



SWEDISH CORRESPONDENCES TO  
DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF  
THE ENGLISH *OF*-GENITIVE

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## ABSTRACT

The English *of*-genitive is interesting because of its diversity in meanings, and in relation to Swedish, since the Swedish language does not have an equivalent. In this essay it is investigated, by use of four source texts (two English and two Swedish) and their translations, what Swedish correspondences there are to the *of*-genitive. The *of*-genitive is divided into seven categories of meaning, and it is investigated whether there is a correlation between the English genitive meaning and its Swedish correspondent forms. The results show that the main Swedish correspondences are s-genitives and prepositional phrases, and imply that there *is* something of a correlation between genitive meanings and Swedish correspondences; genitives of attribute, subjective genitives, possessive genitives and genitives of measure correspond to a great extent to Swedish s-genitives, whereas objective genitives and genitives of origin correspond greatly to Swedish prepositional phrases.

Key words: Swedish, English, translation, *of*-genitive, genitive meanings

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## 1. Introduction

The English language can be said to have two genitive forms (not counting possessive pronouns): the 's genitive and the *of*-genitive (Greenbaum & Quirk, 1990:103). In Swedish, however, the only existing genitive form (not counting possessive pronouns) is the s-genitive (Josefsson, 2001:27); there is, thus, no direct Swedish equivalent to the English *of*-genitive. Added to this, as stated by Ramhøj (2010:30), the *of*-genitive is a common difficulty when translating from English into Swedish. For these reasons, it is of interest to investigate how the *of*-genitive is dealt with in translations; which Swedish forms *of*-genitives are translated into, and which Swedish forms are translated into *of*-genitive constructions. Furthermore, the *of*-genitive is very diverse in its meanings, and it is therefore of interest to investigate whether there is a correlation between the meaning of an *of*-genitive and its Swedish correspondence.

Svartvik & Sager state that the Swedish s-genitive and Swedish prepositional phrases both correspond to the English *of*-genitive (1996:155-156); this, of course, appears quite logical, considering the fact that *of*-genitives are prepositional phrases which function as genitives. According to Ramhøj, the *of*-genitive, when translated, is often transposed; i.e. the word class is changed, but the meaning is the same as in the original expression. The transpositions Ramhøj discusses consist among other things of restrictive relative clauses (2010:9-10, 30).

### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this essay is to investigate what English *of*-genitives correspond to in Swedish, and whether there is a correlation between the meanings of English *of*-genitives and what Swedish correspondences they have.

## 2. Material and Method

In order for there to be a thorough basis for investigation, the primary sources consist of four different texts; two fiction texts and two biographies. Two of the texts (one fiction text, *Cat's Eye*, and one biography, *A Year in Provence*) were originally written in English, and two (one fiction text, *Blackwater*, and one biography, *The Magic Lantern*) were originally written in Swedish<sup>1</sup>. Due to the limited space of this essay, only the first 25 pages of each text have been

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<sup>1</sup> In the examples provided in the essay, *Cat's Eye* will be referred to as ATW, *A Year in Provence* as MAY, *Blackwater* as EK and *The Magic Lantern* as BERG.

analysed. The four texts and their translations have been collected from the English-Swedish Parallel Corpus (ESPC).

The secondary sources consist of a selection of grammar books, both English and Swedish, which have been used in order to define the *of*-genitive. Additionally, a number of articles have been used for references to different features common in translations of texts, and to some extent for a discussion of genitive meanings.

With the use of the above mentioned material, it was defined what was reasonable to include as *of*-genitives in the comparative analysis of this essay. After such a definition was made, the texts were searched thoroughly for *of*-genitives, and these *of*-genitives were then listed in different categories of genitive meaning. A comparison was at this stage made of number and type (i.e. meaning) of *of*-genitives in and between the texts.

Thereafter, the Swedish correspondences were divided into different categories based on their form in relation to the *of*-genitive. Within each English genitive meaning, the proportions of types of Swedish correspondences were investigated. The English original texts and the Swedish original texts were dealt with separately during the investigation, in order for there to be a comparison of Swedish constructions between the Swedish original texts and the Swedish translations.

## 2.1 Definition of the *of*-genitive and delimitations

The English *of*-construction represents a wide variety of meanings, and not all of them will be included as *of*-genitives in this investigation. For this reason, before commencing the analysis of the texts, it is necessary to define what is meant by the term '*of*-genitive'. It appears that this is a term which is not very well-defined and not altogether established. Greenbaum & Quirk state that what by some people is called the *of*-genitive is simply 'a postmodifying prepositional phrase with *of*' (1990:103). Quirk *et al*, however, state that the *of*-construction (i.e. a post-modifying prepositional phrase with *of*) is 'often equivalent in meaning to the genitive construction' (1985:1276). Furthermore, Quirk *et al* provide a large number of examples of *of*-constructions lacking an 's genitive correspondence (1985:1277-1285). For an *of*-construction to be counted as an *of*-genitive in this investigation, it does not need to have an 's genitive correspondence. However, the cases which do not have an 's genitive correspondence are more difficult to handle than the cases which do, and there will be some

discussion of problematic cases further on in this section. There are, however, some cases lacking an 's genitive correspondence which will be included without further discussion. A couple of such examples are 'the noise *of the cars*' and 'the rest *of your life*'.

The criterion for what to include in the comparative study was that the genitive should be able to be fitted into one of the categories listed below. These categories were taken from Quirk et al (1985:321-322). One example phrase, copied from the book, is provided for each category.

Possessive genitive: The gravity *of the earth*. (The earth has (a certain) gravity.)

Subjective genitive: The decline *of trade*. (Trade declined.)

Objective genitive: A statement *of the facts*. (...stated the facts.)

Genitive of origin: The wines *of France*. (France produces wines.)

Genitive of measure: An absence of *ten days*. (The absence lasted ten days.)

Genitive of attribute: The policy *of the party*. (The party has a (certain) policy.)

Partitive genitive: The surface *of the earth*. (The earth has a (rough) surface.)

These categories were chosen because they appear to be rather established, but it needs to be pointed out that this classification of genitive meanings is by no means unproblematic. The fact that the partitive and the possessive genitive can be paraphrased in the same way is one problem; the difference between 'the surface *of the earth*' and 'the gravity *of the earth*' is, of course, purely semantic. Another problem is that some *of*-genitive constructions can be paraphrased in different ways. The phrase 'the smell *of the hot metal*' will serve as an example of this: the hot metal simultaneously *has a (certain) smell* (attribute), *smells (a certain way)* (subjective) and *produces a smell* (origin). In this essay, 'the smell *of the hot metal*' was categorised as a genitive of attribute, but it would not have been wrong to put it into one of the other two categories just mentioned; there is at times only a very thin line between some of the categories. Due to the inevitable element of personal choice, should somebody attempt to repeat this exact investigation the results might be slightly different from those of this essay.

Another problem is that the seven categories above do not cover all of the possible meanings of the genitive. As noted by Josefsson (2001:27), in many cases the connection between the head noun and the genitive is unspecified (e.g. 'the direction *of the arrow*'). There were a few phrases which were not obviously part of any category, but which were fitted in anyway,

making some of the categories rather broad. As an example, 'the first swim *of the year*' was included within the category of partitive genitives, even though the first swim was something that occurred during the year and not part of it in the way that 'the first month' would be.

The list of genitive meanings above consists of seven categories, whereas the list in Quirk *et al* consists of eight. The category which has been excluded in this investigation is that of the genitive of description (the degree *of doctor*). The reason for this exclusion is that the meanings of the *of*-construction which could possibly be fitted into this category (and it is far from clear which ones could) are so diverse so that, for the purpose of this essay and for the sake of relative clarity, no genitives of description have been included. Examples of excluded sentences of this type are 'crimes *of violence*', 'a person *of substance*', 'places *of evaluation*' and 'the art *of hovering*'.

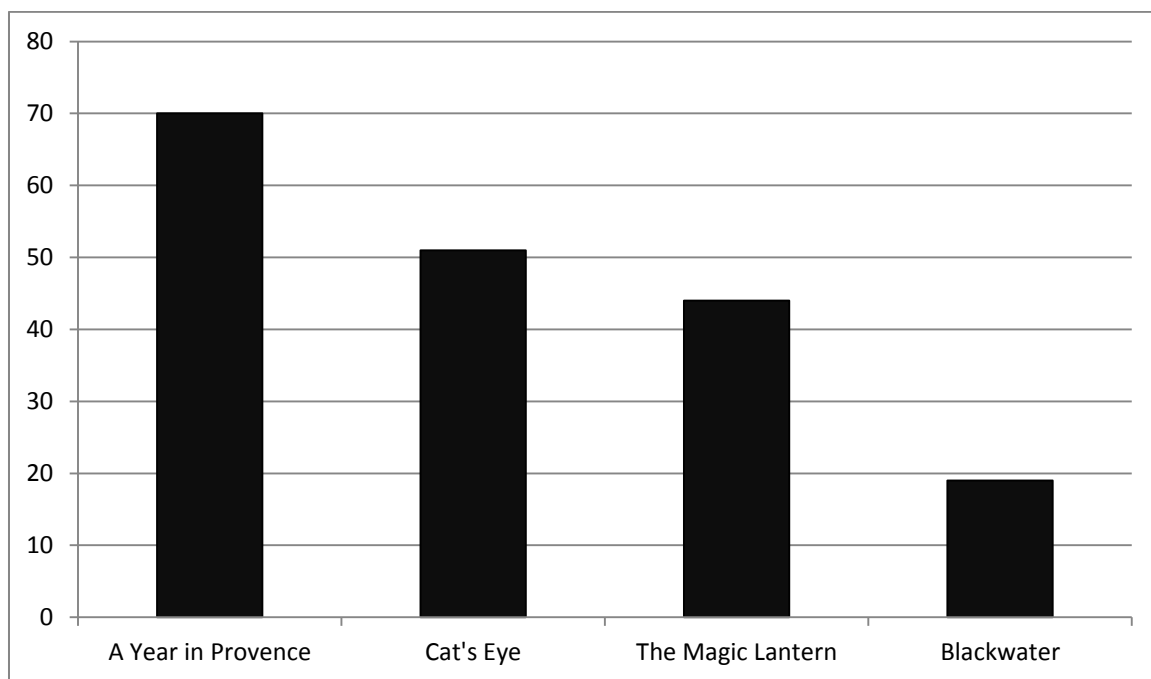
Additional examples of excluded *of*-constructions include 'a picture *of a meadow*' and 'photographs *of my childhood*'. Lyons (1986:130) makes the observation that nouns such as 'picture' are semantically similar to 'derived nominals like *destruction*'. It could, therefore, be argued that a phrase such as 'a picture *of a meadow*' is an objective genitive. However, the only cases which will be included as objective genitives are the ones which, without it altering the meaning in the situation described, could be paraphrased using a verbal construction (e.g. 'The distribution *of Christmas gifts*': Someone distributed Christmas gifts).

Two of the *of*-constructions lacking a genitive variant mentioned by Quirk *et al* are 'a glass *of water*' and 'this kind *of research*' (1995:1278). In the first case, *of* is used to quantify the noun, and in the second case it denotes what type or kind of something the noun is (Svartvik & Sager, 1996:132-133). All cases similar to these have been excluded from the analysis of this essay.

Two final points relating to exclusions should be made. Firstly, idioms (e.g. friends *of a sort*) have been excluded from the investigation, and secondly, a few examples will be given of phrases excluded because of being too far from fitting in to one of the seven categories used. Such examples are 'the other side *of a wall*' and 'a popular equivalent *of the Goddess of Love*'.

### 3. Results and Discussion

In the texts, there are 184 *of*-genitives which have one of the included meanings. 121 of these come from the English source texts and 63 come from the English translations. There are, in other words, nearly twice as many *of*-genitives in the English source texts as in the translations from Swedish. Figure 1 below shows the distribution of *of*-genitives in the texts.



**Figure 1.** The distribution of *of*-genitives in the texts.

Figure 1 shows that there are not only higher numbers of *of*-genitives in the English originals than in the English translations, but there are also higher numbers of *of*-genitives in the biographies than in the fiction texts.

An introduction to the different genitive meanings and their respective proportions in the texts will now be presented.

#### 3.1. Distribution of genitive meanings

The seven categories of meaning will be presented in rank order according to the total number of occurrences of each *of*-genitive meaning. For an overview of the numbers of different *of*-genitive meanings in the investigation, table 1 is presented below.



**Table 1.** Total numbers of *of*-genitive meanings in the texts.

	Partitive	Attribute	Objective	Origin	Subjective	Possessive	Measure	Total
<b>Number</b>	87	40	18	14	13	11	1	184
<b>Proportion</b>	47%	22%	10%	8%	7%	6%	1%	100%

As can be seen, the largest category by far is that of partitive genitives; this category constitutes 47% of the total categories. (1) is an example of a sentence with a partitive *of*-genitive found in the texts.

- (1) They're narrow, with fragile upper edges, like the handles *of china cups*, although she herself is not fragile. (ATW)

The second largest category is that of genitives of attribute. This category constitutes 22% of the total *of*-genitives included. One of the 40 sentences containing a genitive of attribute is (2).

- (2) I don't like the neatness *of hotels*, the squeaky-clean bathtubs. (ATW)

The remaining categories are all comparatively small. Objective genitives constitute 10% of the total *of*-genitives in the texts; (3) is one example.

- (3) On the Saturday, the day before the share-out *of the meat*, Torsten shot her. (EK)

The number of genitives of origin, subjective genitives and possessive genitives within the texts are quite similar; genitives of origin make up 8%, subjective genitives 7% and possessive genitives 6%. One example of each is provided below; (4) is a sentence with a genitive of origin, (5) is one with a subjective genitive and (6) one with a possessive genitive.

- (4) The mould was made from the hair-clippings *of himself and friends*. (ATW)

- (5) As the laughter *of the other guests* died down, genuine drinks were threatened, but we were saved by the cat. (MAY)

- (6) The park *of Sophiahemmet*, the royal hospital, is large. (BERG)

Merely one example of a genitive of measure has been found within the texts, making the category extremely marginal; it only constitutes 1% of the total *of*-genitives. The one example found is provided in (7):

- (7) The Lubéron mountains rise up immediately behind the house to a high point *of nearly 3,500 feet* and run in deep folds for about forty miles from west to east. (MAY)

Since (7) is the only genitive of measure in this investigation, this category will not be discussed in a section of its own.

Provided below is a table presenting the number and proportion of *of*-genitive meanings in each text.

**Table 2.** A comparison of the proportions of *of*-genitive meanings in the English originals *A Year in Provence* (1) and *Cat's Eye* (2), and the English translations *The Magic Lantern* (3) and *Blackwater* (4).

		Partitive	Attribute	Objective	Origin	Subjective	Possessive	Measure	Total
1	Number	31	19	3	6	7	3	1	70
	Proportion	44%	27%	4%	9%	10%	4%	2%	100%
2	Number	28	11	4	2	4	2	0	51
	Proportion	55%	21%	8%	4%	8%	4%	0%	100%
3	Number	19	8	9	2	1	5	0	44
	Proportion	43%	18%	21%	5%	2%	11%	0%	100%
4	Number	9	2	2	4	1	1	0	19
	Proportion	47%	11%	11%	21%	5%	5%	0%	100%

Judging by these numbers, it appears that objective genitives are more common in English translations than in English originals, whereas subjective genitives are more common in English originals than in English translations. Genitives of attribute appear to be more common in English originals as well. As can be seen, the proportion of genitives of origin in *Blackwater* is considerably higher than in all of the other texts. Considering the very small number of *of*-genitives in this text, however, it is possible that this anomaly (in comparison to the other texts) depends to some extent on the content.

The proportions of *of*-genitive meanings within the texts have been presented, and there will now be a presentation of the different types of Swedish correspondences.

### 3.2. Swedish correspondences

The Swedish correspondences were categorised as follows: s-genitives, prepositional phrases<sup>2</sup>, reformulations, compound nouns<sup>3</sup> and deletions/additions<sup>4</sup>. For an overview of the numbers of different Swedish *of*-genitive correspondences in the investigation, table 3 is presented below.

**Table 3.** Total numbers of Swedish correspondences in the texts.

	Prepositional phrases	S-genitives	Reformulations	Compound nouns	Deletions/additions	Total
<b>Number</b>	64	61	25	17	17	184
<b>Proportion</b>	35%	33%	14%	9%	9%	100%

The major Swedish categories are prepositional phrases and s-genitives; together, they constitute 68% of the total numbers. Examples from each of the five categories will be provided in rank order, beginning with prepositional phrases.

The prepositions of the Swedish prepositional phrases are *av, på, i, från, hos, till, för* and *med*. The first four of these are most common, and the last four are marginal. (8), (9) and (10) are examples of Swedish prepositional phrases with *av, på,* and *i,* respectively.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (8) As the cold began to bite into the middle <i>of January</i> , the towns and villages became quiet.       | När kylan började bita sig fast framåt mitten <i>av januari</i> blev det tyst i städer och byar. (MAY)                                |
| (9) They're like the ears <i>of gnomes</i> .   | De ser ut som öronen <i>på bergtroll</i> . (ATW)  |
| (10) Klockorna <i>i Hedvig Eleonora</i> ringde till högmässa, ljuset vandrade, någonstans hördes pianomusik. | The church bells <i>of Hedvig Eleonora</i> rang for morning service, the light shifted and I could hear piano music somewhere. (BERG) |

(11) and (12) are examples of Swedish s-genitive correspondences to English *of*-genitives.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (11) Buckshot in the edible parts <i>of the fox</i> can cause chipped teeth. | Hagel i <i>rävens</i> ätliga delar kan skada tänderna. (MAY) |
| (12) De många klockorna mätte tiden,   | The numerous clocks measuring the time,                      |

<sup>2</sup> This category is restricted to prepositional phrases directly corresponding to the English *of*-genitive.

<sup>3</sup> Two words are included which are not compound nouns, but correspond in the same way to the *of*-genitive.

<sup>4</sup> Deletions in the case of Swedish translations and additions in the case of English translations.

solljuset vandrade över *mattornas*  
gröna oändlighet.

the sunlight wandering across the infinite  
green *of the carpets*. (BERG)

Within the category of reformulations, there are several different Swedish constructions. All of the constructions will not be represented here, but (13), (14) and (15) are a few examples<sup>5</sup>.

(13) I find myself standing in the middle  
*of the main room*, not really knowing  
how I got in here from the kitchen.

Jag upptäcker att jag står mitt i  
stora rummet, utan att riktigt veta  
hur jag kom hit in från kokvrån. (ATW)

(14) Our valley hibernated, and I missed  
the sound which marked the passing *of*  
*each day* almost as precisely as a clock.

Vår dal gick i ide, och jag saknade alla ljud  
som mätte ut dagarna nästan lika exakt  
som en klocka. (MAY)

(15) Walking in the hills, I was often able  
to smell a house before I could see it,  
because of the scent *of woodsmoke*  
coming from an invisible chimney.

När jag vandrade i bergen kände jag ofta  
lukten av ett hus innan jag fick syn på det;  
det var vedröken som doftade ur den  
osynliga skorstenen. (MAY)

In the Swedish version of (15), the *of*-genitive construction has been transposed into a construction involving a restrictive relative clause (*som doftade ur den osynliga skorstenen*). The transpositions discussed by Ramhøj are, thus, included in the category of reformulations in this investigation.

Sentences (16) and (17) are examples of Swedish compound noun correspondences to English *of*-genitives.

(16) Han gick förbi grinden på *dikeskanten*.

Vidart walked past the gate along the edge  
*of the ditch*. (EK)

(17) It was a gastronomic aria which he  
performed at each table, kissing the tips  
*of his fingers* so often that he must have  
blistered his lips.

Denna gastronomiska aria sjöng han vid  
varje bord, och han kysste sig på  
*finger topparna* så ofta att han måste ha  
fått blåsor på läpparna. (MAY)

The category of deletions/additions is the last one to be presented. These are of different kinds, and there will be three example sentences:

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<sup>5</sup> In the cases where there is no direct correspondence to the *of*-genitive, no words in the Swedish sentence will be italicised.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>(18) The walls were built to keep out the winds <i>of the Mistral</i> which, they say, can blow the ears off a donkey.</p>                               | <p>Väggarna var byggda för att hålla mistralen ute; den lär kunna blåsa öronen av en åsna. (MAY)</p>                                      |
| <p>(19) We were advised to go to a butcher in the old part <i>of town</i> who was reputed to have the master's touch and to be altogether très sérieux.</p> | <p>Vi råddes att gå till en slaktare i gamla staden; han skulle vara mästare i sitt gebit och över huvud taget "mycket seriös". (MAY)</p> |
| <p>(20) På hösten 1920 flyttade vi till Villagatan 22 på Östermalm.</p>   | <p>In the autumn <i>of 1920</i>, we moved to Villagatan 22 in the Östermalm district <i>of Stockholm</i>. (BERG)</p>                      |

In the Swedish translation of (18), the head noun and the *of* have been deleted; the same is true for (19), but in this example there is a pre-modifying adjective in the English sentence, and this is kept in the Swedish translation. In sentence (20), there are two additions in the English translation: in the first case, an *of* has been added, and in the second case, an *of*-construction as well as words clarifying the head noun have been added. This last example, the translation of 'Östermalm' into 'The Östermalm district *of Stockholm*' can be referred to as 'explicitation'; there is a higher level of explicitness in the translation than in the source text. According to Baker, explicitation is one of the 'universal features of translation' (1993:243). 'The Östermalm district *of Stockholm*' is a partitive genitive. Explicitation occurs not only in the category of partitive genitives but in several of the other genitive meanings within the English translations.

For a comparison of frequencies of the different Swedish constructions between the texts, table 4 is presented below.

**Table 4.** Numbers and relative frequencies of Swedish constructions within the Swedish translations *Ett år i Provence* (1) and *Kattöga* (2) and the Swedish originals *Laterna Magica* (3) and *Händelser vid vatten* (4).

		Prepositional phrases	S-genitives	Reformulations	Compound nouns	Deletions/additions	Total
1	Number	17	25	15	5	8	70
	Proportion	24%	36%	22%	7%	12%	100%
2	Number	28	11	6	3	3	51
	Proportion	55%	21%	12%	6%	6%	100%
3	Number	14	19	3	3	5	44
	Proportion	32%	43%	7%	7%	11%	100%
4	Number	5	6	1	6	1	19
	Proportion	26%	32%	5%	32%	5%	100%

There are higher proportions of reformulations in the Swedish translations than in the English translations, and higher proportions of reformulations in the biographies than in the fiction texts. There are higher proportions of deletions/additions in the biographies than in the fiction texts as well; here, however, there is no difference between the languages. The remaining three categories are rather more diverse and difficult to generalise about. The Swedish text *Händelser vid vatten* has a much higher proportion of compound nouns than the other texts. The Swedish translation of the fiction text *Cat's Eye* contains the largest proportion of prepositional phrases and the lowest proportion of s-genitives, whereas the Swedish translation of the biography *A Year in Provence* contains the lowest proportion of prepositional phrases and the second highest proportion of s-genitives. The choice of Swedish construction appears, thus, to be not merely a matter of which language it was originally written in, but perhaps also a matter of the content of the text or of translators' personal tastes.

Moving on, the six largest of the seven categories of genitive meaning will be discussed in rank order. Swedish prepositional phrase, s-genitive and compound noun correspondences will be discussed to some degree in all categories where they are present. Reformulations and deletions/additions will only be discussed where there is something in particular to be said about them.

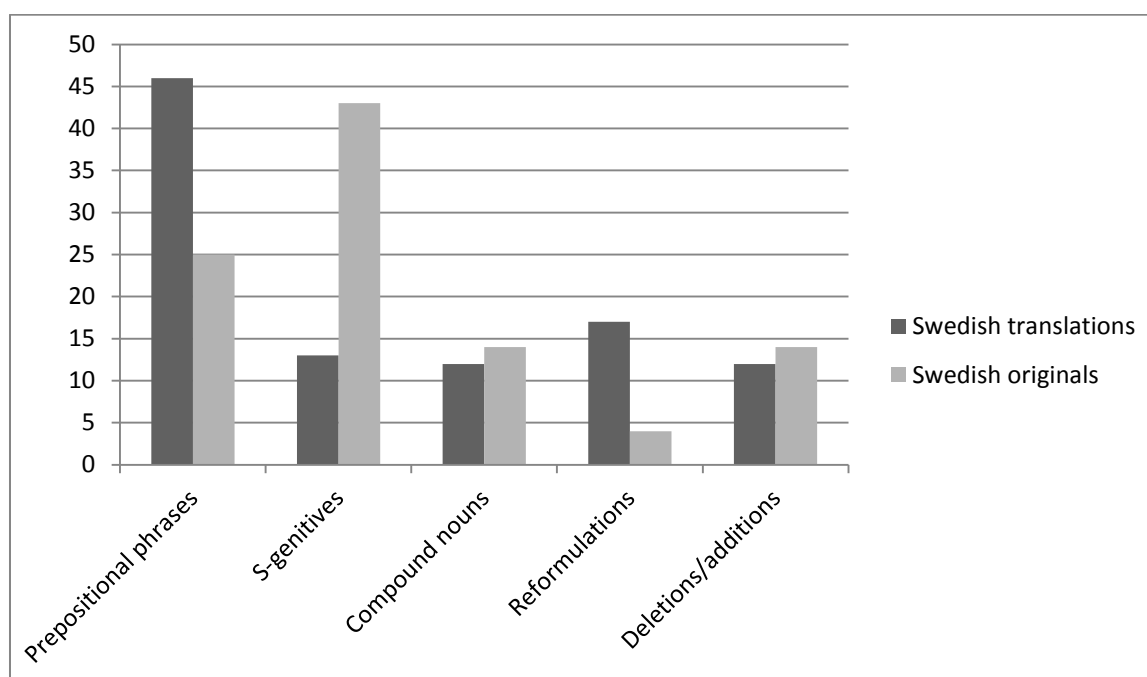
### 3.3 The partitive genitive

Amounting to as many as 87, the partitive genitives make up a majority, 47%, of the total *of*-genitives within the texts. For an overview of the numbers of Swedish correspondences in this category, table 5 is presented below.

**Table 5.** Distribution of Swedish correspondences within the category of partitive genitives.

	Prepositional phrases	S-genitives	Reformulations	Compound nouns	Deletions/additions	Total
<b>Number</b>	34	20	11	11	11	87
<b>Proportion</b>	39%	23%	13%	13%	13%	100%

The largest category of Swedish correspondence is that of prepositional phrases; these constitute 39% of the totals. Within this category, however, the numbers differ to a rather great extent between the Swedish original texts and the Swedish translations. Presented below is a figure showing the difference in proportions of the different Swedish constructions within the English partitive genitive meaning between the two languages.



**Figure 2.** Relative frequencies of different Swedish correspondences to English *of*-genitives in the partitive meaning, as compared between the Swedish originals and the Swedish translations.

The most outstanding aspect of figure 2 is the difference in percentage of Swedish s-genitive constructions between the Swedish originals and the Swedish translations. 12 (43%) of the 28

partitive genitives in the texts translated from Swedish to English are s-genitive constructions in Swedish; of the 59 partitive genitives translated from English into Swedish, only 8 (13%) have become s-genitive constructions in Swedish. In addition, there are two more reformulations in Swedish translations than there are s-genitives.

The percentage of Swedish prepositional phrases is higher in the translations from the originally English texts than in the texts which are originally Swedish. 27 (46%) of the 59 partitive genitives in the English texts have been translated into prepositional phrases in Swedish, and 7 (25%) of the 28 phrases from the originally Swedish texts translated into partitive genitives were prepositional phrases from the beginning. The prepositions of the 34 Swedish prepositional phrases are *av* (17), *på* (10), *i* (6) and *till* (1).

There appears, thus, to be a tendency for English partitive genitives to be translated into prepositional phrases in Swedish rather than into genitive constructions (which appear to be the more natural choice when writing a text in Swedish). This would indicate that, within the Swedish translations of partitive *of*-genitives, there are traces of 'translationese'; 'the Swedish language variety used in translations from English' (Gellerstam, 1996:54). Translationese exists due to the 'fact that a translation is likely to be influenced by the source language'; often, the syntax of the original phrase is kept, even though there is a more idiomatic way of expressing the same thing in the language translated into (1996:54, 58).

Despite the great difference in percentage between genitive constructions in Swedish originals and Swedish translations, which indicates translationese, none of the Swedish translations are directly un-idiomatic. Nevertheless, contrasted below are two sentences; one Swedish original sentence and one Swedish translation.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (21) I <i>plåtlådans</i> bakre kortsida satt en enkel reflexspegel.   | At the back <i>of the metal box</i> was a simple reflecting mirror. (BERG)  |
| (22) When it gets to the end <i>of the day</i> we stop again and put up our tent, heavy canvas with wooden poles. | När det börjar närma sig slutet <i>på dagen</i> stannar vi igen och slår upp tältet, tung tältduk med tältstänger av trä. (ATW) |

Hypothetically, had sentence (22) been written in Swedish originally, it is possible that '*slutet på dagen*' would instead have been '*dagens slut*'.



The reason for choosing a prepositional phrase in Swedish instead of an s-genitive construction appears in some cases to be that there is a definition post-modifying the head noun, as illustrated by comparing (23) and (24):

(23) Vi flyttade till en gul villa i utkanten av den stora parken som gränsade till Lill-Jansskogen.	We had moved to a yellow house on the edge of the great park that borders Lill-Jansskogen in Stockholm. (BERG)
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(24) Min bror och jag och hans kamrater hade kastat snöboll mot växthuset i parkens utkant.	My brother and I and his friends had been throwing snowballs at the edge of the park. (BERG)
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The Swedish s-genitive construction of (24) is not problematic. In contrast, had the Swedish prepositional phrase of (23) been an s-genitive construction, the reference would have been different from what it currently is, and the sentence would have been very odd (i.e. ‘en gul villa i den stora parken som gränsade till *Lill-Jansskogens* utkant’ or ‘en gul villa i *den stora parkens* utkant som gränsade till *Lill-Jansskogen*’).

Of the total 87 partitive *of*-genitives, 11 (12%) are compound nouns in Swedish. Sentence (25) is one example of an English partitive genitive translated into a Swedish compound noun.

(25) Stephen and I crouch, picking up the caterpillars, which are blue-striped, velvety and cool, like the muzzles of dogs.	Stephen och jag sitter på huk och plockar upp larverna, som är blårandiga, och sammetsmjuka och svala, som hundnosar. (ATW)
--	--

There will be no discussion of deletions/additions or reformulations in relation to the partitive genitive, but the focus will now shift to the second largest category; the genitive of attribute.

### 3.4. The genitive of attribute

40 genitives of attribute were found in the texts. The numbers of Swedish correspondences in this category are presented in table 6.

**Table 6.** Distribution of Swedish correspondences within the category of genitives of attribute.

	S-genitives	Prepositional phrases	Reformulations	Total
<b>Number</b>	24	9	7	40
<b>Proportion</b>	60%	23%	18%	100%

The largest type of Swedish correspondence by far within the genitives of attribute is that of s-genitives. Within this *of*-genitive meaning, there are no Swedish compound noun correspondences and no deletions/additions of words.

Sentences (26) and (27) are two examples of English *of*-genitives of attribute and their Swedish s-genitive correspondents.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (26) Fortunately for us, the good humour and niceness <i>of our neighbours</i> were apparent even if what they were saying was a mystery. | Lyckligtvis gick det inte att ta miste på <i>grannarnas</i> vänlighet och goda lynne, även om deras yttranden förblev en gåta för oss. (MAY) |
| (27) He was already moving away from the imprecision <i>of words</i> .  | Han var redan på väg bort från <i>ordens</i> brist på exakthet. (ATW)  |

The prepositions of the prepositional phrases are *av* (5), *hos* (2), *med* (1) and *för* (1). All of the five cases with the preposition *av* have to do with smells, as in (25).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (28) The street car is muggy with twice-breathed air and the smell <i>of wool</i> . | Det är kvavt på spårvagnen av flera gånger andad luft och lukten <i>av ylle</i> . (ATW) |
|---|---|

There are two additional instances of smell attributes. One of them is presented in (29):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (29) Nu låg Mia däruppe i <i>hans</i> doft och ville inte ens tvätta sig. | Now Mia was lying up there in the smell <i>of him</i> , not even wanting to wash. (EK) |
|---|--|

The one thing distinguishing the genitive of attribute in (29) from the five genitives of attribute which (28) is an example of is that in (29), the head of the English prepositional phrase is animate and in the other five sentences it is inanimate. The second of the two Swedish correspondences to English smell attributes also has an inanimate head noun; nevertheless, it appears that there is a tendency for smells of inanimate objects to be presented with prepositional phrases in Swedish.

Two of the nine reformulations will be briefly discussed. The first is presented in (30):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (30) Apart from the peace and emptiness <i>of the landscape</i> , there is a special smell about winter in Provence which is accentuated by the wind and the clean, dry air. | Förutom det tysta och fridfulla landskapet har vintern i Provence en särskild lukt som framhävs av blåsten och den rena, torra luften. (MAY) |
|--|--|

The two nouns and the *of*-construction of the English sentence have been reformulated into two adjectives and a head noun in Swedish; the Swedish phrase can be described as a nominal phrase in which two adjectives are attributes (Teleman *et al*, 1999:153). It appears fitting that if an *of*-genitive of attribute is to be reformulated when translated, it be reformulated into a nominal phrase involving adjectives.

The second example of a reformulation is presented in (31); the reformulation is, in part, the English *of*-genitive itself.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (31) Vid mitt livs början bor hon där ensam tillsammans med fröken Ellen Nilsson, ett tidlöst småländskt monument som lagade god mat, var strängt religiös och skämde bort oss barn. | When I was very young, she lived there alone with Miss Ellen Nilsson, a timeless monument to the character <i>of the Småland region</i> , who cooked good food, was sternly religious and spoiled us children. (BERG) |
|--|---|

The English reformulation in (31) serves to explain the word ‘småländskt’ rather than only try to translate it as such; this is an example of explicitation, the term which was explained in section 3.2. The next category which will be discussed, the objective genitive, also has one instance of explicitation. However, in the presentation of the objective genitives, the focus will lie elsewhere.

### 3.5. The objective genitive

18 objective genitives were found in the texts. The numbers of Swedish correspondences in this category are presented in table 7.

**Table 7.** Distribution of Swedish correspondences within the category of objective genitives.

	Prepositional phrases	Deletions/ additions	S-genitives	Compound nouns	Reformulations	Total
Number	10	3	2	2	1	18
Proportion	56%	17%	11%	11%	6%	100%

The greatest correspondence is prepositional phrases. The prepositions of these phrases in Swedish are *av* (7), *på* (2) and *från* (1). One of the prepositional phrases with *av* is presented in (32).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (32) Möjligen bidrog detta faktum till vårt handfallna anammande <i>av nazismen</i> . | This fact may well have contributed to our astonishing acceptance <i>of Nazism</i> . (BERG) |
|---|---|

Both of the s-genitive construction correspondences to English objective *of*-genitives will be discussed. They are presented in (33) and (34).

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (33) In the old days, this was eaten with bread and boiled potatoes, but now, thanks to progress and the invention <i>of the deep-fat fryer</i> , one could enjoy it with pommes frites. | Förr i tiden åt man denna rätt med bröd och kokt potatis, men nu – tack vare den moderna utvecklingen och <i>frityrkokarens</i> intåg – kunde man njuta den med pommes frites. (MAY) |
| (34) Eftersom Dag ägde en stor armé och alltid var invecklad i krigiska förehavanden med sina vänner, ingicks avtal till <i>bådas</i> belåtenhet.  | As Dag possessed a huge army and was always involved in war games with his friends, an agreement was made to the satisfaction <i>of both parties</i> . (BERG)                        |

In (33), the translator has chosen to alter the verb, making ‘frityrkokaren’ subject instead of object, as it originally was. The example in (34) is more complicated; in English, ‘to the satisfaction of both parties’ could be paraphrased with ‘*which satisfied both parties*’. In Swedish, no verb can be derived from ‘belåtenhet’ directly, but it needs to be paraphrased with ‘*som gjorde båda två belåtna*’; ‘*belåtna*’ appears as an object complement. These two examples indicate that there is something of a reluctance to make objective s-genitives in Swedish; the first example more so than the second, however.

Both of the compound noun correspondences are from Swedish original texts. One of the two is presented in (35).

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| (35) Julklappsutdelning skedde vid | The distribution <i>of Christmas gifts</i> took |
|------------------------------------|---|

matsalsbordet.

place at the dining-room table. (BERG)

Considering the fact that both Swedish compound noun correspondences in this category are from the Swedish originals, it appears that the Swedish originals of this category are more diverse than the Swedish translations. In addition, there is a rather distinct difference in the proportion of objective genitives in the English originals and the English translations; objective genitives constitute 17% of the English translations and only 6% of the English originals. In the next category to be discussed, the genitive of origin, there is also has a higher relative proportion of English translations, although there, the difference is much smaller.

### 3.7. The genitive of origin

In total, 14 genitives of origin have been found in the texts. The numbers of Swedish correspondences in this category are presented in table 8.

**Table 8.** Distribution of Swedish correspondences within the category of genitives of origin.

	Prepositional phrases	Compound nouns	Reformulations	S-genitives	Total
Number	7	4	2	1	14
Proportion	50%	14%	14%	7%	100%

The largest category is that of prepositional phrases. The prepositions of the 7 prepositional phrases are *från* (4) and *av* (3).

One example of a Swedish prepositional phrase correspondence with *från* and one example of a Swedish compound noun correspondence are presented in (39) and (40), respectively.

(39) The hopeful fusillade *of a hunter* on  
afternoon patrol in the vines on the  
opposite hillside.

De förhoppningsfulla skottsälvorna *från*  
*en jägare* på eftermiddagspatrull i  
vingårdarna på sluttningen mitt emot.  
(MAY)

(40) Så fort motorljudet dött bort sprang  
Johan ner. Han tänkte inte.

As soon as the sound *of engines* had died  
away, without thinking, Johan ran down.  
(EK)

These two examples are quite representative of the genitives of origin within their respective original languages; 56% of the English originals have been translated into Swedish prepositional phrases, and 50% of the English translations were originally compound nouns.

The single s-genitive correspondence is presented below, and the relevant phrases are marked in bold.

<p>(41) Långt inne i mitt medvetande kan jag återkalla själva tillståndet: stanken av kroppens utsöndringar, de fuktiga, skavande kläderna, <b>nattlampans milda sken</b> (...).</p>	<p>Deep down in my consciousness, I can recall my actual condition, the stench of my body's secretions, the damp chafing clothes, <b>the soft glow of the nightlight</b> (...). (BERG)</p>
--	--

The genitive of origin in (41) is one of the borderline cases among the *of*-genitives of this investigation<sup>66</sup>. Judging by this fact, and the fact that this is the only Swedish s-genitive correspondence to an English *of*-genitive of origin, it appears as though Swedish s-genitive correspondences to this category are uncommon. This is not the case with the category next in line; that of subjective genitives.

### 3.6. The subjective genitive

13 subjective genitives were found in the texts. The numbers of Swedish correspondences in this category are presented in table 9.

**Table 9.** Distribution of Swedish correspondences within the category of subjective genitives.

	S-genitives	Reformulations	Prepositional phrases	Deletions/ additions	Total
<b>Number</b>	7	3	2	1	13
<b>Proportion</b>	54%	23%	15%	8%	100%

The largest category of Swedish correspondence is that of s-genitives, and within the category of subjective genitives, there are no compound noun correspondences.

<sup>66</sup> (41) could have been classified as a subjective genitive, since the nightlight *glows*. However, the focus lies on the fact that the nightlight *produces* a glow; there is a glow coming from the nightlight.

In the first example sentence of this section, (36), there are two *of*-genitive constructions. The subjective genitive is the first one, marked in bold, and it has a Swedish s-genitive correspondence.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (36) Gnarling has set in, <b>the withering of the mouth</b> ; the outlines <i>of dewlaps</i> are beginning to be visible. | Knotigheten har börjat komma, <b>munnens visnande</b> ; konturerna <i>av dubbelhakor</i> börjar synas. (ATW) |
|---|--|

The prepositions of the Swedish prepositional phrase correspondences to English subjective genitives are *av* and *i*. (37) is the prepositional phrase with *i*.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (37) Her eyelids don't flicker but there's a faint twitching <i>of her fingers</i> , or do I imagine it? | Ögonlocken rör sig inte men det finns en svag ryckning <i>i fingrarna</i> , eller är det jag som inbillar mig? (ATW) |
|--|--|

There is one reformulation deserving extra attention. The genitive of the English sentence is a double genitive; there is a possessive pronoun after the *of*.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (38) This goes along well with another belief <i>of mine</i> : that everyone else my age is an adult, whereas I am merely in disguise. | Det hänger ihop med något annat som jag tror: att alla andra i min ålder är vuxna, medan jag bara är utklädd. (ATW) |
|--|---|

The Swedish reformulation of the double genitive construction of sentence (38) is a restrictive relative clause (*som jag tror*) involving a verbal phrase (*jag tror*); the *of*-genitive has been transposed. Since the construction in English is a subjective genitive, a reformulation involving a verbal phrase appears rather natural.

The final category to be discussed is that of possessive genitives.

### 3.8 The possessive genitive

There are 11 possessive genitives included in this investigation. The numbers of Swedish correspondences in this category are presented in table 10.

**Table 10.** Distribution of Swedish correspondences within the category of possessive genitives.

	S-genitives	Prepositional phrases	Deletions/additions	Reformulations	Total
Number	6	2	2	1	11
Proportion	55%	18%	18%	9%	100%

Precisely as in the category of subjective genitives, the largest correspondence to possessive *of*-genitives is that of Swedish s-genitives, and there are no compound noun correspondences. The prepositions of the Swedish prepositional phrases are, in this category too, *av* and *i*.

Two of the Swedish s-genitive correspondences are presented in (41) and (42).

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (41) Vidart hade köpt fastigheten av <i>gubben Enokssons</i> änka och hon visste inte hur det var med hägnet.            | Vidart had bought the property from the widow <i>of old man Enoksson</i> and she didn't know about the property situation. (EK) |
| (42) <i>Svartsjukans</i> dämon har slagit sin klo i mitt hjärta, jag rasar, gråter, skiter på golvet och smetar ner mig. | The demon <i>of jealousy</i> fastened its claws into my heart. I raged, wept, crapped on the floor and messed myself. (BERG)    |

Neither of the head nouns of the *of*-constructions of the sentences above *own* the noun they post-modify, as such. Nevertheless, the possessive meaning was closest in meaning to the relationship these constructions represent: 'old man Enoksson has a widow' (even though he is dead) and 'jealousy has a demon' (even though it is an abstract noun).

Sentence (43) contains an example of a prepositional phrase correspondence, and sentence (44) one of a deletion:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (43) Kyrkoherden <i>i Hedvig Eleonora församling</i> (fars chef) ingrep.                                     | The Pastor <i>of Hedvig Eleonora parish</i> (Father's superior) intervened. (BERG) |
| (44) The proprietor <i>of the restaurant</i> was dressed for the day in a velvet smoking jacket and bow tie. | Innehavaren hade dagen till ära ifört sig sammetskavaj och fluga. (MAY)            |

Examples (43) and (44) are not prototypical possessive genitives, even less so than (41) and (42), but they are 'akin to the objective genitive' (OEDO 2011).



There is one example which fits better than any other into the meaning of possessive genitive. The Swedish correspondence of this possessive *of*-genitive is a deletion, and it is presented in (45):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (45) We wear long wool coats with tie belts,<br>the collars turned up to look like those<br><i>of movie stars.</i> | Vi har långa yllekappor med knytskärp,<br>och kappkragen uppvikt för att se ut som<br>filmstjärnor. (ATW) |
|--|---|

Shumaker notes that 'possession seems to be [the 's genitive's] most common meaning' (1975:70). Judging by the limited number of possessive genitives in this investigation and the even more limited number of typical possessive genitives, possession seems to be the least common meaning of the *of*-genitive. This is in no way contradictory, considering that, as stated by Quirk *et al*, 'we think of "possession" chiefly in terms of our own species', and generally, when the subject is a person, the 's genitive is favoured (1985:323).

The six largest categories have all been discussed separately, and there will now be a more general discussion to sum up the main results of this investigation.

#### **4. Conclusive Discussion**

In the investigated texts of this essay, the main Swedish correspondences to the English *of*-genitive are prepositional phrases and s-genitives; these are the categories which Svartvik & Sager stated both correspond to English *of*-genitives. Among the prepositional phrases, the most common preposition is *av*, but there are altogether eight different prepositions. The most common ones, except for *av*, are *på*, *i* and *från*. The four prepositions *hos*, *till*, *med* and *för* are rather marginal.

There does appear to be something of a correlation between the different *of*-genitive meanings and their Swedish correspondences. The genitive of attribute, the subjective genitive and the possessive genitive all have over 50% Swedish s-genitive correspondences, comparatively low frequencies of prepositional phrases and no compound nouns at all. The genitive of measure has a 100% correspondence to Swedish s-genitives; however, there was only one example from that category in this investigation.

The objective genitive and the genitive of origin both correspond by around 50% to Swedish prepositional phrases; most of the prepositions of the objective genitive correspondences are

with *av*, and most of the prepositions of correspondences to the genitive of origin are with *från*. The objective genitive and the genitive of origin both correspond to compound nouns in Swedish. The great majority of the compound noun correspondences within these categories are from Swedish original texts.

As for the partitive genitive, the correspondence does not appear quite as clear. The greatest correspondence overall within this category is to prepositional phrases, but there is a rather big difference between the Swedish originals and the Swedish translations; within the Swedish originals, the greatest partitive *of*-genitive correspondence is s-genitives, whereas within the Swedish translations, the greatest correspondence is prepositional phrases. The category of partitive genitives has a 12% correspondence to Swedish compound nouns.

As a final note, a comment on the general differences between Swedish originals and Swedish translations will be made. The difference in the total number of *of*-genitives between the texts of the two original languages is striking; there are 121 *of*-genitives among the 50 pages of the English originals, as opposed to 63 *of*-genitives among the 50 pages of the English translations. Furthermore, the largest difference in proportions of Swedish correspondences between the two languages is within the reformulations: reformulations constitute 17% of the Swedish translations and only 6% of the English translations. This would suggest that in translations from Swedish, English *of*-genitives are mainly formed when the Swedish construction is an s-genitive, a prepositional phrase or a compound noun, or for the sake of explicitation. In translations to Swedish, on the other hand, choosing a construction which does not correspond to the *of*-genitive as such (i.e. translating more freely) appears rather common. As we have seen, Ramhøj's note about transposition fits in under the category of reformulations in this investigation.

As a suggestion for further research, one could investigate Swedish correspondences to the *of*-genitive meaning that was excluded from this investigation due to exceeding diversity; the *of*-genitive of description. Furthermore, since the meanings of this category in relation to the *of*-construction are so diverse, perhaps it could be further divided into sub-categories; the art *of hovering*, for example, could perhaps be part of an appositive sub-category to the *of*-genitive of description.

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