

Peitsa Leinonen

VALO, AVIKKA, FRÄGI
Translations, anglicisms, and other bilingual features in
Finnish Counter-Strike terminology

ABSTRACT

Peitsa Leinonen: Valo, Avikka, Frägi: Translations, anglicisms, and other bilingual features in Finnish Counter-Strike terminology
Bachelor's Thesis
Tampere University
Bachelor's Programme in English Language, Literature and Translation
June 2023

Video games have become one of the most influential cultural products in the world and are consequently enjoyed in many ways. One of these ways is by treating them as a sport, and so the phenomenon of e-sports has been born. Many different games are played competitively, but the game series Counter-Strike has always had an especially notable Finnish playerbase. This thesis aims to analyze how English terminology used in the video game series Counter-Strike has been translated and adapted into Finnish by the Finnish Counter-Strike community. The relevance of this study is in learning about how a community translates language as a group and within a longer period of time, as opposed to a single person or group translating a lexicon with the specific aim of creating a translated set of terminology.

The research material consists of three online sources, which all provide a set of Finnish Counter-Strike terms. These terms are divided into different categories based on their type of adaptation into Finnish. They are then analyzed within their own groups in order to highlight any prevalent similarities or differences between them. The findings from these analyses are then discussed as a whole, leading to final conclusions about the study.

What the results show is that an uncoordinated community still follows consistent rules in the ways that it treats language. Anglicisms are created from words that share phonetic traits and would be unnecessarily complex if translated. Acronyms are kept in their original forms but are read according to Finnish grammatic rules. Translated terms seem to be used when an adequate Finnish translation is available and is not longer than the English alternative. Nicknames are also discussed, but the ways they have formed are not deducible utilizing the data in this study.

Keywords: anglicisms, translation, Counter-Strike, e-sports

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Peitsa Leinonen: Valo, Avikka, Frägi: Käännökset, anglismit, ja muut kielelliset ominaisuudet suomenkielisessä Counter-Strike-terminologiassa
Kandidaatintutkielma
Tampereen yliopisto
Kielten tutkinto-ohjelma
Kesäkuu 2023

Videopelit ovat kasvaneet yhdeksi maailman vaikutusvaltaisimmista kulttuurituotteista, minkä myötä niistä myös nautitaan monin eri tavoin. Yksi näistä tavoista on kohdella niitä urheiluna, mikä on johtanut e-urheilun syntyyn. Monia eri pelejä pelataan kilpailullisesti, mutta etenkin Counter-Strike-pelisarjalla on aina ollut erityisen merkittävä suomalainen pelaajakunta. Tämän opinnäytteen tarkoitus on analysoida Counter-Strike-pelisarjan englanninkielisen terminologian suomenkielisiä käännöksiä ja muunnoksia, jotka suomenkielinen Counter-Strike-yhteisö on luonut. Tutkimus selvittää sitä, kuinka yhteisö kääntää ja muokkaa kieltä yhdessä pitkällä aikavälillä. Tätä verrataan yksilön tai ryhmän määrätietoiseen kääntämistyöhön, jonka tarkoituksena on luoda kattavasti käännetty kokonainen sanasto.

Tutkimusmateriaali koostuu kolmesta internetlähteestä, jotka sisältävät suomenkielisiä Counter-Strike-termien listoja. Nämä termit luokitellaan eri kategorioihin niiden suomenkielisten käännös- tai muunnostapojen perusteella. Tämän jälkeen niitä analysoidaan muiden samassa kategoriassa olevien termien kesken, jotta niiden merkittävät samankaltaisuudet tai erot tulisivat ilmi. Analyysien tuloksia käsitellään kokonaisuutena, josta päätellään tutkimuksen lopputulokset.

Tuloksista voidaan päätellä, että koordinoimaton yhteisö toimii tiettyjen sääntöjen mukaisesti ja käsittelee kieltä samanlaisilla tavoilla. Anglismit muodostuvat sanoista, jotka ovat foneettisesti samankaltaisia keskenään, ja muuttuisivat turhaan monimutkaisemmiksi käännettäessä. Akronyymit säilyttävät alkuperäisen muotonsa, mutta ne luetaan suomen kieliopin mukaisesti. Käännöksiä käytetään, kun suomen kielestä löytyy termeille asianmukaisia vastineita, jotka ovat myös englanninkielistä termiä lyhyempiä. Myös lempinimiä käsitellään lyhyesti, mutta niiden muodostumisesta ei ole mahdollista tehdä johtopäätöksiä tutkimuksen aineiston perusteella.

Avainsanat: anglismit, kääntäminen, Counter-Strike, e-urheilu

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck -ohjelmalla.

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	4
3 RESEARCH DATA AND METHODS.....	5
4 ANALYSIS	7
4.1 Retained Pronunciations	8
4.2 Translations.....	9
4.3 Retained forms, changed pronunciations.....	10
4.4 Nicknames.....	11
4.5 Discussion	12
5 CONCLUSIONS.....	14
6 REFERENCES	17

1 INTRODUCTION

As video games have expanded into being one of the largest forms of consumed media in the world, it is inevitable that entire cultural subsections would be formed in and around them. There are now video game movies, video game stores both physical and digital, video game studies, entire careers built around playing video games for an audience either on video or in a live stream, and much, much more. At this point in time, video games are undoubtedly a major cultural landmark of the modern age and are enjoyed in multitudes of ways. Because games are often designed around winning or losing, competitive video gaming has also grown to be an entire global industry. According to Esports Charts, the League of Legends World Championship tournament had a peak concurrent viewership of over 5,000,000 confirmed viewers during their final match in 2022, breaking their own record that can be expected to rise even higher with time. This phenomenon of video games as competition has even been branded with a term of its own: electronic sports, or as they are more commonly known, e-sports.

Juho Hamari and Max Sjöblom (2017, 211) define the term e-sports as “a form of sports where the primary aspects of the sport are facilitated by electronic systems; the input of players and teams as well as the output of the eSports system are mediated by human-computer interfaces.” While there has been a lot of discussion about whether e-sports should be accepted as a form of sports at all, which could be an entire field of study in its own right, one thing that e-sports does share with classic sports is its language. Ice hockey fans are familiar with terms like angling, clipping, or rebounding, and similarly, someone well versed in the game of DotA2 is no stranger to bursting, DPSing, or kiting. As games have gotten increasingly complex and have a need for communication between players, commentators, and viewers, game-specific lexicons are formed and shaped by the games’ communities. However, due to the online nature of video games, one thing that is prevalent in common sports is often lacking from e-sports. Because a video game can match players with people from around the world, a game will often need to use a lingua franca so that communication is as clear as possible between players. In the western world, this language often ends up being English, as is often the case online in general, but because of this, games are not as landlocked within specific language communities, lessening the need for localization. Consequently, the need for localized broadcasts is also smaller, with the aforementioned *League of Legends* finals match not having been broadcasted in, for example, Finnish at all. In the Finnish gaming scene as a whole though, there is one major exception: Counter-Strike.

Counter-Strike is a video game that was first released in 2000 by Valve Corporation after originally being developed as just a mod for another game called Half-Life. The game has had

several different newer versions released, the latest of which at the time of writing is Counter-Strike: Global Offensive, released in 2012. The most popular gamemode is based around two teams of five players, the Terrorists and the Counter-Terrorists, trying to fulfil their respective objectives within each round of play. The Terrorists' goal is to plant a bomb in one of two designated planting sites within a set time limit, while the Counter-Terrorists must defuse the bomb before it explodes if it is planted. Both teams can also win a round by eliminating the opposing team before the bomb is planted. Players control their characters from a first-person perspective and can eliminate other players' characters with weapons bought with in-game currency acquired by successfully fulfilling objectives and eliminating the opposing team's players, while also being given a small amount at the end of each round. The game is played within a three-dimensional virtual space, in which the character can freely be moved around.

Counter-Strike was an immediate success after its release and has remained one of the most popular e-sports games in history to this day. Because the game was released at a time when online gaming was yet in its infancy, many people would play it at LAN parties, events where people would bring their own computers somewhere to play through the Local Area Network, as well as creating and sharing game demos with others. This LAN scene has existed in Finland for over 30 years, consisting of events like the annual Assembly that was first held in 1992. At events like this, local people would gather and play games with each other, making them a prime place for slang to develop and spread. Counter-Strike tournaments are still being held at these events, and they are commentated in Finnish for the audience at the event, as well as people that might be following the matches online through streams. For some reason, Counter-Strike has had a special place in people's hearts in Finland, being the first game in Finnish television history to have matches broadcasted on a major channel, as well as having many professional Finnish players that have done well for themselves in the global scene.

The purpose of this thesis is to see how English elements of the language used about Counter-Strike have been translated to Finnish over time. It should be noted that this thesis specifically discusses terminology that has been moulded by players and other community members over time, and not any kind of official translation that someone has created. This is because of two reasons: first, there is no official translation for the terminology used. The Finnish lexicon of Counter-Strike has organically developed in the hands of the players, not in the hands of someone who specifically set out to translate it. Second, while there is a Finnish version of Counter-Strike available for playing, it is a separate set of words and terms from what are discussed in this thesis. For example, the sniper rifle named *AWP* is still called *AWP* in the Finnish game files, while in the sources used for this study the weapon is often referred to as *avikka*, its Finnish nickname. There

are also terms that do not exist in the official game even though they are widely known in the community, like the act of *force buying*, a strategy used in desperate situations. While many words do overlap between the two lexicons, like the word *plant* which is both a term used within the game's instructions as well as by players and commentators. Although in Finnish, while the referenced sources use the anglicism *plänttiä*, in the Finnish game the term used is *asettaa*. So, playing the game in a theoretical vacuum of no outside influence from other players, a player would not be subjected to the same set of terms as the people who play the game with the larger community and watch commentated games. By this logic it should be justified to treat the translated game as a separate entity from the language that the Finnish community has created for itself, even if there is some overlap between the two.

There are two notable reasons as to why academics should be focusing on the language development of video game communities. First, video games are a massive cultural product that is being studied in all fields. They are a unique form of interactive entertainment that can contain stories, world views, and cultural implications like other forms of art, while at the same time removing limits that classic physical sports have, like the requirement to be in the same location to be able to play. Linguists should, and do, study the effects of video games on language, as well as what kind of unique linguistic phenomena might occur within them.

Second, very much hand in hand with the rise of the internet, video games are a relatively new historical development. Both the internet and video games are already out of their very infancy with elements of their languages already solidified, but if it is assumed that they will remain a mainstay of human culture for as long as the digital age persists, from future generations' perspectives the current generation is still at the cusp of it all. Therefore, information should be recorded now before it is forgotten, and the original sources do not exist anymore. If it were possible to go back in time and record chess through its entire history, there would be no need to rely on theories about the game's etymological and historical properties. As has been already repeated, video games are tied to culture, and having data from, in this case, Counter-Strike, future linguists could see when and how English influenced Finnish popular culture in the beginning of the 21st century.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Video game translation and localisation are both well studied phenomena, with multiple papers written on both subjects. These works often focus on professional work and the challenges and peculiarities of translating video games. Scholars have written extensively about video game localisation and their experiences of it (O'Hagan 2013; Bernal-Merino 2016). While these studies can shed light on the differences in translating games compared to, say, books, they are only from one perspective: that of a professional translator. This perspective is limited, as localisation is a sort of one-way style of communication, the work of one person that the receiver must accept without a way to influence it back. This is completely different from modern multiplayer video games that are very community based and in which the community shapes the language by using it. Games like Counter-Strike are played differently from story-driven single player games, and their language should be studied as a phenomenon of its own.

Fan translation is also something that can be seen as a part of this thesis' theme, which occurs in a variety of mediums, including video games (Vazquez-Calvo and Thorne 2022). Fan translations are a community-driven endeavour, just like video game slang, but have some notable differences as well. Non-professional fans doing translations within their community are similar in spirit to video game players, but their objectives are different. Fan translators work from one set language to another, trying to create accurate translations of the source material. Meanwhile, the video game community does not have the "limitation" of having to commit to a target language, which will become evident later in this thesis when concepts like neologisms are discussed.

This thesis attempts to study a subject that does not seem to be well understood yet. The slang that has formed within the Finnish Counter-Strike community is a unique blend of fan translations and video game translation, a new lexicon formed slowly within an online community. It is a way of communicating made for the sole purpose of playing games, akin to how traditional sports have their own terminology. The key difference is that this gaming slang has been moulded during an entirely different time period from, say, football or hockey. Video game language is a product of the digital age, in which the usage of English as a lingua franca is more prominent than ever before. Furthermore, digital games are played in a completely different way than traditional sports. Players are connected to each other via voice chat the entire match and can speak to each other constantly. Efficient vocal communication is therefore crucial. Such elements are something not touched upon in localisation nor fan translation. With all that in mind, this thesis aims to be one of the first within a new area of language studies that focuses on competitive video game language formed by the community of the game itself.

3 RESEARCH DATA AND METHODS

The terminology analysed has been gathered from a number of online sources: a set of terms provided by former Finnish professional Counter-Strike player Jere “sergej” Salo, two viewer’s guides to CS:GO, one by the Finnish media company Telia and the other by SuomieSports, as well as an IEM Dallas closed qualifier match between Ninjas in Pyjamas and Fnatic with Finnish commentators, streamed on the ElisaViihdeSport channel on Twitch.tv, the world’s largest video game streaming website at the time of writing. Both written and spoken sources were chosen for this study for a couple of reasons. The written sources are made especially for people looking for beginner level information on the language used in and about the game, so they are a good source of basic terminology. The sets of terms they provide are on the smaller scale, but the benefit of collecting data from multiple sources is in seeing how they overlap. It is also interesting to see how the viewer guides differ from a set of terms provided by a professional player. As for the audio side, an entire game with professional commentators provides us with Finnish pronunciations that are not recorded online in written forms like the international phonetic alphabet, and which are a very crucial part of analysing the translations and how the Finnish Counter-Strike terminology has formed. An unnamed professional e-sports commentator interviewed by T.L. Taylor (Taylor 2012, 228) also summarizes why commentators are a prime source for data on language usage within a game’s community:

“Then I spend time on community forums. I try and not just understand how I play the game but how the pros play the game, how different it is. There always seems to be some kind of language with every game [...] It has its own little language and it’s important you recognize that and use it appropriately when you commentate, otherwise you’d look like an idiot”.

Taylor then expands on this, saying “Commentators, like some of the experienced journalists, are also often the sole history-keepers for the community” (Taylor 2012, 228). He bases this statement on the ephemeral nature of information online, since websites for tournament leagues and such are often deleted without anyone archiving them, leading to years of data being lost. While they are talking about the e-sports scene in general, with most of the lost data being match records, statistics, and histories of players and organizations, forums and other forms of text-based communication on such sites contain enormous amounts of written everyday language by users that is deleted along with everything else. Recording language straight from the mouths of the people that need to keep up with it constantly is therefore quite the treasure trove for research purposes.

It should be noted, however, that none of the sources used can be put in order of legitimacy or officiality. As has been established, the terminology that these sites provide is

something gathered from the community, not something they claim, or could try to claim even if they wanted, to be the de facto terminology that should be used when talking about the game. Valve, the company that owns Counter-Strike, has never released a similar guide in Finnish, and they, if anyone, would be the ones that could even be argued to have some authority over the matter. The sources do not tell the reader where they have gathered their sets of terms (except for Yle, although sergej himself does not disclose where he has learned them), yet it is evident that the writers' sources are part of the same Counter-Strike language community, as they share several terms with each other.

Another detail that should be mentioned is that not all the expressions and terms found in the sources have been utilized in this thesis. This paper is about translation and the relationship between English and Finnish terminology in Counter-Strike, and not all the words that are found in the sources are relevant for that purpose. This includes, among others, expressions like *vitun nice*, *lanit*, and *2V2* because they are not exactly relevant to Counter-Strike and are used more broadly.

4 ANALYSIS

In this section, words are divided based on the ways that they have been modified and translated from English to Finnish. There are four different types: retained pronunciations, translations, retained forms with changed pronunciations, and nicknames. Then, the different categories are analysed within their groups in order to find any notable differences or similarities that may connect them and provide a clue as to why they have been adapted in the ways that they have. This is done for each table separately right after the tables themselves.

There are 31 different Finnish words and terms that have been gathered for this study. Some of them are repeated in tables 2—5, and the reasons for doing so are explained in the tables' respective sections. The full list of words is provided in Table 1 in alphabetical order based on their original English forms. All the words collected have been acquired from their respective websites in April 2023.

Table 1: Complete data table

English	Finnish
Ace	Ace
AK	AK
AWP	AWP, Avikka, Bossi
Banana	Banaani
Bomb	Pommi
Boost	Buustia
Counter-Strike	Kynäri
CT	CT
Damage	Damage
(Defuse) Kit	Kitti
Desert Eagle	Dessu
Entry Frag	Entry Frag
Flash(bang)	Fläshi
Force	Force
Frag	Frägi
GG	GG
Helmet	Kypärä
HP	HP
Kevlar	Kevlar
Map	Mäppi
Mid	Midi
MVP	MVP
M4	M4
No-Scope	Noscope
Plant	Pläntti
Ramp	Ramppi
Site	Saitti
Smoke	Savu
Split	Splitata
Terrorists	Tero
Window	Ikkuna

4.1 Retained Pronunciations

This category of terms contains words that remain largely in their original phonetical forms, becoming anglicisms. Table 2 shows these words in their original English written forms, their English pronunciations, and then the way they are written and pronounced in the Finnish data sources.

The bracketed words in the leftmost row, *bang* and *defuse*, are marked as such because they are part of the full term within the game and could be considered the proper names of the items they are referring to, but they are often just called *kit* and *flash* in English. They, incidentally, also mark them as parts of the original terms that have been omitted from the Finnish written form.

Table 2: Retained pronunciations

Original English term (written)	English Pronunciation (IPA)	Finnish term (written)	Finnish Pronunciation (IPA)
<i>Ace</i>	[eɪs]	<i>Ace</i>	[eɪs:i]
<i>Boost</i>	[buːst]	<i>Boostia</i>	[buːstɪɑ]
<i>(Defuse) Kit</i>	[kɪt]	<i>Kitti</i>	[kɪt:i]
<i>Entry frag</i>	[ˈɛntɹi fræɡ]	<i>Entry frag</i>	[ɛntɹi fræɡ]
<i>Flash(bang)</i>	[flæʃ]	<i>Fläshi</i>	[flæʃi], [flæʃ:i]
<i>Force</i>	[fɔːs]	<i>Force</i>	[fɔːse]
<i>Frag</i>	[fræɡ]	<i>Frägi</i>	[frægi]
<i>Kevlar</i>	[ˈkɛvlɑː]	<i>Kevlari</i>	[kɛvlɑːri]
<i>Map</i>	[mæp]	<i>Mäppi / Mappi</i>	[mæp:i]
<i>Mid</i>	[ˈmɪd]	<i>Midi</i>	[mɪdi]
<i>No-scope</i>	[ˈnoʊskoʊp]	<i>Noscope</i>	[noʊskoʊp:i]
<i>Plant</i>	[plænt]	<i>Pläntti</i>	[plænt:i]
<i>Site</i>	[saɪt]	<i>Saitti</i>	[saɪt:i]
<i>Split</i>	[splɪt]	<i>Splitata</i>	[splɪtɑtɑ]

Looking at the table, there are some immediately apparent connections between the pronunciations. Apart from the [ʃ] in *flash* and [ɪ] in *force*, none of the English pronunciations contain sounds or consonant combinations that are uncommon in the Finnish language. Instead, they contain simple vowel and consonant combinations that are easily replicated in Finnish pronunciation, such as the Finnish letter *ä* ([æ]) that can be observed in several of the original pronunciations. Therefore, a word like *banana* ([bəˈnæ.nə]) does not remain in a similar form due to its schwas, and, as is discussed in section 4.2, is translated to *banaani* ([ˈbɑnɑːni]).

The words also share distinct structural similarities. Almost all of them are monosyllabic in their original English form, apart from *entry frag*, *no-scope*, and *Kevlar*, though they are different in other ways as well, *entry* and *frag* being two separate words, *frag* even appearing on its own as a separate term and *no-scope* just being the word *scope* with a prefix. If *no-scope* is broken down to its components, the parts that form it do begin to resemble the rest of the table. *No* and *scope* both are monosyllabic, and *scope* even follows the trend of having a single

vowel in the middle of consonants. In the IPA pronunciation, the *no-scope* even looks like two hypothetical words that would follow these rules: *nous* and *koup*. This might be why it has been adapted similarly to the rest of the terms instead of being fully translated. If *Kevlar* is analyzed in a similar manner, the reason for it being listed here becomes understandable as well. So, the only standout word in the whole table is *entry*, which is there as a supplementary word to define a certain type of *frag*, therefore not included because of itself but by association.

Ace is also slightly different, having two vowels instead of one and missing a consonant from the front, but if it were to be modified slightly, for example by adding the letter C at the front, the pronunciation would again resemble the rest: [keis]. It is also worth asking why *ace* has retained its pronunciation instead of having it changed like the words in Table 4. That table will consist of words that are pronounced in Finnish exactly like they are written in English, like *damage* ['dæmədʒ], which is pronounced [damage]. For some reason, *ace* has not become [ase]. One possible explanation for this could be that the Finnish word for *weapon* is *ase* and would share the exact same pronunciation. In a video game where guns are a major element of play, this could cause confusion.

4.2 Translations

These words have been translated into proper words of the Finnish lexicon, unlike words from the previous segment.

Table 3: Translations

Original English term (written)	English Pronunciation (IPA)	Finnish term (written)	Finnish Pronunciation (IPA)
<i>Banana</i>	[bə'næ.nə]	<i>Banaani</i>	[bana:ni]
<i>Bomb</i>	[bʌm]	<i>Pommi</i>	['pomi:i]
<i>Flash</i>	[flæʃ]	<i>Valo</i>	['valo]
<i>Helmet</i>	['hɛlmət]	<i>Kypärä</i>	['kypæræ]
<i>Map</i>	[mæp]	<i>Kartta</i>	['kart̪:a]
<i>Ramp</i>	[ræmp]	<i>Ramppi</i>	['rampi:i]
<i>Smoke</i>	[smʊk]	<i>Savu</i>	[savu]
<i>Window</i>	['windʊ]	<i>Ikkuna</i>	['ik:una]

There are a few terms that were already present in Table 2, namely *flash* and *map*. The reason for them being in both tables is that both forms are used. Some sources use the Finnish word *kartta* and *valo*, while some use *mäppi* and *fläshi*. There seems to be no evident reason as to which version is used and why, so it might just come down to the preference of the speaker/writer. Maps are the virtual playing fields that the game is played on, so most of the discussion about them is likely going to take place outside of the matches when a map is being chosen. This means that the ease of speech is not likely a deciding factor, as players or commentators can take their time

discussing the matter without quick developments on the screen. As for *valo* and *fläshi*, they are both two-syllable words that can be pronounced quickly when commentating or playing the game, so neither of the two bring about significant disadvantages to the speaker. *Smoke* is something that is referred to exclusively in Finnish in each source, even though it should logically be seen in Table 2. It is yet another monosyllabic word that has vowels in the middle, and even sounds a lot like *scope*, yet for some reason no source gives us a term like *smoukki*.

It should also be pointed out that while the word *ramp/ramppi* very much resembles the words analysed in section 4.1, there are a few key differences that result in it being considered a translation instead of a retained form created by the Counter-Strike community. First, it is not pronounced as [ˈræmp:i], the retained [æ] being a key similarity between words in Table 2. Second, the word *ramppi* already exists in the Finnish lexicon outside of Counter-Strike, and just happens to very much resemble the English word. While it could be argued that the words *pläntti* and *saitti* are also used in Finnish outside of Counter-Strike, the key distinction about them is that their meanings are different from what they mean in the game, *pläntti* referring to a plot of land, and *saitti* referring to websites. In Counter-Strike, *pläntti* refers to the act of planting the bomb, and *saitti* refers to the in-game area in which the bomb must be planted at. *Ramppi* on the other hand has the same meaning in Counter-Strike slang as it does in Finnish in general.

4.3 Retained forms, changed pronunciations

Table 4 contains terms that have not been translated but do not follow the English pronunciations either. The terms are pronounced in Finnish according to the way that they are written in English.

Table 4: Retained forms, changed pronunciations

Original English term (written)	English Pronunciation (IPA)	Finnish term (written)	Finnish Pronunciation (IPA)
<i>AK</i>	[eɪkeɪ]	<i>AK</i>	[ɑ:ko:]
<i>AWP</i>	[eɪ-ˈdʌbəlju:ˌpi:]	<i>AWP</i>	[ɑ:ve:pe:]
<i>CT</i>	[si:ti:]	<i>CT</i>	[se:te:]
<i>Damage</i>	[ˈdæmədʒ]	<i>Damage</i>	[ˈdɑ:mɑ:ʒ]
<i>GG</i>	[dʒi:dʒi:]	<i>GG</i>	[ge:ge:]
<i>HP</i>	[eɪtʃpi:]	<i>HP</i>	[ho:pe:]
<i>MVP</i>	[ɛmvi:pi:]	<i>MVP</i>	[æmve:pe:]
<i>M4</i>	[ɛmfɔ:]	<i>M4</i>	[æmneljæ]

The first thing that should be noted about this category is that it contains every single acronym in the entirety of the data set studied. The *AWP* is seen in the table for neologisms, as it also has a nickname in Finnish, but the term is another case of a term having multiple used forms. Other than that, these terms do not appear in the other tables. The reasons for this are likely quite simple and tied to Finnish language standards in general, instead of being something unique to video games or

online communities. The Institute for the Languages of Finland (KOTUS) states that in Finnish, acronyms are to be read letter for letter, using English examples like *EU* [e:u:] and *WTO* [ve:te:o:] (Lyhenteet). As this is the standard for Finnish language in general, it is no surprise the acronyms remain as they are.

The only real standout here is *damage*, which would feel more appropriate in the other tables. Its complex pronunciation makes it so that replicating it in Finnish, like the words in Table 2, is not a solution, but for some reason it does not have a translation either. This seems to be due to the limited size of the data for this study, as searching for the Finnish word for *damage*, *vahinko*, along with Counter-Strike on Google does seem to yield many results in which it is used in the context of damage dealt in the game. There are also some results in which the term refers to an accident, because in Finnish the word has two separate meanings. So, if a different list of sources were to be examined, it is probable that *damage* would be found in Table 3.

4.4 Nicknames

The final set of terms is dedicated to Finnish nicknames, as opposed to proper nouns.

Table 5: Nicknames

Original English term (written)	English Pronunciation (IPA)	Finnish term (written)	Finnish Pronunciation (IPA)
<i>AWP</i>	[eɪ-ˈdʌbʰljʊ:-pi:]	<i>Awikka</i> <i>Bossi</i>	[ɑvik:a] [bos:i]
<i>Counter-Strike</i>	[ˈkaun.tə-stɪɪk]	<i>Kynäri</i>	[ˈkynæri]
<i>Desert Eagle</i>	[dɛzə-t i:qəl]	<i>Dessu</i>	[des:u]
<i>Terrorist</i>	[ˈtɛ.ɪ.ɪst]	<i>Tero</i>	[tɛrɔ]

The final group is the smallest one out of all the tables, but some consistency within it can still be observed. It contains two weapon names, both for weapons that are considered iconic in the Counter-Strike scene: *AWP* and *Desert Eagle*. They are both the strongest weapons in their respective weapon groupings within the game, namely Rifles and Pistols, with the AWP being a mainstay role in professional Counter-Strike teams, reserved for the player who is the most skilled at using the weapon, which could have ties to its nickname *Bossi*. Their role in the game is likely not, however, the only reason they have developed their names. The *M4* and the *AK* both already appeared in Table 4, both of which are also considered some of the most popular weapons in Counter-Strike. Virtually every single website with some sort of list of the best or most popular guns in Counter-Strike will have the *AK* as the top spot with the *M4*, *AWP* and *Desert Eagle* usually listed immediately after. The video game journalism sites whatifgaming.com and thegamer.com both have these weapons listed in the exact same order from top down: *AK*, *AWP*, *M4*, and the *Desert Eagle*. The reason these four weapons have been divided like this could be due

to their ease of speech. The *AK* and *M4* are easily read out by following the acronym guideline KOTUS has set for Finnish speech, but the *AWP* is significantly longer and more complex to pronounce if read out loud in a similar manner. The Finnish pronunciation in 4.3 is even modified so that the *w* is turned into *v*. The difference between *avikka* and [a:ve:pe:] then is just another question of preference by the speaker. *Desert Eagle* on the other hand is a lengthy name for a weapon, or even a Counter-Strike term at all, being the only four-syllable term in the entirety of the English words studied in this paper. Therefore, it is no surprise that it has been reduced in length by turning it into a Finnish hypocorism.

On the topic of hypocorisms, *tero* has also been placed in this category of terms, as it did not really fit into any of the other sections and is the closest to a nickname rather than anything else. This is, as with *Dessu*, due to its length, the Finnish translation for it being *terroristi*, a four-syllable word unlike any of the words in the other tables. The ease of speech seems to be what the community prioritized, along with the possible connotation of *Tero* being a common Finnish first name.

Nicknames are a difficult subject to analyze, since they are not so much about language change as they are about the culture in which they were created in. Deciphering the creation of the name *Kynäri* is something that should be done by examining the history of Counter-Strike in Finland, as the word's origins are unlikely to be rooted in its linguistic properties. No official documentation of the name's origin seems to exist, and the discussion about its origins online is scarce and highly questionable thanks to the nature of internet conversations. The same goes for the name *Bossi*, as the only etymological explanation available for it is on the Finnish Wikisanakirja website, which says that the nickname is based on the idea that the player using the *AWP* in a team is the boss of the group, but again, no source or historical reference for this is provided, so this should be taken with a bit of salt. A possible theory for the origin of the name *Kynäri* is that it shares some phonological similarities with *counter*, namely in the way that they share consonants. That also goes for *Avikka*, as it retains the *A* and slightly changes the *W* to fit Finnish speech better, after which the name is filled out with *-kka* as a suffix and turned into another hypocorism like *tero* and *Dessu*.

4.5 Discussion

Judging by the analyses conducted within each of the different sections, all of them seem to be mostly consistent excluding only a few outliers that could usually be explained in one way or another. Most monosyllabic terms seem to retain their pronunciations from English to Finnish, unless a similar handy term can be used as a translation in Finnish. Acronyms are read according to

Finnish language standards, unless a nickname for the term already exists for other reasons, as with *AWP*. The sample size for the data used in this study was quite small, as it was collected from sources that are not abundant in number, but even then, some common themes did become apparent. As was noted earlier in this thesis, no professional translator has created this slang, yet the logic behind the language is like that of a single mind that has decided how said logic should function. This speaks of some sort of internal consistency within the studied community, and it is quite possible that similar conventions would appear within a larger data set. That, however, is something for future studies to focus on.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The primary preconception behind this thesis was that communication concerning a video game would primarily focus on ease of use and fast delivery of information from one speaker to another. This was brought upon by the nature of competitive video gaming, in which athletes, or possibly in this case, e-athletes, try to maximize their chances of winning by performing as optimally as possible. While this includes playing faster and more efficiently, as well as planning strategies and using information available to their fullest, unnecessary verbal information would be a logical aspect to minimize. From what can be gathered from the analyses made in section 4, it would indeed seem that players and commentators do use many terms and expressions that are already short in their original forms, and which are most often kept as around the same length when adapted into Finnish. It is not a surprise that the terms are not made longer than they already are, as there would be no sense to do so, at least from the assumed viewpoint that has been established.

What is interesting about the categories of terms analyzed is how organic their formations seem to be. In the beginning of this paper, it was mentioned that no one person has translated all the Counter-Strike terminology, but that the whole evolution of it has happened slowly within the community. With that in mind, it is amazing how consistently all the categories can be formed. The formation of the Finnish Counter-Strike language has not turned it into a chaotic mess, but followed its own rules that are not written down anywhere for the people using and shaping the language to follow. Even though the data gathered was from different sources that likely compiled them in different ways, the consistency remains throughout. At first glance, Jere “sergej” Salonen’s set of terminology was easily the largest and most chaotic of the sources, yet when broken down, most of what he provided does still follow along the same rules as the sources that were possibly made by just a journalist or hobbyist.

This means that there is a consistent terminology being used underneath the surface, even though no official version of it exists or is being recorded in one definitive place. Some sort of compiled dictionary would help the preservation of this unique subculture of video game communities. It could also be an incredible resource for people wanting to learn more about the subject, whether for the purposes of learning to play the game, having a better understanding of the lingo for spectating purposes, or as a data source for linguistic studies. Having this sort of language subculture should be protected and considered culturally significant. Raising awareness of its existence is also something that should actively be sought. The things that could be learned from it could help us understand other ways of language development and community-formed translation better.

The results of this study also shed some light on the formation of anglicisms in language. The terms that remained nearly identical in Finnish compared to their English counterparts did so because they happened to be convenient. They were short words with simple forms, so there was no need to start changing them. Hence, they remained as is. However, some terms were also translated into Finnish, even in cases where the Finnish term seemingly did not provide any benefit that would prompt it to be translated. It is unclear as to why this is, but it might be because of some historical reason in Finnish Counter-Strike that cannot be parsed from just linguistic data. Anyway, it seems that when it comes to choices made about what kind of words people prefer to use, the main motivation seems to be ease. If the English term is adequate, there is no reason to begin changing it. If the word is hard to pronounce, it will either be modified slightly or replaced with something easier to say. And, if the word is too long, a shorter version will be used to replace it, whether Finnish, English, or something new.

In conclusion, people morph language in ways that suit their needs, and a community's collective consciousness will morph words in a consistent manner, resulting in a surprisingly clean outcome.

The process of creating this study provided some insights into the difficulties of studying a niche, online language community. The sample size was not just limited because of ease of analysis, but also because written records of Counter-Strike terminology in Finnish are quite rare. The reason for even a few dictionaries like this to exist is likely linked to the financial growth of Counter-Strike as a viewed e-sport, as Telia among others has begun to cultivate the game's Finnish scene in monetary ways. So, the creation of these dictionaries is not so much a community effort as much as a few individuals trying to record the slang for use outside the community.

The lackluster number of studies about the subject also proved to be a slight problem, as finding other similar academic works was essentially impossible. That means that this thesis might be the only of its kind, especially about Finnish language use. Being in such a position is both a blessing and a curse, as every path forward is still completely open and untrodden, but there is no assistance to be had either. Hopefully this thesis might be of assistance in any future studies of similar subjects.

As has been mentioned, the dataset for this study was quite small, so one of the first studies that could be done in the wake of this thesis would be to try and see if the results achieved here would remain similar when more terms were added to the data pool. Unfortunately, the number of Finnish Counter-Strike dictionaries is low at the time of writing, so the data gathered would have to be expanded upon by drawing from more varied sources. This could possibly include several matches commentated in Finnish, possible behind-the-scenes videos of Finnish teams playing

matches with the teams' voice communications recorded, as well as reaching out to people in the industry. Asking professional or active hobbyist teams for lists of terminology that they use could provide a lot of data to analyze and possibly reveal differences between them, which could then be expanded upon. Maybe people from around Finland have different dialect differences that can be seen in their Counter-Strike language use. Section 3 briefly discussed the ephemeral nature of information online and how much potential data can be lost when it is not properly archived. The importance of people in the industry was also underlined using commentators as an example, as they are living memory banks that might yield invaluable pieces of information. There is not even a proper source online regarding the nickname of the game, *kynäri*, but maybe some of the veterans of the scene could still enlighten us since they were the ones that originally came up with it.

Moving away from Finnish, similar studies could be conducted in other languages that share similar trends in their Counter-Strike communities. Is this sort of terminology rare and unique to Finnish, or can similar developments be observed in other languages as well? Counter-Strike is a game played in several countries and cultures after all, so maybe developing your own way of speaking about it is common. Or has English been overwhelming as a lingua franca when it comes to video games? How does the size of the language community affect the development of terminology? A single large study about different Counter-Strike languages would also reach many of these goals and spot possible similarities between what kind of change happens in each language.

6 REFERENCES

Primary sources

Counter-Strike: Global Offensive. Windows PC version, Valve Corporation, 2012.

“CS:GO.” *SuomieSports.fi*. 9 Jan. 2021, <https://www.suomiesports.fi/csgo/>.

Hakko, Tommi. “Sergejn Pieni CS:GO-Suomi -Sanakirja.” YLE, January 14, 2019. <https://yle.fi/aihe/artikkeli/2019/01/14/sergejn-pieni-csgo-suomi-sanakirja>.

Telia Yhteisö. “CS:GO-Opas Katsojalle.” March 5 2019. <https://yhteiso.telia.fi/t5/Pelaaminen-artikkelit/CS-GO-opas-katsojalle/td-p/181369>.

Twitch. “NIP vs Fnatic IEM Dallas 2023 Europe Closed Qualifier.” Streamed by *ElisaViihdeSport*, 4 April 2023, Accessed 14 April 2023 <https://www.twitch.tv/videos/1782544394>. Commentated by Roope "Robu" Leppänen & Taneli "disturbed" Veikkola

Secondary sources

Couture, Matthew. “CSGO: The Top 15 Weapons, Ranked.” *TheGamer*, June 7, 2021. <https://www.thegamer.com/csgo-top-weapons-ranked/>.

ESCharts. “2022 World Championship.” Accessed April 15, 2023. <https://escharts.com/tournaments/lol/2022-world-championship>.

Patdu, Anwell. “10 Best CS:GO Weapons: Ranked in Order.” *WhatIfGaming*, April 21, 2023. <https://whatifgaming.com/best-csgo-weapons/>.

Wikisanakirja. ”Nettislangi.” Accessed April 25, 2023. <https://fi.wiktionary.org/wiki/Liite:Nettislangi>.

Other sources

Bernal-Merino, Miguel Á. 2016. *Translation and Localisation in Video Games: Making Entertainment Software Global*. New York, Taylor & Francis. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tampere/detail.action?docID=1791204>.

Hamari, Juho, and Max Sjöblom. 2016. “What Is Esports and Why Do People Watch It?” *Internet Research* 27 (2): 211–232. <https://doi.org/10.1108/intr-04-2016-0085>.

Holland, Theodore J. 1990. “The Many Faces of Nicknames.” *Names* 38 (4): 255–272., <https://doi.org/10.1179/nam.1990.38.4.255>.

Kotimaisten kielten keskus. “Lyhenteet: Miten Lyhenne Luetaan?” *Kielitoimiston Ohjepankki*, Accessed April 23 2023. <http://www.kielitoimistonohjepankki.fi/ohje/275>.

O'Hagan, Minako, and Carmen Mangiron. 2013. *Game Localization : Translating for the global digital entertainment industry*. Amsterdam, John Benjamins. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tampere/detail.action?docID=1337555>.

Taylor, T. L. 2012. “*Raising the Stakes : E-Sports and the Professionalization of Computer Gaming*.” Massachusetts, MIT Press. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/tampere/detail.action?docID=3339416>.

Vazquez-Calvo, Boris, and Steven L. Thorne. 2022 “Catalan Identity and Language Attitudes through Fan Translation of Video Games in the Digital Wilds.” *Journal of Language, Identity & Education* Vol. ahead-of-print: 1–18, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2022.2137168>.