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The Subtitles of the Modern Day

A brief comparative analysis of subtitles found in Finnish TikTok videos

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A day in this modern life often includes a great deal of social media. It is worthwhile to study further the quality of the content in said media. Therefore, this thesis consists of a case study of three TikTok videos found on the channels paidatonriehuja, yleutiset and JoshofWestern. The three videos are from different genres: an advertisement, a news story and a humorous content video, but they have one thing in common which led them to this thesis. It is because they have subtitles. In the advertisement with Käärijä, a Finnish artist, there are interlingual subtitles in English. In the news story from Yle, a Finnish broadcasting company, there are intralingual subtitles in Finnish. In the third video, the humorous content video from an influencer called Josh, there are both types of subtitles as it has subtitles in Finnish and in English.

The study contains a comparative analysis on the subtitles found in the previous videos. This comparison was made with a qualitative approach by observing the similarities and differences within the subtitles against the recommendations which are found in previously published guidelines and books about subtitles such as Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021) *Subtitling: Concepts and Practises*, Finnish Language Expert's (2020) *Subtitles Quality Recommendations*, BBC's Subtitle Guidelines (2024), and Ivarsson and Carrol's (1999) *Subtitling*. The goal of the study was to give an overview on the social media subtitles found in these specific Finnish videos on TikTok and if they are done by upholding the guidelines. There is also a glance in the quality of the interlingual subtitles using Jan Pedersen's (2017) FAR model.

The theoretical framework and the analysis in this thesis both follow the same categorisation that Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) introduced in their book where they divided subtitling in four key categories. Linguistic dimension focuses on the readability, grammar and idiomaticity of the subtitles in comparison to the language's norms. The dimension also entails the discussion of the loyalty of the subtitles to their source text. Spatial dimension is about the proper placement and length of the subtitles in relation to the screen. The temporal discusses the recommendations for the duration of subtitles. This includes the appropriate duration of pauses and how the subtitles are synchronised with the speech. The final category is appearance, which focuses on the best fonts and colours to use for subtitles to make them visible but not too disturbing for the viewer.

The results indicate that the analysed subtitles mostly abide by the guidelines in their linguistic approach as they are following the target language's grammar, they are idiomatic and most importantly, loyal to their target text. However, when analysing the interlingual subtitles with the FAR model (Pedersen, 2017), they had the most errors in readability. The subtitles deviated the most in spatial and temporal aspects against the recommendations. More extensive research with a multitude of videos would be needed for a more generalised study.

Key phrases: inter- and intralingual subtitles, captions, social media

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1 Introduction

Everything moves fast. We are all running to catch the metaphorical bus to the metaphorical destination and it seems we are late. In this day and age, the internet is all around us, accessible at any time and any place. It does that mostly in the form of fast-paced social media. These platforms are ever-growing both in quality and quantity. The purpose of this thesis is to conduct a limited comparative analysis on the subtitles used in the modern world or in this instance, on the social media platform TikTok. TikTok, in short, is a platform used for capturing short entertaining videos and posting them for people to see. The study is limited to three videos: advertisement with English subtitles and Finnish audio, a news story with Finnish subtitles with Finnish audio and a video from an influencer with both English and Finnish subtitles and Finnish audio. The purpose is to compare these TikTok subtitles to the known norms and guidelines about subtitles present in their more familiar forms, such as on television, and to see if they follow these norms or not. To summarise, the purpose is to find an answer to the question: How do social media subtitles follow the introduced guidelines for subtitling? I will also discuss the FAR model introduced by Jan Pedersen (2017) and briefly dive into the importance of social media subtitles and their growing presence. This thesis is inspired by the growing use of social media. It was also influenced by the fact that the subject is topical, but still there are only a handful of studies made of it and in a different language pair. Examples of these would be Nuri Adlina's (2023) article *Translation Strategy in TikTok Terms: English and Indonesian version* and Kinga Duraj's and Agnieszka Szarkowska's (2025) *Beyond Traditional Subtitles: How Emojis and Non-Standard Typography in Subtitles Boost Engagement on TikTok*.

The usage and presence of social media platforms is ever-growing. The ability to scroll through them while on the go with your mobile phone has increased the time used on them. The prognosis for the app TikTok, which the Business of Apps -website offers, is that the app would remain as one of the fastest growing ones in the world and surpass 1.8 billion users by the end of the year 2024 (Iqbal 2024). This could indicate that a large portion of subtitles are viewed on social media instead of a television nowadays. Other apps, such as Instagram, have expanded to posting short videos because of the rising popularity of TikTok. Apps, and especially TikTok, are widely used for marketing especially by influencers, which according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary (2024) is "a person who is able to generate interest in something (such as a consumer product) by posting about it on social media" (Merriam-

Webster, s.v. “influencer”, n.). Subtitles are a way to boost user-engagement with videos as it creates more accessible content for a larger crowd.

Subtitling relies heavily on timing and the space available on screen. There are no specific rules or universal guidelines concerning subtitles but there are many preferences, according to Baños and Díaz-Cintas (2018, 317). Synchronisation of subtitles with their audio and image is a key factor in their production and translation. So how does this show in the videos that are approximately 15–60 seconds long? Will the preferences of subtitling show in these short pieces or is it an entirely new subspecies of subtitles? These are some questions that will be explored later in this thesis. As a field, audiovisual translation is still young because it is highly linked to the evolution of technology (Baños & Díaz-Cintas 2018, 315.). The problems that arise with this evolution are the everchanging multimodal platforms and the need for new forms of subtitles. There are not terms for everything created or the terms are in a trial period and still in developmental stages. The studies have simply a hard time keeping up. For example, the terms ‘social media subtitling’ and ‘captions’ (American English) are used to name subtitles used on TikTok which are explored in this study. These are the ones I will use as well.

This study will contain a comparative analysis of social media subtitles and professional subtitle guidelines. The analysis consists of a case study consisting of three videos. The theoretical framework includes subtitle guidelines and recommendations for intra- and interlingual subtitles. These are all introduced in the latter sections. This thesis will begin with a review of the theory the research questions will be based on. First, I will go over the types of subtitles and then examine what existing subtitle guidelines and studies recommend when constructing subtitles. These will be the basis of the analysis. Lastly the theory section will dive into the importance and impact of social media in the modern world. This will give an opening to discuss the materials and methodology sections where the videos and their creators that are used in this study will be described more in detail. The creators’ usage of subtitles will be analysed in the Analysis section. All results are then later discussed and concluded. In the last section I will also include suggestions for future research.

2 Subtitle categorisation

Wendy Fox (2018, 8) introduces four types of subtitles: conventional, live, subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing (SDH) and fan subtitles. Conventional subtitles in this instance mean the more regularly seen broadcast subtitles. Live subtitles are, exactly according to their name, done when the programme is live on air. Examples of live subtitles can be found in sports programmes and in televised award shows. Fan subtitles are not made by professionals but rather fans of the production that is lacking subtitles. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 9–10) also introduce four different forms of subtitles, which are subtitling, surtitling, live subtitling, and subtitling for the deaf or hard of hearing (SDH). Surtitles are equivalent to subtitles but in live events such as operas or plays and projected on a separate screen usually above the stage. Díaz-Cintas (2018,132) also introduced a term for the many varieties of subtitles that can be found on the internet. This term is cybersubtitles and it is going to be explored as a separate group later.

Fox (2018, 10) divides texts that can be found on screen into three categories which are subtitles, displays, and captions. She describes subtitles as a written translation for the spoken word, either intralingual or interlingual. Captions are added onto a separate layer of the image and have information relevant to the plot line of the story. These are for example peoples' names, place names or times. Fox (2018,10) describes that displays are components found in the picture itself and only mentioned in the subtitles if they are relevant to the story or hard to see from the image. These are for example images of street signs, place names or newspaper headlines. Compared to this categorisation, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) refer to subtitles as captions rather than differentiating them as two separate text forms. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 12) also refer to captions as a form of subtitles and specify that SDH subtitles are referred to as captions or “closed captions” in the USA. Fox (2018, 11) also states that this is common practice in the US but keeps them as a separate group from subtitles in her own work as she refers to their original meaning as intertitles rather than closed subtitles. The term *captions* is often used when referring to social media subtitles. For example, in their own website, TikTok offers instructions on how to use different types of captions (TikTok Support, n.d.). These differences in the categorisation of captions can result in confusions. This is why, in this thesis, they are referred to as closed subtitles or closed captions such as in TikTok.

2.1.1 Linguistic categorisation

Many researchers, such as previously mentioned Jorge Díaz-Cintas and Aline Remael (2021, 9–10), Wendy Fox (2018, 10) and Rocío Baños (2018, 314) divide subtitles first into interlingual and intralingual subtitles. Interlingual subtitling means the presence of two languages: the subtitles are translated from the source language to the target language. Intralingual subtitles contain only one language which acts as both the source and the target language. This is why they are also known as same-language subtitles (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2021, 10–11).

The most familiar form of intralingual subtitles is subtitles for the deaf or hard-of-hearing or SDH subtitles (Fox 2018, 12). These are subtitles that contain more information alongside of the dialogue, such as the description of music, sounds and noises. These are called paralinguistic dimensions (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 10). Intralingual subtitling provides an understanding of the language, its dialects and accents (Fox 2018, 12). Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 19) agree and state that intralingual subtitles are often used in such a production where the speaker has a heavy accent or is speaking a dialect. Another form of intralingual subtitles is made for pedagogical purposes. They do not contain the paralinguistic elements as SDH subtitles do but are a word for word rendition of the audio. This sometimes results in subtitles of many lines. These intralingual subtitles are proven to be a very useful tool for foreign language learning (Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2021, 14).

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 19) explain that interlingual subtitles can be monolingual, bilingual or multilingual and that it depends on how many languages are used in the subtitles. Monolingual subtitles are the most common ones, having one language visible in the subtitles but ultimately consisting of two languages: source language which refers to the audio and a target language which refers to the subtitles, for example, movie with an English audio and Finnish subtitles. In comparison, bilingual subtitles have two languages in the subtitles. They consist of two-line subtitles, and each line is reserved for one language. A good example of this are movie theatre subtitles in Finland, where there are two official languages therefore subtitles are both in Finnish and in Swedish. Multilingual subtitles that contain more than two languages are more a thing of the past as technology advanced and subtitles can be chosen per language (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 20). With modern technology, one can switch between languages for subtitles or captions easily even in social media.

2.1.2 Time for preparation

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 22) also divide subtitles by the time that is used to prepare them. There are pre-prepared/offline subtitles and live/online subtitles. They specify that live subtitles can be divided into semi-live and live subtitles. Live subtitling is also known as simultaneous subtitling. These are forms of subtitles that are made at the same time as the programme is broadcasted. They are very common in sport programmes, live interviews, and talk shows. The videos analysed in this thesis do not contain live subtitles as the videos in question are first edited and then published. To find these forms of live subtitles, one would have to analyse TikTok live-videos. The other category Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021,22) introduce is the pre-prepared/offline subtitles. They are done after the programme has been shot and their preparation has more time. This study is about videos from a social media platform, where it is typical to edit and reshoot parts of videos. The subtitles are usually added after the production.

2.1.3 Display

Another way to divide subtitles is by their display mode. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 25) say that the standard display modes for subtitles are block subtitles which are also known as pop-up or pop-on subtitles. These refer to the time they stay on the screen and the way they appear intermittently, in one go and in full. Scrolling or roll-up subtitles appear as a constant flow in small pieces word for word or in small phrases. The top line usually disappears from the screen as a new line appears. These are usually favoured in live/online subtitling as they give more time for the subtitler or translator (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 26). They can either create an appearance of a conversation flow or disrupt it. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 26) also talk about another form of display mode which is cumulative subtitles. They are a way to create dramatic effect or withhold information. The subtitles appear at different times but leave the screen at the same time. They are in sync with the speaker. For example, if there is a scene that uncovers a big part of the plot, the subtitles sometimes give it away before the speaker has a chance to finish due to a pause on the dialogue. Cumulative subtitles prevent this by leaving a gap that is similar to the dialogue and then adding the next part to the already existing subtitles on the screen (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 25).

From a technical standpoint, subtitles can be described as open or closed. Open subtitles are burned or projected onto the image and therefore, cannot be turned off or on (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 26). These are often used for displaying written content from the screen, for example newspaper headlines or a translation from a visible different language component (Fox 2018, 11). Closed subtitles can be turned on and off by the viewer. They are separate frames that are overlaid on the video. This gives the possibility for multiple language options for subtitles and the ability to choose between them (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 27). McDonnell et al. (2024, np.) mention that many TikTok creators have started to use open subtitles or, as they refer to them, open captions in their videos. TikTok also has the possibility for machine created closed subtitles to be turned on by the user. This is discussed more in the Method-section.

2.1.4 Cybersubtitles by Díaz-Cintas (2018)

As mentioned, *cybersubtitles* is a term introduced by Díaz-Cintas (2018, 132) for subtitles found on the internet. He states that these cybersubtitles can be either requested by a collective or they can be generated voluntarily. He also specifies that cybersubtitles can be made by either a professional or an amateur subtitler. Díaz-Cintas (2018) divides voluntary made cybersubtitles into three categories: fansubs, guerrilla subtitles, and altruist subtitles. Fansubs is a shorthand for fan-subtitles. These are subtitles that fan communities voluntarily produce and distribute freely on the internet without commission. Fan-subtitles are usually present in pirated media on the internet and can contain even typos and mistakes. Guerrilla subtitles are also referred to as activist subtitles as they are produced by people or collectives who are highly engaged in political activities, and they have the purpose of going against mass media and censorship or this is how Díaz-Cintas (2018, 134) likes to define them. Close to the other two types, altruist subtitles are usually voluntary but sometimes commissioned. The subtitling is done by people who have a close affiliation to the project, and it is done purely to get a broader audience for educational or informational purposes (Díaz-Cintas 2018, 133-134). Díaz-Cintas (2018) emphasises the fact that because everybody can add subtitles on the internet, there are endless possibilities and often also endless mistakes. Are amateur subtitlers aware of subtitle guidelines or do they abide by them?

Out of all the categories in the umbrella term cybersubtitles, social media subtitles was not a part of them. The subtitles in social media depend solely on who is publishing the video and for which purpose. Let us hypothesize that most TikTok creators are individual people with no ulterior motives other than have someone enjoy their video. They add subtitles in their videos by themselves because hiring a professional is not in their budget. Would these subtitles be closer to fan-subtitles or altruist subtitles? The subtitles are not made by a fan of the creator because the subtitles were already added in. If altruist subtitles are done by people with a close affiliation on the project, would not the creator of the video have the closest affiliation. Altruist subtitles are the type to be added so that the content is more accessible to either inform or educate the masses. By these definitions, social media subtitles could be categorised as altruist subtitles. However, this is mere speculation and, like previously mentioned, the categorisation of social media subtitles is highly dependent on their purpose whether it is to educate, towards accessibility or to create anarchy. Towards the latter, social media subtitles could easily be categorised as guerrilla subtitles as well. In conclusion, social media subtitles seem to fit every category and none of them at the same time.

Duraj and Szarkowska (2025, 2) introduce TikTok subtitles as significantly different from conventional broadcast subtitles and how they vary in typography, style and placement. They specify that many subtitle guidelines or tutorials concerning these types of subtitles are more about the technical aspects rather than the linguistic conventions. Hayes and Zabalbeascoa (2025, np.) also categorise social media subtitles to professional subtitles that do not follow conventions or norms or as freeform subtitles. Duraj and Szarkowska (2025, 2) emphasize the effect environment has on the outcome of the subtitles, because what is popular on the internet is usually replicated by others. Thus, a certain popular style in subtitles, a colour or a display mode can be made the norm for these subtitles by the content creators. TikTok subtitles can be more revolved around the style, animation and the placement than the linguistic correctness of them. The app is built around user engagement and most of the content creators rely on viewers. A more flashy or distinguishable subtitle can catch the attention of a viewer better than the regular neutral subtitles.

3 The guidelines for subtitling

As mentioned before, there are no universal rules for subtitling. One can argue that the lack of specific rules leaves space for more creative freedom, another that it leaves room for more mistakes. There are, however, guidelines and recommendations to follow. For example, subtitles are bound by time and the number of characters one can fit on a screen (Fox, 2018, 10). This is just one of the aspects one needs to consider when subtitling. The guidelines, that are explored here and used for the basis of the analysis, are made by professionals of the translation field.

3.1 Linguistic dimension

Turning spoken language into written form has its challenges. Most of the time this transition leads to the loss of contextual elements, for example dialect. There is also the problem of trying to convey emotions and intonations through written word. This omission is not only accidental but sometimes done due to the time and space restrictions (Fox 2018, 20). This section focuses on the linguistic part of subtitles. The focus is the target text's readability, grammar, idiomaticity and accuracy with the source text.

Fox (2018, 21) states how interlingual subtitles have the challenge of trying to transfer culturally specific aspects and humour compared to intralingual subtitles, which are prone to be more word-for-word subtitles. The guidelines have a consensus on transferring cultural items on intralingual subtitles only if they are relevant to the plot of the story. One of these specific aspects is the dialect of the speaker. Fotios Karamitroglou (1998) discusses that if speaker's accent or dialect is chosen to be visible in the subtitles, it should not be phonetic transcription of the spoken as it would not be immediately comprehensible to the viewer. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) also back this up by saying that in intralingual subtitles, accents should be indicated only if they are relevant for the viewer to understand the context, for example wanting to point out a character's origin without actually stating it. It also states that showing the accent or the dialect in the subtitles is very rarely done in news reports or other more serious components.

BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) however emphasize that intralingual subtitles should remain faithful to the speaker. This means the subtitles should not oversimplify or change their register, keeping their style of speech that is unique to them, even strong language, when they are essential to the plot. If the strong words are muted or bleeped in the dialogue, it should be replaced with three dots. For example, they recommend the following style: “Keep your f...ing nose out of it!” as opposed to a guideline created for Finnish intralingual subtitles by Vitikainen et al. (2020) who suggest that you replace the curse word with a description of the blip sound in the subtitles. Using the same example: “Keep your (Blip!) nose out of it!” would be the solution that Vitikainen et al. (2020) are suggesting. Vitikainen et al. (2020) agree with staying faithful to the source text but also emphasize the importance of following the norms and grammar of the target text. They focus more on the context of the source text, the bigger picture and keeping the coherence of the programme intact. Ivarsson and Carroll’s (1999, 157) *Code of Good Subtitling Practice* also states that when doing subtitles the language register should be kept appropriate and it should correspond with the spoken word all whilst keeping it grammatically correct. However, in subtitles, correcting speaker’s language should be done cautiously. If it forms an essential part of the dialect, the incorrect grammar should be left as it is.

For intralingual subtitles, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) and ITC guidelines (1999) introduce a way to convey sarcasm in the speaker’s tone which is placing an exclamation mark, or a question mark, in brackets. To indicate a stressed word, it can be highlighted by using capital letters. Vitikainen et al. (2020) on the other hand say that exclamation marks should be used cautiously and only when their exclusion would conflict with the register or the volume of the voice. In Finnish, one cannot only add a question mark to a sentence to turn it into a question. This is done with the use of Wh-words in Finnish or adding clitics, such as *-ko*, *-kö* (Kielitoimiston ohjepankki 2023). BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) uses three dots to replace a curse word, as opposed to Vitikainen et al. (2020) who uses three dots to indicate the continuation of a thought that ended in speech or hesitation or when there’s a thought break inside the lines. Both guidelines use brackets when describing the audio world, such as who is speaking, what is making noise and when there is another foreign language. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) uses brackets also in describing the tone of voice.

Ivarsson and Carroll (1999, 156–158) suggest that every interlingual subtitle should be syntactically their own unit which means that each subtitle should be a coherent sentence and easily understood alone even if a sentence is divided across scenes. The guideline from Vitikainen et al. (2020) also states that it would be best to avoid long sentences that go over many lines or even scene changes but if the information must be separated into two lines, this must be done logically and aesthetically. This means that the flow of information or the grammatical structure should not be interrupted but instead the line break should be at the opportune moment, for example between clauses (Fox 2018, 17). The BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) state that the following parts should not be separated: article and noun, preposition and following phrase, pronoun and verb, and parts of a complex verb. It also states that the breaks between these can be justified only if it eases viewers' eye movement. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 10–12) agree that the previous pairs should not be separated, but if done so, the divide must be logical. Dividing word pairings or compound words is not recommended in Finnish subtitles or by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 174–175). They discuss how separating these units that belong together slows down the reading process and can cause frustration for the viewer.

BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) also emphasise the importance of dividing the sentences at their most optimal and logical point. These previously stated recommendations include the divide between multiple lines, the line breaks and the divide between entire subtitles, the subtitle breaks in both intralingual and interlingual subtitles. The ITC Guidance on Standards of Subtitling (1999, 7–9) also puts the line breaks between phrase or clause boundaries but has stated that an ultimate ideal subtitle would only consist of one complete sentence. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 173–175) agree on how subtitles should be divided the most coherent way possible. If there is a sentence which consists of two or more clauses, then the break should be in between the two especially if the break is between subtitles where the information is divided between scenes. And if there are two or more sentences, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 173) suggest having one complete sentence per line. This of course is dependent on the length of the sentences because there are temporal and spatial restrictions to subtitles.

3.2 Spatial dimension

Spatial dimension is about the placement and the length of the subtitles. There are no absolutes on how subtitles are placed. Their placement is usually up to the technicians but there are limits and conventions that the subtitler needs to be aware of (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 92–93). The placement is highly dependent on the image on the background (BBC 2024). There is also what is called the *screen safety area* for subtitles. The text might be distorted if it is too close to the edges. This is why the preferred place for subtitles is on the bottom of the screen and centred on the middle, and one should deviate from this only when absolutely necessary (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 94). This means they can be placed on another section of the screen if it serves the background image. The subtitles cannot cover or disturb the image. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 95) state that if there is obscuring data at the top and the bottom of the screen, the subtitles should be then placed where they are the easiest to see and read. This is usually the top part of the screen. The BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) discuss how the background image also affects on whether or not the subtitles should be short and thick, which would have more lines and cover more of the image or then long and thin subtitles which would not cover the image but would have to be divided between subtitles and across scenes.

The spatial and timing aspects of subtitling in the guidelines have been heavily influenced by the six-second rule discussed by Díaz-Cintas (2007). The six-second rule means that the number of characters that an average viewer can read in six seconds is 37 per line, a total of 74 in a subtitle, and that there should only be two lines in the subtitle (Díaz-Cintas 2007, 2). The rule contains the recommended number of maximum characters for the optimal reading time. This is why the guidelines usually set out a character limitation for subtitles as well. Baños and Díaz-Cintas (2018, 317) placed the character limit between 35 and 42 characters. Ivarsson and Carroll (1999, n.p.) say that a maximum of 40 characters for cinema, and maximum of 35 characters for television are the most optimal for adequate reading time. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 96) say that the traditional number of characters allowed is 37 and that there is no fixed rule for minimum characters. In comparison, Netflix accommodates a maximum of 42 characters per line so 84 in total (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 98). The newer subtitle guideline by BBC (2024) sets maximum characters for broadcast programmes and online videos. As ‘online videos’ is such a wide-spread category, the maximum number of characters used is decided by the size of the video. The BBC Guidelines (2024)

summarised that if the subtitles are meant for both platforms, online and broadcast, the character limit should not exceed 37. For TikTok videos, which sizes are 9:16, the subtitles can be 90% of the width of the screen. This would mean that the maximum number of characters per line would be 25 according to the BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024).

Fox (2018, 16) discusses how many of the guidelines have set a maximum of two lines per subtitle. Ivarsson and Carroll (1999, 158) have also included in their section “*Code of Good Subtitling Practice*” a statement that the number of lines must be limited to two. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 7) are on the same page and recommend a maximum of two lines. In ITC Guidance on Standards of Subtitling (1999), it is also stated that two lines is the maximum in a subtitle. Compared to these, BBC Guidelines (2024) allows the maximum of three lines of subtitles depending on the size of the visual format. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 92–93) also state that the limit of two lines can be broken and is often done so by cybersubtitles found online. They further explain that the limit of two lines does not always apply to SDH subtitles as they are more likely to have 3–4 lines and it does not apply to bilingual subtitles either which regularly have four lines. Ivarsson and Carroll (1999, 158) state that if the subtitles are divided in two lines, the bottom should be longer than the top if possible. Meaning that the first line of subtitles should be shorter than the second one. This is optimal for shorter eye movement and is also more aesthetically pleasing for the viewer. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 173) add that even though it is more aesthetically pleasing, the divide should be made first with the syntax of the subtitle in mind.

3.3 Temporal dimension

Temporal dimension focuses on the duration of the subtitles, on the pauses between them and on the synchronisation of the subtitles with the speech. The timing of subtitles is also referred to as spotting. To think about the temporal aspect of subtitles, first we need to know what frames are. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) described it well: “[a]udiovisual productions create the illusion of moving images thanks to the rapid succession of a given number of frames per second (fps): a frame being one of the many still images which compose the complete film” (2021, 101). This is why when discussing timing factors for audiovisual material, the timecode is in a form 00:00:00:00 (HH:MM:SS:FF). Meaning that first it is hours, then minutes, seconds and lastly frames. The length of a second is decided by the framerate the programme uses, for example one second can be 24, 25 or up to 26 frames.

As stated above, audiovisual works consist of back-to-back frames being shown in high speed. This leads to the time being in smaller units such as seconds when timing subtitles. The most widely used measurement for subtitle length or their reading speed is CPS which is characters per second. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 108) say that the measurement WPM, which is words per minute, is used by guidelines based on the English language and it has been agreed that the average size of a word is five letters. This depends on the guideline and the language that it applies to. Sebastião Nascimento (2024) describes in his article that a high CPS rate, long subtitles in a short period of time, overwhelms viewers and on the other hand too low of a CPS rate, short subtitles in a long period of time, disrupts the flow of the video. This is why many of the guidelines are trying for the most optimal point between the two extremes regarding the time measurement they use.

Szarkowska and Gerber-Morón (2018, 2) first hypothesized in their study that longer reading speed gives viewers more time to follow what is also happening on-screen apart from the subtitles, but results stated that the slower the subtitle speed is, the more time it gives the viewer to re-read the subtitles and thus adds to their cognitive load (2018, 25). They also emphasized how reading time is affected by the viewer's ability to understand the source language. If the audio is a language the viewer understands, the subtitles can be viewed much quicker (2018, 4). Ivarsson and Carroll (1998, 72) stated the difficulty of following fast-paced subtitles and how they make the processing of information and the picture challenging. Szarkowska and Gerber-Morón (2018, 24–26) contradict this by stating that fast-paced subtitles do not affect the viewer's information processing as their reading speed is adjusted to match the subtitles pace. This is according to their study subjects and has exceptions. For example, they found out in their study that the frustration or too much of a cognitive load was more eminent with people who were not previously accustomed to subtitled context (Szarkowska & Gerber-Morón 2018, 27).

For intralingual subtitles, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) recommend a minimum subtitle speed of 0.3 seconds per word which is roughly 170 words per minute. This would equal to 14 characters per second. They do not state the preferred maximum duration of a subtitle. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) on the other hand recommend a maximum length at 7 seconds per subtitle or a maximum reading speed of 10–12 characters per second. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) recommend a minimum of 1.8 seconds per subtitle if that the subtitle consists of only a couple of words. For interlingual subtitles, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 96) put the

duration of a subtitle between 1–6 seconds, minimum of 1 second and a maximum of 6 seconds. Ivarsson and Carroll (1998, 157–159) also had set a similar scope of 1–7 seconds for a subtitle. The guidelines and recommendations have mostly similar timing suggestions. For Finnish intralanguage subtitles (Vitikainen et al. 2021) did have the longest minimum time of 1.8 seconds. This can be due to Finnish language long compound words or a norm that has proved to be factual from the writer's experiences.

The focus is drawn to the subtitle at the same moment it appears on the screen (Ivarsson, Carroll (1998,72). The timing of subtitles is supposed to follow the rhythm of the speech. The viewer directs their gaze to the subtitles as soon as they hear speech or a hard-of-hearing viewer interprets the facial cues, therefore it creates confusion if there are no subtitles visible at that moment (ITC 1999, 11). If there are two or more speakers, syncing subtitles to match speech is even more important. The synchronization should also apply to speakers off-screen (BBC Subtitle Guidelines 2024). In addition, Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) state that the subtitles are to appear on the screen when the speech starts or maximum of a few frames before. The subtitles should disappear from the screen when the speech ends or a maximum of one second after. According to BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024), subtitles should not appear more than 1.5 seconds, or 36 frames, before speech starts and should disappear after a maximum of 1.5 seconds after the speech ends. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 102–103) recommend that the display rate for subtitles would be that they appear a maximum of three frames before and disappear a maximum of 12 frames after the speech.

Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) state that the voice trumps the image. Meaning that the subtitles can stay on screen as long as the speech continues even if the scene changes. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) contradicts this by saying that if the speaker disappears from the screen, so should the subtitle. It is not specified in the guideline whether or not this is the standard to follow even if the speech continues after the speaker has disappeared. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 115) agree with the forementioned by stating that good general guidelines would be that the subtitles should not go across scene or shot changes if the speaker has finished and if the subtitle goes over to another shot, it should not be removed too quickly after the scene change. They also say that the subtitle should not hang over a change into a completely different scene unless a sound provides a bridge for it. An example of this would be a narrator that keeps talking in the background. All the previous guidelines and recommendations agree that the most important aspect of this is coherence. If one would need

to slip slightly out of sync with subtitles and speech, it must be done with good reason and to not let it affect the flow of information and viewing experience. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) also state that consistency is important. The length of the pauses should stay relatively the same and it is best not to have too many short pauses.

Ivarsson and Carroll (1998, 156) do not set specific frame differences between the subtitles and audio but emphasize how important it is to synchronise the two. They also emphasize the importance of pauses between subtitles. Pauses between subtitles are usually timed in between a shot-change. This gives the viewer time to adjust and process the new image without the subtitles taking the attention (ITC 1999, 12). BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) agree on the importance of pauses. They state that if there is a pause between speech, the pause between subtitles should be a second minimum and preferably a second and a half in length. However, if there is less time than that it produces too much of a “jerky effect” (BBC 2024), and the pauses should then be avoided and the time left for the subtitles. This all depends on the available time and the background image as the subtitles should not hang over images as previously stated. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) say that the minimum pause for continuous subtitles should be 2–4 empty frames. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 114–114) also agree that a pause between the subtitles should be the length of two clear frames. This gives the viewer enough time to process the change of information and follow the flow of a new one. They also agree that subtitles which drag on the screen too long and do not have the sufficient pauses can be disruptive for the viewer. Ivarsson and Carroll (1998, 73) say that there is no reason to remove the subtitles right after the speech ends. That it would be more important to give slow readers more time, however, they also state that the pauses between subtitles should be a minimum of 4 empty frames. The BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) also agree on allowing more time for subtitles in those instances where there is a lot happening in the background, there are unfamiliar words, or there are several speakers.

3.4 Appearance

McDonnell et al. (2024, chap. 4.1.2.) state in their study that most of their participants preferred black and white captions. The next optimal options were white text on a colourful background or other way around, colourful text with a white background. From this it can be determined that the best colour combinations are the ones that are subtle and the most readable. For intralingual subtitles, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) say that subtitles should be white and on a black background for optimum legibility. However, they continue by stating that one should avoid colourful backgrounds. This could be interpreted in a way that one should avoid any other colour than black as a background for subtitles. Regarding interlingual subtitles, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 97) say that all subtitles should be white in colour and that one use of colour changes in subtitles is to indicate a speaker change. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) agrees that this is the preferred method for identifying speakers. They also specify that the narrator is usually indicated using the colour yellow.

There are also other methods of signalling a speaker change. For intralingual subtitles Vitikainen et al. (2020) and BBC Subtitle Guidelines have the following recommendations. According to BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) single quotes are most used when the speaker is out of the picture and more rarely used indicator for out-of-vision sounds are arrows pointing towards the speaker. They also say that when the use of colours as an indicator is unavailable, one should use dashes to signal a speaker change. Some practices are not in frequent use anymore when indicating speaker change, such as pointing arrows. Vitikainen et. al (2020) agree on using colours to identify a different speaker and using em dashes when signalling a speaker change inside the subtitles. However, their preferred method for a speaker off screen is using italics but not when the speaker is in the same space as the other character. For example, if a speaker is talking from a different room, then it is marked with cursive. If the speaker is in the same room but not just in the shot, cursive is not used but lines are separated with an em dash when necessary. For interlingual subtitles Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 132–134) discuss the use of italics. They agree with Vitikainen et al. (2020) that italic should be used for an off-screen speaker but not when they are in the same space. Instead Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) say to use Roman type, which is another historical type, for the speaker in the same room but not visible on the screen. To identify a speaker in interlingual subtitles in other ways than using different colours, ITC Guidance on Standards of Subtitling (1999) recommends horizontal positioning. It discusses how this can be problematic if the

characters move around a lot. For a voice coming out of screen, the guideline recommends a label caption which names the source before the subtitle. The guideline also recommends a character label before the subtitle when there are multiple speakers or when it is unclear who is talking.

Fonts are determined by each platform, but all follow a guideline of *invisible subtitling* where subtitles should be as discreet as possible. This is why the most used fonts are neutral and less ambiguous such as Arial or Helvetica. Netflix even has their own font for subtitles called Netflix Sans (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 96). BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) state that font size should be a maximum of 4.5% of active video height in 9:16 aspect ratio. This is the ratio that is most optimal for uploading TikTok videos. (Ahmed 2025). The font size also depends on the platform and on the image in the background. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) state that for online subtitles the client or the creator determines the font, but it is best to use a system font for optimal readability as other fonts may lose clarity. These recommended system fonts are Helvetica for IOS and Roboto for Android. Finnish public service media company *Yle* states that for their broadcast subtitles, they use Tiresias-fonts which have been designed especially considering people with visual impairments (Yle n.d.). Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 96) recommend the font Arial 30 for all Latin alphabet subtitles. In BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) it is said that in online platforms different characters are permitted than in broadcast, such as note signs for music or currency symbols. There is also a lot of emoji-usage online that is not acceptable in the broadcast systems. McDonnell and colleagues (2024, chap. 4.1.) discuss that many TikTok captions contain emojis for paralinguistic components such as tone of the speaker. For this, they say that emojis are a useful tool but if used excessively they become off-putting and leave too much of the message to interpretation.

4 The impact of subtitles

This section focuses on the types of impact that subtitles have. It introduces a model for subtitle analysis that was inspired by the lack of a generalised accessible theory for analysing the quality of interlingual subtitles. This model is called the FAR model by Jan Pedersen (2017). This section also discusses the growth aspect of social media now-a-days and how it affects subtitles and their viewer. I will also briefly dive into the impact that social media platforms have in the modern world and thus how much impact their subtitles, or lack of them, have.

4.1.1 The need for subtitles leads FAR

Jan Pedersen (2017, 210–212) describes in his article how the quality assessment of subtitles has been focused on the process and not the final product, and how the assessment is usually done by using the guidelines. He explains that there are numerous guidelines for every language and for every company which seem to have their own preferences. In addition, most of these guidelines can be accessed by the employees only and not by everybody wanting to do subtitles. He also mentioned that the previously existing models are targeted towards intralingual subtitles and cannot be utilised when assessing the quality of interlingual subtitles. For these reasons, Pedersen introduced the FAR model for analysing the quality of interlingual subtitles. He divided it into three parts: Functional equivalence, Acceptability and Readability (Pedersen, 2017, 217). He was also inspired by the previously existing NER model by Romero-Fresco (2011) that focused on intralingual live subtitles. This thesis does not cover live subtitles; therefore, this exact model is not explored further.

Pedersen (2017, 217) wanted to focus on interlingual subtitles because they are a type that involves translation. The model is based on error analysis and is divided into the previously mentioned three parts. With functional equivalence, Pedersen (2017, 218) emphasised the importance of focusing on getting the intended message across rather than what is exactly said on the subtitles. Functional equivalence is divided into semantic and stylistic errors. Minor semantic errors account to 0.5 points. These are lexical mistakes that do not affect the understanding or the flow of the text. Standard error equals to 1 point and it means the errors that do not disturb the viewer's progress or that still convey most of the actual meaning. A serious semantic error, which is 2 points, would disturb the viewer's progress and understanding of the text. Stylistic errors are not considered as heavy as semantic errors. An

example of a stylistic error would be using the wrong language register or tone. Their point system is the same as it is in the following categories: minor error is 0.25 points, standard error 0.5 and a serious error is worth 1 point.

The next category that Pedersen (2017, 220) introduced is acceptability which analyses how the subtitles follow the norms of the target language. He divides these errors into three: grammar, spelling and errors of idiomaticity. Minor errors are 0.25 points, standard errors 0.5 and serious errors are worth 1 point. Grammatical minor errors are something that slightly annoys the viewer but does not disrupt the flow. Serious grammar errors affect greatly on the understanding and standard errors fall between these two. Pedersen (2017, 220–221) states that for spelling, minor errors are any spelling mistakes, standard errors mistakes that change the meaning and serious errors mistakes that make the text incomprehensible. Pedersen (2017, 221) explains that errors in idiomaticity is directed toward the errors in the natural use of the target language. Idiomaticity means the use of a language that would sound natural to a native speaker. For example, the use of idioms or slang frequent to the language.

The third big category that Pedersen (2017, 221) introduces is readability. As per its name, it relates how effortless reading the text is. It is divided also into three parts: segmentation and spotting, punctuation and graphics, and reading speed and line length. Pedersen (2017, 221–222) emphasises the importance of segmentation and spotting, as mistakes in these greatly distract the viewer. A serious error in this part would be that the subtitles are not synchronised with the speed by more than one utterance. A minor error would be that the subtitle is less than one second out of sync. A standard error fall between these two. Punctuation and graphics errors depend highly on the guideline that is used, Pedersen (2017, 222) states. This would indicate that the FAR model is dependent on the guidelines' input. One guideline says to use dashes to indicate a speaker change while the other says to use them for every speaker. The reading speed and line length are also dependent on the used guideline. However, Pedersen (2017, 222–223) recommends that anything that is over 15 cps, characters per second, should be marked as an error and anything over 20 cps would qualify as a standard error.

The overall scoring is calculated by adding the points from the one category and then dividing them with the number of analysed subtitles. This is done for each three categories. Pedersen (2017, 224–225) brings out how one of the problems for this model is how to judge the severity of errors and how to assign them a penalty score. It highlights a recurring issue of translation and language which is that in some aspect, the answer is not up to the rules but the interpretation of the reader. The point system's purpose is merely to give detailed feedback to the translator/subtitler in which areas they need to improve or in which areas they excel at.

4.1.2 The influence of TikTok subtitles

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 1) point out the growing appearance of screens all around us. The audiovisual aspects are today's norm and are with us at home, at work and even en route to work. It has become our daily routine to consume audiovisual content for either our enjoyment or to obtain information from it. In 2021, TikTok was named the most downloaded app of 2020 (BBC 2021). This shows how the audiovisual world is in the palm of our hands rather than in the movie theatres or in our television. This constant presence of the audiovisual content has increased the need for audiovisual translation (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2021, 3). This prompts social media channels to add the possibility of subtitles in their platforms. The company TikTok has a quote in their website that states: “[o]ur goal at TikTok is to be accessible to all people, and we're committed to doing the work long-term” (TikTok 2021). The timing of such claim is fitting because at the same time TikTok introduced automatic captioning (McDonnell et al. 2024). McDonnell and colleagues (2024, chap. 1) discuss how TikTok users prefer to add their own subtitles even though the app added a tool for automatic subtitles. With this, they state that prior limited research shows a preference for captioning styles that match with television standards. However, there are no comprehensive studies made or enough proof to fully support this statement.

With the growth of social media presence, intralingual subtitles are no longer aimed only for hard of hearing or language learners but for everybody. TJ McCue (2019) discusses a study made by Verizon Media together with Publicis Media about the percentage of consumers who are watching media without the sound. The study found that 69% of people view videos without sound in public places and that if the video is captioned, 80% of people are more likely to watch the entire video. This is further proof that most people have the habit of watching TikTok in public places without sounds and thus relying on subtitles for the content.

McCue (2019) focuses the article on the marketing side of subtitling and argues that one has to make sure their brand message comes across on a video without sound. Pedersen (2017) also emphasised getting your intent across which is a key point in subtitling and in translation overall.

5 Materials and Method

This section covers the materials used for the analysis. It also discusses the methods of how and why these materials were chosen. It starts with introducing TikTok and more about the general layout and the development of the app in brief. After, there will be more about the content creators and why they were chosen. The last part will discuss the methods used in this study.

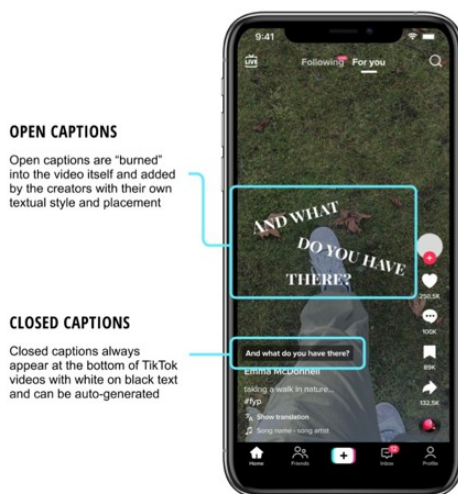
5.1 TikTok

TikTok started out as an app called Musical.ly. It consisted mainly of people uploading dancing videos and tutorials on it. At the same time, a company in China called ByteDance published their own eastern version of the app, Douyin. It gathered so many users that ByteDance decided to explore the market by buying off Musical.ly and merging content from the two apps and thus creating TikTok in 2016 (Tidy & Smith Galer 2020). TikTok is an app where anyone can watch and upload videos ranging from 15 seconds to an hour. It provides songs, sounds and special effects that one can add onto their video (Britannica Editors, 2026). In 2024, TikTok was the most downloaded app with over 770 million downloads that year. Overall, it has been downloaded over 5 billion times (Iqbal 2025). This can contain redownloads. TikTok has partially gained its popularity due to its algorithm technology. The app has an algorithm which shapes the viewer's experience. The algorithm analyses user's behaviour to determine what kind of content they would like to see. This behaviour means what the user likes, comments, follows or how long they watch specific videos (Lang 2024).

With the recent boom in artificial intelligence, or AI, and machine translation, users and creators can turn on autogenerated captions. Auto captions-mode generates captions for the videos automatically. As a creator, one can alter the captions before publishing the video (Hind, 2021). However, many creators choose to use separate apps to help them add their own subtitles to the videos. Within these apps there is a lot of options for different fonts, colours and display modes. TikTok also offers a way to do add subtitles manually to your videos without downloading another app. This requires the creator to write the subtitles and manually set a time for each of the texts, much like a subtitler does. (Robles, 2025). It is emphasized in Robles' article how the captions cannot be altered after the video is posted. The subtitles become a part of the video and that is why they are often called open captions. Captions that TikTok AI functions can add for a viewer afterwards are called closed captions as they can be

turned on and off. This is demonstrated in *Figure 1 Simulated screenshot of TikTok (McDonnel et al. 2024)*.

Figure 1 Simulated screenshot of TikTok (McDonnel et al. 2024)



In this figure, the closed captions are the ones right above the name of the user who published the video and they are the ones that can be turned off and on. The bigger subtitles on top of the image are the open captions which are the ones added before publishing the video and cannot be removed by the viewer. These usually are more colourful and larger in size than the closed captions and much like in the figure, placed more non-traditionally.

5.2 The content creators

In this subsection I will briefly discuss the content creators I have chosen. I will give a brief introduction of them and the video. And then I discuss more why were these chosen for this study.

5.2.1 Käärijä

Jere Mikael Pöyhönen, or as he is more commonly known, Käärijä is a Finnish artist who participated in the song contest Eurovision in 2023 (Iltalehti, 2023). Although he came in second in the song contest, he won the audience's hearts. He has gathered a wide-spread fan base around the world. He has over 830,000 followers on his TikTok account called *paidatonriehuja*. This popularity in other countries got him to make content in English as well or at least sometimes add English captions to his videos. This is one of the main reasons why

I chose him for this study. The video acts as an example of interlingual subtitling in social media. It is a video of Käärijä in a paid partnership advertisement with Oddly Good, a Swedish company that makes plant-based products. In this advertisement, Käärijä is running late and has to eat breakfast and drink coffee before going. He then resolves this with the ICE, ICE, COFFEE -product and pours the iced coffee into his cereal. The video was published on the 4th of October 2024 in Käärijä's TikTok account, and it has over 22 000 views. The video is only 19 seconds long and has 4 interlingual subtitles. There are no credits for creator, subtitler or cameraman information.

5.2.2 Yle Uutiset

Yleisradio Oy or Yle is a Finnish broadcasting company. Yle Uutiset is a segment that focuses on the news. They have their own website for news stories and videos. The Yle Uutiset -website offers news in many languages: Finnish, plain Finnish, Swedish, plain Swedish, English, Saami, Arabic, and many more. For this study, I will explore their Finnish social media channel on TikTok. Going along with the boom of social media, even more businesses, enterprises and news channels have made their own accounts on these platforms. The Finnish channel has a number of 85,000 followers. They do not seem to have a channel in English. That will make Yle Uutiset an example for intralingual subtitling in social media and from the viewpoint of the Finnish language. The video analysed in this thesis is a news video about a flood that occurred in Western Finland in November 2024. Yle's reporter, Antti Kurra is narrating the video that shows the flood damages in different cities. The video also shows him speaking from time to time. He talks a strong Finnish dialect of which origin is unknown to me and not explicitly stated anywhere but could be originating from his hometown Raahe. The video was published on the 26th of November 2024 on the channel *yleuutiset* on TikTok. It has over 21 500 views and the clips were shot by Janni Kumpulainen. Other creators have not been mentioned. The video itself lasts 29 seconds and has 15 intralingual subtitles.

5.2.3 JoshofWestern

Josh Hurst is a freelance writer and an influencer from the USA, who lives in Finland. He shoots comical videos about the everyday life and habits of the Finnish people. He also writes a blog in which he tells why he came and stayed in Finland. His username in platforms is JoshofWestern. His TikTok account has over 90 000 followers and his videos have millions of views. His trademark is indeed talking about what it is like to experience the oddities of the Finnish culture and the language as an American. I chose him for this study because he is multilingual, specifically that he speaks Finnish and English, and because of his gain in popularity. He also has subtitles in every one of his videos. In most of them, he speaks English and has intralingual subtitles in English but in some where he also speaks Finnish or with a Finn, he has both intra- and interlingual subtitles. The video I chose for this study has a Finnish audio and both types of subtitles. In the video he is portraying a conversation with a Finnish person, both played by him, where the Finn does not understand him speaking Finnish because of his accent. It was published 14th of May in 2025 and has 2054 likes and 42 000 views. The video is 20 seconds long and has 14 subtitles, 7 in Finnish and 7 in English. and one introductory caption in English in the beginning. There are no mentions of other creators or if a caption tool was used.

5.3 Method

As an avid user of social media, I have come upon many forms of subtitles or the complete lack of them. My own interest in the field of audiovisual translation sparked the idea of researching the content and the form of the subtitles used in the social media platforms and how are they following the known norms of subtitling. My TikTok algorithm has developed in the sense that my page contains mostly content in English. This has opted me to discover that TikTok contains a lot of intralingual subtitles. For the purpose of this thesis, I wanted to gather a variety of subtitles, both intralingual and interlingual, and subtitles both in Finnish and in English. I started by putting the phrase “Finnish content creators with the most views” on a search engine, Google. This was done in the hopes that I would find Finnish creators that would be popular around the world. That would mean they would more likely add subtitles in their videos to accommodate their viewer base. The results were inconsistent and only resulted in creators popular in Finland. I rephrased and searched for Finnish creators that are popular around the world. It gave me results but not ones who used captions.

I gave up this search method and started thinking who could most likely have captions on their videos. I started with celebrities I knew had made a big name for themselves outside of Finland. For example, Jukka Hildén, Samu Haber, and Käärijä. From these, Käärijä was the only one I could find translated subtitles from. He is this thesis’ interlingual subtitles from Finnish to English example. At the time of the analysis, the video in question was the only one of Käärijä’s videos to contain any subtitles. For another video I started to think about the accessibility side and thought that news and other information channels had to have either intralingual or interlingual subtitles. I found that Yle Uutiset has a TikTok in Finnish and Swedish but not in English, therefore the analysis from their video will be conducted on intralingual subtitles. I wanted another example that would have interlingual subtitles but finding ones that involved Finnish was tough. I then started asking my circle of friends if they have come across any subtitled videos with Finnish and English. This led me to Josh Hurst. I had seen a few of his videos before but none that had either an entire audio in Finnish or the entire subtitles in Finnish. Luckily, I managed to find, with the help of a friend, one of his videos that had both Finnish and English subtitles. This led his video to become an example of both intra- and interlingual subtitles.

I downloaded the videos from the browser version of TikTok to my computer. I used an app called CapCut to manually rewind the videos and create a timecode for the audio and subtitles. I rewound the video back and forth manually to get the timecodes. I was able to move to the exact time when the subtitles appeared or changed. I got accurate results because CapCut App shows the time in seconds and frames, and it is easy to navigate between them. The CapCut App uses a framerate of 24 frames per second (fps), so this is what is used in my analysis. I transcribed both the audio and the subtitles into separate tables and then added the timecodes. This made comparing them with their counterparts much easier. I used a separate website called AVTOOLS.io to calculate the duration of the subtitles and audio using the timecodes. I manually input the timecodes into the website, and it calculated their framerate difference.

My method for analysing these subtitles is a comparative one. I go over the subtitles line by line and study if they follow the guidelines or not. For the video with interlingual subtitles, Käärijä's, I will use the guidelines which offer recommendations for interlingual subtitles. These guidelines include the ones put together by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021), Ivarsson and Carroll (1998) and Wendy Fox (2018). For the intralingual subtitles, which are in Yle's video, I will use the guidelines that are concentrated on intralingual subtitles. These guidelines include BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024), the guidelines by Vitikainen et al. (2020) and the ITC Guidance on Standards of Subtitling (1999). The guideline by Vitikainen et al. (2020) was made for Finnish intralanguage subtitles and also in collaboration with Yle. This makes it the most important guideline for the analysis of the Yle video. However, I want to explore and analyse the subtitles using other guidelines for intralanguage subtitles as well. This can point out either some differences or similarities in the guidelines and how the results will vary depending on which one are you using. For the video with both types of subtitles, Josh's, I will use all of the forementioned guidelines.

My analysis follows the same categorisation that Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) used in their work. This means that the structure will begin with the linguistic dimension which focuses on the readability of the target text. It is where I compare the spoken and written with each other and as well explore the linguistic choices made in those subtitles. The spatial dimension contains analysis briefly about the placement of the subtitles. The section focuses mostly on the number of characters and lines. The temporal dimension entails analysis of the subtitle timing and if and how they differ from the audio. The spatial and temporal dimensions have

been combined into one section because it is the most viable solution for analysing these two components of subtitles. For the purpose of this thesis, we assume that the framerate used in the videos is 24 fps as it is in the app CapCut. The appearance of the subtitles is also analysed briefly in the latter sections. I also included an analysis of the interlingual subtitles using the FAR model by Pedersen (2017). I used his point system for errors when analysing the target text and made a summary to see in which areas the interlingual subtitles have the most opportunities for improvement.

6 Analysis

In this section I will go over the videos and analyse the characteristics of their subtitles. These characteristics include readability, grammar, timing, placement and the appearance. I compare the subtitles against the guidelines recommendations' which includes also comparing the subtitles with the audio.

6.1 Käärijä: a Finnish video with interlingual subtitles

The first video is a Finnish video with interlingual subtitles from Finnish to English. The video is 19 seconds long and has a total of 4 interlingual subtitles. For this video, I will use the guidelines that also have recommendations for interlingual subtitles. These include the guidelines from Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021), Ivarsson and Carroll (1998) and Wendy Fox (2018). For the temporal and spatial dimensions, I will also add the BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) as they are the only ones differentiating their recommendations for online subtitles and broadcast subtitles. In the last subsection the subtitles are analysed by using the FAR-model introduced by Jan Pedersen (2017).

6.1.1 Linguistic dimension

The linguistic dimension focuses on the readability of the subtitles and whether or not they follow the target language's grammar. It is also examined how loyal the target text is to the source text and how much do they differ from one another. I will start with the analysis of the source text, the audio. The whole video contains a form of Finnish that is more normally used in speech as opposed to written and more grammatically correct standard Finnish. There are two speakers in the video, one off-camera and the other visible on screen. Both of the speakers are using expressions prone to spoken language. From this, it can be further interpreted that the speakers are somewhat familiar with each other. The chatty tone can be seen in the words on the left which are found in the source text. Their grammatically correct correspondent is on the right as follows:

Pittää → *pitää* [have to]

Kaikkee → *kaikkea* [all]

Syyä → *syödä* [eat]

These examples are not limited to only one person but found from both speakers. Another common sign of a chattier conversation is the use of the idiom *kahvi naamaan*. Literally translated it would mean “throw or put the coffee in your face” but in true meaning it is an expression used for drinking or finishing your coffee rapidly. An important observation is that the phrase in the audio itself does not contain a verb thus making it another marker for spoken language as missing a verb is not grammatically correct language. Another sign of a chattier language is the use of a clitic common to the Finnish language. Clitics are used to give tone and states of emotion to the conversation. In this instance, the clitic *-pä*s that is found in the last subtitle in the word *kylläpä*s [translation for *kyllä*: yes] adds the emphasis that the speaker is proving their counterpart wrong by succeeding in their task and doing this with a bit of smugness. The clitics in the Finnish language are used in the spoken language and are very hard to translate to their target text. How it was done in this video is discussed below. Below there is the example in question with the target text on the left and the source text on the right.

*Kylläpä*s kerkesin [Yes I did make it in time] → Oh yes I do 😏

To analyse the loyalty of the target text to the source text, they have to be compared to one another. As stated above, the source text contains many markers for a more relaxed spoken language. The subtitles do not contain as much of spoken language elements as the audio. However, they do contain some. For example, the verb *chug* present in the first subtitle is considered to be more of a slang. Another example of the chatty tone is the verb phrase *have to* which is usually replaced by the verb *must* in more formal conversations and to be more concise. Both are grammatically correct options but have a difference in tone. To stay true to the tone of the source text and to the speaker’s character, the phrase *have to* is used instead of *must*. The conversational aspect is especially visible in the last subtitle that can also be seen above: “Oh yes I do 😏”. It contains an interjection and is missing a comma that comes after it. The subtitle also has an emoji which is an aspect not seen in broadcast subtitles. As mentioned previously, emojis can add some paralinguistic elements to the subtitles. In this case it would indicate the smugness or joy of being right. This can also be interpreted from the text itself but with time limitations, the emoji is a faster indicator. The use of the interjection and the addition of the emoji can be a way to indicate the same things that the Finnish clitic *-pä*s does in the source text.

Although, the subtitles do not contain as many markers of spoken language as the audio does, they do contain them in almost every subtitle. The intended tone is visible in the subtitles. As previously mentioned, Fox (2018,20) stated how hard the transfer of a culturally specific element or humour is. If we examine the phrases below:

*kahvi naamaan [literally: throw the coffee in your face
actually: finish your coffee fast]
→ chug your coffee*

It can be seen that both convey the same basic meaning of finishing a coffee in a rapid manner. However, it can be argued that the phrase in Finnish holds more meaning as an idiom for Finnish people rather than the English one for English speaking people. The phrase in the target text is not considered to be an idiom. Despite of that, this is considered to follow the guidelines' recommendations as the solution is being loyal to the source text by conveying its meaning and at the same time keeping its readability.

Looking more at the grammatical aspect of the linguistic dimension it can be seen that there are some changes in the tense throughout the video. First the audio seems to be in the present tense except for the last subtitle that switches to the past tense. This makes sense as the speaker is done performing said action and then states something about it. Many of the guidelines recommend matching the subtitles to the same tense as the audio, for example BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) recommend one should avoid changing the form of the verb and to keep the form same throughout the subtitles. This is realised in all but one subtitle. It continues to be in present tense and thus deviates from the audio. This makes it grammatically correct in the target language, English. The answer to a question or the corresponding phrases to each other need to be in the same tense. As it is stated by the guidelines, it is important to follow the grammatical rules of the target language if there is not a good enough reason not to. The only grammatical error can be found in the last subtitle where there is a comma missing. Omitting or having it there does not change the tone or the outcome so this can be calculated as a deviation from the guidelines' recommendations.

The subtitles follow the recommendations in the manner that the line breaks have been made in a logical point. This means that the sentences have not been cut in the middle of information or in between word pairs. Only one of the subtitles could defer from this as the other three consist of only one line, therefore no line breaks inside the subtitles are needed. This first subtitle, that contains two lines, has three sentences which all end in exclamation marks. Fox (2018, 27) says that the use of many special characters can be too disruptive. Therefore, the first subtitle is not following the recommendation as one or two of the exclamation marks could be omitted by rephrasing or restructuring. In the other subtitles, there are also exclamation marks. All these are due to the other speaker not being in the room but shouting from another and the speaker on-screen replying to them by shouting back. For the subtitles to convey the same, it can be argued that exclamation marks are needed. Too frequent use of them in a subtitle, however, goes against the recommendations.

6.1.2 Spatial and temporal dimension

The subtitles follow the recommendations as they contain a maximum of two lines per subtitles. Based on the previously explored guidelines, the recommended number of characters per line is between 37–42. For online videos, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) stated that 25 would be a maximum number of characters per line so only 50 characters per subtitle. As stated before, only one of the subtitles consists of more than one line. The other three subtitles are one-liners. They are rather short subtitles and do not come close to the maximum numbers of allowed characters. The first and longest subtitle has the greatest number of characters with a total of 46, which does not go over the recommendations for a subtitle. It does, however, have one line that is over 25 characters recommended for online characters in the BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024). The last subtitle, with 12 plus the emoji, has the least number of characters. The emoji takes up 2–4 characters on TikTok. This had to be tested out on the app itself by writing it in a comment section that calculates used characters. The emoji in question “🤪” takes up 2 characters so the last subtitle consists of 14 characters in total. There is no minimum number of characters suggested by the guidelines as for there to be subtitles, there has to be some characters.

The subtitles are placed on top of the screen. This goes against the recommended spot of them being on the bottom and the centre of the screen. However, as explained in the Material section, TikTok videos have a lot of metadata obscuring the bottom of the screen. When this

happens, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2024) recommend moving the subtitles to a place best for their readability and where they do not interfere with the background image. In the video, this optimal place is on the top of the screen where they are. Important to note, if they would be any higher, they would be obscured by more of TikTok's metadata. There is not a lot of room for subtitles in the app and the measurements of them can be distorted by the screen size of which you are viewing the videos from. For the device used for this analysis, the subtitles were in a visible place and not blocking the background image.

All four subtitles follow the recommended minimum duration of 1 second set by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) and the 1.2 seconds minimum set by BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024). The maximum duration set by the guidelines is 6 seconds. None of the subtitles exceed this therefore they are according to the guidelines. The longest subtitle in characters and in duration is the first one, lasting for 4 seconds and 14 frames. The guidelines have also discussed the importance of having pauses between the subtitles. The pauses between continuous subtitles should be at least a few empty frames, a minimum of 4 frames according to Ivarsson and Carroll (1998). Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2020) suggest also 2–4 empty frames for the required minimum. These are realised between all but the first two subtitles. Between the first and the second subtitle the pause consists of only one empty frame. The empty frames are there to give time for the viewer to process information. Only one empty frame goes against the recommendations. The pause between the last two subtitles is the length of 9 empty frames. There is also a lengthy pause between speech therefore this pause should be at least 1 second long according to BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024).

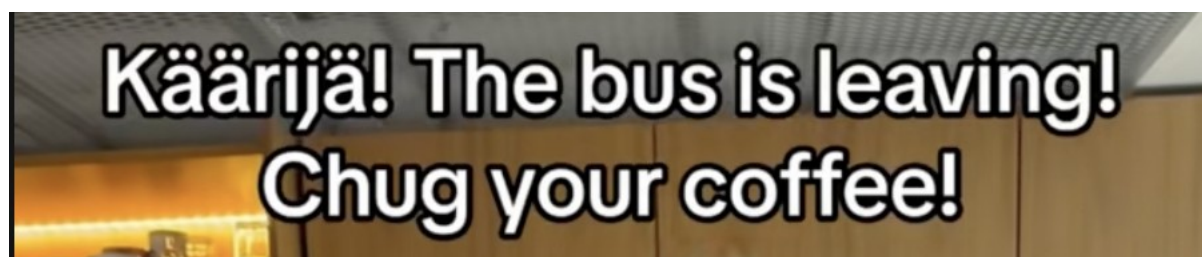
The pauses are also done for more aesthetically pleasing viewing experience and to achieve it, it is also important for the subtitles to follow the rhythm of speech. All of the guidelines agreed and emphasised the importance of synchronising the subtitles to match the flow of the speech. There are no shot changes in the video, therefore the subtitles automatically follow the recommendations by not hanging over one. As stated previously, the attention of the viewer is drawn on the subtitles in the moment they appear on the screen. The first subtitle in the video is visible from the moment the video starts. Its corresponding speech starts 1 second and 12 frames after the subtitle is already visible. This follows the recommendation set by the BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) of a subtitle appearing and disappearing with a maximum of 1.5 second difference in both. However, the recommendation is for intralingual broadcast subtitles and gives more room for being unsynchronised because they are directed for deaf or

hard-of-hearing viewers. The subtitles in the video do not follow Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021) recommended rates for interlingual subtitles of appearing three frames before and disappearing 12 frames after the speech. Rest of the subtitles are not following this recommendation as they are either appearing 4 frames before or disappearing 14 frames after the speech. In conclusion. According to Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021) recommendations the subtitles are not synchronised with the speech.

6.1.3 Appearance

The following examples for the subtitles are screenshots taken with a laptop. There are no indicators within the subtitle text that the other speaker is in another room and not visible for the viewer. This means that the subtitles are not in cursive or there are no dialogue dashes. *Figure 2*, that can be found below, depicts the first subtitle of the video. In the figure, it is shown how the off-screen speaker is marked with a white text that has a black outline. This goes against Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021) statement that all subtitles should be white and at most have a grey box background. However, they stated that the background box should be used to improve readability which in this case the black colour is doing. The first subtitle, and others by the same speaker as they are the same colour scheme, are then following the recommendations by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021). They also go by the guidelines because the font itself is neutral and discrete. The actual font that is used is not stated anywhere and it is hard to determine by other means. By comparing it to font types, it seems to be close to Arial or Helvetica which are among the fonts recommended by the guidelines.

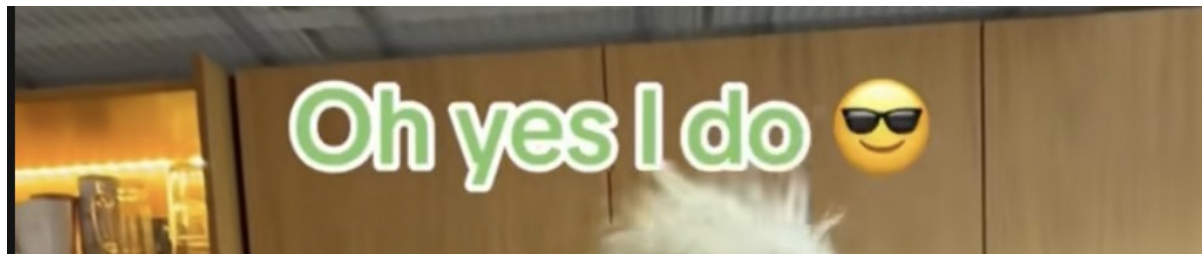
Figure 2 Käärijä subtitle, off-screen speaker example



It can be seen from *Figure 3*, that they have chosen to use colours to indicate a speaker change which is the preferred method by BBC Guidelines (2024). Something that is not visible from the examples is that they are also using the colour changes consistently with the white indicating the off-screen speaker and the green being Käärijä. This example showcases

the usage of an emoji which is not the standard for broadcasting but is considered normal for social media.

Figure 3 Käärijä subtitle, Käärijä example



Both of these subtitles have the colour combinations that were favoured by the participants in McDonnell and colleagues (2024) study. The combination entails either a black or a white counterpart. The subtitle in *Figure 2*, is the most preferred form. This colour combination in *Figure 3* is going against the recommendation set by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021). The colour green is most likely used for Käärijä's speech because it has become a trademark colour for him.

6.1.4 Käärijä from a FAR

Pedersen (2017) introduced the FAR model for analysing the quality of interlingual subtitles. The model is focused on errors thus this analysis will be too. The first category that Pedersen (2017) introduces is functional equivalence which focuses on semantic and stylistic errors. These subtitles do not contain any of those. They convey the audio, not verbatim, but the intended message from it without altering or disturbing it. There are no stylistic errors because the subtitles keep the same register and tone as the audio. It needs to be pointed out that I do not consider *Chug your coffee = Kahvi naamaan* counterparts in the first subtitle to be a stylistic error because it conveys the meaning using a natural expression of the target language whilst conserving the chatty tone of the original. The second category that Pedersen (2017) introduces is acceptability. It focuses on the target text's language norms which in this case is English. Acceptability is furthermore divided into three parts: grammar, spelling and idiomaticity errors. There are no spelling mistakes in the subtitles. However, the fourth subtitle in the video contains one grammatical error as it is lacking a comma after the interjection. This is, however, considered to be a minor grammatical error which would be 0.25 points, because this mistake does not affect the understanding or disturb the viewer's progress. There are no errors of idiomaticity in the subtitles.

The third category is readability which is divided into segmentation and spotting, punctuation and graphics and reading speech and line length. From the viewpoint of spotting, the video contains a few errors. As previously analysed in [6.1.2](#), all of the subtitles are not synchronised with the speech. Pedersen (2017) stated that a serious error would be that they are out of sync by more than one utterance or word and a minor error would be out of sync less than a second. The differences with the subtitles and audio are less than one second with subtitles 2, 3 and 4. This would total to three minor errors so $3 \times 0.25 = 0.75$ points. The first subtitle is out of rhythm by more than one second by starting 1 s and 12 frames before the audio. This makes it hard to determine if it would more than one utterance like the model says because the length of an utterance is not specified. As it is nearly impossible, it gets classified as a standard error and 0.5 points.

The punctuation aspect depends on the guidelines. The guidelines from Vitikainen et al. (2020) recommend not using too many exclamation marks as compared to BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) who recommend even using (!) for marking a sarcastic tone of voice. For the purpose of this model, let's state that the guideline consulted for this is one for interlingual subtitles: the recommendations from Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021). The punctuation marks in the subtitles only include exclamation marks. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021, 125) state that the use of exclamation marks should be done according to the audio; if they are shouting or expressing strong feelings, this should be seen in the subtitles. They also say that overusing exclamation marks can be tedious for the viewer. Although, the first subtitle contains three exclamation marks, I do not consider that a mistake in punctuation. The other speaker is shouting from another room, and it is important to make it clear. After the first word there could be a comma, but the speaker pauses for quite long before continuing, therefore a comma would be unsuitable. For the graphics, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) said that subtitles should be white in colour with a grey background box for optimal readability and for the least disturbance. The other subtitles in the video are white with a black surrounding and the others are green with a white surrounding. By going against the guideline's recommendations, the subtitles could be considered to have standard graphics errors worth of 0.5 points each.

The reading speed and line length is also dependent on the guideline used for the model. And as I covered previously, for this analysis I will use the recommendations from Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021). Pedersen (2017) said to impose a penalty to subtitles that have a reading

speed over 15 cps and that 20 cps would be a standard error. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) put the optimal length for 17 cps so everything over that is penalised. By counting the subtitles reading speed, none of them exceed this limit. Therefore, there are no reading speed errors in the subtitles. None of the subtitles exceed the recommended limit of 37 characters per line or have more than the suggested two lines per subtitle. There are no length errors in the subtitles either. By tallying up all of the points from each category and dividing them with the number of subtitles, the subtitles have 0 error points in functional equivalence, 0.06 error points in acceptability and 0.38 error points from readability. Although the sample is small, there are only four subtitles, these are still considered very minor points and the amounts of error very minimal overall. From these scores, it can be seen that the subtitles have the most issues in the category of readability and no errors in functional equivalence.

6.2 Yle: A Finnish news video with intralingual subtitles

The video is a Finnish news story describing a flood that happened in Finland in November 2024, and how it affected the lives of people. The video is 00:29 seconds in length and has 15 intralingual subtitles. For this video, I will use the guidelines that have recommendations only for intralingual subtitles which are BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024), the guidelines by Vitikainen et al. (2020) and ITC Guidance on Standards on Subtitling (1999).

6.2.1 Linguistic dimension

The linguistic dimension focuses on the readability and grammar of the subtitles and the loyalty that the subtitles have towards the source text, the audio, by examining linguistic aspects of the texts. The video is an informative news story and thus the norms differ from entertainment videos. The language register should be more formal and easily understood. As intralingual, the subtitles are more word for word and do not practise much localisation. However, they have been altered to match the target languages grammar which in this case is standard written Finnish. The video features a journalist narrating the news story and as previously mentioned, he has a strong dialect. Many of the guidelines would recommend keeping the dialect visible in the subtitles, as it is an important aspect of the character if this was a video for entertainment purposes. As a news story, the importance is being accessible

and getting the message across clearly which means the dialect should not be visible from the subtitles at all. This is true for all the subtitles found in the video as they have been changed to a standard form of Finnish.

As stated previously, according to the guidelines in the news and other informative medias' the language register is supposed to be more formal. In some of the subtitles, the filler words used in speech, for example unnecessary repeat of the word *ja* [and], are omitted. Other conversational aspects in the audio have been altered to standard written language in the subtitles. One example is a regular occurrence in the conversational Finnish language, which is that the verb for third person singular *hän* [he/she] is used for plurals. This can be seen in an example below:

Audio: *oppilaat ei päässy* [students could not attend]

Subtitle: *oppilaat eivät päässeet* [they could not attend]

The sentence is referring to the students who could not attend school because of the floods. The grammatically correct form is the plural found in the subtitles. The suffixes *-vät* and *-seet* are also an indication of the plural form in Finnish language. In the first example, the audio has the same subject which is the plural form of students, but the following verb phrase is in singular. This is evident from the lack of the plural suffixes mentioned above. This same conversational aspect of using singular tense for a plural is visible throughout the video but has been changed for the subtitles which is according to the guidelines. The speaker's dialect is perceptible in the audio. This can be seen for example in the omission of letters at the end or in the middle of words. Some examples are visible below.

Audio: *ees* [even], *jou'uttiin* [had to be], *kohalla* [by something]

Subtitle: *edes* [even], *jouduttiin* [had to be], *kohdalla* [by something]

Opposite to shortening words in conversation, the narrator's dialect also has a trademark of adding letters to words. This happens mostly in places where there is usually only one consonant or a vowel, but the narrator adds another. As previously mentioned, these marks of the dialect are not in the subtitles and thus following the guidelines. One example in the audio which does both, omits a letter at the end and adds one in the middle, is the word *satteitte*

[rains[possessive]]. Like all other examples before, it is in its grammatically correct form in the subtitles: *sateiden [rains[possessive]]*.

It is not recommended to have long sentences which have to be divided to many lines or subtitles. All of the guidelines agree that if the information is to be divided into more than one line, it should be done logically and the least disruptively as possible. The monologue in the video is quite lengthy and the image changes rapidly. This results in the subtitles being divided into parts even across images. The guidelines do not recommend splitting word pairs, parts of phrases or compound words across line breaks or especially across subtitles. ITC Guidance on Standards on Subtitling (1999, 7–9) even recommended an ideal of one sentence subtitles. However, the guideline also agrees with the others that the line break should be placed at phrase or clause boundaries. In this video, the subtitles are more than one sentence. Examining the line breaks in the video, it can be seen that in most cases the divide has not been made according to the guideline's recommendations. A few of these line breaks are examined below with the break in question underlined. The subtitle breaks are marked with an em dash.

Separation of an adverb phrase:

*Tampereella taas [In tampere on the other hand]
esimerkiksi nämä autot – [for example these cars]
pääsivät ihan [got into a quite]
kunnon kylpyyn. [sizable bath]*

*Tulvat iskivät tänään [The floods hit today]
aamulla erityisesti – [in the morning especially]
Satakuntaan ja [to Satakunta and]
Pirkanmaalle. [to Pirkanmaa]*

The first underlined line break separates a modifying adverb *ihan* from the adjective *kunnon* which like mentioned above, is not made according to the guidelines' recommendations. These breaks at inconvenient can cause confusion for the viewer as well. For example, in the latter subtitle, in addition to the underlined line break, the word *erityisesti [especially]* is

meant to specify the cities that were affected with the floods. Now that they are separated into different subtitles, it might be interpreted that the floods hit especially hard in the morning.

Separation of a verb phrase:

Aamulla Kolmostie [In the morning Komostie (national road 3)]
jouduttiin sulkemaan – [had to be closed down]
joksikin aikaa, [for a while]
koska vettä oli – [because the water had]
tulvinut tielle [flooded on the road]
Ikaalisten kohdalla. [at Ikaalinen]

Separation of a subject and verb:

Raumalla oppilaat [In Rauma, the students]
eivät päässeet – [could not attend]
edes kouluun [even school]
tulvien takia. [due to the floods]

The separation of a verb phrase across subtitles, which is seen in the first example above, is something none of the guidelines recommend doing. For example, Vitikainen et al. (2020, 11) say that it is best to have all the words that belong to together on the same line. In this case, the parts of a verb phrase should be on the same line and especially in the same subtitle. The latter, separation of a subject and its corresponding verb is not considered as big of a mistake, but it is still not recommended by the guidelines. It can disrupt the viewer by having them second guess who was doing something. However, in line breaks inside the subtitle it is not perceived as negatively as it is in the breaks between subtitles. Some of the subtitle examples above have more than one break that is not done according to the guideline's recommendations but for this analysis I have chosen to highlight only one in each.

Vitikainen et al. (2020, 14) state that splitting sentences into many subtitles can be done as long as each subtitle is a comprehensible unit of their own. They also say that if the noun phrase or the subject of the sentence is too long it needs to be rephrased or divided logically.

In the video the longest noun phrase contains eight words and has been divided into three lines and into two different subtitles with an em dash marking the break between subtitles:

<i>Nämä runsaiden sateiden</i>	<i>[These floods caused by the ample</i>
<i>ja lumien sulamisen –</i>	<i>rain and the melting of the snow...]</i>
<i>aiheuttamat tulvat...</i>	

According to Vitikainen et al. (2020) the division has been made in an optimal point as it does not separate the modifier from their corresponding noun. In this case *runsaiden sateiden* [*ample rains*] are a pair within the noun phrase and not to be separated. Same goes to *lumien sulamisen* [*melting of the snow*] and *aiheuttamat tulvat* [*floods caused by*] in which a verb and a noun form a pair. As stated previously, the video has very long sentences that continue across shot changes. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) states that this is more optimal than trying to breakdown the dialogue to smaller units. The guideline says that breaks should be at a natural point between clause boundaries. The previous example of a noun phrase was divided ideally according to the guidelines. However, the rest of the subtitle does not adhere to the guidelines. The next clause in the sentence would be *ovat siis häirinneet liikennettä* [*have thus disrupted the traffic*] but it has been divided into two subtitles: *ovat siis häirinneet* [*have thus disrupted*] – *liikennettä* [*the traffic*]. This break falls between two phrases instead of clauses. The guidelines state that the exception of a break between phrase boundaries can be done within a reason if it follows the speech pattern but separating pairs, in this a verb and the object, is still not recommended. The breaks between the subtitles mostly follow the guidelines' recommendations except the former example and few others. One divide has been made inside of a verb phrase, *oli – tulvinut* [*had – flooded*], which goes strictly against all the guidelines. However, the continuation of the subtitles is marked in the previous one using a dash at the end of the sentence, which is recommended by Vitikainen et al. (2020).

6.2.2 Spatial and temporal dimension

All of the guidelines, Vitikainen et al. (2020), BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) and ITC Guidance on Standard on Subtitling (1999), agreed that the maximum number of lines in a subtitle should be two. The subtitles follow these recommendations as most of them, 14 out of 15 have two lines and the last subtitle has only one line. The guidelines also discussed what would be the most aesthetic and best for eye-movement in subtitling. They said that the latter line should be longer than the former one i.e. the second line in a subtitle should be longer

than the first in the number of characters. This is the case in 11 of the 15 subtitles in the video. The biggest difference between the lines is in a subtitle where the first line is 27 characters and the second is 19 characters long. This is against the recommendations. The subtitle also has 46 characters in total. There is no minimum number of characters set on subtitles, the focus is on the maximum. The guidelines used for the analysis of this video and the intralingual subtitles put the maximum between 50–84 characters per subtitle. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) specifies a maximum number of characters per line for subtitles found online which is 25 per line and 50 per subtitle. Vitikainen et al. (2020) have a maximum of 70–84 characters for a subtitle, therefore per line they have a scope of 35–42. The most characters per line can be found in two of the fifteen subtitles. These lines both have 27 characters which is over BBC's (2024) recommendation for online subtitles. None of the subtitles exceed the maximum numbers per line that was introduced by Vitikainen et al. (2020). As previously mentioned, the longest subtitle in the video has 46 characters in total. From this, it can be concluded that none of the subtitles go over the recommended subtitle limits.

The guideline by Vitikainen et al. (2020) recommends a minimum time of 1.8 seconds or 1 second and 19 frames and a maximum of 7 seconds for the length of the subtitles. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) do not state a maximum length, but they allow a minimum of 1.2 seconds or 1 second and 5 frames per subtitle. None of the 15 subtitles in the video exceed the maximum limit of 7 seconds. The longest subtitle in duration is 2 seconds and 21 frames, almost 3 seconds. The minimum recommended by Vitikainen et al. (2020) should only be in subtitles that consist of a few words rather than sentences. The subtitles in the video have six words each at most. The recommended minimum time of 1 second and 19 frames by Vitikainen et al. (2020) is not met in 6 of the subtitles. All of the subtitles only consist of only few words each but in some the words are quite long. The shortest subtitle in duration is 1 second and 10 frames and it is 4 words. The BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) have a lower minimum requirement for time and thus all of the subtitles surpass it.

All of the guidelines might not state specific time recommendations, but they all state the importance of synchronising subtitles with speech and following its natural rhythm. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) recommend that there should only be a difference of a few frames between the subtitle and its corresponding audio. Let's assume the "a few frames difference" would be 3–4. From the subtitles in the video, 5 have a difference of more than the

recommended. The subtitle either appears way before the speech starts or stays on the screen too long after the speech ends. In a few cases in the video, the subtitle disappears a couple of frames before the speech ends but according to the guidelines, this is not a significant difference and is acceptable. The second subtitle in the video differs from speech the most as it starts 5 frames before and disappears 5 frames after the speech. Making it a total of a 10-frame difference with the audio. Another one that has the most difference in frames, is the last subtitle in the video that stays on the screen 12 frames after the audio has ended. Interestingly, this is also the shortest subtitle with one line, two words and 24 characters. Also, one notable issue with the synchronisation happens with the 9th subtitle in the video. The subtitle appears on the screen before the former audio has completely ended. Meaning that this subtitle overlaps with the previous audio which is not recommended by either of the guidelines. However, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) state that it is permissible to slip out of sync if it is the case of a single speaker and a multitude of subtitles as long as it does not happen with every subtitle. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) also allow a longer difference between the subtitle and the audio. It says that a subtitle can start 1.5 seconds or 36 frames before its audio and that the subtitle can disappear 1.5 seconds after the speech has ended. It can be debated if that much of a difference can be considered as being synchronised with the speech. By following this guidelines' recommendations, it can be concluded that all of the subtitles in the video are synchronised with the audio.

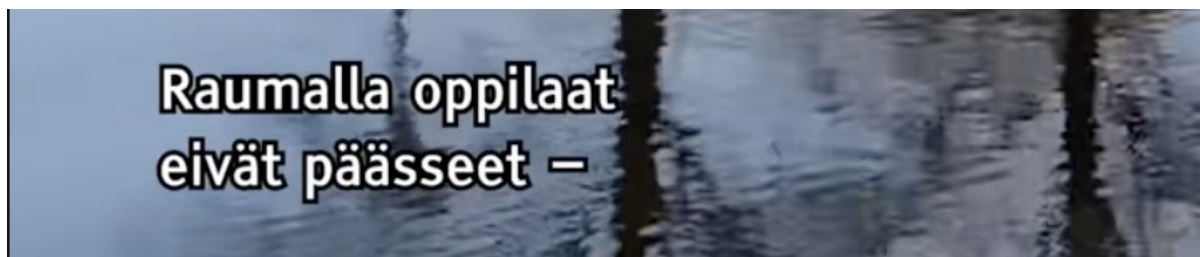
Pauses between subtitles help the viewers process information. As stated in the Theory section, the guidelines have different opinions on the necessary reading speed and pauses for subtitling. Vitikainen et al. (2020, 15) say that a minimum pause of 2–4 empty frames between the subtitles that appear continuously is the optimal. The BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) put a minimum pause of 1 second, or 24 frames between subtitles when there is also a pause between speech. Anything less than one second is not recommended and it would be best not to have pauses at all if the minimum cannot be met. The subtitles in the video appear continuously without any significant pauses in the speech. The pauses between the subtitles all consist of only one clear frame. This does not meet the recommendation by Vitikainen et al. (2020) for continuous subtitles. Because the speech does not have long pauses, they do not need to apply to BBC's (2024). However, they follow the requirement of consistency asked by both of the guidelines. Rather than trying to fit many different-length-pauses in the video, the pauses always consist of one frame throughout the whole video.

Subtitles are usually placed on the bottom of the screen and in the centre. This is highly dependable on the background image and on the type of the audiovisual work. The preferred placement also differs in guidelines. As previously mentioned, TikTok contains a lot of metadata on the bottom of the screen, therefore that is no longer the best place for subtitles. In the case of social media videos, bottom and centre -subtitles would mean above the metadata, username and caption. In this video, the subtitles are placed above the visible username on the screen but at a sufficient distance as they are not blocked by it and are easily detected. They are not placed on the centre but rather more to the left which is recommended by Vitikainen et al. (2020, 21). They say that in Finland, it is common to have them start from the left but can be moved if they obscure the background. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) agree that the most important aspect in subtitle placement is that they do not obscure the background image, texts or the speakers' mouths. In this video, the subtitles are not blocked by anything, and they do not block any essential information.

6.2.3 Appearance

In *figure 4* down below, it can be seen that a white text with a black outline is used in the video. This is the same throughout and because there is only one speaker, there are no other colours or indicators to signal a speaker change. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) say that subtitles should be white in colour with a black box in the background. Other guidelines, for example Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021), stated that this might be too contrastive and suggested a grey box instead. Vitikainen et al. (2020) did not specify any colours but stated that the subtitles should not be disruptive but also should be easily spotted from the image. The subtitles in the video have achieved this by differentiating from the background image whilst using the more neutral colour palette.

Figure 4 Yle-subtitle, appearance example



It is previously mentioned that Yle uses Tiresias-fonts for their broadcast subtitles. The font is hard to determine but by comparing it to the Tiresias-fonts it can be seen that the one in video

does not possess the same gaps between the letters that is the trademark of these fonts. The font in the subtitles is closer to Helvetica or Sans Bold font. This is a mere speculation as there is not a way to definitely determine the font that is used. However, all of the fonts that it could be fall into the category of being easy to read and not too extravagant.

6.3 JoshofWestern: Finnish video with intra- and interlingual subtitles

This video is from an influencer Josh Hurst, an American living in Finland. It is a comical video about the frustrations of learning to speak a new language and how you are perceived. The video has 14 subtitles, 7 in Finnish and 7 in English, and one English intertitle. As the video has both intra- and interlingual subtitles, the guidelines used for the analysis include all of those mentioned in the Theory section. The guidelines about intralingual subtitles, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024), guideline by Vitikainen et al. (2020) and ITC Guidance (1999), are used for the Finnish intralingual subtitles and the guidelines for interlingual subtitles, recommendations by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) and the guideline by Ivarsson and Carroll (1998), are used for the English interlingual subtitles. I will also analyse the interlingual subtitles using Jan Pedersen's (2017) FAR model.

6.3.1 Linguistic dimension

The linguistic side focuses on the readability, accuracy and the grammar of the subtitles compared to their counterparts. In the video the audio is in Finnish, therefore the intralingual subtitles are the Finnish ones. I will focus on them first. They are a word-for-word match with the audio with only one slight difference in the fifth subtitle. The speaker, Josh portraying a Finn, adds a piece of spoken language dialect with a double consonant in *mittään* [anything] which is omitted in the subtitles and written in its standard form *mitään* [anything]. This conversational aspect has been deleted from the subtitles but there are others visible. For example, the use of a passive voice when it should not be used is common in Finnish spoken language. In the subtitles it is *me voidaan mennä* [we can go] instead of a grammatically correct form *me voimme mennä* [we can go], where the verb is conjugated with the subject and the sentence is in active voice.

Another sign of spoken language visible in the subtitles is the use of an interjection *ahhh* [*in this: sign of realisation*]. Interjections describing sounds are not common in written standard Finnish language, but they are vital in intralingual subtitles, especially in SDH (subtitles for deaf and hard-of-hearing). However, this interjection in the video is not found in the Finnish dictionary. It can be speculated if the word *ahaa* [*a sign of revelation*] was meant instead. These signs of spoken language are not incorrect according to the guidelines as this is a video for entertainment purposes and the spoken language is a key component for the characters and the story. Vitikainen et al. (2020) state that the use of passive tense and shortened pronouns are a very common way to bring out the nature of the character and how they speak, and that they are ways that do not hurt the readability of the subtitles.

The guidelines recommend against long subtitles but if they need to be divided, it needs to be done in a logical and undisruptive manner. The longer subtitles in the video are divided to a few lines. In the first subtitle, it is visible that pairs are separated into different lines, which is not recommended. These are for example:

Separation of an adverb phrase:

Tänä [This] – viikonloppuna [weekend]

Separation of a verb phrase:

Me voidaan [we can] – mennä [go]

The divide is made within a subtitle and not between them but dividing parts of phrases into separate lines is not recommended either. None of the subtitles are divided to another scene but are made of a complete subtitle unit. Both BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) and Vitikainen et al. (2020) say that when a thought or speech is interrupted, it is best to mark it with three dots. In the subtitles, this occurrence is marked with a dash which is usually used for signalling the continuation of a sentence. In this case the speech is interrupted and does not continue, therefore according to the guidelines it should be marked with three dots. This happens in both the Finnish and in English subtitles.

By looking at the interlingual English subtitles, it can be seen that they are not a word-for-word translation from the audio but rather a complete unit as their own as they differ in word order or even content. The aspects of spoken language that are visible in the audio and the Finnish subtitles, are not present in the English subtitles quite in the same quantity. When the audio contains filler words, dialect and the use of a passive voice, the English subtitles mostly omit them. This can be seen for example in the second subtitle which consists of only one word in each language. In the Finnish subtitles and the audio, it is a conversational question *häh [huh]* which is used to express confusion. This is not conveyed in the English subtitles in such extent as it is translated to *what* which is an actual question word rather than a conversational clue. Compared to this, the fifth English subtitle has an added *damn* for emphasis which is not present in the audio. The audio has the forementioned double consonant which is a trademark to a Finnish dialect and specifically spoken language. The use of the double consonant adds an emphasis which could be tried to convey with adding an intensifying adjective to the noun.

The use of emphasis is present in the last interlingual subtitle as well as it has a bleeped-out curse word which is not in the audio. Although, the last subtitle is not a match for the audio as it acts more as a separate comment or a footnote used for emphasis. It is embedded in asterisks which are sometimes used for depicting an action or a sound in subtitling in some platforms. In this case, it is describing the action of the speaker whilst emphasizing what they said rather than stating what was said. This example is depicted below.

Audio: *Ahhh! Viikonloppuna! [on the weekend]*

Interlingual subtitle: **Says the exact same thing that I f***** said**

The formerly mentioned bleeped-out curse word can also be seen in this example. The guidelines have recommendations for strong language that is bleeped in the audio that it should be marked with a *bleep* in the subtitles. This example is not in the audio therefore the recommendations differ. The guidelines say to use curse words cautiously and only if they are relevant to the character or the story. In this case, it can be seen as a vital aspect for emphasis and as a signal of frustration from the viewpoint of the other speaker. The word in itself is

considered as very strong language and thus has been most likely bleeped out to avoid censorship from the app of TikTok.

There are other differences between the audio and the interlingual subtitles. In the first subtitle, the word order has been changed to a more idiomatic English language. The sentence is not starting with stating the time, but it has been moved to the end of the sentence.

However, this change can be debated as good or bad because it takes the emphasis away from the most important point of the sentence, which is the time: this weekend. Another detectable difference is also in the first subtitle. The audio has a verb phrase *voidaan mennä* [we could go] but the subtitles have *should go* instead. This adds a tone difference as the audio is more of a suggestion or expressing a possibility to go, but the subtitle states that they should go and makes it more obligatory. This is explored more in the latter chapter with quality analysis using Pedersen's (2017) FAR model.

The interlingual subtitles have more than one line in three subtitles. The first line break separates a list but does so in a way recommended by the guidelines. The coordinating conjunction *and* starts the second line rather than being at the end of the first line. The second line break in the subtitles is done in a manner that goes against the recommendations. ITC Standards Guidance on Subtitling (1999, 7) states, like many of the other guidelines, that line breaks should be at naturally occurring breaks and not separate parts of phrases. The second line break occurs in between a word pair including an adjective and a noun: *a damn thing*. The noun, *thing*, has been separated into the second line. The third line break in the subtitles occurs in the last subtitle between two clauses. However, the divide is not at their naturally occurring break. **Says the exact same thing that If***** said** is the last subtitle as mentioned previously. The clause break is before the word *that*, and it is where the divide should be according to the guidelines. However, the line break occurs after the word and thus it is not following the recommendations.

6.3.2 Spatial and temporal dimension

The spatial and temporal dimensions include the timing of the subtitles as to how are they synchronised with the audio, do they follow the minimum and maximum lengths in time and characters and whether or not there are pauses in between. It also includes the placement of the subtitles compared to the background image.

Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) stated that for bilingual subtitles a 4-line-subtitle is a regular occurrence. It could be emphasised that in that case an ideal would be that each language takes only 2 lines. Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) recommended also only 2-line-subtitles. In the video, both of the subtitles are visible at the same time and as a completed unit. This means that they do not appear cumulative but as a whole. This results in some of the subtitles having many lines. For example, the first Finnish subtitle has 3 lines and the same first subtitle in English has 2 lines. Altogether this would be 5 lines in total. Many viewers need to follow only one of the subtitles, but it can be disruptive seeing big units of text. The English subtitles follow the recommendations as they have 2 lines at the most. The Finnish subtitles have 3 lines in two of their subtitles. One of them has been divided in a more equal manner but the other has one word in the first and last line and a longer line in the middle. This sort of layout is not recommended in the guidelines as it is neither aesthetically pleasing nor optimal for readability. From the English subtitles, 3 out of 7 have a longer first line than the second, which are going against the recommendations.

Both of the subtitles start out with an emoji: a flag representing the language that is visible. The Finnish subtitles are marked with FI and the English ones with US. As discussed previously, emojis are worth more characters the more complex they are. These are considered to be 4 characters each. If we look at the character count total from both the subtitles combined, only the first ones have a total of 125 characters, which goes against the recommendations of 74–84 per subtitle. But separately, they do not exceed this limit. In the same subtitle, neither of the languages exceed the line recommendations. The Finnish intralingual subtitle has 18, 24 and 25 characters in its lines which does not go against the maximum of 35–42 per line recommended by Vitikainen et al. (2020). In addition, the English interlingual subtitle also stays below the maximum of 37 per line recommended by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) and 40 per line recommended by Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) by having 33 and 24 characters in its two lines. Other subtitles in the video are shorter in length therefore they also follow the recommended maximum numbers per subtitle and also the maximum numbers per line. The most characters in a line, is in the last English subtitle with 36 characters. This is close but does not exceed the maximums. The shortest subtitles consist of an emoji and one word each, the Finnish with 9 characters and the English with 10 characters. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) has a maximum number of characters set for online subtitles which is 25 per line and 50 per subtitle. By looking at the longest subtitles

mentioned earlier above, it can be seen that both of them have one line that is exceeding the recommendation of 25 and that both of the subtitles are going over the limit of 50 per subtitle.

As both of the subtitles of different languages appear at the same time, in the temporal dimension they will be treated as one unit, but the guidelines' suggestions are differentiated. Meaning that it is stated which guideline has a recommendation for which type of subtitles. The longest subtitle in length is also the longest in duration. It does not extend over the maximum suggested timing of 6–7 seconds per subtitle as it lasts 4 seconds and 4 frames. This being the longest subtitle in the video, means that the rest do not exceed the maximum time either. They are according to the guidelines. For the interlingual subtitles, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) and Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) all suggest a minimum timing of 1 second and that this should be only a few words in length. There is only one subtitle in the video that does not meet this requirement as it lasts less than a second. The shortest subtitle, with one word, has the duration of 20 frames. It also does not follow the minimum of 1 second and 19 frames suggested by Vitikainen et al. (2020) or the minimum of 1 second and 5 frames by BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) as the Finnish intralingual subtitle also lasts only for 20 frames. Another intralingual subtitle that does not meet the recommendations of Vitikainen et al. (2020), is the fourth subtitle in the video that lasts 1 second and 6 frames. According to BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) this meets the minimum requirement. The interlingual English subtitle has the same duration and therefore meets the 1 second minimum suggested by the interlingual guidelines.

The guidelines for interlingual subtitling suggest pauses between 2–4 empty frames for continuous subtitles. Specifically, Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) recommend a minimum pause of 2 empty frames and Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) suggest a minimum of 4 empty frames. In the video, 3 out of 6 pauses are the length of only one empty frame and do not meet the guidelines' recommendations for the required minimum. The other pauses are the length of 9–12 frames and contrariwise go well over the minimum. This means that they should be the length of at least a second. In conclusion, the pauses are too long to be the required minimum pauses between continuous subtitles and too short for pauses that are in place when there is pausing in the speech. These guidelines have not stated a maximum for a pause but that it is dependent on the speech as the synchronisation with it, is the most important aspect. Vitikainen et al. (2020) also recommend the same length of a pause which is 2–4 empty frames for continuous intralingual subtitles. The same three pauses of only one frame are not following this guideline either. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) have a minimum pause of 1

second or 24 frames when there is also a pause in speech. None of the pauses in the video match this requirement.

Even though the guidelines might suggest different times for pauses, they all agree on consistency. If they change in duration throughout the video, it can be disruptive for the viewer. It is better to have short pauses all throughout the video rather than short pauses first and then longer pauses in between or the other way around. It is what happens in this video. The pauses start with a longer duration then they consist of only one frame, then again longer and once again only a one-frame-pause. This type of a bigger shift in length is not recommended. However, the pauses can fluctuate if there is a lot of time between speech. As stated previously, the synchronisation of the subtitles with the speech is considered to be the most important aspect of timing subtitles or spotting. The guidelines have a different allowance on falling out of sync. For intralingual subtitles, Vitikainen et al. (2020) recommend a variation between subtitles and speech to be only a few frames. In comparison, BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) allows a difference of 1.5 seconds or 36 frames. In the video, the subtitle with the most variation to speech is the third subtitle. It appears 14 frames before and disappears 4 frames after the speech. Even though it does not exceed the maximum mentioned above, it does not meet the preferred difference of only a few frames. The total difference being 18 frames, it can be considered as synchronised with the speech according to the BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) but not synchronised according to Vitikainen et al. (2020).

For interlingual subtitling, Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) do not state specific time preferences but emphasize the importance of following the natural rhythm of speech. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) on the other hand, specified that a subtitle should start a maximum of 3 frames before the speech has started and disappear a maximum of 12 frames after the end of the speech. Two of the subtitles in the video appear before the speech has started and they do so with the duration of either 14 or 15 frames. Rest of the subtitles appear after the speech has started which is usually not recommended in the guidelines. All of the subtitles, except one, disappear after the speech. The sixth subtitle appears and disappears at the same time as the speech. Most of the subtitles disappear well under the recommended maximum of 12 frames. However, the second subtitle in the video stays on the screen a total of 14 frames after the speech which goes against Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021) suggested maximum. Even though most of them are following the guidelines recommendations, the fluctuation in the timing is noticeable and not recommended.

The placement of the subtitles is highly dependent on the image and the platform that they are on. TikTok has a lot of metadata already blocking most of the screen, therefore the subtitles are usually placed above the name of the publisher either on the left or on the centre of the screen. This video has two sets of subtitles which makes the placing more difficult. They have been placed on the left side of the screen and above the username. The subtitles appear as one and are placed on top of each other. They occupy a considerably big portion of the screen; however, they do not cover the background image as they are on top of the speakers' chests and do not cover their faces. The introductory caption in the beginning of the video is placed on top of the screen as an introduction to the subject. It covers the speaker's forehead and does not cover the rest of the face.

The English introductory caption is visible from the moment the video starts. It has 3 lines and 73 characters. This is in the limits suggested by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) for interlingual subtitling. However, it has a longer middle line compared to the first and the last line. The guidelines state that the most optimal would be a structure that starts with a shorter line and grows in the next ones. The total duration of it is 5 seconds and 4 frames. This also fits well within the limits of 1–7 seconds for a subtitle. It appears 14 frames before the first subtitle and disappears a few frames after it. It can be discussed whether or not the 14 frames are enough time for a viewer to see it before the attention shifts to the subtitles.

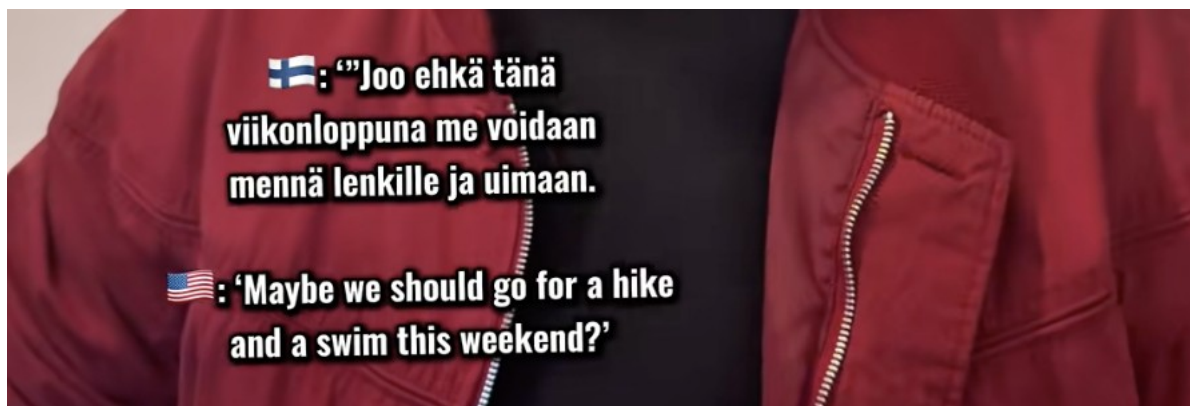
6.3.3 Appearance

The appearance of subtitles is a balancing act. They need to be clearly visible but not too flashy or distract too much from the image. All of the guidelines have different font preferences, but they all agree that a neutral font, like Arial or Helvetica, would be the best. These recommendations are often bent in social media. As mentioned earlier in other videos, emojis are in frequent use in social media. They are a way to convey emotion or information in a shorter way. In this video, they are a way to emphasize the language present in the subtitles and thus perhaps saving viewers' time in which ones to direct their gaze upon.

In *Figure 5* below, it can be seen that the subtitles are white in colour with a black outline. The colour white is recommended by most guidelines. Furthermore, McDonnell et al. (2024) state in their study that most of their participants preferred black and white subtitles. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) suggest a black box rather than a black outline for the subtitles to stand out more. Compared to Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) who suggest a grey box instead. Not quite following these instructions, the subtitles have managed the task of being neutral in

colours whilst standing out from the background. Although the guidelines have no specific statements, the subtitles should be placed straight rather than in an angle. It can be seen below in *Figure 5* that the subtitles are not following a straight line. They are crooked.

Figure 5 Josh subtitle, appearance example



As mentioned, all of the subtitles have the same appearance, specifically the same colour. Most of the guidelines recommend signalling a speaker change with using a different colour of subtitles. This is not done in the video. The speaker change has not been signalled any other way either. A different colour scheme can be seen on the introductory caption in *Figure 6* below. It is not a subtitle for spoken word but rather an informative caption for the video. It most likely has a different colour to differentiate it from the subtitles as they are visible at the same time. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) say that the colour yellow is best used for distinguishing a narrator. In this case, there is no narrator, but this caption can be seen as a narration of a sort and thus following the previously mentioned recommendation.

Figure 6 Josh introductory caption, appearance example



The font is hard to determine by examining it appears to be the same in both the caption and the subtitles. By comparing, it does not seem to match Arial or Helvetica which are the usual

recommended fonts. The font used is a narrow and bold form of the font. These narrow fonts are usually not recommended due to their less optimal readability. The caption is in a bigger font size compared to the subtitles. The long subtitles could take up too much space if in a bigger font size. If the line divide would have been made in a different manner, the font size could be increased for legibility.

6.3.4 Josh from a FAR

Jan Pedersen (2017) divides his FAR model into three parts: functional equivalence, acceptability and readability. Functional equivalence focuses on semantic and stylistic errors. Pedersen (2017) emphasizes semantic equivalence by putting the scoring for semantic errors higher than others. A semantic error in the first subtitle is found in the verb phrase *mennä lenkille* [go for a walk] because it has been translated to *go for a hike* rather than a walk or a jog. This is counted as a standard semantic error and worth 1 point, because it has an error but is still close enough to the original meaning to not disturb the viewer's progress. There is another standard semantic error of 1 point in the first subtitle. A verb *voidaan* [we can] is used in the audio but in the subtitles the equivalent is *should*, when the more appropriate translation is *could*. This can be debated whether or not these two are interchangeable in this context. This could also be seen as a stylistic error as it changes the tone of the sentence. However, I have chosen to analyse it as a standard semantic error worth 1 point because it is an error in meaning and changes the context, but it does not hinder the viewer's experience. The first piece of the dialogue is delivered as a statement but in the subtitles, there is a question mark. In the Finnish audio, there would be more indicators to a question if that were the case. However, altering it to be a question in the subtitles does not affect the progress or the understanding of the dialogue, therefore, I consider the addition of a question mark instead of a period, a standard semantic error of 1 point.

A minor semantic error worth 0.5 points can be found in the second subtitle. The one-word-subtitle *what* is used as the translation of the word *häh* in the audio. However, the more precise translation would be *huh*, because for *what* the audio would state *mitä*. Both, the audio and the subtitle, express an inquiry that invites an immediate response, but it is not quite the correct equivalent. That is why it is a minor semantic error. It is hard to analyse whether or not the last subtitle, which is not a match to the audio but describing an action, is considered as a semantic error. Pedersen (2017,219) does state that when utterances which are important to the plot are not subtitled, it would be considered a standard semantic error. However, what

is said in the audio is described in the subtitle. I will not state this as a semantic error as it leaves much up to interpretation and there are no guidelines recommendations to follow. A stylistic error could be found in two of the subtitles because they have strong language that is absent from the audio. As there are limited instructions or recommendations to these examples, I will not mark them as errors. There is another use of stronger language register than in the audio. This is in the fifth subtitle where there is the word *damn* added for emphasis. This is absent from the audio and thus considered as a standard stylistic error worth 0.5 points.

The second category that Pedersen (2017) introduces is acceptability. This means how the subtitles follow the norms of the target language, or English in this case. These errors are divided into three: grammar, spelling and errors of idiomaticity. This is a video meant for entertainment purposes and the register is not formal. The use of *can't* instead of *cannot* is not considered as an error as they are interchangeable and the guidelines recommend only using formal register in formal setting for example news. Thus, there are no grammar or spelling errors in the subtitles. There are no errors of idiomaticity either. The last category is readability. It focuses on how effortless reading the subtitles is. It is also divided into three parts: segmentation and spotting, punctuation and graphics, and reading speed and line length. Segmentation and spotting mean how the subtitles are timed and how synchronised they are with the speech. There are no segmentation errors in the subtitles as they appear all in one piece and no information is split up across scenes in a disruptive manner. As previously mentioned in [6.3.2](#), five of the interlingual subtitles appear after the speech has started which is not recommended in any of the guidelines. All of these would be a minor spotting error worth 0.25 points each according to Pedersen (2017). Two of the subtitles appear 14–15 frames before the subtitles, which is less than one second off thus making them also minor spotting errors worth 0.25 points each. The second subtitle in the video also stays 14 frames on the screen after the speech which goes over Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021) recommendations and makes it a minor spotting error worth 0.25 points. There are none over one second differences in times between the audio and speech therefore there are no standard spotting errors in the subtitles. Serious spotting errors are counted to be out of sync by more than one utterance, which is not defined by Pedersen (2017). By not having errors over than a second, it can be stated that there are no serious spotting errors in the subtitles either.

Punctuation and graphics errors depend on the guidelines that are used for the analysis. I have chosen to use one of the same recommendations I have used in my own analysis for

interlingual guidelines: Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021). They state that the use of asterisks is getting more common when used to signify letters that have been intentionally omitted. In this video they are used for a bleeped-out curse word which is according to the recommendations. However, they are also used in the same sentence to start and end a comment about action. Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) have no recommendations about these instances, therefore this cannot be considered as an error. The previously mentioned question mark that is omitted from the audio but present in the interlingual subtitles, is used correctly according to the guidelines as the piece of dialogue receives an answer therefore a question mark is preferred. In conclusion, there are no punctuation errors in the subtitles. The graphics of the subtitles differ from the recommendations with not having a grey background box. This can be considered a minor graphics error worth 0.25 points. Another minor graphics error would be the fact that the subtitles are placed crooked.

Speed and length also depend on the guidelines that are used for the error analysis. I use the same recommendations I used previously in my own analysis for interlingual guidelines: Díaz-Cintas and Remael's (2021). There are no length errors in the interlingual subtitles as the lines stay below 37 characters and the subtitles have a maximum of 2 lines each. Regarding errors in speed, Pedersen (2017, 223) suggested penalising subtitles that have their reading speed over 15 cps and 20 cps considered to be a standard speed error. I am using the recommendations from Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) which suggest that 17 cps would be the comparison point for this analysis. One subtitle in the video exceeds this with 18 cps and another two with 20–21 cps. This means that there is one minor speed error worth 0.25 points and two standard speed errors worth 0.5 points each in the subtitles.

By calculating the points from each category and then dividing them with the number of subtitles, the results are as follows: in the functional equivalence category the subtitles have $4/7=0.57$ error points, in the acceptability category 0 error points, and in the category of readability the subtitles have 0.54 error points. The overall points would be 1.61 error points. From the points of each category, it can be seen that the subtitles struggle most with functional equivalence. They also have issues in readability, especially spotting. The subtitles excel in acceptability. These can be debated and analysed as to why this is the case, but the purpose of this model is to give detailed feedback to the subtitler and not think causations.

7 Discussion

The analysis has three videos with different purposes. One is an advertisement from Oddlygood made in collaboration with a known Finnish artist, other a news story from a Finnish broadcasting company and the last a humorous video about Finns from an influencer from the States. They have an important thing in common: subtitles. The first video, an advertisement, has interlingual subtitles. The second has intralingual subtitles and the third has both of them. The purposes of the videos can be summarised each with one or two words: consume, inform and to amuse. The advertisement is directed towards the consumers of the oat-product and to the fans of Käärijä, most likely encouraging them to also buy the product. The news video has a purpose of informing people of current events, in this case floods that were happening in many cities of Finland. The video from Josh is more driven on producing humour and a sense of relatability but as an influencer, his videos' purpose is to collect more viewers and followers. All of these videos got added subtitles in the goals of achieving the purposes of the videos. This inevitably adds the purpose of being accessible to many viewers on which adding subtitles helps tremendously. It is also a common practice for accessibility to add intralingual subtitles if the speaker has a strong accent which is the case with the video from Yle.

All of the subtitles in the videos are open subtitles or captions as they are usually referred to when concerning social media. They are added in post-production, usually in the editing phase. This makes them pre-prepared/offline subtitles. These are the ones the viewer cannot turn off. However, TikTok also offers closed captions for most of the videos that are usually made via machine translation or auto-generate tool. As previously mentioned, TikTok contains also live subtitles in the TikTok Live videos. These are also usually produced by a machine translation tool added in the app itself. They are not the focus in this thesis. All of the analysed subtitles appear in blocks rather than a cumulative way. They appear on the screen fully and then disappear before the next block of subtitles is added. Cumulative subtitles would add onto existing lines when another part of the speech starts or another speaker says something. Considering the space restriction of the screen, TikTok would not accommodate these types of subtitles well. Another form of displaying that takes up usually more than two lines on the screen is called scrolling or roll-up subtitles. In these the subtitles appear in parts but the top part fades away when the new one appears. These could work best in TikTok Live

videos or in the closed captions that the app provides rather than the open captions which this thesis entails.

Díaz-Cintas (2018) introduced cybersubtitles as an umbrella term for subtitles found online. Does it also entail social media subtitles? He distinguished professional and non-professional subtitles. The three groups of voluntarily made cybersubtitles are: fansubs, guerrilla and altruist subtitles. The subtitles in the analysed videos are not added by fans because the videos are published in the creators' official channels rather than a random viewer that added their own subtitles. They are also not guerrilla subtitles as the videos are not politically motivated or have an anarchist agenda against dominant narratives. This leaves the last category: altruist subtitles. As they are made usually by volunteers that have a strong connection to the project's cause to educate or to inform, they do not apply to the subtitles in the videos either. However, the subtitles' purpose in the Yle-video is to inform so it could be argued that the motive for altruism would fit. This is not the case because the channel is institutionally owned and the subtitles' purpose is directed towards accessibility but with the company's personal gain as the video and its subtitles are a part of the news site's communication strategy. Yle (2025) has a statement in their website that describes their promise to produce trustworthy and accessible content and to keep up with the evolution of the digital age. The website has not specified about social media usage or subtitles, but the previous statement can be modified to fit the trends of making subtitled content for social media for accessibility and to follow the digital evolution. The subtitles in their videos could be considered altruist subtitles if the channel was not institutionally owned and the subtitles were produced by an outsider volunteer. The video with Käärijä is an ad so that leaves altruist subtitles out from the count straight away as ad's publisher has an ulterior motive and something to gain. It does not fit to Josh's video either as the subtitles are not made by volunteers in order to inform or educate people. From these existing categories, it could be concluded that the subtitles in the videos are professional subtitles. However, it is more likely that there are not yet enough categories for amateur made cybersubtitles, therefore the subtitles in the videos do not find their place yet.

The format of TikTok gives the subtitler more creative freedom compared to broadcast. In the app itself or with a subtitling app, one can add colours, decorative fonts, emojis or even flashy transitions for the subtitles. Duraj and Szarkowska (2025, 11–25) discovered in their study that viewers are more likely to engage with a video if it has nonstandard subtitles. The

participants' opinions were divided on the usage of emojis, but they all agreed that it is bad if they are overused. Duraj and Szarkowska (2025, 25) made an interesting observation in their article. They said that viewers expect less from social media subtitles than from broadcast subtitles. Less in this case means that the subtitles do not need to have for example the correct capitalisation or punctuation if they are captivating enough to boost user engagement with flashy colours, fonts or emojis. It could be argued that even though the social media subtitles do not need to follow precisely the grammar rules for a viewer to like them, the subtitles need to prove themselves in other areas. For example, in Duraj and Szarkowska's (2025) study the viewers disliked emojis if they appeared too often. This would make it another balancing act for subtitles: to be either too edgy or too little. The norms and preferences may differ with the form of subtitles, but the basic principle remains the same which is that subtitles are added to make the content more accessible for as many people as possible.

These options for flashy subtitles are usually omitted in the subtitling tools used for broadcast items. However, the use of such items can spark the debate of disturbing the viewer, not delivering the intended message or not being accessible. As previously mentioned in section [4.1.2](#), TikTok's goal is to be accessible to everyone. This does not however, stop users from modifying their own subtitles. This promise of accessibility more likely includes the app's own added captions and that they will be provided for more videos in more languages. The analysed videos use a non-disruptive font with neutral colours. They have also added outlines in different colour for the subtitles to stand out better from the background image. As a news channel, Yle has also dedicated themselves to being accessible and offering multitude of subtitles on their channels to be turned on (Yle, n.d.). As per their standard in accessibility in fonts and appearance, they follow it on TikTok as well based on this analysed video. The videos upheld the recommendations of having clear fonts and neutral colours in their subtitles but what if they would not? Many subtitles in TikTok might have flashy and disruptive subtitles. Would the constant presence of these change the norms of subtitling or would subtitles still hold their accessibility first -status?

The subtitles in the videos appear without any flashy transition effect, bold fonts or vibrant colours. Perhaps it is in the creators' style preferences not to use these or they chose to avoid these to be more accessible towards viewers. As a news site, Yle definitely follows this strategy as previously stated. The advertisement with Oddlygood has more creative freedom but chose to go the more moderate way. Adding colours to differentiate speakers, which is

according to recommendations by BBC (2024), and an emoji is already a way to stand out with the subtitles. At least, from the regularly seen broadcast subtitles. The colour choices for the speakers were probably no accident either as one of the subtitles are in green, which is known to be the trademark colour of Käärijä. The subtitler chose to opt out the neon green, which is more Käärijä's style, and added the subtitles in pastel green which is following the recommendations for more neutral-coloured subtitles. And which are more preferred by the viewers according to the study by McDonnell and colleagues (2024, chap. 4.1.2.). The creative freedom could be most exploited by, in this case, Josh. As an influencer, there are no official guidelines of a company or marketing stopping him. Still, he chose to have a neutral font with white and black subtitles which are the most preferred by viewers and the guidelines. He chose his subtitles to be accessible in this way for many. From this, it could be speculated that the creative freedom with subtitles can also be a trap. Especially for a content creator whose livelihood depends on views. Too flashy or too incoherent subtitles could cost many viewers.

BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) emphasised keeping the subtitles' register and tone as close to the audio as possible which means no oversimplifying or changing even crude language. This, however, is highly dependent on the style of the media. The video from Yle contains a narrator with a strong dialect when speaking. In a freer broadcast forum this likely would be shown in the subtitles if it would be important to show where the character is from. The video in question is a news article which means a more serious tone and register is required and its accessibility to everyone has a high importance. These spoken language and dialect elements are for this reason omitted from the subtitles. Contradictory to the accessibility and understanding aspect, the subtitles are long and separated to many parts across different images. This is against the recommendations given in the guidelines. In this case the narrating continues over the image changes and sometimes two images are used for the same sentence thus it can be argued to be acceptable. However, the sentences are also separated between word pairs which is more unconventional and not favoured.

The Käärijä-video has a chattier tone, and it is conveyed in the subtitles as well. By not following all of the grammatical rules of the target language they are able to carry the tone across registers. Going against the target languages grammar is against the guidelines but they do emphasize the importance of keeping the source language's elements within the subtitles. The video has the advantage of taking a more relaxed approach because, regardless of being

an ad, it is on a personal page rather than the business' site. Josh's video also takes on a more relaxed approach which is in character for a humorous content video. The intralingual subtitles are almost entirely a word-for-word rendition, therefore, they also contain the spoken language elements such as the incorrect use of passive voice, shortened pronouns and filler words. Vitikainen et al. (2020) stated that if it is important for the character then the spoken language should be preserved in the subtitles as well. These formerly mentioned elements of spoken language are according to their guideline, as they are ways that do not hurt the readability of the subtitles. Preserving the elements in the subtitles can be a conscious choice by the subtitler as the meaning of the video is to portray a non-native speaking and learning the Finnish language and that even though he speaks exactly the same way as the natives do, he is still not understood.

The interlingual English subtitles have been altered to follow the target text's grammar and have less spoken language than the audio. However, for example in one of the subtitles there is an added curse word for emphasis which is not found in the audio. This is done to keep the same tone and emphasis that the audio adds with a double consonant in a word that is regularly written with only one. The interlingual subtitles try to convey the same tone but it is hard because the Finnish spoken language and the Finnish standard language differ quite a lot. These kinds of differences happen usually in different dialects of the English language rather than in spoken language. The guidelines do not have recommendations for a subtitle that is not exactly a subtitle but more a description of action. These are common in SDH (subtitles for deaf and hard-of-hearing), but the subtitles do not fall under this category. The last interlingual so called subtitle of the video is meant as an annoyed remark rather than a translation for what is said. It is placed inside asterisks which are sometimes used for emphasis, footnotes or to bleep out curse words. Only one of those is common in subtitles and that is their use for covering up curse words. Although not familiar or common, the use of the last subtitle makes sense for the story and tone of the video. In theory, there are no guidelines for this example but in practice it works. Perhaps it will inspire more of its kind in future subtitles.

Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) discussed the importance of giving the viewer enough reading time and of placing pauses between subtitles for better understanding. TikTok's popularity is largely due to its short video content as one can watch a multitude of videos in a short period. Is there enough time in these short videos for the necessary pauses? Analysing the former

videos, it can be seen that the shortest video, Käärijä video, one pause is too short, other just right and the last too long. However, the last pause in the video is in a place where there is a natural pause in speech. This means that the last pause is also too short because in that case it should be 1 second minimum. The Yle video contains only one frame pauses between its subtitles. This does not abide by the guidelines' recommendations of at least 2–4 empty frames for pauses. As a lengthier video already, it can be debated that a few empty frames between the subtitles would not make a huge difference in length and thus could be added. Adding two empty frames between every subtitle would add in total of 30 frames which makes it 1 s and 6 frames more for the length. This difference might seem small and easily addable but in a platform that specialises in short and compact videos, it is already a big hindrance. The length of the video is almost impossible to make longer in post-production; however, the subtitles could be shorter in duration so that there would be time for longer pauses. The videos keep to the habit of being short because many times, viewers scroll away from a video if it seems too lengthy. One could also argue that a viewer is prepared to spend the time with the video if they are interested in the story or are looking for daily news. This all depends on the type of user; one casually scrolling through TikTok or one specifically following and looking for *yleuutiset* channel.

The pauses in Josh's video are either way too short or way too long. There are pauses that are less than the required 2–4 empty frames for continuous subtitles and there are pauses that are way over the required with 9 or more frames. This difference would make them pauses correspondent in speech that should be the minimum length of 1 second. It is not realised therefore the pauses that are too long are also too short. These pauses do not follow a pattern in duration but alter between one or twelve frames. All of the guidelines agree on one thing: consistency. Even if the subtitles would not follow the recommendations on the linguistic, temporal or spatial dimensions, they need to deviate from them in the same manner. This means that throughout the format for example the pauses or the lack of them, should be the same. It creates a disrupting viewing experience if in one part there is no pausing between subtitles and in the other the pause is visibly long. Which is the case for the pauses in the video by Josh. The pauses in the video are either too short or too long with no consistent pattern. Compared to the Yle video which had too short pauses, but they were all too short and did not change back and forth. According to the guidelines, it is acceptable if the pauses are not the required length as long as it serves the speech first. Meaning that if there is a long pause between audio, it is acceptable to have one in the subtitles as well.

The guidelines and recommendations highlight the importance of synchronising subtitles with the speech. The suggestions have a different allowance as to how much they can differ from each other. Based on the analysis, in the Käärijä video the subtitles do not match with the rhythm of speech as they hang many frames over the next audio or start way before their corresponding audio. The Yle video however is considered to be in sync with audio by the guideline requirements of having only few frames of a difference amongst them. The video from Josh has two sets of subtitles so different guidelines needed to be consulted. According to Vitikainen et al. (2020) the intralingual subtitles are not synchronised with the speech and according to BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) they are. The interlingual subtitles in the Josh video appear and disappear at the same time but the guidelines are different. According to the recommendations by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021), most of the interlingual subtitles are synchronised with the speech but others start after the audio or stay too long on the screen. This fluctuation is not considered as synchronised. The shortest video has the most unsynchronised subtitles which is interesting. It could be due to the fact that there is more room to leave the subtitles on the screen for the viewer's sake. However, as previously discussed by Szarkowska and Gerber-Morón (2018), the longer the reading time for subtitles is, the more chance it gives the viewer to re-read the subtitles and thus adds to their cognitive load. The purpose of leaving subtitles for longer is most likely to help viewers but in doing so, it might cause more harm than good. It is no wonder that the Yle video has pauses that consist of only one empty frame as the video is rather short and the subtitles extend to many scenes. Because the subtitles are in many parts, it can be said that short pauses are the best solution in this case so that the viewer can keep up with the information.

None of the videos have subtitles that exceed the maximum amount of time as they do not last longer than 7 seconds. The videos are on the shorter side, so the length of seven seconds for one subtitle means that the subtitle lasts most of the duration of the video. Which brings the matter of minimum time requirements set by the guidelines. Vitikainen et al. (2020) stated that 1 second and 19 frames should be the minimum duration for a short intralingual subtitle and Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) and Ivarsson and Carroll (1999) all stated that 1 second should be the minimum duration for interlingual subtitles. Based on the analysis, there are 5 intralingual subtitles in the Yle video and one intralingual subtitle in Josh's video that do not meet this minimum. In the Käärijä video, there is one interlingual subtitle that falls under the minimum duration. These duration recommendations are mostly for broadcast subtitles, not

for social media subtitles. The videos in TikTok made their fame on the fact that they are short, therefore there is almost always a limited space for subtitles. The spotting aspect of social media subtitles still needs more research and from that, more guidelines or norms for subtitlers to follow.

Jan Pedersen (2017) said that the quality of the subtitles is subjective. It depends on the guideline that is used to analyse them and on the person that is doing the analysis. The results from the analysis confirm this notion. For example, if we look at the recommendations for intralingual subtitles from BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) which has 1.5 second difference allowance for subtitles to still be synchronised with the speech. Compared to Vitikainen et al. (2020) who suggest that subtitles should appear only a maximum of few frames before the speech and leave a maximum of 1 second after the speech ends. Even though these two guidelines are directed to different languages, the difference in their approach in this matter is quite extensive. Both guidelines are used in the analysis for intralingual subtitles, and the results differ when the guidelines differ from each other. This said, in other matters the guidelines have more similar suggestions. The intralingual subtitles in the videos follow the recommendations regarding to minimum or maximum duration of the subtitles and the suggestion of maximum lines per subtitle. The subtitles do not have sufficient pauses as they are either too short to be for continuous subtitles or too short to be natural speech pauses. None of the intralingual subtitles exceed the maximum number of 35–42 characters by Vitikainen et al. (2020).

The guidelines for interlingual subtitles do not have drastic differences in their suggestions amongst each other. The pauses for interlingual subtitles in the videos do not follow the recommendations either by being way longer than 2–4 empty frames or then not the length of 1 second. The subtitles are not over the maximum duration suggested for subtitles but there are two subtitles in total which are not over the minimum duration requirement. None of the interlingual subtitles in the Käärijä video have more than two lines. The video from Josh has a few subtitles that are three lines which is not recommended. However, none of the subtitles in either of the videos exceed the character limitation of 37 suggested by Díaz-Cintas and Remael (2021) or 35 suggested by Ivarsson and Carroll (1999). The results from the analysis using the FAR model were different in both videos. The interlingual subtitles in Käärijä's video had the most errors in readability and the least errors in functional equivalence. This means that the subtitles convey the intended message without any semantic or stylistic errors

but had errors especially in spotting when regarding readability. Compared to Josh's video which had the most errors in functional equivalence with many semantic errors but zero errors in acceptability which means that the subtitles follow the target language's norms and grammar very well. The success in acceptability could be because Josh's native language is English but even that does not guarantee zero errors and is a mere hypothesis.

The outcome of the analysis also depends on the type of subtitles the guidelines were designed for. The analysis has only social media subtitles but only one of the guidelines used has recommendations for online subtitles which is the BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024). Compared to the guidelines for broadcast subtitles, BBC (2024) recommends only 25 characters per line and 50 per subtitle for online subtitles. All of the videos have at least one line in their subtitles that exceed the maximum. Josh's video has 2 lines that have over 25 characters and 2 subtitles that have more than 50 characters in total. If you combine the number of subtitles that were analysed, there are 33 subtitles in total. Out of these, only 4 exceed the maximum number of characters for online subtitles. Marginally that is a small percentage. In conclusion, even though there is a lot more creative freedom for social media subtitles and people prefer to see more flashier subtitles in these platforms, the subtitles in these videos upheld the recommendations of the guidelines for the most part. There is colour usage, but it is subtle. There are emojis in the subtitles but only one per subtitle. Even the errors in linguistics were considered minor when performing the quality analysis or when the errors were compared to the recommendations of a guideline. An almost brand-new form of subtitles and still they are largely similar to the previously known subtitles or are at least in these videos.

8 Conclusion

In the realm of audiovisual translation there has been a lot of talking about whether or not subtitles should be a verbatim copy of the audio. According to the analysis of these videos, it can be detected that none of the interlingual subtitles are completely a verbatim translation but conveys the originals' purpose, for example through chatty tone in the Käärijä video. The intralingual subtitles in the Yle video are more word-for-word translation but been modified for accessibility purposes. Compared to the intralingual subtitles in Josh's video where they are, apart from one letter, a verbatim rendition from the audio. From this small sample in the analysis, conclusion is that they mostly abide by the guideline recommendations concerning linguistic dimension and appearance choices but differ from them in their choices for spatial and temporal dimensions. This could be due to restrictions that the platform contains. There is not a lot of space or time to fully follow the recommendations. It can be counterargued that shorter subtitles would work despite the restrictions. The shorter subtitles in the Käärijä video, however, deviate from the rhythm of the speech more than the longer subtitles in the Yle video or Josh's video. And yet despite the platforms restrictions, most of the subtitles managed to follow the suggestions in the number of characters but are too short in time displayed.

The subtitle types listed in the beginning of this thesis are applied for online subtitles as well, however they do not directly entail the type of social media subtitles analysed in this thesis. It is important to emphasise that the quality recommendations for subtitles that Vitikainen et al. (2020) published were made in collaboration with Yle. They do not state in their website whether this is the guideline they follow whilst doing their subtitles. The info about their subtitles is more towards the accessibility, the quantity of them and which languages they are offered. Much like other guidelines, the quality recommendations are more directed towards broadcast systems. BBC Subtitle Guidelines (2024) also included online recommendations in their guidelines and differentiated various platforms, such as social media. For example, their spatial dimension recommendations, distinguished different size of screens and how they affect the subtitles. The FAR model introduced by Pedersen (2017) only covers interlingual subtitles and therefore could be used only for analysing half of the sample pool. The results are also tied to the guidelines that were referenced when analysing possible errors. If the interlingual subtitle examples in this thesis would have been more extensive, the model would

have perhaps been more beneficial. The model is also dependent on the writer's opinions a lot. Therefore, it is not a fully objective error analysis.

The difficulty of analysing subtitles against recommendations is that they are not rules. Subtitlers do not have to follow these. Also, that many businesses and organisations have their own guidelines which may deviate rather a lot. An amateur subtitler can choose to follow whichever they find or choose not to follow any. The difficulties also include the non-existent metadata on the TikTok-videos. They do not state their cameraman, editor, subtitler, translator or sometimes not even the people shown in the video. This makes it hard to determine whether or not the subtitles are made by amateurs or professionals. The conclusion cannot be made from this sample pool as the information is not attainable. It can be discussed and questioned based on the analysis and the user. The news video is from Yle, which is a company focused on their accessibility and does have many professional translators and subtitlers. The Käärijä video, being an ad, can also have a group of professionals behind it. Josh is a private creator; therefore, it can be hypothesised that he made the subtitles himself. These pieces of information are not stated in any of the videos. One pressing question now-a-days is also the fact that are the subtitles man-made or made by a machine. This is also not stated in the videos therefore it cannot fully be denied that the subtitles would be made using a machine translation or subtitling tool and then added onto the video afterwards. However, both of the audios contain strong spoken word elements that could be hard for a machine to interpret if it is not trained for it. The focus on this thesis is more about the quality of the subtitles against the subtitle guidelines rather than determining if they are made by AI or a person. This direction could be another one for future studies.

The intended target group of the videos is hard to determine as TikTok videos are open to be viewed by all even without the app on your device. However, it is more likely to be viewed by frequent users of TikTok. The previously mentioned algorithm will have a strong effect whether or not the videos will be viewed by the users of the app. For a broader and more generalised study, one could analyse a multitude of videos that appear on their front page. Although this would not be completely objective either as the algorithm is shaped by the individual user. For a more randomised sample, one could create a brand-new TikTok account and see what are the videos that are first offered for you to view and study the frequency and quality of those subtitles. For this study the used videos were searched for with key words and prior ideas. Analysing videos that are very likely to appear in Finnish user's front page, it can

offer a limited insight to see if the Finnish videos uphold quality recommendations in the guidelines. A bigger sample pool and more videos could result in a wider perspective and more generalised overview of Finnish TikTok. In comparison, this thesis offers a very detailed analysis of the two videos that are on the pages of well-known Finnish entities. A close attention to details could be harder to achieve with a bigger sample pool. However, another difficult aspect of this study is collecting the sample pool. This thesis covers only so much Finnish \leftrightarrow English content as was available at the time this thesis was made.

The video with Käärijä is an advertisement which means the primary focus is usually on the product. However, the channel made the marketing ploy of using a well-known celebrity in their video which shifts the focus on the person and makes the primary message more subconscious for the viewer. As an advertisement in TikTok, it means the more compact it is, the more people are likely to view it. The fan base of Käärijä has been steadily growing therefore the video reaches a multitude of people. Despite speaking in Finnish, the subtitles are added in English. This is most likely made to broaden the viewing base and to be accessible to all his fans around the world. The interlingual subtitles can also be a requirement from the company Oddlygood itself to be more reachable for masses. As stated in the [Method-section](#), it was the only video of his that I could find subtitles from. A questionable choice for an international celebrity not to add captions in their videos. From previous viewings one can find comments from his videos asking somebody to translate the audios to English. This could also add an angle for a future study, how many Finnish celebrities with international audiences translate their content or change languages entirely. As this thesis only contains one of his videos and not a counterargument for a non-translated one, it cannot fully answer this question.

As stated previously, the recommended video format size for TikTok is 9:16. The *screen safety area* for subtitles does not apply here in a sense that the screen itself is not distorted, so neither would the text. It does apply in a way that TikTok contains a lot of metadata that blocks most of the video. These would include the username, caption for the video and the icons for likes, comments and sharing. These do not leave much space for subtitles. This could be one of the most vital reasons as to why the Yle video's subtitles have been divided into that many parts. The spatial dimension of the subtitles would need more detailed analysis of the screens. The videos would have to be saved in the form of screenshots entailing the subtitles and the whole screen, and the space that the subtitles occupy calculated from those.

As this thesis did not focus on that, it could be a future addition to this study or complete one on its own.

By using all of the formerly mentioned guidelines in this thesis, it can be seen how the new form of social media subtitles follows the suggestions of the guidelines that might have been previously made only broadcast subtitles in mind. The studies made from this new form of subtitles is still scarce and every addition to the field is useful. By analysing more videos and their subtitles, it could offer content for another form of guidelines or recommendations made only for subtitles in social media platforms just like it inspired Pedersen (2017) to make his model for interlingual subtitles. Many studies are directed towards L2 learning from subtitles but there are only a few concentrated on social media subtitles. Approach for a study could be how social media subtitles effect language learning and add phrase in the viewer's vocabulary or even eventually on dictionaries. This would need extensive research on number of videos and viewers. One limitation that arises with this idea is the same that happened with this thesis: the videos with interlingual subtitles are quite hard to find. Another research idea could be towards how multimedia might easily overload students' cognitive processes. To study this, one would have to perform a cognitive test with subjects watching the videos and then saying what they remember from them afterwards. It would be an interesting future study to see how it affects language learning by overloading one's cognitive channels by watching multitude of videos in the span of one minute all including image, sound, background music and subtitles. Everybody wants everything to happen fast but do not stop to think how much we retain of the information or content when our processors are working on overdrive.

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Appendices

Finnish summary – Suomenkielinen lyhennelmä

Johdanto

Sosiaalinen media on alati kasvavassa osassa elämäämme. Nopeatempoisuus tarttuu internetin maailmasta arkeen ja kaikkeen mitä teemme. Suuren vaikutuksensa lisäksi sosiaalinen media inspiroi tämänkin tutkimuksen. Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tarjota yksityiskohtainen vertaileva analyysi kolmen suomalaisen TikTok-videon tekstityksistä. Analyysi pohjautuu jo julkaistuihin tekstitysten laatusuosituksiin. Vertailen suomen- ja englanninkielisiä tekstityksiä ja sitä, miten hyvin ne seuraavat laatusuosituksia. Keskustelen myös tekstitysten tärkeydestä sosiaalisessa mediassa sekä miten niiden laatu vaikuttaa käyttäjäkokemukseen. Olen sisällyttänyt analyysiin myös Jan Pedersenin (2017) FAR- mallin tekstitysten laadun arvioinnista. Edellä mainittu FAR-malli koskee vain englanninkielistä tekstitystä. Vaikka tekstittämisessä ei ole suoranaisia sääntöjä, monet yritykset ja järjestöt ovat tehneet omat suosituksensa laadun takaamiseksi. Näitä ehdotuksia löytyy muun muassa kirjoista, kuten Díaz-Cintasin ja Remaelin (2021) *Subtitling: Concepts and Practises* sekä Ivarssonin ja Carrolin (1999) *Subtitling* ja laatusuosituksista, kuten Vitikaisen ym. (2020) *Ohjelmatekstitysten laatusuositukset* ja BBC:n (2024) *Subtitle Guidelines* (2024).

Teoreettinen viitekehys

Díaz-Cintas ja Remael (2021) jaottelevat tekstitykset kielellisten ominaisuuksien, tekoon käytetyn ajan ja niiden esitysmuodon perusteella. Kielellisten ominaisuuksien perusteella tekstitykset jaetaan kahteen luokkaan: kieltenvälisiin ja kielensisäisiin. Kieltenväliset (*engl. Interlingual*) tekstitykset voivat olla yksi-, kaksi- tai monikielisiä. Niissä on kuitenkin aina läsnä vähintään kaksi eri kieltä: audion kieli ja tekstitysten kieli. Esimerkiksi englanninkielinen ohjelma, jossa tekstitykset ovat suomeksi. Kielensisäiset (*engl. Intralingual*) tekstitykset ovat kokonaisuudessaan yksikielisiä. Tutuin muoto kielensisäisistä tekstityksistä on ohjelmatekstitys heikkokuuloisille tai kuulovammaisille, mitkä sisältävät enemmän audion ja muiden elementtien kuvailua. Kielensisäisiä tekstityksiä käytetään myös

opetustarkoituksiin tai silloin kun puhujalla on vahva aksentti tai murre. Nykyään mittava määrä ihmisiä katsoo videoita ilman ääniä, joten he nojautuvat tekstitysten varaan. Tekstitykset jaetaan tekoajan perusteella erikseen tehtyihin tekstityksiin, jotka lisätään ohjelman kuvaamisen jälkeen (*engl. Pre-prepared subtitles*) ja live-tekstityksiin (*engl. Live subtitles*), jotka tehdään ja näytetään samaan aikaan kuin ohjelmakin. Nämä ovat yleisimpiä urheiluohjelmissa ja live-haastatteluissa. Díaz-Cintas ja Remael (2021) kuvailevat että esitysmuodon puolesta tekstitykset voivat ilmestyä ruudulle kokonaisina virkkeinä ja poistua seuraavan tieltä (*engl. Block subtitles*), liukuen ruudulle pienempinä osina ja sitten liukua pois näkyvistä (*engl. Scrolling subtitles*) tai ilmestyä ruudulle virke virkkeeltä ja kadota ruudulta kaikki yhtä aikaa (*engl. Cumulative subtitles*). Viimeistä käytetään, kun halutaan lisätä jännitystä ja olla paljastamatta juonen käännekohtaa tekstityksissä. Tekstitykset voidaan jakaa myös teknisten ominaisuuksiensa osalta. Avoimet tekstitykset (*engl. Open subtitles/captions*) ovat osa kuvaa ja katsoja ei voi poistaa niitä käytöstä. Suljetut tekstitykset (*engl. Closed subtitles*) ovat erillisiä kuvasta ja katsojalla on valta päättää ovatko ne päällä vai ei sekä millä kielellä ne ovat, jos sellainen vaihtoehto on tarjolla. Monet TikTok-käyttäjät ovat alkaneet lisätä videoihinsa avoimia tekstityksiä ja sovellus itsessään tarjoaa mahdollisuuden suljettuihin tekstityksiin.

Kuten aiemmin mainittu, monet yritykset ja järjestöt ovat tehneet omat ohjeensa tekstityksille. Olen jaotellut ohjeiden suositukset samalla tavalla kuin Díaz-Cintas ja Remael (2021) tekivät oppikirjassaan: kielellisiin, spatiaalisiin, ajallisiin ja ulkonäöllisiin ominaisuuksiin. Kielellisistä ominaisuuksista tärkeimpänä erotetaan uskollisuus puhujalle. Tekstitykset seuraavat puhujan tyyliä ja sitä ei ole liiaksi muokattu. Tekstityksen tulee samalla noudattaa kohdetekstin kielioppia. Ohjeet suosittelevat välttämään pitkiä lauseita tai jaottelemaan ne loogisesti katkaisematta ajatuksen kulkua tai oleellisia sanapareja. Spatiaaliset eli tilalliset ominaisuudet ovat riippuvaisia taustasta. Tekstitykset eivät saa peittää eivätkä häiritä taustalla näkyvää kuvaa. Ohjeiden mukaan paras merkkimäärä tekstitykselle olisi 37–42 per rivi. Tämä tosin riippuu ohjeesta ja ohjelman muodosta, mutta suurin osa suosittelee maksimimerkkimääräksi 37:ää. BBC (2024) eritteli ohjeet internetistä löytyville tekstityksille. Heidän ohjeidensa mukaan yhden rivin ei pitäisi ylittää 25 merkin määrää. Ohjeet määrittelevät myös rivimäärämaksimin, joka on kaksi ja joista toinen rivi olisi ensimmäistä pidempi. Internetissä näkyvissä tekstityksissä voidaan sallia jopa kolme riviä. Ajallisista ominaisuuksista oleellisin on, että tekstitykset seuraavat puheen rytmiä. Ohjeet ovat eri mieltä siitä, saako tekstitys jatkua yli kohtauksen vaihdon vai pitäisikö tilalla olla tässä kohtaa jo

uusi. Jos puhe jatkuu esimerkiksi uutisselostuksessa yli kohtauksien, tekstitys saa näkyä ruudulla, vaikka kuva vaihtuu. Suosituksena kuitenkin on, että repliikit eivät ole liian pitkiä mutta ei myöskään liian lyhyitä. Vitikainen ym. (2020) määrittävät maksimiajaksi 7 sekuntia ja minimiksi 1,8 sekuntia kun taas BBC (2024) määrittäi minimiksi 1,2 sekuntia. Molemmat korostivat taukojen merkitystä tekstitysten välissä. Tekstitysten ulkonäöstä ollaan melko yhtenäisin mielin. Suositaan mahdollisimman selkeää fonttia sekä neutraalia värimaailmaa. Kaikista ominaisuuksista tärkeimpänä nostetaan esille koherenssi eli johdonmukaisuus. Tekstitysten tulee kytkeytyä sen teoksen maailmaan, jossa ne ilmenevät sekä olla johdonmukaisia ja yhteneväisiä sisällöltään koko ohjelman ajan.

Materiaali ja metodit

Materiaalin pohjana on suosiota kasvattanut sovellus TikTok, jossa voi julkaista tai katsoa lyhyehköjä videoita. Videoiden tekijä voi lisätä joko omat tekstityksensä tai katsojana voit käyttää sovelluksen omia live-tekstityksiä, jotka tekee konekäännin. Tutkimukseen valitsin videot, joiden tekstitykset ovat oletettavimmin videon tekijöiden tulosta. Valitsin analyysiin julkisuuden henkilön Käärijän, uutiskanava Ylen sekä vaikuttaja Josh Hurstin. Jere Pöyhösen, eli Käärijän, valitsin siksi, että hän on kerännyt suuren suosion kansainvälisillä markkinoilla ja halusin tutkia, onko tämä vaikuttanut siihen, että onko hänen videoillaan tekstitykset ja minkälaiset. Löysin hänen kanavaltaan mainoksen Valion Oddlygood -tuotemerkin kanssa, jossa oli englanninkieliset tekstitykset ja suomenkielinen audio. Kyseessä on siis kieltenväliset tekstitykset. Yle-uutiskanavan valitsin, sillä he tarjoavat nettisivunsaakin monella kielellä. Kyseinen TikTok-kanava tarjosi sisältöä vain suomeksi, mutta sisältää suomenkieliset tekstitykset. Tämä onkin siis kielensisäisten tekstitysten esimerkkinä. Josh Hurstin valitsin siksi, että hän tekee sisältöä kanavalleen sekä suomeksi että englanniksi vaikkakin enemmän englanniksi. Häneltä löysin videon, josta löytyy sekä kielenväliset että kielensisäiset tekstitykset.

Metodina toimii vertaileva laadullinen analyysi. Kirjoitin tekstitykset ja puheet taulukoihin kopioimalla ne videosta. Siirsin videot CapCut sovellukseen, josta pystyin manuaalisesti kelaamaan niitä saadakseni puheen ja tekstityksen aikakoodit. Näin niiden vertailu keskenään oli helpompaa. Kävin läpi tekstityksiä rivi riviltä ja jaottelin analyysini teorialuvun lailla kielellisiin, spatiaalisiin, ajallisiin ja ulkonäöllisiin ominaisuuksiin. Vertailin videon antia laatusuosituksen ohjeisiin: miten ne noudattavat ja miten ne eivät noudata suosituksia.

Analyysi ja päätelmät

Yllä mainituista videoista jokainen sisältää ruutuun poltetut tekstitykset, joita katsoja ei voi laittaa pois päältä eli kyseessä ovat avoimet tekstitykset. Ne ovat lisätty videoon siis jo editointivaiheessa, mikä tekee niistä ennalta tehty eikä live-tekstitykset. Tekstitykset ilmestyvät ruutuun kokonaisina ja katoavat uusien tieltä. Kyseessä on siis *block subtitles*. Tämä toteutuu jokaisessa videossa. Käärijä-video sisältää paljon puhekielisiä elementtejä. Keskustelun sävy on hahmolle tyypillisesti rempseää ja se välittyy myös tekstityksistä. Laatusuositukset korostivat juuri puhujalle uskollisena olemisen tärkeyttä. Tämä on saavutettu tässä videossa, jopa sellaisin keinoin, jotka eivät noudata kohdetekstin eli englannin kielen suosituksia. Tästä esimerkkinä on puhekielisen verbimuodon käyttö kieliopillisesti oikean sijaan. Tämä on tehty sävyn säilyttämisen vuoksi. Toisaalta tekstityksissä on myös poikettu sanatarkasta käännöksestä aikamuotojen suhteen, koska niissä on noudatettu kohdetekstin kielioppia. Tämä poikkeaa ohjeiden suosituksista olla puheelle uskollinen mutta seuraa tärkeintä eli koherenssia, sillä tekstitykset poikkeavat johdonmukaisesti. Tekstitykset eli repliikit ovat suositusten mukaisesti maksimissaan kahden rivin mittaisia. Merkkimäärältään yksikään repliikki ei ylitä maksimirajoitusta, joka on 37 per rivi eli noin 74 merkkiä per repliikki. Ensimmäisessä repliikissä on kuitenkin yksi rivi, joka ylittää suositellun 25 merkin määrän internet-tekstityksille. Yksikään tekstityksistä ei myöskään ylitä 7 sekunnin maksimipituutta, mutta yksi ei ylitä osan ohjeista vaatimaa minimipituutta. Ensimmäisen ja toisen tekstityksen välillä ei ole suositusten pituista taukoa. Loppujen välistä tauko löytyy. Tämä ei noudata johdonmukaisuusvaatimusta. Tekstitysten ajoitus poikkeaa puheesta monen ruudun verran, osassa jopa yli sekunnin verran. Tästä voi päätellä, että tekstitykset eivät seuraa puheen rytmiä. Video sisältää kaksi puhujaa ja heidän puheenvuoronsa ovat merkattu eri väreillä. Tämä on ohjeiden mukaan yksi suosituimmista tavoista erotella puhujat toisistaan. Tekstityksissä käytetty fontti on selkeä eli ohjeiden mukainen. Värimaailma on myös neutraali, sillä fontti on joko valkoinen mustalla korostuksella tai vihreä valkoisella korostuksella. Yksi tekstityksistä sisältää emojiin, mikä on suhteellisen normaali näky internet-tekstityksissä mutta ei ole läsnä ohjelmatekstityksissä.

Päinvastaisesti Yle-video on vakavamman sävyinen, sillä kyseessä on uutisartikkeli. Juontajalla on vahva murre ja voi olla osasyynä kielensisäisiin tekstityksiin. Selostus sisältää puhekielelle tyypillisiä elementtejä, kuten sanojen lyhentämistä mutta nämä eivät näy

tekstityksissä. Uutisen tarkoitus on tarjota informaatiota, joten selostajan puhetyyli tai luonne eivät ole olennaisia tässä tapauksessa. Olennaisinta on tiedon saavutettavuus, joten tekstitykset on kirjoitettu suomen kirjakielellä eivätkä sisällä puhekielisiä elementtejä. Tekstitykset eivät myöskään sisällä selostavia elementtejä, joten niitä ei ole suunnattu erityisesti heikkokuuloisille. Voikin olla, että ne noudattavat nykyaikaista trendiä, jossa jokaiseen videoon lisätään tekstitykset sillä monet katsovat videoita ilman ääntä. Tämä lisäisi siis myös katsojamäärää. Tekstitykset voidaan laskea sanasta sanaan vastineiksi, joskin muokattuna. Pitkä selostus on siirretty pitkiksi repliikeiksi. Niiden pituuden vuoksi ne on jaoteltu useaan osaan. Tämä jaottelu on osassa repliikeistä tehty kohdista, jotka kuuluisivat yhteen, esimerkiksi verbilausekkeen osien keskeltä. Tekstitysten pituudesta huolimatta, repliikit eivät ylitä suositeltua maksimimerkkimäärää, joka on 37 per rivi mutta kaikista repliikeistä löytyy yksi rivi, joka on yli 25 merkkiä per rivi. Tämä on vastoin ohjeita internet-tekstityksille. Kaikki repliikit koostuvat kahdesta rivistä, mikä on suositusten mukaista. Kuitenkin monessa niistä toinen rivi ei ole ensimmäistä pidempi kuten on suositeltu. Repliikkien välissä on vain yhden ruudun mittainen tauko, mikä on vastoin ohjeita. Tämä kuitenkin säilyy läpi videon mikä noudattaa koherenssisuositusta. Tekstitykset eroavat puheesta vain muutaman ruudun verran, joten ne noudattavat puheen rytmitystä. Ne ovat näkyvissä ruudulla kuvan vaihdon yli mutta kuten aiemmin on sanottu, se on sallittua selostavan uutisartikkelin kohdalla.

Vaikuttaja ja kirjoittaja Joshin video eroaa kahdesta ylemmästä, sillä että kyseessä on yksityisen toimijan julkaisema video. Sen teossa ei ole ollut mukana yhtiötä, yritystä tai muuta kaupallista toimijaa tai sitä ei ole videon tiedoissa mainittu. Videon sävy on myös rento, mikä näkyy kieltensaisissa suomalaisissa tekstityksissä. Video sisältää myös kieltenväliset englanninkieliset tekstitykset. Nämä eivät sisällä yhtä paljon puhekielisiä elementtejä kuin suomenkielinen audio mutta yrittävät säilyttää saman humoristisen sävyn. Kummankaan kielen repliikit eivät ylitä 37 merkin maksimia per rivi, mutta molemmista löytyy rivi, joka ylittää suositellun 25 merkin maksimin. Molempien kielten repliikit ilmestyvät ruudulle yhtä aikaa ja sisältävät kumpikin useamman rivin. Ehdotus maksimissaan kahdesta rivistä per repliikki ylittyy kahdessa suomenkielisessä tekstityksessä. Rivien jaottelun tulisi tapahtua lauserajojen kohdalla tai sanaparien jälkeen. Molemmissa sekä kieltensaisissa että kieltenvälisissä tekstityksissä jaottelut erottavat sana- tai lauserakenteita, mikä ei ole suositusten mukaista. Repliikkien väliset tauot vaihtelevat pituudeltaan läpi videon ja osa tauoista on liian lyhyitä. Suositusten mukaan taukojen ei tarvitse noudattaa

aikarajoitteita pilkulleen, kunhan ne käyvät järkeen puheen kanssa, mikä tarkoittaa sitä, että jos puheessa on pitkä tauko niin repliikkien välinen tauko voi myös olla pidempi. Videon repliikit eivät kuitenkaan noudata suositusten mukaista ohjeistusta siitä, että repliikit voivat erota puheen rytmistä muutaman ruudun verran. Niiden välinen ero on liian suuri. Videon tekstitykset ovat väriltään mustavalkoiset, valkoinen teksti mustalla taustalla ja käytetty fontti on selkeä ja hyvin luettavissa. Ulkoasu on siis suositusten mukainen. Myös tämä video sisältää emojimerkkejä. Repliikit on merkattu kielen mukaan joko Yhdysvaltojen tai Suomen lipulla. Tämä emojien käyttö säästää katsojien aikaa, jotta he löytävät ne tekstitykset, joita haluavat seurata. Tärkeintähän TikTokissa on, että asiat tapahtuvat nopeasti. Emojien käyttö on yleistynyt sosiaalisessa mediassa huomattavasti verrattuna ohjelmatekstityksiin, joissa niitä ei ole ollenkaan.

TikTok-videot antavat tekijälleen enemmän luovia vapauksia kuin esimerkiksi televisiossa näkyvät tekstitykset. Analysoitujen videoiden tekstitykset sattuivat olemaan osittain samankaltaisista kategorioista kuin useimmat televisiotekstityksetkin mutta sovelluksessa saattaa usein nähdä enemmän ohjeista poikkeavia tekstityksiä. Joshin video on esimerkki tästä, sillä videossa on kahdet moniriviset tekstitykset näkyvissä samaan aikaan, ja tauot repliikkien välillä eivät täytä suosituksia. Käärijä-videossa tauotus tekstitysten välillä oli otettu huomioon, mutta se on voinut olla helpompi ratkaisu lyhyemmän dialogin sekä vain yhden kielen vuoksi. Kuitenkin tämän lyhyen dialogin takia, monet videon repliikeistä olivat jätetty ruudulle liian pitkään puheen loppumisen jälkeen. Yle-videon selostus taas on mittava, joten niin ovat tekstityksetkin. Taukojen lisääminen kasvattaisi videon pituutta ja voisi häiritä puheen rytmin seuraamista. Tätä vastaan voisi argumentoida että, koska tekstitykset ovat niin pitkiä juuri niiden väliin katsoja tarvitsisi tauon. Szarkowska ja Gerber-Morón (2018) kuitenkin päätyivät tutkimuksessaan siihen tulokseen, että tekstitysten lukuajan pidentäminen tuottaisi enemmän harmia katsojalle. He totesivat, että vaikka lukuaika on lyhyt, niin katsoja tottuu siihen paremmin kuin pitempään lukuaikaan. Tästä voisi siis teorioida, että Yle-videon pitkät tekstitykset eivät tarvitse pidempää lukuaikaa ja että ne olisivat hyvin luettavissa, vaikka tauot välissä olisivat pidempiä.

Lopuksi

Näiden esimerkkien perusteella näemme, että analysoidut tekstitykset seuraavat ohjeiden laatusuosituksia kielellisten ominaisuuksien ja ulkonäön suhteen. Ne eivät kuitenkaan noudata ohjeita spatiaalisissa tai ajallisissa ominaisuuksissa. Nämä tilalliset ja ajalliset erot voivat johtua TikTokissa olevista rajoitteista. Ruudulla ei ole paljoakaan tilaa eikä lyhyissä videoissa ole aikaa pitkille tekstityksille. Kuitenkin esimerkkien tekstitykset noudattavat ohjeistuksia merkkimäärän ja maksimiajan suhteen. Ne eivät kuitenkaan täytä vähimmäisajan vaatimuksia. Se onkin suurena haasteena sosiaalisen median tekstittäjille, sillä lyhyet videot eivät tarjoa helppoa alustaa suositusten noudattamiseen.

Monet laatusuositusten ohjeista eivät ota erikseen huomioon internetissä näkyviä tekstityksiä vaan keskittyvät enemmän televisio-ohjelmiin. Ohjeet ovat myös suosituksia eivätkä suoranaisia sääntöjä. Amatööritekstittäjä voi valita monesta olemassa olevasta ohjeesta tai valita olla noudattamatta yhtäkään niistä. Uusi ohjesuositus voitaisiin kirjoittaa analysoimalla useita tekstityksiä sosiaalisen median kanavilta ja niiden pohjalta nähdä, miten nykyajan erilaiset tekstitykset muuttavat käsitystä tekstittämisestä ja audiovisuaalisesta kääntämisestä. Sosiaalisen median tekstityksiä tulisi siis tutkia laajasti tulevaisuudessakin, sillä tällä hetkellä olevien tutkimusten mukaan niillä ei ole edes omaa kategoriaansa.