Translating Culture

An analysis of the cultural transfer in literary translation

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Abstract

The loss in translation between languages has long been debated, and a current issue within Translation Studies is that of the cultural aspect. Using two opposing concepts by Lawrence Venuti; *domestication* that is used to assimilate the source culture into the target culture, and *foreignization* that is used to preserve and highlight the foreign culture in the target text, this paper examines how culture is transferred in literary translation between English and Swedish. In order to establish which strategies are used, data consisting of 30 passages from the American novel *Dead Until Dark* (2001), and the corresponding passages in two different Swedish translations of it, is analysed linguistically. While the first translation is found to show no marked preference for either strategy, the second translation uses domestication thrice as often as foreignization. However, both translations use domestication in 9 out of 10 examples in the category ‘Figurative use of language’, which suggests a marked difficulty in preserving the source culture while translating metaphorical language. The analysis also shows a difference in the way the strategies are employed, suggesting a further division of the strategies into ‘passive’ and ‘active’. The author calls for further research on the effect of such a division.

Keywords: *Translation Studies, literary translation, linguistics, Lawrence Venuti, Domestication, Foreignization*
1 Introduction & Aim

Translation Studies is an interdisciplinary field which has expanded in recent years, with a “potential for a primary relationship with”: linguistics, comparative literature and cultural studies, etc. (Munday 2016:44). A key concept in Translation Studies is the literal ‘word-for-word’ versus the free ‘sense-for-sense’ debate which goes back to Cicero (106-43 BC) and St Jerome (347-420 AD) (Munday 2016:50). Somewhat self-explanatory, the literal perspective promotes straying from the original as little as possible, preferably keeping the same grammatical and syntactical structures, while free translation allows for more ‘artistic freedom’ of the translator, the focus instead lying on preserving the sense of the original. This discussion has since developed into an academic field of study, with several theories still building on the original debate (Munday 2016).

In 1990, Mary Snell-Hornby coined the expression ‘the cultural turn’, which describes the shift of focus in Translation Studies toward the “focus on the interaction between translation and culture”, and studies “the way in which culture impacts and constrains translation” (Munday 2016:194). With issues in translation now connected to ideology and culture beyond meaning and aesthetics, Lawrence Venuti’s work gained influence (Munday 2016:218). Suggesting two translation strategies available to the translator, domestication and foreignization, Venuti connected culture to ideological norms and shaped his theory according to translations into the English language. English culture can be considered to dominate the Western world, and this could be connected to its favoured approach of domestication; to assimilate the source culture into the target culture within translations.

By narrowing the definition of culture, looking at the cultural aspects within the text, this paper will test if Venuti’s terms are applicable to translations with English as the source language. More specifically, to translation from English to Swedish. I will look at the cultural elements within literary translation by choosing a source text with frequent use of regionally and socially marked features, and analyse the original text and translations linguistically with a focus on cultural markers. The main question of the paper is: How is culture transferred between languages in the translations of a literary text?
2 Background

The background of this paper is broken down into two subsections. The first section consists of a theoretical background that looks into the field of Translation Theory, and the second section relates this paper to previous works within the field.

2.1 Theoretical background

2.1.1 Translation theory

Translation theory from a Western perspective has its origins in the translations of the Bible and classical Greek and Latin. However, Translation Studies as an academic subject was not established until the late half of the twentieth century (Munday 2016:30). The field is continuously developing, and Jeremy Munday states that “from being a relatively quiet backwater in the early 1980s, Translation Studies has now become one of the most active and dynamic new areas of multidisciplinary research” (2016:33). Within the field, literary translation is regarded as its own type of translation, distinguished from other types such as scientific and technical translation as well as audio-visual translation. (Munday 2016:31). In the early history of the discipline of translation, in the 1950s and 60s, systematic, linguistic-oriented approaches were developed, with work such as that of Fedorov (1953/1968), Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Malblanc (1944/1963), Mounin (1963) and Nida (1964a), now considered classics. (all cited in Munday 2016:35-6).

Although the debate surrounding translation up until modern times was centred around the concepts of free translation versus literal translation, translation theory was not free from other influences. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) interpreted translations from a hermeneutic point of view coloured by the Romantics of the early nineteenth century; shifting the focus from ‘absolute truth’ towards ‘inner feeling and understanding’ (Munday 2016:64). Moving beyond the concepts of word-for-word and sense-for-sense, Schleiermacher introduced two methods for translating: “Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him, or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Schleiermacher 1813/2012:49, as cited in Munday 2016:65). Schleiermacher saw this approach as “breathing new life into the language”, “import[ing] the foreign concepts and culture into German” (Munday 2016:64-5). The former, foreignizing method, “emphasizes the value of the foreign, by ‘bending’ TL [target language] word-usage to try to ensure faithfulness to the ST [source text]” (Munday 2016:65). To ‘bend’ the language would be a necessary consequence of this approach, “for
example [by] compensating in one place with an imaginative word where elsewhere the translator has to make do with a hackneyed expression that cannot convey the impression of the foreign” (Munday 2016:65).

2.1.2 The Concepts of Domestication and Foreignization

The ideas of Schleiermacher were later developed by Lawrence Venuti. Venuti (2005/2008) protested against the favoured strategy in American and British translations to shape foreign texts according to English-language culture and values. The focus on translation of meaning is following the sense-for-sense ideal and, building on Eugene Nida’s concepts of equivalence and equivalent effect, it treats language as the artistic expression of individual ideas, rather than as discourses contingent upon cultural norms and values, regionally and diachronically affected (Munday 2016). According to Venuti, “linguistic and cultural differences are domesticated” (2008:29), and the foreign text is assimilated to English values. This domesticating strategy shows in the aspiration for ‘transparent translations’; supposed to read so fluently that the reader never has to notice anything indicating that the text was originally written in another language, thus effectively “closing off any thinking about cultural and social alternatives” (2008:35). The favouring of this approach in English-language translations has a long history, which Venuti dates to the early 17th century and connects to the censuring of Latin texts due to prevailing morality values (2008). Venuti does, however, acknowledge that the English-language tendency for domestication can be compared with Schleiermacher’s “nationalist agenda” using foreignization; an indication that the two opposing strategies can be detached from their “ideological purpose” (2008:83).

Venuti reacts to the ‘invisibility of the translator’, and argues for the need to recognise the translator’s imprint on the text. He claims that translations are “irredeemably partial” in their interpretation (2008:50) and that all translations to some degree ‘violates’ the source text in the process of breaking it down and re-building it as the target text. His aim is to “demystify the effect of transparency” (2008:50) that conceals the translator’s role. Although the translator seems invisible, s/he has altered the source text and imbued it with her or his own cultural values (2008). Venuti’s ideas also mean that translations need to be seen within their “sociocultural framework” (Munday 2016:218), not limited to the text and the translator but including “politically motivated institutions” (Munday 2016:219) as well as social institutions, including the publishing industry. These institutions and players determine
not only the outcome of the specific text but also which texts are translated, and thus have a “particular position and role within the dominant cultural and political agendas of their time and place.” While “[t]he translators themselves are part of that culture” they can decide to “either accept [it] or rebel against [it]” (Munday 2016:219).

The translator can rebel against the domination of the target culture by using the foreignizing strategy; while equally partial (as domestication), it is not trying to give the illusion that the source text was written in the target language originally. It builds on Schleiermacher’s idea in his 1813 lecture to “send the reader abroad” instead of “bringing the author back home” (cited in Venuti 2013:15). A foreignizing translation must deviate from the norms of the target language, “flaunting their partiality instead of concealing it” (2008:29) to “signify the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text” (2008:18), not abandoning fluency but “reinvent[ing it] in innovative ways” (2008:19). Venuti stresses that domestication and foreignization are not binary opposites but part of a continuum, an indication of ‘ethical attitudes’ towards a foreign text, leading to ‘ethical effects’ (2008:19). He proposes ‘the symptomatic reading’ as a method of analysis to “locate discontinuities at the level of diction, syntax or discourse that reveal the translation to be a violent rewriting of the foreign text” (2008:21). Such discontinuities can consist of inconsistency in word choice, exposing the translation process, generalisations (for example by omitting character and place names), deletion of local markers, additions, making the target text more clear or explicit than the source text, shaping the characters, and the use of euphemisms (Venuti 2008). Typical markers of a domesticating approach also include the use of current English; not archaic, features that are widely used instead of specialised, standard language instead of colloquial, the avoidance of foreign words or pidgin English, and syntax that “unfolds continuously and easily” rather than being ‘faithful’ to the foreign text (2008:4). Venuti indicates, however, that the markers for which strategy is used are not fixed: “Because the precise nature of foreignizing translation varies with cultural situations and historical moments, what is foreignizing in one translation project will not necessarily be so in another” (2008:20). Thus, to determine which strategy is used in a translation is not always straightforward and may be up for debate.
2.2 Specific background

2.2.1 Wang and Chinese-English Cultural Factors

Fade Wang is one of the researchers who have analysed Venuti’s concepts in the recent years, applying them to the translation of cultural factors (2014). He uses the Merriam Webster definition of culture to specify the term: “culture refers to the body of customary beliefs, social forms and material traits constituting a distinct complex of traditions of racial, religious, or social group” (Wang 2014:2423). He then connects culture to language through their mutual evolvement through history and “the development of writing and human communication. Much of the recent work has revealed that language is related to cognition, and cognition in turn is related to the cultural setting” (2014:2423). He continues:

a language not only describes facts, ideas, or events which indicate similar world knowledge of its people, but also mirrors the people’s attitudes, beliefs, world outlooks, etc. In a [way], language represents cultural reality. (Wang 2014:2423)

Having connected culture with language, Wang describes translation as a ‘cultural activity’, an “intercultural communication between the author and the translator, and between the translator and the readers of the target language”. (2014:2424). Using Venuti’s concepts, providing Venuti as a self-proclaimed advocate of the foreignizing strategy, Wang contrasts him with Eugene Nida, who would be representing the opposition by favouring the domesticating approach in his aim for ‘natural’ translations, assimilating the ‘behavioural mode’ in the source language “into the readers’ cultural sphere” (2014:2424). Further, Wang connects Venuti’s concept to the ‘literal vs. free’-debate, describing the literal view as “how to keep the form of the source language without distorting its meaning”. (2014:2424). This description is linked to foreignization by the aim to stay close to the syntax of the source text, laying emphasis on “linguistic and stylistic features”. A ‘free’ translation, on the other hand, is “more likely to pursue elegance and intelligibility … at the expense of the form of the source language” (2014:2425).

While Wang’s work has a strong theoretical section, the lack of explanation for data or method weakens the analysis. What is interesting, however, is Wang’s conclusion that a frequent use of foreignization by keeping an exotic atmosphere is simultaneously transferring the culture to the target reader and distancing them from it. He states that it risks making the target readers find the translated text strange, which then ultimately leads to a misunderstanding of the source culture. That risk is greater when the source culture is one the
Wang, of course, is basing this statement on his analysis of translations between English and Chinese, and also concludes that today’s globalisation is beneficial to cultural communication between languages. This, paired with an increased interest in different cultures, indicates an increased possibility for a foreignizing approach in the translation of literature in the future. (2014:2426). In opposition to Venuti, Wang finds that domestication and foreignization should not contradict each other, but that the translator should aim to find a balance between the two strategies, chosen according to the actual textual situation, instead of relying on one premeditated approach. “Only when translators properly choose foreignization and domestication and combine them appropriately, can they bring satisfactory translations to readers, and at the same time fulfil the duty of intercultural communication” (Wang, 2014:2427).

2.2.2 Mashhady and Pourgalavi: Translating Slang

Mashhady and Pourgalavi (2013) analysed Venuti’s model looking at the treatment of slang in two different translations of The Catcher in the Rye. The aim of their study was to analyse English “culture bound words and expressions […] to see whether they [were] domesticated or foreignized” (2013:1005). While initially claiming that the translations were from the same year, it was revealed later in the paper that none of the versions were first editions. Both published in 2010, the first editions were published in 1984 and 2002, respectively. The difference of 18 years should not be disregarded, perhaps especially not when looking at slang. Therefore, I argue that without studying the first editions, possible diachronic differences between the analysed versions cannot be ruled out. Mashhady and Pourgalavi note that the treatment of cultural aspects in a source text, and successfully conveying them in the target language, is one of the biggest issues in translating. (2013:1004).

Mashhady and Pourgalavi’s study is built around 40 paragraphs randomly chosen from the source text, containing slang in dialogues. To the categories of domestication and foreignization, they add ‘neutralized’, ‘untranslated’, and ‘domesticated-foreignized’ (2013:1005). Without explaining these other categories, they find that a total of one item was “domesticated-foreignized”. The vast majority, 80% in the first version and 90% in the second, were domesticated. Although only 5% of the items in the study was foreignized, Mashhady and Pourgalavi interestingly claim that “[s]lang cannot be translated literally or using the foreignization strategy because it has to do with culture and should be translated to
convey the intended meaning and produce the intended effect” (2013:1006). Thereby, they disregard the very strategy meant to convey foreign culture, in favour of the ‘free translation’-notion of meaning and Nida’s concept of effect; the very strategies Venuti argues are used to assimilate cultural aspects into target language values. Aside from this questionable conclusion, I also question the definition of slang concerning some of the passages analysed. ‘Having qualms about something’, ‘for Christsake’, not giving ‘a damn’, reading a ‘terrific sentence’, getting ‘robbed’ (when buying something expensive), being ‘crazy’ about someone, ‘sonuvabitch’, having a ‘lousy’ childhood, ‘not shutting up’, ‘being loaded’, ‘can’t do it, Mac’, being ‘practically broke’ and not being ‘mad’ anymore (2013:1008-9) are instances that might fit uneasily into the criteria (“regarded as a taboo term in ordinary speech with people who belong to a higher social class”, “cannot [be] fully underst[ood]” by “people outside a particular social group”, “not long-lived”, “used to specify in-groups and out-groups”) specified in the paper (2013:1004). While some of the examples are idiomatic, some use informal spelling to signal ‘normal’ verbal pronunciation. Yet some of the examples seem to be in standard written English. This is problematic, since the quality of the analysis inevitably is determining the validity of the conclusion.

3 Design of the present study

3.1 Data

I will apply Venuti’s concepts to literary prose, and for this purpose analyse the novel *Dead Until Dark* by Charlaine Harris (2001). It is the first novel in a series of books called ‘the southern vampire-mysteries’, in the fantastic genre of vampire-romance. It gained a lot of popularity and was adapted for television in the HBO-series *True Blood*. With its popularity came a demand for translations into other languages. The Swedish title, *Död Tills Mörkret Faller*, was translated and released by two different publishers with only a year in-between the translations. The novel is set in Louisiana in the American South and uses a lot of cultural references, as well as made up words and phrases linked to its genre, which are tied culturally to the language. The author was born in Mississippi, and the book conveys a strong sense of the American South. Barbara Johnstone describes “regionally marked ways of talking” typical to the South as “uses of indirectness, euphemism, and literary sounding metaphor” in samples of both “speech and writing” (2003:200), and calls out for further research in “features connected to verbal artistry, such as the use of formulaic comparisons” (“lower than a snake’s
belly, “slower than a crippled turtle”, “rich as cream gravy on Sunday”) “as well as other kinds of figurative language” (2003:205). However, focusing on Southern English as a specific culture could be difficult, since “literary dialect tends to be a problematic and unreliable source” for linguistic investigations (Schneider 2003:26). Moreover, “inflectional morphology and grammar tend to be socially marked rather than regionally distinctive” and a lot of features of Southern English, such as multiple negation and uses of the form ‘ain’t’, “cannot be considered as distinctive or characteristic of Southern English exclusively” (Schneider 2003:28-29). It should be noted, therefore, that although some of the examples used for analysis may be marked as Southern English, I will not establish in-depth whether the linguistic features should be considered regionally or socially marked, but rather how the cultural aspect in the text is treated in the Swedish versions, regardless of it being part of Southern English or English in general.

3.2 Method

The aim of this study is to look at linguistic features within the source text and compare them to the two different translations, to see if there is any loss in meaning or in cultural references when the chosen passages are compared to corresponding passages in the target texts. The use of two different translations will allow for a triangulation of the results. The first step of collecting data was to underline anything in the source text that I found culturally marked; that involved a play on words, or made up words which would have no pre-determined equivalent in the target language; or that I suspected would be otherwise difficult to translate. A small trial-analysis of the first six underlined passages was conducted, to test if they were relevant for my purpose. In the trial analysis I found that passages containing regional markers specific for Southern English, such as –ly exclusion in words like really, were ignored in both translations; that is, they were translated according to standard Swedish spelling. Although there is surely room for debate as how to best transfer this kind of linguistic marker, I decided to exclude it for the purpose of this paper.

Since the total of underlined passages in the source text would comprise a data-set beyond the scope of this analysis, I formulated criteria for three different categories, to include a lot of variation and be able to compare the results from the different analysed passages. Limiting the analysis to 10 examples per category, I chose the passages that 1. Fit best into the criteria, and 2. Did not cause too much repetition. The first category consists of
‘Semantically complex words’. It includes passages the author plays with meaning in ambiguous words; words that are used in new ways in the ‘fictional universe’ of the novel; and words that are ‘made up’, specific to the novel. Due to the ambiguous nature of these passages they risk being simplified in the translation process. The second category consists of ‘Culture-specific-words’; words that because of their link to their source culture and language might not have an exact equivalent in the target language. This includes reference to cultural items, fixed phrases, pop-cultural references, and (fictional) names of institutions. The last category contains ‘Figurative use of language’, and consists of the metaphoric and symbolic use of words with reference to animals or food, including similes and idioms. Food is likely to be viewed, and used, differently in different cultures, and so I suspect, are animals; partly due to the geographical difference but also in how they are viewed and treated in different cultures.

Henceforth, the source text will be discussed using the abbreviation ST, and the target texts using the abbreviation TT. In the same manner, source culture will be referred to as SC; target culture as TC, source language as SL; and target language as TL. The English-language passages will be presented in full, for context, with bold-faced text marking the analysed part. Underneath the ST example I will list the TT passages corresponding to the bolded part, with my own English translations underneath. The first line will be a literal translation closely adhering to Swedish syntax and grammar, and the second line will be a ‘fluent’ translation. The first TT published by Stjärnfall is referred to as version one, ‘V1’, and the second TT published by Månpocket is referred to as version two, ‘V2’. In the analysis I will consult dictionaries in English and Swedish as well as corpora from both languages. For the SL I will use the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), and for the TL I will use the interface Korp (The Swedish Language Bank), searching in all the available corpora.

4 Results

The results are broken down into two sections which consist of a qualitative Analysis section, where the data is presented and discussed, and a quantitative Summary section, where the amount of passages using the approach of domestication contra foreignization will be presented in a table.
4.1 Analysis

The analysis is further broken down into three subsections which represents the different categories of data; Semantically complex words, Culture-specific words, and Figurative use of language.

4.1.1. Semantically complex words

(1) “She wasn’t one of those reactionaries who’d decided vampires were damned right off the bat” (p. 18)

V1: “fördömda redan från första bettet” (p. 19)
   damned already from first bite
   ’damned from the first bite’

V2: “dömda att hamna i helvetet allihop” (p. 22)
   damned to end up in hell all of them
   ’all damned to end up in hell’

While “right off the bat” (n.d.) is an idiom for ‘straight away’ or ‘from the beginning’ the word bat also refers to the animal whose long-lived association with vampires is well-known, invoking humour. Here, V2 chooses to replace the idiom with a prepositional phrase, while V1 replaces the idiom with a phrase that preserves the meaning of ‘from the beginning’. There is also a possibility in V1 that bettet (‘the bite’) is borrowing from the English word ‘bet’. Although this borrowing is not recognised as a Swedish word, a search in Korp shows that the use of bet in combination with Swedish morphology, such as the suffix –ta, betta (‘to bet’), is common in informal contexts. Bettet would then refer both to ‘the bite’ and to ‘the bet’, the full phrase meaning ‘from the first bite/bet’. Whether this is the intention of the translator or just a lucky accident, it is certainly preserving some of the sense of sports-idiom, and would therefore score higher on the foreignizing-scale than V2. Moreover, V2’s addition of hell is adding a religious aspect non-existent in the ST, a sign of domestication.

(2) “‘Just go back in’, I said, embarrassed at my waterworks (p. 132)

V1: “vattenflöde” (p. 119)
   water-flow
V2: ”allt mitt bölande” (p. 138)
    all my bellowing

V1 stays closer to the syntax of the ST, which preserves some of the connotation to pipes or drainage system, and can be considered foreignizing. V2, presumably in pursuit of an informal synonym to *cry*, uses the verb *böla*. This word, however, focus more on the sound of crying than the flow of tears, and shares etymology with the English verb *bawl* (Svenska Akademiens ordbok). I will regard this change as domesticating.

(3) “And a couple had died violently by a freak of nature” (p. 48)

V1: ”av ett underligt väderfenomen” (p. 46)
    by a strange weather-phenomenon

V2: “genom en naturens nyck” (p. 53)
    by a nature’s quirk
    ’by a quirk of nature’

‘Freak of nature’ here can refer both to the vampire that actually killed the couple, or the tornado the vampire staged to make it seem like the couple died of natural causes. V1 loses the ambiguity when interpreting *nature* as ‘weather’, and this loss must be regarded as domesticating. V2 keeps the ambiguity, but in doing so inevitably changes the agency. While *freak of nature* would refer to the specific vampire guilty of the murder, *quirk of nature* would refer to the very existence of vampires, or perhaps their unnatural strength. That considered, since losses in translation are inevitable this approach would not be deemed domesticating.

(4) “You wanna see this little thing? Or shall I just give her a love bite?” (p.72)

V1: “kärleksbett” (p. 68)
    love-bite

V2: “kärleksbett” (p. 79)
    love-bite
‘Love bite’ (n.d.) shares the same meaning as the word ‘hickey’, and here the established phrase works as a euphemism for the vampire actually biting the human and feeding on her blood, read literally. Both V1 and V2 uses a literal translation. Unlike the Swedish word corresponding to hickey; sugmärke (literally ‘suck-mark’), kärleksbett is not found in Svenska Akademiens ordbok or ordlista. A search in Korp provides 1202 hits for sugmärke and 259 hits for kärleksbett, and the words does not seem to share the same sense, since kärleksbett is used in a majority of the cases to describe the ‘friendly’ biting of animals. However, this sense could also work in the context, and the literal translation shows a foreignizing approach in both versions.

(5) “‘I’m mainstreaming’, he explained, and she nodded.” (p. 114)

V1: ”integrerar” (p. 104)
integrating

V2: “håller på och smälter in” (p. 120)
holding on and melting in
‘am blending in’

Here, the adjective ‘mainstream’, describing something normal or ordinary, has been turned into a verb, describing vampires living ‘normal’ lives among humans. V1 choses a verb corresponding to mainstreaming which is used in an unusual way in the TT, much like in the ST, signalling foreignization. V2, on the other hand, replaces the verb with a verb phrase providing an explanation. When looking at the context of the passage, the following paragraph features the protagonist asking questions about the conversation just overheard, specifically about this strange word. As a result of the translation choice in V2, this following paragraph does damage to the protagonist’s inferred intelligence. To make the TT clearer than the ST is a sign of domestication, as is translation-choices shaping the characters (see section 2.1.2.) Based on this it is evident that V2 is domesticating.

(6) “Fangtasia, the vampire bar, was located in a suburban shopping area of Shreveport” (p. 114)

V1: “Fangtasia” (p. 104)
V2: “Fangtasia” (p. 119)

‘Fangtasia’ blends ‘fang’, in the text a synecdoche for ‘vampire’, and ‘fantasia’, a word with several cultural referents. In both TTs, the name is left untranslated. While the association with fantasia works as well in the TL as in the SL, the word fang requires knowledge in English in order for the target reader to understand the pun. Venuti considers the use of the foreign word as foreignizing, and therefore I will treat un-translated words as such. I would like to add, however, that preserving fang here might have worked even better if it was also preserved elsewhere in the text.

(7) “Maudette was a fang-banger?” (p. 24)

V1: “vampyr-groupie” (p. 25)

vampire-groupie

V2: “gaddälskare” (p. 29)

tooth-lover

‘fang-lover’

This phrase sounds like the word gangbang while it uses fang as synecdoche for vampire, and bang in the sense of ‘to have sex (with)’. The connotation to gangbang lends negativity to the phrase. The translation choice of V1 is explaining the term rather than transferring it, by using an explanation that is provided in the ST just a few lines following this passage; “Vampire groupies” (Dead until Dark, p.24). As a result, V1 also needs to change that explanation in the TT to “Groupies till vampyrer” (‘groupies for vampires’) in order for the explanation not to be identical to the phrase that first required it. V2 instead makes up a phrase corresponding to the one in the TT by combining its translation for ‘fang’; gadd, with älskare, rendering the translation as ‘fang-lover’. However, there is a loss in negativity in V2 when losing its connection to gangbang; and the phrase becomes even further modified when considering the difference between bang and love. These changes indicate domestication and would mean that both translations are domesticating by the use of different changes.

However, yet another point could be made about the term fang-banger. It is used several times throughout the ST, and while V2’s translation seems consistent the phrase is continuously changed in V1. In page 105 of V1 fang-bangers is left untranslated, and page
221 uses the translation vampyrknulle (‘vampire-fucker’). It could be argued that the variation captures different use of the phrase through different contexts, in a foreignizing manner. However, the change in the crudeness of the latter expression also alters the personality of the narrator in a domesticating way. I would argue that the best choice for a foreignizing approach would be to leave the phrase untranslated. Swedish contains a lot of English expressions, and an untranslated expression would not be unrealistic. Furthermore, since an explanation is provided after the first mention of the phrase in the ST, (the passage referred to in this example,) there would be no risk of misunderstanding it.

(8) “The vanity plate read, simply, FANGS 1” (p. 71)

V1: "FANGS 1” (p. 67)

V2: “GADD 1” (p. 79)

TOOTH 1

’FANG 1’

As established earlier, literally functioning as a body part of vampires, fangs also function as a synecdoche for vampires in the text. V1 is untranslated, while V2 used its ’standard’ translation for fang; gadd. Before reading the TTs, I was curious as to how this would be translated since the literal translation for fang would be ‘huggtand’ and could not possibly fit on a license plate. While gadder (plural of gadd) corresponds with ‘fangs’ in the sense of teeth, used informally, gadd as it is used here, in singular, is almost never used to describe a tooth (Korp). Although this could be due to the fact that teeth often exist in plural, and therefore most often would be discussed in plural, the standard meaning of gadd (‘the aculeus of an insect such as a bee’) is at risk of making itself reminded, and as a result make the target word seem more innocuous than the source word, a domesticating change. However, in defence of V2 it also features a nice side-effect since GADD 1 could be read in Swedish as gadd en, creating gadden, meaning ‘the fang’.

(9) “I stared at the big plastic cup on Sam’s desk, which had been full of iced tea. ‘The Big Kwencher from Grabbit Kwik’ was written in neon orange on the side of the green cup” (p 272)
V1: "Den stora törstläckaren från Grabbit Kwik" (p. 249)
That big thirst-slaker from Grabbit Kwik
'The big thirst-quencher from Grabbit Kwik’

V2: "Stora feta törstläckaren från Grabbit Kwik” (p. 280)
Big fat thirst-slaker from Grabbit Kwik
'The big fat thirst-quencher from Grabbit Kwik’

These fictional names also function as descriptions. Both translations lose the intentional misspelling repeated in the store name, and the description in the name, ‘Grab it quick’, might be lost to target readers unfamiliar with the SL. That considered, the use of the foreign name is foreignizing. V2 adds feta (‘fat’) between big and kwencher, and this adjective could be a sign of domestication; a valuation of the SC’s large saccharine drinks by the TC.

(10) “I began wondering if Bubba was the hitman- hitvampire?” (p. 274)

V1: “torpeden – vampyrtorpeden?” (p. 250)
the torpedo the vampire-torpedo

V2: “den lejde mördare[n] – ”Hyr en vampyr”? (p. 282)
the hired killer rent a vampire

By the anaphora used the author humorously questions if a vampire can be considered a ‘hitman’ or if that entails also being a (hu)man. While the method in V1 is syntactically close to the ST, torpedo is not functioning in the same sense as the hitman, which exclude vampires since man entails ‘human’, and ‘human’ entails ‘living creature’. Thereby, the humour based on the values of the word hitman is lost. V2’s method is keeping the humour by changing the joke, musing on how one would find such a service as ‘rent-a-vamp’ or how the advert would look, also forming a rhyme in the process. Although V1’s literal translation suggests a foreignizing approach, the resulting loss in meaning and humorous effect should be noted. Contrastingly, the artistic freedom of V2 is not domesticating the cultural aspects of the text, but could be considered an attempt to incorporate the foreign culture. It thereby uses the foreignizing strategy in a completely different way.
4.1.2. Culture-specific words

(11) “Sam’s **pickup** was sitting in front of his **trailer**” (p. 8)

V1: “**pickup**”,” **trailer**” (p. 11)

V2: ”**pickup**”, ”**husvagnen där han bodde**” (p. 13)

the trailer there he lived
‘the trailer where he lived’

While **pickup** is recognised as a Swedish word since 1960 (Svensk Ordbok) with a meaning corresponding to the English, ‘trailer’ in Swedish have the meaning “a large van or wagon drawn by an automobile, truck, or tractor, used especially in hauling freight by road” (n.d.). Thus, using the Swedish version of the word does not work semantically, and leaving a word ‘untranslated’ when it exists in the TL in a different sense risks confusion. Therefore, it should be noted that while V1 has attempted a foreignizing strategy, the result is not very successful. V2 is accompanied by the adverbial phrase *where he lived* as clarification, since Swedish ‘husvagn’ is not associated with a permanent residence, in the sense of ‘trailer home’. This addition is necessary for the target reader’s understanding, and therefore I do not regard the addition as domestication, but it does not indicate a foreignizing approach either.

(12) “Denise had been lunging forward, looking like a **redneck witch**” (p. 10)

V1: ”**vettvillig bärsärkarhäxa**” (p. 13)

crazy berserk-witch

V2: ”**riktig redneckhäxa**” (p.15)

real redneck-witch

**Redneck** is an English word with no exact equivalent in Swedish due to the difference in cultures. In both Swedish versions the Swedish possibility of creating compounds is used. V2, in a foreignizing manner, leaves redneck untranslated. In both versions, an adjective is added: **vettvillig** (‘crazy’) in V1 and **riktig** (‘real’) in V2. In both adjective and translating choice, V1 is adding values to **redneck** that would be considered domesticating.
(13) “No, ma’am, I don’t think so” (p.110)

V1: “Nej, frun” (p. 101)
   No wife
   ‘No, ma’am’

V2: “Nej”(p. 116)
   No

The use of Sir or Ma’am accompanying the answer to ‘yes or no’ questions from one’s parents is given by Johnstone as an example of forms of address typical to the American South (2003:192). In V2, ma’am is simply ignored, since titles and forms of address which would correspond to ‘Mr’, ‘Mrs’, ‘Miss’, ‘Sir’ and ‘Ma’am’, are not used in modern Swedish. V1 translation would be considered an archaism. However, since the use of ma’am is a marked feature of the SC, using an archaism is a typical example of foreignizing by pointing to the difference in cultures. Contrastingly, to remove it in favour of creating a more fluent text, is a typically domesticating approach.

(14) “[The movie] had been a real shoot-‘em-up” (p. 176)

V1: ”pangpangfilm” (p. 158)
   bang-bang-movie
   ’shoot’-’em-up’

V2: “våldsfilm” (p. 182)
   violence-movie

The first entry for shoot- ’em-up in the Oxford English Dictionary was made in 1986 and the first example text is from 1953. It is described as U.S slang for a “fast-moving story or film, esp. a Western, of which gun-play is a dominant feature” (OED), and later examples show how it is used describing computer games. It would thus be regarded as a fairly modern term. V1 uses the translation pangpangfilm, acknowledged as a Swedish word by Svenska Akademiens Ordlista. The entry features no description of the word, but I would think pangpang- corresponds well with ‘shoot-’em-up’ in its origin as describing Westerns and its development in describing both movies and games featuring gunfire, thereby being foreignizing. V2 instead makes up a compound, a translation choice that in this case removes
the direct reference to guns, or shooting, while also losing the informality of the phrase. These changes could be considered domesticating.

(15) “’I had a… funny uncle’, I said” (p. 177)

V1: “ful gubbe” (p. 159)
   ugly old-man

V2: “snuskgubbe i släkten” (p. 183)
   dirty-old-man in the relatives
   ‘indecent old man in the family’

The phrase ‘funny uncle’ is explained later in the same page of the ST as “an adult male relative who molests his… the children in the family” (177). While funny uncle could be said to be a euphemism for the paedophile it describes, the translations are not as mild. The phrase in V1 is frequently used phrase in Swedish to describe paedophiles, according to Korp, but the use of gubbe doesn’t fully correspond to uncle, losing the meaning of ‘sibling to one’s parent’. V2 makes up for this by the explanatory prepositional phrase. V2’s translation choice is described in Svenska Akademiens Ordboka as an established compound. However, while referring to someone morally and sexually ‘uncommendable’ (‘snuskgubbe’, n.d.) it seems to have a somewhat broader definition than funny uncle. This is a difficult example, and while there certainly is some difference between funny and ugly/dirty/indecet, as well as between uncle and old man, the translations both attempt to transfer the circumlocutory way of saying ‘paedophile’ from the ST. I am therefore inclined to consider these translations to be somewhere in the middle of the scale, neither domesticated nor foreignized.

(16) “What would I wear for my own little interview with a vampire?” (p. 221)

V1: “pratstund med en vampyr” (p. 200)
   talk-moment with a vampire
   ’chat with a vampire’
This is a pop-cultural reference, either to Anne Rice’s 1976 novel or its 1994 movie adaption, both titled “Interview with the Vampire”. The movie is explicitly referred to at page 115, and Anne Rice is referred to in the very first page of the novel. The Swedish title of both the novel and its movie-adaption is *En Vampyrs Bekännelse* (‘The confession of a vampire’), not used in either translation. Although there is a difference between *interview* and *confession*, the latter could have worked in the context (the protagonist preparing to use her mind-reading ability to urge forward a confession from a thief). While V1 differs from the ST, V2’s translation is corresponding to it; yet it is unable to be recognised by readers unfamiliar with the SL title. Since the cultural reference is lost in both of the translations I will consider them domesticating.

V2: “*intervju med en vampyr*” (p. 228)

interview with a vampire

(17) “He said ‘death or torture’ as calmly as I said ‘*Bud* or Old Milwaukee’” (p. 224)

V1: *’Bud’, “Old Milwaukee”* (p. 203)

V2: “*på fat eller flaska*” (p. 231)

on barrel or bottle

‘tap or bottle’

*Old Milwaukee* is not sold in Systembolaget (the Swedish Alcohol Retailing Monopoly), and although *Budweiser* is, an existing use of the abbreviated form *Bud* in Swedish is doubtful. V1 is thereby leaving the reader to understand them through the context of the narrator being a barmaid, adopting a foreignizing strategy with a doubtful level of success. V2’s translation is easily understood by the target reader, but also generalises the specific brands of beer in the original, which would be considered domesticating.

(18) “‘Aw honey’, he said, and bless his country heart, he put an arm around me and patted me on the shoulder” (p. 89)

V1: *Phrase omitted* (p. 82)

V2: “*Gud välsigne hans stora lantishjärta*” (p. 95)

God bless his big farmer-heart
The adjective ‘country’ in the original encompass several meanings relating to characteristics of the (rural) countryside and its culture. The character is described in the text as simpleminded but kind-hearted, and the act in the passage as gentlemanlike. V1, in a domesticating move, excludes the phrase entirely from the TT, while V2’s “lantsis” (n.d.) is a Swedish derogatory term for farmers used by ‘townsfolk’. In V2, thus, the chosen translation for country highlights its meaning of ‘simple’ while excluding other, more positive, meanings. This change of values is further applied by readers to the characteristics of the narrator and thus modifies her; therefore, V2 is domesticating.

(19) “the Chamber of Commerce was having a lunch and speaker at Fins and Hooves” (p. 269)

V1: “handelskammaren”, “lunch med tal”, ”Fenor och Hovar” (p. 246)
   commerce-chamber lunch with speech Fins and Hooves
   ‘chamber of commerce’, ‘lunch with speech(es)’, ‘Fins and Hooves’

V2: “Köpmannaföreningen”, “lunch och föredrag”, ”borta på Fins and Hooves” (p.277)
   Buy-man-association lunch and lecture away at Fins and Hooves
   ‘Retailer’s association’ ‘lunch and lecture’ ‘away at Fins and Hooves’

This is a difficult passage, containing the name of an institution, a noun phrase referring to a lunchtime debate or conference, with no fixed equivalent in the TC, and the name of the place accommodating the members of the institution, presumably a restaurant with a name signifying a menu of both seafood and meat. Starting with the Chamber of Commerce, V1 and V2 have chosen different translations. The description for V1’s translation in Svenska Akademiens Ordlista matches the description of the source phrase in OED perfectly. V2’s use, while it has a similar meaning, entails that the members of the “association formed to promote and protect the interests of the business community” (“Chamber of commerce”, n.d.) are also the owners of those businesses. But the choices of the last part of the passage are perhaps most interesting from a domestication/foreignization perspective. Fenor och Hovar might not seem like a common (or even likely) name of a Swedish restaurant (and no hits are found when searching for the name in Swedish business-finder search engine Eniro), yet the words have the same associations as in English; therefore, the literal translation, despite not reading fluently, does not change the meaning and could be
considered foreignizing. V2, on the other hand, leaves the name untranslated while adding an adverbial to make the text read more fluent, to ‘soften’ the blow of an unknown proper noun; which could suggest a domesticating approach. I will not consider it as such, however, since it does not affect the cultural transfer.

(20) “Sam propped himself on his elbows, **sunny side up**” (p. 279)

V1: ”**soliga sidan upp**” (p. 255)

sunny side up

V2: “**framsidan rakt upp i vädret, så att säga**” (p. 288)

the front-side straight up in the weather so to say

‘the front-side straight up in the air, so to speak’

This passage appears in the context of a man appearing naked in the narrator’s bed. **Sunny side up** is a reference to fried eggs; “fried on one side only, and served with the yolk uppermost”. “Sunny side” also refers to the “most favourable, desirable, cheering, or optimistic part or aspect (of a person or thing)” (n.d.). V1’s literal translation does not function as a reference to eggs in the TL, and showing the ‘sunny side’ is mainly used in a literal sense. It is however, when used figuratively, used in the sense of the ‘best side’ (Korp). Despite not exactly corresponding in meaning, it functions in conveying the sense that the narrator does not find this revelation entirely unpleasant, and must be regarded foreignizing. V2’s translation, on the other hand, is by replacing **sunny side** with ‘front side’, as well as further describing that front side, shifting the state of happiness from the narrator to the subject of the sentence, and that change must be considered domesticating.

4.1.3. Figurative use of language

(21) “His voice as **slithery as a snake on a slide**” (p. 14)

V1: “**oljig som en ringlande orm**” (p. 16)

oily as a coiling snake

V2: ”**hal som en orm i en rutchbana**” (p. 14)

slippery as a snake in a slide

‘slithery as a snake on a slide’
A search for this expression in COCA renders 68 hits for *as a snake*. The most common collocates preceding the phrase are *mean* and *quick*, with 10 and 9 hits respectively. *Slithery as a snake* does not occur at all, which shows that the simile is not a fixed expression. A snake might be perceived as a threatening animal, but the use of *slide* conjures up a funny image, and thus subdues any threatening effect by invoking humour. While V2 translates the simile literally, adopting foreignization, V1’s choice removes the humour and the effect of the simile is changed, in a way that could be considered domesticating.

(22) “I’m **healthy as a horse**” (p. 14)

V1: “**frisk som en häst**” (p. 16)
   healthy as a horse

V2: “**frisk som en nötkärna**” (p. 14)
   healthy as a nut-kernel

With 28 hits in COCA, this simile can be regarded a fixed expression. While V1 chooses a literal translation, V2 opts for the Swedish expression with equivalent meaning. V2 certainly reads fluently in Swedish, yet it transfers only the meaning of health and nothing of the SC, and is therefore a clear example of domestication. V1, on the other hand, reads a bit strange in Swedish but could be used as a marker of the SC, since the use of expressions referring to horses is recurring in the novel and throughout the extended series. That makes V1 a good example of foreignization.

(23) “When I left, Gran was clearly **counting her chickens**” (p. 27)

V1: “**sälde skinnet innan björnen var skjuten**” (p.27)
   selling the skin before the bear was shot

V2: **”tagit ut segern i förskott”** (p. 32)
   taken out victory in advance
   ‘collected the victory in advance’

This phrase refers to the proverb *don't count your chickens before they're hatched* (count, 2016). V1’s translation choice changes the shortened version of the proverb to a full version, and changes the animal concerned as well. V2 loses the animal metaphor.
entirely and settles with a phrase equivalent in meaning. For a foreignizing approach, the passage could have been transferred literally, perhaps adding *before they hatch* in the TL for the target reader better to understand the meaning. These translations, although different from each other, both have a domesticating function.

(24) “Of course, Gran was in *genealogical hog heaven*” (p. 53)

V1: “släktforskningens **himmelrike**” (p. 51)
  relative-research heaven-kingdom
  ’The heaven of genealogical research’

V2: ”släktforskarnas **paradis**” (p. 59)
  relative-researchers paradise
  ’The paradise of genealogical researchers’

*Hog heaven* means ”[a] place, state, or condition of foolish or idle bliss” (n.d.), and *hog* is also used metaphorically for a person being greedy or self-indulgent. Both translations omit *hog* entirely, an omission more likely due to difficulty translating than to a decisively domesticating approach; yet, the effect is domesticating. A stubborn translator might have been able to use the Swedish association between pigs and gluttony in the phrase *gottegris* (‘goody-pig’), referring to a person indulging in sweets, in a metaphorical manner. Such a use could also have preserved the colloquial manner of the expression, now lost in translation.

(25) “I’d read all kinds of stuff, but this would be *straight from the horse’s mouth*” (p. 60)

V1: “från en säker **källa**” (p. 57)
  from a safe source

V2: “direkt **till källan**” (p. 66)
  immediately to the source
  ‘straight to the source’

*Straight from the horse’s mouth* is an idiom that “refers to the presumed ideal source for a racing tip and hence of other useful information” (‘horse’, 2016). Both translations abandon the animal metaphor. In order to preserve the SC, an alternative could
have been to translate the passage literally and add an explanation afterwards, to ensure the meaning is not lost in translation. Since both the figurative use and animal reference is lost, I will consider these approaches domesticating.

(26) “Sam, we haven’t seen you in a coon’s age” (p. 137)

V1: “evigheter” (p. 123)

eternities

V2: “evigheters evigheter” (p. 143)

eternity’s eternities

*Coon* is an abbreviation for *raccoon*, and this idiom means ‘a long time’. Both versions lose the animal reference. V2 attempts to replace the emphasis of the original expression by the double use of *evigheter*, the first one modifying the other, which also makes the phrase more colloquial. Again, the translation choices do not sustain the SC in the TT, failing foreignization; however, the degree of domestication remains debatable. On the one hand could be argued that the translations do not replace the SC with something else in the TC, but merely ‘neutralizes’ the marked cultural aspects, to use Mashhady and Pourgalavi’s term. On the other hand, focusing on the ‘core meaning’ instead of the actual words in the text is domesticating. Therefore, I will consider the failure to transfer the SC domestication.

(27) “I had to add a dash of guilt to that emotional stew” (p. 245)

V1: ”Mitt i allthop kände jag mig lite skyldig” (p. 223)

Middle in everything felt me little guilty

’In the middle of it all I felt a little guilty’

V2: ”Jag kunde också konstatera att det fanns en nypa skuldkänslor med i mitt känsломässiga hopkok” (p. 252)

I could also ascertain that it existed a pinch guilt-feelings along in my feelings-wise bunch-cook

’I could also ascertain that there was a pinch of guilt among my emotional concoction’
This metaphorical expression describes the narrator’s mind-set, adding a sense of homeliness by the reference to cooking. V1 transfers only the meaning, and while the reference to cooking remains in V2, the formality of the phrase is curiously changed. Since the passage reflects the thoughts of the narrator in the story, this also alters her personality. Both translations then, though different from each other, can be regarded as domesticating. I would instead have translated the passage as “Jag fick lägga till en nypa skuld i den känslomässiga röran”, favoring a more literal translation. Röran has a sense similar to hash; referring both to ‘food’ and to a ‘mess’.

(28) “She might as well have said ‘Chicken’ and flapped her arms like wings” (p. 118)

V1: ”Fegis!” (p. 107)

Coward

V2: “’Fegis!’ och börjat darra på underläppen” (p. 124)

Coward and started trembling on under-lip

’Coward!’, her lower lip trembling’

In English, chicken (n.d) is used as slang for cowardice, while in Swedish the word for ‘chicken’ lacks any such recognised use (‘kyckling’, n.d.). V1 excludes the second phrase of the sentence, the omission a clear sign of domestication. V2’s approach, while including the physical part of the mockery, loses the symbolic use of the animal. This loss affects the cultural transfer, and makes the effect domesticating. The alternative to leave chicken untranslated would not have been uncalled for, since its English connotation with cowardice is widely represented in popular culture and would be familiar to a lot of the target readers. A search for chicken in Korp shows that although most of the Swedish use of the word in English is related to food, in phrases like chicken nuggets, there are instances of chicken race or (being a) chicken, as in ‘coward’. A further search in Korp for vilken kyckling (‘what a chicken’), din kyckling (‘you chicken’), and är en kyckling (‘is/are a chicken’) in order to see if the cowardly meaning is used in Swedish as well, showed an indication of such use in the last search. It revealed four instances where the use might mean ‘coward’; however, only one could be established as such from the context. Nevertheless, this shows that although the use of chicken as ‘coward’ is unusual in Swedish, it does exist, and might become further established in the future. A foreignizing approach would have helped shape this change.
(29) “they never made a positive mark on the world, or *amounted to a hill of beans*, to my way of thinking” (p. 29)

V1: *Phrase omitted* (p. 30)

V2: "*var komplett värdelösa på alla sätt*” (p. 35)
   was completely worthless on all manners
   ‘was completely worthless in every way’

   The idiom *hill of beans* has the meaning ‘of little importance or value’ (2016). V1 avoids the difficult passage entirely, and the change in the second version is also rather dramatic. While the ST offers a comment on the actions of the subjects, never amounting to anything (positive), V2 further evaluates those actions when deeming them worthless. Since this addition in judgement affects the character whose thoughts it represents, this is considered domestication.

(30) “Granny was as *pleased as punch*” (p. 17)

V1: “*förtjust*” (p. 19)
   delighted

V2: "*gladde sig något enormt*” (p. 22)
   glad herself something enormous
   ‘enjoyed herself immensely’

In the translations to this passage, none have preserved the use of simile. V2 changes the structure of the sentence, turning ‘pleased’ into a verb phrase with an addition of an adverb; possibly in order to keep the informal tone of the original. Nevertheless, the reference to the drink is lost, as is the use of simile, and I will therefore consider these translations as domesticating.
4.2 Summary

Table 1. Quantitative Analysis

### Semantically complex words

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<td>Foreignization</td>
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### Culture-specific words

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### Figurative use of language

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### Total

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<td>Foreignization</td>
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Before analysing the table, it should be noted that the criteria for domesticating or foreignizing use, because of their non-binary nature, can range from slightly domesticating to very domesticating, and slightly foreignizing to very foreignizing. The numbers do not take this into account. Nor do the numbers take into account whether the use of domestication/foreignization worked well in the text or would be considered a mistake by the translator. However, the statistics will be treated as an indication of the general treatment of cultural aspects in the translations.

Looking at the total numbers, it is apparent that V2 uses more domestication than V1. While V1’s use of domestication/foreignization is balanced, V2’s use of foreignization is very low. Notable in both versions is the high rate of domestication in the
last category, which is especially marked in V1, that uses a foreignizing approach twice as often as a domesticating in the second category, and four times as often in the first category. V2 is displaying a rather balanced use of domestication/foreignization in the first category, while adopting the domesticating approach 3 times as often in the second category. Also noteworthy is the fact that only the second category contained examples that I was unable to deem either domesticating or foreignizing; one in V1 and two in V2.

5 Discussion

Before addressing the summarised results, a few points must be made about the analysis. It shows that applying Venuti’s strategies, as suspected, is not straightforward, and the degrees of domestication/foreignization are subject to debate. Moreover, it shows that the concepts are not connected to the quality of the translation, since loss in meaning is recorded in both domesticating and foreignizing examples. Instances of domesticating ‘fails’ are seen in example (3), where the ambiguity is lost, as well as in examples (18) and (29) where the phrases are omitted entirely. Instances of foreignizing ‘fails’ are seen in examples (10) and (11), where a literal translation strategy causes loss in the transfer of meaning, and in (17), also a literal translation, that risks not being understood by target readers. Example (10) is especially interesting, since the ‘failed’ foreignizing approach of V1 can be contrasted with the successful foreignizing approach of V2. A pattern can be noted in the ‘failed’ translations; those foreignizing consists of literal translation or non-translation, while those domesticating consists of omitted phrases. I therefore suggest that domestication and foreignization could be subdivided into two categories: ‘Passive’ and ‘Active’, where ‘passive foreignization’ includes literal translations and non-translations, and ‘active foreignization’ includes creative solutions that retain (otherwise) lost cultural aspects. ‘Passive domestication’ would include omissions, and ‘active domestication’ would include additions. Perhaps this division could resolve Wang’s reservations against the foreignizing strategy. Since the results of this study also contrast with Mashhady and Pourgalavi’s conclusion that foreignization is unsuitable in the transfer of culture, it seems relevant to note that a passive approach, while able to be successful in translations from English to Swedish, where the TL is highly susceptible to the SC and used to its influence, might not work as well when translating in the opposite direction, or between other languages. A use of active foreignization, however, might be better suited for cultures further apart from each other.
Moving on to the statistics, the overwhelming majority of domestication in the category of figurative use suggests that this type of language is especially difficult to translate while preserving the sense of the source culture, while V2’s comparatively high rate of foreignizing approach in the category of semantically complex words perhaps can be attributed to the creativity in passages (3) and (10), with the application of active foreignization. The variation of the results in both translations indicate that the translators have not actively used Venuti’s strategies in the translation process, and therefore it might be relevant to further separate ‘strategy’ from ‘effect’. The passive translations can be considered examples of domesticating or foreignizing effect independent of the translators’ aim, as could example (1) where the preserved ambiguity might be accidental.

The results of this study show that the complexity of cultural transfer between languages demands more complex theories than the two strategies of domestication and foreignization as they are, and that cultural transfer should be viewed in relation to the transfer of meaning; where not just the strategy of the translator, but the effect for the target reader must be taken into account. It is my conclusion that loss of culture entails loss of meaning as well as identity, and that if translators aim to actively pursue a foreignizing strategy, their translation will be richer for it.

6 Concluding Remarks

This paper has investigated how culture is transferred from English to Swedish, and found that the target language’s susceptibility to the source culture allows for non-translations or literal translations that might not work if the target readers are less familiar with the source language. The cultural aspect needs to be translated in such a way that the meaning is not lost to the target reader, and for this purpose the translator may need to adopt an active foreignizing strategy to implement creative changes. These creative changes can then compensate for the losses that are unavoidable in translation. The differences in effect between active and passive foreignization could be further investigated in future studies, and the active foreignizing strategy could be applied in translations of figurative use of language, in order to investigate whether such a strategy could help aid the translator in the transfer of cultural aspects.
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