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Translating into an endangered language: Filling in lexical gaps as Language Making

Abstract. In this article, we analyse translation in the context of revitalisation from the point of view of Language Making. Both translation and revitalisation are based on the idea of languages as distinct entities, and together, they are doubly inclined to draw clear-cut borders between languages. The data come from a series of translation courses targeted to speakers and learners of Karelian, a critically endangered Finnic language spoken in Finland and Russia. By analysing the reflective assignments of the translation course participants and focusing on how they report on encountering and overcoming lexical gaps, we examine a very concrete case of Language Making: the creation of new lexical items for Karelian for the purposes of a translation task. Since coining neologisms in our data is mostly based on borrowing or calquing, the data illustrate how the participants perceive the language boundaries and the connections between Karelian and other languages. Contrary to what the intersection between translation and revitalisation suggests, a rather flexible view on linguistic borders is displayed. Participants fill in lexical gaps by drawing on all linguistic resources available to them: mainly Finnish and Russian, but also “international” resources and occasionally other languages or other Karelian dialects. To a lesser extent, the data also display the participants’ competing and conflicting ideologies of what is Karelian, what belongs to it and on which or whose model to base the neologisms.

Keywords: lexical gap, neologism, Karelian, endangered language, revitalisation, language making, translation, translator training.

1. Introduction

We have learned to think of languages as distinct, finite-state entities which, due to their lexical, grammatical and other properties, stand out from other languages. In current sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, this widespread view of languages as entities with clear-cut borders has been questioned; it is emphasised that it is a result of ideological, sociohistorical and political developments, not a natural state of affairs. Rather, languages and dialects are seen as vague and open-ended concepts; they are resources that overlap in a continuum-like manner (see e.g. Irvine and Gal 2000; Milroy 2001; Wei 2013). This continuum can be seen as a local pool of resources from which individuals in different situations and at different stages of life draw their varied linguistic repertoires (Dufva et al. 2011; Blommaert and Backus 2013). Consequently, language is active and dynamic use of these resources, rather than an autonomous, internally coherent object with clearly defined borders (Milroy 2001; Dufva et al. 2011; see also Cowley 2005).

Seeing languages as distinct entities is, however, a widely held traditional view resulting from social learning among both linguists and language users. The naturalised notion of languages as separate, inherently homogeneous systems is the outcome of a development that started at least at the times of Romantic Nationalism and was supported by the political framework of nation-state projects (see e.g. Laakso 2018). As a result, we have been socialised to classify and label the linguistics resources we encounter and associate them with distinct speaker groups. In this special issue, all the diverse historical, social, ideological and

political processes carried out by different actors in different cultural contexts and leading to “linguistic differentiation” (Irvine and Gal 2000) are bundled under a common denominator, Language Making. The term covers all processes in which languages (or other varieties) are conceptualised as distinct, clear-cut units and given names that distinguish them from other units (Krämer et al. 2022, NN et al., in this special issue). In the present article, we follow this definition when we analyse the drawing of linguistic borders in a special context that unites translation with language revitalisation.

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The present article discusses Language Making in the context of translation into an endangered language. The combination is intriguing because both translation and language revitalisation are activities which tend to consolidate the perceived boundaries between two languages or varieties. Translation is traditionally characterised as a bridge that enables communication between parties that do not share the same linguistic resources. At the same time, however, the bridge metaphor entails an idea of two distinct linguistic entities between which the connecting bridge is built. Translation thus by definition contributes to linguistic differentiation and bordering and implies conceptualising languages as clearly delimited entities existing independently from each other. Language revitalisation inevitably involves Language Making as well: what was previously considered vaguely a “dialect” or a “way of speaking” will now be presented as a language in its own right. The language activists and other revitalisers construct (or reconstruct) a language that has its own label and a set of linguistic rules (printed in dictionaries, grammars and textbooks) and that is seen distinct from the other varieties spoken in the same society. In the revitalisation context, the concept of languages as separate linguistic units is pronounced: you need to see the endangered variety as a distinct entity to highlight its special value, to justify the importance of preserving it and reversing its decline.

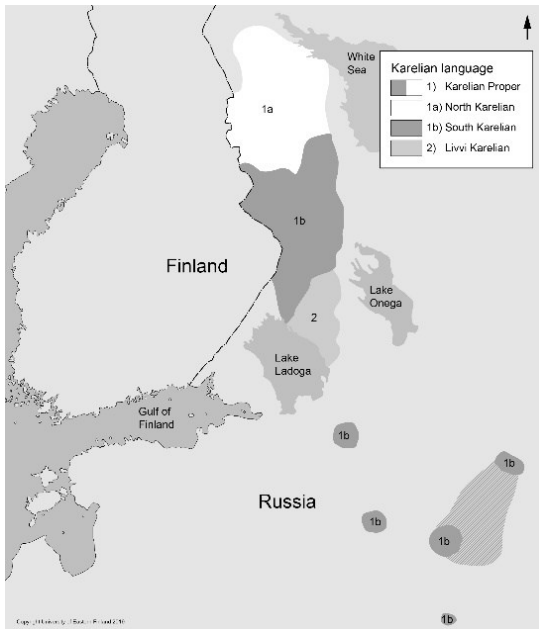
We approach the Language Making processes in a specific setting: a series of translation courses targeted to speakers and learners of Karelian, a critically endangered Finnic language spoken in Finland and Russia. By analysing the reflective assignments of the course participants and focusing on how they report on encountering and overcoming lexical gaps, we examine the participants’ orientation towards or against the dominant languages, Finnish and Russian, and other languages or dialects. When filling in lexical gaps for the purposes of the translation task at hand, participants engage in Language Making in a very concrete sense.

The article is structured as follows: In Section 2, we introduce the endangered Karelian language, highlighting the complex context of this pluricentric language. In Section 3, we discuss the role of translation in linguistic differentiation and its functions in the context of minority languages. In Section 4 we present our data and method, and in Section 5 we analyse how translators fill in lexical gaps and the justifications they present for their decisions. Finally, in Section 6 we discuss the relevance of our results from the point of view of Language Making.

2. The endangered Karelian language: riptide of conflicting Language Making processes

In this section, we introduce Karelian as an example of an endangered variety and outline the historical, political, social and material conditions for the emergence of Language Making process(es). Karelian is a small autochthonous minority language, traditionally spoken in Russia and in Finland. It belongs to the Finnic branch of the Finno-Ugric language family and is the closest cognate of Finnish. The geographical location at the shifting border of two states (first Sweden and Novgorod/Russia, later Finland and the Soviet Union/Russia) has made the Karelian people to live at the intersection of Western and Eastern cultural tradition. Living between two states, two forms of Christian religion (Lutheran vs. Eastern Orthodox), two majority cultures, and two social systems has shaped the Karelian people both in a concrete, historical sense and in a mental, ideological way. Two very different majority languages have affected the Karelian language: Russian is a Slavic language, written with the Cyrillic script, and Finnish is closely related to Karelian and written with the Latin script.

The Karelian language is divided into two major dialects, Karelian proper and Livvi Karelian (also known as Olonets Karelian), and the former is further divided into two subgroups: Northern Karelian (also known as White Sea Karelian) and Southern Karelian; these have been spoken in a relatively large area in Russia (see Map 1). In addition, there are Karelian language islands in Tver oblast in inner Russia (with origins in the 17th century migration mainly from the Southern Karelian dialect area), often referred to as Tver Karelian. (For Karelian dialects, see e.g. Laakso et al. 2016, 97.) Linguistically, the Karelian dialects belong to a larger dialect/language continuum that ranges from the Eastern Finnish dialects through Karelian proper and Livvi Karelian to the Veps language. In Finland, Karelian is nowadays a non-regional minority language; for this reason, it cannot be geographically located in Map 1. All the Karelian dialects have been spoken in Finland, Southern Karelian being the most common one. (For Karelian in Russia and in Finland, see Karjalainen et al. 2013; Sarhimaa 2016.)



Map 1. The traditional areas of the Karelian dialects.

Both in Russia and in Finland, the number of Karelian speakers has been rapidly decreasing during the last century, and Karelian is now critically endangered. According to the latest Russian census (2010), there are about 45,000 ethnic Karelians living in the Republic of Karelia and 7,300 in Tver oblast. Altogether, around 25,600 inhabitants reported knowing Karelian and the number of those who reported Karelian as their mother tongue was even lower (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 3–4; Laakso et al. 2016: 97). In Finland, there is no statistical data on Karelian but recently, it has been estimated that there might be about 11,000 speakers with good language skills (Sarhima 2017: 113–115). In both countries, Karelian is seldom transmitted to younger generations and most of the fluent speakers represent the older generations (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 97; Sarhima 2017: 140). Karelian as a heritage language is mainly used in the domestic sphere (Laakso et al. 2016: 97). Furthermore, the Karelian speakers are bilingual, having either Russian or Finnish as another native resource. In general, Finnish Karelians do not know Russian or vice versa, with the exception of those Russian Karelians who have studied Karelian at the State University of Pedrozavodsk and have learned Finnish as a part of their curriculum (for the education, see Palander et al. 2013: 368)

The threat of extinction has caused counteractions in both countries. In the Soviet Union, the emergence of *perestroika* allowed for the awakening of many ethnic minorities in the late

1980s; this marks the beginning of the revitalisation of Karelian, which has been continued in Post-Soviet Russia. In Finland, revitalisation began in the early 1990s. The actions have mainly been organised by language activists and funded by NGOs; the official support from the governments has been limited. The actions have most often taken the form of organising cultural events and promoting the written use of Karelian, but attempts have also been made to activate the use of Karelian in child day care and to teach Karelian in school and higher education as well as in adult education.

Revitalisation often involves the need to develop written use of the language and Karelian is not an exception. At the dawn of revitalisation, the Russian Karelian activists were faced with the issue of creating a written standard – or in this case, several standards. Separate standards were established for Northern Karelian and Livvi Karelian, and Tver Karelian has also been used in writing to some extent (Anttikoski 2003). The standards are based on the Latin script and they have been adopted in Finland as well. Southern Karelian has until recently lacked a written standard but a group of Finnish Karelian language activists is currently developing it. The possibility of a common written standard has been discussed from time to time but so far, a consensus has not been reached. A further trait in the literary use of Karelian is that the standard language is mainly used by the younger generations and in Russia, the Latin-based alphabet is challenging for older Karelian speakers. (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 172–173; Sarhimaa 2016: 248–249).

During the last three decades, Karelian has had a narrow yet continuing presence in the media. In Russia, there is a small publisher in Petrozavodsk which publishes books and a weekly newspaper in Karelian and periodicals with part of the content in Karelian. Russia also broadcasts television and radio programmes in Karelian. (Karjalainen et al. 2013: 38–40, 91–92.) In Finland, the role of Karelian in media has been even smaller but it has been growing slowly: a web-based newspaper with 3–6 issues in a year has appeared since 2011 and a short weekly news bulletin in radio since 2015 (Laakso et al. 2016: 110). There have been a few civic associations in Finland who publish books in Karelian; often the writers or translators are Russian Karelians. It is noteworthy in the context of the present article that Karelian-language literature has largely been developed via translation (Iso-Ahola 2017, Iso-Ahola forthcoming). The presence of Karelian on the Internet and social media is scarce (Moshnikov 2016) but it is expected to gain significance in the future.

At present, the ongoing efforts to revitalise Karelian are accompanied by complex and conflicting sets of Language Making processes. Looking from a broad perspective, Karelian has been (and still is) struggling at the borderland between two countries. In Finland, there has been a longstanding political and ideological aim to present Karelian as a dialect of Finnish and to assimilate the Karelian people into Finns (Sarhimaa 2017: 104–110). Even today, many Finnish lay people are unaware of the existence of the Karelian language or

consider it a Finnish dialect. The Karelian language spoken in Russia is, in turn, often described as a “mixed” language because of the strong influence from Russian. The state border has separated the Karelian language spoken in two countries with a possible outcome of Finnish and Russian Karelian growing in different directions under the influence of two different majority languages. Furthermore, the creation of separate written standards for each dialect artificially reinforces the dialect boundaries which in spoken language are more subtle and gradual. The emancipation of Karelian dialects has led to heated debate about the status of the varieties: there is a small group of language activist in Finland claiming that we should not speak about three Karelian dialects but three languages (Arantola and Paalamo 2018). In the next section, we discuss the role of translation in the context of language endangerment in general as well as the specific significance of translation for filling in gaps in the endangered language.

3. Translational underpinnings: from linguistic bordering to coping with lexical gaps

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Translating into an endangered language is Language Making at its best: by translating we support the language, develop its vocabulary, and produce new language products for the language users. Translating may also raise the status of the language. (For the role of translation in revitalisation, see [Kuusi et al. NN, NN and NN-2017](#).) At the same time, a boundary to the source language from which translation takes place is reinforced, and the specificity of the endangered language is emphasised. Translation shows that the endangered language is a language separate from the source language. In other words, translation contributes not only materially but also ideologically and symbolically to the making of a language.

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The view that translation does not only contribute to the overcoming of a language barrier but also to the drawing of language borders is a new perspective not widely discussed in translation studies. On the contrary, the idea of languages as distinct entities seems to be so deeply rooted in translation studies that it has remained largely unnoticed. The contribution of translational activities – and translation studies – to linguistic differentiation has, however, not remained totally unrecognised. It has been particularly highlighted by Dizdar (see e.g. Dizdar 2006, 2019) and Dizdar and Gipper (2015) who call for a stronger attention in translation studies for the significance of unclear or presumed boundaries between languages.

The strict borders between language systems are a premise that has been present in translation studies since the early days of the discipline. Dizdar (2019) states that the idea of crossing language borders through translational activities conceals the idea of the existence of these borders. Translation is based on the assumption of separate language units, the boundaries between which make interaction impossible or difficult. The occurrence of translation is a sign of an assumed or constructed language boundary, and as highlighted by Dizdar (2019), translation is a process that creates, strengthens, and stabilises language

boundaries and emphasises the identity of individual languages. In other words, translation underlines the existence of languages as distinct units. Dizdar and Gipper (2015: 10) bring up the role of translation in political nation-state formation: translation, on the one hand, follows the borders constructed through the processes of nation-state formation; on the other hand, translation precedes the nation-state borders, preparing their formation by participating for example in the development of national languages and literatures. As the nation-state borders are often thought to be both political and linguistic borders, translation thus strengthens them both. However, with relation to linguistic bordering, the door swings both ways. In multilingual nation-states such as Switzerland or Canada, translation may also contribute to ensuring cohesion, preventing the linguistic borders from becoming political ones.

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In addition, translation also has a more symbolic dimension. Dizdar (2019) cites the EU as an example. In the EU, translation into the official languages of the EU countries enables communication between speakers with different linguistic resources. At the same time, however, translation into these languages also emphasises their independent existence and their distinct nature. Another example, which is frequently cited in research on linguistic differentiation (see e.g. Bugarski 2012), is the split up of the former Yugoslavia into newly created states, a process in which various linguistic measures were adopted in order to support the formation of both new national identities and states. One of these linguistic measures is translation, which is now carried out between the seemingly new national languages distinguished from each other in the political state formation process (Novak 2020). The borders of these “new” languages largely follow the state borders, and translation between them underlines their separation. It allows the communities to emphasise the specificity of their “own” language. As Diaz Fouces (2005: 100) puts it, “[t]ranslation is an effective instrument for linguistic secessionism”.

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For endangered languages, the symbolic dimension of translation is often more important than its instrumental function – building bridges between parties who do not share the same linguistic resources (see e.g. Diaz Fouces 2005: 98). This is also the case for Karelian, whose speakers are all bilingual and master the majority language of their region, Finnish or Russian. From a communicative point of view, there is thus no need for translation from these languages into Karelian; for example, Karelian speakers in Finland can read fiction and participate in society in Finnish and Russian Karelians in Russian. Translation, nevertheless, takes place both from Finnish and Russian into Karelian (Iso-Ahola 2017), but obviously for other reasons than overcoming a language barrier. Translational activity from Karelian into other languages has been marginal and will not be dealt with in this article (Iso-Ahola forthcoming).

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For minority languages, translation has often functioned as a ‘filling-in’ device to fill in gaps in the minority language or literature (Toury 1985: 3–4). Perhaps the most widely recognised symbolic function of translation in these situations is the increase of prestige that the translation of classic works of literature into a minority language brings (Toury 1985). However, in order to preserve the vitality of the minority language in modern society, it is

equally important to translate technical and scientific texts (Cronin 2003: 142–143; 151–152). Such translation, however, needs specialised, up-to-date vocabulary, which endangered languages typically lack. More often than not, it is the task of the translator to create it for the purposes of the translation task at hand. In a way, translators need to take the role of an ‘ad hoc’ terminologist, without engaging in the standardised steps of term management as performed in terminology proper (Pasanen 2018: 9). When encountering problematic terms or concepts in the source text, the translator consults diverse resources to find the correct or most suitable target-language equivalent or, if there is no equivalent, to coin a new term or expression (Pasanen 2018: 9–10). Translating into a major language seldom includes creating neologisms; translating into an endangered language, however, is practically impossible without a flexible ability to cope with lexical gaps. ▲

▲ As described by [Kuusi et al. \(2019\)](#) ~~NN, NN and NN (2019)~~, information seeking for an endangered language is challenging and looks very different from that of major languages. In professional translation into major languages, information seeking includes consulting a variety of documentation sources such as dictionaries, term bases and parallel corpora. These sources require technical know-how, and special technological tools are designed to ease and speed up their use. For an endangered language like Karelian, the tools and resources available are modest. There are several general dictionaries (between Russian and Karelian or Finnish and Karelian) but not all of them are easily accessible for translators in the two countries. Terminological work was initiated in Russian Karelia at the beginning of 2000s but the outcomes (a few special field lexicons) cover only a few fields; furthermore, they describe the Russian reality and as they were published in a printed format only, they are not easily accessible, especially for Finnish Karelians. There are no electronic term bases or special technological tools for Karelian, and because of the restricted use of Karelian in the society and the short history of written Karelian, the number of parallel texts (i. e. texts representing the same genre and dealing with the same subject matter as the source text but originally written in Karelian; see e. g. Floros 2004) is limited. When translating modern texts into Karelian, the translators are constantly met with lexical gaps, i.e., cases where they cannot find a Karelian equivalent for a source language expression – and where they have to create new lexical items ([Kuusi et al. 2019](#) ~~NN, NN and NN 2019~~).

The basic means of filling lexical gaps in any language are borrowing (often with some phonological and grammatical accommodation to fit the target-language structure), calquing and word formation (compounding and derivation). In translation, these techniques are intertwined with other kind of translation strategies in expressing the source text content in the target-language text, such as paraphrasing, using synonyms or related concepts, explaining the reference or by omitting it (for translation strategies see e.g. Chesterman 1997). All techniques and strategies mentioned above are present in our data. For the purposes of the present article, we focus on borrowing, calquing and morphological neologisms (compounds and derivatives), i.e. the cases in which creating a new lexical item is mostly based on a model provided by other languages and which thus reveal Language Making processes occurring in the intersection of two majority languages. In the next section,

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we introduce our data consisting of the reflective assignments written during a translation course.

4. Data and method: student reflections in minority language translation

The present study uses material gathered in 2015–2019 during a series of translation courses¹, aimed at Karelian language activists and other speakers of Karelian and organised at the University of ~~XX~~[Eastern Finland](#), which offers studies of Karelian language and culture as a (minor) subject. The courses were designed by a group of linguists and translation scholars and based on teaching methods used in professional translator training at Finnish universities. Two courses were designed, each consisting of three intensive two-day seminars with contact teaching (lectures and exercises), distributed during an academic year, and independent work (translation exercises and peer feedback) between the seminar days. The first course focused on translating Wikipedia articles for the Karelian edition of Wikipedia and the second on translating fiction; the participants could complete either one of them or both. Both courses were held twice during the project.

From the viewpoint of translator training, the main challenge was to select the core competences of professional translation (see e.g. EMT 2017) relevant for translators of an endangered language and compress them into a condensed course format (without established models to follow, as the training of minority language translators has so far received only modest attention in translation studies; see ~~NN and NN~~[Koskinen and Kuusi](#) 2017: 189–190). The selected theoretical issues included the translator's competencies, communicative situation of translation (e.g. the function of translation and the intended audience), translation process, translation strategies, information seeking and translator's terminology work. In addition, the courses dealt with topics that were more or less directly linked to translating into Karelian or minority languages in general. For example, we discussed the concern expressed in research on minority language translation that unidirectional translation from a dominant language of the society can lead to extensive source-language interference that may threaten the specificity of the minority language (see Toury 1985: 7–8; Cronin 2003: 141).

Practical exercises were planned to increase the participants' metacognitive awareness of their own translation process and translating skills. During each course, the participants had two individual translation assignments accompanied by a reflective commentary describing their translation process and justifying their translation solutions. Writing a reflective report on one's translation process is an established practice in university-level translator training. These reports are meant to accompany the student's translation output and are variedly referred to as e.g. translation annotations, translation diaries or translation commentaries (see e.g. Shei 2005: 315–316). The main aim of writing a translation commentary is to raise the students' consciousness of their translation process and the decisions they make while translating. Participants also provided feedback to each other on their translations. The two

¹ The project was funded by the ~~XX~~[Kone](#) Foundation.

major aims guiding the design and implementation of the translating courses were to give the participants practical and cognitive tools to facilitate their translation work and to empower them to continue translating after the training.

The translation courses were linked to the academic curriculum of the subject Karelian language and culture, but they were open to anyone interested in the topic, both in Finland and in Russia. Consequently, each course had a heterogenous group of 20–30 participants with varying age, education, Karelian language skills and experience in translation. The groups included young students of the Karelian language from both the University of ~~XX~~ [Eastern Finland](#) (Finland) and the State University of ~~XYZ~~ [Petrozavodsk](#) (Russia), often but not always with Karelian roots. Quite a few of the participants from Russia were “language workers”: teachers, journalists, writers or translators who had studied Karelian at the State University of ~~XYZ~~ [Petrozavodsk](#) and now utilise their Karelian skills professionally. This group enjoys the status of highest experts of Karelian language in Russia and are often referred to as Karelian intelligentsia or elite (see e.g. Karjalainen et al. 2013: 132). In contrast, some participants did not have any previous experience in university studies. The age of the participants varied from young students in their early twenties to elderly people. The linguistic background was variable as well: some participants were native speakers of Karelian while others were second-language learners or, in some cases, so called new speakers (see e.g. O’Rourke, Pujolar and Ramallo 2015). The language skills in Karelian varied greatly and sometimes in a somewhat unexpected way: some learners or new speakers had a better command of (written) Karelian than some of the native speakers. The translation skills and experience varied a lot, too: while most of the participants had little or no previous experience of translation, some were practicing translators of Karelian with a considerable practical experience in translation.

The complexity of the current situation of the Karelian language, described in Section 2, was reflected in the course setting. The participants translated into all three main varieties of Karelian, Livvi Karelian being the most common, Northern Karelian the second-most common and Southern Karelian the least common of them. It should be noted that the training context in itself consolidated the dialect boundaries: the exercises were always translated into a specific dialect, and in the activities the participants were divided into groups on the basis of their dialect. Experts of each dialect carried out language revision of student translations for this dialect. Furthermore, some participants had learned the standard variety of Northern or Livvi Karelian at school, university or language courses, and this may have consolidated the idea of Karelian dialects as clear-cut varieties. In contrast, the situation of Southern Karelian is drastically different; at the time of the training, the standardisation of this variety had only begun and there was no consensus on what grammatical features and lexical items would belong to the future standard. This forced the Southern Karelian participants to ponder the boundaries of their dialect. While translating into Northern and Livvi Karelian appears as a consolidating process of Language Makings (using, confirming and expanding a pre-existing standard), translating into Southern Karelian is a process of incipient Language Making when norms are emerging for the first time.

The practical and metaphorical struggle between two countries and dominant languages was present in a very concrete way. Since the participants came from Finland and Russia, both Finnish and Russian as the dominant languages (and the languages of schooling for the participants) played a big role in the training. In practically all translation assignments, the source text was in Finnish or in Russian, either as the original language of the text or as the mediating language for indirect translation. The broader picture of translating into Karelian is similar: almost all Karelian literary translations have been made from or via Finnish or Russian (Iso-Ahola forthcoming).

Our overall data consists of 145 reflective translation commentaries written by 47 participants (1–4 commentaries each). The total number of those course participants who gave their consent to use their assignments for research purposes was 53, but some of them did not write translation commentaries. The translation commentaries analysed were originally written in Finnish, Russian or one of the Karelian varieties (the choice of language was left to the participants' discretion); for the present article, we have translated the excerpts presented into English. The data is referred to by a) Roman numerals I–IV indicating the consecutive number of the translation course, b) the number 1 or 2 indicating whether the translation commentary was the first or the second commentary written during the course, and c) an underscore followed by the number of the participant (for example, III_06).

In the analysis, the focus is not on the actual translation solutions (we do not analyse the translations in this article) but on the participants' reflections on filling in lexical gaps. New words are often formed on the basis of existing words in other languages, referred to here as model words. We analyse the instances where a participant reflects on using or avoiding a Finnish, Russian or other model word when coining a new word to fill in a lexical gap encountered during the translation process. We are aware that some of these lexical gaps might not be real gaps in the language, but rather gaps in the participant's knowledge of it, or gaps only on one side of the state border between Finland and Russia. However, most of them are very likely genuine and connected with either the restricted domains of language use typical for endangered languages (resulting in lack of modern or technical vocabulary) or the translation process per se (lack of translation equivalents for source-culture specific items). In addition to filling in lexical gaps by creating neologisms, the coping strategies of the participants included e.g. paraphrasing or omission. In the present article, however, we focus on the cases where participants considered creating a neologism. In these instances, the participants take a stance on the model languages available for them and make concrete choices that contribute to the making of the Karelian language.

The analysis was based on a close reading of the participants' translation commentaries, using ATLAS.ti software to assign key words that capture the meaning of the segment ("codes" in terms of ATLAS.ti, such as "lexical gap", "loan translation" or "Russian model word adopted") to segments of data. Then, the coded data was queried with the Code Co-occurrence tool to find co-occurring codes: in our case, the code "Lexical gap" co-occurring with any code indicating an adoption or rejection of a model word as a basis for a Karelian neologism. Close reading with assigning key words allowed us to gain an intimate

understanding of the data, while the query tool helped us to get quantitative information on the frequency of the observed phenomena.

5. Analysis: students' reflections on filling in lexical gaps

In this section, we examine how the participants reflect on using model words when creating neologisms to fill in lexical gaps encountered during the translation process. First, we analyse instances where participants adopt a model word from Finnish, Russian or other languages as a basis for a neologism in Karelian. Second, we analyse instances where participants specifically reject such model words. As we are reporting on what the participants say they did (and not what they actually did), the figures must be understood as approximate. Very likely, in actual translations there are instances of filling in lexical gaps not described in translation commentaries: in translation commentaries, students often report only on the main difficulties met and decisions made during the translation process. It must be noted that the course assignments analysed here were not designed for research purposes in the first place, but intended to empower participants to translate into Karelian and thus to support language revitalisation.

5.1 Adopting a model: pragmatic considerations

In our data, Finnish is one of the obvious sources of borrowing and calquing. In connection with lexical gaps, the (potential) use of Finnish words or expressions as models for neologism was considered in 148 excerpts in 48 commentaries by 29 participants (see Table 1). Using a Finnish word as a model is an expected and almost obvious solution when translating from Finnish, but interestingly, Russian was the source language in 26 of these commentaries and Finnish in 22; it is worth noting that the majority of Russian Karelian participants had learned Finnish as at the University of Petrozavodsk. This highlights the close connection between Karelian and Finnish and shows that Finnish is an option for creating neologisms among the Russian Karelians. In fact, when developing written Karelian in Russia in 1990s, borrowing from a closely related language was considered a strategy that maintains the “purity” of the Karelian language, as opposed to borrowing from Russian (Öispuu 1997: 92). In a recent study on loanwords in two Karelian newspapers published in Russia in 2010's, Tavi and Tavi (forthcoming) found out that Finnish still is the most common foreign source of neologisms. (There is no record on whether the Finnish loanwords are understood by Russian Karelians whose knowledge of Finnish varies a lot.)

Table 1. The number of occurrences referring to adopting a Finnish or Russian model

	Occurrences	Commentaries/ Participants	Translated from Finnish	Translated from Russian
Finnish	148	48 / 29	22	26
Russian	112	45 / 26	15	30

Finnish and Russian	74	27 / 19	12	15
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The corresponding numbers for using a Russian word or expression as a model are somewhat lower: it was considered in 112 excerpts in 45 commentaries by 26 participants (see Table 1). Out of these 45 commentaries, 30 were written by students translating from Russian and 15 by students translating from Finnish. What is remarkable is that 74 of these 112 instances co-occur with reflections on borrowing or calquing from Finnish. In these 74 cases, students were considering (at least) two potential models for filling in the lexical gap, Finnish and Russian. These overlapping cases occurred in 27 different commentaries written by 19 participants. 15 of them were translating from Russian, 12 from Finnish. Thus, there is a considerable overlap in the instances where participants discuss the adoption of either a Finnish or a Russian model. In roughly one half of the total number of cases where a Finnish model is considered (76/148 excerpts), a Russian model is considered as well; in approximately two thirds of the total number of cases where a Russian model is considered (76/112 excerpts), a Finnish model is considered too. This finding indicates that when coining new words, participants did not limit their search for models to the language they were translating from (which was in most cases the dominant language of the society they were living in) but were drawing on different linguistic resources available to them.

In most cases the (possible) use of a certain model word or expression, whether Finnish or Russian, was not justified in any specific way. In general, the reasons for considering a certain model seem to be pragmatic, connected to the translator's tools at hand (especially dictionaries) and to the amount of effort required for exploring other options. Typically, participants reported on calquing or borrowing from Finnish or Russian when they could not find a pre-existing equivalent in dictionaries. When translating from Finnish, the easiest way to fill in a lexical gap obviously was to use the Finnish word from the original text, often in a slightly adapted form to make it sound Karelian, see example (1)². When translating from Russian, a Finnish model is not as readily available, and participants explained using it because they could not find the word they needed in Russian–Karelian dictionaries and moved on the look at Russian–Finnish dictionaries (which are much more thorough than the Russian–Karelian ones and which may also be accessible through Internet) or Finnish parallel texts, see (2). The lack of dictionary equivalents was the most common explanation offered by participants for borrowing or calquing from Russian as well, see (3).

- (1) But for example, the [Finnish] word *vallankumous* ['revolution'] was difficult as I couldn't find the correct term, so I decided to leave it as *vallankumouš*. (I2_06)

² The non-English words and expressions are marked by italics and their meaning is explained in square brackets added by the authors of this article.

(2) For example, I couldn't find a suitable translation for the [Russian] word *поездом* ['in transit'] in the Karelian dictionaries. I didn't find a Karelian equivalent in *Oma Mua* newspaper, either. I looked at the Finnish variant. The Finnish variant is *kauttakulkumatka*. I think I can use this word in the translation. (III1_01)

(3) I couldn't find the [Russian] word *комод* ['chest of drawers'] in the Karelian dictionaries. In my translation, I use the variant *komodu*, adapted from Russian. (IV1_42)

When considering a Finnish model, only one participant justifies borrowing from Finnish by referring to Finnish as a relative language, see (4); there were no explicit references to the notion of purity when borrowing from Finnish. All in all, it seems that the participants mostly treated the Finnish words as a legitimate source or model which can be exploited without specific justification.

(4) In Karelian, there is no equivalent to the [Russian] phrase *центр продажи билетов на концерты и в театр* ['centre for selling tickets to concerts and theatre'], therefore, I searched for similar forms and words in Russian dictionaries and the Finnish translation equivalent (since among the closest relatives of Karelian, it [= Finnish] is the one I'm most familiar with and there are similar forms in it) and I decided to use the [Karelian] phrase *konsertoih da teatrah bilietöin myöndykeskus*. (III1_38)

Direct borrowing from Finnish was usually accompanied by accommodation: the participants mostly aimed at adjusting the Finnish equivalent phonologically (or orthographically) to Karelian; even though the languages are closely related, there are many phonological differences. The result was not always successful in terms of Standard Karelian norms but for the purposes of the present article, it is interesting to notice that for many participants, slight phonological adaptation is enough to turn a Finnish word into a Karelian one, see (5) (see also example (1) above). In a few cases, there was also morphological adaptation. Both Finnish and Karelian have rich derivational morphology but the use of derivational suffixes often differs. This has been acknowledged in (6) in which the participant takes the Finnish word *vapina* 'tremor' as a starting point but replaces the Finnish suffix with a Karelian one, resulting in *vabižendu*. This kind of phonological and morphological accommodation suggests that the border between Finnish and Karelian is considered low and that it can be crossed in a relatively simple way. However, also the border between Russian and Karelian could easily be surpassed by phonological accommodations, as demonstrated in examples (3) above and (12) below).

(5) Some words, for which I didn't find an equivalent, I managed (quite well, in my opinion) to turn into Karelian ones or at least much like Karelian ones. For example, the [Finnish] word *renessanssi* ['renaissance'] became *reneššanšši* and [Finnish] word *ulkoavaruus* ['outer space'] became *ulkoavaruuš*, even though *ulgoavaruuš* could have been a good form, too. (I2_06)

- (6) I thought that I'll have to adapt the [Russian] word *мрёмор* ['tremor'] because it is an international term from Latin, in Finnish there is *vapina* or *tremor* (in Karelian *tremoru?*). I decided to use the word *vabižendu*, perhaps it is clearer and sounds more Karelian. (III2_25).

When choosing between a Finnish and a Russian model, explicit arguments for opting for a certain model were scarce. Occasionally, participants wondered whether other speakers might understand the neologism they were coining, or what other speakers said they preferred, or how frequently the components of a potential new compound word were used in Karelian, see (7), or whether the word was used in other languages. Somewhat surprisingly, the target group (Finnish or Russian Karelians) was explicitly mentioned only a couple of times, see (8), although implied in comments concerning the comprehensibility of the neologism and the preferences of other speakers.

- (7) Suddenly it occurred to me that because the [Finnish] word *sähkö* ['electricity'] is found in Karelian texts, I could choose *sähkögituaru* ['electric guitar'] but I thought that I still have to seek for information. I couldn't find the exact word *sähkögituaru* in the corpus [a collection of Karelian texts compiled by one of the course participants] but *elektrogitaru* occurred (only once, though). Then I looked at the other words beginning with *sähkö* or *elektro*. Words related to *sähköposti* ['email'] were used more than a hundred times, *elektroposti* not at all. *Sähköpoujezdu* ['electric train'] occurred four times, *elektropoujezdu* not once. [– –] All in all, for the words related to electricity, the ones beginning with *sähkö* were more frequent. Therefore, I decided to use here the word *sähkögituaru*. (III_09)
- (8) [Finnish] *pikamatka* – here I had to decide whether to use an original word (borrowed from Finnish) or an international one. I decided to use the international variant *sprintu*. The loan words ending with a consonant are usually adapted by adding the vowel *u* or *y* at the end of the word. [– –] I think *sprintu* is a suitable word for a sport. It is understandable for both Finnish and Russian Karelians. (I2_11)

The findings indicate that participants were actively searching for solutions in both directions and reflecting on whether to calque or borrow from Finnish or Russian. They draw on their linguistic resources available to them – and as in (9), even on resources “unavailable” in a sense of using a language they did not know:

- (9) I don't know Russian but with the help of the *sanakirja.org* Internet dictionary, it is possible to see the Russian words as transliterated [into to the Latin script]. So I searched the [Finnish] word *oire* ['symptom'] between Finnish and Russian and got the transliterated [Russian] word *simptom*. Because the speakers of Karelian always know Russian as their other language, I decided to adapt the Russian word towards Karelian: I made the word *simptoma*, because the vowel-ending word sounds more Karelian. (I2_16)

Languages other than Finnish or Russian were discussed in two cases: when the source word (which lacked a Karelian equivalent) was so called internationalism and when the participant wanted to explore the options available in closely related languages. Altogether 73 lexical gaps reported in the commentaries involved a translingually widely used word which often had its origin in Latin or Greek or (in some cases) an Anglicism that has been relatively recently borrowed to many languages. However, even though some participants listed a number of equivalents in a variety of languages, in practice the word was almost always borrowed into Karelian via Finnish, see (10), or Russian, see (11); therefore, the use of these words as a model overlaps with using a Finnish or Russian model. Sometimes Finnish and Russian share an internationalism and then it seems very natural to borrow the same word into Karelian, too (12). Choosing (or considering) an internationalism seems to be justified based on intelligibility: these words are used in many languages and they are thus easy to understand. In addition, some participants considered these words suitable when writing to multiple target groups in two countries, see (9) above. In the context of Language Making, we may also contemplate whether the very fact that these words occur in numerous languages offer another explanation: they do not “belong” to one specific language and are thus “safe” to borrow. Furthermore, participants may feel that using the same international words as the bigger languages raises the status of Karelian among languages.

- (10) I could not find an equivalent for the [Finnish] verb *boikotoida* [‘to boycott’] in any sources and I ended up in trying the verb *boikotoija*, formed according to the Finnish model. (I2_10)
- (11) For some time, I pondered how to translate the [Russian] words like *лидер* [‘leader’] or *имидж* [‘image’]. I decided to translate them as *liideru* and *imago*. I think they are suitable words. (I1_14)
- (12) One more example I want to mention is [Russian] *богема* [‘bohemian’]. In a similar way, I first found the Finnish equivalent, which is *boheemi*. I understood that Russian and Finnish words are similar and so I invented the Karelian word *bougemu*. (III1_25)

Another, less frequent case involving other languages were the occasions where the participants explored the options available in closely related Finnic languages other than Finnish. Estonian was referred to 9 times by 5 participants, see (13). Considering the Estonian equivalent was not explicitly justified; it seems that these participants treated it as an obvious possibility much in the same as the Finnish equivalents, even though the difference between Estonian and Karelian is substantial. One reason for looking at Estonian was probably practical: Estonian is the second biggest Finnic language and there are both Finnish–Estonian and Russian–Estonian dictionaries available, also on the Internet. Another Finnic language, mentioned once by two participants, was Veps, see (14). Veps is a cognate of Karelian spoken in Russia; it shares many features with Livvi Karelian. Veps has much less speakers than Karelian but there is a Wikipedia in Veps and a Russian–Veps dictionary.

The cases where participants considered models from other languages such as Estonian or Veps always overlap with cases where a Finnish or a Russian model is considered.

- (13) I looked at the old but reliable Finnish–Estonian dictionary if there are other equivalents for Finnish *kinkku* [‘ham’] than the western loan *sink*. I indeed found the [Estonian] word (*sea*)*kints* [‘leg of pig’]. (I12_13)
- (14) Right in the beginning, I had to think how to translate the [Russian] term *черная дыра* [‘black hole’]. First, I looked at the Russian–Karelian dictionary for the equivalents of [Russian] *дыра* [‘hole’]. They were *loukko* and *reikä*. In the Kotus dictionary [a dialect dictionary of Karelian] I found also the word *aukko*. Then I started to think if it would be *mušta aukko*, *mušta loukko* or *mušta reikä* in Northern Karelian. I looked up the term in Finnish (*musta aukko*), Estonian (*must auk*) and Veps (*must reig*) editions of Wikipedia. I decided to use the variant *mušta aukko* in the translation because it exists in Finnish and Estonian and the word *aukko* is included in the [Karelian] Kotus dictionary. (I2_01)

What is particular about the situation of the Karelian language are the dialectal differences and the co-existence of several written standards: Northern Karelian and Livvi Karelian have fairly stable standards whereas developing the Southern Karelian standard (see Section 2) has just begun. Livvi Karelian is most viable in terms of the number and scope of dictionaries (for example, there are both Russian–Karelian and Finnish Karelian dictionaries) whereas Northern Karelian dictionaries are few, and the only ones available are between Russian and Northern Karelian. For Southern Karelian, there is only one dictionary for Tver Karelian (Karelian–Russian) and a short Karelian–Finnish dictionary. Terminological work has been done in Russian Karelia for Northern and Livvi Karelian but not for Southern Karelian. The amount of printed or digital texts is biggest for Livvi Karelian and there exist some material in Northern Karelian as well but the Southern Karelian texts are very rare.

The possibility of borrowing a word from another dialect of Karelian is, however, seldom mentioned in the translation commentaries in connection with lexical gaps: there are 11 occurrences in 5 commentaries written by 3 participants (in most cases together with references to model words in Finnish, Russian or other languages). On the one hand, this is somewhat surprising because one might expect it to be natural to rely on the lexical resources of a close dialect. On the other hand, considering the nature of Language Making processes, this is in line with the deliberate effort to develop separate standards for Northern and Livvi Karelian, reflecting the fact that these dialects are being taught separately at school and at university. It is hard to tell whether the fact that other dialect(s) are not mentioned is due to deliberate decision to keep the two standards apart or if it follows from practical reasons (for example, which dictionaries the participant has had at hand when translating). When the participants have looked at other dialects, they have found possible translation equivalents (15) or a model for coining a new word or a name, as in (16). Not surprisingly, most of these cases concern Southern dialect which has very little modern vocabulary; Livvi Karelian with a more established standard is seen as a suitable model, see (17).

- (15) In some places the dialect vocabulary helped, like for example the Livvi Karelian and Border Karelian *kiäntöpiäveičči* [‘pocket knife’] (Russian *peročinnjyj nož*, Finnish *linkkuveitsi*). I don’t know whether this word has been ever used in Northern Karelian or whether one could find an equivalent in one’s own language. (IV1_08)
- (16) On the other hand, another possibility to form a name [for a Moomin character named Stinky] would be *Haizui*, which is derived from the Tver Karelian word *haizuja* ‘smelly’. (II_18)
- (17) As an aid for translating, I mainly used the *Karjalan kielen sanakirja* [Dictionary of Karelian] at the Kotus web page and the Dictionary of Tver Karelian but to find equivalents for neologisms, I also used the Livvi Karelian dictionaries of Martti Penttonen and Markianova & Pyöli. Livvi Karelian is far more developed than Southern Karelian and as far as neologisms are concerned, it is useful to take one’s cue from them. (II2_13)

To sum up, when encountering a lexical gap, the participants draw on all linguistic resources available to them: Finnish and Russian (or often – both at the same time), international words of Latin or Greek origin (typically, however, via Finnish or Russian), closely related languages such as Estonian and other Karelian dialects. All these languages are approached as resources that offer models for coining a new word for the purposes of the translation task at hand.

5.2 Rejecting a model: critical considerations

The opposite tendency, avoiding a certain model, was clearly less pronounced. There are references to (a wish for) avoiding the Finnish or the Russian model (see Table 2), but the number of these cases is much lower than for adopting a certain model. However, these comments are typically more explicit in their argumentation and tend to give some justification for the decision not to follow an available model. Contrary to our expectations, the notion of purity of the Karelian language was never explicitly mentioned in these argumentations.

Table 2. The number of occurrences referring to avoiding a Finnish or Russian model

	Occurrences	Commentaries/ Participants	Translated from Finnish	Translated from Russian
Finnish	16	11 / 10	9	2
Russian	11	7 / 6	4	3

When discussing the lexical gaps, there are 16 references to avoiding a specific Finnish model and 3 references to avoiding Finnish influence in general in 11 commentaries by 10 individuals; 8 of them translated from Finnish and 2 from Russian. These comments differ from the ones that describe following the Finnish or Russian model in that they are considerably longer and often exhibit thorough reflection and weighing of possible translation solutions. It seems that avoiding the use of a Finnish model is much more conscious and reasoned compared to adopting a model from the same language. These participants are aware of the fact that Finnish elements may be too easily transferred to a closely related language, and if they decide to follow the Finnish model, they do it after careful consideration. Furthermore, some of these comments manifest a conscious decision to promote the status of Karelian as a language of its own, see (18) and (19).

- (18) [About translating Finnish *sininen hetki* ('blue hour'; literally 'blue moment'):] In my translation, I ended up using the [Karelian] equivalent *sinine čuassu* ['blue hour'; *čuassu* 'hour'] because this is how the concept has been translated into many other languages too. [– –] However, I think it is important that when coining new words, one should not lean too heavily on one's own dominant language, in my case on Finnish, but examine the concept or phenomenon from the viewpoint of several languages. The equivalent developed in this way is on a par with the equivalents in other languages. (II2_30)
- (19) [About translating the name of the Moomin character *Stinky*, in Finnish *Haisuli*:] Anyway, [the potential Karelian names] *Haizuli*, *Haižuli*, *Haizui* are all rather poor because they resemble so closely the Finnish name. For the prestige of the language, it is important that the language has its own identity, and with names, it could be emphasised by using clearly different names. (II_18)

The situation for avoiding a Russian model is quite similar: it was consciously avoided only 11 times, in 7 commentaries written by 6 participants. Out of these 7 commentaries, 3 were written by students translating from Russian and 4 by students translating from Finnish. However, 9 of these 11 cases overlap with cases presented above: apart from rejecting a Russian model word, participants also consider adopting or rejecting a Finnish model word, adopting a model word from other Karelian dialect or adopting an international word, see (20). In 7 out of 11 cases, the participants gave their reasons for choosing not to exploit the Russian model. They explained their decision with varying arguments: that the target readers might not understand the calque/loanword, that Finnish was considered to present a more natural model for Karelian, that the participant wanted to avoid excessive calquing from Russian or did not want the Karelian word to look like a calque from Russian and that the participant wanted to avoid using both Russian and Finnish as model languages. Unlike the cases where participants adopted a Russian model, avoiding it seems to be a conscious and thought-out decision in the few cases where it occurs.

- (20) [Finnish] *sakkorinki* ['penalty loop'] – [Karelian] *štruafu* ['penalty'], *kierros* ['loop'], I got the equivalent *štruafukierros*. Another equivalent for [Finnish] *rinki* is the word

kruugu (Markianova & Pyöli [a dictionary]). I think the word *kierros* [a word common to both Finnish and Karelian] is suitable here, it is better not to have two Russian loan words one after another, as they would be in *štruafukruugu*. (I2_11)

Even though the number of cases where a specific model is rejected is much lower than the number of cases where a model is adopted, in the former the participants seem to be more aware of the possibility of cross-linguistic influence in their translations. Rejecting a model, thus, seems to be more conscious and critical than adopting a model and connected with a wish to avoid the excessive influence of the dominant language(s).

6. Conclusion

Both translation and language revitalisation are based on approaching languages as separate entities. In consequence, translation in the context of language revitalisation is doubly inclined to reinforce rather than problematise the boundaries between languages. However, contrary to what one would have expected, a rather flexible view on linguistic borders is displayed in our data. Participants fill in lexical gaps by drawing on all linguistic resources available to them: mainly Finnish and Russian, but also “international” resources and occasionally other languages or other Karelian dialects. The process of drawing on one’s linguistic resources materialises in their decisions to either adopt or reject a certain linguistic model as a base for a Karelian neologism.

In most cases, models are adopted on pragmatic grounds: borrowing or calquing from one of the dominant languages is seen as a practical and readily available way to solve the problem at hand. Sometimes, however, participants show a more critical attitude and consciously decide to avoid a Finnish or Russian model. It is noteworthy that out of the total number of lexical gaps discussed in our data, only a small proportion includes a specific justification for adopting or rejecting a model. However, for rejecting a model, it is much more typical to give one’s reasons for the decision. Interestingly, these critical arguments are concentrated in translation commentaries written by a rather small number of participants.

Adopting a Finnish model was clearly more popular than adopting a Russian model. In cases where a model was consciously avoided, the weights were more even. The most interesting finding, however, was the overlap of these tendencies in our data. In a majority of cases, the participants’ reflections included several tendencies at the same time: to fill in a single lexical gap, they were discussing both Finnish, Russian and other models and combining the adoption of one model with the rejection of another (or both). Moreover, the participants did not limit their search for suitable model words to the source language of translation: when translating from Finnish, participants make use of Russian words as basis for creating a neologism, and vice versa. The motivations behind this pragmatic approach are probably connected to the course setting: the participants were filling in lexical gaps as a part of a course assignment and needed to do it in certain time limits. The availability of a model was perhaps the most important criterion for its acceptability. Still, a clear tendency of an “active and dynamic use” of one’s linguistic resources (see Section 1) is clearly displayed in our

data. The models offered by the dominant languages (Finnish and Russian), other Karelian dialects and “international” resources are all approached as legitimate stimuli for neologisms.

However, there are more critical and ideologically oriented voices in our data as well. When participants fill in lexical gaps by adopting models from other languages, they also (whether consciously or unconsciously) make decisions as to on which (or whose) model to base their neologisms: the dominant, the linguistically related, or the international. Some of the participants do not want to base Karelian neologisms on (one of the) models existing in other languages, wishing to escape Finnish, Russian or other influence on the Karelian language. Sometimes these critical considerations have a more practical motivation, such as the comprehensibility of the resulting neologism for target readers. Controlling the crosslinguistic influence from the source text or the dominant language is one of the recurrent themes in research on minority language translation (Touy 1985: 7–8, Cronin 2003: 141). Michael Cronin (2003: 141) calls for translation practices that critically consider what elements to adopt from the dominant language and what not, and how to let the minority language expand without losing its specificity. These views were discussed during the course lectures with the aim to increase the participants’ awareness of the phenomenon and to help them make justified decisions about when to follow the source-language model and when not. Still, the critical voices in our data are few and far between.

Karelian – a pluricentric language with several dialects spoken in two countries – presents a case where linguistic differentiation is a possible outcome of revitalisation. On the one hand, each dialect has its own written standard, and the standardisation process reinforces the dialect boundaries. On the other hand, Finnish and Russian Karelian have been separated by the state border; in future, this may enhance their development in different directions under the influence of the two majority languages. In our data, the drawing of linguistic borders between Karelian varieties is indicated by the low number of instances where a model word from another Karelian dialect is considered.

An endangered language community gives rise to various types of agency and language activism, all affecting Language Making. Teachers, journalists, writers, and translators belong to significant agents in any language society (see Krämer, Vogl and Kolehmainen et al. in this volume) but their influence is much stronger in the context of revitalisation. When other models are scarce, new terms coined by translators may have a lasting impact on the language. As Language Makers, minority language translators may turn out to be more influential than their colleagues in dominant languages. Another trait typical to small minority communities is that all individuals who take part in linguistic activities in any form, as active language users or in the role of audience, are agents in this special Language Making process. Everyone who speaks or writes in Karelian is a Language Maker participating in language emancipation and in developing and consolidating linguistic norms.

Agency presupposes both an ability and willingness to act (Koskinen and Kinnunen 2010: 6), and is therefore closely connected to empowerment, which, in turn, is of extreme importance for revitalisation.

The results of our analysis illustrated how the participants perceived the language boundaries and the connections between Karelian and other languages. To a lesser extent, they also displayed the participants' competing and conflicting ideologies of what is Karelian and what belongs to it. In a majority of cases, the participants exerted their agency by drawing freely on the different linguistic resources available to them. A small minority, however, engaged in ideological considerations on which or whose model to base their neologisms. Their attempts to critically assess and reject the available model words imply an active stance on the revitalisation process and a wish to preserve and strengthen the boundaries of the Karelian language, thus exemplifying a conscious, well-reflected contribution to Language Making. However, in the context of a critically endangered language, both approaches count: whether pragmatic utilisation of available models or critical selection among them, the participants act as agents of revitalisation, thus contributing to the making of the Karelian language.

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