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A Qualitative Descriptive Translation Study of

Shakespeare's

Romeo and Juliet

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Abstract

This essay is a qualitative descriptive translation study concerning two translations of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* into Swedish. The purpose of the study is to investigate the translational behaviour of the translators and the translation norms that govern this behaviour. By thoroughly analysing stretches of the play, the study will attempt to locate translation shifts (linguistic changes) that occur in the translation from the source text to the target text. These changes are connected with the translators' fidelity towards e.g. the metre of the verse or the sense transfer of puns. The analysis also comprises a survey of the translation norms that the translators adhere to. These norms, stated by the translators themselves, are connected to their translation approach. Thus, the study will reveal the differences of translation behaviour and analyse them from a wider perspective. The translations were made around 1840 and in 1982, respectively. The considerable space in time in itself suggests that linguistic differences will occur. However, the study will also find differences as regards the purposes of the translations. The older translation appears to be performed in a tradition of fidelity to the written text and its literary qualities, whereas the modern translation clearly has the purpose of being used for the stage performance. The latter is stated by the translator himself, who also argues that Shakespeare is to be considered drama and not literature.

Keywords

Equivalent, extratextual norms, literal translation, operational norms, retention, sense, skopos, source text, target text, translation shifts.

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1. Introduction

The works of William Shakespeare have been translated into Swedish over a long period of time. A comparison of two translations into Swedish from different periods (the 1840s and the 1980s) is likely to reveal that these differ from each other as regards e.g. linguistic features and literary qualities. A translation from one language into another can be seen as the product of the translator's decisions. These decisions are directed by certain norms of translation, as defined by Toury (1995; for definition, see section 3 below). This study is a qualitative analysis of a translated play following the models of descriptive translation studies (DTS), with the purpose of investigating the norms that the translators adhere to, i.e. to investigate what decisions are made during the translation, and what is directing those decisions. A thorough analysis of selected stretches of the play will connect the differences in translational behaviour to the norms that govern this behaviour.

2. Material

This essay analyses stretches of two translations into Swedish of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, by Carl August Hagberg and Göran O Eriksson. These are compared with the English text from *The Illustrated Stratford Shakespeare*, edited in 1982. The analysis concentrates on selected stretches of soliloquy and dialogue that have been presumed to be interesting as to the purpose of this study. These texts contain difficulties that make them symptomatic of the translation strategies used throughout the play. More specifically, one soliloquy will be analysed, followed by two stretches of dialogue. The soliloquy has been chosen because of its high-flown verse and its richness of imagery (see section 4). The two stretches of dialogue are characterized by puns (see section 4), and are not written in verse. The difficulty of rendering puns into another language is exemplified in the latter of these two stretches. On the whole, it can be said that the examples in this study are examples of Shakespearian language which are interesting when it comes to translation, which is why they have been selected. They are interesting because verse and puns are characteristic features that are found also in other Shakespearian plays, not only this one. The translation then reveals the decisions that a translator has to make to transfer these features into his own language. The norms that govern these decisions are defined in the subsequent section, and they are also described by the translators themselves in their comments on their translations (see section 4).

Metatexts, in the form of the translators' comments and prefaces, have also been used for the analysis in the present study. Further statements and theories of the translators have been presented by Eriksson himself (1995) and (as for Hagberg) by Molin (1929). Norms, shifts,

and other terminology belonging to translation studies are defined in the literature on translation theory used for this study. These terms and this literature are presented in the subsequent section, as well as in the analysis.

In referring to Hagberg's translation, the non-standardized Elizabethan spelling of Shakespeare as 'Shakspeare' will be used, for the sake of accuracy. This is how the name is actually spelled on the cover, the title page and in the translator's commentaries. Hagberg's translation was made around 1840 (Molin 1929:279), even though the source edition was printed in 1899. Eriksson's translation is from 1982.

3. Method

This analysis follows the methodology for descriptive translation studies developed by Toury (1995). The two translations will be referred to as the target texts (TTs), and the original text as the source text (ST). These terms will be used henceforth to refer to the translated and original texts. The results of the investigation will be presented as a micro-level descriptive and comparative analysis of the ST and the two TTs. (Consequently, the source language and the target language will be referred to as SL and TL). The two TTs are compared with the ST for shifts (see below) to identify "relationships between 'coupled pairs' of ST and TT segments" (Munday 2001:112), but they are also compared with each other. A micro-level translation description is one of the sections in a scheme for translation description proposed by Lambert and van Gorp (1985). This level of comparison between ST and TT identifies "i.e. shifts on phonic, graphic, micro-syntactic, lexico-semantic, [and] stylistic" levels, as well as the "selection of words", the "dominant grammatical patterns and formal literary structures (metre, rhyme...)", and the "narrative, perspective and point of view" (Lambert & van Gorp 1985:52). By noticing translation shifts (where the translations often differ), the operational and extratextual norms of the translators will, assumingly, be brought to light. Translation shifts are "small linguistic changes occurring in translation of ST and TT" (Munday 2001:55). Norms of translation behaviour are defined by Toury as:

the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right or wrong, adequate or inadequate – into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations.

(1995:55)

According to Toury, the translation activity is governed by these norms. They "can be expected to operate not only in translation of all kinds, but also at every stage in the translating event" (Toury 1978/2000:202). Operational norms "may be conceived of as

directing the decisions made during the act of translation itself” (Toury 1978/2000:202). This will have consequences for the relationship between ST and TT. Extratextual norms are then a source for reconstructing translational norms. Extratextual norms are norms outside the actual translation act that may still affect the translation behaviour, and they should therefore be taken into account. These norms are e.g. “semi-theoretical or critical formulations, such as prescriptive ‘theories’ of translation, statements made by translators, editors, [...] and other persons [...] connected with the activity” (Toury 1978/2000:207). The extratextual norms of the translators in this study are described in their own supplementary comments on the translations. (Eriksson also provides a preface.) These comments will be analysed as well. The micro-level analysis of the translations will investigate the adherence to the norms stated by the translators. Thus, the analysis works at a micro-level as well as from a wider, extratextual perspective.

4. Analysis

The following analysis is structured in four parts. Firstly, the extratextual material is analysed (4.1), i.e. the metatexts provided by the translators themselves and by Molin (1929). This is followed by the analysis of a soliloquy (4.2), and two dialogues (4.3) from *Romeo and Juliet*. The analysis is followed up by a discussion (4.4).

4.1 Extratextual analysis

A theatre play works in several dimensions. It is written for the stage, i.e. to be performed by the actor/s addressing the audience. The actors transfer the written text, verbally and visually, to the spectators. The addition of “paralinguistic signals” (Alm-Arvius 1998:14) to the verbal language (gestures, postures, etc.) allows the spectators to create an overall impression of the play, including visual signals such as costumes and setting. Gottlieb (1997:143, in Pedersen 2005:13) defines four semiotic channels in a polysemiotic text (e.g. films and TV-shows). A play can also be considered a polysemiotic text; the overall impression can be seen as a result of these four channels co-operating: the verbal audio channel (the verbal impression), the non-verbal audio channel (e.g. music), the verbal visual channel (e.g. signs), and the non-verbal visual channel (the visual impression).

A play is also written to be read. The actor has to read the play before s/he can commence working on his/her character, and s/he has to read it to be acquainted with the other characters, as well as the plot, in order to be artistically credible on stage. However, any person (actors included) can read any play as mere literature; a drama text does not have to be

performed to be a drama text. It can be read silently by a single person, or aloud in a group. Historically, this is known as the closet drama. Wikipedia (2008) defines “closet drama[s]” as “designed especially for reading and [not concerning] themselves with stage technique” (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). They were most popular during the 19th century, following the decay of the verse tragedy, which had been popular on the stages since the Neoclassical period. One famous example from the period is Goethe’s *Faust*, which is considered a closet drama though it has been occasionally set on stage (<http://en.wikipedia.org>). Hagberg made his Shakespeare translations in this time, when staged verse drama yielded to melodrama and comedy. This is not to say that Shakespeare plays are to be considered closet dramas. On the contrary, they are obviously meant for the stage. However, it should not be disregarded that the works of Shakespeare are (and have been) edited in book form as well as script form (for stage purposes). The immense production of the works of Shakespeare in book form seems to indicate that his works have also often been read as literature, i.e. not necessarily brought to the stage. The Hagberg editions, for example, were edited in twelve volumes (<http://runeberg.org/hagberg/>) neatly designed to embellish contemporary bookshelves. Consequently, it may be argued that the skopos for a translation like Hagberg’s was not only to be a translation for the stage, since the translation product was edited in book form. *Skopos* is a Greek word for ‘aim’ or ‘purpose’ (Munday 2001:78) and is used in translation theory as “a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation” (Vermeer 1989/2000:221) Eriksson, on the other hand, claims that *Romeo and Juliet* is “stage drama, not literature”¹ (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982: 5, my translation). His translation is in fact a stage version which he used as the director of a stage production of the play, and the divisions into scenes are his own, used for rehearsal purposes (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:7). This version was later edited in the present book form. Here, the skopos of the translation has been set for the stage rather than the bookshelves; a skopos that is coherent with the translator’s own notion that the play is not to be considered literature. Eriksson also criticized earlier translations of Shakespeare for being too literary:

It is no wonder that so many translators have felt the compulsion, when faced with the concentrated force of a Shakespeare text, to describe their experience of it rather than to transfer it into Swedish. They have wished to honour the text by elevating it to a “literary” level, sometimes with archaic style devices, or by otherwise transforming it into written language, which with us has a higher

¹ The original text reads “scendramatik, inte litteratur” (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:5).

standing than the spoken word. This has occasionally resulted in excellent closet dramas. However, the spoken language is where tradition survives.²

(Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6, my translation)

To what extent this critique is aimed at Hagberg's translations is difficult to tell. However, Eriksson's argument suggests that earlier translators have felt compelled to adhere to certain extratextual norms (see section 3) that were prevalent in the target culture during that period. Eriksson's translation approach seems to involve a desire not to adhere to the norm of transforming a play into written language. Eriksson thought that "[t]o translate for the stage is to translate spoken language; and the spoken language is a body language"³ (Eriksson 1995: 211, my translation). Hagberg's ideas on translation have been presented by Molin (1929). Hagberg "declares his respectful ambition to, with all the means at his disposal, attain and render the variations of the original"⁴ (Molin 1929:296, my translation). He wanted to "work in the spirit of the original script"⁵ (Molin 1929:318, my translation). Overall, his approach seems devoted to the written language. In his own comments to the translation of *Romeo and Juliet*, he remarks that he revised his first translation because he wanted it to be more verbatim. When comparing the first effort to the original, he found it "too free"⁶ in comparison (Hagberg, in Shakspeare 1899:187, my translation). This discussion suggests that Hagberg's translation approach is more literal than Eriksson's, because of its adherence to the literary qualities of written language, whereas Eriksson wants to render the spoken language to a greater extent because the skopos of his TT is for the stage, and because he considers the devotion to the written language a bad influence on drama translation:

That Shakespeare remains contemporary in the original but grows old in translation is due to him writing in direct contact with the spoken language, and to be spoken.⁷

(Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6, my translation)

² "Det är inte underligt att så många översättare har känt sig tvingade, när de har ställts inför den koncentrerade kraften i en Shakespearetext, att beskriva sin upplevelse av den i stället för att överföra den till svenska. De har velat hedra texten genom att lyfta upp den till en "litterär" nivå, ibland med arkaiserande stillgrepp, eller genom att på annat sätt förvandla den till skriftspråk, som hos oss har högre status än det talade ordet. Resultatet har ibland blivit utomordentliga läsdramer. Men det är i talspråket som traditionen lever." (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6)

³ "Att översätta för scenen är att översätta talspråk; och talspråket är ett kroppsspråk" (Eriksson 1995:211).

⁴ "betygar han sin ödmjuka strävan att med alla till buds stående medel söka nå och återge originalets skiftningar" (Molin 1929:296).

⁵ "verka i urskriftens anda" (Molin 1929:318).

⁶ "för fri" (Hagberg, in Shakspeare 1899:187).

⁷ "Att Shakespeare förblir en samtida i original men åldras i översättning beror på att han skrev i direkt kontakt med det talade språket, och för att talas." (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6)

At this point, it needs to be taken into account that even though a translation made by Hagberg in 1840 may seem obsolete to a modern target culture, it was probably not considered old in the target culture of 1840. The linguistic features of Hagberg's text are obsolete today because of the linguistic development of the target language between 1840 and today (e.g. the orthography and the syntax). The TT of 1840 may also have been in closer contact with the contemporary spoken language, especially perhaps the language used on stage. Both spoken language and written language undergo development. Therefore, it is proposed that all translations must grow old as a language develops. Nevertheless, it seems that Eriksson's ambition of retaining the contact with the spoken language in translation is an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of trendsetting that a more literary approach might bring (the archaism which he criticized above). As Eriksson points out, "spoken language develops, where written language imitates; spoken language preserves its roots where written language falls victim to trends"⁸ (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6, my translation). A literary translation like Hagberg's would then be more likely to stagnate over time because he looks more to the written features of the ST language, rather than the spoken features. His literary approach goes hand in hand with his literal approach. Following Eriksson's argument, one can propose that being too faithful to the ST as a written text implies that the TT may stagnate sooner than if one decides on a freer approach which does not imitate the text but rather goes deeper into the roots of the ST and transfers the talkativeness rather than the readability.

Hagberg, as mentioned, provides his own comments and remarks in addition to his translation. Eriksson adds comments as well, although they rather focus on the plot. However, he provides some interesting thoughts on translating Shakespeare in the preface. His translation, as mentioned, is for the actor and the audience, not the reader. Or, as he wrote elsewhere: "To translate a play is to attempt to interpret actors here and now, in physical interaction with each other, with an audience"⁹ (Eriksson 1995: 211, my translation). Eriksson clearly has the stage performance in mind as the purpose of translating Shakespeare, and he shares his thoughts on the problems of transferring Elizabethan spoken English into contemporary Swedish, one problem being that modern Swedish has been removed from tradition to the extent of being "desexualized"¹⁰, whereas Shakespeare's English is "vibrating

⁸ "Talspråket utvecklas, där skriftspråket härmar; talspråket bevarar sina rötter där skriftspråket faller offer för stilbildning" (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6)

⁹ "Att översätta en pjäs är att försöka tolka skådespelare här och nu, i fysiskt samspel med varandra, med en publik." (Eriksson 1995:211)

¹⁰ "avsexualiserat" (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:5)

with sexuality”¹¹ (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982: 5, my translation). This seems to be a problem, according to Eriksson, in any attempt to translate older writings into modern Swedish. The translation process negatively transforms the ST into a TT that “becomes parched”¹² (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:5, my translation). Another problem is the rich occurrence of English monosyllabic words that makes the spoken syntax so fluent. In comparison, the “polysyllabic and bumpy Swedish [feels] heavy as granite”¹³ (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982: 6, my translation).

4.2 Soliloquy

The soliloquies of Shakespeare often express the inner thoughts and intentions of the character, and are expressed in a high-flown blank verse, often rich in imagery. Imagery is defined by Booth et al. (2006) as “the use of figurative language to evoke a feeling, to call to mind an idea, or to describe an object” (Glossary, A4). Riisanen has pointed out one of the problems arising when translating Shakespeare’s imagery into Finnish: “In imagery, literary expression no doubt reaches its greatest depth and subtlety” (1971: 15). This is also the crucial point where the translator needs to find the right balance between the ST and the TT, because in imagery “the limits of translatability are brought into relief” (Riisanen 1971:15). The translator has to transfer the imagery to the TL with deference to both the metre of the verse and the sense of the imagery in the ST. At the same time, s/he has to consider the options that his or her own language offers in order to attain equivalence with the original text. Occasionally, the analysed stretches in this presentation need to be longer than a line-for-line analysis; it is sometimes necessary to view the translations in longer contexts, i.e. sentences. A long sentence of three lines or more is easier to analyse as one example than to divide it up.

Examples 1-10

The ST numerals refer to act, scene, and line. TT numerals refer to page only. The names of Hagberg and Eriksson are abbreviated as H and E, respectively.

(1) He jests at scars, that never felt a wound. (*Romeo and Juliet* II.ii.1)

H: Den ler åt ärr, som aldrig känt ett sår. (115)

¹¹ ”vibrerar av sexualitet” (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:5)

¹² ”förtorkar” (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:5).

¹³ ”känns den flerstaviga och knöliga svenskan tunghuggen som granit.” (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6)

E: Den ler åt ärr som aldrig känt nåt sår. (43)

The translators' choices are fairly similar, or rather, Eriksson seems to have borrowed Hagberg's translation (see also example 8), with the exception of choosing the unstressed indefinite pronoun *nåt* (cf. *any*) instead of the indefinite article *ett*, 'a', as the determiner. There are two other shifts from the ST. Firstly, the verb *jests* is rendered as *ler*, 'smiles', the sense of which is related to *jests*, and which retains the syllabic equivalence to the ST. Secondly, the initial pronoun *he* is translated as *den* (cf. generic *anyone* (*who*) as well as the specific *the one* (*who*)). This demonstrative is the most obvious choice in the TL.

(2) But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks? (II.ii.2)

H: Men tyst, hvad strålar genom fönstret där?

E: Sch! Vad är det som lyser där i fönstret?

Hagberg retains the iambic rhythm, while Eriksson breaks it up. The interjection *Sch!* 'Hush!' is in fact placed outside the pentameter, and the subsequent phrase is trochaic rather than iambic. The sense is transferred at the expense of the metre. The noun *light* is not literally translated but is understood through the verbs *strålar* and *lyser* respectively, near-equivalents of *shine*. *Light* and *breaks* are thus merged into one TT verb transferring the sense.

(3) It is the east, and Juliet is the sun! (II.ii.3)

H: Det östern är, och Julia är solen!

E: Öster är där, och Juliet är solen!

Hagberg's word order is rather obsolete to a modern reader/viewer, but very faithful to the rhythm. Both translations are fairly literal.

(4) Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon

Who is already sick and pale with grief,

That thou, her maid, art far more fair than she: (II.ii.4-6)

H: Gå upp, du sköna sol, och döda Luna,

Som ren är sjuk och blek af harmsen afund,

Att du, som hennes tjänarinna är,

Är mycket, mycket skönare än hon.

E: Upp vackra sol och dräp den bleka månen

Som redan tynar bort av avundsjuka
För att du lyser klarare än hon.

Hagberg uses four lines to render this sentence, or rather two lines to translate the last line. The equivalent of *maid*, *tjänarinna*, has four syllables; thus Hagberg has to use more space to be faithful to the rhythm as well as to the syntax. Furthermore, he substitutes *moon* with the Latin *Luna*, perhaps to transfer a more animate sense of the moon in order to suit the verb *döda*, ‘kill’. The modifier *envious* is omitted in the first line. Instead, it occurs as a noun, *afund*, ‘envy’, at the end of the second line replacing the noun *grief*. So *grief* as a feature is omitted from the context, but Hagberg still manages to convey the sense of the *envious moon*.

Eriksson too replaces *grief* with *avundsjuka*, ‘envy’, and he moves the adjective *pale* from the second line to use it as the modifier *bleka*, ‘pale’, in the first line, thus retaining the overall sense. In the second line, the co-ordinated adjectives *sick and pale* are replaced by the phrasal verb *tynar bort*, ‘languish’ or ‘pine away’, which describes the action rather than the state of the moon. He omits *her maid* in the last line for spatial reasons.

(5) Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off. (II.ii.7-9)
H: O, tjäna ej den afundsamma längre!
Lägg af den kyska månans bleka färger,
Blott dårar bära dem, o, lägg dem af!
E: Du, tjäna inte mer den kyska månen.
Du ser ju själv att hennes sjuka skrud
Är färgad som en narldräkt. Kasta av den.

This is a somewhat dynamic approach. In the first line, both translations have a different syntax from the ST in order to retain the flow of the verse as well as the sense. A literal translation would be too long. The noun *maid* is paraphrased into the verb *tjäna*, from which is derived the Swedish translation of *maid*, *tjänarinna*, which Eriksson omitted in (4). Hagberg renders *envious* literally, while Eriksson chooses the modifier *kyska*, ‘chaste’, which in fact is a translation of *vestal* in the second line (in this sense, a synonym of ‘chaste’). Having done this in anticipation, he uses *sjuka*, ‘sick’, as a modifier of *skrud*, ‘livery’, and the colour *green* is generalized into *färgad*, ‘coloured’, in the third line. Eriksson uses the

pronoun *du*, 'you', to enhance the sense of communication to Juliet, and he translates rather freely (sense-for-sense), e.g. by using the noun *narrdräkt*, 'fool's motley', in order to keep the sense without disturbing the metre.

Hagberg anticipates the imperative clause *cast it off* and uses the roughly corresponding *lägg dem af* from the third line in the second line (*lägg af*) to make another imperative clause, which is also a rather free approach. He paraphrases *sick and green* into *bleka färger*, 'pallid colours', but is otherwise fairly faithful to the ST. Furthermore, the sense of *envious* is lost in Eriksson's translation by his replacing it with *kyska*, 'chaste'. Instead, the erotic sense of Romeo's imagery of rivalry between Juliet (the sun) and the moon is enhanced, which charges, or excites, the soliloquy at the prospect of the coming dialogue (intercourse) with Juliet.

(6) It is my lady; O! it is my love:

O, that she knew she were! (II.ii.10-11)

H: Det är min hjärtanskär, det är min flicka:

O, att hon visste att hon vore det!

E: Ja, det är hon. Det är min älskade!

Å om hon visste det!

This passage offers little difficulty. Hagberg renders this literally, except transposing *hjärtanskär*, 'love (of my heart)', and *flicka*, 'girl', (a partial synonym of *lady*). Eriksson replaces *lady* with the personal pronoun *hon*, 'she'.

(7) She speaks, yet she says nothing: what of that?

Her eye discourses, I will answer it.

I am too bold, 't is not to me she speaks: (II.ii.12-14)

H: Hon talar, fast hon säger intet; - intet?

Jo, hennes öga talar; jag vill svara.

Jag är för djärf; hon talar ej till mig.

E: Hon talar. Men hon säger ingenting.

Än sen då! Ögat talar. Jag ska svara.

Nej nej, det är inte till mig hon talar.

The only challenge here for the translators is to make the TT syntax suit the ST verse. Eriksson's approach is somewhat less poetic and less literal than Hagberg's. *Än sen då*, 'so what', and *nej nej*, 'no no', are interpretations rather than translations of Romeo's dialogue with himself; devices of spoken language emphasizing that Romeo is debating with himself.

- (8) Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do entreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres till they return. (II.ii.15-17)
H: Två stjärnor av de klaraste på himlen
Ha fått förfall – bedt hennes ögon tindra
I deras sfärer, tills de komma åter. (116)
E: Två av de vackraste av himlens stjärnor
Har fått förhinder och bett hennes ögon
Tindra i deras sfärer tills de kommer.

In translating the phrase *To twinkle [...] return*, it is obvious that Eriksson has (almost) kept, perhaps borrowed, Hagberg's translation. In his comments, Eriksson admits to borrowing some of Hagberg's lines, because he would not be able to formulate them as beautifully as Hagberg (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:148). This exemplifies that the ST is not the only source for a translator to use. Existing TTs may already have offered the best solution, as Eriksson seems to think in this situation.

- (9) What if her eyes were there, they in her head?
The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As daylight doth a lamp: her eye in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night. (II.ii.18-22)
H: Men tänk om hennes ögon sutte där
Och stjärnorna inunder hennes panna?
Då skulle hennes kinders klara ljus
Fördunkla stjärnorna som dagsljus lampan,
Och hennes ögon genom eterns rymder
Med sådan flod av klara strålar glittra,
Att fåglarna på kvist begynte kvittra,
Uti den tron att natten var förbi.

E: Tänk om det var så! Och om de i gengäld
 Satt där på henne! Å, de anletsdragen
 Skulle få stjärnorna att blekna bort
 Som lampor när det gryr. Och hennes ögon
 De skulle stråla med sånt sken från himlen
 Så fåglar sjöng och trodde det var dag.

To satisfactorily render the poetic imagery in the five lines of the ST, Hagberg has to use eight lines while Eriksson uses six. The richness of monosyllabic words in the ST, which Eriksson points out (see section 2), is clearly seen in Shakespeare's first and last line, containing only such words. This makes it almost impossible for a Swedish translator to render line for line, although Eriksson succeeds in his last line. The quality of poetry is more retained in Hagberg's approach, but is more space-consuming. Eriksson's approach is less literary, more aiming towards the spoken language, the language of an actor performing the scene, or the language of a lovesick young character like Romeo, having Juliet in mind rather than making poetry. In other words, Eriksson seems to aim more towards the situation of the characters in the play, their will and their actions. A token of Hagberg's more literary approach can be seen in his intention to be faithful to Shakespeare's rhyme in the two last lines, *bright – night*. These words do not have rhyming equivalents in the TL. Instead, Hagberg tallies two translated verbs from each line, *glittra*, 'glitter' (his translation of *stream*), and *kvittra*, 'twitter' or 'chirp' (his translation of *sing*). It is not a translation of Shakespeare's words, but rather a transfer of – and fidelity to – the poetic form.

(10) See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
 O! that I were a glove upon that hand,
 That I might touch that cheek! (II.ii.23-25)
 H: Se, hur hon lutar kinden mot sin hand!
 O, vore jag en handske på den handen!
 Jag rörde då vid hennes kind;
 E: Titta, nu lutar hon sin kind i handen.
 Å om jag var en handske på den handen,
 Då rörde jag den kinden!

The concluding lines of Romeo's soliloquy offer no difficulties for the translators. The TL equivalents fit well into the metric, and syntactic, structure of the TT.

4.3 Puns in dialogue

A pun is “a witticism which relies for its success on the playing with the different meanings of a word or bringing together two words with the same or similar form but different meanings” (Crystal 1992:320-321). Puns are difficult to transfer into another language. The joke is often lost in literal translation. However, if the SL and TL are linguistically close (e.g. Germanic languages such as English and Swedish), there is sometimes a chance that a pun may work in the TL as well. As seen below, it is possible to make Swedish puns of the translations of e.g. *coal* and *choler*. If the puns are not transferable themselves, the translator may still be able to transfer the sense of punning by adapting existing puns from the culture of the target language into the TT. This dialogue between two servants is not written in verse, so the translators are not bound to the metre as otherwise. This omits one dimension of translating Shakespeare and may open the field to a freer approach towards the text, since the translators’ choices do not depend on spatial parameters.

The following example is the opening scene of the play, where Sampson and Gregory enter carrying (probably heavy) swords and shields.

Examples 11-13

(11) Sampson: Gregory, on my word, we’ll not carry coals.

Gregory: No, for then we should be colliers. (I.i.1-3)

H: S: På min heder, Gregorio, vi låter inte göra kål på oss vi.

G: Nej, då vore vi ju kolare. (93)

E: S: Du, Gregory, oss sätter de sig inte på.

G: Nej, då blev vi ju påsatta. (11)

The phrase [*to*] *carry coals* has an idiomatic sense in the SL. It is a phrase “used by early dramatists” meaning “to bear indignities tamely” (<http://dictionary.die.net> 2008), or to “submit to be ‘put upon’ ” (<http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org> 2008). Hagberg makes a pun in the TL using the Swedish idiom *göra kål på*, ‘nearly kill’, where Sw. *kål*, ‘cabbage’, is a homophone of Sw. *kol*, ‘coal’. This corresponds with ST *coals* as well as *kolare*, ‘collier’, in the second line, which is literally translated. He is more devoted to the literal transfer of the words in the ST (than Eriksson), and the idiomatic sense of *göra kål på* is somewhat deviant from that of *carry coals*.

Eriksson makes a TL pun with no literal reference to the ST (*coal/kål*), rather producing a sense paraphrase ('put upon'). The phrase *oss sätter de sig inte på*, 'we won't let ourselves be put upon', answers to *påsatta*, 'screwed', literally, 'put upon', in the next line, which results in an erotic, TL-oriented, pun. He retains and transfers the idiomatic sense of *carry coals* ('submit to be put upon') more directly than Hagberg, but avoids the effort of translating *coal/collier* for the same purpose.

(12) Sampson: I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

Gregory: Ay, while you live, draw your neck out o' the collar. (I.i.4-7)

H: S: Jag menar, om vi bli koleriska, så ta vi till pliten.

G: Åh, drag du kollern ur hufvudet först, medan du ännu har det i behåll.

E: S: Jag menar, vad har vi värjorna till om vi inte drar dem.

G: Det drar vi oss inte för, menar du. (12)

Shakespeare develops the punning around the word *coal*, and Hagberg follows the pattern, staying fairly close to the ST, using *kolerisk*, 'choleric', and *kollern* (a horse disease). Eriksson's interpretation plays with the verb *drar*, 'draw' (i.e. the constructions *dra värjorna*, 'draw swords' and *inte dra sig för*, 'not hesitate'), which makes sense only in the TL.

(13) Sampson: I strike quickly, being moved.

Gregory: But thou art not quickly moved to strike. (I.i.8-10)

H: S: Jag slår kvickt till, bara jag kommer i farten.

G: Men du kommer inte så lätt i farten att slå till.

E: S: Jag stöter fort bara jag får upp den.

G: Men du får inte upp den så fort så det stör.

This is an instance of chiasmus with punning qualities, based on the effect obtained by shifting the order of the words within the sentence. Both translations reflect this strategy, although Hagberg uses two adverbs, both *kvickt*, 'quickly', and *lätt*, 'easily', since the latter is more suitable within the TT in the second line. Eriksson overtly stresses the erotic allusions, making them more obvious in the TT than they are in the ST. The phrase *bara jag får upp den*, 'if I only get it up', clearly suggests more than just the sword.

The following dialogue between Romeo and Mercutio has been translated by Eriksson, while Hagberg in fact omits parts of it. Here, Romeo meets his comrades Mercutio and

Benvolio on the morning after the scene by the balcony. He explains why he disappeared during the night, which leads to this witty dialogue with its sexual undertones.

Examples 14-15

(14) Romeo: Why, then is my pump well flowered.

Mercutio: Sure wit: follow me this jest now, till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular. (II.iv.62-66)

H: R: Liksom mina skor med sina granna rosor. (125)

M: Bra sagdt! Gå på med det här skämtet, tills du har slitit ut dina skor. (126)

E: R: Aha! ett bistånd. Synd att jag inte har min blommiga skjorta, men det är ju en bisak. Vad gillar du den här?

M: Vacker som din vits, och lika skrynklig. Dra inte ut den för långt bara, då blir den plattare fattaru. (57)

According to Eriksson, this is one of the passages in the play where the jargon is impossible to translate directly. Passages like these have to be “completely re-written, since they become incomprehensible or completely pointless in direct translation”¹⁴ (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6, my translation). Hagberg stays close to the ST; he translates *pump* into *skor*, ‘shoes’, which is a literal translation, but the erotic sense of *pump* in the ST, which is the actual punning in the dialogue, is lost in translation. The rest of Mercutio’s line is omitted by Hagberg. The punning of *sole* and *solely* cannot be transferred literally into the TT. Then follows several lines which Hagberg has deliberately omitted (while Eriksson has not), for example:

(15) Romeo: O single-soled jest! solely singular for the singleness.

Mercutio: Come between us, good Benvolio; my wit faints.

Romeo: Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I’ll cry a match.

Mercutio: Nay, if our wits run the wild-goose chase, I am done;

for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one of thy wits, than, I am sure,

I have in my whole five. Was I with you there for the goose? (II.iv.67-76)

E: R: Som din gadd. Är den ditt bidrag?

¹⁴ ”skrivs om helt, eftersom de blir obegripliga eller totalt poänglösa vid direkt översättning.” (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:6)

M: Bilägg, snälla Benvolio! Min espri sviktar.

R: Sporra den då, sporra den! annars har jag vunnit.

M: Å, ska vi rida efter räv? Du har ju din bakom örat, det är därför den är så våt om fötterna. Fick den sig nån höna i natt, eller var hönsgården stängd?

Hagberg has omitted these stretches because they “cannot be comfortably and naturally rendered”¹⁵ (Hagberg, in Shakspeare [sic!] 1899:184, my translation). He says, on the one hand, that his “great respect for every line, written by Shakspeare, would have forbidden him this [...] omission”¹⁶ (Hagberg, in Shakspeare 1899:184, my translation), but he also argues that the puns in the rest of the rendered dialogue convey sufficient information for the dialogue to be comprehensible (Hagberg, in Shakspeare 1899:184). Eriksson translates the entire passage, but the punning is adapted (changed) to cohere with cultural references in the TL. Adaptation in translation theory, as defined by Vinay and Darbelnet, “is used in those cases where the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL culture” (Vinay & Dalbernet 1958/2000:90-91). The idiom of running *the wild-goose chase* is SL-oriented; thus Eriksson adapts the situation to TL references. The punning of *bi*, ‘bee’, in the TT is the translator’s own invention. He claims that “it is not the quality of the puns that is the essential in the scene (it is the reunion of the three comrades)”¹⁷ (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:7, my translation). Eriksson has the characters in mind (and thus the actors), whereas Hagberg pays his respect to the text.

4.4 Discussion

The analysis shows examples of soliloquy and dialogue of puns, where Hagberg’s literal and literary approach is contrasted to Eriksson’s freer approach aiming for the stage. A good example is (9), where Hagberg’s ambition to retain the poetic qualities compels him to extend the verse of the TT. Eriksson’s ambition, on the other hand, is to render the qualities of the spoken language at the expense of literal and literary equivalence. Hagberg shows more deference to the poetic qualities (in the ST) of Romeo’s famous soliloquy by the balcony than Eriksson, who, bearing the actor in mind, tries to bring out the erotic sense of the imagery, as seen in (5). Eriksson’s TT is more accessible and comprehensible to a modern reader, but it

¹⁵ ”icke kunna rätt ledigt och naturligt återgifvas.” (Hagberg, in Shakspeare 1899:184)

¹⁶ ”stora vördnad för hvarje rad, skrifven af Shakspeare, skulle hafva förbjudit honom denna [...] uteslutning” (Hagberg, in Shakspeare 1899:184).

¹⁷ ”det är inte vitsarnas kvalitet som är det väsentliga i scenen (det är återföreningen mellan de tre kamraterna).” (Eriksson, in Shakespeare 1982:7)

lacks the beauty and high-flown expressions of Hagberg's text. In the translation of puns, Eriksson deliberately re-writes parts of the dialogue to cohere with the TL as well as target culture references. The differing ambitions of the translators, due to the respective skopoi of their translations, lead to their making different decisions during the translation. This, consequently, suggests that their operational norms differ as well. In (2) and (3), for example, Eriksson is not as faithful to the iambic rhythm of the ST as Hagberg. As a director for the modern stage, he seems to pay more attention to the intrinsic drama of the text, regardless of the verse. Hagberg seems to be more faithful to the written text and the rhythm of the verse. However, it can be argued that the retention of the poetry in his translation has grown obsolete to a modern actor or a theatre audience, which is probably the reason why translators like Eriksson have decided to adapt Shakespeare to a more modern language. The literary qualities of Hagberg's translations, however, make them still suitable for reading. The considerable space of time between the productions of the two translations suggests that the respective contemporary extratextual norms of the target cultures caused the differences in translation behaviour. The differences between the translations shown by the micro-level analysis of the examples are symptoms of these extratextual norms.

5. Conclusion

This qualitative descriptive translation study has compared two different Swedish Shakespeare translations with the original text. The micro-level analysis of selected stretches of the play has been looking for translation shifts in each translation. These shifts have shown similarities as well as differences in translation behaviour. The extratextual norms to which the translators adhere have been presented and analysed. The differences between the translations have been connected to these norms. The translators have adhered to operational norms that, assumingly, are a result of their respective contemporary extratextual norms regarding translation. It has been argued that Hagberg adheres to a more literal and literary approach whereas Eriksson translates more freely with the spoken performance in mind. This suggests that the skopos of Hagberg's translation was that it should function as literature as well as drama because of its literary qualities. Eriksson, on the other hand, with his background as a director, claims that the ST is to be considered drama and not literature.

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