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What procedures were employed in the translation of names in Winnie-the-Pooh into Norwegian?

How do they affect the story for the target text readers?

Bachelor's project in Bachelor in English

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Introduction

This thesis focuses on the translation of names in Winnie-the-Pooh from English to Norwegian. The first book about Winnie-the-Pooh was originally written by Alan Alexander Milne and was published in 1926. It was translated to Norwegian in 1932 by Rikka Deinboll. Even though the story was published almost 100 years ago, it is a story most children all over the world know. The story of Winnie-the-Pooh is narrated by Christopher Robin, and the plot is all part of his imagination, which becomes quite evident by the way the story is told. The names are all made up by him, which leads to the names being childlike, simple and self-explanatory.

Translation of names and translation of children's literature are two complex areas of translation, with many different dilemmas. When combining the two, it is important to keep the names interesting to the target text reader, as well as not adapting the name to the extent where the target text seems like a different text than the source text. It is impossible to view names as just linguistic elements, they have to be viewed from their own, distinct origin (Bertills, 2003: 186). As a result of this, the translator has many different factors to consider when choosing how to translate the names. The research question for this thesis is what strategies or procedures were employed in the translation of names in Winnie the Pooh into Norwegian, and how do they affect the story for the target text readers?

Theory and method

The article "Children's literature and translation" is written by Cecilie Alvstad, and as the title reveals it discusses different areas of children's literature that causes an extra challenge for translators. Alvstad mentions five traits that are considered to be important characteristics of children's literature, and the issues they cause when translating. The traits are cultural context adaptation, ideological manipulation, dual readership, features of orality, and the relationship between text and image (2010). When it comes to translation of names, it is the cultural context adaptation, the dual readership and the features of orality that are important.

The cultural context adaptation that Alvstad discusses concerns the translation of things like proper names, historical background and foreign language. Children's literature should be produced with children's different needs and abilities in mind, and if a translator keeps all the original references, the target text won't appeal to the target text readers in the same way it appeals to the source text readers (Alvstad, 2010: 22). The trait of dual readership is based on

the fact that children's literature often is read by several adults, like teachers, parents, publishers etc. Because of this, there is sometimes an official target audience of a text, the children, as well as an unofficial audience, the adults (Alvstad, 2010: 24). The references made by the author or the translator to the adults can be things like a satirical tone, or a deeper meaning to a name that a child won't understand. When it comes to the features of orality, children's literature often contains rhymes, wordplay and a certain kind of rhythm that can be difficult to translate. This may lead to the translator having to choose between either the sound or the content of the text when translating (Alvstad, 2010: 24).

Yvonne Bertills has written the book *Beyond Identification* (2003), where she discusses different issues concerning children's literature and translation of names. Children's literature is written and translated by adults, but it is made for children, so the language in both the source and target text should appeal to children. Bertills mentions an argument made by Nikolajeva (1996), arguing that when translating children's literature, a translator is not just supposed to transmit the meaning of the text to the target audience, but they need to induce the same types of feelings, associations and thoughts as the source text reader experiences (Bertills, 2003: 191). As this can be challenging to achieve, it may lead to the target text being unnecessarily adapted, and risks losing some of the functions of the original text.

Further on, Bertills discusses how a translation is influenced by the translator's views of, and attitudes towards, both children, childhood and children's literature (2003: 189). As mentioned previously, Rikka Deinboll was the translator of the first Norwegian version of Winnie-the-Pooh. Deinboll was a Norwegian librarian, where she mostly worked in the children's section of the library. Throughout her life she worked closely with children's literature, both at Norwegian and American libraries (Tenfjord, 2009). She also published two different works where she collected different rhymes and verses aimed at children. Winnie-the-Pooh was only one of several children's books she translated into Norwegian (Tenfjord, 2009).

There are three theories that are included in this thesis, the polysystem theory, Epstein's theory for translation of names in children's literature, and Toury's three-phase method. The polysystem theory was developed by Itamar Even-Zohar in the 1970s, where he describes the polysystem as a system of other systems. These systems have different similarities as well as differences, but they still function as a whole, as they are dependent of each other (Munday,

2016: 171). They consider the human patterns in literature, which makes it easier to detect both familiar and new, unfamiliar phenomena, and when they do occur (Even-Zohar, 1979). There is a dynamic relationship between these systems and their positioning, which leads to the positioning of translated literature taking both a primary and a secondary position. However, it is most common for translated literature to take on a secondary position, where it functions as a minor system with no significant influence on the polysystem (Munday, 2016: 172).

Zohar Shavit has written an article where he discusses translation of children's literature in general, as he believes that there are a few general patterns this type of translation typically follows. In Even-Zohar's polysystem, children's literature typically holds a lower position, which could lead to translators allowing themselves greater liberties than translators of literature higher in the polysystem can (Shavit, 1981: 171). Because of this peripheral position, a translator of children's literature is more liberated when translating a text, than the translator of a primary text is, as long as they follow a few principles. The first principle is to adjust the text to be suitable and functional to the child, and it has to correlate with what society finds good for the child. The second principle is to adjust the plot, characters and language so that children understand everything, and are able to read it (Shavit, 1981: 172). At the time *Winnie-the-Pooh* was published, the first principle was considered the most important.

B. J. Epstein has written the book *Translating Expressive Language in Children's Literature – Problems and Solutions*, which, as the title reveals, discusses different difficulties with translating children's literature. When it comes to the usage of proper names in children's literature, they often tell the reader certain personality traits about the characters, in addition to setting expectations which may or may not be fulfilled throughout the story (Epstein, 2012: 68). The more a name tells about a character, the fewer words the author will have to use to describe each character, which is important when it comes to children's literature, as these books typically are limited in length (Epstein, 2012: 68). In addition, more creative names might arouse different emotions in the young readers and interests them more. As the names have such importance, they might be extra difficult to translate without losing any values or important connotations.

Epstein has made a table for the process of the translation of names in children's literature. This table includes four different steps - analyzing the function of the name in the target text, analyzing the role of the name, or similar names, in both the target- and the source culture, which is important to do from a child's point of view, as they are the intended readers. The third step is to look at other translations made of the name, or similar ones, and the final step is to choose what kind of translational strategy to use (Epstein, 2012: 78-79). The goal of this approach is to keep as many of the names' connotations and associations intact in the translated version.

The different translational strategies Epstein refers to are retention, replacement, deletion, addition, adaption, explanation and literal translation, where she mentions that retention is the most commonly used approach (Epstein, 2012: 75). If retention is your chosen strategy, the name from the source text is kept the way it is written in the source text. Adaption is used to adjust the spelling, grammar or some other part of the name, to make it fit better into the target text. According to Epstein, deletion, explanation and literal translation are the least used techniques. Explanation is used when a name has many associations to the source text readers, but there is no way to translate it and have it mean the same to the target text readers. Deletion means either the deletion of a part of a name, or the character in itself (Epstein, 2012: 85).

The three-phase method is a theory firmly set within a descriptive framework, made by Gideon Toury. Toury's approach is mainly built on Holmes' map of translations studies. In the map, descriptive studies have three subgroups of research – function-, process-, and product-oriented (Toury, 2012: 5). Together these approaches will give you more or less the full insight into a translated text. Toury proposes a model for how these subgroups belong together in translation. The first step is the function-oriented part of the strategy, which is to systematically position the text in a target culture and find out its function. The second step is the product-oriented part, which consists of figuring out the appropriate realization of the target text in the target culture. The final step is the process-oriented part, which consists of figuring out what the relationship between the source- and the target text, and figuring out what processes have been used in the translation (Toury, 2012: 7). This is the method I have chosen to use when finding the data for this thesis.

Analysis and data

The Norwegian data included is from the first Norwegian translation made in 1932. At this point the Norwegian language was in many ways affected by Danish, which it no longer is. Therefore, there may be some differences in the names we see here, and the names used in translations that were made later – like Peter Sprett, that later has been changed to Petter Sprett.

The English data included is retrieved from a PDF found online. The page that posted the PDF is a page that works on posting different books online, and it correlates with the other sources I have found on *Winnie-the-Pooh*.

Main characters (Table 1)

	English	Norwegian	Procedure
1	Winnie-the-Pooh/Winnie-ther-Pooh	Ole Brumm	Replacement
2	Christopher Robin	Kristoffer Robin	Adaption
3	Piglet	Nasse-Nøff	Replacement + Addition
4	Rabbit	Peter Sprett	Replacement + Addition
5	Eeyore	Tussi	Replacement
6	Owl	Uglen	Literal translation
8	Kanga	Kengu	Adaption
9	Baby Roo	Kengubarnet	Adaption

As we can see in (1), Winnie-the-Pooh has two different spellings that both occur frequently in the book. There is no explanation to why there are two different spellings, but the narrator explains Winnie-ther-Pooh's meaning. "Winnie" is a unisex name of Welsh origin, that is more commonly used for girls than it is for boys. The narrator of the book explains

«When I first heard his name, I said, just as you are going to say, 'But I thought he was a boy?' 'So did I,' said Christopher Robin. 'Then you can't call him Winnie?' 'I don't. "But you said—" "He's Winnie-ther-Pooh. Don't you know what 'ther' means?" "Ah, yes, now I do," I said quickly; and I hope you do too, because it is all the explanation you are going to get.» (Milne, 1927: 3).

The word “ther” is not a traditional word in the English dictionary, but it could show the playful and childlike way of naming characters that the book has. The story is based on Christopher Robin’s imagination, and he is the one naming all the other characters. The fact that “Winnie” is commonly used as a girl name does not matter to Christopher Robin because that is the name he chose. This childlike way of thinking is also mirrored in the rest of his name. In the introduction to the book, the narrator describes that in a previous book about Christopher Robin, he had named a swan Pooh. After they had parted ways, Christopher Robin imagined that the swan did not need – or want – this name any longer. However, Winnie-the-Pooh, or Edward Bear as his name was at that point, wanted an exciting name, which was when Christopher Robin first gave him the name Winnie-the-Pooh (Milne, 1927: 1).

In the Norwegian translation, Deinboll has not included either the explanation of the name “Pooh”, or the explanation of “ther”. The character’s first name in the Norwegian translation, Ole, is not a unisex name. Instead, Deinboll chose a very common boy name in Norway, especially around the time the book was published. The second part, “Brumm” could be described as an onomatopoeia – the sound a bear would make according to Norwegians. Even though the name is child-friendly, it loses some of its playful connotations that there is in the original name.

In (5) Deinboll was faced with another issue that could be difficult to solve. “Eeyore” is the name of a sad and lonely donkey, where the name takes from the phonetic spelling of the sound a donkey makes. The author of the source text, A. A. Milne, is British, and the British pronunciation of the word “Eeyore” resembles the sound a donkey makes. However, in the Norwegian translation, it has been translated into “Tussi”, which in no way resembles the sound of a donkey. In both “Eeyore” and “Tussi” there are two syllables, which seems to be the only similarity between the structure of the names. “Tussi” seems to be a name that Deinboll has made up herself, as there is no real meaning behind it. However, it has a few different connotations. The word slightly resembles the Norwegian word “stusselig”, which translates to “miserable”, which in many ways is descriptive of his character, which is likely that Deinboll also thought of when naming him. In addition, the name is a typical name of a pet, with the “-i” ending.

Other characters (Table 2)

	English	Norwegian	Procedure
10	Trespassers William	Adgang Fridtjof	Replacement
11	Henry Pootel	Basse	Deletion + Replacement
12	Alexander Beetle	Aleksander Bille	Adaption + Literal translation

(10) is a name the characters read on a sign, and the name of Piglet’s grandfather. Both names are supposed to be the character’s first names, which seems to be the result of Christopher Robin’s imagination, as well as his lack of understanding. Piglet explains “And his grandfather had had two names in case he lost one—Trespassers after an uncle, and William after Trespassers” (Milne, 1927: 14) Trespassers is the English word for someone walking where they are not supposed to walk, and William is a name that was extremely popular in England at the time of the publication of the book. William means both “desire” and “protection”, and was a name commonly used by royals. Deinboll has decided to translate this into “Adgang Fridtjof”. “Adgang” has two different meanings, either the path to a place, or getting the permission to walk somewhere. Either way, it does not have the same connotations as the English word does, which gives the target text readers a slightly different impression of this character than the source text readers receive. “Fridtjof” means “peace” and “thief” and was not as commonly used in Norway, as William was in England. However, the famous explorer Fridtjof Nansen went on his expedition across Greenland and the North around thirty years before Winnie-the-Pooh was published and could be the reason why Deinboll chose to give him this name. Both the English and the Norwegian name implies that the character went on expeditions, which seems like a natural connection with the name Fridtjof, and one that the Norwegian audience most likely could understand. This leads to the associations source text and target text readers get while reading the text being similar.

Henry Pootel is briefly mentioned in the story. Piglet takes Baby Roo’s place in Kanga’s pouch as a practical joke, but Kanga does not notice that it is Piglet in her pouch and not Baby Roo. As a way of getting Piglet out of that situation, Christopher Robin tells Kanga that it is one of Pooh’s family members, which results in the name being similar to Winnie-the-Pooh’s nickname – Pooh. In addition to the resemblance to “Pooh”, the first letter of Pootel matches the first letter in Piglet’s name.

In the Norwegian version, Deinboll seems to have considered a passage that comes shortly after Christopher Robin gives him the name when deciding what his name should be. In the English version, Milne writes that “Never had Henry Pootel Piglet run so fast [...]” (Milne, 1927: 46), where he calls him both by “Henry Pootel” and by “Piglet”. Deinboll has translated this sentence into “Aldri hadde Basse Nøff sprunget så fort [...]” (Milne, 1932: 99), meaning that her name choice was inspired by Piglet rather than Pooh.

Nicknames (Table 3)

	English	Norwegian	Procedure
13	Edward Bear	Teddy-Bjørnen	Replacement
14	Pooh Bear	Ole Brumm	Deletion
15	Pooh	Brumm	Replacement
16	Bear	Bamse	Literal translation
17	Little Piglet	Lille Nøff	Literal translation
18	Roo	Kengubarnet	Deletion
19	Rabbit	Sprett	Addition

In the source text, Winnie-the-Pooh’s original name is Edward Bear, but he is typically referred to by other names. The narrator explains, “*EDWARD BEAR, known to his friends as Winnie-the-Pooh, or Pooh for short, was walking through the forest one day, humming proudly to himself*” (Milne, 1927: 2). However, in the Norwegian version of the book, this sentence has been translated to “*Teddy-Bjørnen, kalt Ole Brumm eller bare Brumm, gikk en dag gjennom skogen og nynet stolt for sig selv*” (Deinboll, 1932: 7). This directly translates to English as, “The teddy bear, called Ole Brumm or just Brumm [...]”. As we can see, Deinboll has omitted the fact that Winnie-the-Pooh originally had a different name, and rather just calls him by “Ole Brumm”, the equivalent of Winnie-the-Pooh.

In addition to this, there are a few nicknames that are not included in the translated version, like “Pooh Bear” and “Roo”. Baby Roo is frequently just called Roo in the English version, but in the Norwegian translation, it is consistently translated to “Kengubarnet”, the original name. However, there is also added a nickname to the target text that does not exist in the source text – “Sprett”, which is an abbreviation of his original name “Peter Sprett”.

Names of places (Table 4)

	English	Norwegian	Procedure
20	Sanders	Sanders	Retention
21	Hundred Acre Wood	Hundre-meter-skogen	Literal translation
22	The Chestnuts	Kastanjen	Literal translation
23	Six Pine Trees	Seks Furuer	Literal translation

As we can see, the names of places are the names Deinboll has done the least with. (20) is the only name in the entire text that has been retained. The name does work well in Norwegian, even if it is not the typical Norwegian name of a forest.

Discussion

As mentioned previously, names in children's literature are important tools to reveal information about the characters and the plot. What is important to remember when translating these names is that they should evoke the same feelings in the target text readers, as they do in the source text readers (Bertills, 2003 :194). As we can see in the data found, Deinboll has made an effort in translating the names for this to be fulfilled.

If we go back to Epstein's translational strategies, adaption and replacement are Deinboll's most used techniques when translating the proper names of the characters. Epstein explains that adaption happens when the name works in the target culture, but something could be changed for it to fit better, like changing the spelling of Christopher in (2), to the Norwegian way of spelling the name, Kristoffer. This could be so that children who know how to read will be sure how to pronounce the name (Epstein, 2012: 83). Replacement has been used when the literal translation of the names have unsatisfying results.

Some of the names, like Piglet and Rabbit have been both replaced and added to in the Norwegian translations. However, there does not seem to be a clear system to when Deinboll did this. Both Rabbit and Piglet are originally named after what animal they are, and Deinboll named them based on some of their qualities instead, like "Nøff" in Nasse Nøff, which is the Norwegian word for what a pig says, or "Sprett" in Petter Sprett, which directly translates to "Bounce". It would be natural to think that Deinboll chose to do this with all the names that were based off the animal they were, but in (6) she chose literal translation as her translation strategy.

As mentioned previously, the names of the different places seem to be the category where Deinboll chose the most similar strategies. In (21)-(23) she chose literal translation as her strategies, which makes sense as all the translations work well in Norwegian. In (20), her chosen strategy is to retain the original name, which is the only time she does this. As Alvstad mentions, it is important to keep a child's abilities and levels of understanding in mind when translating children's literature. However, this name works just fine in Norwegian, which seems to be Deinboll's conclusion as well.

When considering the translation of the names, Deinboll has kept cultural context adaption and features of orality in mind. Most of the names are as childish and playful as the names in the source text are. This childishness and playfulness make the names easy to pronounce, even for fairly young children, that are the intended audience of these books. They are easy to pronounce and easy to remember, as there is a rhythm to many of the names, especially of the main characters. There does not seem to be any complex meanings behind the name, but this goes for both the source text and the target text. Deinboll has added a rhythm and alliteration to some of the names that are not in the original text, like in Piglet's name – Nasse Nøff. When it comes to the part of a dual readership, the names seem to be mainly directed toward the children.

In comparison, the nicknames are the most inconsistent in strategy choices. In the English version, Winnie-the-Pooh has four different nicknames, while this has been reduced to three in the Norwegian version. However, looking at the translations Deinboll has made in (15) and (16), it would not make sense to combine the Norwegian versions of these two names. "Pooh" has the advantage in that it does not mean anything particular in the source language, so Milne could set the limits for the meaning of the name. The Norwegian translation "Brumm" is, as mentioned earlier, an onomatopoeia, and something that could be used to describe a bear. To pair this with a different word for bear, like "bamse" is would come off as inconvenient and unnecessary. In addition to Pooh's nicknames, Deinboll has also added a nickname the source text does not have - Sprett.

Shavit's first principle a translator of children's literature has to follow is to adjust the text to be suitable and functional to the child, and it has to correlate with what society finds good for the child. The translations Deinboll has made of the names in this story seems to follow this principle, keeping the target culture in mind when deciding what the names should be.

Conclusion

As a conclusion, the research question for this thesis was what strategies or procedures were employed in the translation of names in Winnie the Pooh into Norwegian, and how do they affect the story for the target text readers. Winnie-the-Pooh was translated by Rikka Deinboll, a librarian with seemingly a lot of experience from both children, and children's literature, which seems to have affected the translation of the names. As Bertills mentions, the translator's point of view on children and childhood will affect how the translations are executed (2003, 189). The theories I decided to include are the polysystem theory, Toury's three-phase method, and Epstein's theory for translation of names in children's literature. Typically, because of children's literature's low position in the polysystem, a translator can allow themselves greater liberties than translators of literatures higher positioned in the polysystem, as long as the target text makes sense.

When it comes to the translation of the names, there does not seem to be a clear system in the translation strategies Deinboll has chosen. The strategies used most common by her are replacement, adaption and literal translation. However, it seems like Deinboll's intentions when translating the names were to interest the target audience and create names that give the target text readers the same emotions and associations as the source text reader experiences. By choosing one specific strategy, she could risk ending up with names that do not make sense, or that don't have the same associations in the target language as in the source language. The name that seems to have "suffered" the most in this translation is the main character himself, where the playful, unisex name has been translated into a common, but child-friendly name.

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