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## Translating child protection assessments for ELF users: Accommodation, accessibility, and accuracy

### Lastensuojelupäätösten kääntäminen lingua franca -englantiin: mukauttaminen, saavutettavuus ja tarkkuus

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**Abstract:** This paper analyzes the translation of five child protection assessments and decisions from Finnish into English. Translators of such text have to make difficult decisions in relation to the linguistic resources of the end users, namely the child's parents or custodians, because it is impossible for the translator to assess their linguistic resources. Therefore, it is difficult to strike a balance between an accurate translation and a pragmatically felicitous translation. Besides, these texts are typically translated by community interpreters who have no formal training in translation. A total of 18 examples of translation problems related to terminology, nominalization, passive constructions, and speech representation were analyzed by mobilizing different linguistic theories related to each category. The results show that the target texts present several accommodation strategies aimed at rendering the translations more accessible. Thus, terms are explained or glossed, and terms, grammatical constructions, and complex forms of reported speech are simplified. More awareness-raising among different stakeholders is needed in order to produce translations that really empower migrant communities.

**Keywords:** community translation, public service translation, ELF, Finnish, social work

**Tiivistelmä:** Kirjoituksessa tarkastellaan lastensuojelun päätösten ja selvitysten kääntämistä suomesta englantiin. Tällaisten tekstien kääntäminen on haasteellista, sillä käännosten käyttäjät ovat hyvin harvoin syntyperäisiä englannin kielen puhujia. Käännöksen on siis säilytettävä lähtötekstin laillinen voima, mutta

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lisäksi käännöksen käyttäjän eli lapsen huoltajan on voitava ymmärtää käännös. Usein tekstejä kääntävät asioimistulkit, joilla ei ole kääntäjän koulutusta. Analysoitavaksi valittiin 18 käännösongelmaesimerkkiä, jotka edustavat terminologiaa, nominalisaatiota, passiivirakenteita ja referenttia. Tulosten perusteella kääntäjät käyttävät useita sopeuttamiskeinoja, joilla he lisäävät käännösten saavutettavuutta. Keinoja ovat muun muassa kaksikielinen merkitseminen (glossaaminen), selittäminen, monimutkaisten rakenteiden yksinkertaistaminen ja kieliopillinen “luonnonmukaistaminen” eli prototyyppillisen kategorian käyttäminen (esim. verbin käyttäminen substantiivin sijaan kerrottaessa tapahtumisesta tai tekemisestä). Ongelmien ratkaisemiseksi olisi tärkeää lisätä kielellistä tietämystä kaikkien lastensuojelutekstien kanssa tekemisessä olevien henkilöiden parissa.

**Avainsanat:** englantia lingua francana, suomi, sosiaalityö, lastensuojelu, virkatekstien kääntäminen

## 1 Introduction

Finland has been a host country for migrants since the early 1990s, and the number of people with a migration background has grown steadily since then. At the end of 2019, 7.5% of the population (compared to 1.7% just 20 years earlier) were not native speakers of the languages traditionally spoken or signed in the country. This demographic change is mostly visible in the cities. Thus, in the city of Helsinki, foreign language speakers represented 16.2% of the population at the end of 2019. While Russian, Estonian, Arabic, and Somali are the most common languages used by migrants, English is also among the top 10 languages, with 22,052 speakers at the end of the year 2019, compared to 3569 speakers in 1990 (Statistics Finland 2020).<sup>1</sup>

Migration has also transformed the translation and interpreting services in the country. Alongside community or public service *interpreting*, a growing body of translations of written texts related to public services need to be *translated*. In the context of social work, these texts include decisions and reports related to specific child-protection cases, and this paper focuses on such texts. These texts are typically translated by professional translators or by community interpreters through the same agencies that provide community interpreting services. Many translators translate from Finnish into a second or third language, and they do not necessarily have other than professional connections to migrant communities. The scope of these translations is difficult to assess, as translation and interpreting

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<sup>1</sup> In these statistics, a person can only have one mother tongue. A newborn’s mother tongue is automatically that of the mother unless the parents request another language to be registered.

agencies do not compile statistics based on the division between community translation and other forms of translation. However, estimates can be made based on community interpreting statistics, as the same individuals tend to be both community interpreting and community translation service users. Thus, in 2014, a major interpreting agency in the greater Helsinki area reported that while Russian and Somali together accounted for approximately 34% of all interpreting assignments, English, with 3% of all interpreting assignments, was the seventh most important language of community interpreting. The vast majority of users of public services needing translation and interpreting between Finnish and English do not have English as their first language or their native language. They use English rather than a language that they know better for various reasons. First, there may not be enough translators and interpreters of these other languages available, or indeed none at all. Second, they often prefer a Finnish interpreter and translator, who most likely does not have ties to their community, rather than a translator or an interpreter of their native language, because the matters that are translated and interpreted are typically quite delicate. Moreover, a person coming from a highly multilingual country that is a former British colony may regard English as their mother tongue because of the prestige of the official language and the fact that there is confusion between the concepts of mother tongue and official language (Määttä 2015, 2017). Explicit mentions of most of these scenarios can be found in the texts analyzed in this paper.

Recently, the term *community translation* has emerged to qualify written translations produced for migrant communities. Community translation can be defined as translation aimed at empowering a language community (Taibi 2018: 8). In fact, the empowering function of community translation should be regarded as its general mission: translation quality should be assessed against this overarching principle, and the focus should be on effective communication in a language variety that is accessible to the end users, rather than on the creation of standard equivalents (Taibi 2018: 19–21). In fact, according to Cornelius (2010: 172, cited in Lesch 2018: 79), a community translator needs reformulation and adaptation skills in addition to linguistic skills in order to identify content that is likely to be difficult for the target text reader. These goals echo the findings of ELF research, which has shown that ELF users tend to resolve the problem of different linguistic resources between the interlocutors by using various accommodation strategies, for example by increasing redundancy, explicitness, and clarity (e.g., Cogo 2009; Dewey 2011; Mauranen 2012; Seidlhofer 2011: 96). Such strategies are also typical in cross-cultural immigration encounters involving interpreters (Guido 2012).

However, community translation for ELF users differs from community interpreting involving ELF or community translations for communities consisting mainly of native speakers of the target-text language. Indeed, in community

translation for ELF users, it is usually very difficult to assess the end users' linguistic resources and an appropriate level of accommodation because there is no direct contact between the translator and the communities, and because of the linguistic variance among different ELF-using communities and idiosyncratic differences among the users. Moreover, when texts are produced for the internal use of an administration, the main goal is not the empowerment of the community. For example, the reports and decisions concerning individual cases produced by child protection services are aimed at legitimizing the actions taken in each case and destined to be read by other child protection officials. In addition, however, these texts are translated in order to conform with the law, which stipulates that the service users need to be informed about the actions taken and their justifications. What is more, since the issue of taking a child into care is emotionally difficult, translation in a written form guarantees that the information is retained by the service user (cf. Heino and Kärmeniemi 2013: 94).

This paper analyzes the most salient lexical and syntactic features in a sample of child protection decisions and evaluations translated from Finnish into English. The goal is to examine whether accommodation to the end users' needs is visible in the translation strategies and whether it is possible to strike a balance between accessibility and accuracy of translation within the constraints imposed by the legally binding nature of the source text. Overall, the paper showcases thorny translation problems faced by community interpreters when they translate complex written texts for an ELF audience.

The corpus was obtained from a translation and interpreting agency and consists of five documents written in Finnish and their translations into English; the total word count of the translations amounts to 16,668 words. The translations were coded using letters (A to E); the letter appears in parentheses in the third column in the examples. The source texts were written by social workers (texts A and E) or professionals working at residential childcare institutions (texts B, C, and D). Four texts are assessments concluding with recommendations for actions to be taken (texts A, B, C, and D), whereas one text contains the actual decision as well as instructions for appealing against it (text E). The translators were community interpreters; no other information regarding the translators was provided. The corpus was anonymized, after which a manual qualitative analysis was performed by comparing the source and the target texts in order to identify the most important phenomena to be analyzed in more detail. Based on the initial analysis, translation shifts, namely differences between the source and the target texts (Catford 1965), were identified, affecting terminology, morphosyntax, and reported speech. On the following pages, 18 examples are analyzed in two sections: terminology (12 examples in four thematic clusters) and syntax (three examples) and reported speech (three examples). All examples belonging to the same cluster (i.e., three examples)

are presented in one table. The overrepresentation of a given text in a particular cluster is due to an attempt to show only examples in which the absolute anonymity of the persons involved can be guaranteed. Since the analyzed phenomena are different in each section, different linguistic concepts were mobilized to conduct the micro-level qualitative analysis of lexical and grammatical shifts (i.e., shifts concerning words, morphology, syntax, and speech representation) occurring in the passage from source text to target text. To conclude, the results are discussed within the framework of the community translation ideals discussed above, and recommendations for better practices are proposed.

In the examples, glosses appear in italics under the Finnish words and sentences. See the appendix for the abbreviations used. In order to simplify the marking, only plural forms of nouns are indicated. A hyphen is used to show that the words that are glossed belong to the same compound; a dot is used between abbreviations depicting grammatical information related to the same word.

## 2 Terminological issues

Terms are usually understood as words that have a specific meaning in a specialized language and which can be translated by establishing terminological correspondences between discrete languages (Faber and Ureña Gómez-Moreno 2012: 77–78). At the same time, this idealized view of terminology is challenged by considerable terminological variation and the fact that several terms can be used to refer to one concept, and that terms behave differently depending on the texts in which they appear. This variation and lack of consistency is a major problem for translators of texts representing the specialized language of a particular domain (Faber and López Rodríguez 2012: 13).

Social work and child protection terminology is an important feature of this corpus, and these terms appear particularly in headings and at the beginning of each text. Most of them come directly from the Finnish Child Welfare Act (*Lastensuojelulaki 13.4.2007/417*), also available in an unofficial English translation (*Child Welfare Act 417/2017*). To analyze these terms, three core areas comprising three terms each were identified: child protection in general, substitute care, and placement and taking into care. In addition, a fourth category was created, comprising three other recurrent terms which do not form a cohesive group. In this section, I will analyze these 12 examples by comparing the source text (second column in Table 2 on the next page) and the target text (third column). The fourth column specifies the corresponding terms in the Child Welfare Act,<sup>2</sup> followed by

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<sup>2</sup> Henceforth abbreviated to CWA.

Table 1: Child protection.

#	Source text	Target text	CWA
(1)	lastensuojeluilmoitus <i>child.PL.GN-protection.NM-notification-NM</i>	child welfare notification (A: 4)	child welfare notification (5.25b <i>et passim</i> )
(2)	lastensuojelutarpeen <i>child.PL.GN-protection.NM-need.GN</i> selvitys <i>assessment.NM</i>	assessment concerning the <b>need to adopt child</b> <b>protection measures</b> (A)	assessment of a child's need for child welfare (5.26.1)
(3)	lastensuojeluun <i>child.PL.GN-protection.IL</i> tulo <i>arrival.NM</i>	reasons for <b>child pro-</b> <b>tection assessment</b> (A)	becoming a child welfare client (5); start of a client relationship (5.26) <i>et</i> <i>passim</i>

the exact reference in parentheses: chapter (first number), section (second number), and paragraph (third number). Names of persons and places are replaced by letters X and Y; when applicable, the terms under scrutiny are in boldface in the examples both in the source and the target text.

The key word *lastensuojelulaki* and the abbreviation *Lsl* ('CWA') occur several times in all source texts, and all target texts use the same term as the unofficial English translation of this law. In addition to the name of the law, the word *welfare* appears only in the translation of the word *lastensuojeluilmoitus* ('child welfare notification', example [1] in Table 1). In examples (2) and (3) (Table 1), the term *child protection* is used instead of *child welfare*, and this usage is in fact consistent in all target texts – while all examples discussed in this section come from text A, the term appears in all target texts in different phrases. Regarding other sources of terminology, the term *child welfare* is used on the InfoFinland website (City of Helsinki 2019) and the child welfare pages of the City of Helsinki (2018), whereas both appear on the websites of other major cities in the greater Helsinki area. A Google search shows that the frequency of *child welfare* is indeed 1.57% higher than that of *child protection*. Based on these facts, source language interference is a plausible explanation for the target texts' preference for the term *child protection*: the Finnish term *lastensuojelu* is a compound comprising two parts, *lasten* ('children', genitive case plural) and the deverbal noun *suojelu* ('protection', derived from the verb *suojella* 'protect').

The English noun *assessment* is used both to render the Finnish noun *tarve* ('need') in example (2) (in the genitive form *tarpeen* in the compound *lastensuojelutarpeen* 'of need for child welfare') and the noun *tulo* in the syntagm *lastensuojeluun tulo* ('becoming a child welfare client', literally 'entering child

protection' [the word *lastensuojelu* in the illative case indicating movement toward something], example [3]). In other target texts, the noun *assessment* is also used to render the Finnish noun *arviointi* ('evaluation'). Thus, while the noun *lastensuojelu* ('child protection' or 'child welfare'), appearing in all examples of Table 1, is clearly a term, the deverbal nouns *tarve* ('need', derived from the verb *tarvita* 'need', example [1]) and *tulo* ('coming, entering', derived from the verb *tulla* 'come') are treated as ordinary nouns in target text A. As a result, target texts (2) and (3) explicate the source text. In fact, the syntagm *lastensuojeluun tulo* (example [3]) does not appear in the Finnish version of the CWA; instead, *asiakkuuden alkaminen* ('start of a client relationship') is used. In examples (2) and (3), the wordy explanations may be due to the use of deverbal nouns (derived from verbs and verbal phrases) in the source text, condensing information that is usually expressed by verbs. Both examples therefore illustrate the asymmetry of cross-linguistic terminology in this domain. As for nominalization, it characterizes all source texts in this corpus and will be examined in more detail in examples (14) and (15) (Table 5).

Substitute care means that the responsibility for the child's care and upbringing is organized in a foster home or in a residential childcare institution instead of the family home. This concept is prominent in most texts of the corpus. Compared to the first three examples discussed above, terms related to substitute care (examples [4] through [6] in Table 2) present more translation shifts. Thus, example (4) is the heading of a list specifying previous decisions affecting the child. The target text differs slightly from the CWA, which is probably due to the fact that the source text extract starts with the participial clause *lasta koskevat* ('concerning/regarding the child', constructed by the 1st participle plural *koskevat* of the verb *koskea* 'touch, concern, regard' and its object *lapsi* 'child' in the partitive case [*lasta*]).<sup>3</sup> In other words, since the word *lapsi* is translated verbatim, the target text has to use the English present participle *regarding* instead of the preposition *on*. The participle *regarding* also appears in example (5), and the adjective *new* replaces the 4th infinitive (or MINEN infinitive) *muuttaminen* ('the act of changing') of the verb *muuttaa* ('change').<sup>4</sup> In the target text, the participle *regarding* actually excludes the usage of another participle, such as *changing*, as in the CWA. At the same time, the adjective is arguably easier to process than the participle. Hence, while example (4) illustrates a tendency to translate faithfully, example (5) represents an accessibility-oriented accommodation strategy.

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3 Finnish uses six different participles.

4 Among the five infinitives of the Finnish language, the 4th infinitive acts exactly like a noun and can take all nominal case endings.

Table 2: Substitute care.

#	Source text	Target text	CWA
(4)	lasta koskevat <i>child.PT touch.1-PC.NM.PL</i> <b>sijaishuollon päätökset</b> <i>substitute.NM-care.GN</i> <i>decision.PL.NM</i>	<b>substitute care decisions</b> regarding this child (E)	decision on substitute care (9.42.1 <i>et passim</i> )
(5)	päätös sijaishuoltoapaikan <i>decision.NM substitute.</i> <i>NM-care.NM-place.GN</i> muuttamisesta <i>change.4-IN.EL</i>	decision regarding a new substitute care placement (E [4])	decision on changing the substitute care place (3.16.2 <i>et passim</i> )
(6)	<b>sijaishuoltoapaikan</b> <i>substitute.NM-care.NM-place.GN</i> <b>muutos</b> A:stä B:hen <i>change.NM A.EL B.IL</i>	<b>transfer</b> from A to B (E)	changing the substitute care place (same as above)

Example (6) is a clear case of translation shift: the NP (noun phrase) *si-jais-huol-to-pai-kan muutos* ('change of substitute care place' [*sijaishuoltoapaikka* 'substitute care place' in the genitive case and *muutos* 'change' in the nominative]) is translated by the noun *transfer*, duly simplifying the text by focusing only on the names of the residential care institutions. This example is also a clear case of accessibility orientation and accommodation to the service user's imagined language competence.

Substitute care almost invariably entails the child being placed outside the home, typically in a residential childcare institution, a home-like foster care institution, or a foster family. Often, placement and substitute care are accompanied by taking into care, which means that the social authorities are responsible for the child's care until the circumstances at home have improved. The close links among the three terms *substitute care*, *placement*, and *taking into care* can in fact be regarded as representing different perspectives on the same phenomenon, namely the fact that the child no longer lives at home and that the parents no longer take care of the child. Hence, it is easy to confound the terms, and Finnish lexical structures may also play a role in this confusion, as explained in the previous section. Example (7) (Table 3) illustrates the confusion between *placing* and *taking into care*: the term *sijoitettu* ('placed', past participle [2nd participle] of the verb *sijoittaa* 'place') is translated as *taken into care*. While this translation appearing at the beginning of the text is erroneous, it does not alter the purpose of the text, for taking into care almost always involves placement outside the family home, which

**Table 3:** Placement and taking into care.

#	Source text	Target text	CWA
(7)	<b>sijoitettu</b> <i>place.PS.2-PC.NM</i> lapsi: X <i>child.NM X.NM</i>	child <b>taken into care</b> : X (B, C, D)	place ( <i>passim</i> [more than 100 occurrences])
(8)	X sijoitettiin X.NM <i>place.PS.IP.</i> <b>avohuollon</b> <i>open-care.GN</i> <b>tukitoimenpiteenä</b> (Lsl 37§) <i>support.NM-measure.ES</i>	X was placed as part of <b>non-institutional support measures</b> (CWA, Section 37) (B, C, D)	supportive measures in open care (9.44.1.3)
(9)	X <b>sijoitettiin</b> X.NM <i>place.PS.IP.</i> <b>kiireellisesti</b> (Lsl 38§) ja <i>urgently and</i> <b>otettiin huostaan</b> (Lsl 40§) <i>take.PS.IP care.IL</i>	X <b>was placed in care through an emergency care order</b> under CWA, Section 38 and <b>was taken into care</b> (CWA, Section 40) (B, C, D)	emergency placement ( <i>passim</i> ), urgent placement (8.38.1, 14.83), place urgently (10.49.1); take into care ( <i>passim</i> )

is also the case here. In fact, the impossibility of translating this line including the child's name as *child placed* may have triggered the translation shift.

The term *supportive measures in open care* (example [8] in Table 3) appears in this form only once in the CWA, although it is a key term in child protection. The term *support measure*, used in the target text, is mentioned in the glossary of the Child Welfare Union (2010, *s.v. placement as a support measure in open care*). Open-care measures do not necessarily mean that the child is placed in an institution: for example, these measures may consist of helping the family at home or offering family therapy. In fact, the meaning of the word *open* remains opaque and misleading when the measure consists of placing the child in an institution providing substitute care. In addition, the term *non-institutional* in the target text is erroneous, for in this case the child is placed in an institution.

Example (9) (Table 3) reflects the confusion between *placement* and *taking into care* as well, as illustrated by the hybrid form *was placed in care* in the target text. However, while this form does not appear in the CWA, the more than 100,000 Internet hits show that it is actually used quite widely. Moreover, while the act does not recognize the term *care order*, it is widely used globally, as illustrated by the

496,000 hits on the Internet. The verb *place* may have been added for reasons of clarity.

Social work aims at empowering its clients, and developing the clients' resources and strengths to cope with their adverse situation is a key element of the empowerment process (Katisko 2013: 120–121). In child protection work, empowering the parents is crucial, and in order to develop empowerment strategies, social workers need to assess the parents' non-material resources. This assessment is also used as a rationale against which the measures to be taken are judged. As a result, child protection assessments and substitute care decisions often include a section in which the parents' resources are analyzed. The Finnish word *voimavarat*, which is a key child protection term although it does not appear in the CWA, is a compound comprising the words *voima* ('strength, power') and *varat* ('resources', plural), and the obvious English translation is *resources* in the psychological and mental meaning of the word. However, while the translation appears to be straightforward, the polysemic nature of the target text word, containing both a material (mainly financial) and an abstract (mental and physical) dimension, makes it problematic in the sense that an end user who is not familiar with psychological concepts may misunderstand the word as meaning financial resources. In example (10) (Table 4), the term is explained as containing a physical and an emotional dimension, which shows that the translator knows the concept from community interpreting contexts, in which the word is notoriously problematic.

The term *sosiaalityöntekijä* (example [11] in Table 4) appears four times in the corpus, and the target texts always render it with the word *social worker*. In the

**Table 4:** Other important terms.

#	Source text	Target text	CWA
(10)	voimavarat <i>strength.NM-resource.PL.NM</i>	physical and emotional resources (A)	
(11)	sosiaalityöntekijä <i>social-worker.NM</i>	social worker (A, B, C, D, E)	social worker ( <i>passim</i> )
(12)	ohjaaja <i>guide.NM</i>	educator (B, C, D)	
	omaohjaaja <i>own-guide.NM</i>	personal educator (B, C, D)	
	vastaava ohjaaja <i>respond.1-PC.NM guide.NM</i>	senior educator (B, C, D)	
	sosiaaliohjaaja <i>social-guide.NM</i>	social advisor (B, C, D), case worker (A), case worker ("sosiaaliohjaaja") (A)	

CWA, it is the only term referring to social work professions. However, the reality of social and adjacent work is quite different, as illustrated by example (12) (Table 4), listing four different professions appearing in the source texts. The term *ohjaaja* (literally ‘guide, person who *orients* another person’) refers to the educators or therapists who orient the children in a residential care institution. In addition, children have their personal *ohjaaja*, called *omaohjaaja* (*oma*, ‘own, personal’). There is also a person who is responsible for all other workers (*vastaava*, ‘responsible’). All target texts use the same equivalent to render these terms referring to residential care institution staff. However, terms referring to these professions can easily be confounded with the fourth term in the list, namely *sosiaaliohjaaja*, which is translated as *social advisor* in three target texts and as *case worker* in two texts. Significantly, many target texts gloss these terms in Finnish in parentheses (see the second example from text A), and even the term *social worker* is glossed once.

Overall, 22 discrete words are glossed in the target texts, and these items refer to social and substitute care workers (nine terms), appeal instructions (five terms), custody of children (two terms), child welfare notifications (two terms), and other child protection concepts (four terms, including the term *child welfare client*, discussed above in example [3]). While one may argue that translators gloss terms because they are not sure about the exact equivalent, the choice of glossed terms appears to indicate willingness to pinpoint important terms that the end users encounter in the process of their child being a child welfare client. In fact, it is impossible to assign the same interpreter to each encounter related to a particular case, and each document produced in relation to the case may be translated by a different translator. In other words, when glossed, the end users may recognize these terms from previous and subsequent encounters and translations. Furthermore, there is considerable variation among the target texts, and for many of the terms in question, there are no generally accepted translation equivalents. Glossing, as well as other techniques such as explication (examples [2], [3], and [10]), and the usage of a prototypical grammatical category (see example [13] in Table 5) make the target text more accessible to the end user. Other essentially syntactic strategies aimed at improving accessibility will be discussed in the following section.

### 3 Syntax and reported speech

In the tables shown in this section, the fourth column represents a *shadow translation*, that is, a translation that was not used but that could have been used (Matthiessen 2001: 83). The shadow translations provided below aim at reflecting

the lexical and grammatical structure of the source text and were made by the author of this paper. While the shadow translation aims at literality, it is not possible to convey all the meanings of the source text. In particular, while the typical constituent order in Finnish is SVO, word order is relatively free and can be used to generate different meanings. In addition, Finnish has verbal constructions that do not exist in English, and uses cases to convey grammatical meanings that English expresses through prepositions. Glosses providing both lexical and grammatical information, which appear in italics in the second column, are therefore particularly informative in this section, in which entire sentences are analyzed.

Passive constructions are a typical feature of administrative texts. In example (13) (Table 5), a passive construction in the source text is translated by using the generic personal pronoun *you*. This construction is clearly easier to understand than the passive and has the advantage of addressing the end user directly. In fact, all subsequent passive constructions in the appeal instructions are translated by using the generic *you*, which presents the advantage of specifying the prototypical flow of information (agent–verb–target/patient) and using the prototypical grammatical category for doing and happening, namely the verb.

Examples (14) and (15) (Table 5) concern another characteristic of formal texts typically produced by public service institutions: nominalization. In example (14), the compound noun *kotiutusselvitys* in the source text is rendered semi-literally as ‘homecoming assessment’ in the shadow translation, although this translation does not convey the dimension of *sending home*, implied in the Finnish noun *kotiutus*. This noun is derived from the verb *kotiuttaa* (‘send home’). The second element of the compound, namely *selvitys*, is derived from the verb *selvittää* (‘assess, report, find out’). The target text translates nominally only the noun *selvitys* (*assessment process*), and explains it further with a verb (*evaluate*). The noun *kotiutus* is explained in a discrete clause in which both a passive and an active verb are used. In example (15), the homecoming assessment is referred to simply as *the plan*, and the 4th infinitive or MINEN infinitive *lisääntyminen* (‘increase’) and the deverbal noun *sujuvuus* (‘fluidity, smoothness, management’, derived from the verb *sujua* ‘run smoothly, go’), here in the partitive case (*sujuvuutta*), are denominalized, which also triggers the addition of more words. In both examples, the denominalization makes the text clearer.

Nominalizations and passive constructions are common throughout the source texts. According to critical discourse analysis, passive and nominalized forms can be used for ideological purposes because they delete or hide contextual and indexical information, such as agency and temporality (Fairclough 2001: 103–104; see also Halliday and Matthiessen 2004: 177–178). However, since the general goal of social work is to empower and inform the client, it would be contradictory to use

Table 5: Passive constructions and nominalizations.

#	Source text	Target text	Shadow translation
(13)	Oikaisuvaatimus <i>rectification.NM-request.NM</i> toimitetaan kirjaamoon. <i>deliver.PS.PR registry.IL</i>	You should send or hand-deliver the letter of appeal to the Registry. (E)	The appeal request is sent/delivered to the Registry
(14)	X:n <i>X.GN</i> kotiuutus- ja <i>homecoming.NM- and</i> tukitiimin <i>support.NM-team.GN</i> kotiuutusselvitys <i>homecoming.NM-assessment.NM</i> käynnistyi (date). <i>start.IP.3-SG</i>	Therefore, on (date), the X homecoming and support services team started an assessment process to evaluate <b>whether the child could be discharged and return to his home.</b> (E)	A homecoming assessment concerning X was initiated by the homecoming and support team.
(15)	<b>Kotiuutusselvityksen</b> <i>homecoming.NM-assessment.GN</i> <b>aikainen suunnitelma</b> <i>dating plan.NM</i> oli X:n <i>is.IP.3-SG X.GN</i> <b>kotilomapäivien</b> <i>home.NM-holiday.NM-day.PL.GN</i> <b>lisääntyminen</b> kolmeen <i>increase.4-IN.NM three.IL</i> päivään viikossa, jotta <i>day.IL week.IN in order</i> kyettäisiin <i>be able.PS.PR.CD</i> arvioimaan X:n <i>assess.3-IN.IL X.GN</i> <b>arjen ja</b> <i>everyday.GN and</i> <b>koulunkäynnin</b> <i>school.GN-going.GN</i> <b>sujuvuutta</b> kotoa <i>smoothness.PT home.PT</i> käsin. <i>from</i>	According to the <b>plan, X would spend more time at home</b> (three days a week), so that it would be possible to evaluate <b>the way he manages daily routines and school</b> while staying at home. (E)	According to the plan that dates back to the homecoming assessment, there should be an increase of home leave days to three days in order to be able to assess the management/smoothness of X's everyday life and schooling.

nominalizations and passive constructions purposefully in order to render the texts more difficult. In fact, nominalizations and passive or passive-like constructions may originate intertextually and interdiscursively from other texts such as laws,

regulations, and other assessments, or other discursive regimes of public service, such as law, public health, or municipal administration. While the overuse of these constructions is recognized as a problem in Finnish (see e.g., Piehl 2006), they have become an important discourse- and genre-defining feature enhancing the authority of a text such as a child protection decision, and they can be used to distance both the authors of the texts and their end users from the institutions from which the texts emanate and which they ultimately represent. Hence, nominalizations and passive constructions accentuate the neutrality and impartiality of the social worker. Indeed, this distancing is part of the ideologically motivated entextualization process which de- and re-contextualizes discourse and makes it a text devoid of internal conflicts and inconsistencies (Silverstein and Urban 1996: 4; Blommaert 2005: 47). The next section discusses the clearest cases of entextualization, namely reported speech.

Since the description of different parties' opinions is an essential part of child protection decisions and assessments, reported speech is an important feature in the corpus. In addition, it is often necessary to specify the source of information, and reported speech is also a natural part of narrative passages in which not only actions and occurrences but also utterances are explained. In fact, comprehensive reporting reflects the social worker's professional competence (Lillis 2017: 485–486): reported speech justifies the appropriateness of institutional intervention, and contributes to reifying the allocation of responsibilities among authorities, shifting part of this responsibility away from the social worker (Baynham and Slembrouck 1999: 440–441).

In the first two examples ([16] and [17] in Table 6a), reported speech is intertwined with nominalization. Thus, in example (16), the father's speech is condensed into a narrative report of speech act (Leech and Short 1981: 323),<sup>5</sup> so that the contents of his speech are explained with two nouns. The first noun, *toive* ('wish'), is derived from the verb *toivoa* ('hope, wish'). The second noun, *kotiutuminen* ('homecoming'), derived from the verb *kotiutua* ('come home'), resembles the noun *kotiutus*, discussed above (example [14]). However, while the source text of example (14) represents the perspective of the person or instance of sending someone home, the perspective of example (16) is that of the person who comes home. The target text transforms this narrative report of speech act into indirect speech. In example (17), the source text presents the child's speech as a narrative report of speech act through the noun *kokemus* ('experience, feeling') rather than using the verb *kokea* ('experience, feel, think'), which may represent the contents of the child's speech or the social worker's interpretation of it. The first sentence is

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<sup>5</sup> This term, which is not related to speech act theory, refers to passages in which the narrator reports what the characters said and how.

**Table 6a:** Reported speech.

#	Source text	Target text	Shadow translation
(16)	Isä esitti <i>father.NM ex- press.3-SG.IP</i> toiveen X.n <i>wish.GN-AC X.GN</i> <b>kotiutumisesta.</b> <i>homecoming.EL</i>	The father said he wanted the girl to <b>come back home.</b> (E)	The father expressed a wish con- cerning X's homecoming.
(17)	X ei kuitenkaan <i>X AUX-NEG.3-SG</i> <i>however</i> halunnut palata <i>want.2-PC re- turn.1-IN</i> laitokseen. <b>Syynä</b> <i>institution.IL rea- son.ES</i> <b>tähän oli X.n</b> <i>this.IL be.3-SG.IP</i> <i>X.GN</i> <b>kokemus siitä,</b> <i>experience.NM</i> <i>it.EL</i> etteivät <i>that-AUX- NEG.IP.3-PL</i> osasto A:n <i>department.NM</i> <i>A.GN</i> aikuiset <i>adult.NM.PL</i> ymmärrä häntä. <i>understand.1-IN</i> <i>he.PT</i>	However, X did not want to return to the institution, <b>saying that</b> the adults at the A Unit did not un- derstand her. (E)	However, X did not want to return to the institution. The reason for this was X's experience of the adults at Unit A not understanding her.

also a narrative report of speech act. While the target text preserves the first narrative report of speech act, it transforms the second one into indirect speech. In addition, the two sentences are combined into one sentence with two clauses.

In example (18) (Table 6b), the constellation of different categories of reported speech is more complicated. The extract is based on the description of the events as given by a person working at the emergency call center, who reports the center's actions and the contents in the speech of the persons that were contacted. The first

Table 6b: Reported speech.

#	Source text	Target text	Shadow translation
(18)	<p>Hätäkeskuksesta <i>emergency.NM-center.EL</i> <b>soitettu</b> <i>call.PS.5-PC.NM</i> äidille, joka, <i>mother.AL who.NM</i> <b>kertoi</b> <i>tell.3-SG.IP</i> <b>ettei</b> <i>that-AUX-NEG.3-SG</i> mitään väkivaltaa <i>any.PT violence.PT</i> <b>ole</b> <i>be.AUX-NEG.3-SG</i> <b>ollut,</b> <i>be.2-PC.NM</i> mutta <b>pelkää</b> <i>but fear.3-SG</i> isän tulevan <i>father.GN-AC come.1-PC.GN-AC</i> riehumaan paikalle. <i>rage.3-IN.IL place.AL</i> Isä <b>on</b> <i>father.NM be.AUX.PR.1-SG</i> <b>nyt</b> rauhoittunut ja <i>now calm.2-PC.NM</i> and <b>odottaa</b> <i>wait.3-SG-PR</i> lähistöllä <i>surrounding.AD</i> soittoa poliisilta.<i>call.PT</i> <i>police.AB</i></p>	<p>The Emergency Calls Center <b>had contacted</b> the mother, who <b>had said</b> that there <b>had been</b> no violence, although she <b>was afraid</b> that the children's father would come and make a scene. <b>Now</b> the father <b>has calmed down</b> and <b>is</b> somewhere near the residence <b>waiting</b> for the police to call him. (A)</p>	<p>The Emergency Calls Center had called the mother, who said that there had not been any violence, but she was afraid that the father would return and cause trouble. Now the father is calm and is waiting in the area for a call from the police.</p>

verb of the source text passage is the past (or 5th) participle (*soitettu*) of the verb *soittaa* ('call'), and there is no auxiliary verb, which is something that may occur when notes are taken quickly. The passage continues in indirect speech in the imperfect tense (*kertoi*, 'said, explained'), as if the person having written the

assessment had been in contact with the mother at that point. The same confusion continues throughout the passage: *ei ole ollut* (perfect tense negative, ‘has not been’), *pelkää* (present tense, ‘fears’), *on* (present tense, ‘is’), and *odottaa* (present tense, ‘waits’). The last sentence can be regarded as a narrative report of the father’s speech, inscribed in the emergency center’s notes in the present tense, the deictic pronoun *nyt* (‘now’) suggesting that the agent had spoken to the mother first. Another possible interpretation is that the sentence represents the mother’s free direct speech, namely a category of speech representation in which the “verbatim” speech of a person is reported without indicating that it is a direct quotation. The target text changes the tenses in the first sentence, so that it is clear that the mother relayed the events to the emergency center agent. However, the present tense and the adverb *now* are maintained in the last sentence, which together with the usage of normal tenses of indirect speech in the previous sentences gives the impression that the last sentence indeed represents the mother’s free direct speech (differentiated from indirect speech by the absence of a reporting verb). This passage illustrates the complex intertextual nature of child protection assessments and decisions: the abnormal tenses used in the source text indicate that the passage was copy-pasted directly from a report written by the emergency center.

## 4 Conclusions

In this paper, I have analyzed translation strategies in child protection decisions and reports translated from Finnish into English, with a focus on terminology, morphosyntax, and speech representation. The translators’ attempts to make the target texts more accessible to the end users are visible in terminological simplifications and explanations, glossing of terms and other difficult words, usage of verbs instead of nouns when describing doing and happening, usage of active instead of passive constructions, and the simplification of speech and thought representation techniques. While lexical and grammatical fidelity prevail in certain examples, all target texts contain translation shifts that appear to indicate accommodation of the text to the end users’ linguistic resources, therefore increasing accessibility.

However, accommodation to the end users’ needs has its limits as well. English-speaking end users of community translation texts in Finland are very rarely native speakers of English in traditional sociolinguistic terms, and their English competence may vary from rudimentary to excellent. In addition, the end users come from linguistically and culturally diverse countries (cf. Lesch 2018: 71). As explained above, there are several reasons why English is used rather than a

language in which the end user might be more conversant. While a community interpreter working in a face-to-face encounter can assess the end user's actual language resources to a certain extent and accommodate the complexity of the language used accordingly, the translator of written texts in community settings – who is often a community interpreter – has no possibility for such an assessment. Moreover, the translator's agency of accommodation is limited because of the legally binding nature of child protection assessments and decisions. In sum, in translations of child protection case reports and decisions for individual ELF users, several constraints prevent the usage of accommodation strategies to the same extent as in oral interpretation or naturally occurring conversations involving ELF.

In a textual chain or trajectory, every transition from one text to another unravels an unequal distribution of textual resources among the participants (Blommaert 2005: 64). In the area of child protection, the passage from the final version of the source text to the translation for the child's legal guardians marks the culmination of unequal resources. The acknowledgment of the text's destiny as a source text for a translation would be the only way to improve the situation dramatically: this way, potential translation problems could be identified during the production of the source texts. Another solution would be to promote terminological work at a local level, namely among community interpreters and translators working for different agencies in the same metropolitan area.

## Appendix: Abbreviations used

### Verb morphology

1-SG	1st-person singular
3-SG	3rd-person singular
3-PL	3rd-person plural
1-IN	1st infinitive or A infinitive
3-IN	3rd infinitive or MA infinitive
4-IN	4th infinitive or MINEN infinitive
1-PC	1st participle
2-PC	2nd participle
5-PC	5th participle
AUX	auxiliary verb
AUX-NEG	auxiliary negation verb
CD	conditional mode
IP	imperfect tense
PR	present tense
PS	passive voice

## Noun morphology

AB	ablative case
AD	adessive case
AL	allative case
GN	genitive case
GN-AC	accusative (total object) case in the genitive form
EL	elative case
ES	essive case
IL	illative case
IN	inessive case
NM	nominative case
PL	plural
PT	partitive case (including partial object)

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