

**”Dinna Fash, Sassenach”– Subtitle  
Quality and Finnish Translations of  
Cultural References in Streaming  
Services**

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This thesis examines translation quality and Finnish translations of cultural references in the three most popular international streaming services used in Finland. The analysis is qualitative in nature, and the research material consists of the first season of the *Outlander* series. As the series is set on 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish Highlands, it offers various interesting aspects for study. The main focus is on cultural aspects, which include the Gaelic language, Scottish dialect, proper names, and titles. Other issues concerning subtitle quality are examined as well. The theoretical framework utilized in this thesis includes Juliane House’s and Kristiina Abdallah’s ideas of translation quality and Jan Pedersen’s works on Extralinguistic Cultural References and the FAR model. In addition, the thesis examines the recent development in the field of audiovisual translation and its effects on translation and translators as well as the emergence of streaming services. While the main focus of the thesis is on product quality, it aims to keep in mind the underlying external factors that affect the occurrence of translation errors.

The thesis finds that all three streaming services use different translation providers and that the translators vary between episodes. However, the overall information provided on the origin of the subtitles is rather inadequate. Nevertheless, the use of multiple translators appears to create inconsistencies in the translation choices. In all categories, *the Gaelic language, the Scottish dialect, personal names, place names, and titles*, the translations change throughout the episodes, occasionally resulting in more serious errors as well. There are also some serious errors regarding acceptability but overall, readability and acceptability seem to be on an adequate level. It can be argued that the main issue behind problems in the quality of the subtitles is most likely that there has been insufficient amount of collaboration between the different translators and that the translators might have not had a chance to catch up on the previous episodes or had any access to written episode scripts or terminologies. Further studies could benefit from a more in-depth look into the operation of the streaming services concerning their methods for acquiring audiovisual translations and their views on audiovisual translation and multinational translation companies in general. The translation companies and translators themselves could also be contacted in order to focus on the various aspects influencing product quality.

Keywords: audiovisual translation; subtitling; quality; streaming service; outsourcing; equivalence; acceptability; readability; cultural reference; translation strategy; translation error

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## 1. Introduction

In recent years, audiovisual translation has been quite a discussed topic in Finland. Much controversy has been caused by the emergence of a trend that favors the practice of outsourcing, which means that the production of audiovisual translations has largely been moved from local suppliers to various multinational corporations. As a result, price rates, translation quality, and translators' working conditions have received critique as it seems that good audiovisual translations and competent translators are often unappreciated. In other words, as is common in many cases, time and money often seem to be prioritized over quality.

There is also another factor that has affected this change and is in the focus of this thesis: the way that we experience television has changed quite radically during the current decade. We no longer need to tune in at a specific time to watch our favorite series on TV or remember to record them. Instead, we can watch them and far more through various streaming services, which have steadily gained more and more popularity. In Finland, many television networks offer their own streaming services, at least partially free of charge. These streaming services include *Yle Areena*, *Ruutu* and *Katsomo*, which allow users to catch up on everything they might have missed on TV. Usually the content in these type of services is only available for a very limited time. More importantly, we have also experienced the emergence of massive international streaming services, which are what I will be focusing on in this thesis. These services offer their subscribers a chance to watch, in exchange for a monthly price, whatever they can find in the service collection, such as various movies and full seasons of countless TV series. These types of international streaming services have gained major popularity in Finland as well, and the three most popular are Netflix, Viaplay and HBO Nordic. These streaming services each have a strong foothold, which is probably due to the fact that despite somewhat similar collections, each of them provide unique content for their users. Netflix and HBO Nordic both seem to concentrate mostly on series, and both have their very own productions that are only available on their own streaming services. Netflix especially appears to be concentrating more and more on developing various Netflix Originals that include both series and movies. Overall, if any highly popular series can be found on HBO Nordic, it most likely cannot be found on Netflix and vice versa. Meanwhile, Viaplay also has

a collection of series, many of which are not available on either of the above, but its most unique feature seems to be the collection of new movie releases and sport events.

In this thesis, I will examine some Finnish audiovisual translations used in these three most popular international streaming services, more precisely concentrating on their origin and quality. For the quality, I will mostly be concentrating on the translations of various cultural references. The research material that I will use to achieve this purpose consists of the first season of the popular *Outlander* series, which provides many intriguing cultural aspects to study: it includes history, fiction, Scottish Gaelic and Scottish English. I have constructed this thesis in six chapters. In the following chapter, I will give the reader some background information on the events that have taken place in the audiovisual field in the past years as well as on the emergence of the most popular international streaming services already mentioned in this chapter. Next, I will move on to examine the most common conventions used for subtitling and the concept of quality in the field of audiovisual translation. In addition, I will discuss some key models that I will utilize in my analysis on the audiovisual translations used in the first season of *Outlander*. Chapter four introduces the methods that I have used in this thesis as well as a brief introduction to the world of *Outlander*, and chapter five concentrates on the analysis of the research material itself. Finally, chapter six concludes the thesis by summarizing the results and discussing the possibility of further research.

## **2. Background**

### **2.1. Turmoil in the field of Audiovisual Translation**

Lauri Mäkelä (2016) points out that large, multinational translation companies have been creating a decrease in translators' fees since the 1990s. Considering this, it would seem that the trend of outsourcing is not in fact a new trend at all, but it has definitely become more visible during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In fact, during the past decade, we have witnessed some extremely unfortunate development in the field of audiovisual translation that has been caused by the overwhelming trend of outsourcing the majority of subtitling services to these multinational corporations. In other words, it seems that the trend has evolved from being a somewhat subtle force to representing the common way of doing things.

The Finnish television consists of various free channels that are mostly provided by three broadcasting companies. These are the national public broadcasting company *YLE* and two commercial media companies: *MTV* and *Nelonen*. First, in 2009, Nelonen outsourced its translation services to the giant multinational corporation *Broadcast Text International* (today known as *BTI Studios*). Following in 2012, the even larger media company MTV did the same. A petition signed by 93 translators (SKTL 2012) describes the disquieting situation and atmosphere among translators, who were worried about the overwhelming trend of outsourcing audiovisual translation services. The petition points out that translators working for MTV had previously been a part of a collective labor agreement, which guaranteed them solid pay and good working conditions, but unfortunately BTI Studios was not bound by this agreement, and would offer only a fraction of that pay while at the same time also demanding a considerably faster work pace. All 93 translators who signed the petition were working for the national public broadcasting company Yle, which after these massive cases of outsourcing, remained the only translation service provider that was bound by a collective agreement (Aromaa, 2012). This development in the audiovisual translation industry has been a constant topic of discussion in the translation community and visible through various news coverage. The discussions and publicity, however, seemed to do very little to change the situation.

Nevertheless, there have been active efforts to improve the situation, and Mäkelä (2016) also discusses these more current events in the audiovisual translation industry. While in 2015, a new collective labor agreement was created, he points out that it fell quite short from generating a major difference. It seems that only some of the smaller translation companies adopted the agreement. Among the big multinational corporations, SDI Media refused to sign the agreement altogether, and while BTI Studios did agree to sign, it ended up discharging some of its translators in order to hire new, independent translators, who would be unable to benefit from the agreement. This is rather unfortunate since these large companies were probably the biggest target for creating this new agreement. In addition to all this, it seems that there has recently been some negative development in Yle as well: according to the Finnish broadcasting union *Radio- ja televisiokääntäjien liitto* (RTTL) (2016), Yle has recently outsourced some of its translation services to Lingsoft Oy, SDI Media and even BTI Studios. The broadcasting union expresses its worries about this development which Yle was never supposed to take part in. These worries are hardly surprising considering the response

that SDI Media and BTI Studios had on the labor agreement. However, Yle's head of translation services, Christoffer Forssell (2016), assures that only five percent of all the translations are outsourced and that there will be no decrease in quality.

Overall, the discussions in the field of audiovisual translation are still continuing, and the most recent development took place only a few months ago. According to *Av-kääntäjät* (2019), the collective agreement was renewed once again for the following year, and it emphasizes that special attention should be paid to translators' working conditions. However, especially the difference in the position of independent translators compared to those working under a translation agency is still found unacceptable, but as the situation requires changes in the legislative level in order to change, it might take some time.

## **2.2. What about the streaming services?**

While the traditional broadcasting companies have recently more or less proceeded to outsourcing, the international streaming services have done that since the beginning. These services emerged after the audiovisual translation industry was already dominated by the multinational translation companies, and thus outsourcing the translation services has probably been the most obvious course of action. Moreover, considering the overwhelming amount of content, outsourcing is also probably a much easier cause of action than hiring in-house translators.

The first to launch its streaming service in Finland was Viaplay in 2011, a year before Netflix, which has since surpassed Viaplay in the number of subscribers. HBO Nordic joined the two in 2013 but it, too, fell behind Netflix, which is by far the most popular of the three (Aamulehti, 2015). However, Netflix did have quite problematic beginnings in Finland. At first, after major promotion and publicity at the time of its launch, it seemed that Netflix subscribers were somewhat disappointed at the amount of available content in the service (Kaleva 2012). There are still some series on which Netflix seems to be several seasons behind and others that have suddenly had many seasons removed – seasons that do not seem to appear back on the catalogue. As examples of series such as these I could mention *Modern Family*, *Doctor Who* and *the Vampire Diaries*. Overall, however, the Netflix catalogue today is rather massive, and their constant efforts in producing their own content is extremely visible in the amount of available series and movies.

In addition to the rather small catalogue at the time of its launch, it seems that Netflix in particular has had some issues regarding its subtitles as well. Back in 2013, Yle's *Kuningaskuluttaja* (Yle, 2013) carried out a small test, where users gave their opinions on the three streaming services. The quality of subtitles in all three services were found somewhat varying, but Netflix especially received criticism. As someone who is always subscribed to at least one of these services (depending on what I feel like watching), I can account having had this exact same notion. Moreover, I have noticed that Netflix differs from the other two in that it often does not include any information about the source of its subtitles. During its early days, Netflix was also caught illegally using translations that were taken from a website called DivX Finland, which has a large collection of subtitles made by non-professional translators (Yle 2012). This was quite problematic for the non-professional translators contributing to this collection, but undoubtedly for the professional translators as well. Their working conditions and livelihoods had already been at risk due to outsourcing and decreasing price rates, and now a major new service would rather use unprofessional translations for free than hire professionals. Despite these issues, Netflix, as well as Viaplay and HBO Nordic, has gained a powerful status as a streaming service provider in Finland.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1. Subtitling Conventions**

As Esko Vertanen (2008: 149) points out, in Finland, audiovisual translation is mostly carried out through subtitling, and the amount of text produced in the form of subtitles is rather massive. It is, therefore, not surprising that it is often said that the majority of all the text that Finnish people read are in the form of subtitles. When we look at the process of producing subtitles, we can see that the translator's work in this matter is anything but easy.

Something very present in audiovisual media is *multimodality*. Mikko Lehtonen (2008: 38) explains that multimodality includes two dimensions, which are referred to as *textual dimension* and *cultural dimension*. He emphasizes that both of these dimensions are multimodal as well and that therefore, their combination is, of course, that also. He explains that the multimodality in the textual dimension can be viewed through the fact that language never exists on its own. Instead, speech, for

example, includes aspects such as intonation and rhythm, which are also accompanied by posture, gestures, and facial expressions. Similarly, he says that the cultural dimension has multiple factors as well: it is a combination of various symbolic forms and conveyed communication. It is clear, therefore, that there are many aspects to consider when producing subtitles, since audiovisual media entails a great deal more than speech and speech itself can, of course, include aspects such as interruptions, unfinished sentences, overlapping, and various type of ambiguity. Considering a series such as *Outlander*, there are also such complicating issues as multiple languages and dialects. English and the Gaelic language are extremely intertwined in the series, and the Scottish dialect can often be quite strong.

In order to have some consistency and sense in the subtitles, there are some varying, but overall quite consistent conventions in Finland regarding space and time on the screen. Esko Vertanen (2008: 150–151) discusses these conventions drawing from his background as a translator at the national public broadcasting company Yle. He points out that the translator should always be as truthful to the original text as possible and that this is true for subtitling as well, even though an audiovisual translator might have to carry out some rather radical solutions. This is especially due to the fact that there can usually be only two lines of text on the screen at the most. Vertanen (2008: 150–151) says that this makes the information provided incomplete, but that it is acceptable as long as the conventions used for subtitling are respected. He emphasizes that a subtitle must appear on the screen long enough for the viewer to be able to read it and tell whose speech the subtitle represents. In addition, the subtitles must follow the rhythm of the speech, and the viewer should be able to immerse him- or herself into the program through the subtitles without necessarily actively noticing the subtitles. In other words, the viewer needs to have a pleasant watching experience and be able to follow, say an episode, as well as if they were able to understand everything that is being said. In addition, the text should flow with the speech, meaning that a subtitle should appear and disappear at the right time, be on the screen long enough for the viewer to be able to read it, include the crucial information at least, and not be too long or distract the viewer from the program itself.

According to Vertanen (2008: 151), the average number of characters per line has been around 33 and 34, and a full line of text should be visible on the screen for about two or three seconds. A full two-liner, on the other hand, should be visible for four to five seconds. Vertanen (2008: 151) says that, overall, the instructions are that

a subtitle should appear on the screen for at least one second and 30 seconds at the most, although generally not over ten seconds. Overall, we can see that the number of characters is extremely small considering how much information can be uttered in those few seconds. Nevertheless, those few seconds are short for a viewer, and no matter how long those seconds feel to the translator, the viewer cannot be expected to read faster than those 33–34 characters in three seconds. This inevitably results in having to often radically cut down from what is being said on the screen. The problem of course is what should be kept and what should be removed.

Vertanen (2008: 152–153) explains that the most important thing to consider while translating an audiovisual source text is the time. He emphasizes that the text should appear on the screen for the exact time that it takes for the speaker to utter the line and that short utterances should appear as a short line of text, whereas longer utterances should be written out longer as well. As some things have to be left out of the translation, Vertanen (2008: 152) explains that a translator should aim to leave out things that are not essential or that the viewer already knows from previous context but that characterization should, at the same time, also be preserved. As an instruction, Vertanen (2008: 153) says that a good course of action would be to first translate the whole utterance, then abbreviate it to a shorter utterance, and finally add some elaboration, additional information or words that create depth and color – in said order.

As an example of non-essential or previously known information, Vertanen (2008: 152–153) mentions people's names and titles, which are something that are not repeated often in Finnish the way that they are in English. *Outlander* is a series with a great deal of titles that are used constantly, but I think this is a somewhat different situation, since it was, of course, much more important at that time, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, to refer to people with their proper titles. Nevertheless, it will be interesting to see how visible they are in the subtitles. As a difficulty, which is also very present in *Outlander*, Vertanen (2008: 153) mentions the use of slang and dialects. He says that these types of elements can be kept quite subtle in the subtitles so that the readability does not suffer but that if they are expressed in the text, it should, of course, be done consistently.

Another important part of the subtitling conventions is the organization of text on the screen. As Vertanen (2008: 154) points out, every piece of subtitle on the screen should be a coherent and easily understandable whole. He points out that if a sentence cannot fit into one subtitle, it should always be segmented into another subtitle from reasonable places so that the information can still be easily understood

by the viewer. This is, of course, true to lines as well, and although he points out that it is aesthetically more pleasing to leave the top line shorter than the bottom line, this obviously cannot be valued more than the coherence of the text. One could argue that is always more important to arrange the subtitle so that words that are connected to each other are on the same line.

## **3.2. Aspects of Translation Quality**

### **3.2.1. Translation Quality in General**

The main consequences that can be expected to result from the recent, unfortunate development in the audiovisual translation industry, are of course a decrease in both translation quality and the translators' working conditions. As work pace is expected to increase, professional translators lack a crucial resource for producing high-quality translations: time. This, in turn, may also result in having to move to a different line of work, making way for, for example, amateur translators or recently graduated translators, who are keen to earn some money and will settle for poor working conditions and lesser pay. One might wonder how this could work in a long run, since poor translation quality should by all means be something very visible. The issue is, however, that although translation quality can be visible, it is quite hard to critically evaluate, and the viewers themselves, many of whom are probably able to notice elements of insufficient quality, will probably not act on their observations with anything more than a comment to themselves or to anyone who is with them at the moment. The critical evaluation of translation quality is another aspect altogether, and not an easy one at that.

In her revised model of translation quality assessment, Juliane House (2015: 2–63) defines an adequate translation to be pragmatically and semantically equivalent to the source language text. She also points out that translation is largely affected by many extra-linguistic aspects. In the scope of this thesis on the translation of cultural references in particular, I think that the most important aspects that House mentions as examples of these extra-linguistic elements are "the extra-linguistic world which is 'cut up' in different ways by source and target languages", "the translator's workplace conditions", and "the translator's knowledge, expertise, ethical stance and attitudinal profiles as well as her subjective theory of translation" (2015: 2). These three are very

much in the heart of what I think is required to produce a high-quality translation for a series that is, from a Finnish point of view at least, set in a very distant time and place. The distance results in the world of *Outlander* inevitably having to be portrayed differently in the target language compared to the source language, as it can be impossible for a Finnish viewer to understand it otherwise. The translator's workplace conditions as well as knowledge and expertise are something that I have already mentioned previously and should always be considered when analyzing audiovisual translations, especially as a result from the current situation in the field.

However, House (2015: 142–143) finds it important to make a clear distinction between linguistically based analysis and social evaluation:

In translation quality assessment it is important to be maximally aware of the difference between (scientifically based) analysis and (social) judgement in evaluating a translation, in other words there is a difference between comparing textual profiles, describing and explaining differences established in the analysis and evaluating the quality of translation. (House 2015: 142)

She explains that a functional-linguistic approach alone does not entail having the power to evaluate the goodness of a translation, but that it provides foundation for social evaluative judgement, which is what is required for such evaluation. She emphasizes that these two should not be confused with each other and that while social factors usually have a far greater influence compared to linguistic matters or the skills of the translator, a linguistic-textual analysis and comparison still have a higher relevance in the evaluation of a translation; social factors by themselves are secondary. The point that she is making is that translation evaluation needs both of these aspects:

In translation, we need both. Judging without analysing is irresponsible, and analysing without judging is pointless. However, we must also concede that while judging is easy, understanding is infinitely more complex. (House 2015: 142–143)

Kristiina Abdallah (2008: 275–276) discusses the evaluation of translations as well and warns us not to get caught up in criticizing the subtitles without considering the reasons behind poor subtitle quality. She argues that the traditional focus on product quality often excessively concentrates on criticizing the translator's skills and focuses only on the translator's responsibilities, leaving little consideration for the

translator's rights. Abdallah believes that translators' poor working conditions are often ignored when laughing at translation errors. This is probably very true especially considering viewers who know the source language and therefore easily notice obvious errors but who are not necessarily aware of or do not think to consider the working conditions in a field that they themselves are not working in. Abdallah discusses the current situation in the field of audiovisual translation and argues that because of outsourcing translation services, the translation process itself now has more parties, which ultimately results in more varied views on the concept of quality. She argues that these structural changes make product-oriented quality assessment problematic, and quality should, instead, be evaluated more holistically.

Abdallah (2008, 282–284) also points out that overall, the whole concept of quality is, in fact, surprisingly ambiguous and that she has been unable to find any univocal definition on it. Nevertheless, she emphasizes that quality should be observed in three different dimensions: *product quality*, *process quality*, and *social quality*. She especially emphasizes that special attention should be paid to process quality, that is, how the translation is produced and social quality, that is, what the circumstances around producing the translation are, which both affect the product quality. She notes that people probably usually only concentrate on the product quality because that is the only one of these dimensions that the viewer sees. This makes sense; a final product is visible and easy to judge. However, while I agree that we should always keep these other two dimensions of quality in mind when evaluating product quality, I do believe that traditional product quality evaluation can shed light on the quality in the other dimensions as well and that it can thus be beneficial in further analyzing the underlying issues in the stages of process and social quality. In other words, I think that what she is saying works in both ways. It is easy to judge based on the product, but it is often the only aspect that we can judge unless we have a chance to, say, interview all the translators and managers in a translation company.

I have chosen a product oriented approach in this thesis, but I hope that by discussing aspects related to product quality, I have managed to give the reader some insight into the issues currently at work in the field of audiovisual translation and that the reader would keep in mind that there is always a reason for an error in a subtitle. This reason might be the lack of time or resources – translators are not always provided with a script, for example, and sometimes they might be provided with that but not

with the audiovisual content itself. The reason might also be due to bad working conditions, or it might be due to the translator's skills as well.

### 3.2.2. The FAR Model

Jan Pedersen (2017: 210–224) also discusses quality in translations and he, too, points out that it usually means different things to different people in different positions in the translation process: management associates it with work flow, professionals with the balance between input and efficiency, and academics with equivalence and language use. As an academic himself, Pedersen is interested in the quality of the translated product in particular. He points out that there seems to be no generalized model for assessing the quality of interlingual subtitles as a translation product, and for that purpose, he introduces the FAR model. I will utilize the FAR model in this thesis since as mentioned, I will be concentrating on product quality. Pedersen explains:

The FAR model assesses subtitle quality in three areas: Functional equivalence (do the subtitles convey speaker meaning?); Acceptability (do the subtitles sound correct and natural in the target language?); and Readability (can the subtitles be read in a fluent and non-intrusive way?). (Pedersen 2017, 210)

In the scope of this thesis, as I am especially concentrating on the translation of culture specific elements, I will mostly focus on equivalence. Equivalence has probably been one of the most commonly discussed terms in translation studies throughout the years, and there have been many variations of it. As Alice Leal (2012: 39) says: “Indeed, the question of equivalence is as old as translation practice itself.” As just few examples of different types of equivalence, she mentions dynamic, formal, functional, pragmatic, textual, semantic, and stylistic equivalence. Pedersen (2017, 218–220) himself considers pragmatic equivalence to be the best form of equivalence in subtitling meaning that ideally, both what is being said and the meaning behind it, but especially the meaning, should be evident in a subtitle. Pedersen connects this concept of equivalence that he uses in this model to Gideon Toury's concept of *adequacy*. Toury (2012: 69–70) defines adequacy as “constituting a representation in that language/culture of a text already existing in some other language, belonging to a different culture and occupying a definable position within it”. In other words, a

translation is adequate when it follows the norms of the source text. Pedersen (2017: 218) argues that in subtitling, the meaning is usually more important than what is actually being said and that translating only the meaning can, therefore, be considered standard subtitling practice. An example of this could be something that is too long to be translated into a subtitle and is thus expressed in a different, shorter manner, while still holding the same meaning. However, Pedersen (2017: 218) explains that if neither is conveyed, or if what is being said is evident but the meaning is left unclear, an error occurs.

The FAR model (2017: 217) focuses on these translation errors and their classification according to their severity. As a part of the model, Pedersen also introduces a penalty point system that allows the model to be used for feedback and teaching. This aspect of the model, however, is rather irrelevant in my thesis, since I simply focus on describing the quality of the subtitles. Otherwise, the error system can be used in my thesis as well since it allows me to determine the severity of the translation errors in my research material. Pedersen classifies the errors into *minor*, *standard* and *serious*:

Thus, minor errors might go unnoticed, and only break the illusion if the viewers are attentive. Standard errors are those that are likely to break the contract [of illusion] and ruin the subtitle for most viewers. Serious errors may affect their comprehension not only of that subtitle, but also of the following one(s), either because of misinformation, or by being so blatant that it takes a while for the user to let go of it and resume automated reading of subtitles.  
(Pedersen 2017, 217)

By “contract”, Pedersen (2017: 215) refers to a *contract of illusion*, which he uses to describe the relationship between interlingual subtitles and the viewers. This relates to something that we discussed earlier with the subtitling conventions: one characteristic of a good subtitle is such that the viewer does not actively notice that they are reading subtitles, but instead feels like they are receiving the actual dialogue. In other words, breaking the contract means that the illusion is broken, and the viewer becomes distracted by the subtitles.

Considering the errors themselves, Pedersen (2017: 217) explains that minor semantic equivalence errors are mainly lexical errors that have no considerable impact on the plot. Standard errors include plot-related utterances that are left out in the subtitle or errors that do not entirely change the meaning, even though it might be

conveyed somewhat differently. A serious error, on the other hand, results in the viewer not understanding what is being said, and this would affect the understanding of the following subtitles as well. In addition to these semantic errors, Pedersen also mentions stylistic errors, which he considers less severe than semantic errors. This is due to the fact that they do not tend to cause misunderstandings but include language use that is not entirely in tune with the original, such as incorrect use of register.

Considering the other two categories in the FAR model, Pedersen (2017, 220–221) explains that readability includes elements such as segmentation, reading speed, and line length, which we have already discussed previously with the subtitling conventions. Acceptability, on the other hand, is again Toury's term, and he (2012: 69–70) defines it as “the production of a text in a particular culture/language which is designed to occupy a certain position, or fill a certain slot, in the host culture”. In other words, it refers to the subtitle being translated following the target language norms. Pedersen (2017: 220–221) explains that errors in acceptability cause the subtitle to sound foreign or unnatural, and he divides these errors into *grammar errors*, *spelling errors*, and *errors of idiomaticity*, which can be minor, standard or serious. He says that minor grammar errors merely cause annoyance whereas serious grammar errors can affect the understanding of the subtitle. Between these two are standard grammar errors. Minor spelling errors are described as any spelling errors, standard spelling errors as errors that change the meaning, and serious errors as something that cause the viewer to be unable to read the word. Idiomaticity errors, on the other hand, Pedersen explains to be a result of unnatural use of language, which is usually caused by source text interference. This, in turn, if serious enough, might result in an equivalence error as well.

Pedersen (2017, 224) points out that the FAR model is subjective and fuzzy considering that assessing the severity of the errors can be rather difficult. There can obviously be different views on, for example, whether an error in a subtitle is minor or standard. It is, therefore, essential to keep in mind that my interpretations in the analysis section are thus also subjective, and it is perfectly possible that someone else might consider some errors differently. It is, nevertheless, important to pay attention to different types of errors while analyzing product quality as they might shed light to problematic areas in subtitle production, and the severity of the errors can help pinpoint issues that originate from external factors.

### 3.2.3. Extralinguistic Cultural References

I am also utilizing another book by Jan Pedersen (2011) in which he examines a translation feature well suited for analyzing this particular series. He calls this feature Extralinguistic Cultural References (ECRs). This term is quite closely related to the term *realia*, which Ritva Leppihalme (2016: 126–130) explains to be an often-used term in translation studies which refers to such concepts in the source culture that are not present in the target culture. She discusses the problematic issue of translating these realia that are very connected to their local and temporal surroundings and that create local nuances that cannot necessarily be recreated in the target culture translation. Another similar term is *irrealia*. Even though *Outlander* is very much connected to the real world and features important historical events, it is, nevertheless, a fantasy series as well as it entails time travel and fictional places, for example. Mika Loponen (2009: 167) introduces the term *irrealia* as a fictional world counterpart to the term *realia*: "From the translation point of view, studying fictional worlds as semiotic constructions creates the need for a specific set of fictional *realia* – non-existing *realia* tied to a fictional setting, whose effect is to define and determine the fictional cultural, geographical and historical settings – thus *irrealia*".

In this thesis, however, I am specifically concentrating on Pedersen's (2011: 44) idea of Extralinguistic Cultural References, which he defines as "references to people, places, customs, institutions, food etc. that are specific to a certain culture, and which you may not know even if you know the language in question". Pedersen explains that his focus on them is a result from his earlier studies, where he noticed that the treatment of these ECRs was extremely varied and reflecting of the translator's style. As we will later see, this is extremely relevant for the thesis at hand.

According to Pedersen (2011: 48–51), the majority of ECRs that we see are proper names referring to people, places or institutions. He also explains that while it might often be difficult to decide whether something should be considered an ECR, the revealing question is "Is the linguistic expression in itself transparent enough to enable someone to access its referent without cultural knowledge?" (2011: 48). If the answer is *no*, the term or phrase in question can be considered an ECR. He does note, however, that the guidelines that he provides do leave room for interpretation, and grey areas are thus inevitable. This is good to keep in mind as I later attempt to utilize this model in practice as well. Pedersen (2011: 51) also emphasizes that it is crucial to

realize “the difference between a linguistic expression and its referent, as this may be altered (and indeed lost) in translation.” So, an ECR always refers to the linguistic expression used to refer to the referent, which itself Pedersen (2011: 51) calls “referent of an ECR” or “ECR referent”.

Pedersen (2011: 51–56) discusses a lot about the properties of proper names and the problems that they might cause in translation, but in this model, he simply views proper names as a continuum with expressions that carry little or no sense and such that carry a lot of sense. I have also dealt with the translation of proper names in my Bachelor’s thesis (Lassila 2016), so I will not get into that matter too much here. However, as *Outlander* belongs to the category of fantasy, it should be noted that there are often proper names that carry a meaning, and such names might call for translation in order to maintain the meaning and carry it on to the target language reader as well – or in this case, to the viewer.

Pedersen (2011: 58–60) divides the ECRs into domains, twelve most common of which he finds are *weights and measures*, *proper names* (divided into personal names, geographical names, institutional names, and brand names), *professional titles*, *food and beverages*, *literature*, *government*, *entertainment*, *education*, *sports*, *currency*, *technical material*, and *other*. He notes that some of the domains are overlapping and mentions multifunctional ECRs that belong to various domains on various levels and embedded ECRs that are nested in another ECR. These are good examples of factors that can result in the translation analysis to be quite subjective. Considering this thesis, the most central of these twelve domains are proper names, more specifically, personal names and geographical names (or *place names* as I have called them in the analysis section as that is a broader, more appropriate concept here) and professional titles (which I will refer to simply as *titles*).

Pedersen (2011: 76–103) uses six main categories to discuss translation strategies used with ECRs. He uses *retention* to refer to a strategy where the ECR can either be left completely unchanged, be highlighted with italics or quotations, or it can be slightly altered for the target language audience by, for example, changing the spelling. An example of this in *Outlander* could be a Gaelic term that is left as it is in the translation. *Specification*, on the other hand, refers to adding information. An example could be including some additional information with a name of a British ruler in the translation in order to make it easier for foreign viewers to know who is referred to. *Direct translation* refers to translating the ECR without any semantic alteration.

For example, a place name that consists of general nouns such as *the Highlands* can be directly translated. *Generalization* means making the translation less specific. As this is an opposite approach to *specification*, an example could be using a general term of a ruler in the translation instead of the ruler's name, for example, "kuningas" [the king]. *Substitution* refers to replacing the ECR with another ECR from the source language or the target language. For example, changing a Scottish term to a term that is typical of a Finnish dialect could be considered substitution. *Omission*, of course, simply means leaving the ECR out altogether. Finally, Pedersen mentions *official equivalent*, which means using an existing translation that is in common use or officially decided upon. An example of this could be a title that has its Finnish official equivalent. Pedersen mentions that various strategies can be used simultaneously but also emphasizes that the translator might not be consciously aware of combining or even using these strategies. This is also very important to keep in mind as we look at the possible translation strategies used in the *Outlander* subtitles.

Next, Pedersen (2011: 105–120) discusses seven parameters that affect the translator's decisions in using the translation strategies mentioned above: *transculturality*, that is, the familiarity of the ECR to both the source text and target text audiences; *extratextuality*, that is, does the ECR only exist inside the source text or also outside it; *centrality*, that is, the importance of the ECR; *polysemiotics*, that is, the interaction between different elements, for example, dialogue, sound and action; *media-specific constraints*, that is, the subtitling conventions; *co-text*, that is, whether the ECR has been mentioned in the text before; and *subtitling situation* including, for example, genre, style and register of the text as well as various production related aspects, the target language audience, and deadlines. As it is possible that a translator is unaware of using any translation strategies mentioned, it is also possible that they might not consider all possible parameters either. As is the case with this analysis of the *Outlander* subtitles, it can be impossible to know the underlying strategies and methods used for producing subtitles. Nevertheless, I believe that being aware of these various strategies and parameters will make our task in the analysis of these subtitles a little easier.

## 4. Used Methods

### 4.1. Choosing a Series

I aimed to choose a relatively new series for the analysis, so that the subtitles would somewhat reflect the current practices that the streaming services use for providing audiovisual translations. Since the idea is to compare the three most popular international streaming services, Netflix, Viaplay, and HBO Nordic, it was, of course, also essential that the series would be available in all of them. Thus, I decided to analyze the Finnish subtitles of the popular *Outlander* series, which provides many interesting aspects for study. It takes place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and it features a large amount of terminology from Scottish Gaelic as well as many other cultural aspects that are most likely challenging considering their translation and would require consistent conventions between episodes.

*Outlander* is a popular fantasy and drama series that is based on a book series by the same name which is written by Diana Gabaldon. It is a series filled with time travel, drama, history, and romance. It follows the story of Claire, a 27-year-old Englishwoman who has recently returned from World War II, where she worked as a combat nurse. Together with her husband, Frank Randall, they try to find their way back to a normal, peaceful life by going on a second honeymoon to Scotland. It happens to be the time of Samhain festivities, and they come across a place called Craigh na Dun, a mysterious circle of standing stones, where they witness a strange ritual. Claire later returns to Craigh na Dun alone, and is intrigued by a mysterious humming that seems to emanate from the stones. As she touches the largest stone in the middle of the circle, it sends her back 200 years in time, and she suddenly finds herself in the 1743 Scottish Highlands.

Unfortunately, she runs right into the middle of a fight between a group of Highlanders and some English soldiers and comes across one of these soldiers, who looks exactly like her husband Frank. However, it is not Frank but his extremely similar-looking ancestor, Jonathan “Black Jack” Randall, Captain of the English soldiers. The encounter is anything but pleasant but fortunately, Claire is rescued by the Highlanders, who turn out to be members of clan MacKenzie. Among them is an injured young man, James (Jamie) Fraser, who is the other main character in this series. Jamie is only in his early twenties, but due to unfortunate circumstances with

Black Jack himself, Jamie is a wanted man and currently being protected by his relatives in clan MacKenzie. Claire tends to his wounds, but the Highlanders are rather suspicious of this Englishwoman who has suddenly appeared in the middle of the fight, and they take her to Castle Leoch to meet Colum MacKenzie, Laird of the clan. The laird suspects that Claire might be an English spy and instead of letting her go, he forces Claire to stay at Castle Leoch and work as a healer. During her stay at the castle, she learns that she can return to her own time through the standing stones at Craigh na Dun, but she has no luck in trying to reach them. As a result, Claire has to accustom herself to a life in the Highlands, where a Jacobite army is slowly rising to fight back the English.

After another unpleasant encounter with the vile and sadistic Black Jack Randall, Claire has to marry Jamie in order to become Scottish and to stay out of reach of Black Jack and the English. After marrying Jamie and eventually leaving Castle Leoch, Claire finally confesses her true identity to Jamie, who then takes Claire back to the standing stones, so that she can return home. However, realizing that she has fallen in love with Jamie, Claire no longer wants to return to her previous life and decides to stay, but life in the Scottish Highlands can prove very dangerous.

As the series is set in the 18<sup>th</sup> century Scotland, the world is quite different from today's world. Many historical events are taking place, events that are important in the British history as they determine the future of the Scots. In addition, the culture in the Scottish Highlands is very unique. The Scots are living a rather separate life from the rest of the British, and this is seen as a threat, which results in the English trying to get a hold of the wild Highlands. While the Scots do speak English, they tend to do it with a heavy Scottish accent and with many Scottish words. Moreover, they are often not speaking English at all but Scottish Gaelic instead, which is the closest language to them, that is, the one that they often feel most comfortable using. Moreover, they tend to use it whenever Claire is with them as a way of excluding her from the conversations, because as I mentioned, she is thought to be an English spy. Scottish Gaelic is a Celtic language which according to a 2011 census, only has around 87,000 speakers, which is less than two percent of the population (Scotland's Census, 2015). In other words, most of the *Outlander* viewers most likely have a very similar experience as Claire as they are often unable to understand what the Scottish clansmen are saying.

## 4.2. Conducting the Analysis

I have conducted this study through analyzing the research material in a qualitative manner by examining and comparing the Finnish subtitles in Netflix, Viaplay and HBO Nordic. The first step was to subscribe to all three streaming services that I would examine, so that I would get access to the *Outlander* series. At the time of my analysis, Viaplay and HBO Nordic both had the first two seasons of *Outlander* in their collections, whereas Netflix had all three seasons that had already aired in Finnish television at that point as well. However, in the scope of this thesis, multiple seasons would be rather excessive. Therefore, I decided to exclude seasons two and three from this study altogether and concentrate on the first season, which consists of sixteen approximately hour-long episodes.

The second stage in the analysis was to find any mention of the translators or translation companies used for producing the subtitles for each episode. My aim was to discover whether the translator is visible, whether the three streaming services use the same subtitles or acquire them from different subtitle providers, and whether the translator stays the same between episodes. The latter would, of course, be highly beneficial considering the consistency of, for example, the terms and style used in the subtitles between episodes. Usually, the subtitle provider is shown at the end of the episodes, but I also searched through the series and episode descriptions as well as the credits at the beginning of the episodes. This ensured that I could be certain whether the information was mentioned or not.

With the analysis of the subtitles themselves, I have focused especially on the quality and consistency of the translation choices for various names, terms, and expressions. In addition, I have gathered the most obvious and major readability and acceptability related issues, but the extensive analysis of these two aspects are beyond the scope of this thesis. In order to examine the various translation choices, I watched every episode of the first season of *Outlander* with the Finnish subtitles. Moreover, I always had three devices at my disposal, so that I would be able to see the subtitles in all three streaming services simultaneously. Whenever I came across a specific term, cultural reference or translation issue, I would write down all the translation choices used in the different streaming services and episodes and consider whether they could be considered ECRs and what the translation strategies and the parameters behind them could be. In case of errors, I would consider whether the errors are semantic or

stylistic as well as the severity of the errors. I have divided cultural references into five main categories: *the Gaelic language, the Scottish dialect, personal names, place names, and titles*. After analyzing the translations of these cultural references, I have discussed the readability and acceptability of the subtitles in all three streaming services.

The translation units that I have chosen are most often single terms, but they can also be names or expressions that are constituted by a longer phrase. I have arranged both the translation units and the translation providers into various tables that each include the episodes marked “Episode 1”, “Episode 2” etc. or abbreviations “ep1”, “ep2” and so forth. The tables that concern the translation providers include any possible information given on the translation providers in every episode. If no information is provided, I have marked it with “–”. For the translation units, there are separate columns or rows for the translations in Netflix, Viaplay, and HBO Nordic (shortened into “HBO”). If the term or expression does not appear in the subtitles at that moment, I have marked it in the table using “–”, and if the particular term or expression does not appear in the episode at all, I have used “∅” in the table.

## **5. Analysis**

### **5.1. Where do the subtitles come from?**

As mentioned, one of the first steps in this analysis was to learn where the subtitles come from. Through watching the episodes, it is clear that all three streaming services use different subtitle providers. Unfortunately, however, only Viaplay and HBO Nordic show any information on the source of the audiovisual translations. Netflix appears to have no mention of the names of any translators or a translation company in any of the episodes. Nevertheless, since the Netflix subtitles are clearly different to the ones used in Viaplay and HBO Nordic, it is clear that Netflix has used another subtitle provider, but unfortunately, we do not know who or what company that might be. Based on the fact that there are terms and expressions which have varying translations in the subtitles, we could assume that the audiovisual translation used in Netflix for the season is done by multiple translators, as is the case with Viaplay and HBO Nordic as well.

Although there is definitely more information given on the subtitle providers in Viaplay and HBO Nordic, it seems to be somewhat problematic as well. In Viaplay, the subtitles for every episode in *Outlander*'s first season are acquired from Ordiovision, on which, however, I was unable to find much information. The address mentioned in the episodes, [www.ordiovision.com](http://www.ordiovision.com), leads to a website that appears to have no information on said company. Another issue is that altogether, only three translators are mentioned in the first season. In almost half the episodes, on the other hand, only the website for Ordiovision is mentioned (See Table 1 for details). Therefore, it is unclear whether there are actually more than three translators, or if the translator in all episodes is one of these three.

<b>Episode 1</b>	Håkan Mäkelä <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 9</b>	Sami Siitojoki <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 2</b>	Håkan Mäkelä <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 10</b>	Sami Siitojoki <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 3</b>	Sami Siitojoki <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 11</b>	Mika Wainonen <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 4</b>	Sami Siitojoki <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 12</b>	Mika Wainonen <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 5</b>	Sami Siitojoki <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 13</b>	<a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 6</b>	<a href="http://ordiovision.com">ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 14</b>	<a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 7</b>	<a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 15</b>	<a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>
<b>Episode 8</b>	Sami Siitojoki <a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>	<b>Episode 16</b>	<a href="http://www.ordiovision.com">www.ordiovision.com</a>

**Table 1** Subtitles used in Viaplay for the first season of *Outlander*

HBO Nordic, on the other hand, uses one of the large multinational corporations that I have mentioned previously in this thesis, SDI Media, as its translation provider. Here, too, the translators vary between episodes, but altogether seven translators are mentioned. However, the information provided in HBO Nordic is also incomplete (See Table 2 for details), as there are altogether three episodes where the translator has been left unmentioned. The translation company is left unmentioned as well, but I think it would make more sense to assume that SDI Media has been used in these as well than that they had suddenly used a different company altogether. Of course, anything is possible. Nevertheless, I think that the main issue is the same as in Viaplay: we cannot know if there are more translators and how many or if it is always one of these that are mentioned.

<b>Episode 1</b>	Elina Land www.sdimedia.com	<b>Episode 9</b>	Sonja Lahdenranta www.sdimedia.com
<b>Episode 2</b>	Elina Land www.sdimedia.com	<b>Episode 10</b>	Juha Arola www.sdimedia.com
<b>Episode 3</b>	Ilkka Äärelä www.sdimedia.com	<b>Episode 11</b>	Petri Hautala www.sdimedia.com
<b>Episode 4</b>	Ilkka Äärelä www.sdimedia.com	<b>Episode 12</b>	Petri Hautala www.sdimedia.com
<b>Episode 5</b>	–	<b>Episode 13</b>	Anu Miettinen www.sdimedia.com
<b>Episode 6</b>	–	<b>Episode 14</b>	Anu Miettinen www.sdimedia.com
<b>Episode 7</b>	Petri Hautala www.sdimedia.com	<b>Episode 15</b>	–
<b>Episode 8</b>	Juha Arola www.sdimedia.com	<b>Episode 16</b>	Sonja Lahdenranta www.sdimedia.com

**Table 2** Subtitles used in HBO Nordic for the first season of *Outlander*

## 5.2. Cultural References

### 5.2.1. The Gaelic Language

The first season of *Outlander* focuses greatly on the tension between the English and the Scottish, but the main focus is on Claire and her unexpected life among the Scots. She is mainly surrounded by Scottish characters, and while English is used most of the time, the Scots also very often use Gaelic. It is an important cultural aspect in the series, and as we can see, the approaches to its translation vary in the subtitles. I would not consider the Gaelic terms and expressions ECRs, however, as the main issue with the Gaelic language is that the viewer and most likely the translators themselves are probably unable to understand the language to begin with.

Claire’s understanding of Gaelic is rather non-existent. She often finds herself wondering what the others are saying about her, and the clansmen’s use of Gaelic makes her feel like an outsider, which most likely is a motive for the suspicious Scots. She also often asks Jamie to explain some expressions. As the main character, whose story the viewers are following, is unable to understand Gaelic, it makes sense that the viewer would also be left in the dark as to what the characters are saying. As a result, the viewer can identify with Claire. Sometimes in fantasy series, if a foreign language or an invented language is spoken, the makers of the series add English subtitles to those scenes. A good example of this is the Dothraki language spoken in *Game of Thrones*.

Thrones. There are no Finnish subtitles on the screen, when Dothraki is spoken, but there are English subtitles. I will not speculate the reasoning behind omitting Finnish subtitles in these situations, however, as this is not the case in *Outlander*. There are no English subtitles in any of the three services, and for the most part, there are no Finnish subtitles, either. Omission is overwhelmingly the most used strategy when it comes to these Gaelic terms and expressions.

The most frequently used Gaelic term in this season is probably the term *sassenach*. It is an important term in the series overall, which is quite evident considering that it is basically the name of the series. When mentioned for the first time, back in Claire's own time, the term is explained to mean *English*, or at worst, *outlander*. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Highlands, this term is constantly used to refer to Claire, often not exactly as a compliment. The clansmen suspect Claire to be a *sassenach* spy, and they make it quite evident that Claire is not welcome in their lands. However, the term is mostly used by Jamie in a very opposite way. He calls Claire *sassenach* from the first episode onwards and never uses it in anything less than a friendly manner. With Jamie, it is more a sign of affection, and as they fall in love with each other, the affection behind the term is more and more evident.

As we can see in Table 3, retention is the most frequently used translation strategy in all three streaming services, which makes sense considering centrality and co-text. This is an important term, and it is not only mentioned multiple times, but its meaning has been discussed already in the very first episode. Claire knows what it means and so do the viewers. Nevertheless, there is some variation, which mostly occurs when someone other than Jamie is referring to Claire, but there are some rather interesting translation strategies used for Jamie's utterances of *sassenach* as well.

In episode five, for example, *sassenach* never appears in the Netflix subtitles. It is always translated into something else, even when Jamie is addressing Claire, and the viewers might find it rather strange to suddenly see Jamie address Claire as "englantilainen", which does not really declare affection. We do not have any information on the Netflix translation, but it seems possible that the translator has changed at this point, especially since similar instances can be seen in HBO Nordic as well. In episode thirteen, for example, *sassenach* is always translated into "englantilainen" in HBO Nordic, and on this occasion, too, even when it is Jamie addressing Claire. As we can see in Table 2, the translator has changed again in this episode: the translator Anu Miettinen appears for the first time. The parameters behind

these translation strategies might well be connected to the subtitling situation and production related aspects. There might have suddenly been a new translator, who has not had the opportunity to watch the previous episodes and might not even quite know what the series is about. While it makes sense for the clansmen to refer to the English as “englantilainen” [English] or “anglosaksi” [Anglo-Saxon], I definitely think that Jamie calling Claire “englantilainen” can be considered an error. I would consider this a standard semantic error as it might break the illusion for the viewers as well as affect the plot as it can cause misunderstandings about the relationship between Claire and Jamie.

The different translation strategies used in episode fourteen, “sassenach-nainen” [sassenach woman], brittityttö [British girl], and englannitar [English lady] are due to the fact that a different version of *sassenach* was used: *sassenach lady*. This is a rather different way of referring to Claire and direct translation seems like an appropriate strategy. Considering stylistic aspects, I could argue that “englannitar” is the most appropriate translation for *sassenach lady*. “Sassenach-nainen” and “brittityttö” both sound somewhat unnatural and referring to the 27-year-old Claire as “tyttö” [girl] seems rather unfitting – especially in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

	<b>Netflix</b>	<b>Viaplay</b>	<b>HBO</b>
<b>ep1</b>	sassenach	sassenach	sassenach
<b>ep2</b>	sassenach	englantilainen	englantilainen
<b>ep3</b>	sassenach	sassenach	sassenach
<b>ep4</b>	sassenach	sassenach	sassenach
<b>ep5</b>	englantilais- / anglosaksi, englantilainen	sassenach	– / sassenach
<b>ep6</b>	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep7</b>	sassenach	– / englantilaisnainen	– / tyttö
<b>ep8</b>	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep9</b>	sassenach	sassenach	sassenach
<b>ep10</b>	sassenach	sassenach	sassenach
<b>ep11</b>	sassenach	sassenach	– / sassenach

<b>ep12</b>	sassenach / –	sassenach / –	sassenach / –
<b>ep13</b>	sassenach	englantilainen / sassenach	englantilainen
<b>ep14</b>	sassenach(-nainen) / sassenach	– / sassenach	britti(tyttö) / – / englannitar
<b>ep15</b>	sassenach	–	–
<b>ep16</b>	sassenach	sassenach	sassenach

**Table 3** Finnish translations for the term *sassenach* in *Outlander*

There is another phrase that Jamie uses a couple of times to address Claire in an affectionate way: *mo nighean donn*. This phrase first occurs in episode seven, and Jamie explains that it means “my brown-haired lass”. As with most of the Gaelic language, omission is used in all three streaming services in this episode. Viewers can hear the Gaelic and Claire’s question about the meaning behind it. In episodes ten, eleven and fifteen however, retention has been used in the Netflix translation, and the Gaelic phrase is shown in the Finnish subtitles. Co-text might be an affecting parameter here as the phrase has been mentioned before, and the viewers along with Claire know what it means. However, it would have been better, if the viewer could have seen the phrase the first time that it was mentioned, because now there is a possibility that the viewer is unable to recognize the phrase in a written form.

Although omission and occasional retention seem to be the most commonly used translation strategies for the Gaelic language, there are also some incidents that suggest that the translators might have sometimes had difficulties telling whether a character is speaking Gaelic or just English with a thick Scottish accent. Indeed, the Gaelic and English are often completely intertwined, which makes it difficult to notice where one language might end and another begin. Nevertheless, I think that there are a few incidents where an error occurs.

In episode nine, Jamie is very frustrated, and he exclaims something in Gaelic. In HBO Nordic, this has been translated into “Hyvä on sitten.” [All right then.] It might perhaps be possible that the translator has thought it to be English, since it could very distantly sound something like “All right.” While an angry *all right* could very well be what Jamie is saying and thus, the translation choice would fit the situation quite well, Claire or the viewers do not know that this is the case. It is important to understand that Gaelic is the closest language to the Scots and Jamie and that frustrated Jamie

would most likely exclaim something in Gaelic which both Claire and viewers are unable to understand. Instead, the tone in the exclamation is quite easy to grasp. By now, the viewer should be used to the fact that Jamie expresses things in Gaelic in situations such as this. I would consider this a stylistic error in case that the Gaelic term also means something in the lines of *all right*, but if not, it would constitute a minor semantic error, since the translation would be incorrect as well, but the viewers might not notice an error, since they might not realize that Jamie is speaking Gaelic.

There is a similar situation in episode ten. Again, Jamie seems to say something in Gaelic, and this time, too, it seems to be something very natural for him to say in his own language. The scene is extremely stressful and sad; Claire is holding a dead baby in her arms. She has found the baby abandoned in the forest and naturally, she is feeling rather devastated. The event is one of many that portray the various superstitions that people at that time had, and Claire, being from a more modern time, does not understand or accept them. Jamie tries to comfort her and clearly asks her to give the baby to him. He reaches out his hands and says something in Gaelic. Claire seems hesitant, and Jamie says “Come.”, after which he takes the baby. The translator in HBO Nordic is the only one who appears to have realized that the term is clearly in Gaelic and used the usual translation strategy: omission. However, in the Netflix subtitles, the term is translated into “näytä” [show] and in the Viaplay subtitles, it appears as “anna” [give]. I believe that the translation strategies used here are direct translation in Netflix and substitution in Viaplay. The reason for this is that the word Jamie expresses distantly sounds like “show”, so the translators might have thought that to be what Jamie uttered. After doing some research, I suspect that the word he is really saying is *seo*, which means “here”, so there really is no equivalence error here. Instead, I would say that this is again more of a stylistic error. It causes no misunderstandings, but the language use is not entirely in tune with the original, and the viewer might notice that Jamie is in fact speaking Gaelic.

Again, a similar situation occurs in episode twelve. There is a rather hilarious scene, where Claire and Jamie are spending time in Jamie’s home castle, Lallybroch. Jamie is a wanted man, and the sudden appearance of English soldiers in Lallybroch results in a dangerous situation. Jamie is forced to hide in a nearby river, which is full of freezing cold water. After he is finally able to surface again, it is quite easy to guess the general meaning behind the Gaelic word that he shouts out angrily. Omission would work well since the viewers can probably sense the tone in Jamie’s voice in this

situation, but this translation strategy is only used in the HBO Nordic subtitles. In Netflix, the word has been translated into “Paskat!” [Shit!] and in Viaplay, “Saamari!” [Damn!]. Again, I would consider this a stylistic error. The Gaelic language is supposed to be something that neither Claire or the viewer understands, but both are perfectly capable of guessing that Jamie is swearing, and at this point in the season, the use of Gaelic can definitely be expected from Jamie.

### **5.2.2. The Scottish Dialect**

Although the Scots use Gaelic a lot, Scottish dialect is used even more often, and the heavy Scottish accent in their English is very noticeable. Since Scottish dialect can often be something that a viewer is not familiar with, even though they might understand English, I think the Scottish terms and expressions in this series can definitely be considered ECRs. There are examples in episodes five and twelve which are similar to the last three that we discussed in the previous chapter as they demonstrate the issue of whether the Scottish dialect should be translated or not.

In episode five, there is a lot of traveling as Claire is going around the Highlands with the MacKenzie clan, working as a healer in their journey to collect rent from the farmers in MacKenzie land. As the road can be quite long and uneventful, one of the things that the clansmen like to do on their way is singing. There is a scene where the clan is riding on the road and singing with a heavy Scottish accent, and the singing is only translated in the HBO Nordic subtitles. In Netflix and Viaplay, there are no subtitles during this scene, which might, of course, be due to some external factors, which can determine that songs are to be omitted in the subtitles. This would make sense, since the opening credits of the series also features a song, which is never translated in any of the three streaming services. However, it could also be possible that the thick Scottish accent is affecting the choice of strategy here as it might be confused with Gaelic. At first, I thought that the men were singing in Gaelic as well, and it would make perfect sense but nevertheless, this is not the case. Depending on the parameter, I would either consider this a stylistic error or a minor semantic error. The first would be due to the fact that the scene includes only singing, and I see no reason to leave it out of the subtitles. The viewers can see and hear the singing, and many would probably like to know what the clansmen are singing about. The latter

would be due to the fact that even though it is possible that the viewers, too, might think that the clansmen are singing in Gaelic, there is also a chance that they might recognize that it is just a heavy Scottish accent and as a result, the illusion may be broken. Similar issue is also present in the Viaplay subtitles in episode twelve: the Gaelic language and the Scottish dialect are so intertwined that it is difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins, and there is again some English that is omitted from the subtitles.

Scottish dialect is obviously constantly present in *Outlander*, and as we determined while discussing subtitle conventions, dialect-related aspects can be kept subtle in the subtitles in order to not affect readability. If they are expressed, however, it should be done in a consistent manner. Scottish terms, such as *bonnie*, *wee*, *dinna*, *canna*, *lass(ie)*, *lad(die)*, and *ken* are used all the time in *Outlander*, but most of them are usually not translated any differently compared to more common English terms. For example, *ken* is most often approached in exactly the same way as if the character was using the term “know” and simply directly translated into “tietää” in all three streaming services. This is often the case even when a Scottish term is emphasized in some way. I would not consider these instances as errors, since it would be hard to come up with other suitable translations that would not convey a completely different tone or register, as we can later see. For example, there is a scene in episode four, where Claire, who is indeed English and, therefore, does not tend to use Scottish terms, uses the term *ken* in frustration. She is angry at a character named Dougal and uses the term to show her irritation towards the clansman:

Dougal: Now you ken my mind.

(...)

Claire: Perhaps you don't *ken* his mind.

Claire very clearly emphasizes the term in a sort of a mocking manner, but the subtitles do not convey this in any of the three streaming services.

However, as I said, this is usually the case, not always. There is an interesting example in episode six, where some of the translators have chosen to try to portray the Scottish accent and terms. There is a rather awkward situation between Dougal and a room full of English soldiers. When a character called lord Thomas asks Dougal how he should address him, Dougal answers with a thick Scottish accent, which results in

the British soldiers mocking him. They either fail to understand his strange English or pretend not to understand it in order to make Dougal feel uncomfortable. I myself had to turn on the English subtitles to help me figure out what exactly Dougal is saying, and it is something in the lines of:

Ye kin call me MacKenzie, if in it please ye, or if we're being formal, ye can call me Chief  
MacKenzie, which in matters of war and bicker leaves us ower fae each other as equals  
dinnae ye ken.

In the Netflix translation, the translator has tried to make the heavy accent visible:

Voitte kutsua MacKenzieksi, jos miellyttää, tai jos olemme muodollisia, päällikkö  
MacKenzieksi, joka sodan ja kinastelun pauloissa tekee meestä silhon tasavertaisia kuthen  
uumoilet.

This is a very interesting approach. The substitution used for the term *ken*, “uumoilla”, is used multiple times in this episode in the Netflix translation. It is a rather colorful way of saying “aavistaa” [predict]. Many of the other substitutions in the translation of this utterance appear to be characteristic of how people in Lapland would pronounce them: “meestä” (meistä) [us], “silhon” (silloin) [then], and “kuthen” (kuten) [as]. This type of substitution is an interesting approach, and the subtitling situation, namely style, register and audience, is probably the underlying parameter for a strategy like this. The English see the Scottish as northern people who speak funnily much the same way that people in Southern Finland might see people in Lapland. The difference, of course, is that there was obvious and serious tension between the English and the Scottish at that time, but I can see why this strategy has been used. Nevertheless, it is a contradictory approach, for sure; it has both positive and negative aspects to it. The scene is most of all emphasizing the fact that the English soldiers think that Dougal speaks in a funny way, and therefore, emphasizing this in the subtitles makes sense as well. On the other hand, the viewer has never seen Dougal speak like this before. Therefore, the functionality of this solution rests entirely on whether the viewer has realized that even though the subtitles have previously shown Dougal and the other clansmen speaking in quite a normal manner, they are constantly speaking in a way that is radically different to the way that the English speak and that as a result, there has constantly

been a type of a language barrier between the English and the Scottish. It is arguable, however, whether the translation strategies used in the Viaplay and HBO Nordic subtitles are more suitable.

In the Viaplay subtitles, the part with the heaviest accent is omitted altogether:

Sanokaa MacKenzie tai muodollisesti sotapäällikkö MacKenzie.

[Call me MacKenzie or formally, War Chief MacKenzie.]

This approach is staying in tune with how the clansmen's speech has been translated earlier. It fully trusts the viewer to be aware that the mockery that follows is reasonable in the sense that Dougal is indeed speaking very, very differently compared to the English. The translator for the HBO Nordic subtitles, on the other hand, has tried to make the accent slightly visible by choosing a passive form for the translation:

Sanokaa vaikka MacKenzie. Muodollisesti päällikkö MacKenzie. Mitä sotaan tulee, ollaan tasavertaisia.

[You can call me MacKenzie. Formally, Chief MacKenzie. As it comes to war, one can consider us equal.]

This is a sort of an in-between solution of the two extremes that have been used in the Netflix and Viaplay subtitles. I will not attempt to argue, which of these solutions is the best, since the interplay with consistency and explicitness is something that the translator often has to consider in a series such as this.

The terms *lass*, *lassie*, *lad*, and *laddie* form an exception to the general strategy of translating the Scottish terms as if they were more common English terms. Especially *lass* and *lassie* are usually translated throughout the episodes, most often on Netflix, while in the Viaplay and HBO Nordic subtitles, they are sometimes omitted from the translation. While *lad*, *laddie* and *lassie* are commonly used to describe someone younger, *lass* is used in *Outlander* practically all the time, referring to any female character regardless of factors such as age or marital status. However, the translations are almost always “tyttö” [girl], “tyttönen” [little girl] or “tytsy” [chick]. This often forms quite a stylistic error as Jamie might call Claire *tytsy* in the Netflix subtitles. This is quite uncharacteristic for Jamie considering that he is many years

younger than Claire and has a lot of respect for her. Therefore, *tytsy* is not something that I would imagine Jamie ever calling Claire in a serious situation.

Sometimes, the Scottish terms appear to cause major issues in understanding as well. For example, there is a very interesting translation error in episode four. Dougal is saying that Jamie is currently outside, because he does not want him inside the castle walls, and he of course uses the Scottish term *dinna* for “do not”. The translator in Netflix, however, is apparently unaware of this Scottish term for the expression “do not” and mistakes it for a name:

Dinna haluaa hänet seinien sisään.  
[Dinna wants him inside the walls.]

Obviously, there is no character named Dinna in *Outlander*, and this is definitely a more major error. I would consider this a serious semantic error, because it is most likely so blatant that it might take a while for the viewer to resume automated reading. The viewer will most likely wonder who Dinna is and what walls is Jamie supposed to be inside in since he is obviously outside the castle walls.

### 5.2.3. Personal Names

There is an overwhelming number of characters in *Outlander*, most of whose names are left unmentioned or are mentioned only once, and the viewers most likely forget these names as soon as the scene changes. As fiction that is, however, taking place in the real world, most of the personal names are quite ordinary such as Claire or Jamie, and some are real names of historical figures that we know today. Many of the personal names in this season can be considered ECRs as they require knowledge outside the name itself: Jonathan Randall, often referred to as Black Jack Randall, Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ, King James, King George, and Prince Charles, referred to as Bonnie Prince Charlie or Bonnie Stuart Prince.

Jonathan Randall is a fictional character, an English soldier whose notoriety has caused him to be known as Black Jack. Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ, on the other hand, is in fact, more of a saying than a personal name, but as it appears as a name, I decided to place it in this category. It is mainly an American saying that originates from World War II, similar to Jesus H. Christ, which is also used. Although it is quite

clear that the name is used as an exclamation of frustration, its origins can be rather ambiguous to the Finnish audience. King George refers to the current ruler at the time, King George II. King James refers to James Francis Edward Stuart known as King James III of England or King James VIII of Scotland, and Prince Charles is his son, Charles Edward Stuart. They were all key figures to the Jacobite cause, which aimed to return the British throne to the House of Stuart. Since names of rulers tended to be translated into Finnish until quite recently, these ruler names have Finnish official equivalents as well: especially Yrjö II and Jaakko III or Jaakko VIII are used, and Charles is sometimes referred to as Kaarle III based on his followers knowing him also as Charles III. The translations of these personal names can be seen in Table 4.

		<b>Black Jack (Randall)</b>	<b>Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ</b>	<b>Bonnie Prince (Charlie) / Bonnie Stuart Prince (across the water)</b>	<b>(King) James</b>	<b>(King) George</b>
<b>ep1</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Black Jack	Jeesus H. Roosevelt Kristus	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Black Jack	Jeesus H. Roosevelt Kristus	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Musta-Jaakko	(Voi) jessus sentään!	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep2</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep3</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	Jeesus H. Roosevelt Kristus	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	Kristus H. Roosevelt	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	Voi Rooseveltin pöksyt!	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep4</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	Jeesus H. Roosevelt Kristus	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	Voi hyvä luoja!	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	Voi Rooseveltin pöksyt!	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep5</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	Bonnie Prince Charlie	Jaakko	Yrjö

		<b>Black Jack (Randall)</b>	<b>Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ</b>	<b>Bonnie Prince (Charlie) / Bonnie Stuart Prince (across the water)</b>	<b>(King) James</b>	<b>(King) George</b>
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	Bonnie Prince Charlie	Jaakko	Yrjö
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	Bonnie Prince Charlie	–	Yrjö
<b>ep6</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Black Jack Randall	∅	∅	Jaakko	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Black Jack Randall	∅	∅	Jaakko	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Jack Randall	∅	∅	–	∅
<b>ep7</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep8</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Black Jack	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Musta Jack / Black Jack	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Black Jack	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep9</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Black Jack	∅	Prinssi (Charles) / Charlie-prinssi (meren takana)	James	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	–	∅	Jaakko / Stuart / Bonnie Prince Charlie (veden toisella puolen)	Jaakko	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	–	∅	Charlie / (vastarannan) prinssi	Jaakko	∅
<b>ep10</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Black Jack	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Black Jack	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Black Jack	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep11</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	Bonnie Prince Charlie	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	Bonnie Prince Charlie	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	(Kaunis) Kaarle	∅	∅
<b>ep12</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Randall	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Randall	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Randall	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep13</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep14</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	Prinssi Charlie	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	Prinssi Kaarle	∅	∅

		<b>Black Jack (Randall)</b>	<b>Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ</b>	<b>Bonnie Prince (Charlie) / Bonnie Stuart Prince (across the water)</b>	<b>(King) James</b>	<b>(King) George</b>
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	Prince Charles	∅	∅
<b>ep15</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Black Jack (Randall)	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Randall	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Musta Jaakko / –	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep16</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	Prinssi Charles / –	Kuningas Jaakko	Kuningas Yrjö
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	Prinssi Kaarle / –	Kuningas Jaakko	Kuningas Yrjö
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	Prinssi Charlie / –	Kuningas Jaakko	–

**Table 4** Finnish translations for personal names in *Outlander*

It is interesting how differently the name Black Jack has been translated in different episodes. As mentioned before, it is often important to carry a meaning behind a name in fantasy into the target language as well, but I am not sure that it is the best approach here. The name *Jack* is a perfectly normal name, and while the first part of his nickname apparently refers to his “black soul”, *Black Jack* can also be quite an easy expression to many Finns, familiar from a card game, if nothing else. On the other hand, some other perfectly normal names are translated due to the fact that they are names of rulers, so in that sense translating this name fits among some of the other ones. However, there is the issue that the character’s name is Jack Randall, which is never translated, so it might be confusing for viewers, if the same character is called both *Jack* and *Jaakko*.

In the Netflix subtitles, the translation strategy for Black Jack is always retention. In the Viaplay subtitles, retention is also used in every episode, but there is an interesting occurrence of “Musta Jack” [Black Jack] in the beginning of episode eight. “Black Jack” is otherwise used in this episode, but Black Jack is also mentioned in the “previously” section that explains what has happened in the season thus far. For that occurrence, direct translation is suddenly used in the subtitles. It could be that these previously sections are not translated by the current translator of the episode. This part of the subtitle could originate from the previous episodes with a different translator. However, the strange thing is that there is no mention of “Musta Jack” in any previous episodes. Regardless of the translator, I would consider this a minor

semantic error. As the viewer has most likely already seen the previous episodes, this is only reminding them of events that they already know, and the error might go somewhat unnoticed.

The HBO Nordic subtitles are the only ones where the nickname has completely been changed into Finnish in two episodes. In episode one, Black Jack is translated into “Musta-Jaakko” [Black-Jaakko], and in episode fifteen into “Musta Jaakko” [Black Jaakko]. It is unclear whether there have been one or two translators since the translator in episode fifteen has been left unmentioned. Then again, in episode six, the nickname has been omitted altogether in both two occurrences, and Black Jack Randall appears only as Jack Randall. The biggest issue with these translations in HBO Nordic is undoubtedly the problem with consistency. It cannot be beneficial for the viewer to have two different translations for *Black Jack*. I would probably consider this a serious semantic error, since it is something that the viewers will most probably clearly notice. Even though it is possible that the viewers can guess that the names are referring to the same character, they cannot be introduced to “Musta-Jaakko” in one episode and “Black Jack” the next.

“Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ” is something that Claire uses quite often in situations where she is feeling angry or frustrated. Regardless of the translation strategy, it would probably be ideal that the translation would stay the same throughout the episodes. However, as we can see, the translations vary. In the Netflix subtitles, the translation is always the same, and the strategy used is retention. In Viaplay, the translations are different in all three episodes, which is interesting considering that there are only two translators (See Table 1). The translator in episode one has used retention and kept the original form. The translator in episodes three and four, on the other hand, has used two completely different translation strategies for some reason. In episode three, he has only slightly altered the original name into “Kristus H. Roosevelt” [Christ H. Roosevelt] probably to make the expression a little shorter and natural, but in episode four, he has chosen a completely different approach. Here, generalization is used; he has changed the name into a more general exclamation: “Voi hyvä luoja!” [Oh my god!]. This is probably due to transculturality: as mentioned before, this source language expression is most likely unfamiliar to many Finns. It is unclear, however, why he has chosen two so very different translation strategies. It might be that he simply forgot having already translated the expression in the previous

episode, or perhaps there has been some external influence, and the subtitling situation has become an affecting parameter as a result.

In the HBO Nordic subtitles, the situation is similar: there are two translators, one in episode one and another in episodes three and four. However, here the translations of the second translator stay the same, although it is different to the first translator's version. The translator in episode one has used generalization much the same way that the translator in Viaplay has done for episode four: the name is changed into an exclamation “(Voi) jessus sentään!” [(Oh) for goodness' sake!]. The translation strategy in episodes three and four is similar but has aspects of retention as well. The name *Roosevelt* is kept in the Finnish version, but the original has still been changed into an exclamation that is quite funny: “Voi Rooseveltin pöskyt!” [Roosevelt's pants!]. It is funny to the point that one could argue that the translation loses some of the anger that can be heard in Claire's voice. However, it retains the name that Finnish viewers are likely to be familiar with and plays with it to create a functional exclamation.

Apart from one instance of “James” in the Netflix subtitles of episode nine, official equivalents “Jaakko” and “Yrjö” have been used for King James and King George in all three streaming services. The minor inconsistency, however, creates a serious semantic error as the viewers cannot be expected to realize who is being discussed. On the contrary, the translation strategies used for Bonnie Prince Charlie vary quite a lot. Retention is used in all three streaming services, perhaps because this could be seen as a somewhat fixed nickname, similar to Black Jack. However, a more generalized version of the name, “prinssi Charles” [Prince Charles] or “prinssi Charlie” [Prince Charlie], is also often used in all three streaming services. This is most likely more familiar to the Finnish viewers, since even if they might not know who exactly this prince, who was important to Scottish history, was, the phrase at least is familiar, which “Bonnie Prince Charlie” might not be. The previously mentioned Finnish official equivalent *Kaarle* is also used in episode eleven in the HBO Nordic subtitles along with a translation for the term *bonnie*, “Kaunis Kaarle” [beautiful Charles], and in episodes fourteen and sixteen in Viaplay the prince appears as “Prinssi Kaarle” [Prince Charles]. Again, I do not think that any of these translations can be considered an error in itself, but the inconsistency in the translations does create a serious semantic error, as was the case with Black Jack. There are many characters in this season, and

the viewing experience is made unnecessarily difficult for the viewers by using so many different names for them.

There is also one episode, where a clear semantic plot-affecting error appears in the translation of the Bonnie Prince: in episode nine, there has clearly been some confusion in the Viaplay translation concerning the identity of the characters that are being discussed. Prince Charlie and King James are obviously different people, and they have both been mentioned previously in the episode, both even in the same sentence. At that occurrence, they appeared as “Charlie” and “Jaakko” in the subtitles, and there was even an occurrence of “Bonnie Prince Charlie” before that, but suddenly there is a major misunderstanding as to who the characters are actually talking about, as *Prince Charlie* appears as “Jaakko” [James] in the subtitles. There is quite a lot of talk of these rulers in this episode, so it might be that the translator has just accidentally written the wrong name. Nevertheless, this definitely constitutes a serious semantic error, as the viewers might become very confused as to who is doing what and where. In this same episode, the Bonnie Prince also appears as a generalized “Stuart” in the Viaplay translation. This could be seen as a stylistic error, because although Prince Charles was a Stuart, so was his father, King James. Therefore, a generalization such as this might create even more confusion on these various royals that were so very important in the Scottish history, but whom Finnish viewers may not know anything about.

There are, of course, many other personal names in this season, but they are all quite ordinary. Still, there are some interesting errors happening with them as well. For example, the laird of MacKenzie clan, Colum MacKenzie, often appears as “Callum” in the Viaplay subtitles. This happens in episodes two, three, four, five and seven, which is interesting considering that there is more than one translator in these episodes and that Colum always appears as “Colum” when he is mentioned in the episode descriptions. There might be an issue here that the translators have not seen the transcripts and have simply tried to hear the name, but the character’s real name could also have been easily googled especially since *Outlander* was a very popular book series before the TV series existed. Then again, in episode seven, the translator in Viaplay is the only one who has gotten the name of Jamie’s mother correctly: Ellen MacKenzie. In the Netflix and HBO Nordic subtitles, she is called “Aileen” for some reason. This is a rather minor error, however, since this is the only time when Jamie’s mother is mentioned in the season, but it does provide further proof that the translators

have indeed not used a written episode script. There are some other small name related errors in HBO Nordic that support this as well: in episode eleven, Dougal first appears as “Douglas” but then later in the episode correctly as “Dougal” again. In the same episode, a character called Jeanie is also thought to be *Jamie* the first time but again, appears correctly as “Jeanie” later in the episode. These may seem small issues, but then again, they might confuse the viewer and break the contract of illusion, so I would consider these minor semantic errors.

#### 5.2.4. Place Names

*Outlander* includes various place names that can refer to towns, areas, castles and prisons, for example. As mentioned before, *Outlander* is a world full of both reality and fiction. Some of these places are real and can be found in the United Kingdom today whereas some of them might sound like that but are, in fact, imaginary places that only exist in the world of *Outlander*. There are a few place names that are the most present in this season of *Outlander* and that can all be considered ECRs as they require cultural knowledge: The Highlands, Castle Leoch, Craigh na Dun, Lallybroch, Culloden Moor, and Fort William.

Craigh na Dun is the magical place with the standing stones that Claire travels through in time, and Lallybroch is the home castle of clan Fraser, that is, Jamie and his family. As place names, these two are quite straightforward, and retention has been used in all three streaming services in all occurrences. The other place names, on the other hand, also include general terms, and for most of them, other translation strategies have been used as well (See Table 5 for reference). These place names definitely require some cultural knowledge as well. One can look at a map and see that Scotland is basically divided into Highlands and Lowlands, but one definitely needs more cultural knowledge to know that the Highlands are the part of Scotland that is mostly connected to the Gaelic language and the Scottish clans, which the English wanted control of. As a result, they were a place for many battles and massacres (Scotland Info Guide, 2019). Castle Leoch can also quite easily be understood to refer to a castle, but some cultural knowledge is needed to know that it is in fact a fictional castle seating clan MacKenzie, which did, however, seat many real castles as well. Culloden Moor, on the other hand, is again a very real place that served as the

battleground for the Battle of Culloden, where British soldiers destroyed thousands of Highlanders (Scotland Info Guide, 2019). As the final battle between the Jacobites and the British army, Culloden Moor is very important for the events of *Outlander* as well. Finally, Fort William is the second largest city in the Scottish Highlands but in this season of *Outlander*, it refers specifically to a garrison under English command. It is place where both Jamie and Claire are captured during the season.

		<b>Highlands</b>	<b>Castle Leoch</b>	<b>Fort William</b>	<b>Culloden Moor</b>
<b>ep1</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Ylämaat	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	ylängöt	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	ylämaat	Castle Leoch	Fort William	∅
<b>ep2</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	ylämaat	∅	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	ylämaat	∅	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	saari	∅	–	∅
<b>ep3</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Ylämaa, ylämaat	Leochin linna	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Ylämaat	Leochin linna	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Ylämaat, ylämaa	Leochin linna	∅	∅
<b>ep4</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Ylämaat	Leochin linna	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Ylämaat	Leochin linna	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Ylämaa	linna	∅	∅
<b>ep5</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Ylämaa	Leochin linna	∅	Cullodenin nummi
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Ylämaat	Leochin linna	∅	Culloden Moor
	<b>HBO:</b>	ylämaat / Ylämaat	linna	∅	Culloden Moor
<b>ep6</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
<b>ep7</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep8</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	–	∅
<b>ep9</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	Leoch	Fort William	∅
<b>ep10</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅

		<b>Highlands</b>	<b>Castle Leoch</b>	<b>Fort William</b>	<b>Culloden Moor</b>
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep11</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	– / Leochin linna	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	∅	∅
<b>ep12</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	Leochin linna	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	Leoch	Fort William	∅
<b>ep13</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep14</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Ylämaat	∅	Fort William	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	ylämaat	∅	Fort William	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	ylämaa	∅	Fort William	∅
<b>ep15</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep16</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	Ylämaa	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	Ylämaat	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	Ylämaat	∅	∅	∅

**Table 5** Finnish translations for place names in *Outlander*

Direct translation appears to be used for most of the occurrences of the Highlands, and extratextuality is probably the guiding parameter here as this is a real place with Finnish equivalents for the name. However, throughout the episodes, in all translations, there is quite a lot of variation as to whether the Highlands are translated into the singular form “Ylämaa” [Highland] or the plural form “Ylämaat” [Highlands]. It also varies whether the name is capitalized or not. In addition, there is one instance of “ylängöt” [uplands, highlands] in the Viaplay subtitles as well. I would argue that these inconsistencies constitute a stylistic error, since the viewers will most likely realize that these variations refer to the same place, but it is an error nonetheless. There is one standard error as well: in episode two, there is an expression *through the Highlands*, which in the HBO Nordic subtitles is translated into “koko saarella” [throughout the islands]. There has obviously been some type of a misunderstanding here, and it may result in the viewer being unable to understand where the events are

taking place. It is possible that they might mistakenly think about the whole British Isles, for example. Again, it would seem that no transcript has been available.

The overwhelmingly most used translation strategy for Castle Leoch in all three streaming services has been direct translation: “Leochin linna” [Leoch’s castle]. This is interesting especially considering that the translation strategy for the similar place name, Fort William, is always retention in all three streaming services, even though Fort William could similarly be translated into “Williamin linnake” [William’s fort], for example. Extratextuality may have been a parameter behind this decision, as Castle Leoch is a fictional place only existing inside the fictional source culture, but Fort William exists in real life as well. It also refers to the city that currently exists today and is called Fort William in Finnish as well. However, as I previously mentioned, Fort William is referring to the fort itself here instead of the city, so it could have been equally beneficial to use direct translation for that as well. With Castle Leoch, there is also one instance of retention in the HBO Nordic subtitles of episode one, and on the other hand, the generalized “linna” [castle] and “Leoch” are used in these subtitles as well. I would consider the instance of retention a minor semantic error since it may go unnoticed, but there is also the possibility that the viewers might be a little confused.

Culloden Moor is extremely essential for the events in *Outlander*, but in this season, it is only discussed in one episode. Translators in Viaplay and HBO Nordic have used retention, and perhaps extratextuality has affected this similarly as in the case of Fort William, although unlike Fort William, Culloden Moor is known as “Cullodenin nummi” [Culloden’s moor] in Finnish. This translation, however, is only used in the Netflix subtitles. Since this is the only episode where Culloden Moor is mentioned, there are no issues with consistency, at least, but I would consider the retained “Culloden Moor” a stylistic error, since a Finnish version does exist.

### **5.2.5. Titles**

Various titles are constantly used in this season of *Outlander*. In addition to the rather basic misters and madams, which are always translated into some version of “herra” [mister] and “rouva” [madam], there are some very commonly used titles that are used to refer to most of the key characters in this season. The use of titles was, of course,

more prominent in the 18<sup>th</sup> century than it is today, and many of the titles used in *Outlander* are not in common use anymore. This might be a reason behind the fact that the most common titles used in this season appear to have proved somewhat problematic to translate consistently (See Table 6 for reference). These include *lady*, which can be used as a title to politely refer to any woman or to discuss more of a “classy” woman. *Laird* is a very Scottish specific term in this series, and it is used to refer to a head of a clan, mostly to laird Colum MacKenzie, head of clan MacKenzie, in this instance. *Mistress*, on the other hand, is used to refer to a female head of a household or in this season, most often to a woman who is assumed to be married. For example, Claire is often referred to as mistress since she has told the clansmen that she is a married woman. *Lord* is again more of an English term, used to refer to various English officers whereas *chief* is in turn a Scottish term often used to refer to Dougal MacKenzie, who is the war chief of clan MacKenzie and sometimes to Colum as the general “chief” of the clan.

		<b>lady</b>	<b>laird</b>	<b>mistress</b>	<b>lord</b>	<b>chief</b>
<b>ep1</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	neiti	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	leidi	∅	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	leidi	∅	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep2</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	(linnan) isäntä	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	linnanomistaja	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	linnanherra	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep3</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	laird	∅	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	kartanonomistaja / linnanherra / herra	∅	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	laird	∅	∅	∅
<b>ep4</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	poika / isäntä	emäntä / neiti	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	– / kartanonherra / linnanherra	rva	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	laird	rouva	∅	∅
<b>ep5</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	neiti	lordi / laird	– / neiti	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	rouva	– / linnanherra	rouva	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	rouva	– / kartanonherra / päällikkö	neiti / rouva	∅	∅
<b>ep6</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	rouva / nainen	laird	∅	lordi	päällikkö
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	rouva / nainen	linnanherra	∅	– / lordi	(sota)päällikkö

		<b>lady</b>	<b>laird</b>	<b>mistress</b>	<b>lord</b>	<b>chief</b>
	<b>HBO:</b>	rouva / nainen	(klaanin) päällikkö / klaanipäällikkö	∅	- / lordi	päällikkö
<b>ep7</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	rva / rouva	lordi	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	rva / - / rouva	lordi	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	rouva / neiti	lordi	∅
<b>ep8</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	lady / nainen	∅	rouva	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	emäntä / rouva	∅	- / rouva	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	lady / -	∅	- / rouva	∅	∅
<b>ep9</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	lady	isäntä / - / herra	∅	∅	päällikkö / herra
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	lady	laird / - / päällikkö	∅	∅	klaanipäällikkö / päällikkö
	<b>HBO:</b>	lady	laird / -	∅	∅	laird
<b>ep10</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	lady	laird / -	rouva	lordi	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	lady	linnaherra / laird / -	rouva	lordi	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	lady	kartanoherra / -	rouva	lordi	∅
<b>ep11</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	laird	opettajatar	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	kartanonomistaja	rouva	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	linnaherra	-	∅	∅
<b>ep12</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	lady	laird	-	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	lady	laird	-	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	rouva	herra / linnaherra / isäntä	emäntä	∅	∅
<b>ep13</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	lady	laird	rouva	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	lady	laird / kartanonomistaja	rouva	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	lady	kartanoherra	rouva	∅	∅
<b>ep14</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	lady	laird	rouva	lordi	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	lady	laird	rouva	lordi	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	nainen / lady	kartanoherra	mrs	lordi	∅
<b>ep15</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	∅	∅	-	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	∅	∅	-	∅	∅
	<b>HBO:</b>	∅	∅	-	∅	∅
<b>ep16</b>	<b>Netflix:</b>	hieno nainen	∅	rouva / -	∅	∅
	<b>Viaplay:</b>	lady	∅	- / rouva	∅	∅

	<b>lady</b>	<b>laird</b>	<b>mistress</b>	<b>lord</b>	<b>chief</b>
<b>HBO:</b>	hieno nainen	∅	–	∅	∅

**Table 6** Finnish translations for titles in *Outlander*

As we can see, many different translation strategies have been used for the term *lady*. These strategies mostly follow the circumstances that are currently at work in the scenes: when *lady* is used to refer to a “classy” woman in episode sixteen, the translation is “hieno nainen” [classy woman] in the Netflix and HBO Nordic subtitles. Substitution is also used in the HBO Nordic subtitles in episode twelve: *lady* appears as “rouva” [madam] in the translation in a situation where *lady* is used to show respect. “Neiti” [miss] is also used a couple of times in Netflix, but in episode five, the title refers to Claire, and it does not really suit to refer to her as *miss* as the characters are aware, at this point, that Claire is not a *miss* but a *mrs.* This I would consider a stylistic error. Occasionally, the generalized “nainen” [woman] is used for *lady* as well, and there is also one instance of “emäntä” in episode eight in the Viaplay subtitles. This would be more accurate if the title *mistress* was used and is somewhat of a stylistic error here. Another stylistic error and also a minor semantic error results from episode one, where in the Viaplay and HBO Nordic subtitles, the title is altered to fit the target language and is used in the form “leidi” [lady (as in a classy woman)]. This is both problematic for consistency as well as considering the fact that the official equivalent for *lady* in Finnish is also “lady”, not “leidi” (Kielitoimiston sanakirja, 2019). In cases where *lady* refers to a “classy” woman, the term “leidi” might be used instead of “hieno nainen”, [classy woman] but in situations such as this, where *lady* is indeed used as a title, “leidi” is both semantically incorrect and as an informal term, in a completely incorrect register.

*Laird* is another term for which many different translation strategies are used. Two common terms used in the Finnish subtitles are “linnaherra” [lord of the castle] or “linnanomistaja” [owner of the castle] and “kartanoherra” [lord of the manor] or “kartanonomistaja” [owner of the manor]. While *laird* can very well mean “kartanoherra”, this title is most often used here to refer to Colum MacKenzie of Castle Leoch, which is indeed a castle, and therefore, I think “linnanomistaja” or even better, “linnaherra” is definitely the more correct term to use for the translation. In addition, there are various episodes where more than one term is used for *laird*. In episode three, both “kartanonomistaja” and “linnaherra” and in episode four, both

“kartanonherra” and “linnanherra” are used in the Viaplay subtitles. This, I would again consider a stylistic error, since the consistency is broken, and even worse, inside one episode. Similarly, in episode nine both “laird” and “päällikkö” [chief] are used in Viaplay, as well as both “linnanherra” and “laird” in episode ten and “laird” and “kartanomistaja” in episode thirteen. There is also one instance of both “kartanonherra” and “päällikkö” used in episode five of the HBO Nordic translation. There are also various instances of “herra” [lord] and “isäntä” [master], but these are all used in different situations, usually as vocative expressions when the laird is addressed directly. There is also more of a serious error in episode four in the Netflix subtitles as *laird* is probably mistaken for *lad* for some reason since the translation is “poika” [boy] at first, but then “isäntä” later on. Referring to Colum MacKenzie as a “poika” is definitely likely to break the contract of illusion and confuse the viewers as to who is referred to in the discussion. Another, more minor error can be found in both the Netflix translation of episode five and the HBO Nordic translation of episode six, where *laird* is probably again misunderstood, this time to be *lord* as it is translated into “lordi” [lord]. This is also somewhat confusing, since the title *lord* is also very present in this season and in episode six, lord Thomas, referring to his stay in Scotland, says:

If I stayed here long enough, I could become laird. Laird Thomas

In the HBO Nordic subtitles, the translation is:

Jos jään tänne, minusta voisi tulla lordi. Laird Thomas.

[If I stayed here, I could become lord. Laird Thomas.]

As lord Thomas is most definitely already a *lord* and is imagining being a *laird* instead, this is quite clearly a semantic error, but one that might go unnoticed, so I would classify it as a minor semantic error. Quite the contrary to *laird*, the title *lord*, on the other hand, is translated extremely consistently throughout the episodes: it appears as the correct official equivalent “lordi” (Kielitoimiston sanakirja, 2019) in all three streaming services.

The use of “päällikkö” [chief] as a translation for *laird* is also problematic, because there is the title *chief* as well, and that is usually translated into “päällikkö”. As I mentioned previously, sometimes *chief* is actually referring to the laird, which of

course makes this even more complicated. A good example can be found in episode nine, where the clansmen are arguing on who they should be loyal to, Colum or Dougal:

- Where does your loyalty lie? To the chief or war chief?

- There is but one laird to the clan, is there not?

In the Netflix subtitles, chief has been translated into “päällikkö” and war chief into “sotapäällikkö” [war chief]. In Viaplay the terms used are “klaanipäällikkö” [clan chief] and “sotapäällikkö” and in HBO Nordic, “laird” and “sotapäällikkö”. The term *laird* that is used in the reply on the other hand, is translated into the generalized “herra” [lord] in Netflix, “päällikkö” in Viaplay, and “laird” in HBO Nordic. I think that the translation of the first line in the Netflix subtitles can be rather confusing for the viewer; the separation of “päällikkö” and “sotapäällikkö” is not obvious, and the viewers might be unaware as to who the clansmen are actually talking about, especially since in the next subtitle, the very general term “herra” occurs. Using “klaanipäällikkö” and “sotapäällikkö”, on the other hand, is a functional way of separating these two, but then again, the general term “päällikkö” in the next subtitle can create confusion as well. The translation in HBO Nordic subtitles seems to be the only one that is clear:

- Oletko uskollinen lairdille vai sotapäällikölle?

[Are you loyal to the laird or to the war chief?]

- Klaanilla on vain yksi laird.

[The clan has only one laird.]

This strategy ensures that the viewers have no trouble understanding who is referred to as they know who the laird is and what the laird’s significance is, and they know who the war chief is as well.

*Mistress* is again a very Scottish term used similarly to the somewhat equivalent more English term *madam*. The term often refers to Claire in this season, and in these instances, “rouva” [madam] would be the most correct translation, but there are some instances of “neiti” [miss] as well, which is rather unfitting for the married Claire and constitutes a stylistic error. “Emäntä” [mistress] is also used, which would make more sense, if the title referred to a female head of household, which Claire at this point is not. Therefore, calling Claire “emäntä” and especially “emäntä

Claire” in the Netflix subtitles in episode four could also be seen as a stylistic error. In addition, using the English title *mrs.* in episode fourteen in the HBO Nordic subtitles is definitely a minor semantic error as the official equivalent in Finnish is “rouva” or, in short, “rva”. There is one error that is more serious as well: in episode eleven in the Netflix subtitles, *mistress* is translated into “opettajatar” [schoolmistress] while referring to Claire. While *mistress* can indeed have this meaning, it definitely is not the case in this context. Claire is not a teacher, and there is no reason to think that she would be. An error this blatant will probably break the illusion for the viewers, as they might stop to wonder when it was mentioned that Claire was a teacher.

### 5.3. Readability and Acceptability

Considering the readability of the subtitles, there does not appear to be any major errors. The subtitles are always two lines long at the most, and they are not packed with text excessively, so the viewer has enough time to read them. Occasionally, the text could have been segmented a little better, but the segmentation does not appear to cause any major issues in the viewer being able to connect the various elements while reading. In addition, it seems to always be clear which character is talking in the subtitles.

Acceptability, on the other hand, seems to be a more major issue in the subtitles for this season of *Outlander*. There are problems in all three categories: grammar, spelling and idiomaticity. In the case of grammar and spelling, however, the problems tend to be rather minor as was the case with readability. Grammar is quite adequate in all three streaming services, but source language interference can be seen as well. Most evident this is in the Netflix subtitles, where sentences could often have been written more in the lines of target language conventions. These errors include aspects such as beginning a sentence with a conjunction or ending a statement clause with a question mark. Noticeable is also the tendency to follow the source language quite strictly at times, instead of creating a more fluent subtitle that is more in tone with the target language. Various spelling errors are present as well, but as mentioned, these, too, are usually quite minor. They include minor spelling errors with place names, for example: Craigh na Dun can appear as “Craig na Dun” and Cranesmuir as “Crainsmuir”.

The most obvious errors in acceptability are definitely errors with idiomaticity. These can be rather serious at times as for example in episode one, which includes a scene between Claire and Jamie shortly after Claire has been captured by the clansmen. She has managed to escape for a brief moment, but Jamie manages to find her. Jamie is telling Claire that the other men are waiting for their return and that they should get back to them. However, Claire is in no way willing to go back with Jamie:

Claire: I'm not going with you!

Jamie: Yes, you are.

Claire: What, are you going to cut my throat if I don't?

Jamie: Why, no.

So clearly, Jamie has no intention of cutting Claire's throat. He even continues by saying that Claire does not look too heavy, so what he plans to do is to easily carry her, if she refuses to come on her own. Moreover, already during the first encounter with Jamie in this first episode of the series, it is probably quite clear to the viewers that Jamie is not a bad person in any way and probably has no desire to hurt Claire. Nevertheless, there are rather major mistakes in the Viaplay and HBO Nordic subtitles:

**Viaplay:**

(...)

Viillätkö muuten auki kurkkuni?

[Will you cut my throat otherwise?]

- Miksi en viiltäisi?

[Why would I not?]

**HBO:**

(...)

- Viillätkö muuten kurkkuni auki?

[Will you cut my throat otherwise?]

- Miksi en?

[Why not?]

These two translations clearly indicate that Jamie would have no trouble cutting Claire's throat. For some reason, Jamie's answer "Why, no." is apparently interpreted to be the same as "Why not?" The difference between these two is, of course, quite crucial. The translation in the Netflix subtitles is more accurate, although rather clumsy as it is somewhat against the conventions in Finnish language to place a question mark after anything other than a direct question:

**Netflix:**

(...)

- Katkaisetko kaulani, jos en lähde?

[Will you cut my throat, if I don't go?]

- En?

[No?]

A better solution would be to just have the answer without the question mark, so it would be a statement instead of this unclear interrogative expression.

There is also another good example of an error that is a result of misunderstanding what exactly is being discussed. In episode fourteen, Claire has to embark on a dangerous venture to find and rescue Jamie. To help Claire on this journey, Jamie's sister Jenny first hands Claire a small bag of money. After that, she starts to retrieve a knife from her pocket to provide Claire with something to protect herself as well. She says:

This belongs to Ian. He has another one.

This time, it is the Netflix subtitles that include a rather major error:

Rahat kuuluvat Ianille. Hänellä on toinen pussi.

[The money belongs to Ian. He has another bag.]

The translator has mistaken Jenny to be talking about the small bag of money that she handed Claire before starting to get the knife from her pocket. Instead of Ian having another knife, he now has another bag of money in the Netflix translation. Luckily,

this error does not, however, really affect the plot in any way unlike the previous example.

## 6. Conclusion

Although we cannot be sure about the origins of the Netflix subtitles, it seems that all three streaming services have used multiple translators for the episodes of the first season of *Outlander*, and it has clearly had consequences for the consistency of the translations for various terms in the subtitles, for example. However, not all problems with the consistency can be explained with the changing of the translator, as we can see, for example, with the exclamation “Jesus H. Roosevelt Christ”, which has been translated in two different ways by the same translator. Overall, all three streaming services could do a lot better in providing the viewers with information as to where the subtitles have been acquired from and who the translators are. This issue is obviously most blatant on Netflix, which does not provide any information, but there are many episodes in Viaplay and HBO Nordic as well that do not show the name of the translator.

The series includes countless instances of use of the Gaelic language and, on the other hand, Scottish terms and heavy Scottish accent. Omission is the most popular translation strategy used for the Gaelic language in this season, which makes sense as Claire herself is unable to understand it. However, there are also instances of retention with terms and phrases that are used multiple times and whose meaning Claire and the viewers know: *sassenach* and *mo nighean donn*. Unfortunately, however, there are scenes where the translators seem to have confused the Gaelic language and the Scottish dialect: sometimes the Gaelic language appears to have been interpreted as English and is translated, and sometimes the Scottish dialect appears to have been confused with the Gaelic language and omitted as a result. Singular Scottish terms, on the other hand, are usually translated as if they were equivalent English terms. In instances where they have been substituted with other terms in attempt to convey the Scottish dialect, some rather interesting translations occur, all of which are definitely not positive such as some of the translations for the term *lass*, or do not quite function as intended such as the use of such Finnish terms that are used in Lapland. In addition, some translators are clearly unfamiliar with Scottish terms, and if such translators are

not aware of all the events that take place in the series or all the characters, an expression such as *dinna* can be mistaken for a personal name.

As might have been expected due to the use of multiple translators, the translation strategies used for the various cultural terms vary quite a lot. Retention has often been used even for names that have a semantic meaning such as Black Jack and Bonnie Prince Charlie. However, there are also occurrences of various translations such as “Musta-Jaakko” and “Kaunis Kaarle” and overall, there are many inconsistencies in the translations of personal names. This, of course, causes errors and difficulties in the subtitles, as the viewers might have to think who is being discussed. Official equivalents have also been used for rulers, and in the case of King James and King George the strategy stays consistent. There are also some blatant errors in some spellings of personal names such as Dougal and Colum and occasionally, there are some plain misunderstandings or cases of accidental carelessness as to who is being discussed. This can be seen, for example, in the case of Jeanie and Prince Charlie.

There are many meaningful place names as well and again, various translation strategies have been used. The differences vary from minor spelling variations such as “Ylämaa” and “Ylämaat” to using both retention and direct translation for places such as Castle Leoch. Overall, the major factor for causing errors is the inconsistencies in most of the names. This is also true for the various titles, but the inconsistencies in their translations are also sometimes connected to the subtitling situation as is the case with the title *lady* appearing as “lady”, “rouva” or “hieno nainen”.

Considering the readability and acceptability in this season, the quality of the translations seems adequate, but there are some fundamental issues as well. Overall, all three streaming services have room for improvement in the quality of the translations. It seems clear that if a series such as this has many translators, they should have the opportunity to consult each other or see the previous translations at least. As there are clear examples of issues in mishearing parts of the characters’ speech, which in turn results in occasionally rather serious errors in the translation, it seems that one of the most blatant issues is that the translators do not appear to have been provided with any type of written episode scripts or terminology lists. The heavy use of Gaelic and Scottish dialect is a perfect example of why it is essential that a translator has access to the episode transcripts as they can result in serious issues in understanding. In addition, considering the fact that at least one of the translation companies used for the translations in this season, SDI Media, is one of the large multinational translation

companies that we discussed at the beginning of this thesis, we might assume that there is a general issue with the overall working conditions. This can definitely have had a negative impact on the quality of these translations.

As this thesis has mostly examined the translation of cultural terms and expressions, readability and acceptability could be further analyzed. Further studies would also benefit from a more in-depth look into the operation of the streaming services. The services could be contacted and inquired about their methods for acquiring audiovisual translations and the views that they have on audiovisual translation in general. Their attitudes towards these problematic multinational translation companies could also be discussed. In addition, the overall analysis of quality in the subtitles could be extended in further research. By reaching out to the translation companies and to the translators themselves, process quality and social quality could be examined as well. Based on this thesis, it is clear that the methods of the streaming service providers and the translation companies can have a large impact on the product quality.

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## Appendix 1: Finnish Summary

### Taustatietoa

Audiovisuaalinen kääntäminen on viime vuosina ollut puheenaiheena johtuen monista melko radikaaleistakin ulkoistamispäätöksistä. Käännöspalveluiden ulkoistaminen pieniltä toimijoilta suurille kansainvälisille yrityksille on Lauri Mäkelän (2016) mukaan ollut nouseva trendi jo 90-luvulta alkaen, mutta viime vuosikymmenen aikana ulkoistamisesta on näyttänyt tulevan normi. Audiovisuaalisen kääntämisen kentän ovat vallanneet jättiyritykset kuten BTI Studios ja SDI Media, joiden kanssa työehtosopimuksen laatiminen on osoittanut erittäin hankalaksi tehtäväksi. Tämän seurauksena audiovisuaalisten käännösten hinnat ovat laskeneet yhdessä käännösten laadun kanssa, ja näyttää siltä, ettei hyviä käännöksiä ja osaavia kääntäjiä arvosteta yhtä paljon kuin ennen. Toisaalta käännösala on aina ollut ongelmallinen ottaen huomioon, ettei kääntäjän ammatti ole millään tavoin suojattu. Kuka tahansa voi toimia kääntäjänä, ja työ saattaa houkuttaa harrastelijoita tai opiskelijoita halvoista hinnoista huolimatta. Myös sinnikäs uskomus, että kääntämistä voi tehdä kuka vain kahta kieltä osaava henkilö, vaikuttaa väistämättä kääntäjien arvostukseen.

Audiovisuaalisten käännösten tuottamiseen on vaikuttanut myös television muuttunut maailma. Suosikkisarjoja ei enää tarvitse katsoa tiettyyn kellonaikaan tiettyinä päivinä tai muistaa tallentaa, vaan niistä voi myös nauttia erilaisten suoratoistopalveluiden kautta. Suomessa monilla television palveluntarjoajilla on omat suoratoistopalvelunsa, joita voi käyttää ainakin osittain maksutta. Näitä ovat esimerkiksi *Yle Areena*, *Ruutu* ja *Katsomo*, jotka tarjoavat käyttäjilleen mahdollisuuden katsoa ohjelmia, joita ei ole televisiosta ehtinyt nähdä. Tällaisissa palveluissa sisältö on usein tarjolla hyvin rajatun ajan toisin kuin sitten taas suurissa kansainvälisissä suoratoistopalveluissa. Nämä suuren luokan palvelut tarjoavatkin käyttäjilleen mahdollisuuden katsoa kuukausittaista maksua vastaan mitä ikinä valikoimassa on tarjolla, ja palveluista löytyvät usein esimerkiksi monien sarjojen koko tuotannot. Tällaiset kansainväliset suoratoistopalvelut ovat Suomessakin nousseet suureen suosioon, ja niistä käytetyimmät ovat *Netflix*, *Viaplay* ja *HBO Nordic*. Näillä kaikilla kolmella on oma vahva jalansijansa, joka johtuu todennäköisesti hieman erilaisesta tarjonnasta: Netflix keskittyy varsinkin nykyään enemmän ja

enemmän omaan tuotantoonsa, HBO tarjoaa monia laatusarjoja, ja Viaplay keskittyy enemmän uusiin elokuvajulkaisuihin sekä urheiluun. Nämä palvelut ovat rantautuneet Suomeen, kun ulkoistaminen on jo ollut normi, eikä olekaan yllättävää, että palveluiden käyttämät käännöspalvelut tulevat ulkoisilta toimijoilta.

Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan näissä kolmessa suosituimmassa kansainvälisessä suoratoistopalvelussa käytettyjä suomenkielisiä tekstityksiä ja niiden alkuperää sekä laatua. Tutkielma keskittyy etenkin kulttuuriin liittyvien termien käännöksiin. Tutkimuskohteena on suosittu *Outlander – Matkantekijä* -sarja, joka seuraa 27-vuotiaan Clairen tarinaa. Claire on englantilaisnainen, joka on juuri palannut toisesta maailmansodasta, jossa hän toimi sairaanhoitajana. Yhdessä aviomiehensä Frank Randallin kanssa he yrittävät palata takaisin normaaliin elämään ja suuntaavatkin toiselle häämatkalle Skotlannin ylämaille. He osuvat paikalle juuri Samhainin aikaan ja todistavat kummallista rituaalia Craigh na Dunin erikoisilla kivipaaseilla. Claire palaa myöhemmin yksin kivipaaseille, ja suurinta niistä kosketettuaan päätyy 200 vuotta ajassa taaksepäin. Claire löytää itsensä 1700-luvun ylämailta keskeltä taistelua englantilaisten sotilaiden ja ylämaalaisten välillä. Joukko ylämaalaisia pelastaa Clairen, mutta epäilee häntä samalla englantilaiseksi vakoojaksi. Ylämaalaiset kuuluvat MacKenzien klaaniin ja vievät Clairen Leochin linnaan klaanipäällikön puheille. Claire pakotetaan jäämään linnaan ja hän joutuu oppimaan 1700-luvun ylämaiden tavoille. Sarjan maailma eroaa siis hyvin paljon nykymaailmasta. Siihen sisältyy monia historiallisia tapahtumia, ja hahmojen puhekin on hyvin omalaatuista. Vaikka ylämaalaiset puhuvatkin sarjassa englantia, heidän englannissaan on erittäin vahva skotlantilainen aksentti, ja se sisältää monia skotlantilaisia termejä. Tämän lisäksi ylämaalaiset usein myös puhuvat gaelin kieltä, jonka he selkeästi kokevat itselleen läheisimmäksi kieleksi. He myös käyttävät sitä usein sulkeakseen Clairen keskustelun ulkopuolelle. Claire nimittäin ei ymmärrä gaelin kieltä, ja suurin osa katsojista voi varmasti samaistua häneen.

## **Teoreettinen lähtökohta**

Tutkielmassa hyödynnetään teoriaa liittyen etenkin tekstityskonventioihin ja käännösten laatuun. Tekstittäminen ei käännösalan ole helpoimmasta päästä, sillä kaikkea puhuttua on mahdotonta saada ruutuun, ja puhe sisältää keskeytyksiä, päällekkäisyyttä ja epäselvyyksiä. *Matkantekijälle* ominaisen lisän tuovat myös jo

mainitut murteet ja eri kielet. Tekstitysten tekemiseen on olemassa hieman vaihtelevia, mutta suurimmaksi osaksi yhtenäisiä, konventioita liittyen tilan ja ajan käyttöön ruudulla, ja niitä noudattamalla pyritään saamaan katsojalle miellyttävä katsomiskokemus. Esko Vertasen (2008: 150–151) mukaan tavoitteena on, että katsoja pystyy vaivatta lukemaan ja ymmärtämään tekstitykset niin, ettei tekstitykseen sen kummemmin kiinnitä huomiota, vaan sarjaa pystyy seuraamaan yhtä hyvin kuin jos ymmärtäisi puhetta. Tämän kannalta on hänen mukaansa tekstirivien merkkimäärän ohella myös oleellista, että teksti on ruudulla samaan aikaan puheen kanssa ja että se on jaettu loogisiin kokonaisuuksiin sekä ruudun sisällä että ruutujen välillä.

Kristiina Abdallahin (2008: 275–284) mukaan laadun käsite on usein hyvin moniulotteinen ja epäselvä, mikä vaikeuttaaakin laadun arvioimista. Hän painottaa myös, että tuotekeskeiseen laatuun keskittyminen voi olla kohtalokasta, jos se tarkoittaa huonoille käännöksille nauramista ja ymmärtämättömyyttä käännöksen laatuun vaikuttavista taustatekijöistä. Tämän tutkielman rajoissa keskitytään nimenomaan tuotteen laadun käsittelyyn, mutta pidetään mielessä käännösalan muutokset ja niiden vaikutus kääntäjien työolosuhteisiin, osaamiseen ja mahdollisuuksiin. Tuotteen laadun arvioinnissa keskitytään Jan Pedersenin (2017: 210–224) FAR-mallin pohjalta ekvivalenssiin ja tyylivirheisiin, mutta myös hieman luettavuuteen ja hyväksyttävyyteen. Pedersen viittaa ekvivalenssilla FAR-mallissaan siihen, vastaako käännös alkuperäistä merkitykseltään, kun taas tyylivirheillä hän tarkoittaa sellaisia käännösratkaisuja, jotka saavat tekstityksen kuulostamaan vieraalta tai muuten vääränlaiselta. Luettavuuden käsite taas liittyy jo mainittuihin tekstityskonventioihin ja hyväksyttävyydellä Pedersen viittaa kohdekielen normien noudattamiseen. FAR-mallissa keskitytään käännösvirheisiin sekä niiden vakavuuteen, joka määräytyy katsojan mahdollisuudesta seurata ohjelmaa ja ymmärtää tapahtumat sekä juonenkäänneet.

Kulttuuriviittausten arvioinnissa taas keskitytään pitkälti Jan Pedersenin (2011: 44–120) ajatukseen kielen ulkopuolisista kulttuuriviittauksista, jotka voivat viitata esimerkiksi ihmisiin, paikkoihin ja tapoihin, jotka ovat tietylle kulttuurille spesifejä, eivätkä välttämättä ole katsojalle selviä, vaikka kielitaitoa löytyisikin. Suurin osa näistä viittauksista on Pedersenin mukaan erisnimiä, ja tässä tutkielmassa keskitytäänkin nimenomaan niihin sekä myös titteleihin. Tutkimusmateriaalin erisnimistä osa on historiallisia nimiä, osa täysin tavallisia nimiä ja osa yleisnimiä sisältäviä nimityksiä. Tutkielmassa pohditaan myös Pedersenin mainitsemia kielen

ulkopuolisten kulttuuriviittausten käänösstrategioita sekä strategioiden käyttöön ja valintaan vaikuttavia tekijöitä. On hyvä kuitenkin pitää mielessä, ettei tämän tutkielman rajoissa päästä kuulemaan kääntäjiltä itseltään heidän käyttämistään strategioista tai ajatusprosessista, ja analyysi onkin väistämättä melko subjektiivista.

## **Tutkielmassa käytetyt metodit**

Tutkielman kannalta oli tärkeää valita suhteellisen uusi sarja analysoitavaksi, jotta tekstitykset kertoisivat suoratoistopalveluiden nykyisistä käytännöistä audiovisuaalisten käännösten tuottamiseksi. Lisäksi sarjan tuli olla saatavilla kaikissa kolmessa palvelussa. *Matkantekijä* oli tältä kannalta osuva valinta, ja lisäksi se sisältää analysoinnin kannalta monia mielenkiintoisia asioita. Sarjan sijoittuminen menneisyyteen sekä gaelin kielen käyttö ovat hyviä esimerkkejä tästä.

Tutkimusmateriaalin analyysissä keskitytään ensimmäiseksi selvittämään tekstitysten alkuperää jokaisessa ensimmäisen kauden kuudessatoista jaksossa kaikissa kolmessa suoratoistopalvelussa. Tämän jälkeen keskitytään itse jaksoihin, jotka on pidetty samanaikaisesti nähtävillä kaikkien kolmen palvelun kautta. Jaksoissa on kiinnitetty huomiota etenkin eri nimien, termien ja ilmaisujen käännöksiin, jotka on analyysissä jaettu viiteen pääkategoriaan: gaelin kieli, skotlantilainen murre, henkilönnimet, paikannimet ja tittelit. Näiden käännösten yhteydessä on pohdittu, onko lähtökielessä kulttuuriviittauksia, ja millaisia käännösstrategioita ja niihin vaikuttavia tekijöitä on todennäköisesti hyödynnetty. Lisäksi pohditaan, ovatko mahdolliset käännösvirheet semanttisia vai tyylillisiä, ja mikä niiden vakavuus on. Tämän lisäksi tarkastelun kohteena ovat selkeimmät luettavuuteen ja hyväksyttävyyteen liittyvät aspektit, mutta niihin paneutuminen yksityiskohtaisesti jää tämän tutkielman ulkopuolelle.

## **Analyysin pääkohdat**

Tutkielmassa todetaan, että kaikissa kolmessa suoratoistopalvelussa on käytetty eri tekstityksiä. Tekstitysten alkuperää ei kuitenkaan pystytä kokonaisuudessaan saamaan selville. Netflixissä mainintaa käännösten alkuperästä ei ole lainkaan, mutta Viaplayn käännösten kerrotaan tulevan Ordiovisionilta ja HBO Nordicin SDI Medialta. Valitettavasti itse kääntäjien nimet on sekä Viaplayllä että HBO Nordicilla kuitenkin

mainittu vain osassa jaksoista. Kääntäjiä on kuitenkin molemmissa palveluissa useampi, ja käännösratkaisujen vaihtelevuus ja epäjohdonmukaisuus myös Netflixissä viittaa siihen, että *Matkantekijän* ensimmäistä kautta on kaikissa kolmessa suoratoistopalvelussa ollut tekstittämässä monta eri kääntäjää.

Käännösratkaisujen tarkastelussa huomataan, että gaelin kielen suhteen käytetyin käännösratkaisu näyttää olevan poisjätetty. Joitain poikkeuksiakin kuitenkin löytyy. Esimerkiksi sarjan nimeenkin viittaava, hyvin usein käytetty termi *sassenach* on usein jätetty käännökseen sellaisenaan, mutta vaihteleviakin käännösratkaisuja löytyy. Osassa tapauksissa *sassenachin* käännös on täysin sopimaton sarjan tyyliin, joka kertoo kenties siitä, etteivät kääntäjät ole välttämättä pystyneet perehtymään sarjan aiempiin tapahtumiin tai käännöksiin. Gaelin kieli on myös selkeästi aiheuttanut muutakin hämmennystä. Joissain tapauksissa vaikuttaa siltä, että kääntäjä on kenties ajatellut gaelin kielen olevan englantia, sillä joitain ilmaisuja on saatettu yhtäkkiä yrittää kääntää. Tähän sekaannukseen on todennäköisesti vaikuttanut se, että voimakasta skotlantilaista murretta ja gaelin kieltä saattaa olla välillä vaikea erottaa toisistaan. Ongelma on nimittäin nähtävissä myös toisin päin: joskus englantia on jätetty kääntämättä kenties siksi, että sen on luultu olevan gaelin kieltä. Kaiken kaikkiaan tällaiset virheet viittaavat vahvasti siihen, ettei kääntäjillä ole ollut käytössä minkäänlaista käsikirjoitusta tai termistöä.

Skotlantilaiset termit on suurimmaksi osaksi käännetty aivan samoin, kuin jos ne olisivat tavallisempia englanninkielisiä termejä. Esimerkiksi termi *ken* on usein käännetty aivan kuten *know* eli ”tietää”. Poikkeuksiakin kuitenkin taas löytyy. Joissain tapauksissa murretta on koetettu tuoda esiin esimerkiksi kääntämällä tämä termi verbiksi *uumoilla*. Suoranaisia virheitäkin löytyy: esimerkiksi skotlantilainen *dinna* (do not) on yhdessä tapauksessa oletettu nimeksi Dinna. Lisäksi jatkuvasti käytetyt termit *lass* ja *lad* saavat jokseenkin vaihtelevia suomennoksia, ja etenkin *lass* on usein käännetty tyyliin sopimattomasti *tytsyksi* tai *tyttöseksi*.

Henkilönnimet on usein jätetty tekstityksissä sellaisikseen, vaikka ne sisältäisivät yleisnimiä, mutta poikkeuksiakin löytyy. Esimerkiksi Black Jack Randall on useimmiten jätetty kääntämättä, mutta joissain jaksoissa on yhtäkkiä saatettu käyttää *Musta-Jaakkoa* tai *Musta-Jackiä*. Hallitsijoidenkin nimissä on vaihtelua ja välillä epäselvyyksiäkin, mutta suurimmaksi osaksi on käytetty suomenkielisiä virallisia vastineita: esimerkiksi King James on useimmiten *Kuningas Jaakko*. Paikannimet on usein myös säilytetty lähtötekstin muodossa, mutta niissäkin löytyy

epäjohdonmukaisuutta. Ylämaiden kirjoitusasu esimerkiksi vaihtelee paljon eri jaksojen ja kääntäjien välillä, ja Leochin linna on usein jätetty muotoon *Castle Leoch*. Epäjohdonmukaisuutta on paljon myös titteleiden kohdalla, ja klaanipäällikköön viittaava *laird* esiintyy esimerkiksi käännöksinä *laird*, *kartanonherra*, *linnanherra*, *isäntä* ja *päällikkö*.

Luettavuuden ja hyväksyttävyyden kannalta tekstitysten laatu näyttäisi kaiken kaikkiaan olevan hyvällä tasolla. Tekstityskonventioita on pitkälti noudatettu, vaikkakin välillä tekstin jaottelu voisi olla loogisempaa. Hyväksyttävyydessä esiintyvät ongelmat eivät myöskään useimmiten ole vakavia, mutta niitäkin tosin löytyy. Kaiken kaikkiaan tekstitysten laadussa olisi selkeästi parannettavaa, ja vaihtuvien kääntäjien yhteistyötä tulisi selkeästi mahdollistaa enemmän. Tähän ongelmaan vaikuttavat varmasti myös työolosuhteet, mutta työolosuhteiden tarkasteleminen jää kuitenkin tämän tutkielman ulkopuolelle. Lisäksi tutkimusta voisi laajentaa suoratoistopalveluiden toimintaan audiovisuaalisten käännösten suhteen: olisi hyvä selvittää palveluiden suhtautumista niihin sekä etenkin monikansallisiin palveluntarjoajiin.