Päivi Kuusi & Leena Kolehmainen & Helka Riionheimo

Introduction
Multiple Roles of Translation in the Context of Minority Languages and Revitalisation

Abstract

This cross-disciplinary review article provides an overview of previous studies on minority language translation by combining Translation Studies with language revitalization research and the study of the multilingual practices of minority language speakers. The article explores possible links between these three areas of research that, so far, have shown relatively little interest in a cross-disciplinary approach, and hopes thus to contribute to a better understanding of the different types and status of minority languages as well as the diverse roles of translation and interpreting for their speakers.

1 Introduction

This article[1] provides an overview of existing research on minority language translation from the point of view of Translation Studies (TS), language revitalisation research, and the study of multilingual practices of minority language speakers. Translating into and from minority languages has not been the focus of any of these research fields. TS have traditionally focused on major languages, and minority languages have been gaining attention since the mid-1990s. Presumably, this lack of scholarly interest is a result of an overall focus on professional translation within TS. Since there is little commercial demand for translations into and from minority languages, it has not been easy for them to attract the spotlight of TS. In language revitalisation research, translation has remained largely invisible and is typically mentioned only in passing, if at all. This invisibility of translation is somewhat unexpected since translation plays a role in many revitalisation activities, e.g. the development of written standards, vocabulary, and learning materials

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[1] The articles in this special issue were reviewed by two external reviewers. We thank them for their valuable feedback and suggestions for revision. The four articles in this issue are based on research that was conducted in co-operation between two projects at the University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu: The Kiännä project (2015-2018, funded by the Kone Foundation) aims to support the revitalisation of the endangered Karelian language by organising translator training for its speakers and learners. The Kontu project (2015-2018, funded by the Emil Aaltonen foundation) investigates the role of translation in the context of minority languages. For more information see: Kiännä (n.d.), Kontu (n.d.).

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for education. In research on the multilingual practices of ordinary speakers, such as code-switching, mechanisms involving translation are not always recognised as such even though translation is obviously an essential part of everyday communication for many bilingual minority language speakers. The often ad hoc, sporadic nature of translation in everyday interaction may be the reason its description has remained rare, has been carried out from a completely different perspective, or has utilised a differing terminology. For this reason, the primary goal of this introductory review article is to bring together observations related to translation in the context of minority or endangered languages from research fields that, so far, have approached the issue quite independently of each other. By combining insights from these fields of study, we aim to advance the study of minority language translation, to make the role of translation more visible in different minority language situations, and to identify areas that have remained in the shadows. In this article, the notion of "minority language" refers to a variety of settings in which a language is dominated by another. The notion ranges from traditional minority languages to migrant languages and languages in post-colonial societies. Minority languages may show variation with regard to the number of speakers, domains of use, status in society, geographical and economic circumstances, and the historical developments behind their minority position. Despite these differences, minority languages share one common characteristic: their subordinate position with relation to the dominant language of a society (Branchadell 2005: 6-7; see also Venuti 1998: 135).

The focus of this and the three articles that follow, however, is on the individual actors that actually translate, i.e. on minority language speakers and the varying roles in which they exhibit their agency as literary translators, translation students, language activists, and ordinary multilingual speakers. Agency, defined as "the willingness and ability to act" (Koskinen/Kinnunen 2010: 6) is ultimately a product of actions (Koskinen/Kinnunen 2010: 7). Emerging from actions, agency can also be studied by observing the actions, linguistic or otherwise. In the following three articles, the agency of minority language speakers and translators is sought in different linguistic accounts of their actions. These accounts include interviews with minority language translators (Iso-Ahola), field notes on student conversations during translator training sessions, students' written self-reflections on what was learned during translator training, student feedback (Koskinen/Kuusi), and recorded conversations and metalinguistic commentary on multilingual practices in everyday speech (Lantto/Kolehmainen).

This introductory article is organised as follows. Section 2 outlines the key issues of previous research on minority language translation in TS and examines how the diversity of minority language situations has been accounted for in TS and in sociolinguistics. Section 3 examines the role of translation in language revitalisation with a focus on the importance of translation for endangered languages and on the – perhaps surprising – invisibility of translation in revitalisation research. Section 4 focuses on the acts of translation performed by ordinary minority language speakers. These acts include the non-professional, fragmentary, and incidental translation practices in the everyday interaction of different linguistic minorities. The section also examines the function and relevance of

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these practices for the speakers themselves. The main insights of these three fields of study and their possible implications for the future study of minority language translation in TS are summarised in section 5.

2   Translation and the Diversity of Linguistic Minorities

Minority languages remained in the margins of TS for a relatively long period of time, but are gradually gaining more attention in TS. In 1998, Michael Cronin characterised minority languages as "invisible" in TS (Cronin 1998: 158), and in 2011, these languages were still considered outside the mainstream of TS (Branchadell 2011: 98). In 2017, a query on the keyword "minority language" gives 225 hits in the *Translation Studies Bibliography* (Gambier/van Doorslaer n.d.), even though some of the hits seem only to touch upon the topic (and a query on title gives only 16 hits). For "endangered language", the numbers are much less promising: title query gives only one hit, while keyword query gives none. However, despite the lack of general attention, there were individual attempts to examine the specificities of minority language translation even before the turn of the century (see Branchadell 2005: 2). As early as 1985, Gideon Toury argued that translating into a minority language deserves special attention in research because minority languages form a "middle ground" between general and language-pair-specific TS (Toury 1985: 5, 7). According to Toury, minority languages constitute weak target systems, both compared to the major language of the community and to most other potential source languages of translation (Toury 1985: 7). The notion of weakness in relation to the source language and culture originates in Even-Zohar's (1978) work on the position of translated literature in the larger polysystem of literature in a given culture. In a situation where a smaller nation (or linguistic group) is dominated by a larger one, its literature is typically weak and inclined to import models from the dominating source system (Even-Zohar 1978: 121-122). This weakness is likely to have an influence on translations into minority languages, because it makes them susceptible to source language interference that may, in time, approximate them to the source language models (Toury 1985: 7-8). At the same time, minority languages need translation. Translation may help to preserve and develop a minority language by, for example, reassuring its speakers of the resource-fulness of their language, triggering the creation of new vocabulary, and strengthening those domains of language use that have remained under-used (Toury 1985: 7).

This combination of inherent weakness of the target system and a need for translations makes the role of translation in minority language contexts highly ambiguous. This ambiguity has been repeatedly observed in subsequent research on the topic (see e.g. Cronin 1995: 90, 2003: 147; Millán-Varela 2003: 158; Branchadell 2005: 7), and it seems to be the key to understanding the role of translation for minority languages. In his influential 1995 article, which is often considered the starting point for research on minority language translation in TS (see e.g. Raine 2010: 35), Michael Cronin characterises the relationship between minority languages and translation as "fundamentally paradoxical" (Cronin 1985: 89). He asserts that translation is necessary for minority

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languages to retain their vitality, yet at the same time, translation poses a threat to the specificity and distinctiveness of these languages (Cronin 1995: 89). Developing this idea further in a later article, Cronin expresses the fear that under pressure from dominant languages of society, minority languages can, over time, "become mirror-images of the dominant language" (Cronin 1998: 147). In other words, repeated interference may lead to permanent convergence (Toury 1985: 8). This may be the case especially when the two languages, the dominant and the subordinate, are closely related. However, the pressure may nevertheless lead to "partial imitation of the dominant language" (Raine 2010: 40) even if the two languages are not closely related. The ambiguity inherent in translation results from unequal power relations, which is another key issue in TS research on minority languages. The emphasis on power relations originates in research on post-colonial translation and in the cultural turn TS took in the 1990s – a development that led to the recognition of power relations between cultures as a relevant feature that influences translation (Branchadell 2005: 6). These relations are rarely symmetrical and are likely to influence translational behaviour (see Toury 1985: 7). In the case of minority or endangered languages, the issue of power asymmetry cannot be ignored.

Languages of different status have been treated in TS as minority languages. Examples of these are Irish and Tibetan, which have been discussed in previous works in TS (Cronin 1996; Raine 2010) and Basque and Karelian, which are dealt with in this thematic issue. The Irish language enjoys the status of a national and the first official language of the Republic of Ireland. It has also been one of the official languages of the European Union since 2007. Despite its official status, the language is weak when compared with English, the other official language of Ireland, and it is in need of promotion and support to remain vital. The Tibetan language has over six million speakers, but it is constantly deteriorating as speakers abandon it in favour of Chinese (Raine 2010). The situation and the legal status of the Basque language with its 714,000 bilingual and 338,000 passive bilingual speakers (see Fifth Sociolinguistic Survey 2011) varies in the different administrative areas where the language is spoken in Northern Spain and Southern France. In the Basque Autonomous Community, where both Basque and Spanish are official languages, the Basque language has experienced considerable positive changes since Spain's transition to a democracy in the 1980s and the introduction of different revitalisation programmes (Totoricagüena/Urrutia 2008). The Karelian language is critically endangered. It has approximately 25,000 speakers in Russia and 11,000 in Finland and is not an official language in either of the countries (Karjalainen et al. 2013; Sarhimaa 2016). These four languages differ in official status and in number of speakers, but share a subordinated position in their relation to a major language (Branchadell 2005: 7). This position makes them "weak" as target languages of translation in Toury's (1985) sense and has implications for the willingness, possibilities, and competence of speakers to use these languages in different domains.

In other words, minority status is not granted by the position or size of a minority-language community in itself, but in relation to another linguistic group that occupies a major position. A language may be a minority language in one country and a major

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language in another (Branchadell 2005: 2). This view is in line with the definition of a minority language in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which includes major languages that have been traditionally spoken as minority languages in certain regions, such as German in South Tyrol (Branchadell 2005: 2). As Michael Cronin observes, minority "is a relation not an essence" (1995: 86; see also Cronin 2003: 144). Consequently, a minority status is necessarily contextual, defined in relation to a majority, and is dependent on a specific historical situation (Cronin 2003: 165; see also Venuti 1998: 135).

This relativity, however, makes the notion of minority open to various interpretations and definitions. New competing terms have been introduced to highlight different aspects of a non-dominating language. For example, the related term "minor language" was chosen by *mTm*, a translation journal that focuses on translating from, into, and between minor languages. It defines a minor language as "a language of limited diffusion or one of intermediate diffusion compared to a major language" (mTm n.d.). In congruence with this rather broad definition, languages such as Finnish (Mikhailov 2015) or Greek (Parianou 2009, 2010) have been discussed in TS as minor languages, even though both occupy a dominant position in their corresponding societies. To clear the picture, Albert Branchadell (2011: 97) proposes the term "absolute minority language" to refer explicitly to those minority languages that do not enjoy a dominant position in any country.

As "minor" or "minority" are felt to suggest small numbers, scholars have proposed alternatives to highlight other characteristics that are perhaps more apt to capture the essence of a minority position. For example, the terms "minoritised" or "minorised languages" have been introduced to emphasise that these languages have been "deprived of an official status" (Diaz Fouces 2005: 13) and "subjected to marginalisation and discrimination throughout their history" (Millán-Varela 2004: 53). The adjectival forms thus have political overtones suggesting that minority status is something that has been imposed on a language by the major or dominant linguistic group. As Krause (2007: 40) points out, behind a minoritised position we can always identify historical processes that have led to it. Globally, minoritising is speeding up the endangerment of languages at an alarming rate, and to highlight the danger of language extinction, Skutnabb-Kangas (2012) has proposed the provocative term "linguistic genocide", i.e. small languages are not just fading and dying, they are being "murdered". (We will return to the notion of language endangerment in section 3.)

However, not all scholars wish to highlight connotations with historical wrong. Baumgarten and Gruber (2014: 27), for example, propose a more neutral term, "non-state language", to escape any association with nationalism or with small numbers of speakers. Further, the notion "less translated languages" shifts the focus from the attributes of the language, such as the number of speakers or its official status, to the translation market (Branchadell 2005: 1). Inspired by the EU term "lesser-used languages", this term has been introduced to refer to languages that seldom serve as source languages of translation (Branchadell 2005: 1). The notion includes languages such as Arabic or Chinese, which, although major world languages, occupy a marginal position

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as source languages of translation when compared with English (Branchadell 2005: 1). Branchadell's notion of subordination is relevant here as well: the common feature uniting minority languages seems to be their subordinate position not only with relation to the dominant language of a society, but also in relation to the dominant source language on the global translation market. Small or endangered minority languages like Karelian fall into the category of lesser-translated languages, however, with a difference. In the global translation market, Karelian occupies a marginal position not only as a source language of translation but also as a target language. In Cronin's (1995: 88) terms, Karelian is source-language intensive, which means that translations are made largely from major languages into Karelian, not the other way around (as opposed to target-language intensive languages such as English, with pronounced translation activity from this language into other languages). However, even the translation activity from major languages into Karelian is feeble at its best (see Iso-Ahola 2017). The problem, therefore, is not just the imbalance of translation flows, but their overall weakness in both directions.

As is evident from the above discussion, the focus of TS has been on issues that are common to and unite different minority languages. Conversely, the internal diversity of the notion of minority languages and the differences in the situations of linguistic minorities have not been addressed in detail. Observations of the role translation plays for minority languages in general are typically based on case studies focused on a single minority language, such as Irish (Cronin 1996), Catalan (Bacardí 2005; García de Toro 2005) or Galician (Millán-Varela 2003, 2004). These are minority languages with an established position in their societies. Analogous studies on the translation of endangered languages are practically non-existent. This is clearly a result of the general emphasis in TS on professional contexts for translation. The translation market for endangered minority languages is extremely limited and offers few job opportunities for professional translators (Kuusi 2017), which makes it unfruitful for the study of professional translation. Translation and interpreting services are needed for some endangered aboriginal or indigenous languages in countries such as Canada or Australia, and recently a handful of presentations on translation and interpreting into these languages has been included in some of the conferences in TS featuring minority language translation as one of their themes (see *Translation and Minority* 2016; FIT2017; on the situation in Canada, see also Folaron 2015: 8). However, the general trend in TS seems to be to ignore languages with no professional translation market to offer.

There have been, however, some efforts to differentiate among various minority language situations. Branchadell's (2011: 97) notion of absolute minority language discussed above is one of them. Cronin (1995) makes a distinction between diachronic and spatial origins of a minority status. The first refers to historical development, the second refers to changes in national boundaries leading to a minority position (Cronin 1995: 86-87). The spatial origin of a minority status influences translation by enhancing translation flows, owing to the geographical proximity of a country where the minority language is in a major position (Cronin 1995: 87). In Branchadell's terms, these minorities are not

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absolute. Diaz Fouces (2005: 95-97) differentiates between three levels in the emerging "new linguistic order" in the European Union: official languages of the member states, the minorised European languages and immigrant languages. Diaz Fouces (2005: 96) deliberately refrains from using the common term "minority language", as some of these languages (such as Catalan) actually have more speakers than some of the EU's official languages (such as Finnish). The category of minorised languages, however, includes not only languages such as Catalan, with millions of speakers and an established position in the society, but also small or endangered minority languages, such as Karelian, with only some tens of thousands of speakers and no official status.

The terminological discussion outlined above shows that TS researchers have recognised the linguistic and social diversity of minority languages and have tried to account for this diversity terminologically. Similar, but more fine-grained distinctions have been suggested in sociolinguistics and language sociology where minority languages are often divided into three main groups: "indigenous", "autochthonous" and "allochthonous" language minorities. "Indigenous language" has a juridical meaning and is connected to the consequences of colonialism. Indigenous people or tribal people are the "original" people in their traditional areas who have suffered under European colonialization but have preserved their traditions, language, and livelihood habits, and are currently protected by the United Nations (Laakso et al. 2016: 15). The term, however, is often used as a synonym for autochthonous languages, and the terminological distinction between the two is nebulous. The term "autochthonous language" refers to any linguistically distinct, historical minority group that has lived in a particular region or country since the beginning of historical documentation (see e.g. Laakso et al. 2016: 16); in Diaz Fouces' (2005) terms, these are "minorised languages" (see above).

Those minority groups, in turn, that have migrated to a particular area in the more recent past are named "allochthonous" or new language minorities (Laakso et. al. 2016: 16); this group is equivalent to Diaz Fouces' (2005) "immigrant languages" (see above). It is important to note that the distinction between "autochthonous" and "allochthonous" (old and new) languages is not clear-cut, and between the two, there is a continuum of minorities with different histories. For example, the question of how long a group must have lived in an area in order to be classified as autochthonous is a matter of definition, and in cases of long-lasting migration, the distinction gets blurred (Laakso et al. 2016: 15). In addition, the issues and challenges faced by historical linguistic minorities and recent immigrant groups can be similar, for example, when there is lack of or competition for resources (see e.g. Gardner-Chloros 2007: 469, 482; Laakso et al. 2013: 12).

The historical, geographical, economic, and demographic circumstances of autochthonous minority languages may vary considerably. The types, motivations, and volumes of migration alternate, too. Edwards (1995: 140) addresses this variation in both categories and suggests a typological framework of minority-language situations according to three basic distinctions (see also Edwards 2007: 259-260). The first criterion describes whether the minority languages are "unique, non-unique, or local only". A "unique" minority language is spoken in one country only, a "non-unique" minority language is pluricentric

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and is spoken in two (or more) countries but everywhere as a minority language, and a "local-only" minority language is a pluricentric language that is a minority in one country but dominant in another. In Branchadell's (2011) terms, unique and non-unique would count as absolute minority languages, and local-only minorities would count as non-absolute. The second criterion of Edwards takes into account the geographical "cohesiveness", i.e. whether the speakers of a minority language are geographically concentrated or whether the language is non-territorial, and its speakers are scattered. The third criterion deals with transnationalism and the type of connection between the speakers of a minority language that is spoken in different countries; the speakers may be "adjoining" or "non-adjoining". The different combinations of these three distinctions give rise to a ten-partite model that can be applied to both autochthonous and new immigrant minorities. For example, Edwards (1995: 140) mentions the Romany language (throughout Europe) as an example of a non-unique, non-cohesive, and non-adjoining language. Spanish in the southwest USA, in turn, serves as an example of a local-only, adjoining, and cohesive minority language.

It is beyond the scope of this article to illustrate the ten possible types of both autochthonous and allochthonous minority languages (for examples, see Edwards 1995: 140; Edwards 2007: 460). In addition, as Edwards (2007: 461) highlights, this typology is far from all-encompassing, and not all minority languages are easy to classify according to the above criteria. For the purposes of this article, however, Edwards' detailed typology is useful because it shows how minority language situations may vary. Neither the situations of autochthonous minorities nor the situations of immigrant minorities are homogeneous. Consequently, the types, needs and functions of translation also vary, and to our knowledge, only preliminary attempts have been made to chart these differences in TS. For example, job opportunities for translators are different for local-only versus unique/non-unique minorities. There is a demand for the former translations in a country where the language occupies a dominant position (see Cronin's 1995 observations on the spatial origin of a minority status above). Similarly, in developing new vocabulary, the minorities are in a different situation (Kuusi 2017: 52, 55). A local-only minority is strongly supported by the country where their language occupies a majority position. Non-unique minorities can cooperate transnationally, and the unique minorities remain alone.

Previous studies of minority language translation have not explicitly touched on the diversity of language minorities and the relevance of this diversity for translation. Section 3 focuses on endangered languages as a special type of minority, and the role of translation is considered in the context of language revitalisation. Section 4 focuses on the translational practices in the everyday interaction of autochthonous and allochthonous minority language speakers.

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3   Translation in Language Revitalisation

Due to unequal power relations, most linguistic minorities struggle in a situation termed "language maintenance", i.e. the speakers

> continue to use their language in some or all spheres of life despite competition with the dominant or majority language to become the main/sole language in these spheres.
>
> (Pauwels 2008: 719)

The domination of a majority language over endangered languages has proceeded to the point that the minority language is at risk of vanishing within a couple of generations, and the minority speakers are in a process of language shift. They predominantly use the majority language, and the domains of the minority languages are being reduced (see e.g. UNESCO 2003: 2; Thomason 2015: 4). The critical factor is the lack of inter-generational language transmission, which leads to a situation where the language is spoken by the elderly but not by the younger generations. Endangerment is a process that can happen to any minority (indigenous, autochthonous, allochthonous), but the consequences are more drastic in the case of Edwards' unique and non-unique minori-ties (see section 2). It is worth noting that the vast majority of the world's languages fall into this category. Endangered languages represent a specific type among minority lan-guages, and they exhibit several traits that differ from more stable minorities, perhaps most notably ambivalent and ambiguous linguistic identity. Often, the speakers of an endangered language do not consider their language as a "real" language or themselves as "proper" speakers (see e.g. Grinevald/Bert 2011: 57; Laakso et al. 2016: 9-10; Partanen/Saarikivi 2016). These self-conceptions have arisen in a vicious circle of language shift, accompanied by the negative attitudes of the majority toward the minority language and its speakers.

Much effort in past decades has addressed the revitalisation of endangered languages (or, to use another term, reversing language shift). Linguists have focused on the rapid reduction of linguistic diversity on the macro level (e.g. Crystal 2000) and on the indi-vidual's right to use their own language, on the micro level, as a linguistic human right (e.g. Skutnabb-Kangas 2012). The goal of revitalisation is "to increase the number of speakers of a language and extend the domains where it is employed" as well as to change community attitudes towards a language (Grenoble/Whaley 2006: 13). The most acute challenge is to make the language available to possible new speakers, and, conse-quently, most revitalisation programmes concentrate on language immersion for both children (e.g. pre-school language nests, bilingual education at school) and adults (e.g. the master-apprentice model) (see e.g. Grenoble/Whaley 2006: 50-58; Hinton/Hale 2008; Thomason 2015: 163-167). Revitalisation gives rise to a specific group of speakers, named language activists, who, in practice, lead the revitalisation; they can be defined as persons who focus "energetic action on language use in order to create, influence, and change existing language policies" (Combs/Penfield 2012: 462).

A phenomenon characteristic to endangered language communities is the emer-gence of new types of speakers, which challenge the traditional, ideologically loaded

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concepts of mother tongue and native speakers. An important sociolinguistic group are so called new speakers, defined as

> individuals with little or no home or community exposure to a minority language but who instead acquire it through immersion or bilingual educational programs, revitalisation projects or as adult language learners. (O'Rourke/Pujolar/Ramallo 2015: 1)

Sometimes these individuals even originate outside the ethno-linguistic group (Hornsby 2015: 108). New speakers are separate from neo-speakers, who have learned the revived form of language as young children in revitalisation programmes (Grinevald/Bert 2011: 49; Sallabank 2013: 13). Typical new speakers can be characterised as adult L2 learners, but, in the context of revitalisation, they are recognised as members of the language community (Jaffe 2015: 30). Jaffe (2015: 26) also discusses the value of the metalinguistic knowledge of new speakers, who often have acquired language through formal education.

The concept "mother tongue" is complicated in all multilingual settings, and Skutnabb-Kangas (2012: 106-108), for example, proposes following four, possibly conflicting, criteria for mother tongue: origin (the language learned first), identification (the language one identifies with or is identified with by others), competence (the language one knows best), and function (the language one uses most). Skutnabb-Kangas further emphasises the relativity of a mother tongue as one person may have several mother tongues, a person's mother tongue may change during the course of life, and, importantly, it is "possible to claim a mother tongue by identification" (Skutnabb-Kangas 2012: 108-111). Moreover, Laakso et al. emphasise that in the case of acute endangerment, "applying the requirements would be very counterproductive to any effective efforts to revitalise the language at issue" (Laakso et al. 2016: 12). This means that in endangered language communities, the most educated and most active individuals are often new speakers who strongly identify with the language but whose competence differs from that of the traditional native speakers (see Iso-Ahola 2017).

In addition to increasing language use and engendering new speakers, language revitalisation often involves actions related to written language as well. Creating a written standard (codification, standardisation) is sometimes even presented as one of the pre-requisites for reviving a language (Crystal 2000: 138-141). The question of a written standard and literacy is complicated (for discussion, see Grenoble/Whaley 2006: 102-136), but, at least in the Western world, the existence of a written variety gives the endangered language more prestige and affects the way people see their own language (or the way the majority sees the endangered language). The special status of a (written) standard reflects a view of language known as the ideology of standard language, "strong belief in 'the one best variety' and a general denigration and rejection of all other (non-standard) varieties" (Vogl 2012: 13; see also Milroy 2001). The need to develop a written variety is also practical; written material is needed when teaching the language.

From the TS perspective, revitalising an endangered language via developing a written standard and creating diverse written materials seems a context in which trans-lation is obviously involved. According to Toury (1985: 7), translation is an instrument for

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preserving and developing a language. It can stimulate the creation of new expressions in an economic way, strengthen the self-esteem of its speakers, and convince them that their language is capable of expressing everything that has been expressed in other languages (see section 2). Therefore, it is somewhat surprising that many of the recent studies of revitalisation pay little attention to translation and its role in the revitalisation process. For example, in the much-cited document produced by UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages (UNESCO 2003), which presents nine factors contributing to the vitality of language, translation is mentioned only once in connection to language documentation:

> As a guide for assessing the urgency for documenting a language, the type and quality of existing language materials must be identified. Of central importance are written texts, including transcribed, translated, and annotated audiovisual recordings of natural speech.
> (UNESCO 2003: 16)

However, translation is probably involved in several other factors as well, such as creating teaching materials, advancing the written use of language, and the use of so called new media.

Another example is the volume *Towards Openly Multilingual Policies and Practices* (Laakso et al. 2016), which reports the findings of the research project ELDIA (European Language Diversity for All). The book gives a multidimensional picture of the use of several Finno-Ugric minority languages in Europe and promotes the maintenance of multilingualism. Still, translation is mentioned only sporadically when describing something that has been (or has not been) translated into the variety of minority languages investigated, and the long questionnaire (see e.g. Sarhimaa 2016: Annex 3) filled out by the survey participants does not contain questions about translating or interpreting. *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* (Hinton/Hale 2008) presents a similar picture. Even though different revitalisation practices are described in detail, translation and interpreting are mentioned only incidentally. Most probably, the absence of translation in these books is not intentional but reflects the instrumental role of translation in language revitalisation. Translation is not an object of interest in itself even if it is an indispensable step in carrying out many of the revitalising measures, e.g. in widening the range of domains in which the language is used, in the use of the language in new domains and media, and in the production of materials for language education and literacy (Factors 4, 5 and 6 in the document of the UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages 2003). The ensuing invisibility is further enhanced if translation is seen as a straightforward and unproblematic transfer mechanism without recognising its ambiguous potential for the development of minority languages.

In practice, translation is naturally one of the means of revitalisation, and this is seen, for example, in the case of Saami languages in Finland. The three Saami languages spoken in Finland are endangered, but as indigenous languages, they have a protected juridical status. They are mentioned in the Constitution, they have their own language act, and they have the areal status of official language in northernmost Finland. Furthermore, the Saami peoples have consciously worked to save their languages. In these

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efforts, translation has played its part. For example, the proposal for action published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Toimenpideohjelma 2012) contains several refer-ences to translation, mostly due to the legal status of Saami. The Saami Language Act gives the Saami people the right to use their own language before the courts and other public authorities, and one way to implement this is to use translating or interpreting. Pasanen's (2015) extensive study of the revitalisation of the Inari Saami language also refers to translation relatively frequently. Translating has been needed to create official documents, teaching materials, religious texts, literature and songs, among other things. Pasanen (2015: 121) highlights the ramifications of language nest activities as demon-strated by the Inari Saami children. After the children had learned Inari Saami in language nests, the next step was to make Inari Saami the language of tuition at school, and this, in turn, has increased translation, creating new vocabulary and producing teaching materials. (See also Folaron 2015 for a discussion on the role of translation for endangered aboriginal languages.)

Overall, in the study of revitalisation as presented in sociolinguistics or language sociology, translation remains rather invisible and disguised. Translation, translations, and translators are mostly mentioned in passing, and if a study contains a subject index, there is usually no entry for "translation". It would seem that translation is not considered a phenomenon that is interesting or useful to examine in detail. Many dimensions examined in TS, such as the translators' agency, translation process, translation strate-gies, or translation culture (to name just a few), have, in most cases, not been touched upon at all. However, the careful reader will find some references to translators as agents in revitalisation. Urla (2012: 99-100) briefly describes the work of an early Basque language activist and mentions translators as one group of language activists needed in revitalisation (Urla 2012: 44). The aspect of agency has, however, not been examined systematically. In this issue, Iso-Ahola's article explores the role of literary translators of an endangered language, giving voice to the activist translators themselves and the way they perceive their agency in the revitalisation of an endangered language (Iso-Ahola 2017).

Of particular interest for this issue is that translator training is hardly mentioned in the revitalisation studies we have encountered. For example, there has been systematic and large-scale translation training for Basque translators, first in a separate Translators' School and then incorporated into university programmes (Garabide Association n.d.: 46), but we have not encountered much research on this topic. There is a similar gap in TS research. With the exception of Kuusi (2017), Raine (2011) and Sim (2000), the latter focusing on the training of Bible translators, there is not much to be found on the topic. In the present issue, Koskinen and Kuusi address this gap by analysing how the trans-lators' agency is constructed during translator training organised for students and language activists of an endangered language.

This gap in research is a natural consequence of the scarcity of institutionalised train-ing. Translator training programmes have been launched for some minority languages, such as Irish or Catalan, but not for endangered languages. The obvious reason is the non-existence of a translation market for most endangered languages (see Kuusi 2017;

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Koskinen/Kuusi 2017). Nevertheless, the absence of training seems striking, bearing in mind that the first action mentioned in the UNESCO report on endangered languages concerns linguistic and pedagogical training:

> providing language teachers with training in basic linguistics, language teaching methods and techniques, curriculum development, and teaching materials development.
>
> (UNESCO 2003: 5)

The basics of translator training would supplement the competence of language activists and support their empowerment as language users.

The invisibility of translation in language revitalisation research is echoed in TS, where revitalisation as the purpose of translation has only recently begun to gain attention. In research focusing on major language translation, it has been generally assumed that translation is needed in interlingual and intercultural situations for the purpose of mediation between groups or individuals (for discussion, see Tymoczko 2006: 16). Thus, the function of translation, as defined by Roberts: "the application or use which the translation is intended to have in the context of the target situation" (Roberts 1992: 7), is to enable communication between parties. Furthermore, Marta García González (2005: 107) observes that TS have focused on *how* to translate instead of asking *why*. This "disregard for the reasons for translation" (García González 2005: 110) stems from the trend to focus on major languages. From the point of view of major languages, it is natural to see translation as an activity that enables communication between two parties speaking different languages (García González 2005: 107). However, in multilingual cultures, there is not necessarily a need for mediation between linguistic groups (Tymoczko 2006: 16). This is typically the case for speakers of autochthonous minority languages. Since they are bilingual and fluent in the dominant language of their society, there is no need for translation to ensure understanding or enable participation in that society. In such a situation, translation becomes "a mechanism to promote the language itself" and a "tool in the process of language recovery or preservation" (García González 2005: 110-111). For these minority language communities, the aim of translation is not to ensure understanding between parties, but to sustain, to develop, and to revitalise their language. Functions of translation not related to mediation will be addressed in section 4, where the focus is on everyday oral interaction and the translational practices of multilingual speakers.

4   The Translational Practices of Minority Language Speakers

This section examines the ordinary speakers of minority or endangered languages as agents engaged in translational action. The discussion outlines previous research on the translational practices of minority language speakers in their everyday communication, and addresses what little is known about the translational activities inserted in their everyday interaction and enabled by their bi- or multilingual repertoire. In TS, these practices are referred to as non-professional, meaning that not all translation is performed by professional, trained translators, who are paid for their services. Throughout history,

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ordinary multilingual speakers have acted as translators and continue to do so both in different institutional and in more mundane settings. In TS, this non-professional side of translating and interpreting was first brought up by Brian Harris (see e.g. Harris 1976, 1980), but in recent years, this study has gradually developed into a new research field in its own right (for recent publications see e.g. Pérez-Gonzaléz/Susam-Saraeva 2012; Kolehmainen/Penttilä/Pilke 2015; Evrin/Meyer 2016; Antonini et al. 2017). Translation as an activity without any occupational status is even more obvious in the context of minority or endangered languages than in other contexts due to the low commercial demand for minority language translations (see section 2).

The focus of the few previous studies in TS on minority language translation has been on autochthonous minorities, such as Catalan, Galician and Irish (see section 2), but research has barely touched on the translational practices of the speakers themselves. The speakers of autochthonous languages, such as Karelian and Basque in this issue, are typically bi- or multilingual. They have varying command of the minority language (see section 3 and the articles in this issue) and of the dominating language(s) of their living environment. Because they know the majority language, there seems, at first glance, to be no need for translation in the interaction between minority and majority language speakers. Translation, however, occurs. In this issue, the prevalence of translation in ordinary interaction becomes obvious in the article by Lantto and Kolehmainen (2017), in which a particular type of translation practiced by "regular" speakers is discussed. The focus of that article is on reported speech in the oral interaction of bilingual Basque-Spanish speakers in which the speakers navigate between the practices of translation and code-switching. The speakers need to decide whether to translate or not when referring to a prior situation and quoting something someone else previously said or wrote in another language. If they use the language of the ongoing conversation, they translate; if they decide not to translate, they exploit code-switching and quote the original message in the original language.

In other words, in the multilingual practices that Lantto and Kolehmainen describe, no third-party mediator is commissioned to pass a message from one party to another. In this context, translation does not serve the mediating function of facilitating communication between speakers with different language resources. Instead, translation is a type in which speakers carry out "acts of translating" (Paloposki 2016: 18) in the middle of an ongoing conversation. In such cases, translation does not extend from the beginning of a conversation until its end, but appears more occasionally and is embedded into a bigger whole. TS have not investigated this kind of embedded translational practice, and instead have focused on professional contexts in which translation is usually regarded as the production of full-length texts and interpreting as a mediation of a complete dialogue. "Pieces of translation", embedded in another text or dialogue bring up forms and functions of translation that have not been identified previously.[2] The particular "act

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[2]   Multilingual speakers' translational activities are, of course, not restricted to minority or endangered languages' speakers but are utilised by multilingual speakers with different linguistic backgrounds (e.g.

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of translating" highlighted by Lantto and Kolehmainen (2017) forms only one type of the translational practices used by ordinary speakers. More research is needed on the speakers of autochthonous minorities as agents of translational activities.

In contrast to the translational practices of the speakers of autochthonous minority languages, translation carried out by speakers of allochthonous, immigrant minority languages has been studied more intensively. Detailed descriptions of the translational activities of multilingual speakers have begun to accumulate taken especially from child language brokering. Child language brokers are children or adolescents of migrant families who

> are asked to take on the role of the language and cultural mediator and to translate for their parents, relatives, friends, and members of their linguistic and ethnic community in a variety of formal and informal domains, such as the school, the police station, local government offices, shops, hospitals, etc. (Antonini 2010: 5)

Valdés, Chávez and Angelelli (2002) and Orellana (2009) discuss examples of translation in the varying non-institutional and institutional domains that range from the private family circle and the immediate neighbourhood to diverse authorities. In the context of migration, speakers carry with them the language(s) of their origin to the new living environment in which they encounter a new, dominant language. Children and adolescents are often the first ones in the family to acquire the language of the new environment and begin – or are commissioned by the adults – to act as mediators between their family members and society. In Tse's (1995) study of Latino high-school students in the United States, most interviewed immigrant adolescents reported to have translated or interpreted for their families.

More often than not, research on the translation of allochthonous minority languages does not emphasise the minority status of these languages. Instead, other viewpoints dominate, and a considerable part of research on child language brokering has been conducted outside TS or linguistics, for example, in pedagogics, sociology, or psychology. In these disciplines, the main research questions have concerned the attitudes of the children towards translating and the impact of the translational activities on the children, on the integration of their parents, and on the power relations between family members (see e.g. Tse 1995; Antonini 2010; Weisskirch 2010).

From the viewpoint of TS, the most fascinating studies are those that analyse concrete situations in which child language brokering occurs. The examples of various studies (see e.g. Orellana et al. 2003; Bauer 2010; Bucaria/Rossato 2010; Meyer/Pawlack/Kliche 2010) show that child language brokers rely on all the usual translation strategies familiar from the contexts of professional translation. They take the target group into consideration and shape the message according to its needs, they pay attention to cross-cultural differences and try to avoid intercultural conflicts, they add and remove information when needed, and they provide summaries, and use examples and paraphrases when they do

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for Finnish-Portuguese translational practices in everyday interaction see Harjunpää/Mäkilähde 2016; Harjunpää 2017).

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not find the correct word in the target language. There are, however, problems that relate to the lack of expertise in the special field in question and to the insufficient special terminology in both of the languages the child knows. As shown by, for example, Pöchhacker (2000), this is a problem in health care where medical care providers do not necessarily receive all the information needed for the diagnosis or the treatment of a patient when information is left out due to terminological gaps. Rajič (2008) points out, however, that in addition to special field expertise, linguistic problems may also be linked to restrictions in the acquisition of the minority language. The domains of minority language use may be limited to the family circle, and the vocabulary and other linguistic skills do not increase and develop in interaction with the society in which another language dominates (see e.g. Montrul 2011).

The above discussion shows that mediation is the central function of translation in the context of migration and allochthonous minority languages. Child language brokers are agents that enable contact between speakers of different languages, the integration into and participation in a society. Translation, nevertheless, has other functions. The maintenance of the minority language at the societal level (see section 3) may not appear relevant for immigrant languages that are still vital and spoken in the country or region of origin (Edwards' "a local-only minority", see section 2). At the individual level, however, language maintenance is an important issue in immigrant families (see e.g. Tsunoda 2006: 5-6) striving to find a balance between language shift and the preservation and intergenerational transmission of the minority language. In this respect, the autochthonous and allochthonous minority language speakers face similar challenges.

Previous studies report that a common three-generation pattern emerges in the assimilation of immigrant language speakers in a new country (see e.g. Fishman 1991). First-generation (adult) migrants remain monolingual speakers of their language of origin in the sense that they often acquire the new, dominant language as adult learners and never reach full proficiency. Their children, second-generation speakers, usually become bilingual and acquire both the language of their parents and the language of the new environment. Their children, the third generation, are often monolingual in the language of the new environment and have a limited (if any) command of their grandparents' original language. Interestingly, translation has been shown to play a role in migrant families when different generations have different linguistic repertoires. In other words, translation contributes to minority language maintenance and intergenerational minority language transmission in allochthonous minorities.

In her Italian-English data, collected from the everyday intergenerational family mealtime conversations of North-American bilingual immigrant families, Del Torto (2008, 2010) shows how interpreting performed by second-generation family members may have several different functions. The most obvious function is mediation and conversational management. Interpreting, that is carried out in both directions, from the minority language into the dominating language and vice versa, forms a mechanism that builds contact between the languages and members of the family. It facilitates conversation between speakers of different generations whose linguistic resources may vary, and it

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functions as a method of minority language learning for the third generation. Much like the findings of Lantto and Kolehmainen (2017), in such cases, interpreting may concern smaller chunks of conversation, such as individual words or phrases, and does not necessarily extend from the beginning of the conversation to its end. In addition to the mediating function, interpreting is also employed as an element of identity construction (Del Torto 2008, 2010): even when not triggered by linguistic or conversational problems, second-generation speakers, nevertheless, may interpret. In such cases, interpreting is for the second-generation immigrants "a means to (re)create their own Italianness through demonstrations of their Italian language fluency" (Del Torto 2010: 148-149). In other words, interpreting is a strategy for creating a bilingual sociolinguistic identity.

In the "shift-maintenance-system", as Del Torto (2008, 2010) characterises the navigation between the minority and dominant language, the overall picture of interpreting is complicated and ambiguous. In family mealtime conversations, interpreting is simultaneously a resource for language maintenance and language shift. For second-generation speakers, interpreting demonstrates both a "shift in being able to use English well enough to interpret for older relatives" and "maintenance in being able to communicate with family members in Italian" (Del Torto 2010: 176). For first-generation family members, interpreting also supports the maintenance of the minority language. For third- and fourth-generation family members, the situation is, however, different because interpreting performed by second-generation speakers discourages them from using the minority language. This ambiguous nature of interpreting resembles the controversial role of translation that Toury and Cronin highlight in their writings (see section 2). Their viewpoint concerns translation's ambivalent role as a source of interference and as a tool of language maintenance and development. As shown by Del Torto's data (2008, 2010), the translational activities of immigrant families and communities add a new perspective to this ambiguity.

5   Discussion

The overall goal of this article was to compare viewpoints of TS, language revitalisation research, and the study of the translational practices of multilingual minority language speakers. By outlining the role of translation in varying multilingual situations, our understanding of translation and interpreting, and the agents who translate and interpret, can be broadened. The strong focus of TS on major languages and, within them, on professional agents and their activities seems to have overshadowed many contexts in which translation occurs and is essential for minority or endangered language speakers. By combining the three fields of research and making visible the role of translation in different minority contexts, we aimed to promote the study of minority language translation and identify areas where new research is needed.

Our review of research on minority language translation in TS showed that despite its still marginal status, minority language translation is steadily gaining attention in TS. The existing research highlights the ambiguous, two-way nature of translation; minorities

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need translation to develop their own language. Nevertheless, at the same time, translation may be a threat to them, imposing on them the models of the dominant language. Interference, or cross-linguistic influence, is a phenomenon typical to language contacts and occurs in all forms of language use. Translation is but one context for it, but it seems that TS are sensitive to the responsibility of translators in promoting or preventing dominant language influence. This sensitivity to unequal power relations (subordination and domination) has been another prevalent trend in TS research on minority language translation.

The notions of subordination and domination are even more essential in the context of revitalising endangered languages, an activity that has been of central interest in sociolinguistics and language sociology during recent decades. A review of revitalisation studies revealed that translation as an activity and translators as agents of revitalisation have remained rather invisible, even though translating is frequently performed in a revitalisation process. Since translating into endangered languages remains an under-researched area both in revitalisation studies and in TS, our objective is to point out potential new areas worth investigating from the TS perspective. Examining issues such as the translators' agency, translation process, or the overall translation culture would benefit sociolinguistic studies and shed light on a revitalisation activity that has, so far, remained almost invisible. An interesting and practically unexplored course of research is translator training tailored for language revitalisation. In this issue, Koskinen and Kuusi (2017) point out that translator training for endangered languages should focus on constructing the agency of student translators, thus enabling them to act consciously and responsibly for the benefit of the endangered language. However, as the findings of Koskinen and Kuusi suggest, when a language is threatened by extinction, the best results are perhaps achieved when the construction of the translators' agency is perceived not as something strictly individual but as a collaborative project where the abilities of a single agent can be extended with the help of other agents – students, practicing translators, the speakers' community – who share motivation and a common goal.

Revitalisation as a function of translation challenges TS to reconsider some of its traditional concepts. For example, a typical phenomenon is the emergence of so called new speakers (adults who have learned or relearned a language), who have often acquired the endangered language through formal education and whose combination of language activism, metalinguistic knowledge, and writing skills give them the potential to translate. As translators, language activists are very different from trained professionals, who have been the main subject of investigations in TS. In this issue, Iso-Ahola's data includes interviews with Karelian translators who fall into this category, as do some of the students in the data analysed by Koskinen and Kuusi. The existence and significance of new speakers also forces researchers to contemplate the notion of mother tongue, which in turn has corollaries for translator training as well, calling for a reconsideration of mother tongue competence (Raine 2011) and (as a logical consequence) directionality in translator education.

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A review of research on the translational practices of minority language speakers reveals that acts of translation and interpreting occur on the grass-roots level, too. Translating is a prevalent phenomenon in the everyday life and interaction of multilingual minority language speakers, but in that context, its types of occurrence differ from the professional context. So far, in this context, TS have focused on child language brokering. Another area that has received some attention is interpreting between different generations of immigrant families where the generations do not share the same linguistic resources. By contrast, the translational practices of autochthonous minorities have remained in the margins of the discipline. Altogether, existing research covers only a small part of the whole range of the translational practices performed by multilingual speakers, and the phenomena clearly deserve closer examination. In this issue, Lantto and Kolehmainen's article is a step in this direction. Another aspect that has not been thoroughly addressed in TS is the internal diversity of minority languages; here sociolinguistic research with its more fine-grained typology of linguistic minorities may provide helpful conceptual tools. The needs and functions for translating and interpreting seem to differ among autochthonous minorities and among more recent, usually immigration-based allochthonous minorities. Endangered languages constitute a special case as their speakers use translation for revitalising their language. Therefore, it is essential for research on minority language translation to be complemented by considering the diversity of minority languages.

From the point of view of language revitalisation, the main thread in the TS discussion outlined in section 2 is the understanding of minority as a relative and, therefore, dynamic concept (Cronin 1995, 2003). Being historical and dynamic, a minority status is something that can be changed. As Krause (2007) responds to Cronin's conception of minority:

> an understanding of minority as a relative, dynamic and, therefore, changeable phenomenon is highly enabling, in that it allows for a proactive attitude towards 'altering the state' of minority positively and productively.
> (Krause 2007: 35)

With this proactive or activist dimension, revitalisation becomes "fighting the status quo", where "regular" speakers as well as translators exercise their agency by using the language and exposing others to its use. In the following three articles, the focus is on the different ways these agents engage in translational action, whether producing translations to be published, to be handed in to a translation teacher, or simply to be inserted into their speech during everyday communication. The voice of these agents is heard in interviews, classroom discussions, reflective course assignments, and metalinguistic commentary concerning their own language use. All of these different data sets include the voices of both new and traditional minority language speakers, understood as their "social and discursive positions […] as they 'voice' the concerns, resistance or empowerment of equity-seeking groups" (Taivalkoski-Shilov 2013: 2). Through their voices, we hope to make the role of translation in language revitalisation more visible. Perhaps their voices will also contribute to an understanding of translation as something more than a simple and neutral transfer mechanism. Embedded in cultural, social, and power

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relations, translation may carry with it the aims and intentions of the translating agent as well as the traces of influence from the dominant linguistic culture.

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