicit things in the source text implicit, generalization, which means that "a specific term is translated as a more general term" (Pym 2014:14), particularization, where a general term is translated as a more specific term, and compensation, where the sense of the message is similar, but the translator expresses it differently. In the most extreme cases the translator could either leave out or replace certain information as a type of avoidance, choosing not to have to deal with translation problems. The main point is that the sense of the text is the same as the original, although it is conveyed in a different way in the target language compared to the source language.

2.5. Literary Translation

Literary translation deals with the translation of poetry, plays, novels, short stories, songs and other literary texts. The aim is often to create a translation that, to the readers, seems like an original (Bassnett 2014:4), which means that the translator has to combine both their linguistic knowledge and their artistic sense when translating literary works (Wright 2016:8). As Wright (2016:54-55) states, translation engages us cognitively and creatively, because reading and searching for meanings in the open-endedness of literary texts is a creative act. Literary texts often use stylistic features and figurative language and create fictional worlds as well as "embody a state of mind" (Boase-Beier 2011:46, cited in Wright 2016:54), which non-literary texts do not do, at least not to the same extent (Boase-Beier 2011:35-46, cited in Wright 2016:54). These characteristics make translation of literary texts more difficult than non-literary. Tahiri (2020:203) states that "[to achieve equivalence] the literary translator has to be capable of a systematic analysis of style in literature focusing on the relevance of language features and on their particular literary effect". What Boase-Beier says about literary texts embodying a state of mind is related to Khozan's (1993) argument that atmosphere is especially important in the translation of short stories. Atmosphere refers to "the story's prevailing tone, mood and its emotional aura which establish the reader's expectations and attitudes" (Khozan 1993:43). Being able to convey the emotional climate in a story requires time and sensitivity, because the language of short stories is just as connotative, symbolic and rich in meaning as the language of poetry (Khozan 1993:41). The translator needs to be aware of the atmosphere to be able to translate the story right, because the emotional aura of the story reflects the writer's

perspective and thoughts on the subject (Khozan 1993:43-44). Finding and recreating the narrative voice of the author is considered important in literary translation (Munday 2012:133).

Narrative texts are usually less difficult to translate than other literary texts, because they contain less highly specific language and the text often expresses features like purpose and cause-effect more explicitly, which makes them easier to interpret and thereby easier to translate (Nida 2001, cited in Pesonen 2008:55). However, even though the short story is a type of narrative text, it is often complex with different layers and levels of meaning, which makes it quite difficult to write, interpret and translate (Pesonen 2008:77-78). Tahiri (2020:203) argues that "[w]riters do not give a full or neutral version of a story, but they emphasize the limited perspective of the personal point of view", and that is why "it has become increasingly significant to differentiate between different points of view within the literary narrative" (Tahiri 2020:203). Fowler (1983, cited in Tahiri 2020:203) differentiates between two points of view, namely the internal, i.e. the character's point of view, which is associated with understanding and empathy (Tahiri 2020:206), and the external, i.e. the narrator's point of view. Translators have a tendency to be more explicit and thereby often shift from the internal to the external perspective (Tahiri 2020:209, 211). This is also something that the translator has to be aware of because if the narrative perspective is different in the translation compared to the original, the reading experience will not be the same (Tahiri 2020:205). The relation between the narrator, characters and the narrated events are perceived differently due to shifts in narrative perspectives (Tahiri 2020:212). It is also worth mentioning that translations gain an additional narrative voice, i.e. the translator's (Tahiri 2020:212), which brings us to the idea of the translator's (in)visibility that will be discussed in the next section.

2.6. The Translator's Invisibility

Translators and their work are not appreciated enough and acknowledging the translator is unusual, think for instance about where the translator's name is placed in printed books or in the credits to subtitled films, if it occurs at all (Wright 2016:81-82). This is both a consequence and a reinforcement of the idea that the translator should be invisible. However, invisibility might not be possible in translation, because many scholars argue that translations are interpretations of the source text, which means that the translator will, at least to some extent, add their own perspective on the subject. Baker (2000, cited in Jiang 2012:371) argues that the translator's voice is present in the decisions of what to translate, what strategies they use and in their distinctive way of expressing themselves. On the one hand, translators have to remain

as faithful to the source text as possible and on the other hand, they should claim more visibility and appreciation for their work (Wright 2016:67).

In the previous section, it was mentioned that translations have multiple voices. This is called polyphony and it refers to there being multiple voices, i.e. the writer's and the translator's, in a unified context, i.e. the translation or the translated story (Roulet 1996). However, there can also be other voices, e.g. the publisher's or the proofreader's (Jiang 2012:369). These voices might not be visible in the translation, because they are presented through the translator, but they may exist due to interventions during the translation process (Jiang 2012:369). Wright (2016:63) states that translations are creative blends of source and target and that the translator's voice is what bridges the differences between the two.

The translator could have quite a lot of power. For instance, when there are only a few translations of a text, and the source text, or any other versions of it, are inaccessible to the reader, then our perception of the subject will be heavily influenced by the translation, i.e. the translator's interpretation (Wright 2016:109). Perhaps that is why some scholars believe that the translator should be invisible. According to Chesterman and Wagner (2014:28) "[the translator's] job is to be invisible and neutral, not to distort the original text by imposing [their] own personality on it". The translator is supposedly invisible when using the domesticating strategy (Wright 2016:82), what Venuti (2018) referred to as fluent translations, because the translator's presence is less apparent and the translation seems more like an original, as if it was made for the target audience. However, Bassnett (2014:124) argues that "[t]he issue is not that the translator is invisible, but rather that in judging translations, critical opinion has opted to render the translator invisible by stressing the significance of the original over its translation".

One could argue that the translator is always visible, because "[t]ranslations are visible traces of individual readings" (Bassnett 2014:124), and one just has to know where to look. For example, the translator can make their presence known in the preface, the footnotes and the commentary (Bassnett 2014:118), and on a more subtle level the translator's voice can be identified through a comparison between the source and the target text (Jiang 2012:374). According to Hermans (1996a, cited in Jiang 2012:370), there are three cases where the translator's presence is visible: 1. when the translator's interpretation and explication of the source text is necessary for the target reader to understand; 2. when the translator comments on

the translation; and 3. when the translator gives excessive information on contextual factors. Cases 1 and 2 are concerned with the communicative aspect of translation, while case 3 is concerned with the translator's relation to the context (Jiang 2012:370). Case 1 is also related to the idea of foreignization, where the translator becomes more visible, because the translator has to be a mediator or cultural interpreter between the foreign and the familiar (Wright 2016:82).

The tendency to explicate comes from the translator wanting to pass on their understanding of the source text to the target reader (Chesterman & Wagner 2016:30). As stated before, translations are representations of the translator's interpretation and understanding of the source text, which means that translations of the same text will also differ in some respects. That does not mean that one translation is better than the other, but they are instead different readings of the same text. Similarities between translations of the same text also do not necessarily mean that that is what the writer originally meant, because "translation errors can be perpetuated from translation to translation, sometimes over centuries" (Wright 2016:104). Translation errors are also not necessarily wrong, because the translator could have interpreted the text differently, revealing their own attitude towards the text, or had a specific intention with the word choice (Wright 2016: 100-108). It is often through errors that the translator becomes visible, when the reader is able to recognize the text as a translation (Chesterman & Wagner 2016:28). Some examples of errors that the translator might make are using words that are not equivalent, using a different style than the source, not achieving the same effect or reading experience or using expressions that native speakers would not use in a similar context (Chesterman & Wagner 2016:28-30). When translations are reviewed, the translator is often blamed for 'bad' translation decisions, but rarely praised for 'good' solutions (Wright 2016:90). Scott (2012a:29, cited in Wright 2016:94) argues that readers should be "mindful of the possible 'deeper' sources of mistranslations", because usually it is not that the translator is incompetent but rather that the translator's unconscious attitudes have slipped through. As Hatim and Mason (1990:11, cited in Pesonen 2008:35) states: "any translation will, to some extent, reflect the translator's own mental and cultural outlook".

2.7. What Makes a Good Translation?
It is not that easy to determine if a translation is good or not as the criteria change over time or as Bassnett (2014:81) puts it: "it is important to remind ourselves that every age has its ideal of translation, and aesthetic criteria change, sometimes so rapidly that it is impossible to

establish a constant set of norms for good translation practice". Whether a translation is considered good or not also depends on what type of text we are looking at. The criteria differ between types of texts; e.g. for short stories it seems like recreating the atmosphere is extremely important. Some believe that being faithful to the original is important and that the translator should be rather invisible, while others believe that a text should be adapted for the target audience and that their reading experience should be similar to that of the readers of the source text. Perhaps trying to find the golden mean is what the translator should do to produce a good translation, but is that actually possible? When translating, the goal should be to create a text that does not seem like a translation, i.e. it should be easy to read and sound natural in the target language. This means that the translator has to negotiate both linguistic and cultural differences (Bassnett 2014:9) while still being as faithful to the original as possible. Wright (2016) states that translations can be wrong, but they can also sometimes be better than the source text, because the translator is so careful with their reading that they might be able to add to the original story in some way. So, how do we judge how successful a translation is?

Wright (2016:109) states: "The relationship between source and target is in fact something that few people are qualified to assess", i.e. whether a translation is good or bad might not be something that we can judge. For example, a translation can be good in some respects, but bad in others when comparing it to the original and therefore judging whether the translation is good or bad becomes quite impossible. That is why Wright (2016:109) proposes that the success of a translation should be measured "as a particularly complex type of literary text rather than in terms of its relationship to its source". This means that translations should be less about equivalence between source and target and more about how the text makes its meaning. A good translation resembles the original, but is also a good text in its own right.

2.8. Earlier Studies
In this section, we will look at some earlier studies to see what has already been done by others in this field. These studies are only a few examples.

Pesonen (2008) examined whether the belief that translators who translate into their mother tongue do a better job than non-mother tongue translators. She found that the translators' mother tongue does not determine how successful a translation is, but rather that the translators' individual qualities and skills matter. Pesonen also found that understanding the source text properly, which requires adequate linguistic knowledge, and being able to read between the

lines, especially when it comes to literary translation, is necessary to be able to produce a good translation.

Englund Dimitrova's (2013) research question was whether patterns in lexical choices can be part of the study of translator style. She defined translator style as the linguistic patterns found in a target text produced by a translator. These linguistic patterns can be analyzed either in relation to the source text or other target language texts. Englund Dimitrova (2013) focused on lexical choices such as explicitations and specifications. Her material consisted of two Bulgarian short stories, by writer Yordan Radichkov, and the Swedish translations by Arne Hult and Ulla Roseen. The results were that this type of analysis is possible and that one of the translators' lexical choices create her own translator style; Hult's lexical choices only add details while Roseen's lexical choices reveal her own interpretation of the text.

Ariyanti et al. (2017) analyzed translation strategies and how these strategies affect the quality of the translation. Ariyanti et al. (2017) did a qualitative analysis of the short story *In Twilight Born* by the Indonesian writer Pramoedya Ananta Toer and the English translation by John H. McGlynn. This short story was chosen because it contains cultural elements that have no equivalent translation in English. Ariyanti et al. (2017) found that translation by paraphrasing using unrelated words, i.e. rewriting by using words with a similar meaning, was the most used translation strategy, while translation using loan words or loan words together with an explanation, i.e. foreignization, was used the least. They also examined the quality of the translation by categorizing sentences according to how accurate, acceptable, which refers to naturalness in the target language, and readable the translation was. The results were that the majority of the sentences were accurate, acceptable and readable.

In his thesis, von Zeipel (2018) analyzed the translation strategies used by Carl G. Martinsson when translating Extralinguistic Cultural References, i.e. culture-specific elements, from Persian to Swedish. von Zeipel's (2018) material consisted of the collection *Getingboet och nitton andra noveller från Iran* of short stories. Besides analyzing the kinds of strategies used, von Zeipel (2018) also examined whether the translator was source language oriented or target language oriented. The results were that the translator mostly used retention, i.e. foreignization, and generalization, which means using less specific terms when there are no exact equivalents in the target language. The translator was neither source nor target language oriented, but had rather found a balance between the two.

Almarazig (2018) identified where losses in translation occur and examined the reasons behind these losses. He focused on the semantic, syntactic and cultural losses that occur in the English translation, by Elisabeth Jacquette, of the short story *A Glance,* written by Yusuf Idris in Arabic. Semantic loss means that due to the lack of an equivalent in the target language there is a loss in meaning. Almarazig (2018) found that the translator often paraphrases to work around translation problems. The structure and features of Arabic and English are so different that the translator has had to make changes to the word order for naturalness in the target language. This is what Almarazig (2018) refers to as syntactic losses and it means that the target reader might not be able to completely understand the intended meaning. Culturally bound expressions also lose some of their intended meaning in translation and the target reader might therefore have trouble understanding the context as a whole. Almarazig (2018) found that idioms and metaphors were translated literally, which could cause problems for the target reader who is not familiar with the source language and culture.

3. Materials

My material consists of the English translation *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer* by Alice Menzies and the Swedish original *Och varje morgon blir vägen hem längre och längre*, written by Fredrik Backman. The story is about an old man, Grandpa, and how he deals with slowly losing his memories due to dementia. The story is focused around Grandpa's three most important relationships: his relationship with his wife, his son, Ted, and his grandson, Noah. It is a story about trying to hold onto precious memories and the people we love the most while learning to let go.

I chose to analyze this text, because I think Fredrik Backman is a great writer and I have read most of his other books as well. The way Backman tells these stories and expresses himself is both beautiful and funny, and he seems to have a great understanding of people and emotions. Backman's stories are about ordinary people, with their fair share of loveable and irritating characteristics, living their rather ordinary lives. I thought it would be interesting to see how a translator recreates the atmosphere and the emotions in another language. *Och varje morgon blir vägen hem längre och längre* (Eng. *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer*) seemed like a good text for this type of analysis as it was shorter than most of his other texts, which means that I could analyze it properly within the scope of this thesis. Short stories

are also interesting to analyze, because they have certain features that can make the translation process more challenging and therefore the translator might become more visible in the text.

According to the Library of Congress, Backman's books have been translated into English by three different translators: Alice Menzies, Henning Koch and Neil Smith. *And every morning the way home gets longer and longer*, the translation that I am analyzing in this thesis, is translated by Alice Menzies. She has also translated Backman's *The Deal of a Lifetime*. There is little information to be found about Menzies, but she specializes in Scandinavian languages and translates from Swedish, Danish and Norwegian into English (Kääntö Piiri, n.d.). According to her LinkedIn profile, she has also spent some time in Sweden, which means that she probably has a good idea of both the language and the culture.

4. Backman's Writing

Since his debut in 2012 with the novel *En man som heter Ove*, which was a huge success worldwide (Klintö 2019:24), Backman has achieved a lot. The novel was made into a movie, which was then nominated for an Oscar (Klintö 2019:24). His trilogy, which starts with the novel *Björnstad*, and *Folk med ångest* have also been made into tv-series. In 2019, he won PiratenPriset, a Swedish prize awarded by Fritiof Nilsson Piraten Sällskapet, with the motivation: "I Piratens anda varvas humorn med stort allvar och han står alltid på de svagas sida i sina skildringar av vår samtid" (Piraten Sällskapet, n.d.) (Eng. 'In the spirit of Piraten, humor is interspersed with great seriousness and he always stands with the weak in his depictions of our time' (ME)[1]). Millions of copies of his books have sold worldwide and many of his books have been on bestseller lists, including two times on the New York Times bestseller list (Leijon Jönsson 2020:2). Backman has also been translated into more than 40 different languages, which makes him world-renowned (Palmkvist 2019).

4.1. Earlier Studies on Backman's Work

When searching for earlier studies on works by Backman, I found multiple Swedish dissertations where different themes in Backman's novels were explored. In her dissertation titled 'Gender & identity in the novel *Björnstad* - A gender study with a didactic perspective', Adriansson (2019) analyzed the characteristics, based on gender theory, and character development of four teenagers, two boys and two girls. Adriansson (2019) also explored these

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1 My translations from Swedish are marked by (ME)

themes from a didactic perspective, and concluded that this novel could be used in literary studies in schools, e.g. students could discuss questions relating to the view of men being the norm and the view of sexuality that the novel presents.

Magnusson (2021) also discussed the novel's potential usefulness in education, especially when discussing questions relating to values, in her dissertation: "*Björnstad* och den svenska skolans värdegrund : En studie av Fredrik Backmans roman *Björnstad* och dess didaktiska potential vid arbete med värdegrundsfrågor i gymnasieskolans svenskundervisning". Magnusson (2019) could identify five themes in the novel that can also be found in the curriculum, namely equality between men and women, everyone's equal value, freedom and integrity, sexuality and identity. She also concluded that being able to discuss fictional characters and events could enable interesting ethical discussions.

Borg (2019) also used the novel *Björnstad* for her dissertation: 'Between Sänkan and Höjden: A Power Analysis of the novel *Björnstad'*. Borg (2019) analyzed the power relations between the ice hockey players and how these power relations emerge due to the players' differing skills and socioeconomic backgrounds. Her analysis is based on Foucault's theory of dynamic strength.

Olsson's (2021) dissertation, '"Humor is the soul's last line of defense, as long as we laugh we are alive" : An analysis of humor in Fredrik Backmans novel Anxious People *'*, is an exploration into the humor in *Anxious People* and an argumentation for including more humorous literature in literary classes in schools. She states that humorous literature is not common in education, but studies have shown that humor and laughter supports cognitive abilities. Therefore it should be used more in education.

In the dissertation titled 'Att berätta för barn om sorg och död: Sagoelementens funktion i Astrid Lindgrens *Bröderna Lejonhjärta* och Fredrik Backmans *Min mormor hälsar och säger förlåt*', Dabrowska (2018) analyzed how storytelling is used to explain death and grief to children. She analyzed the novels *Bröderna Lejonhjärta* and *Min mormor hälsar och säger förlåt,* and compared the two. Dabrowska's (2018) conclusions were that the novels depict death and grief differently, but both writers use some form of storytelling, which allows children to travel to another world where everything is just as it should be.

I also found an article called 'Bouncing off Ove: old men's readings of the novel *A Man Called Ove* as a cultural representation of ageing masculinity', where Lövgren et al. (2021) recognized the description of "the older man as grumpy, digitally illiterate and obsolete in the modern world" (taken from the abstract). Besides analyzing the representation of ageing masculinity, Lövgren et al. (2021) were also interested in how older men read the novel. Through discussions in focus groups with 17 men aged 65-92, they found that the older men resisted the researchers' interpretation, but also identified with the characters.

4.2. Opinions on Backman's Writing

Having read a few reviews of his books and interviews, I can say that I am not the only one who thinks Backman's stories are feel-good books. For example, Ekman (2017) states that: "hans böcker är lika känslomässigt pricksäkra som Pixar-filmer. Man skrattar och gråter på precis rätt ställen" (Eng. 'his books are as emotionally accurate as Pixar movies. You laugh and cry at the exact right moments' (ME)) and Klintö (2019:24) states that: "Han vill ge andra människor en möjlighet till verklighetsflykt" (Eng. 'He wants to give other people an opportunity to escape reality' (ME)). According to Palmkvist (2019), Backman is "utan tvekan vår roligaste författare på den här sidan millennieskiftet" (Eng. 'without a doubt our funniest writer on this side of the turn of the millennium' (ME)) and Backman himself says that he uses funny wordings simply because he thinks they are nice, and in true Backman-style, he describes it like this: "som att sätta fram blommor hemma, som att torka av bordet innan gästerna kommer … Du behöver inte göra de där grejerna, men det är trevligt" (Ekman 2017) (Eng. 'like placing flowers on the table or wiping the table down before the guests arrive … You do not have to do any of that, but it is nicer' (ME)). Backman is a best-seller author, which, on the one hand, means that his stories are well-written and many find enjoyment in reading them, but, on the other hand, it means that perhaps his texts are not that complex or experimental. Backman himself even states: "Men man får separera det jag gör och det som är stor litteratur. Jag skriver böcker som folk läser på en strand eller på en flygplats. Det är min genre" (Lindqvist 2014) (Eng. 'But you have to separate what I do from great literature. I write books that people read on a beach or in an airport. That is my genre' (ME)). Backman has also said that he does not care about whether his readers think he writes well or even whether they like him or not, he just wants them to understand every sentence that they read and actually feel for the characters, and that means it has to be a good story and that is something he wants to keep improving, i.e. being a great story-teller (Ekman 2017).

Backman seems to have succeeded in writing stories where the readers feel for the characters and are able to relate to them. His characters are very realistic and relatable, and as Palmkvist (2019) states: "Han ser människor, ser rakt igenom dem, och som få andra författare naglar han fast en personlighet på bara några få sidor" (Eng. 'he sees people, sees right through them, and like few other writers he nails a personality in only a few pages' (ME)). Backman's characters and how well he is able to describe them seem to be his specialty, because they are what most readers find so fascinating about his books. According to Doll (2020), Backman tries to create an extremely small world so that he can focus on the emotions and dig deep into the characters. Backman himself states: "I steal little things from a lot of people, and I pour that into a character until that character is real for me" (Doll 2020). Perhaps that is why his characters are so relatable. Backman says that he has been greatly inspired by Astrid Lindgren (Lindqvist 2014), who is one of Sweden's most popular writers. Lindgren is especially known for her children's books and "[n]o Swedish author has been translated into as many languages, and the estimated number of her books sold to date world-wide is approximately 165 million copies" (Astrid Lindgren Company, n.d.). She is also a writer who has created interesting characters that are loved by many.

In the interview with Ekman (2017), Backman describes himself as a person who is strongly driven by emotions and despite having written many books that have sold well, he still struggles with his self-confidence. He also stated that he is aware that he can be quite difficult to deal with, because he is headstrong and serious about what he does. Because of this he has changed publishers multiple times. *Och varje morgon blir vägen hem längre och längre* was a project that he did for himself, to better understand the thoughts and emotions that he was dealing with and to get back on track. He even calls it his 'little therapy project'. Backman originally published the story on his blog, but then an American publishing house wanted to publish the story in English. Later it was also published as a book in Sweden.

4.3. Reading Experience

Besides analyzing the two texts, I also went on websites such as adlibris.com, bokus.com, amazon.com and goodreads.com, to read online reviews to get an idea of what kinds of reactions readers had to the text and what their thoughts were. I read reviews on Swedish websites to get an idea of what kinds of reactions readers of the original had, and then I read reviews on English websites to get an idea of what readers of the English translation thought

of the text. I wanted to see if I could find any differences between the reviews in Swedish and the reviews in English, and if there were any differences, perhaps that would mean that there was a difference in the reading experience depending on if they read the original or the translation. Keep in mind that these reviews were written by non-professional readers and that these opinions only represent a small percentage of readers. The reviews are also usually very general and rarely comment on anything specific, either good or bad.

As I mentioned before, atmosphere refers to the tone, mood and emotional aura of the text. The story itself as well as the language, i.e. how the writer expresses himself, create the atmosphere. Because language creates the atmosphere, the translator might, intentionally or unintentionally, change the atmosphere. However, my impression of the translation is that the atmosphere is very similar to that of the original, perhaps due to the minimal changes by the translator and her efforts to stay as faithful to the original as possible. I also found that the reactions to the text were very similar among all of the reviewers, both on the Swedish and the English websites, which suggests that the readers had similar reading experiences despite some of them having read the translated version of the story. Many of the reviews contained words such as *emotional*, *touching*, *poignant*, *sad* and *hopeful*, which describe the tone and the general emotional aura of the text. The reviewers all seemed to agree that the story was poetic and beautifully written, but that it was also powerful and insightful as it carried an important message. Many also thought it was an eye opening and thought-provoking story that would stay with them for a long time. Multiple reviewers of the translated version used the words *emotional punches* to describe specific sentences that evoked strong emotions, e.g. "It's an awful thing to miss someone who's still here" (p. 61) or "Almost all grown adults walk around full of regret over a goodbye they wish they'd been able to go back and say it better" (p. 33). The words *wise* and *wisdom* were also used by many to describe these kinds of sentences and Backman's way of expressing himself in general. Some of the reviewers mentioned that they thought the book was great when needing a break from heavier reading, because it is not too heavy, but still very meaningful. These were the kinds of reactions that both readers of the Swedish text and readers of the English translation seem to have had.

The story definitely resonated with many as they said it made them cry. Some reviewers also mentioned Backman's ability to put universal experiences and human thoughts and emotions into words. For example, "his [Backman's] perspective is so unusual and yet so universally understood" and "Backman never ceases to amaze me with his understanding of the elderly

characters he gives us - Ove in A Man Called Ove and Elsa's grandmother in My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry. The empathy, the caring way he presents them - where does it come from?". This has been mentioned by professional reviewers as well, e.g. "Fredrik Backman vill diskutera det omöjliga, men också fantastiska, och i slutändan nödvändiga, i att vara människa" (Lind 2019:13) (Eng. 'Fredrik Backman wants to discuss the impossible, but also amazing, and ultimately unnecessary, in being human' (ME)). In an interview, Backman himself stated that: "En kompis sa så här: »I första kapitlet presenterar du karaktärernas absolut mest irriterande karaktärsdrag och sen ägnar du 350 sidor åt att försvara dem.« Och det är nog ganska sant" (Ekman 2017) (Eng. 'A friend once said: In the first chapter you present the characters' absolute most annoying characteristics and then you devote 350 pages to defending them. And that is probably quite true' (ME)). Backman seems to have the ability to capture exactly what it is to be human, both the good and the bad, and his readers can easily relate to his characters. He has an understanding of people that seems to amaze many of his readers.

Although most of the reviews were positive, there were a few that found the structure of the story confusing. I must agree, because when reading the text for the first time, I had trouble understanding exactly what was happening: what was real and what was not, who was experiencing what and how everything was connected. It took me a while to realize how the story was structured. The reading experience was definitely more enjoyable the second time around, because everything made more sense when I knew what to expect. And to quote some of the reviews:

"denna var lite flummig, osammanhängande och förvirrande, men jag förstår också varför författaren har valt att göra den så" (Eng. 'this was a little vague, incoherent and confusing, but I also understand why the writer chose to do it that way' (ME))

"Berättelsen känns osammanhängande och förvirrande, svårt att hänga med. Men detta känns samtidigt som mer eller mindre avsiktligt från författarens sida, som ett sätt att belysa demensproblematiken." (Eng. 'The story feels incoherent and confusing, hard to follow. But at the same time it feels more or less intentional, as a way of illustrating the struggles that come with dementia' (ME))

"I was confused, folks, I was confused!! And my editor self says it's because there is a point-of-view problem: I often couldn't tell whether we were hearing the story from the grandfather's, Noah's, or even Noah's dad's point of view."

Both the original and the translation seem confusing to some of its readers, which means that the writer may have been creating a confusing atmosphere on purpose, to replicate the

confusion and disorientation that the grandfather with dementia must be experiencing. This would also mean that the story is told from the grandfather's point of view, what he is thinking and feeling and what he still remembers of his life and the people that matter the most, even though it is not written in first-person but rather a third-person narrative. Changing the point of view would have also affected the atmosphere, and that is probably why the translator also kept the confusing structure. Among the reviewers that mentioned the story was confusing, most of them seemed to think it negatively affected the reading experience and almost ruined it in a way, but there was also one reviewer who said: "In the confusing way that it is written, the confusion makes perfect sense and is fascinating for the reader". So the opinions on the confusing structure and atmosphere of the story were divided; some thought it added to the story, while others thought it made it unnecessarily difficult to read.

There is a preface, which I recommend people to read before reading the story, because it sets the tone for the whole book and it also gives the reader an idea of what to expect from the story. Atmosphere is also what builds the reader's expectations and attitudes towards the story, and that is exactly what the preface does. In the preface, Backman explains that this story was never meant to be published and that he only needed to put his own thoughts and feelings into words to make sense of them, which makes it a deeply personal story. He also explains what the story is about, which builds the reader's expectations and prepares the reader for what is to come. The Swedish preface is much more detailed, which makes me wonder whether Menzies translated the Swedish preface and simply left out some parts that seemed less necessary or Backman wrote the English preface himself and left out certain parts that he thought were uninteresting to non-Swedish readers. The English preface includes everything that the reader needs to know, but the Swedish preface gives the reader more insight into who Backman is as well.

Based on the reader reviews, I believe that the translator was able to transfer the story into English well. Her translation seems to have offered the readers of the translation a similar reading experience as the readers of the Swedish original. Perhaps the text was easy to transfer into another language and culture or perhaps the translator's efforts to translate so that the text flows nicely and sounds natural, but still stays close to the original paid off.

5. Methods

I decided to do a qualitative analysis of the translation and compare it to the original based on what I have read about translation theory. I started working with the text simply by reading the text and taking notes on anything that caught my eye, e.g. words that may be problematic for the translator or cultural elements that seem to be typically Swedish. I also wrote down anything that caught my eye in the translation, e.g. sentences that sounded a little awkward in English. By analyzing the two texts sentence-for-sentence and comparing the translation to the original, I was able to note several similarities and subtle differences. When it comes to analyzing translation strategies, I decided to make these distinctions: 1. literal translations are only word-for-word translations, i.e. calques, because otherwise it is difficult to draw a line between literal and equivalent translation; 2. equivalence is anything from minor changes in word order to bigger changes, such as complete restructuring of a sentence, but the main idea is that the sentence should convey the message in a similar way; and 3. repackaging is when the translator has made major changes and only the function or the approximate meaning of the sentence is conveyed. Despite trying to explain my reasoning behind how I have decided to define the translator's strategies and how I will identify them in the text, it is important to note that an analysis is always partly subjective.

6. Analysis

Before getting into specific examples, we will take a look at what kinds of translation strategies the translator, Menzies, has used. The translation strategies affect the finished product and the reading experience. My first impression of the translation was that it seemed extremely similar to the original; I could not see any major differences between the translation and the original. Analyzing the translator's chosen strategies revealed why, or how, the two texts seem so alike.

Having done a close reading of both the original and the translation as well as a sentence-for-sentence analysis and comparison of the two texts, I would estimate that about 85 % of the sentences could be considered equivalent translations and about 15 % percent are literal translations. There are about 800 sentences in total, which means that about 120 of them were translated literally and the rest, about 680 sentences, were translated using equivalence. The number of sentences vary slightly as some of the very long sentences in the Swedish original have been divided into shorter sentences in the English translation. These proportions are only an estimate after having counted sentences and categorizing them according to the following

criteria, namely literal translations are always word-for-word translations, which means that they are easy to recognize, for example:

1. Hon har farmors ögon. (p. 69)

   She has Grandma's eyes. (p. 57)

2. Det var en morgon i december när hon dog. (p. 70)

   It was a morning in December when she died. (p. 59)

Equivalence, on the other hand, can be a little more diverse. Everything from small changes to the word order or one word having been replaced for naturalness, such as:

3. Noah ser att farfar skäms <u>så fort</u> han sagt det är komplicerat att förklara, för farfar <u>säger aldrig</u> det till Noah. (p. 27)

   Noah can see that Grandpa is ashamed <u>the minute</u> he says it's hard to explain, because Grandpa <u>never says</u> that to Noah. (p. 12)

to restructured sentences, which still convey the same message, for example:

4. **I skymningen tycks** <u>hytten på fiskebåten</u>, rummet som han arbetade i under så många år, **så litet**. (p. 75)

   <u>The boat's cabin</u>, the room in which he worked for so many years, **looks so small in the twilight**. (p. 64)

are considered equivalent translations. There are actually so few bigger changes in the text, that any other translation strategies than equivalence and literal translation, account for less than 1 %. In fact, I only found these two examples of repackaging:

5. De har aldrig haft det gemensamt (p. 33)

   They've never seen eye to eye (p. 18)

6. Deras andetag växelvis (p. 66)

   She takes a breath (p. 54)

In the first example, the translator has taken the meaning of the original sentence and repackaged it by using a more common expression in English. By doing that the meaning of the sentence has also shifted slightly, which we will come back to later. In the second example, the translator has shifted the focus slightly by rephrasing what is happening in the situation. In the original text, the focus is on both characters as they breath alternately, but in the translation the focus is shifted to the female character. These changes are also quite small, but the reason why I consider them examples of repackaging is because of these small shifts in meaning or focus. While there are also a few instances where the translator has added or omitted certain information, these instances are exceptionally few. These instances are some of the few examples where the translator's voice becomes the most apparent. Although the translator has

made changes to sentences by adding or omitting certain information, the essence of the sentence is always there, which means that even those sentences can be considered equivalent translations. To illustrate how similar the translation and the original seem and to give you an idea of what kinds of strategies the translator has used, let us take a look at the following paragraph from the text, all differences have been underlined:

7. Är inte <u>detta</u> den bästa av alla livets åldrar,

   Isn't <u>that</u> the best of all life's ages,

   <u>tänker en gammal man</u> när han ser på sitt barnbarn<u>,</u>

   <u>an old man thinks</u> as he looks at his grandchild<u>.</u>

   då en pojke <u>precis är stor nog</u> att förstå hur världen fungerar men ännu ung nog att vägra acceptera det<u>?</u>

   When a boy<u> is just big enough</u> to know how the world works but still young enough to refuse to accept it<u>.</u>

   Noahs fötter <u>når inte till</u> marken när <u>han låter sina ben dingla</u> över kanten på bänken,

   Noah's feet <u>don't touch</u> the ground when <u>his legs dangle</u> over the edge of the bench,

   men hans huvud når till rymden,

   but his head reaches <u>all the way</u> to space,

   för han <u>har inte levt tillräckligt länge</u> för att låta någon hålla hans tankar på jorden.

   because he <u>hasn't been alive long enough</u> to allow anyone to keep his thoughts on Earth.

   Hans farfar <u>sitter bredvid</u> och är <u>oerhört, oerhört</u> gammal, givetvis,

   His grandpa <u>is next to him</u> and is <u>incredibly</u> old, of course,

   så gammal nu att folk har gett upp och inte längre tjatar på honom att börja bete sig som en vuxen.

   so old now that people have given up and no longer nag him to start acting like an adult.

   Så gammal att det är för sent att växa upp.

   So old that it's too late to grow up.

   Den är inte så dum, <u>den åldern heller</u>. (p. 17-18)

   It's not so bad <u>either, that age</u>. (p. 1)

As we can see, the translator has mostly used equivalence as her preferred translation strategy. The few small changes are only done for naturalness, e.g. small changes to the word order so that the sentence structure follows the linguistic norms of English. The Swedish original is so translatable, at least into English, that the translator has been able to translate much of the text without making any major changes. Although only about 15 % of the text is translated literally, the number of sentences that have been translated literally is, in my opinion, quite high

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considering literal translation often makes the text less fluent. And fluency is, as I have mentioned before, considered very important, especially in translations of foreign works into English. Although most of the sentences that have been translated literally sound quite natural in English, there are a few sentences that sound somewhat awkward. For example,

8. Jag fick dig bara <u>ett ögonblick</u> (p. 25)

    I only had you for <u>the blink of an eye</u> (p. 9)

The Swedish expression *ett ögonblick* could be translated as 'a moment' (ME), which sounds more natural than *a blink of an eye*. This shows that the translator has tried to translate as close to the original as possible, and in that process perhaps used literal translation even when other translation strategies would have produced a better, more natural result. I will discuss this further in example 27 and 57.

The overall impression is that the original and the translation are very similar, and that the translator seems to have made extremely few changes to the text. This raises questions such as: What makes this text so easily translatable? Is it easily translatable into many different kinds of languages or only into English? If so, why? These questions will be explored further in the discussion. In the following sections, we will look at some more specific examples of the similarities and differences that I found when comparing the English translation with the Swedish original.

6.1. The Translator's Voice

On the surface, it seems like the translator, Menzies, has made very few changes to the text. Because she has tried to translate every sentence as equivalently as possible, it makes her quite invisible. However, there are a few examples of sentences where she has either added or omitted certain information. And by analyzing Menzies' translation choices, her voice becomes more visible.

6.1.1. Additional Information

It was mentioned earlier that translators tend to explicate, because they want to pass on their interpretation of the text to the reader of the translation. This translation also has a few examples of explicitation. There are no long explanations, as the translator seems to have assumed everything to be quite familiar to the target audience. In fact, the longest addition is the sentence "Numbers always lead people back" (p. 3), which the translator has added, because she may have wanted the reader to have a better understanding of Grandpa and why

mathematics is so important to him. This sentence clearly describes his faith in mathematics, and that numbers will lead you wherever you want to go is definitely something he strongly believes is true. Although there are no other longer explanations, there are short additions to a few sentences to make it easier for the reader to follow. The following two examples illustrate this:

9. Jag visste alltid vem jag var med dig. Du var min genväg. (p. 66)

   "I always knew who I was with you. You were my shortcut," <u>Grandpa confides.</u> (p. 54)

10. Ted är så arg på mig, käresta. (p. 74)

    "Ted is so angry at me, love," <u>Grandpa says.</u> (p. 62)

The underlined words are the translator's additions. These additions were probably made to facilitate the readers' understanding of the dialogue and who says what. In the Swedish text, who says what is implicit information and the reader can quite easily figure out who is who both from the context and from what they already know about the characters. There are also a few other examples where the translator has explicated implicit information, to facilitate the reading experience. To exemplify what I mean, take a look at these two sentences and their translation:

11. För andra barn kanske det är pepparkakor och glögg, men om man en gång haft en farmor som älskade saker som växte så luktar alltid jul som hyacinter. (p. 20)

    For other children maybe <u>that scent</u> would be ginger biscuits and mulled wine, but if you've ever had a Grandma who loved things that grew then Christmas will always smell like hyacinths. (p. 4)

12. Lamporna hänger kvar, de han hängde upp i ett enda virrvarr på utsidan (p. 75)

    The lights are still there, the ones he strung up in a tangle on the outside <u>of the boat</u> (p. 64)

Although this information is implicit, i.e. the fact that the writer is talking about the scent of gingerbread and mulled wine and that the lights are strung up on the old boat, the translator has wanted to explicate, so that it is impossible to misunderstand. Even the made-up noun "farmorsaker" (p. 58) is translated as "Grandma's things" (p. 45), which is what it means, but by clarifying it like this, it takes away some of the childlike charm of the text, which the made-up word provides. As we can see from these examples, the translator's explicitations are meant to make the text easier to understand. Now let us look at a few sentences where the translator has omitted information.

6.1.2. Excluded Information

Translators may omit certain information when translating, because they consider the information unnecessary for some reason. Perhaps it is difficult to translate and explaining it would take up too much space or they think that it does not add anything to the story or they believe that the reader can draw certain conclusions from the context and therefore certain information is unnecessary to include. Let us look at the first example:

13. En ensam droppe blod balanserar på kanten av en djup fåra i huden, strax ovanför ögonbrynet, ligger där och kämpar mot gravitationen <u>gömd bakom kroppens ålderdom.</u> (p. 27-28)

A single drop of blood is teetering on the edge of a deep gash in his skin, right above his eyebrow, sitting there fighting gravity. (p. 12)

The last part of the sentence, *gömd bakom kroppens ålderdom* (Eng. 'hidden behind the old age of the body' (ME)), has been left out. Perhaps this part of the sentence was difficult to translate or difficult to understand or the translator might have deemed it unnecessary and therefore decided to exclude it. When trying to analyze the translator's choices and understanding the thought behind those choices, I realized that I also had a bit of trouble with this sentence. I was wondering whether it was gravity, which the sentence seems to refer to, or the drop of blood, which would make more sense, that was 'hidden behind the old age of the body', and does the 'old age of the body' refer to wrinkles? Either way, not including that part of the sentence in the translation might have been a good decision, because it does not add much to the sentence or the story. However, in the following example, I think the translator should have included the sentence that she omitted.

14. Hon skrattar i hans hjärna då. <u>Överallt i honom.</u> (p. 78)

She laughs inside his brain then. (p. 67)

I think it is a shame that *Överallt i honom* (Eng. 'Everywhere inside him' (ME)) was left out, because the sentence adds to the reader's understanding of Grandpa, namely that he still has very strong feelings towards his wife and that he still feels her presence although she is gone. The sentence itself may be somewhat tricky to translate, but the translator could have rephrased it so that the general idea is still intact and the readers of the translation could get to experience the same understanding of the character and what he feels as the readers of the original.

In the previous section, we looked at some examples of the translator's explicitation, but there are also a few examples where explicit information is made implicit. These two examples illustrate this:

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15. Den gamla mannen lägger sig <u>på rygg</u> i gräset (p. 75)

     The old man lies down on the grass (p. 63)

16. Ted lärde sig själv <u>att cykla.</u> (p. 77)

     Ted taught himself. (p. 66)

In these cases the translator has omitted unnecessary information and made the reader rely on implicit information to avoid unnecessary repetition. The context gives the reader enough information, e.g. the characters already mention riding a bike and learning how to do so, which means that excluding these specifications is completely justifiable.

6.1.3. Translation Choices

Translators can have all kinds of reasons for why they translate sentences a certain way and we can only guess why they make the choices that they do. With this in mind, let us look at some of the more interesting translation choices that the translator has made with this text. The first translation that caught my attention was:

17. När farfar var ung räknade <u>en grupp kvinnor och män</u> ut hur de skulle flyga <u>tre personer</u> till månen (p. 18)

     <u>A group of people</u> calculated how to fly <u>three men</u> to the moon when Grandpa was young (p. 2)

Firstly, the translator has replaced 'a group of women and men' (ME) with *a group of people* and secondly, she has replaced 'three people' (ME) with *three men*, which could either refer to only males or to people of any gender. I think that the original wording is important, because the writer could have just as easily said *a group of people* in Swedish, but instead he wanted to highlight that women were also involved. Therefore, the rephrasing is a bit of a pity, but the translator might have chosen to rephrase the sentence to make it shorter or to make it sound more natural, like how people usually express themselves. Another translation that caught my attention was the question:

18. Gör det ont på farfar? (p. 79)

     Is Grandpa in pain? (p. 68)

The question has lost some of its charm in English, because the way the question is formulated in Swedish makes it sound a little more childish, as if the person asking the question is a young child. The translation, on the other hand, is more neutral, in the sense that any person of any age could have asked the question. In this case the translator might not have realized that the question was supposed to sound like it came from a small child and therefore only translated the meaning or she might not have known how to phrase the question in a way that would

create a similar effect. The translator may also sometimes want to create a slightly different effect than the writer had and thereby uses a different way of expressing something, instead of using the exact equivalent. Let us look at another example, where the translator might have wanted to convey a slightly different interpretation of the situation or highlight a different emotion than the writer:

19. Och jag tror inte att du behöver vara rädd för att glömma mig, <u>fastslår</u> pojken efter viss betänketid. (p. 73)

"And I don't think you need to be scared of forgetting me," the boy <u>says</u> after a moment's consideration. (p. 62)

In the Swedish original, the boy seems more confident in his statement, because *fastslår* means to state, to assert or to determine. He seems to say it more decidedly in the Swedish text, compared to the translation. The writer may have wanted to express the character's confidence in his statement, because it seems like the boy wanted to comfort his grandfather. Therefore a literal translation of *fastslår* would have been more appropriate, if the translator wanted to transfer the same feeling of confidence and comfort into the translation, because *fastslår* carries these connotations, which *says* does not. However, the translator might have wanted to leave a subtle trace of the boy's fear and uncertainty towards the whole situation in the way the conversation is described and therefore used a less specific word. The following example also caught my attention, because the translation seemed a little vague compared to the original:

20. Det är sant, det är sant… <u>vad sa du nu igen</u>? (p. 73)

That's true, that's true… <u>what was that</u>? (p. 62)

To give a little context to the sentence: the boy just said that with the grandfather's memory becoming worse, he will be great at keeping secrets, which is then something the grandfather jokes about, i.e. already forgetting what the boy just said, which the Swedish *vad sa du nu igen?* (Eng. 'what did you say again?' (ME)) is clear about, while the translation *what was that?* is a little more vague. What was meant by the question becomes clear when reading further, but at first the reader of the translation may be confused about that question and wonder did he hear something or what is he referring to? However, it seems like the translator stuck with a common expression, i.e. what people usually say when they have not heard or not understood what someone just said. Perhaps it would sound less natural if she had translated the question in any other way. Naturalness seems to have been the reason for the following translation as well:

21. Han är arg för att din <u>fiende</u> är en <u>fiende</u> han inte kan slåss mot. (p. 74)

He's angry because your <u>enemy</u> isn't something he can fight. (p. 62)

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The translation only mentions the word *enemy* once compared to the Swedish sentence where *enemy* is used twice. I think the writer wanted to emphasize the word *enemy*, otherwise he would have used a pronoun the second time. The translator might not have realized that *enemy* should be emphasized and therefore translated the sentence so that it sounds natural. The translator also seems to have translated the following example with the intention of it sounding as natural as possible:

22. vem vet hur <u>glest</u> sådana pojkar dyker upp. (p. 78)

   who knows how <u>often</u> boys like that turn up? (p. 67)

The meaning of the two sentences is the same, and in Swedish we usually also say *who knows how often…*, and that is why the word *glest* is actually quite important. *Glest* literally means sparsely, and by using it, the writer wanted to emphasize the character's belief that she landed a very special person. So by replacing 'sparsely' with *often*, we are missing out on getting to know the character a little bit better. By using common expressions, the text is also simplified, for example:

23. Farfar <u>begrundar</u> detta länge. (p. 65)

   Grandpa <u>spends a moment or two thinking that over.</u> (p. 53)

The Swedish sentence actually means 'Grandpa contemplates/ponders this for a long time' (ME), but instead it was translated using a common, easily recognizable expression. By using common expressions or less complex words, the translator makes the text more accessible to different kinds of people. However, I also think that by using more difficult words, such as contemplate or ponder, writers can help their readers expand their vocabulary and knowledge, intentionally or not. Considering the last few examples, it seems like, at times, the translator might not know exactly what the writer had intended or if she does, she chooses to use more common ways of expressing herself when translating. By doing that she takes away a little bit of the writer's voice, but at the same time, that is how she makes her own presence known.

While comparing the translated sentences with the original, I came across a few translations that made me question why the translator had chosen to use the word that she did instead of any other synonym. For example:

24. farmor sa att det inte var <u>lämpligt</u> att ge nyfödda barn drakar som gosedjur och farfar sa att han inte ville ha ett <u>lämpligt</u> barnbarn. (p. 22)

   Grandma said it wasn't <u>suitable</u> to give newborn children dragons as cuddly toys and Grandpa said he didn't want a <u>suitable</u> grandson. (p. 8)

The word *suitable* is the translation of the word *lämpligt*, which also means appropriate, acceptable or proper. Those synonyms could have just as well been used, which means that the translator has made a choice, but with the limited information that I have, I cannot know or even assume why she chose *suitable* instead of any of the other ones. Another example is:

    25. det är det sista minnet som <u>sviker</u> honom (p. 25)

        that's the last memory to <u>abandon</u> him (p. 9)

The translator has used the word *abandon* for *sviker*, which literally means betray. By using *abandon* instead of 'betray', the translator conveys a slightly different feeling. Perhaps she wanted to pass on her understanding of how the character feels. The expression 'minnet sviker' is also a common expression in Swedish and could therefore have been translated like an idiom, which means that the equivalent English translation would have been 'memory fails'. However, a translation like that would not tell us as much about the character's feelings.

6.1.4. Translation Errors

It was mentioned earlier that translation errors are not necessarily wrong, but rather the translator's own interpretation. There are a few cases of translation errors in this text as well; some are not necessarily wrong, but the meaning has shifted slightly and some could even be considered misunderstandings. Firstly, there are three examples of translation errors that do not affect the meaning of the sentence or the understanding of the story all that much. The first example is part of what the grandfather says about how lost he sometimes feels:

    26. Jag seglar på ett stort och stilla <u>hav</u> (p. 60)

        I'm sailing on a big calm <u>lake</u> (p. 48)

In this case, translating *hav* as *lake* tones down the voicing of feeling small and alone, i.e. a lake can be quite large but it will never be as big as an ocean, so sailing on an ocean would make you feel much smaller and it would be much scarier than sailing on a lake. The second example is the boy's answer to his grandfather's description of what it feels like to lose one's memories, namely the boy says: "Läskigt" (p. 60), which was translated as "Horrible" (p. 48). The reader still understands how the boy must feel, but *läskigt* literally means scary, which might have been a more accurate expression for a young child. The last example is a translation that sounds a little awkward in English:

    27. när hon blev arg kunde hon tömma en bar full av vuxna män (p. 69)

        when she got angry she could empty <u>a full bar of grown men</u> (p. 57)

The word order somehow sounds awkward in English and I think it could have been better with the same word order as in Swedish, i.e. 'a bar full of grown men' (ME). However, the way it is translated now does not affect the meaning of the sentence.

Secondly, there are two examples of translation errors that are not wrong, but the meaning has changed slightly. The first example is:

28. De har aldrig haft det gemensamt, hans pappa och han. (p. 33)

    They've never seen eye to eye, his dad and him. (p. 18)

The Swedish sentence could have been translated literally, 'They have never had that in common, his dad and him' (ME) ('that' refers to an interest in numbers and mathematics), but instead it was translated using a set expression that only partly shares the same meaning as the original sentence. The translation makes it seem like they never agree on anything, while the original sentence only suggests that they have different interests. This does not mean that the translation is wrong, it is in fact quite accurate when thinking about everything that we as readers learn about their relationship throughout the book, but the meaning of the sentence itself has shifted. The second example is:

29. Jag menar att det är svårt för mig att förstå, ursäktar sig den gamla mannen. (p. 27)

    "[…] I mean it's hard for me to understand," the old man apologizes. (p. 12)

The translation is not necessarily wrong because 'att ursäkta sig' means either to apologize, which the translator has chosen to use, or to offer an excuse. Both meanings could be used in this context, but I think the writer was going for the latter, which would make this a translation error. However, the translator probably used *apologizes* because it was easier than 'offers as an excuse' (ME) and close enough in meaning. Sometimes, translations that are close enough are also good enough.

Thirdly, I found a sentence that is not exactly a translation error, but the sentence has lost some of its humorous effect due to the translation. The joke reads as follows:

30. Berätta att jag brukade säga till servitörerna på restauranger att hon var dödligt allergisk, och när de frågade om man verkligen kunde vara det mot koriander så sa jag: "Tro mig, hon är dödligt allergisk, om du serverar henne koriander kan du dö!" (p. 72)

    Tell me that I used to tell waiters in restaurants that she had a serious allergy, and when they asked whether someone could really be allergic to coriander I said: 'Believe me, she's seriously allergic, if you serve her coriander you could die!' (p. 61)

The expression *dödligt allergisk* literally means lethally allergic, so the joke is built on the word *dödligt*, which could also mean deadly, i.e. causing death. The punch line is that she might become murderous, i.e. cause death, if served coriander, because that is how much she hates the herb. However, the joke is not as funny in English when *dödligt allergisk* is translated as *seriously allergic*, because it does not carry the double meaning. This is also why puns and other kinds of word play are difficult to translate. Jokes, in general, can be challenging to translate, as we can see from the above example, but there is one joke in the text that works in both languages. The joke was translated (almost) literally and still managed to preserve its humorous effect:

31. Jag sa: "Doktorn, doktorn, jag har brutit armen på två ställen!" Och doktorn svarade: "Då råder jag dig att sluta gå till de ställena!" (p. 31)

    I said, 'Doctor, Doctor, I've broken my arm in two places!' and the doctor replied, 'Then I'd advise you to stop going there!' (p. 16)

Lastly, I found two examples of translation errors that are actually wrong. The first example is:

32. Nej, döden är en långsam trumma. Den räknar varje slag. <u>Vi kan inte förhandla med den om tid.</u> (p. 66)

    "No, death is a slow drum. It counts every beat. <u>We can't haggle with it for more time.</u>" (p. 54)

While *haggle* means to discuss a price (money) and trying to lower it, *förhandla* is more about negotiating and trying to get what you want in any kind of situation, not just when it comes to money. Negotiating the price of something is called 'pruta' in Swedish. A more correct translation of *förhandla* would have been either 'negotiate' or 'bargain'. The tendency to explicate can be seen in this example as well, the translator seems to have wanted to specify that we usually ask for *more* time, while that is only implied in the original. The other example is the sentence:

33. Jag <u>har mätt</u> torget. Det har blivit mindre inatt igen. (p. 26)

    I've <u>filled</u> the square. It got smaller overnight again. (p. 11)

The verb *har mätt* is the perfect tense of the verb 'mäta', which means to measure. The translator seems to have confused *har mätt* with the adjective 'mätt', which means to be full, perhaps not realizing or not knowing that the adjective 'mätt' is usually only used when talking about eating. The translator might have thought that Grandpa was talking about filling the square with things to remember as the square is a reference to his brain. However, the fact that Grandpa loves mathematics should perhaps have been a hint as to him dealing with his illness

the same way he has dealt with everything else in his life, i.e. by using numbers. The above examples show that so-called translation errors can in fact be errors that shift the meaning of a sentence, but they can also be a representation of the translator's interpretation of the text and thereby not wrong.

6.2. Cultural Elements

The surroundings described in the text are very Swedish/Nordic with the lakes, islands, fields, bears, trees with leaves in different colors and changing seasons with snow in winter and flowers blooming in June. The following sentence from the text also describes the Nordic climate and the changing seasons: "When they moved into their first house he spent the dark months growing a garden so beautiful that it knocked the air out of her when the light finally came" (p. 39). The difference between the amount of hours of sunlight in winter and in summer is very big in the Nordic countries; the winter months are very dark and the days seem short, but when spring and summer arrive the hours of sunlight we get in a day increase and for a few days in summer the sun almost seems to never set. Living in a single-family house with a veranda (Swe. 'altan' or 'terass') and a yard is also very common in Nordic countries. Christianity and Christmas are also mentioned a lot in the story and there are references to things that Swedes and other Nordic people would consider typical for Christmas, e.g. gingerbread (Swe. pepparkakor), mulled wine (Swe. glögg), saffron buns (Swe. lussekatter) and hyacinths, which are considered a Christmassy flower. Although all of the above describe a Nordic setting, most of them are not distinctly Swedish and therefore quite easy for many to recognize and relate to, especially in other Western countries. The character's names, Ted and Noah, are also international or English-sounding, which means that the translator has not had to think about changing them. So there are some cultural elements that are typically Swedish, or Nordic, and then there are also a lot of elements that are easily recognizable to other audiences as well. Firstly, let us look at some words and expressions that are characteristically Swedish, in the sense that they do not have an equivalent term in English, and then we will look at some cultural and linguistic similarities and differences between Swedish and English.

6.2.1. Swedish-Specific Terms

The following examples from the text are words and expressions that the translator may find problematic as they do not have an equivalent in English. The word "namnsdag" (p. 61) appeared in the text and was translated as "birthday" (p. 49), because not many countries celebrate 'name-days' (ME). Sweden and Finland are two of the few countries in Europe that

still have a strong tradition of celebrating 'name-day', which is based on the Catholic Church's calendar of saints (University Almanac Office, n.d.). The saints played an important role in medieval Catholic Europe, and that is why they were celebrated on specific days (University Almanac Office, n.d.). Later, people who were named after saints were also celebrated and as that became more common, other names were added and still names are being added to the calendar as they become common birth names (University Almanac Office, n.d.). In Poland and Greece it is still an ecclesiastical tradition, but in Sweden and Finland the tradition is secular and how 'name-days' are celebrated, if at all, varies between families (University Almanac Office, n.d.). Therefore, the translator replaced *namnsdag* with *birthday*, because 'name-days' are similar to birthdays and birthdays are celebrated in most countries and cultures.

The second example of a word that does not have an English equivalent is "morgontrötta" (p. 67), which was translated as "sleepy" (p. 55). This translation is not wrong, but it is not as specific as the Swedish word, which means being tired in the morning after having just woken up. There is also a more general term in Swedish that means *sleepy*, namely 'sömnig', but as there is no equivalent to *morgontrött*, the translator has settled for the closest equivalent there is.

The third example is the word *vardag*, which can be found in this sentence:
   34. Du blev aldrig <u>vardag</u> för mig, käresta. (p. 51)

      You never became <u>ordinary</u> to me, my love. (p. 38)
The translation expresses, at least to some extent, the meaning of the word *vardag*. However, *vardag* has a little more nuance to it, because not only does it mean everyday, weekday, ordinary and normal, it can also mean repetitive and boring. And I believe that the writer was, at least partly, aiming for the connotation with boring, but as there is no equivalent English word that evokes all the same connotations, the translator had to choose one.

The next example also evokes certain associations that may be difficult to transfer into another language, namely the word "himlavalvet" (p. 22), which refers to the sky, but which also sounds more poetic and is reminiscent of Bible texts or even old scientific descriptions of how the sun or the stars move along the sky. The word *himlavalvet* describes the sky as a sort of vault or a dome, which can be difficult to replicate in another language. The translator has translated it as "the heavens" (p. 6), which does not describe the look of it, but it does sound

slightly poetic and reminiscent of Bible texts, which means that the translator has found an expression in English that is close enough.

The following two examples are colloquial expressions, which means that they may be slightly problematic to translate. The first example is "svinbra" (p. 73), which was translated as "really good" (p. 61) and that is what the expression means. 'Svin-', which can be used as a first part of a compound in front of many other adjectives as well, e.g. svindyr (Eng. 'really expensive' (ME)), svinträtt (Eng. 'really tired' (ME)) or svingammal (Eng. 'really old' (ME)). It is used to make the adjective stronger, but because English does not have a similar construction, the translator simply translated the meaning of it. The other example is the word *grym*, which usually means cruel, but it also, colloquially, means cool or awesome. The context determines the meaning and in this case *grym* is used to mean the latter, because Noah is explaining to his grandfather that it is okay to forget him as that means that the grandfather can get to know him again and he even says: "I'm actually a pretty cool person to get to know" (p. 62). These two examples are proof that the translator needs to have good knowledge of both languages, even a good understanding of more colloquial language, to know how to translate these kinds of expressions in the best way possible.

Swedish has a lot of compound words and just like *svinbra*, the following example contains a prefix that can be used in combination with many different words. To give some context, the grandmother accused the grandfather of "growing coriander in secret" (p. 40), which in Swedish is "smygodlade koriander" (p. 53). 'Smyg-' is a prefix that is used before verbs to change the meaning, in this case into doing something in secret, often illicit. For example, smygläsa (Eng. 'to read in secret' (ME)) or smygfilma (Eng. 'to film in secret' (ME)). Swedish also has an expression for *in secret*, namely 'i hemlighet' or 'i smyg', but compound words are extremely common in the Swedish language, so maybe they are preferred.

The last point that I am going to address in this section are the Swedish words for grandparents, i.e. mormor, morfar, farmor and farfar. In Swedish there are different words for grandmothers and grandfathers depending on whether they are grandparents on the maternal or the paternal side. This could potentially be a bit problematic when translating from English into Swedish, if it is not clear from which side of the family the grandparent is, but when translating from Swedish into English, this is no problem at all. In the next section, we will look at other Swedish words and expressions that may be problematic in one way or another.

6.2.2. Problematic Words and Expressions

In this section, we will look at words and expressions that may have been problematic for the translator, because they have multiple different meanings or the writer has used them in a way that is not very common, i.e. he might have had a specific intention in mind, which could be difficult for the translator to transfer into English. The first example is:

35. Hur den [solen] <u>sprakade</u> hela vägen över sjön (p. 67)

    The way it [the sun] <u>sparkled</u> right across the lake (p. 55)

The verb 'spraka' is often used to describe things like sparklers, meaning it usually involves sparks and crackling sounds, like from a fire, while 'sparkle' is more like glittering. Because 'spraka' is strongly associated with a crackling sound, I believe that the connotations are slightly different; 'spraka' describes something more fiery and alive, while 'sparkle' means a softer, quieter glittering of lights. The verb was used to describe how the sun rises in the morning and how its light travels across the lake, and in Swedish, a brightly shining sun is usually described as 'strålande', not *sprakande*. That is why I believe that the writer might have had a specific reason for using *sprakande*, perhaps this was his way of emphasizing the characters' excitement of waking up to a new, beautiful day. When disregarding the slightly different connotations of the original word and the translation, the words sound very similar, *sprakade - sparkled*, which might be a reason for the translator to use *sparkled*. The verb 'sparkle' might also have been used to describe how the sunlight is reflected in the water. The second example is:

36. Blåsten <u>bråkar</u> i trädtopparna (p. 32)

    The wind <u>fights</u> in the treetops (p. 17)

The word 'bråka' is slightly difficult to define as it can mean multiple things, which makes it problematic for the translator. For example, 'bråka' can mean to quarrel, to fight, to annoy someone with the intent to get a rise out of them, to be disruptive or to mess with someone. In this sentence, the verb *bråkar* means that the wind is sort of messing with the leaves, pulling them in this and that direction. The image that the writer is trying to paint is that of nature never being completely still. The translator's choice of *fights* for *bråkar* is a literal translation, perhaps in lack of a better way to describe it in English. It was mentioned earlier that, sometimes, literal translations are a risk reducing strategy, the risk being mistranslation. The third example is:

37. Pojkens mungipor <u>snuddar</u> öronsnibbarna. (p. 73)

    The corners of the boy's mouth reach his earlobes. (p. 62)

In this example, the translator might have had trouble translating the word *snuddar*, which means barely touching or touching very lightly. The sentence itself is a hyperbole, meaning that the boy is smiling so broadly that the corners of his mouth seem to reach his ears, and as a whole it is translated well, because both the meaning and the exaggeration is transferred into English. However, the exact meaning of the word *snuddar* is not transferred. Perhaps the translator thought the translation was already good enough and adding an 'almost' or a 'nearly' would just make the sentence unnecessarily long. Translating the Swedish word *mungipor*, i.e. 'corners of the mouth', already makes the English sentence a lot longer than the Swedish one.

The last example is not a specific sentence but rather a recurring expression, namely 'att klappa någon/något', which means stroking someone/something, but the action is often more of a light tapping in a loving manner rather than a stroking motion. The expression is often used when talking about stroking someone's hand or cheek. It is also used when talking about petting a dog. The verb 'klappa' also means to clap, and that is why some people might be confused about the meaning of 'att klappa någon/något', especially as Swedish also has other words for stroking, namely 'stryka' or 'smeka'. Although the writer has used both 'klappa' and 'stryka', e.g. "Pojken stryker honom på armen" (p. 61), in his text as well as using 'klappa' in some more unusual contexts, e.g. "Hon klappar hans tinningar" (p. 56), the translator has consistently used the word 'stroke' as the translation for these actions. As I mentioned above, 'att klappa någon/något' is not exactly like the action of stroking, but there is no similar expression in English and the word that most closely describes the meaning and feeling behind the action is 'stroking', so the translator has had to settle for that word.

In the translation, I also found an English expression that does not have an equivalent in Swedish. In English there is an expression for when the liquid runs along the side of the pot or the jug when pouring, namely 'the pot is dribbling'. However, in Swedish it must be described, because there is no set expression for it, and that is why the writer had to express himself like this: "att hälla upp kaffe utan att det rann utanför" (p. 46), which would translate to 'pouring coffee without it flowing on the outside (of the pot)' (ME). So when translating the Swedish sentence, the translator could use the English expression, which is shorter than having to describe the situation, and the result was "pour coffee without the pot dribbling" (p. 32).

6.2.3. Achieving Equivalence

It may be quite challenging for the translator to achieve equivalence, in the sense that the reading experience for the readers of the translation is the same as the reading experience for the readers of the original. Although there may be equivalent terms in English, words always carry certain connotations and associations that are culturally bound and that is why the translator has to think about how to translate the text in the best way possible. This also brings us back to the idea that translations are never a perfect representation of the original and that sometimes the translator just has to decide that it is good enough.

Let us first look at the words related to Christmas that are mentioned above, namely "pepparkakor" (p. 20), "glögg" (p. 20) and "lussekatter" (p. 46), because there may be adequate terms or translations for them in English, but the translations will probably not evoke the same associations for the target readers as the Swedish words evoke in Swedish readers. 'Pepparkaka' is a thin, brown, hard cookie with a strong flavor of ginger, cinnamon, cardamom and other spices, and the dough is usually cut out into different shapes and figures using cookie cutters. It is similar to gingerbread, which is defined as "[a] kind of cake, pudding, or (now most commonly) biscuit flavoured with ginger or other spices" (OED). The translator has used the word "ginger biscuits" (p. 4), which might be considered a synonym to gingerbread or ginger cookies. However, when googling those terms, the pictures that come up for 'ginger biscuits' are of thicker, round cookies, while for 'gingerbread' the pictures actually look like *pepparkakor*. When googling 'ginger cookies', there is a mix of pictures of *pepparkakor* and thicker, round cookies. Therefore, I think the most equivalent translation for *pepparkakor* would be 'gingerbread'. Complete equivalence may be difficult to achieve as our associations with the words *pepparkakor* and gingerbread may differ culturally. The same goes for "mulled wine" (p. 4), which is the translation for "glögg" (p. 20). 'Glögg' is a hot drink which often consists of red wine, sugar and spices (Svenska Akademiens Ordböcker) and the drink can be either alcoholic or non-alcoholic. There are different kinds of *glögg*, in the sense that some are quite strong in taste while others are more like a juice, so even children like it. *Glögg* is often served with raisins and almonds. 'Mulled wine' is defined as "[wine which is] made into a hot drink with added sugar, spices, fruit, etc." (OED), but the OED also has the word 'glögg' listed with the definition: "A Scandinavian (originally Swedish) winter drink, traditionally consisting of hot sweetened red wine to which brandy, almonds, raisins, and various spices are added". So why has the translator chosen to translate the word, rather than just leave it as is? I would imagine that very few people, especially those who have never had any contact with Swedish

Christmas traditions, would know what *glögg* refers to, but they might have some idea of what *mulled wine* is. That is probably why the translator has used the latter term. While *pepparkakor* and *glögg* are part of Christmas traditions in most Nordic countries, "lussekatter" (p. 46) is a very Swedish pastry, which is often eaten around the 13th of December, 'Luciadagen', which is another Swedish Christmas tradition. *Lussekatter* are saffron buns in the shape of an 's', usually with a raisin in each end of the bun. The translator has chosen to call *lussekatter* what they are, namely "saffron buns" (p. 46), which means that the reader will know what it is, but will miss out on everything that is associated with *lussekatter*, because the reader probably will not even know that these buns are baked around Christmas time. This is why achieving an equivalent effect in translations is extremely difficult when words are so strongly connected to culture and traditions.

Swear words can also vary a lot in different cultures and languages. What is considered a swear word, what the swear word refers to, when and where it is used and the gravity of it varies. The writer has used a variety of different Swedish swear words and the level of how offensive the word is is quite similar for all of them. The translator, on the other hand, has used much milder expressions in most cases. The following examples will illustrate this:

38. Vad <u>fan</u> vet du om det? (p. 82)

    How <u>the hell</u> would you know? (p. 71)

39. Sluta dra i mig, jag kan <u>för helvete</u> berätta mitt favoritskämt! (p. 34)

    Stop pulling at me, I can tell my favorite <u>bloody</u> joke! (p. 19)

40. din <u>förbannade</u> matematik! (p. 52)

    your <u>bloody</u> mathematics! (p. 39)

41. <u>För helvete,</u> jag vill bara ha mina cigaretter! (p. 82)

    <u>For God's sake,</u> I just want my cigarettes! (p. 71)

These examples are placed in the order of harshest to mildest swear words in the translation. Besides the first example, the translations are quite mild in comparison with the original. Although the swear words are not as harsh in the translation, the effect is still similar enough. There is also one instance where the translator has replaced the swear word with a simple description of what the word actually means, namely:

42. Och sedan gick du runt och smygodlade koriander varje vår, bara för att <u>jävlas</u>. (p. 53)

    And then you went about growing coriander in secret every year, just <u>to mess with me</u>. (p. 40)

The word *jävlas* is a swear word, but it means to mess with someone. On the whole, it seems like the translator has wanted to tone down some of the swearing to make the text more appropriate. How inappropriate swearing is considered, also varies between different cultures. In some cultures, swearing is considered fine in certain situations, while in other cultures swearing might be considered inappropriate in most situations. The translator may have wanted the translation to be as unoffensive as possible to be on the safe side, but still use some mild swear words to preserve some of the writer's and the characters' way of expressing themselves.

Achieving equivalence is not only challenging when working with words that have culture-specific connotations, but also when working with sentences that contain constructions that are very language-specific. For example:

43. Jag vet, <u>säger hon med andetagen sjungande mot hans hals.</u> (p. 26)

    "I know," <u>she says and her breath sings against his neck.</u> (p. 10)

44. <u>Det går</u> runt människor på torget (p. 22)

    People are walking around the square (p. 8)

45. <u>Det studsar</u> en ballong mot tältets tak (p. 84)

    A balloon bounces against the roof of the tent (p. 73)

The first example is a sentence structure that is sometimes used in Swedish to give a more detailed description of the situation, e.g. how something is done or how the character feels. However, this kind of sentence structure is not as common in English, and because the translator seems to want to use more common expressions, she has decided to rephrase the sentence. In the last two examples, the word *det* does not actually refer to anything or mean anything in itself, it is just a grammatical element. This kind of grammatical element is quite common in the Swedish language, e.g. '*Det* är sommar' (Eng. 'It is summer' (ME)) or 'Imorgon snöar *det'* (Eng. 'Tomorrow it is snowing' (ME)). Sometimes it works in English, as we can see from these two examples, but other times rephrasing the sentence is necessary, like in the two examples from the text. The following sentence is another example of a common expression and grammatical construction that makes sense in Swedish, but perhaps not in English.

46. Och ändå har du så bråttom ut att titta på det att du aldrig hinner <u>sätta in disken.</u>
    (p. 42)

    And you're still in such a hurry to look at it that you never have time <u>to do the dishes.</u>
    (p. 29)

The underlined part of the sentence, *sätta in disken*, literally means to put in the dishes, and the location, i.e. in the dishwasher, is implicit. However, in English the locative expression is obligatory with the verb 'to put' for the sentence to be grammatically correct. Compare these two sentences: 'Kan du sätta in glassen (i frysen)?' and 'Could you put the ice cream in the freezer?' In Swedish, it is possible to leave out *in the freezer*, because it is already implied, and the sentence is still grammatical, but in English it is necessary for the sentence to be complete. Therefore, the translator has chosen to rephrase the sentence and replace *sätta in disken* with *to do the dishes*. The reason for the replacement might be that the literal translation, 'to put the dishes in the dishwasher' (ME), would be longer and a bit of a mouthful. As we have noticed before, the translator tends to use easier ways of expressing herself.

6.2.4. Cultural Elements in the Translation

So far I have only discussed Swedish or Nordic elements in the original text and how the translator has dealt with issues that may arise when translating culture, but there were also a few cultural elements relating to the English speaking world in the translation. We will now take a look at those cultural elements.

When analyzing the translation, I found a few cultural elements that confused me as to who the target audience is. On the one hand, "hiss" (p. 82) was translated as "lift" (p. 71) and "byxbenen" (p. 62) was translated as "trouser legs" (p. 51), which are both the British English equivalents for the American English 'elevator' and 'pant(s) legs'. As was mentioned earlier, some of the swear words were translated as *bloody*, which is also more commonly used by British English speakers. On the other hand, the length or height of something was expressed using the imperial system, which is mainly used by Americans, rather than the metric system, which was used in the original Swedish text and which most other countries in the world use. For example, "ett par decimeter" (p. 45) was translated as "a few inches" (p. 31) and "En och åttiosju, pappa" (p. 83), where the unit is implied, was translated as "Six foot one, Dad" (p. 72). The spelling of words is also more American, e.g. *recognize* and *favorite*. In regards to these observations, it is difficult to say who the target audience is. However, the mixing of British and American is perhaps not so strange considering the translator, Menzies, is British and the publishing company, Atria Books, is American.

6.3. Figures of Speech

While ordinary speech is straightforward, figures of speech make language more attractive and efficient by replacing the more literal meaning of a word or a phrase with a new meaning (Kienpointner 1999). "[Figures of speech] partake in a definition of language as a creative, communicative activity" (Kienpointner 1999) and because figurative language is used in both poetic and ordinary language, figures of speech allow us to be creative in many different situations (Shen 2006). Studies (surveyed in Gibbs 1994, cited in Shen 2006) suggest that figurative languages, specifically metaphorical language, helps with structuring and shaping our perception of the world, because "metaphors […] lead to a kind of intellectual pleasure in the audience: metaphors offer some cognitive surprise, but this surprise is soon followed by a growth of knowledge which is easily achieved" (Kienpointner 1999). Figures of speech are not only aesthetic devices, they also "shape our cognition and culture-specific views of reality" (Kienpointner 1999). Because we view the world differently depending on what culture we are from and we express ourselves differently through various languages, figures of speech may be difficult to translate from one language into another, which means that they may have to be adapted in some way. Kienpointner (1999) even states that:

> As far as cross-cultural communication is concerned, on the one hand FSP [figures of speech] can be considered as universals, which occur as discourse strategies in all languages and cultures; on the other hand, there exist a number of language-specific or culture-specific contrasts as far as the use and the frequency of particular FSP are concerned.

The writer, Backman, uses a lot of symbolism, such as the square and the items filling it representing the grandfather's brain (what is left of it) and what he still remembers, the roads leading from the square representing neural pathways and access to memories as well as the rain that represents memory loss and brain fog. He also uses different kinds of figures of speech to make his story come alive. The most common types of figures of speech in this text are: metaphors, similes and personification. Metaphor refers to "[w]hen words are used with metaphoric senses, one field or domain of reference is carried over or mapped onto another on the basis of some perceived similarity between the two fields" (Wales 2014:265), i.e. there is an implied resemblance, e.g. "The dad likes numbers and the boy likes letters; they're different languages" (p. 18), which means that the dad and the son are very different and that they sometimes have a difficult time understanding one another. Similes are comparisons (Shen

2006), e.g. "The place is strange but everything here is familiar, <u>like</u> someone stole all the things you grew up with and put them into the wrong house" (p. 3), which describes the feeling of strange mixed with familiar by comparing it to a situation where you can easily imagine how you would feel. Personification means that "inanimate objects are made animate" (Wales 2014:21), often by describing them as a person, e.g. "a million tiny purple arms reaching up from the stalks to embrace the rays of sunlight" (p. 4), which describes the way the hyacinths look underneath the bench. By using these self-invented, often a little silly, metaphors, the writer is able to describe the characters thoughts and feelings in a way that the reader easily understands and is able to imagine themselves in the situation. His metaphors and similes are not necessarily ordinary or common, in fact they are often quite strange and specific, which sometimes make them subtly funny, e.g. "blinking neon lights, strung here and there across their facades like they were taped up by someone who was either in too much of a hurry or absolutely desperate for a poo" (p. 25). Because the writer comes up with his own comparisons and descriptions, the translator has chosen to transfer them as literally as possible without losing naturalness in the target language. For example:

47. Till sist faller den, ner på farfars skjorta, och direkt efter den faller två droppar till, likt hur barn hoppar ner i havet från en brygga, en måste våga först innan de andra följer efter. (p. 28)

Eventually it falls, onto Grandpa's shirt, and two more drops immediately do the same, just like when children leap into the sea from a jetty, one has to be brave enough to go first before the others will follow. (p. 12)

48. Det börjar snöa på torget, i samma takt som riktigt små barn gråter, först som om det knappt hade börjat men snart som om det aldrig skulle sluta. (p. 43)

Snow starts to fall in the square, the same way very small children cry, like it had barely started at first but soon like it would never end. (p. 29-30)

49. Mellan blommorna blänker glassplitter och nycklar, som om någon förvarat dem i en stor burk och trillat och tappat den. (p. 20)

There are shards of glass and keys glittering between the flowers, like someone had been keeping them safe in a big jar but then fell over and dropped it. (p. 4-6)

50. Den gamla mannens ögon är märkligt blanka nu (p. 20)

The old man's eyes are strangely empty now. (p. 6)

51. löven rör sig i hundra dialekter av grönt (p. 32)

the leaves move in a hundred dialects of green (p. 17)

52. hans hud är ett segel på väg att bli övergivet av vinden. (p. 49)

   his skin is a sail about to be abandoned by the wind. (p. 34)

53. dimman som brukade krama träden ömt som ett svalt lakan i gryningen (p. 38)

   the fog which used to tenderly hug the trees like a cool sheet at dawn (p. 24)

54. Jag saknar gryningen. Hur den stod och stampade vid slutet av vattnet, alltmer frustande och otåligt (p. 66-67)

   I miss the dawn. The way it stamped <u>its feet</u> at the end of the water, increasingly frustrated and impatient (p. 54)

As we can see from these examples, large parts of the sentences are literal translations, and where there are changes, it is mostly in the word order to achieve naturalness. If the writer had used idioms or other common expressions instead, the translator would have had to think more about how to translate them and maybe even search for equivalent expressions in the English language. Because Backman usually creates his own metaphors, there are only two examples of set expressions that were not translated literally, but rather with the equivalent English expression. These two examples are:

55. <u>Han kan</u> mer än tvåhundra decimaler <u>i huvudet</u> (p. 31)

   <u>He knows</u> more than two hundred decimals of <u>it by heart</u> (p. 16)

56. Du har <u>dragit</u> den förut, farfar. (p. 32)

   You've <u>told</u> that one before, Grandpa. (p. 17)

The first example (55) is the expression 'to know/do something by heart', which in Swedish is 'kunna/göra något utantill/ur minnet/i huvudet'. The other example (56) is the expression 'to tell a joke', which in Swedish is 'att dra ett skämt'. Translating these expressions literally would, first of all, be really difficult, and, second of all, the meaning would be completely lost. These are the kinds of expressions where the translator needs to find equivalent expressions to use. Besides these two examples, the translator has been able to translate most of the figures of speech quite literally. Although the literal translations usually sound quite natural, there are a few instances where the literal translation sounds unnatural. For example:

57. Jag fick dig bara <u>ett ögonblick</u> (p. 25)

   I only had you for <u>the blink of an eye</u> (p. 9)

Ett ögonblick literally means the blink of an eye, but while the Swedish *ett ögonblick* actually is the expression used when referring to a short moment, English speakers usually say 'a moment' or 'one moment'. Perhaps the translator wanted to stress the briefness and the writer's litotes, i.e. understatement. However, describing it as 'a fleeting moment' would have sounded more natural. The translator's decision to use *the blink of an eye* instead of a more natural

equivalent might be due to the related expression "We had too little time" (p. 9), which comes before the litotes. The translator might have thought that using *the blink of an eye* described the character's feelings better and that using 'a fleeting moment' would be too similar to the preceding expression. The fact that this is an example of a litotes is also confirmed by the preceding expression, which in turn is a hyperbole, i.e. an exaggeration, namely:

58. Vi fick <u>en evighet.</u> (p. 25)

We had <u>an eternity</u>. (p. 9)

This is obviously an exaggeration, because no one can live for eternity and how do we even know what an eternity is, but together these two statements create an antithesis. When one of the characters talks about their time together as an eternity and the other talks about it as just a short moment, the two statements become an antithesis, i.e. strongly contrasting ideas placed close to each other forming a kind of parallelism (Wales 2014:25). These two statements are also followed by:

59. Du fick mig <u>ett helt liv</u>. Hela mitt. (p. 25)

You had me <u>an entire lifetime</u>. All of mine. (p. 9)

Where *an entire lifetime* becomes a middleground of sorts, because it is neither a short moment or an eternity. It is also more true than the other two statements, because they were together for most of her life, but if that is considered an eternity or a moment is subjective. Through this dialogue, the reader gets to learn more about the characters and their relationship. Exaggeration or emphasis is also expressed in other ways than through hyperboles, namely through repetition. For example:

60. Det är så <u>väldigt, väldigt</u> komplicerat att förklara. (p. 24)

It's so <u>incredibly, incredibly</u> hard to explain. (p. 9)

61. jag hoppas så <u>innerligt, innerligt, innerligt</u> att du har fel. (p. 57)

I'm <u>dearly, dearly, dearly</u> hoping that you're wrong. (p. 44)

62. <u>oerhört, oerhört</u> gammal (p. 18)

<u>incredibly</u> old (p. 1)

63. Pojken tänker efter <u>länge, länge, länge.</u> (p. 73)

The boy spends <u>a long time</u> thinking about that. (p. 61)

In the first two examples (60-61), the repetition is translated literally, which means that the translator is putting the same emphasis on the words and on their meaning as the writer. The last two examples (62-63), on the other hand, are translated without the repetition, which means that the translator probably considered it unnecessary and only translated the meaning of it. The grandfather's nickname for his grandson, *Noahnoah*, is also an example of repetition. The

reader is actually offered an explanation for this repetition, namely that the grandfather likes the grandson's name twice as much as everyone else's. This gives the reader more information about the character and how important his grandson is to him. Later in the book, the grandfather also calls his son, *Tedted*. These nicknames are a sign of the grandfather's affection towards the people that matter the most. The writer has also used a lot of other kinds of figures of speech in his text. For example:

64. Farfar vill veta om <u>skolan</u> sköter sig. (p. 44)

Grandpa wants to know if <u>the school</u> is behaving. (p. 30)

I believe that the writer is referring to teachers and other students and everything else that comes with the notion of *school*. Therefore this could be considered both an example of a synecdoche, which is the when "'part' of a referent is named and stands for the 'whole'; or vice versa" (Wales 2014:411), and a metonymy, which is when "the name of a referent is replaced by the name of an attribute, or of an entity related in some semantic way" (Wales 2014:267-268). Another example of figurative language in the text is:

65. Så gammal att det är för sent att växa upp. (p. 18)

So old that it's too late to grow up. (p. 1)

This statement is self-contradictory, because if you are old, you should already have grown up. This is an example of a paradox, which is a statement made up of two contradictory concepts (Shen 2006), in this case 'being old' and 'still needing to grow up'. This statement is also a metaphor for how someone is so old that they are too set in their ways already for there to be any chance that they will ever change. While some types of figures of speech can be a little challenging to recognize immediately, alliterations are one of the easiest ones. Alliterations are "the repetition of the initial consonant in two or more words" (Wales 2014:14). This text contains quite a few examples of alliteration, some are alliterations in Swedish, but not in English and vice versa:

66. **t**rillat och **t**appat den (p. 20)

fell over and dropped it (p.6)

67. Han **t**ystnar, **t**vekar (p. 24)

He falls silent, hesitates (p. 8)

68. **t**yst och **t**årlöst (p. 24)

silently and tearlessly (p. 9)

69. **k**arta och **k**ompass (p. 24)

a map and a compass (p. 8)

70. **Ä**lskade **e**nvisa du (p. 57)

Darling stubborn you (p. 44)

71. vattnets alla ljud och sånger (p. 19)

sounds and **s**ongs of the water (p. 3)

72. älskade bråkiga du (p. 26)

darling **d**ifficult you (p. 10)

The first five examples are all alliterations in Swedish, but not in English, and the last two are alliterations in English, but not in Swedish. I also found one example of an alliteration that works in both Swedish and in English, namely:

73. **V**arma **v**indar **v**andrar genom hyacinternas armar (p. 32)

Warm **w**inds **w**ander through the arms of the hyacinths (p. 17)

Alliterations can be difficult to transfer into another language, because the meaning of the words is obviously more important and conveying the message should be the priority. However, as we can see from these examples, alliterations can sometimes be compensated, in the sense that the translator can add alliterations where it is possible, if it is not possible to place them where the writer has placed them. This can also be true for other types of figures of speech in certain situations. It is also worth mentioning that alliterations might not always be intentional, most of the above examples seem like they were accidental. Intentional or not, alliterations can add a little something to the text and positively affect the way the language flows and sounds. Alliterations are also not as context-bound as many other figures of speech. However, there are certain types of figures of speech that need more contextual information for them to make sense. Irony, which is when the expressed meaning is the opposite of the intended meaning (Shen 2006), is one of them. According to Gibbs (1993, cited in Shen 2006), irony is mostly used to express the speaker's attitudes, usually negative or critical. However there are also other uses for irony, for example:

74. Han slår <u>högst</u> oskyldigt ut med armarna (p. 53)

He throws out his arms in a gesture of innocence (p. 40)

The context is that the grandfather is accused of growing coriander in the garden just to mess with his wife, who absolutely hates coriander, but he seems to claim innocence with his body language. This is perhaps not the most typical example of irony, but what is expressed, he does a gesture of innocence, is the opposite of what it actually means, namely that he is guilty and he knows that she knows that he is guilty. While both the original sentence and the translation imply that he is only pretending to be innocent, the Swedish expression is more obvious about the intended meaning. In the Swedish sentence, the message of the statement is heavily

dependent on the small word *högst*. Without the word *högst*, the sentence becomes more direct and what that means is that the irony of the gesture only becomes apparent in the context as with the English translation. The word *högst* immediately lets the Swedish reader know that the gesture is supposed to convey innocence, but there is no sincerity behind it. The Swedish sentence also conveys his humorous intent, namely that he is guilty of growing coriander to mess with her and that he is continuing to mess with her by claiming innocence now, more clearly than the English translation. For the English reader, the fact that he is just messing with her becomes apparent as you continue reading.

The last few examples that I will discuss are not exactly figures of speech, but they also demonstrate linguistic creativity. The first example is:

    75. inga fingrar <u>skakar</u>, inga hjärtan <u>saknar</u> (p. 25)

        no shaking fingers, no aching hearts (p. 10)

The Swedish sentence sounds kind of like a rhyme, or a half-rhyme, and rhymes are difficult to translate as they are very language-specific. Because the translator has chosen to simply translate the meaning of the words, the English sentence does not sound as good as the Swedish. However, in this text, the meaning of the sentence is definitely more important than trying to make the words rhyme. The same goes for the following example:

    76. Hans kropp är <u>tung</u>, hans röst är <u>tunn</u> (p. 49)

        His body is heavy, his voice is weak (p. 34)

This sentence is also a half-rhyme in Swedish, but the translator has only translated the meaning of the words into English. The last example is another rhyme in Swedish, but in this case, the translator has had to completely rephrase that part of the sentence:

    77. tills solen inte gick att <u>hålla i sin fålla</u> (p. 67)

        until there was no more holding back the sun (p. 55)

The translator has been able to translate what the writer meant with *inte gick att hålla i sin fålla*, but the word *fålla* itself actually means a hem or a small enclosure for animals. The writer probably used *fålla* purposely to make the sentence rhyme, but as there probably is no word in English that would convey the same meaning and rhyme at the same time, the translator has chosen to just transfer the intended meaning. The translator might not have known what meaning, a hem or an enclosure, the writer was referring to either. This example shows that translating linguistically creative expressions is no easy task and that rephrasing the sentence may be necessary in some cases. On the whole though, it seems like the translator has been able to translate the writer's figures of speech rather painlessly.

7. Discussion

I have read most of Backman's novels, which means that I am quite familiar with the way he writes. Although Backman does not write experimental or particularly challenging literature, he has his own style, which I thought might be hard to replicate in a different language. Backman's humor as well as his understanding of different kinds of people and of emotions is very characteristic of his work. He also often uses a lot of unusual and even quite inventive figurative language in his stories. Therefore I had certain expectations even before reading the translation. I was expecting to find many differences between the original text and the translation, both minor and major differences, and I thought the translator might have trouble transferring his specific way of expressing himself, which also meant that I expected the translator to be more visible in the text than she actually turned out to be. However, when reading the translation, my immediate reaction was that it seemed extremely similar to the original. Menzies, the translator, seemed almost completely invisible, because there was so little difference between the translation and the original. I also found extremely few indications as to it being a translation, when reading through the translated text the first time, even though I knew that I was reading a translation. The only indicators that I found were the translation errors, e.g. *filled* for *mätt*, when it should have been 'measured', and *seriously allergic* for *dödligt allergisk*, which led to loss of its humorous effect. Having read the Swedish original, they really stood out to me, but I could imagine that readers of the translation might not notice them and therefore the translator is virtually invisible. Some of the cultural elements, specifically the words related to Swedish Christmas traditions, also indicated that this was a translation, because while they may not be completely foreign to English-speaking audiences, they are not exactly familiar or relatable either.

When analyzing the text more closely and comparing individual sentences in the translation with the original, I was able to find some small differences and traces of the translator's interpretation. By taking a closer look at the translator's choices, I was able to get a better idea of what Menzies thought process might have been and why she chose to translate the way she did. Translation choices can also tell us something about what the translator finds important in a text and what they want to convey to the readers of the translation. For example, Menzies seemed to have wanted to make the text easier to read and to understand, which we can see in the examples 9 and 10, where she has added information about who is speaking, and 13, where she has excluded unnecessary information. However, what the translator's intentions are can only be assumed based on the context and the comparisons with the original, because we can

never know for certain why translators make specific choices. By comparing translation choices to the original, we can also learn more about the writer: what he finds important in the text and his personal writing style and way of expressing himself. For example, in the examples 17-25, where Menzies has made a different choice than Backman, his choices and intentions become clearer. Analyzing translations can also make us more aware of differences in languages and cultures, e.g. the Swedish Christmas traditions and the words that are strongly related to those, and how different people express themselves as well as how translators find ways to work around those differences. By recognizing the difficulty of the task of translating, we can also recognize the need to give translators more credit and appreciation for their work. Everyone will at one point or another find themselves in need of translation, or at least come into contact with some kind of translated text, and that is why translators and their work is so important.

Menzies has used literal translation and equivalence, almost exclusively, as her translation strategies. This means that she has wanted to stay faithful to the original, as much as possible without losing naturalness in the target language. By staying faithful to the original, Menzies renders herself invisible. As mentioned before, Venuti (2018) discusses fluency and the characteristics of a fluent translation, which has been the preferred type of translation of foreign works into English. Among those characteristics, the invisibility of the translator is the most evident and it has also gotten the most attention. Fluency refers to the translator producing a text specifically for the target readers through explicitation or by domesticating the text. When domesticating a text, the foreign is replaced by the familiar, which results in the translation seeming more like an original designed for the target readers. This also makes the translator less visible. There were very few examples of domestication in this text, but they were all necessary if the target readers are American, e.g. *namnsdag*, which is not a familiar concept in most countries, was replaced by *birthday* and measurements in centimeters were changed to feet and inches. However, if the target readers are British or Australian or from somewhere else, the change from the metric system to the imperial system was unnecessary.

Venuti (2018) also stated that fluent translations are written in standard, modern English and that the language should flow naturally and easily. It was mentioned earlier that translators tend to explicate and this could be part of the reason why. Translators' tendency to explicate was also noticeable in this text, as I already mentioned. Although the text seems like it is quite easy to understand and to translate, I could still find a few examples of explicitation. Menzies seems

to have wanted to leave less room for misunderstanding, which helps the reader and improves the reading experience. Explicitation can be quite noticeable if the translator adds long explanations, but it can also be quite subtle, like in this translation, and in those cases the translator's voice can only be identified in small changes found by comparing the translation to the original. By analyzing translations and looking for what has been translated and what has not as well as how the text has been translated, the translator's voice becomes more visible (Baker 2000, cited in Jiang 2012:371).

The translator also becomes more visible when they are considered more of a mediator between two languages and cultures. Through foreignization the target reader is introduced to a new setting and new experiences and the translator acts as a middleman who provides the necessary contextual information. The translator is therefore more visible in translations where foreignization is one of the chosen translation strategies. However, this text did not contain any clear examples of foreignization. The only foreignizing aspects of the story were *ginger biscuits*, *saffron buns* and *mulled wine*, which the Swedish reader immediately understands refer to Christmas, but the English reader might not recognize them or know what kinds of connotations these words carry. The translator did not explain what these foods refer to, which suggests that she did not think they were that unfamiliar. Not offering any explanations also makes Menzies less visible, because she does not add her own voice to the story. Foreignization was perhaps not necessary as Menzies seems to have assumed that the target readers are quite familiar with all aspects of the story, even the more culture-specific elements.

The most unexpected findings were the translation errors, because my overall impression was that the translator really succeeded in producing a good translation that still managed to create an almost identical reading experience for the target audience as for the original audience. I was also surprised to find typically British expressions, such as *lift* or *trousers*, mixed with American spelling and the use of the imperial system for measurements. However, as I mentioned before, the translation is published by the American publishing house Atria Books and the translator, Menzies, is British, which might explain the inconsistency. Who they were thinking of as the target reader, whether they were aiming for American, British or other readers, is unclear. The basic idea of translation is transferring a message from the source language into the target language with the target readers in mind, because the text has to be appropriate and considerate of the target readers' values and culture (Munday 2012:29). So how do you translate a text if you are not sure who the target reader is? Perhaps they assumed

it would not make a difference whether the reader was American or British, either because the text is neutral or because English-speakers share similar experiences and values.

The language in short stories can be just as rich as in poetry (Khozan 1993:41), which is why I was also very interested in analyzing figures of speech and examining how the translator decided to transfer them. There were many examples of different types of figures of speech in this text and Backman especially seems to like to use metaphors and similes in his writing. The analysis revealed that many of the figures of speech were translated quite literally, which is perhaps not very usual, because figures of speech are usually language-specific and therefore need to be translated with the equivalent expression in the target language. Figurative language is also one of the reasons why literary texts are more difficult to translate than non-literary texts. However, in this case, the translator might have gotten away easier, because she could translate the figures of speech quite literally. Literal translation may even have been necessary due to Backman creating his own metaphors and similes. They are a huge part of his own specific writing-style and way of telling stories, which makes them essential and should therefore be transferred into other languages as they are. The narrative is also important in literary translation, because it affects the atmosphere of the story and the way the story is read. According to Fowler (1983, cited in Tahiri 2020:203), there are two points of view: internal, the character's point of view, and external, the narrator's. Translators often change the narrative by shifting from the internal to the external point of view (Tahiri 2020:209, 211), e.g. through explicitation. Although Menzies did explicate in some cases, the changes were so subtle that she managed to maintain a similar narrative as the original. Based on reader reviews, both the translation and the original were confusing to read, which Backman and Menzies had probably intended considering the theme of the story. However, Menzies did add a few indicators as to who is speaking, e.g. "'Ted is so angry at me, love,' Grandpa says." (p. 62), which is a slight shift from the internal point of view to the external point of view, because it shifts the perspective slightly by moving from the characters' point of view to the narrator's. But this change was so minor that it did not affect the overall narrative much and it also makes reading easier as the readers do not have to rely on contextual information to know who says what.

Producing a translation that creates the same reading experience for its readers as for the readers of the original by any means should be the goal (Bassnett 2014:13), because a perfect representation of the original is not possible. Therefore the translator has to interpret the message of the original text and convey that message in an appropriate way to the target

readers. Professional translators revealed in an interview that creating a similar reading experience for the target readers is their main objective, and they put effort into making the text sound good in their head (Cooke 2016). Based on my own impression of the texts and the online reviews of the translation and of the original, it seems like Menzies was able to create a very similar reading experience for the readers of the translation as the readers of the original had. Menzies was even able to transfer the confusing structure and atmosphere of the text, which was probably intentional although some readers thought it negatively affected their reading experience. The translator seems to have been able to balance fluency, because there were almost no complaints among the reviews about the text seeming like a translation or being difficult to read, and faithfulness to the original, because the translation seems to have evoked the same types of thoughts and emotions in its readers as the original. Overall, it seems like the translator did a good job with this text and she seems to have been able to translate most of it without much problem.

The question is then, why was the text so translatable? I will briefly discuss three possible reasons: 1. the experiences and the emotions in the story are universal and therefore easy to transfer into any language and culture; 2. Backman's writing is easy to translate, because it is not complex or particularly experimental but rather belongs to the genre of airport novels; and 3. Swedish and English are both culturally and linguistically similar, which facilitates translation between the languages.

Backman's books have sold worldwide and all of them have been translated into multiple languages, which means that people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds have shown an interest in Backman's stories. Despite him writing in Swedish, about Swedish people in a Swedish setting, people all over the world seem to be able to relate to these characters and their stories. The characters and what they experience are universal and relatable to people no matter where they are from. This makes the stories easy to transfer into other languages and cultural contexts. Based on the reader reviews, many found this story relatable and there were many praises for Backman's ability to put human experiences and emotions into words. The fact that there were so few examples of both foreignization and domestication indicates that the translator did not find it necessary to rewrite the text for the target reader, which means that she assumed the reader would be quite familiar with everything. However, whether this is proof of the story being universal or Swedish and English being linguistically and culturally similar is hard to say based on just this translation.

Another reason for why this text is so translatable is the writing itself. Considering what I have already mentioned, Backman's books being bestsellers, feel-good stories and belonging to the genre of airport novels, his writing is quite straightforward and easy to read and to understand, which makes it easier to translate. Backman himself even said that he is more concerned with telling a good story rather than writing well. According to some of the reader reviews, this story is meaningful and not too heavy, which makes it a nice break from heavier reading. Perhaps Backman purposely avoids difficult wordings, because his stories are about ordinary people living ordinary lives. There is no need for fancier phrasing.

The last explanation for the translatability of the text is the similarity between Swedish and English. The fact that Menzies has been able to translate most of the text using literal translation and equivalence, especially without making any major changes, means that Swedish and English are linguistically very similar and that we have similar ways of expressing ourselves. This comes as no surprise considering language history and the continuous contact between European/Western countries throughout centuries, which has allowed us to be familiarized with each other's cultures. However, as I mentioned earlier, I had expected the translator to have to explain or maybe even replace some of the cultural elements, especially those related to Swedish Christmas traditions, with elements more familiar to the target reader, but instead she had found terms that were sort of equivalent in meaning, e.g. *lussekatter* which was translated as *saffron buns*. The only replacement of a Swedish tradition was the celebration of *namnsdag*, which Menzies replaced with a more familiar concept, i.e. birthdays. On the whole, it seems like the translator had less trouble with potentially problematic Swedish expressions than I thought she would. To be able to tell whether these three possible reasons for the translatability of the text are true, we would have to look at English translations of Backman's other books and translations of this particular text in other languages. Based on the English translation of this text alone, I can only make some assumptions.

Earlier I discussed what makes a translation good, and some believe staying faithful to the original is key, while others believe the text should be reworked with the target reader in mind. Staying faithful to the original renders the translator invisible, while reworking the text makes the translator more noticeable, so which is better? There are so many different factors to consider in translation and scholars cannot agree on what the best approach is. Therefore some scholars highlight the reading experience and believe that creating a similar reading experience

is the objective of translation. The text should also seem like an original, which makes small changes for naturalness necessary. In my opinion, Menzies was able to stay faithful to the original, while still conforming to English language norms, and there were very few indicators as to it being a translation. She also managed to create a similar reading experience for the target readers, so based on that it seems like she produced a very good translation of *Och varje morgon blir vägen hem längre och längre*.

8. Conclusions

In this thesis I set out to bring attention to the translator's voice by analyzing translation strategies and the translator's decisions, and the results were that Menzies is quite invisible due to her choice of translation strategies. She has maintained faithfulness to the original by using equivalence in about 85 % of the cases and literal translation in 15 % of the cases. Although her word-for-word translations work in most cases, there were a few examples where the phrasing sounded a little awkward in English. Menzies used other translation strategies in less than 1 % of the cases, e.g. there were only two examples of repackaging and very little domestication or foreignization. This also means that Menzies has made extremely few changes to the text and most of the changes that she has made are subtle and can only be found when closely comparing the translation to the original. These sorts of changes were made for naturalness in the target language, to make the text easier to read or to make the text less offensive, even though the text is quite neutral to begin with. By analyzing these changes, Menzies' voice becomes more noticeable in the translation.

Although the translation hardly seemed like a translation, the few translation errors that I found, some where the meaning has shifted slightly and some that were actually wrong, exposed it as one. However, these translation errors may not be noticeable to readers who have not read the original and who do not know that the text is a translation.

The text contains cultural elements that are typically Swedish or Nordic, such as the setting and the Christmas traditions, which I thought the translator may have to change to adapt the text for the target readers. However, many of these elements are familiar to people of other cultures as well and Menzies seems to have thought that the cultural elements would be familiar enough to English-speaking audiences and therefore there was no need to change anything. There were also some Swedish-specific terms and other expressions that could have been problematic for the translator, but Menzies was able to transfer the meaning of them without

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much problem, perhaps due to Swedish and English being both culturally and linguistically similar.

Another potentially problematic point was the figures of speech, which can be difficult to transfer from one language into another, and there were a lot of different kinds. However, Menzies managed to transfer most of them and in many cases she was able to transfer them quite literally due to Backman using his own, made-up metaphors and similes.

On the whole, Menzies succeeded in producing a translation that sounds natural in the target language while still being faithful to the original. Based on the online reader reviews, the translation also seems to have offered a similar reading experience for the target readers as the original had offered its readers, which many scholars believe should be the objective of translation.

While many studies examine translation problems, I wanted to take a look at what might have made this text easy to translate as my first impression was that the translation and the original are exceptionally alike. Although it can be quite challenging to think of reasons for the translatability of the text when there is nothing to compare it to, I found three possible ones. The first is that the story, the characters, the experiences and the thoughts and emotions are so universal that the text is easily transferred into any language and culture. The second is related to the language of the text; perhaps Backman's writing is easy to translate, because there is nothing special to it, no difficult or fancy phrasing as he finds telling a good story more important. The third reason relates to the similarities between the source and the target language, namely is the text only easy to translate because Swedish and English are both linguistically and culturally similar? Because I wanted to identify the translator's voice, I did also examine some potential problematic points such as cultural elements to see how the translator dealt with those. The analysis revealed that it seems like the translator did not have much problem translating this text, based on how similar the translation is to the original and the fact that the translator was able to use literal translation and equivalence to the extent that she did. That would mean that the third reason, i.e. the similarity between Swedish and English, is probably true. However, to know if all three reasons are definitely true, we would have to analyze other translations of this text and of Backman's other books.

The findings of this analysis support the hypothesis that the translator tends to be invisible in translations that are faithful to the original. However, by closely analyzing even small changes, the translator becomes more visible and we can get a better idea of what the translation process might have looked like and why the translator made the choices that they did. Translation strategies and decisions affect the finished product, e.g. they affect how similar the translation is to the original, whether the translation seems like an original or not, the atmosphere of the text and the whole reading experience. By analyzing translation strategies and how different choices affect the end product, we can contribute more research to the field of translation and perhaps offer translators more information on how to achieve their particular goals with different types of texts.

For further research, I think it would be interesting to look at translations of this text in other languages as well for comparison. When analyzing translations in other languages, what it is that makes this text so translatable might become more clear and finding the answer to this question would be easier: Are Swedish and English just so linguistically and culturally similar that the translation process is facilitated by that or is the text somehow so universal that it is easy to translate? It could also be interesting to look at Backman's other works to see how they are translated and if they seem easy to work with or if this, for some reason, was an extraordinarily translatable text. It could also be interesting to examine the translator's (in)visibility in other translations, for example, is the translator as invisible in Backman's other books or is it just Menzies' way of translating? Further research could focus more on analyzing the translator's voice, their translation strategies and decisions, both in literary translations and in other types of translations. Perhaps that way we could get a better understanding of the translation process and we could better recognize that different types of translations can be good and that translations are not inferior to the original.

Summary in Swedish

Introduktion

Översättning har varit väsentlig för att sprida kunskap, idéer och litteratur genom tiderna (Bassnett 2014:15). Globaliseringen har lett till att vi nuförtiden kommer i kontakt med andra språk, kulturer och värderingar nästan dagligen och det betyder att vi, medvetet eller omedvetet, alla tar del av översättning på ett eller annat sätt (Bassnett 2014:1). Cronin (2003:34, citeras i Bassnett 2014:143) hävdar också att översättning är en väsentlig del av globaliseringen och inte bara en följd av den, eftersom översättning gör saker tillgängliga för fler människor. Den senaste tiden har också allt fler börjat intressera sig för översättning och hur översättare arbetar. Även om översättare börjar få mer uppmärksamhet och uppskattning för det arbete de gör så är de fortfarande ofta osynliga. Därför ville jag göra en analys där jag jämförde översättningen med originalet för att se var och hur översättaren ger sig själv till känna i texten. Genom att analysera översättningsstrategier, översättarens sätt att hantera potentiellt problematiska punkter, likheter och skillnader mellan översättningen och originalet samt hur dessa uppkommer, kan vi lära oss mer om översättningsprocessen. Mina forskningsfrågor är relaterade till översättarens synlighet (eng. the translator's voice/invisibility) i texten och hur hen kan göra sig mer eller mindre synlig genom de översättningsstrategier som hen använder. Därför ställer jag följande frågor: Hur översätts stilfigurer? Hur översätts kulturella inslag till ett annat språkligt och kulturellt sammanhang? Är översättaren synlig i texten på något vis, i så fall hur? Vilka typer av översättningsstrategier har översättaren använt? Vad gör att originalet och översättningen verkar så lika? Den sista frågan handlar om att mitt första intryck av översättningen var att den är extremt lik originaltexten och därför ville jag undersöka vad det är som gör dem så lika. Tidigare studier har också fokuserat mest på översättning från ett majoritetsspråk till ett minoritetsspråk. Därför valde jag att istället analysera en engelsk översättning av ett svenskt original.

Bakgrund

I översättningsteorier diskuteras i huvudsak hur man ska översätta och de mest centrala frågorna handlar bl.a. om hur mycket översättningen får avvika från originalet och om översättarens skyldighet är att ta hänsyn till författaren eller till läsarna (Bassnett 2014:4-6). Målet inom översättningsteori är att producera en omfattande teori som kan användas som allmängiltiga riktlinjer inom översättning (Lefevere 1978:234, citeras i Bassnett 2014:16).

Forskare är även intresserade av att identifiera större mönster, t.ex. genom att analysera själva texten och översättningsstrategierna eller undersöka hur översättningen påverkar den mottagande kulturen. Dock tycker många översättare att teorierna inte går att tillämpa och att teoretiker inte förstår vad översättning är i praktiken.

Översättning är ett stort område och forskare verkar inte kunna komma överens om hur översättare borde översätta. Några tycker att översättningen ska vara så lik originalet som möjligt, vilket kan leda till att texten inte låter lika naturlig på målspråket, medan andra tycker att översättning handlar om att tolka budskapet i texten och sedan förmedla det på ett lämpligt sätt på målspråket, vilket kan betyda att översättaren gör större förändringar i texten. Det finns två motsatta sidor som Bassnett (2014:11-12) tycker att de flesta översättningsteoretiker kan placeras på, dvs. på den ena sidan finns de teoretiker som fokuserar på de problematiska punkterna inom översättning och på vad som går förlorat, medan de på den andra sidan fokuserar på att hitta lösningar på problemen och tror att översättning är berikande för den mottagande kulturen. Även om många tycker att översättningen är oäkta eller underordnad originalet, som ofta anses äkta, så finns det mycket att vinna på informationen och de nya idéerna som sprids tack vare översättning (Bassnett 2014:174). Översättningen är aldrig en perfekt representation av originalet, eftersom den är översättarens tolkning av originalet. Därför borde översättningen inte jämföras med originalet när det gäller autenticitet. Eftersom det finns så många olika åsikter om översättning, tycker en del forskare nuförtiden att målet med översättning borde vara att återskapa läsupplevelsen på målspråket. Cooke (2016) intervjuade professionella översättare för en artikel och de avslöjade att de översätter enligt hur texten låter i deras huvud. Översättarnas val baseras alltså på vad som åstadkommer en likadan läsupplevelse, för det är deras mål. Orsaken till att det är näst intill omöjligt att skapa allmängiltiga riktlinjer för översättning är att kriterierna för vad som anses vara en bra översättning förändras med tiden (Bassnett 2014:81).

Översättaren är inte endast en författare, hen är också en läsare, en expert på tvärkulturell kommunikation och har ofta goda kunskaper i flera språk. Översättaren tar alltså på sig flera olika roller och arbetar utgående från dessa. Munday (2012:16) menar att översättaren borde närma sig uppgiften med inställningen att författarens val är betydelsefulla. När översättaren har en idé om hur författaren gjort sina val borde översättaren försöka återskapa dessa val på ett lämpligt sätt på målspråket. Både medvetna och omedvetna val är viktiga, eftersom de representerar översättarens egen tolkning av källtexten. Översättaren måste även tänka på att

behandla källtexten och kulturen med respekt samtidigt som hen måste tänka på målgruppen och deras förväntningar. Översättarens val blir speciellt viktiga när översättaren stöter på problem, t.ex. ord som inte går att översätta direkt eftersom ett motsvarande ord saknas i målspråket. Catford skiljer på två olika typer av översättningsproblem: språkliga och kulturella (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:32-34). Språkliga översättningsproblem betyder att det inte finns lexikala ersättare, medan kulturella översättningsproblem betyder att ett ord eller ett begrepp kan ha flera betydelser eller tolkningar beroende på vilken kultur och kontext de förekommer i (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:32-34). Översättaren använder olika översättningsstrategier beroende på vad hen tycker passar bäst och vad hen vill åstadkomma, t.ex. kan en del saker översättas direkt medan andra kräver omarbetning. När översättaren kan översätta direkt kan hen använda sig av bokstavlig översättning eller motsvarande uttryck. Dock är inte fullständig likvärdighet möjlig eftersom olika språk uttrycker olika syn på världen (Pym 2014:9) och enskilda ord kan ha helt olika konnotationer eller väcka andra associationer (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:15). Därför borde översättaren satsa på att skapa en motsvarande effekt, så att förhållandet mellan mottagaren och budskapet är samma också på målspråket (Bassnett-McGuire 1987:26). Den här typen av motsvarighet kallas dynamisk motsvarighet (Wright 2016:29). När meningen kräver omarbetning måste översättaren använda någon annan översättningsstrategi. Översättaren kan t.ex. behöva göra ändringar i texten för att målgruppen ska kunna få en likadan läsupplevelse som källtextens läsare fått. Översättaren kan behöva använda sig av antingen förfrämmande strategi (eng. foreignization) eller kulturell filtrering (eng. domestication). Med kulturell filtrering menas att översättaren gör texten mer bekant för läsaren, medan förfrämmande strategi betyder att läsaren introduceras för en ny miljö; dvs. kulturell filtrering för författaren närmare läsaren medan förfrämmande strategi för läsaren närmare författaren (Binfor 2019). Ibland kan ord eller begrepp vara rent av omöjliga att översätta av en eller annan orsak och behöver därför ersättas. Helst ska de ersättas med något som fortfarande förmedlar budskapet, men som passar in i den nya kontexten och som målgruppen förstår. Sättet som budskapet framförs på kan alltså ibland behöva omarbetas en del.

Litterär översättning handlar om översättning av texter såsom poesi och skönlitteratur. När översättaren arbetar med dessa typer av texter behöver hen använda sig av både sina språkkunskaper och sitt konstnärliga sinne (Wright 2016:8). Litterär översättning är ofta också mer krävande än icke-litterär översättning, eftersom skönlitteratur har annorlunda drag som gör översättningen svårare, t.ex. används stilfigurer frekvent (Boase-Beier 2011:35-46, citeras i

Wright 2016:54). Noveller är ett exempel på skönlitteratur och enligt Khozan (1993) är stämningen (eng. atmosphere) i novellen viktig, vilket betyder att översättaren behöver tänka på hur hen återskapar stämningen i översättningen. Med stämning menas de känslor, förväntningar och attityder som väcks hos läsaren (Khozan 1993:43). Stämningen i texten speglar alltså författarens perspektiv och syfte (Khozan 1993:43-44). Att kunna återskapa stämningen i översättningen av en novell kräver tid och skicklighet, eftersom språket i noveller kan vara lika konnotativt, symboliskt och rikt som språket i dikter (Khozan 1993:41). Berättarperspektivet påverkar också läsupplevelsen, vilket betyder att översättaren behöver beakta det i översättningsarbetet. Fowler (1983, citeras i Tahiri 2020:203) skiljer på två berättarperspektiv: inre, dvs. karaktärens perspektiv, och yttre, dvs. berättarens perspektiv. Översättare tenderar att vara mer explicita och växlar ofta från det inre perspektivet till det yttre (Tahiri 2020:209, 211), vilket kan påverka läsupplevelsen (Tahiri 2020:205).

En översättning innehåller flera röster, eftersom översättningen innehåller både författarens idéer och åsikter samt översättarens tolkning och omarbetning av texten. Dock har idén om flyt (eng. fluency) starkt styrt översättningen av utländska verk till engelska. Med flyt menas att översättaren beaktar den avsedda målgruppen och målspråket i större utsträckning än vad som skulle vara nödvändigt (Venuti 2018:4-13). Det betyder alltså att översättaren filtrerar bort allt det "utländska" och skriver om texten så att den verkar som ett original (Venuti 2018:4-13). På det här sättet blir också översättaren osynlig. Baker (2000, citeras i Jiang 2012:371) hävdar dock att översättarens röst alltid finns i texten, i de val som översättaren gör när hen översätter en text. Man kan alltså identifiera översättarens röst genom en noggrann jämförelse mellan källtexten och måltexten (Jiang 2012:374), t.ex. brukar översättare ha en tendens att förklara mer eftersom de vill förmedla sin egen tolkning av texten till läsaren (Chesterman & Wagner 2016:30). Översättaren kan också göra sig mer synlig i förordet eller i fotnoter (Bassnett 2014:118). Översättaren blir ofta synlig i och med översättningsfel, eftersom läsaren då märker att texten är en översättning (Chesterman & Wagner 2016:28). Dock är s.k. översättningsfel inte nödvändigtvis fel utan översättaren kan ha haft andra avsikter eller tolkat texten annorlunda och på det viset avslöjar hen också sina egna attityder gentemot texten (Wright 2016:100-108).

Metoder och material

Mitt material består av den engelska översättningen *And Every Morning the Way Home Gets Longer and Longer*, översatt av Alice Menzies, och det svenska originalet *Och varje morgon blir vägen hem längre och längre*, skrivet av Fredrik Backman. Novellen handlar om farfar,

som lider av demens, och hur han försöker hålla kvar de viktigaste minnena så länge som möjligt samtidigt som hans barn, Ted, och barnbarn, Noah, försöker vänja sig vid tanken att farfar snart kommer att lämna dem. Jag valde att analysera den här texten för att jag har läst de flesta av Backmans böcker och jag gillar hans sätt att skriva. Sättet som Backman berättar sina historier på är både vackert och humoristiskt och han verkar ha en bra förståelse för människor och känslor.

Eftersom jag bara analyserar två relativt korta texter, originalet och översättningen, tänkte jag göra en djupare, kvalitativ analys och jämförelse. Jag började med att läsa texterna och skriva ner allt som fångade mitt intresse, t.ex. ord som skulle kunna vara problematiska för översättaren eller inslag som är typiskt svenska. Jag skrev också ner sådant som fångade mitt intresse i översättningen, t.ex. meningar som lät onaturliga på engelska. Genom att analysera och jämföra texterna mening för mening kunde jag hitta flera likheter och en del små skillnader. Jag analyserade också översättningsstrategier och valde att definiera dem så här: 1. bokstavlig översättning, dit endast ord för ord översättningar räknas; 2. semantisk översättning, dvs. likvärdig översättning dit allt från små förändringar i ordföljden till större förändringar såsom omstrukturering av meningar räknas; 3. fri översättning, där översättaren ganska fritt har omformulerat budskapet. Fastän jag har försökt definiera hur jag har tänkt gällande översättningsstrategier och kategoriseringen av meningar är det viktigt att notera att en analys av den här typen alltid är åtminstone delvis subjektiv.

Förutom att analysera originalet och översättningen, läste jag även en del online recensioner av novellen på webbplatser såsom adlibris.com och goodreads.com. Jag läste recensioner på svenska webbplatser för att få en uppfattning om vad läsare av originalet hade tyckt om novellen och så läste jag recensioner på engelska webbplatser för att få en uppfattning om vad läsare av den engelska översättningen hade tyckt om novellen. Jag tänkte att om det fanns några skillnader mellan de svenska recensionerna och de engelska recensionerna kanske det skulle betyda att läsupplevelsen hade varit annorlunda beroende på vilken version av texten man hade läst. Dock är det värt att notera att recensionerna är skrivna av icke-professionella läsare och att deras åsikter endast representerar en liten andel av Backmans läsares åsikter samt att dessa recensioner ofta är väldigt allmänna och sällan kommenterar något specifikt.

Analys och resultat

Det första intrycket som jag fick av översättningen var att den verkade väldigt lik originalet. Vid första anblick kunde jag inte se några stora skillnader mellan översättningen och originalet, men genom att mer noggrant analysera översättningsstrategierna kunde jag se varför texterna är så lika. Efter att ha läst igenom båda texterna noggrant samt analyserat och jämfört texterna mening för mening, skulle jag uppskatta att ca 85 % av meningarna är semantiska översättningar och ca 15 % av meningarna är bokstavliga översättningar. Dock är dessa proportioner endast en uppskattning baserad på hur jag har räknat och kategoriserat enskilda meningar. Kriteriet för att en mening ska räknas som en bokstavlig översättning är att meningen är översatt ord för ord, t.ex.

1. Hon har farmors ögon (s. 69)

   She has Grandma's eyes (s. 57)

Medan kriteriet för semantisk översättning omfattar allt från meningar med små förändringar i ordföljden eller där ett ord har ersatts av ett annat, t.ex.

2. Noah ser att farfar skäms <u>så fort</u> han sagt det är komplicerat att förklara, för farfar <u>säger aldrig</u> det till Noah. (s. 27)

   Noah can see that Grandpa is ashamed <u>the minute</u> he says it's hard to explain, because Grandpa <u>never says</u> that to Noah. (s. 12)

till meningar som blivit omstrukturerade, så länge de fortfarande framför originalets budskap. Det fanns så få större förändringar i översättningen att alla andra översättningsstrategier, förutom bokstavlig och semantisk översättning, står för mindre än 1 %. Jag hittade endast två exempel på fri översättning, t.ex.

3. De har aldrig haft det gemensamt (s. 33)

   They've never seen eye to eye (s. 18)

I det här exemplet har översättaren, Menzies, tagit betydelsen av eller budskapet i originalet och omformulerat det genom att använda ett vanligt uttryck i engelskan. Meningar där Menzies har gjort någon typ av förändring är de ställen i texten då hennes röst blir mer framträdande. Dessa meningar är dock väldigt få och även om Menzies har lagt till eller utelämnat en del information är budskapet ofta ganska oförändrat, vilket betyder att även dessa meningar kan anses vara semantiska översättningar.

Menzies har mest använt sig av semantisk översättning och de få, små förändringar som hon har gjort är nödvändiga för att meningarna ska låta mer naturliga på målspråket, t.ex. har Menzies gjort små förändringar i ordföljden så att meningarna följer det engelska språkets

regler. Det svenska originalet är så översättningsbart, i alla fall till engelska, att Menzies har kunnat översätta största delen av texten utan att behöva göra några stora förändringar. Detta betyder att hon förblir ganska osynlig. Dock finns det, som nämnts tidigare, några meningar där Menzies har lagt till eller utelämnat information och genom att analysera hennes översättningar och de val som hon har gjort blir hon mer synlig, t.ex.

4.   Ted är så arg på mig, käresta. (s. 74)

        "Ted is so angry at me, love,"<u>Grandpa says.</u> (s. 62)

De understrukna orden är översättarens tillägg och skulle troligen underlätta läsningen av dialogen, så att läsaren direkt förstår vem som säger vad. I den svenska texten är detta implicit information, dvs. vem som säger vad är underförstått utifrån kontexten. Översättare kan också utelämna en del information när de anser att informationen är onödig, t.ex. om det är svårt att översätta och en förklaring skulle ta upp för mycket utrymme eller för att de inte tycker att det tillför något till berättelsen eller för att de anser att läsaren kan dra sina egna slutsatser från kontexten. Följande är ett exempel:

5.   En ensam droppe blod balanserar på kanten av en djup fåra i huden, strax ovanför
        ögonbrynet, ligger där och kämpar mot gravitationen <u>gömd bakom kroppens</u>
        <u>ålderdom.</u> (s. 27-28)

        A single drop of blood is teetering on the edge of a deep gash in his skin, right above
        his eyebrow, sitting there fighting gravity. (s. 12)

De fyra sista orden i meningen, "gömd bakom kroppens ålderdom", har blivit exkluderade i översättningen. Den här delen av meningen kan ha varit svår att översätta eller att förstå eller så kan översättaren ha ansett att den är onödig och därför strukit den.

Det förekom även några exempel på översättningsfel i den engelska texten. En del av dessa är dock inte direkt fel, men betydelsen har förändrats eller så har det skett ett missförstånd, t.ex.

6.   <u>De har aldrig haft det gemensamt</u>, hans pappa och han. (s. 33)

        <u>They've never seen eye to eye</u>, his dad and him. (s. 18)

En bokstavlig översättning av den svenska meningen skulle ha varit möjlig, men istället har Menzies använt ett fast uttryck som endast delvis förmedlar originalets betydelse. Enligt översättningen verkar det som om pappan och sonen aldrig kommer överens, medan i originalet handlar det bara om att de har olika intressen. Dock betyder detta inte att översättningen är fel, med tanke på allt annat som vi läsare får veta om deras relation, men betydelsen av själva meningen har förändrats.

Ett annat exempel är:

7.   Jag <u>har mätt</u> torget. Det har blivit mindre inatt igen. (s. 26)

        "I've <u>filled</u> the square. It got smaller overnight again." (s. 11)

Verbformen 'har mätt', som är perfektformen av verbet 'mäta', verkar ha blivit förväxlat med adjektivet 'mätt' i översättningen. Menzies kanske har tänkt att farfar pratar om att fylla torget med saker att minnas, eftersom torget representerar hans hjärna, och därför översatt 'har mätt' som 'I've filled' utan att veta att 'mätt' inte används på det sättet.

Det finns också en hel del kulturella inslag i texten som har varit mer eller mindre problematiska att översätta. Backman beskriver en nordisk miljö, vilket betyder att en del kulturella inslag är typiskt svenska, eller typiskt nordiska, medan många andra även kan vara bekanta för andra läsare, speciellt västerländska sådana. De inslag som är typiskt svenska är svårare att översätta, t.ex. ord som "svinbra" (s. 73), som översattes som "really good" (s. 61), eller "namnsdag" (s. 61), som översattes som "birthday" (s. 49). Dessa ord har ingen direkt översättning och har därför behövt omformuleras. Ord som "pepparkakor" (s. 20), "glögg" (s. 20) och "lussekatter" (s. 46), som är starkt kopplade till jultraditioner, kan i engelskan ha lämpliga motsvarigheter, men dessa översättningar, "ginger biscuits" (s. 4), "mulled wine" (s. 4) och "saffron buns" (s. 46), väcker knappast samma associationer hos målgruppen som hos de svenska läsarna.

I min analys av översättningen fann jag att Menzies använde en blandning av amerikansk och brittisk engelska, vilket gjorde det svårt att avgöra vem målgruppen är. Å ena sidan används brittiska ord såsom "lift" (s. 71) och "trouser legs" (s. 51), istället för de amerikanska motsvarigheterna 'elevator' och 'pant(s) legs', å andra sidan används amerikanska måttenheter istället för det metriska systemet, vilket används i den svenska texten och i de flesta andra länder i världen, t.ex. "ett par decimeter" (s. 45) översattes som "a few inches" (s. 31). Menzies använder även det amerikanska sättet att stava, t.ex. 'recognize' och 'favorite'. Att översättningen innehåller en blandning av amerikansk och brittisk engelska är dock inte speciellt överraskande med tanke på att översättaren själv är brittisk, medan bokförlaget, Atria Books, är amerikanskt.

Stilfigurer är ett exempel på hur kreativt vi kan uttrycka oss och de påverkar även vår syn på omvärlden (Kienpointner 1999). Det betyder att stilfigurer sällan kan översättas direkt från ett språk till ett annat, eftersom olika kulturer ser på omvärlden på olika sätt och man uttrycker sig

olika beroende på vad man talar för språk. Backman använder en hel del olika stilfigurer, speciellt metaforer av olika slag, vilket kan göra översättningsarbetet mer komplicerat. Dock hittar Backman oftast på sina egna jämförelser och beskriver saker på ett speciellt sätt, som är väldigt typiskt för honom och hans sätt att uttrycka sig. Av denna orsak har Menzies valt att översätta Backmans liknelser och metaforer så bokstavligt som möjligt utan att det låter onaturligt på målspråket, t.ex.

8. Till sist faller den, ner på farfars skjorta, och direkt efter den faller två droppar till, likt hur barn hoppar ner i havet från en brygga, en måste våga först innan de andra följer efter. (s. 28)

   Eventually it falls, onto Grandpa's shirt, and two more drops immediately do the same, just like when children leap into the sea from a jetty, one has to be brave enough to go first before the others will follow. (s. 12)

Stora delar av meningen är direkta översättningar och de få förändringar som finns har gjorts för att meningen ska låta naturlig på målspråket. Att översätta dessa stilfigurer bokstavligt kan ha varit nödvändigt med tanke på att Backmans egna liknelser och metaforer är en stor del av hans sätt att skriva och berätta historier. Detta gör dem väsentliga för Backmans författarskap och bör därför överföras som de är. Om Backman däremot hade använt idiomatiska uttryck, som ofta är väldigt annorlunda i olika språk, skulle Menzies ha behövt fundera mer på vad den rätta motsvarigheten är och på hur uttrycken ska översättas till engelska på bästa möjliga sätt. Därför kan man tänka sig att Backmans sätt att skriva, speciellt när det kommer till olika stilfigurer, är lättare att översätta än många andra författares. Menzies har även lyckats föra över många av Backmans andra stilfigurer i översättningen, t.ex. litoteser, allitteration och rim.

Översättaren borde alltid sträva efter att göra läsupplevelsen för målgruppen så lik läsupplevelsen av originalet som möjligt. Baserat på läsarnas recensioner, verkar läsupplevelserna ha varit väldigt lika oberoende om recensenterna hade läst den engelska översättningen eller det svenska originalet. Berättelsen berörde många och en del av recensionerna nämnde Backmans förmåga att sätta ord på universella mänskliga upplevelser, tankar och känslor. Backman har en förmåga att förstå sig på människor och det förvånar många av hans läsare. Även om recensionerna för det mesta var positiva tyckte en del, både de som hade läst originalet och de som hade läst översättningen, att texten är lite förvirrande. Detta betyder kanske att Backman har försökt skapa en förvirrande stämning medvetet, för att spegla farfars förvirring i och med demensen, och att Menzies lyckats föra över samma känsla i översättningen. Baserat på recensionerna verkar det som om Menzies har lyckats översätta

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berättelsen väl, eftersom läsarna av översättningen har upplevt liknande tankar och känslor som läsarna av originalet.

Avslutande sammanfattning

Genom att analysera översättningsstrategierna kan vi få veta mer om vad översättaren tycker är viktigt i texten och vad de vill förmedla till läsarna av översättningen. Genom att analysera översättarens val och jämföra dem med originalet kan vi även lära oss mer om författaren, t.ex. vad hen vill förmedla till läsarna, hurdant hens personliga skrivsätt är och hur hen uttrycker sig. Analyser av översättningar kan göra oss mer medvetna om skillnader mellan olika språk och kulturer, hur olika personer uttrycker sig samt hur översättare kringgår dessa skillnader. Genom att åskådliggöra svårigheterna med översättningsarbetet, ser vi också att översättare borde få mer erkännande och uppskattning för sitt arbete.

När jag läste översättningen, var min första reaktion att den var väldigt lik originalet. Menzies är nästan helt osynlig i texten, eftersom skillnaderna mellan originalet och översättningen är så få och små. Menzies har lyckats hålla översättningen trogen originalet genom att använda semantisk översättning i 85 % av fallen och bokstavlig översättning i resterande 15 %. Även om de bokstavliga översättningarna fungerar bra i de flesta fall, fanns det några få exempel där den bokstavliga översättningen låter en aning klumpig på engelska. Menzies använder andra översättningsstrategier i färre än 1 % av fallen, t.ex. fanns det bara två exempel på fri översättning och få exempel på kulturell filtrering och förfrämmande strategi i översättningen. Detta betyder alltså att Menzies har gjort extremt få förändringar i texten och de förändringar som har gjorts är knappt märkbara. Det var endast när jag analyserade översättningen mer noggrant och jämförde enskilda meningar med originalet som jag kunde se små förändringar och därmed hitta spår av översättarens egen tolkning av texten.

Baserat på mitt eget intryck av texterna och på läsarnas online recensioner verkar det som om Menzies har lyckats återskapa läsupplevelsen på engelska. Menzies har även kunnat överföra den lite förvirrande strukturen och stämningen i texten, vilket antagligen var medvetet även om några läsare tyckte att det påverkade läsupplevelsen negativt. Överlag verkar Menzies ha kunnat balansera valet att följa originalet troget och att samtidigt få måltexten att låta naturlig väl, eftersom översättningen har väckt samma tankar och känslor hos läsarna som originalet och ingen tycks ha märkt att texten är en översättning eller tyckt att den är svår att läsa. Menzies har alltså gjort ett väldigt bra jobb med översättningen av den här texten och hon tycks ha

kunnat översätta det mesta utan problem. Frågan blir dock: varför är den här texten så lätt att översätta? Jag ska kort presentera tre möjliga orsaker: 1. upplevelserna och känslorna i berättelsen är universella och därför lätta att överföra till vilket språk eller vilken kultur som helst; 2. Backmans sätt att skriva är lätt att översätta, eftersom språket inte är speciellt komplext utan snarare tillhör genren flygplatsromaner (eng. airport novels); och 3. svenska och engelska är både språkligt och kulturellt lika, vilket gör det lätt att översätta från det ena språket till det andra.

Resultaten av denna analys stöder hypotesen om att översättaren ofta är osynlig i översättningar som är trogna originalet. Genom att noggrant analysera även små förändringar kan översättaren dock göras mer synlig och vi kan få en bättre bild av översättningsprocessen och ta reda på varför översättaren har gjort på ett visst sätt. Översättningsstrategierna och de beslut som översättaren tar påverkar slutprodukten, t.ex. påverkas likheten mellan översättningen och originalet, stämningen och läsupplevelsen samt vare sig översättningen verkar som ett original eller inte. Genom att analysera översättningsstrategier och hur dessa påverkar slutprodukten kan vi lära oss mer om översättning överlag. Dessutom kan översättare kanske få mer information om hur de på bästa sätt kan uppnå sina mål när de jobbar med olika typer av texter.

Förslag till fortsatt forskning skulle kunna vara att analysera andra översättningar av den här texten för att bättre kunna jämföra och skapa sig en bredare bild av hur Menzies har lyckats så bra med sin översättning till engelska. När man analyserar samma text på olika språk blir det mer tydligt vilka de problematiska punkterna är och då kan man också se vad som gör texten så lätt att översätta från svenska till engelska. Man kanske skulle få ett mer tydligt svar på frågan: underlättas översättningsarbetet av att svenska och engelska är så lika, både språkligt och kulturellt sett, eller är det för att berättelsen är så universell och relaterbar? Det kunde också vara intressant att analysera översättningar av Backmans andra verk, för att jämföra hur de är översatta och om de är lika lätta att översätta till engelska. Man kunde även titta på översättarens synlighet i andra översättningar av Backmans verk för att undersöka om översättaren ofta är osynlig eller om detta endast var Menzies sätt att översätta. Fortsatt forskning kunde fokusera mer på hur översättaren gör sig själv mer synlig genom sina översättningsstrategier, både inom litterär översättning och inom andra slags översättningar. På det viset skulle vi kunna få en bättre bild av själva översättningsprocessen och vi skulle kunna erkänna att översättningar av olika slag kan vara bra på olika sätt och att översättningar inte nödvändigtvis är sämre än originalet.

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