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Translator Training for Language Activists

Agency and Empowerment of Minority Language Translators

Abstract

The article reports the first experiences and challenges of the translator training courses that were organised in 2015-2016 for Karelian language activists at the University of Eastern Finland. In the wider context of power asymmetry between dominant and endangered languages, the focus is on individual agents who learn and practice translation: on translator students. The article analyses three kinds of data: course materials (lectures and exercises), field notes kept during participant observation in the training sessions, and a reflective course assignment with student feedback. The article focuses on the student perception of agency, operationalised as reflections on ability, willingness, and intention to translate. Willingness is a central theme in an activist context, and revitalisation provides a shared motivating intention to translate. The findings indicate that this common cause supports seeing both language abilities and translation abilities as a shared competence, signalling attitudes that favour perceiving agency in terms of multiple translatorship.

1 Introduction

In Translation Studies (TS), research on minority language translation has concentrated on issues of power and inequality. As a culture-bound activity, translation is inevitably influenced by power relations between cultures and linguistic communities – relations that are typically asymmetrical (Branchadell 2005a: 6). When one of the languages involved is a minority language, the asymmetry is accentuated. As a rule, power asymmetry implies relationships of dominance and subordination. With relation to the major or dominant language, minority languages are placed in a subordinate position, and this, as Branchadell (2005a: 7) observes, is the very feature that unites minority languages, postcolonial languages, and less translated languages alike. All of them, despite the differences in their situations, share with each other the position of subordination (Branchadell 2005a: 7).

Unequal power relations are closely related to the ambiguous role of translation in minority language contexts, which is another key issue in TS research on minority languages (see e.g. Toury 1985; Cronin 1995, 1996, 1998, 2003; Millán-Varela 2003; Branchadell/West 2005). The role of translation for a minority language is seen as a two-

fold phenomenon, with a positive and a negative contribution to the development of the minority language. Translation promotes the use of a minority language and stimulates its development in various domains and yet, at the same time, exposes it to the risk of heavy source-language interference, an influence that languages in a subordinate position are ill equipped to resist. In this article, the focus is on the positive side of this double role (the same approach is chosen in Branchadell/West 2005). There are two reasons for this. First, the overall aim of the translator training project described in this article is language revitalisation (for definition, see Kuusi/Kolehmainen/Riionheimo 2017). Through translation and translator training, the project aims to support the revitalisation of an endangered language. This obviously draws on the stimulating and innovative potential of translation. Second, translator training is the very site for gaining control over the potentially negative influence of translation. In the first article to address directly the double role of translation in minority-language contexts, Toury (1985) suggests that the risk can be managed through translator training. In what Toury calls “controlled interference”, translators are trained to direct interference to those domains and levels of language where the minority language wishes to adopt a source language model, and to constrain or suppress it in cases where there is no need to adopt a foreign model (Toury 1985: 8).

In Toury’s model, it is the translator who wields the double-edged sword. If trained to do so with skill and consideration, translators can exercise their power even in the context of disproportionate power relations between cultures. Whereas earlier research on minority language translation focuses on power relations between entire linguistic communities, in the present article, the focus is on issues of power and empowerment on the individual level – on minority language translators themselves. As the above discussion implies, in minority translation contexts, translators need to be sensitised to their controlling and enabling role in revitalisation, and they need to be sufficiently empowered to manage their ambiguous tasks. For this reason, the focus of this article is on translators’ agency, understood as willingness and ability to act in an intentional way (Koskinen/Kinnunen 2010: 6; Buzelin 2011: 6). However, in contrast with Iso-Ahola (2017), who focuses on published translators, we will examine the agency of minority language translators at an early stage, where it is still being formed – that is, during translator training.

While numerous publications have in recent years been devoted to researching translator and interpreter training in general, the training of minority language translators is a clearly under-researched area in TS. The few existing accounts, however, point to certain differences between translator training for major vs. minority languages. Raine (2011) highlights the problem of mother tongue competence in minority language. Even if the minority language is the student’s first language, it is often not the language of schooling for them. Therefore, more attention needs to be paid to the student’s mother tongue competence during translator training. Kuusi (2017) looks into the findings of research on minority language translation from the point of view of translator training in an attempt to identify issues that distinguish the training of minority language translators.

These include: the function of a translation that might not be communicative at all but aimed at increasing the visibility or actual use of a language; the lack of professional contexts for translators; the practical challenges of translating into an underused language, such as non-standardised language, lexical gaps (especially in special field terminology), lack of corresponding registers, and scarcity of parallel texts and other support materials in the minority language.

The present article reports on our first experience of organising short-term translator training for speakers of an endangered Karelian language during the academic year 2015-2016 at the University of Eastern Finland. The training was organised within the framework of a language revitalisation project, and one of its main aims was to empower speakers of a minority language to translate and thus contribute to the revitalisation of the language. The article combines insider and outsider perspectives: Kuusi was responsible for the curriculum design and was also the core trainer whereas Koskinen, although she is a member of the steering committee for the initiative, was an outside observer during the course itself. Although we had familiarised ourselves with the small set of existing TS literature, the reality of the double role of translation only became clear gradually. In this article, we aim to explore the issues of power, empowerment, agency, and activism in minority translation contexts further. Our research questions are: How are the differences in activist vs. professional translation taken into account in the course contents; how do participants make sense of the role of the translator in a minority translation context; and how do they negotiate the degrees of agency and activist identity they feel confident and competent to accept? The paper is structured as follows. A brief overview of the key terms is provided in section 2, and an explanation of the context of the case reported here is provided in section 3. This is followed by an empirical part that includes an analysis of the data collected during and after the course. Data were collected on how the participants perceive translators' agency, and how they deal with the potentially conflicting demands of the language revitalisation context.

2 Agency and Activism in the Context of Revitalisation

During the past decade, translation scholars have turned their investigations increasingly to cover translation and interpreting activities beyond professional contexts (Antonini et al. 2017). These volunteer translators often have an activist bent. They include various politically motivated translator groups (Baker 2009), fans who provide bootleg subtitles for their favourite TV shows (Díaz Cintas/Muñoz Sánchez 2006; Pérez- González 2014), as well as translators and interpreters who dedicate their time to a social cause (Boéri 2012; O'Brien 2016). This trend of researching beyond professional spheres has brought increased visibility to the multifarious functions of translation, but discussions tend to focus on forms of activity boosted or made possible through technological innovations and digitalised tools, and they, therefore, often build on (unfounded) claims of newness, while volunteer and activist translation has a long history.

Many activist translation groups focus on the translated content, and they engage in translation to communicate a worldview, to participate in a political conflict, to disseminate information, or to forward a particular lifestyle. In contrast, in the context of minority language translation, the actual content to be translated is often of secondary importance, as the activism is directed at increasing the use of the minority language in question, or more broadly, at supporting linguistic diversity (Pérez-González/Susam-Saraeva 2012: 153).

Engaging in the revitalisation of an endangered language with no official status is by nature volunteer and activist translation. Financial resources are often limited, and professional translator positions non-existent or few, which make unpaid volunteer work the basis of revitalisation work. In a context such as the Karelian language, where all speakers are bilingual, each decision to use the minority language is an everyday act of language activism, and engaging in translation into the minority language is a more extended form of that same decision. We can argue that anyone who chooses to keep a minority language alive through personal language choice is, by definition, a language activist, whether or not they identify themselves as such.

Florey, Penfield and Tucker (2009) define a language activist as “a person who focuses energetic action towards preserving and promoting linguistic diversity” (Florey/Penfield/Tucker 2009: 4), be it a native speaker or a non-native linguist who does not belong to the language community. In line with their definition, we start with the assumption that everyone involved in a translator training initiative for an endangered language engages in language activism in one form or another (ourselves included), and since the activities are directed at promoting translation practices, we are more specifically involved in activist translation. We also posit that translators’ agency is of crucial importance. Translators need to feel empowered, motivated, and able to take on the activist roles situations require of them (on empowerment in translator training see Kiraly 2000; Klimkowski/Klimkowska 2012). In providing training for these translators, the trainers need to take a stance on how and to what extent to actively foster this empowerment, and how to balance the participants’ varying skill levels with the need to boost their confidence.

3 The Training Context

Our article presents a training initiative which participates in revitalising Karelian language through empowering new actors to engage with translation. Karelian is a critically endangered Finno-Ugric language spoken in Finland and Russia. It has been estimated that there are some 11,000 speakers of Karelian in Finland and 25,000 in Russia (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 3; Laakso et al. 2016: 108). In Finland, the speakers traditionally resided in the eastern parts of the country, but were resettled after Second World War and live now scattered among majority population. In Russia, the highest concentration of speakers lives in the Republic of Karelia, with a smaller population in Tver Oblast (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 10). The Finnish-Russian state border thus divides the speakers

into two separate groups, and the fragmentation is further enhanced by the subdivision of the language into areal varieties (Olonets Karelian, North Karelian and Tver Karelian; see Laakso et al. 2016: 97). All speakers are in practice bilingual. For most of them, the dominant language is either Finnish or Russian, and Karelian is a heritage language mainly used in the domestic sphere (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 22; Laakso et al. 2016: 97). Over time, use of Karelian has been suppressed for political and cultural reasons, but revitalisation efforts have been made since the 1980s and 1990s (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 37, 59). Still, the functional domains of the language are restricted (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 11-12, 190). New vocabulary is being published in bulletins and dictionaries in the Republic of Karelia, but new words are not necessarily accepted by native speakers (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 10-11), and materials published in Russia, such as Russian-Karelian dictionaries, are unavailable to Karelians in Finland who do not understand Russian. On the Russian side, the status of Karelian is more established, and a handful of professional posts with translation-related tasks exist. On the Finnish side speakers are more scattered, and language status less institutionalised. (For more details, see Iso-Ahola 2017.)

In the years 2015-2018, the University of Eastern Finland hosts a language revitalisation project “Translation, revitalisation and the endangered Karelian language” funded by a private foundation. The overall aim of the project is to support language revitalisation by offering language activists and other speakers of Karelian up-to-date knowledge of and skills in professional translation. Through translator training, the project attempts to empower speakers of Karelian to translate and to contribute to the emergence of a new generation of translators of the Karelian language. Through translation, the project also hopes to increase the number of language products available in Karelian. Additionally, one of the aims of the project is to connect translators and speakers of Karelian from Russia and Finland with each other.

As project funding is insufficient to launch a full-length training programme, the project organises short-term courses on translation theory and practice (translation seminars) open to anyone interested but also linked to the academic curriculum of Karelian. The first translation seminar was completed during the academic year 2015-2016 with the aim of giving students a general overview of relevant translation theory and some practical experience of translation. The seminar consisted of 48 hours of contact teaching (lectures and exercises) and 87 hours of independent work – a workload equal to 5 ECTS credits at Finnish universities. Clearly, the main challenge in designing the seminar was to combine the intended learning outcomes with the limited time resources: how to teach the core competencies of professional translation in such a short period of time, and how to combine high professional standards with the mission of empowering the participants to translate.

A mission impossible to start with, the task was further complicated by the heterogeneity of the group. Altogether, 28 students signed up for the first translation seminar, and 16 of them completed the course. One third of the students can be classified as native speakers of Karelian, others were new speakers or second-language learners (for

a discussion on the notion of native and new speakers, see Kuusi/Kolehmainen/Riionheimo 2017). The language skills of the students varied greatly, and some “learners” had more advanced language skills than some of the “native speakers”. As practically all native speakers of Karelian are bilingual, the dominant language of the students was either Finnish or Russian. Students translated into three different varieties of Karelian; the majority translated into Olonets Karelian, five students translated into North Karelian, and one student translated into South Karelian (on varieties of Karelian, see Iso-Ahola 2017).

Approximately half of the participants were from Finland, and the other half from Russia, but also this category is porous because of cross-border movement. As the seminar was open for both degree students and people outside the university, not all participants had previous experience of university studies, which meant that the group had widely varying academic skills and approaches to learning. In addition, the students’ previous experiences with translation varied; some were practicing translators of Karelian and others were young degree students with no previous experience of translation. Only a few students, mainly those graduated from the University of Petrozavodsk in Russia, had previously taken some courses in translation theory or practice.

Due to the limited time resources, the number of theoretical issues covered during the seminar had to be narrowed down to a minimum. Lectures were delivered on the most central issues such as the translation profession, translation process, communicative situation (including the function of translation, the intended reader and the idea and methods of user-centered translation), information mining and terminology work for translators. Additionally, topics linked directly to minority language translation, in general, or the situation of the Karelian language, in particular, were also included. For example, the programme included lectures on the study of minority language translation in TS (covering issues such as power asymmetry and managing interference), the history of translation in the Republic of Karelia in Russia, and the translation performed by the Karelian broadcasting company on the Russian side of the border.

The trainer profiles were varied. Kuusi and some of the guest lecturers were university teachers in translation, but had no knowledge of Karelian. However, lectures were also delivered by practicing translators of Karelian, a translator from the European Commission Representation in Finland, and students of Karelian who had undertaken translation work into Karelian and wanted to share their experiences with others. Practical translation classes were co-conducted by Päivi Kuusi and Natalia Giloeva, a teacher in Karelian language and culture.

Practical exercises were designed to increase the students’ metacognitive awareness of their own translation process. In addition to translation assignments, students wrote commentaries on their translation process, assessed and commented on the translations of their peers, and compiled a personal “list of insights” of what they had learned about translation during the seminar. Writing translation commentaries was one of the main methods used to increase the students’ awareness of their own performance. In the commentary, students had to describe their translation process and justify their

translation solutions. Commentaries followed detailed instructions that covered the communicative situation, source text, translation process (including search for information and terminology) and evaluation.

4 Method and Data

To uncover how agency played out in the data collected during the course, we created a methodology based on analytical categorisation. We proceeded from two definitions of translators' agency: agency as the willingness and ability to act in a particular situation (Koskinen/Kinnunen 2010: 6) and as the ability to exert power in an intentional way (Buzelin 2011: 6). To have agency, translators need to have the required *abilities* (skills, competences, a position that gives room to manoeuvre), they need to be *willing* to use their abilities (motivation, identity, self-concept), and they need to have an *intention* towards which they are working in the capacity of translator.

We operationalised the occurrences of agency-related elements in the data into three categories as follows:

- (a) reflexions on one's own or others' abilities, competences, as well as current and desired skill levels (= ability) (Koskinen/Kinnunen 2010; Buzelin 2011)
- (b) expressions of willingness or resistance to positions of power/decision-making in terms of lexical, textual, or social outcomes (= willingness) (Koskinen/Kinnunen 2010)
- (c) description of and commentary on aims and intentions in translating/learning to translate (= intention) (Buzelin 2011)

These categories were analysed from three subsets of data. First, course materials (lectures and exercises) were taken to reflect the explicitly stated learning outcomes as designed by the course organisers. Second, field notes from the course meetings were analysed to identify elements discussed and debated among participants. The third data set consists of reflective course assignments collected at the end of the year. It comprises individual texts where students were free to raise the issues they felt most pertinent. These were complemented with students' answers to a similar question in the course feedback sheets.¹ In comparing and contrasting these three sets of data we aim to shed light on the question of agency in training minority translators from three directions: How and to what extent did the curriculum and course content illuminate agency and activism?

¹ As noted above, 28 students signed up for the translation seminar and 16 of them completed the course, having completed all assignments. As some of the participants completed only some of the assignments, the number of assignments handed in does not match the number of students: 18 students handed in their personal "list of insights into translation", while 19 students handed in the course feedback sheet. Supposedly, for participants not enrolled at the University of Eastern Finland as degree students, it was less important to complete all assignments and receive the credit points: for them, it was probably more convenient to complete only those assignments that seemed important for them or fitted into their schedule.

How and to what extent did the participants raise the issue and respond to taught elements? How much weight did the participants put to abilities, willingness and intentions in the free-form assignment and course feedback at the end of the course?

The data are manifold, and their linguistic set-up is complex. The administrative documents were produced in Finnish. Teaching by Kuusi and other lecturers and trainers was delivered in Finnish and/or Karelian (sometimes with Russian as a support language), with interpretation from Finnish into Karelian for instructions, and handouts of the lecture slides in Finnish were translated into Karelian (in our data we have the handouts and field notes of teaching; the lectures were not recorded). Lectures were available for analysis in the form of power points and field notes. Field notes (totalling 30 pages) were kept during most of the training sessions (during lectures, discussions, workshops and also to some extent recess), and they were written in Finnish by a Finnish speaker (Kaisa Koskinen) with a rudimentary understanding of Karelian, based on course interaction which was full of code switching and translanguaging between Karelian and Finnish. The reflective assignment consisted of students' personal "list of insights". In the middle of the translation course, students were asked to keep a record of things they learned about translation during the seminar, and compile a personal list of "insights into translation" to be handed in at the end of the course. Students were advised to compile their lists as "Top 10 precepts for translation" and to include ideas they thought they would like to keep in mind in the future when translating. The students were free to choose the language (Finnish, Russian, Karelian). Of 18 lists handed in, nine were written in Finnish and nine in Karelian. For the present article, the lists written in Finnish were analysed in original, and lists written in Karelian were analysed in Finnish translation. However, when in doubt, the original Karelian lists were consulted. Even though the authors do not actively speak Karelian, as native speakers of Finnish they can understand some of it. Yet, translations into Finnish were necessary to ensure full understanding. Before analysis, the lists were anonymised.

The student feedback sheets (19) were filled in anonymously at the end of the last translation class, and the students had only limited time to think of what to write (unlike the reflective assignments, which were compiled during a longer period of time). Students were asked to fill in the sheets in Finnish or Russian to enable the trainers to read them without having to wait for the feedback to be translated from Karelian. In addition to giving feedback on the course contents and teaching methods, students were asked to list the most important things they had learned during the seminar. For the purposes of the present article, only this last question was included in the data, as it roughly answers the same question as the reflective assignment: how did the training contribute to the construction of the students' agency as translators?

In the following, we will analyse these different data sets – curriculum texts and lecture content, classroom interaction and student reflections – from the point of view of agency. It is, of course, important to keep in mind that in doing so we authors are also ourselves in many ways implicated in the data, and we need to also carefully consider our own agency. Kuusi, in particular, is wearing many hats as she was responsible for

curriculum design, course content, and the exercises we analyse below. In such a setting, one must take care to keep insider knowledge and data analysis apart. However, having two people interpreting the results creates checks and balances, and the fact that both of us were present in the actual events also adds reliability to the analysis. The insider role of Kuusi also adds an autoethnographic note, for example when she is able to reflect on the aims and aspirations of curriculum design (e.g. 5.1). It is quite common for researchers interested in pedagogical topics to study their own training settings and collect data from there. In such cases, combinations of autoethnography and outsider observations can provide a fruitful combination of viewpoints.

5 Agency and Activism in Research Data

5.1 Agency and Activism in Course Contents

Even though the notions of activism and agency were not explicitly discussed during the translation seminar, several issues related to them surfaced in course activities. The aspect of activism influenced the course design from the very beginning, as one of the project's main aims was to provide language activists with basic knowledge and skills in professional translation, and the training was targeted at Karelian language activists. The notion of agency was perhaps more covert during the initial phase, but certainly is inherent in many of the basic concepts and types of activities in regular translator training. Perceived as a normal way to proceed, the importance of developing the students' self-concept as translators and their understanding of translation as an intentional action was included in the course contents, even if not explicitly conceptualised in terms of agency.

As pointed out in section 1, existing research on minority language translation provided a frame of reference for designing the course. However, the material available was found insufficient, as there was very little research available on training issues in the context of minority languages, let alone endangered languages. Therefore, the course was put together by combining the very basics of regular translator training with materials pertaining specifically to minority or endangered languages.

For the students, the lecture on research on minority languages in the field of TS was perhaps the most obvious source of information related to the role and responsibility of the translator in the context of endangered languages. The lecture introduced issues such as power asymmetry and subordination (see section 1), internal colonialism (Cronin 1996), mandatory translation (Branchadell 2005b), and minority languages as weak target systems (Touy 1985; see Kuusi/Kolehmainen/Riionheimo 2017). It also addressed the idea of controlling interference through translator training. Other issues that sparked discussion during the lecture included, for instance, the ambiguous role of translation for minority languages as both an enabling force and an instrument of oppression (Cronin 2003), and the political implications of foreignising vs. domesticating translation strategies in minority language translation. This last question, in particular, provoked

discussion on the responsibility of the translator in choosing a strategy that serves the cause of revitalisation.

Another, perhaps less obvious aspect of the translators' agency was implicitly present in lectures on information mining, where the emphasis was on the active role of the translator in constructing equivalence between units of two linguistic systems. The lectures presented the translator's research work as active reasoning instead of passive receiving of ready-made solutions, and it emphasised inference skills, making justified choices between several possible alternatives, and the occasional (or, in the context of endangered languages, not so occasional) necessity of coining new expressions.

As a part of the distance learning assignments, students wrote two extensive translation commentaries on their own translations. The commentaries followed instructions on how to write a translation commentary and covered issues such as the search for information, the function of the translation, and the intended reader. Students were also expected to provide examples of the most challenging problems they encountered while translating (words, terms, structures, style and register) and the solutions they chose. Even though the instructions did not explicitly mention translators' agency, the issues covered helped students become aware of their own decision-making process and, consequently, of their active role as translators, as opposed to the common misconception of translating as passive mediation between two linguistic codes. When required to describe their translation process and justify their solutions for translation problems encountered, students developed an understanding of translating as conscious and intentional action. Similar aims were pursued in assignments based on collaboration between peers. In addition to writing translation commentaries, students reviewed the translations and translation commentaries of one of their peers, and received peer feedback on their own translations, both during training sessions and as distance learning assignments between the training sessions.

The aspect of intention (the purpose of the translation) was present in the choice of texts to be translated. During the training sessions, students acquired basic skills in producing texts for Wikipedia. As a distance learning assignment, they were assigned to translate a text for the Karelian edition of Wikipedia (which did not exist at the time). One of the reasons for choosing this focus was the aspect of volunteering and activism inherent in Wikipedia translation. The choice also made it possible for students to publish their translation online (at first, in the Wikipedia incubator) and, in this manner, contribute to increasing the visibility of the Karelian language, which was the aim and the motivating force behind the translation activities. Additionally, students contributed to the common cause of getting the Olonets Karelian edition of Wikipedia out of the incubator, a goal that was achieved after the first seminar in the autumn of 2016.

The aspect of cooperation was clearly present in translation classes; almost all the work during classes was done in pairs or small groups. The chosen emphasis on collaboration stemmed from the project aims, namely that of connecting translators of Karelian from Finland and Russia with each other. By making the students work together and

discuss their work with each other, they were encouraged from the very beginning to construct their agency in collaboration with other agents.

5.2 Agency and Activism in Classroom Discussions

Above is a description of the issue of agency from the point of view of course organisers (responsible teachers and the project's steering committee), whether in the form of course content or discussion points actively proposed by various lecturers. The following section takes a bottom-up approach and analyses how and to what extent the questions of ability, willingness, and intentions arise in student contributions to classroom discussions (as reflected in fieldwork notes [FN]).

5.2.1 Ability

It may be considered somewhat unexpected for a group with extremely heterogeneous starting levels of language and translation skills that in this data set issues of skills and abilities were seldom discussed. At the beginning of the first seminar, many participants expressed an unwillingness to engage in *prima vista* translation and used lack of skill as an excuse, but in general any potential skills gaps were not signalled as obstacles. Several participants, all new speakers of Karelian, expressly recognised their limited abilities, but this did not seem to inhibit or constrain their agency at all. The general atmosphere can be described as empowered and bold:

- (1) Kirjoitan preesensissä. Ehkä jatkokurssilla opin imperfektin ja sitten voin kirjoittaa myös sitä. (FN p. 10)²

I write in present tense. During the more advanced course, I will hopefully also learn the past tense, and then I can start using that too.

Some new speakers saw translating primarily as a means of improving their own language skills, without any desire or plan to be published. One participant called these translations *koitehkiännökset*, "trial translations," specifically emphasising that they are not translation proper (FN p. 25). It logically follows that even limited skills and abilities were seen in an enabling and motivating light, not as an obstacle. As one participant who had engaged in large-scale translation projects put it:

- (2) Täällä on mietitty kuka on tarpeeksi hyvä. No minä en ainakaan ole (FN p. 25).

We have discussed who is able enough [to translate]. Well, I am definitely not.

In a minority language translation context, the step from translating for one's own pleasure or education to being a published translator can be surprisingly short. As there are no

² In order to support multilingualism and minority languages, the editors and authors of this special issue have agreed to retain the examples in their original language (in this article, either Karelian, examples 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, or Finnish, examples 1, 2, 4, 7, 11, 12, 13, 17, 19), followed by an English translation. This way, we are hoping to make minority languages more visible and foreground the authentic voices of the agents themselves (see also Iso-Ahola 2017: footnote 17; Lantto/Kolehmainen 2017: footnote 4).

translation markets to enter and professional standards to reach, being published is more a question of one's own initiative and resourcefulness. Adapting tasks to one's skill level may, in that context, be seen as an essential element of minority language translators' agency. One of the participants explained this: "The language in children's books is easy enough. It was easy to start with them" (FN p. 25).

Although nagging doubts about one's abilities were also raised in some remarks as a constant worry in translating (FN p. 24), and not everyone was as outspoken as the participants quoted above, the general atmosphere in the field notes is clearly geared towards empowerment, and no-one expressed doubt about any risks involved in learner translation in cases such as the above. Instead, there were numerous mentions in the field notes of remarks that emphasised cooperation and/or lamented the difficulty of translating alone if you cannot consult anyone. This may be a general feeling among new translation students; still, the role of linguistic community and collegial support is likely to be even more important in the context of an endangered language (see section 5.3.1). Two proverbs that were mentioned sum up the general atmosphere of working together to achieve the same goal:

(3) Yksi piä hyvä, ga kaksi vie parem. (FN p. 26)

Two heads are better than one.

Olisi tärkeää että "kaikki tervattais yhtä venettä".

We all need to "tar the same boat".

While the participants set a high bar for themselves and their own continued language learning (FN p. 28), the different skills levels were tolerated well for the sake of the cause of revitalisation. In the community of language activists, expertise can be seen as shared: some have resources and energy and others have more developed language skills or more extensive translation experience.

5.2.2 Willingness

Willingness is a crucial factor for these participants, and for all translation activism. This is not surprising as volunteer translation is built on willingness. Although only one participant introduced herself as a language activist during the seminar (FN p. 23), it is safe to say that, in one way or another, everyone was involved in language activism, and their participation in the seminar was voluntary. Therefore, willingness was to be expected. However, the pressing nature of this willingness may come as a surprise for someone not familiar with minority language activism in the context of endangered languages. Tolerance towards the agentic behaviour of others is not a choice but a necessity as everyone's input is needed, regardless of language skills, dialect, or style (FN p. 6). Similarly, many participants were not only willing to translate, but they felt they had to. This urge to translate was mainly internalised, originating from the chosen "stubborn" resistance to the easy monolingual practices in the everyday life (FN p. 13). However, it was also often brought about by pressure from others, as requests for translation help

can become a burden (FN p. 24). The participants were well aware of the risks of burnout from trying to do too much, and they gave each other the advice not to set too high demands on themselves (FN p. 13). One could argue that in terms of willingness, too much agency can also be a problem.

Perhaps because of the potentially limitless agency of translators, discussions also contained a lot of talk about the limits of one's power, and the advice to refrain from taking too many liberties. When the question of whether a translator is allowed to correct mistakes in the source text was posed to one of the visiting lecturers, a positive response was received from another participant as well as the lecturer. This provoked others to repeat the question in a more emphatic manner:

(4) Kysyisin vielä, saako todellakin korjata asiavirheitä? (FN p. 18)

I would like to ask again; can one really correct mistakes?

A lengthy discussion of when and how to correct mistakes and when not to ensue, but most discussions on the limits of translators' agency were related to lexicon, and in particular, the constant need to coin new words. Several participants emphasised that one should not create new words lightly (FN p. 5, 10) and that one should always try to respect the models that already exist in the language (FN p. 14). Institutional constraints, client wishes, and other elements that regularly pose limits to professional translators' agency are not relevant to translators of Karelian (or most other endangered languages, for that matter). In that context, translators are rarely paid and often freely choose what they are willing to translate. However, some participants from the Russian side of the border were actually employed in positions where they produced (audio-visual) translations, and they brought up the intended audiences and their constraining role: "ei pää suututtaa rahvasta"/"you are not to upset the viewers" (FN p. 23).

5.2.3 Intention

Revitalisation was so embedded in the seminar set-up that the core intention was not difficult to uncover. Despite the heterogeneity of the group, the cause of the Karelian language was a uniting element. During the first seminar day, the participants listed the benefits of translation in keeping the language alive, in developing new words, and in making Karelian more visible for those who do not speak it (FN p. 2). During the closing session, more individual motives for language learning were expressed (FN p. 28), as well as the faster production rates for translations compared to writing texts from scratch. A healthy sense of competitiveness can also be harnessed for motivation: the Wikipedia project for Olonets Karelian was boosted by the knowledge that the Veps language already had a site published online (FN p. 10).

The feeling of urgency was shared; the language is dying, and there is no time to be wasted (FN p. 24). The shared cause of revitalisation created a fundamental sense of unity in the group. Heated debates on word choices or correct orthography aside, the group was united in their words and deeds. They repeatedly emphasised the importance

of cooperation (FN p. 28), and in group activities, they demonstrated their attitude in a flexible and cheerful manner, as the translated extract from the field notes indicates:

- (5) A four-member group wanted to be a team. The teacher was worried because the plan was to have three participants in each team [each team member with a particular linguistic profile].

Teacher: How will you translate then?

The students: We'll translate well.

The teacher: Which language?

Response 1: All variants!

Response 2: Mixed language, we will translate into a mixed language.

Teacher [later]: You could also be in any other team.

Response: Fine, put us in the team you want.

The team was disintegrated. ... [The division into teams had become increasingly complicated, and members of this team were dispersed into different groups.] Everyone was flexible and set to work no matter which team they were assigned to. (FN p. 6)

5.3 Agency and Activism in Student Reflections

Classroom discussions exhibit group understandings, and reflect those elements participants feel confident to express among others. Individual assignments allow for reflections that are more private. In this section, the issues of ability, willingness, and intention are discussed in the light of the students' reflective course assignments and course feedback provided individually. To give more room to the students' individual voices, this section is somewhat longer than other sections of the present article.

The "list of insights" compiled by each student was written in the form of numbered or bullet point lists, each point giving an "insight" or precept, typically written as a piece of advice or recommendation for oneself ("do this", "it is important to remember that..."). The number of bulleted points in each of the 18 lists varied from four to 15, totalling 150 items. Items related to a certain topic were calculated, and the numbers given below refer to the item count. Some items were related to more than one topic at a time and, for this reason, were counted more than once. In the feedback sheets, students were asked to mention the most important things they had learned during the seminar. As most students mentioned more than one thing they had learned, the total below exceeds the number of feedback sheets (19).

5.3.1 Ability

Whereas in field notes the aspect of ability was seldom discussed (see 5.2.1), this third data set presents a different picture. As both the "list of insights" and the feedback sheet

focused on things the students had learned, it is quite natural that reflections on ability outnumber reflections on willingness and intentions, which are less directly related to learning outcomes. However, the students' reflections involved all aspects of agency relevant for our research, even though willingness and intention sometimes surfaced in a less direct way.

In "list of insights", reflections on the ability to translate were present in items broadly categorised as relating to translation competence: language skills (6 references in the lists), source text analysis (8), revising the translation (21), research skills (43, including filling in lexical gaps), and developing metacognitive awareness of one's own translation process (4). From the point of view of course organisers, it was encouraging to notice that student reflections focused on the basic set of translation competences (see EMT 2009; PACTE 2003) that the training was designed to give. The only competences that did not emerge in student reflections were those related to knowing market requirements and job profiles and negotiating with a client (classified as Translation Service Provision Competence in EMT 2009 and Knowledge about Translation Sub-competence in PACTE 2003). The absence of reflections on these topics was to be expected, as the job market is not a relevant category for translators of Karelian and was, therefore, not included in course contents. Other reflections on the ability to translate included the consultative role of the minority language community and the influence of working conditions on translating (particularly time management).

The emphasis on translation competencies in "list of insights" was echoed in the course feedback. As the most important thing they learned, most students mention the improvement of one (or more) of the translation competencies: translation skills (6), research skills (5), language skills (4), or the ability to reflect on one's own translation process (3). Interestingly, in the "list of insights", the translator's technical competence was not emphasised, but in the feedback sheets, three students placed the basics of translation memory tools as the most important thing they had learned. Other issues mentioned in the feedback more than once or twice were the courage and eagerness to translate (4) and cooperation with other students (3).

Most translation competences are presumably the same for both major and minority language translators (differences relating mostly to the almost non-existent translation market and the voluntary basis of the work for languages such as Karelian) (Kuusi 2016). Therefore, it is natural that student reflections related to them did not reveal anything specific that could be linked to the minority language context. The high proportion of items related to research skills (43) in the lists is probably also characteristic of learning translation in general. However, the division of this category into sub-categories seems to reflect problems specific to minority language translation. Students reflected on information mining in general (11 references in the lists) (along the lines of "Language skills alone are not enough because translating requires special field knowledge, skills, and

know-how”, List02),³ the diverse use of dictionaries (8), and extracting vocabulary from parallel texts in the target language (10). However, they seemed to be most concerned with filling in lexical gaps (14). It is obvious from the students’ lists that the lack of modern vocabulary, special field terminology in particular, complicates translation into Karelian. However, stimulating the lexical development of an underused language through translation (in a situation where models are adopted from two dominant languages, Finnish and Russian, of which one is closely related to the recipient language and the other is not) is beyond the scope of this article, and merits its own separate treatment.

As raising the students’ metacognitive awareness of their own translation process was one of the main objectives of the course, it is perhaps surprising that in the lists, the number of items related to a self-reflective approach to translation was rather small (4). This, however, is not the whole truth because metacognition is implicitly present in several other topics. Many of the reflections on the ability to translate, such as coining new terms or revising a text, presuppose a certain amount of metacognition even if not explicitly stated in the student lists. Below, an example of one of the four clear cases in this category explicitly links awareness of one’s own translation solutions with responsibility for translation and subsequent improvement of quality:

- (6) Älä varua olla vastuus omas kiännökses. Malta sellittiä jogahine oma kiätty, oma vallittu da ezil tuodu. Ku maltannet kaččuo omah kiännökseh kriittizesti, toinah tullii roih jo parembi, korgeitazoizembi. (List02)

Don’t be afraid to be responsible for your own translation. You need to be able to explain everything you have translated, chosen, and highlighted. When you can look critically at your own translation, perhaps the next one will be better, of higher quality.

The role of self-reflection in the ability to translate is neatly summed up in one of the feedback sheets:

- (7) Tärkeimpiä juttuja taisi olla kääntämisen tekniikka ja oman käännösprosessin tarkkailu. Nyt ajattelen mitä käännän enkä vain käännä. (Feedback15)

Perhaps one of the most important things was the technique of translation and the monitoring of one’s own translation process. Now I think about what I translate instead of just translating.

However, one of the students expressed a view opposite to those in favour of a self-reflective approach: that writing a translation commentary is “a waste of time that would be better used for translating texts” (List05). As is evident from the course feedback on teaching methods, several students felt that commenting on one’s own translations was

³ This data set is referred to with the name of the assignment (either “List” for the “lists of insights” into translation, or “Feedback” for feedback sheets, followed by a number of the item in question. The numbering of the lists does not correspond to the numbering of the feedback sheet, which means that “List01” and “Feedback01” are not necessarily produced by the same student (even though they may be, by coincidence).

difficult at first or felt strange. Possibly, writing a reflective translation commentary might have been easier for degree students, whereas students with no previous experience of academic studies were perhaps less accustomed to analysing their own learning process.

In the lists, one of the popular topics related to the ability to translate was the influence of working conditions on translating (14 items). As many as ten of these were related to time management. Students pointed out that one should allow enough time for translating, or never translate in a hurry, unless necessary. One of the students linked time management with information retrieval; bearing in mind the infinite amount of information available, one should consider how much time is reasonable to invest in research (List10). The remaining three items in this category commented on other working conditions; that it is better to translate in the morning when one is not too tired (2) and take a break occasionally when translating (1). As time management had not been touched upon during lectures or exercises, this student concern is likely to arise from personal experience. As pointed out in 5.2.2, for activist translators, there is the risk of doing too much, and, therefore, it is reassuring to see that students are aware of the importance of allowing themselves enough time to translate.

When feeling uncertain of their translation solutions, the students recommended turning to the speakers' community for advice (17 items in the lists). The consultative role of the minority language community emerging from the student lists is probably a natural consequence of a situation in which other translation aids are scarce. When compared with major language translation, those translating into Karelian have less of everything to assist them in decision-making: fewer dictionaries, fewer parallel texts, and less modern vocabulary, let alone special field terms or term-banks. New speakers translating into their L2 may feel an even stronger need to turn to native speakers for advice. The students' strong reliance on other speakers is related to feelings of inability or unwillingness to solve problems alone and a wish to extend one's abilities with the help of others. Here, the linguistic community seems to enable rather than constrain.

- (8) Pyytyä apuo muilta kielenmalttajilta. (List01)

Ask for help from others who know the language.

However, the constraining role is also present. In addition to questions of (in)ability, the wish to ask others implies a willingness to share with them the position of exerting power in the linguistic community by, for example, coining new words and, consequently, sharing with them the responsibility for the choices made. Some of the items in this category explicitly linked the advisory role of the linguistic community with the need to introduce neologisms:

- (9) Uuzie sanoi luadijes hyvä olis kysyö muilgi kielen pagizijoil, ellennetähgö hyö moizie uuzie sanoi. (List13)

When coining new words, it is good to ask other speakers whether they understand these new words.

Six of the 17 items relating to the speakers' community recommend turning for advice not just to other speakers of the minority language, but also other translators. It seems that teamwork during practical translation classes and peer feedback in distance learning assignments encouraged students to turn to other translators for advice and to value their input in the otherwise solitary translation process (see 5.2.3).

- (10) Arvosta verkostoloi: toizen kiändäjän mielet ollah tärgiet. (List11)

Appreciate networks; the opinions of other translators are important.

Cooperation is present in feedback sheets too. In example (11), cooperation, language skills, and translation skills are all placed among the most important things learned, leading to encouragement:

- (11) Yhteistyön merkitys. Kielitaitoni kohentui paljon kurssin aikana. Opin myös paljon kääntämisestä. → rohkeus (Feedback14)

The importance of cooperation. My language skills improved a lot during the course. I also learned a lot about translation. → courage

In the lists, only three of the students commented on their ability to translate into a non-native language. As the majority of the students were new speakers of Karelian who were learning the language during translator training, it is a little surprising that the topic did not surface more clearly in the lists. However, it was encouraging for the trainers to see that at the end of the training course, some of the students felt empowered enough to participate in language revitalisation through translation, even though this meant translating into a non-native language:

- (12) Vähemmistökielelle kääntäminen on tärkeä kielenelvytyksen muoto. Voin osallistua käännöstoimintaan, vaikka karjala ei olekaan äidinkieleni ja kielitaitoni on vasta alkeistasolla. Kääntäminen voi olla itselleni kielen harjoittelua ja samalla voin tuottaa karjalankielistä sisältöä esim Wikipediaan. (List20)

Translating into a minority language is an important form of language revitalisation. I can participate in translation activity, even though Karelian is not my native language, and my language skills are still on the elementary level. For me, translating is a way to improve my language skills, and, at the same time, I can produce materials in Karelian, for example, for Wikipedia.

The quotation above also demonstrates the aspect of intention. The student explicitly mentions two motivating factors for translating: it improves his or her language skills and allows him or her to participate in language revitalisation.

Empowerment is also displayed in example (13) below from the feedback sheets. In the example, the feelings of ability and inability are intertwined, but the emphasis is on the enabling power of encouragement. The student first mentions research skills as the most important thing he or she has learned, and then goes on to place emphasis on the emerging courage to translate even with modest language skills:

- (13) Karjalan kielen tiedonhaku. Opintojakso oli innostava ja rohkaiseva. Opintojakson käytyäni uskallan kääntää vaikka en olekaan kovin kielitaitoinen. (Feedback1)

Information mining related to Karelian. The seminar was inspiring and encouraging. After completing the course, I have the courage to translate even though my language skills are not very good.

5.3.2 Willingness

The examples that demonstrate the empowerment to translate are all related not only to ability, but also to willingness; when empowered to act, one is willing to do so. Willingness was also visible in the desire to share with the linguistic community the position of exerting power. Perhaps the most fruitful area for studying willingness in this context is to be found in the choices made when filling in lexical gaps. When coining new expressions, translators exert power and make decisions but also need to admit their share of responsibility for the development of the language (see example (9) in 5.3.1).

In the lists, the aspect of willingness to exert power is also present in student reflections on limits of translation (3); is the translator allowed to correct mistakes in the source text or edit the text to increase readability? (See also 5.2.2 above.) One student felt that factual mistakes must be corrected; the second thought it advisable to clarify unclear passages, but regarded this a never-ending debate; and the third demonstrated an even higher amount of uncertainty concerning the limits of translation:

- (14) Pie raja: kirjuttajan sanottu da sinun kiätty. Sinun käil ei pie rikkuo sidä midä sanou kirjuttai. Älä ližiä omua, älä vähendä da alenda kirjutettuu... Puaksuh himoittau. Kus on se raja???? (List02)

Maintain the boundary: the author's words and your translation. You must not breach what the author says. Do not add anything of your own, do not lessen or downgrade what has been written... Often one would like to do so. Where is the dividing line????

5.3.3 Intention

Taking the future readers into account was one of those elements emphasised in teaching. In the lists, student intentions were perhaps most clearly visible in reflections concerning the intended reader (12). Most of them were general comments along the lines of "When translating, think who you are translating for" (List11), including one comment representing the opposite view "You don't need to think who you are translating for, just translate and then look and correct if necessary" (List05). Only one of these recommendations explicitly mentions the choice between speakers of Karelian living in Finland and those living in Russia, and only two of them mention the choice of the variety of Karelian language to translate into. It is not evident from the lists whether the other students also had these specific target groups in mind. For an endangered language, the group of potential readers is often restricted to start with, and for Karelian, the group is rather fragmented due to the division of the linguistic community into areal varieties

and two distinct populations residing in different countries. It can be speculated that some of the students targeted their translations at a very narrow readership. One of the lists clearly echoes the idea, presented during one of the lectures, to create “personae”, fictive archetypes of users to help the translator consider the needs of the intended readers (on user-centered translation, see Suojanen et al. 2015).

- (15) Luaji omassas mieles moine hengi, kuduale i kiännät. (List18)

Create in your own mind the kind of person you are translating for.

The intentional aspect was also present in items related to the development of the Karelian language (7). In the lists, students thought it advisable to favour Karelian words over loan words (2) or to consider carefully whether to borrow an item from Finnish or Russian (1), and to make sure that the use of a neologism is justified (1). Three other items in this category were loosely related to managing interference. Concern for the possibly threatening developments in one’s own language seem to be typical when translating in an asymmetrical relationship, not necessarily between major and minor, but also between two major languages, one of which is in a stronger position compared to the other. In the case of Karelian, however, the sheer amount of lexical gaps, encountered in almost every sentence, makes the problem far more acute, and the problem of filling in lexical gaps surfaces in student reflections on all three dimensions of their agency. In the example below, a student associates the use of a loan word with being lazy and not taking the trouble to look for an expression of Karelian origin:

- (16) Sanoin karjalankielizien vastinehien eččies, ei pie laškistellakseh da ottua kiännökseh ezim. ven’ankielisty laihinua. Parembi eččie pädeviä karjalankielisty sanua [...]. (List17)

When looking for equivalents in Karelian, you must not be lazy and use, for example, a loan word from Russian; it is better to look for a suitable word in Karelian [...].

As noted earlier, the preference for words of Karelian origin to neologisms is an instance of student willingness to exert their agency and make decisions (see Section 5.2.2). However, it is probably motivated by a wish to maintain the purity or authenticity of the Karelian language, which is under threat from the dominant language and, therefore, an instance of student intentions to “control interference” (Toury 1985). In the data, the aspects of agency discussed in this article frequently overlap, and it is sometimes difficult to maintain clear-cut categories.

Intention is evident in example (17) from a feedback sheet. The status and visibility of the Karelian language are considered the real achievement and the motivating force behind translating. Even if training as such is important too, the most important thing is the symbolic value of organising the course and its practical consequence of bringing speakers together. The value of translation is instrumental; the ultimate goal is something that can be achieved with the help of translation and translator training, but learning to translate is not a goal in itself.

- (17) Varsinaista käännöskoulutustakin tärkeämpää ja hyödyllisempää oli kenties se, että seminaari/kurssi ylipäänsä pidettiin – kokosi puhujia yhteen, nosti statusta jne. Koulutuskin oli tärkeää ja hyödyllistä. (Feedback12)

Perhaps even more important and useful than the actual translator training was the fact that the seminar/course was organised in the first place – it brought speakers together, raised status, etc. The training was important and useful too.

One of the challenges faced by the trainers was to find a balance between giving the students an understanding of how demanding translation can be, while at the same time making them feel empowered enough to translate. The following two excerpts from the student lists reflect this seeming opposition in a positive light. In example (18), the student explicitly states that translating is difficult, but the lesson drawn from the observation is not to retreat from translating, but to value the work of translators, whether performed by yourself or by others.

- (18) Kiändämine on jygiempi oman tekstan kirjuttamistu: kirjuttajes voit oppie vältiä moizii kohtii, kudamii tarkah et tiijä; kiännökses kogo tekstu pidäy kiändiä. Kunnivoiče kiändäjii, arvosta omuagi ruaduo. (List11)

Translating is more difficult than writing your own text: when you write, you can try to avoid things you don't know exactly; in translation, the whole text must be translated. Respect translators, appreciate your own work too.

For the trainers, it was comforting to see that an awareness of the challenges inherent in translating did not discourage the students, but rather sensitised them to their own demanding role as translators. Example (19) displays a balanced view of both the pitfalls of translation and the translator's license to be human: making mistakes is part of the game.

- (19) Jokainen meistä voisi tehdä virheen, kääntäjä ei ole superhero. (List14)

Any of us could make a mistake; a translator is not a superhero.

6 Conclusions

As the above analysis shows, issues of agency and activism were omnipresent during the course, but their emphasis varied among the data sets. Dividing agency into abilities, willingness, and intentional action allowed us to gain an in-depth understanding of how issues of agency played out as the course progressed. In the analysis, we proceeded from elements planted by the organisers, to the co-construction of attitudes and understandings in group, to the individual, internalised views of the core elements. Course contents reflect the intentions of the organisers in putting forward particular skills and attitudes. Student discussions and reflections, subsequently, allow us to study “translation as practice from the viewpoint of those who engage in it in a particular [...] setting” (Buzelin 2011: 8). In the present case, the agents of translation in question were students

in the process of constructing their agency as (future) translators, and the particular context was that of activist translation for language revitalisation.

To summarise our three data sets, the course content was built around translation competences, and the targeted abilities concerned meta skills such as information mining. The various competences were also the focus of individual reflections, when students looked back at what they had learned. In contrast, classroom discussions foregrounded language skills, or the perceived lack of them, and the central enabling and constraining factors in translating for publication.

Willingness is a *sine qua non* on a course freely attended and aimed at volunteer translation practices. It is, therefore, noteworthy that the risks and limits of volunteering were also brought up in discussions, and that the student reflections also considered the limits of translator licence. One of the objectives of the course was to empower new translators. This was not explicitly stated in the course contents, but the success of this hidden agenda is visible in both field notes (5.2.1) and in course feedback. The “list of insights” and course feedback highlight the aspect of ability, which is only natural, as the students were specifically asked what the most important things were that they had learned during the seminar. Bearing this in mind, it is interesting that aspects of willingness and intention also surfaced in this last data set.

Agency is fundamentally intentional; it is willingness to use abilities to achieve something. In the present case, revitalisation and the cause of the Karelian language offered themselves as the self-evident and unquestioned agentic framework for both organisers and participants. This shared framework contained variation, and participants expressed different engagements with the idea. The most significant duality concerned individual vs. collective approaches to revitalisation, and both are present in the data. While some students regarded improving their language proficiency as the most important thing learned during the seminar, others valued the possibility to participate in the common cause of increasing the visibility of the Karelian language. Tsunoda (2006) distinguishes between language revitalisation on two separate, yet interconnected levels: the societal (macro) level and the individual (micro) level. The former concerns “the extent to which the language is used in the community” (Tsunoda 2006: 174), while the latter relates to “the degree of an individual’s proficiency in the language” (Tsunoda 2006: 174-175). In general, reflections related to the ability to translate seem to belong to the individual level, while those related to student willingness and intention seem to belong to the societal level. These levels, however, are mutually dependent. As was evident from the students’ reflections, the feeling of ability empowered the students to translate, while the ensuing translation activity contributes to language revitalisation on the societal level and, in turn, motivates the students to improve their ability to translate.

An interesting finding was the collective nature of agency as depicted in the data. Even if ability, as such, was perceived as something individual, individual gaps in abilities were thought to be overcome through a collective effort. Individual and collective revitalisation efforts fed into the same aims. Expressions of collective support can be seen as manifestations of what has elsewhere been labelled “multiple translatorship”

(Jansen/Wegener 2013). Student reflections on cooperation with other students and translators as well as on the consultative role of the linguistic community demonstrate the collaborative nature of translation in a setting where the aim of the activity is not the individual's need to earn a living, but the shared desire to contribute to the common cause of language revitalisation (see also Iso-Ahola 2017). However, whereas Jansen and Wegener see multiple translatorship as a process in which agents "interact, negotiate and struggle for influence" (Jansen/Wegener 2013: 5), the agents in the present data seem to struggle for influence not with each other or within the linguistic community, but with respect to the dominant language that renders minority language invisible.

The data sets and our results summarised above need to be understood in perspective. The field notes reflect the views of those who were the most vocal and the most willing to step forward in public, and the trainers were also involved in these discussions and put forward their views and ideas. Although the notes contain many voices, they cannot be interpreted as the consensus of all participants. When compiling the list of insights, students were able to express their personal thoughts and to choose freely which topics they wished to comment on in their lists. Nevertheless, even if this assignment did not entail detailed instructions guiding the students' reflections, the translation commentaries (and the instructions on how to write a translation commentary) written before and during the compilation of the lists certainly influenced the students' thinking. It is sobering to keep in mind that, in a training setting, data sets collected from participants are not "pure" and free from the influence of trainers.

Toury (1985: 8) maintains that the ambiguous role of translation in minority language contexts can be controlled by the linguistic community through translator training. When trained to manage the risk of unwanted influence from the dominating language, translators can make the most of the revitalising power of translation. To achieve this, training should focus on enabling students to act in an intentional and conscious manner, in other words, it should focus on constructing students' agency. However, the context of Karelian, with the numbers of both potential translators and potential readers decreasing at an alarming rate, prompts translators to close ranks. In this setting, translators' agency should not be constructed in isolation, as an individual project, but in cooperation with others who share the same goal. Encouragingly, student translators in the present data exhibited both an emerging awareness of their own agency and a wish to exert it in collaboration with other agents.

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