THE AGENCY OF MILITARY INTERPRETERS IN FINNISH CRISIS MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

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Tutkimuksen aihe on sotilastulkkien toimijuus suomalaisissa kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa. Sotilastulkit ovat avainhenkilöitä kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden monikielisessä ja -kulttuurisessa toimintaympäristössä. Kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden sotilastulkkien toimijuuteen, rekrytointiin, koulutukseen ja käyttöön liittyviä kysymyksiä ei ole aikaisemmin tutkittu Suomessa. Tutkimus toteutettiin Pääesikunnan luvan nojalla.

Tutkimuksen päämääränä on selvittää 1) mitkä ovat suomalaisissa kriisinhallintajoukoissa palvelleiden sotilastulkkien taustat, motiivit, koulutus ja valmiudet sotilastulkin tehtävään, sekä 2) millaisia toimijoita sotilastulkit kokevat itse olevansa osana kriisinhallintajoukkoa. Tutkimusaihetta lähestytään sekä käännöstieteen että sotatieteiden teorian näkökulmasta. Käännöstieteen alan käsitteitä tutkimuksessa ovat kääntäjän toimijuus (*agency*) ja käännöskulttuuri (*translation culture*). Sotatieteen alan näkökulmasta aihetta tarkastellaan toisaalta sotilaspedagogiikan (toimintakyky, toiminnallinen kielitaito) ja toisaalta taktiikan (tulkkaustaktiikka, *human terrain*, *social battlespace*) käsitteiden kautta.

Tutkimuksen aineiston muodostavat 14 sotilastulkkeina kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa palvelleen henkilön teemahaastattelut. Aineistoa täydentää sähköpostitse toteutettu kysely 8 valtion sotilastulkkien koulutuksesta vastaaville organisaatioille. Tutkimusaineiston analyysi toteutettiin tunnistamalla ja kokoamalla aineistoista viiteen teemaan sopivia tietoja, minkä jälkeen tietoja tarkasteltiin valituista teoreettisista näkökumista. Analyysin teemat ovat motivaatio, vaikutusvalta, puolueettomuus ja lojaalius, henkilösuhteet ja yhteishenki sekä näkyvyys ja pelko. Lisäksi aineistosta poimittiin sotilastulkkien taustaan, mm. koulutukseen ja kokemukseen liittyviä tietoja.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että sotilastulkit ovat merkittäviä toimijoita suomalaisen kriisinhallintajoukon osana. Sotilastulkeilla on runsaasti vaikutusvaltaa operaatioiden toimintaympäristössä. Sotilastulkit tiedostavat puolueettomuuteen ja lojaaliuteen liittyvien kysymysten tärkeyden, mutta lähestyvät niitä eri tavalla kuin tavanomaisessa toimintaympäristössä toimivat tulkit. Sotilastulkit kokivat yleensä sotilaan roolin ensisijaiseksi tulkin rooliin nähden. Henkilösuhteet, johtaminen sekä kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaiden kyky viestiä tulkin välityksellä ovat sotilastulkeille tärkeä voimavara. Sotilastulkkien toimijuuden tärkeimpiä osatekijöitä ovat kulttuurintuntemus ja sotilaskoulutus. Sotilastulkkien tausta, koulutus ja motivaatio sekä tavat hakeutua sotilastulkin tehtävään ovat vaihtelevat.

Tulokset osoittavat lisäksi, että suomalaisten kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden käännöskulttuuri on kansainvälisessä vertailussa kehittymätön. Tutkimus antaa eräitä konkreettisia esityksiä siitä, miten sotilastulkkien rekrytointia, koulutusta ja käyttöä sekä kriisinhallintajoukon koulutusta voitaisiin parantaa.

Avainsanat: toimijuus, sotilastulkki, kriisinhallinta, toiminnallinen kielitaito.
Keywords: agency, military interpreter, crisis management, functional language skill.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Starting Points

Finland has had an impressive record of accomplishment in crisis management since its first mission, a peace-keeping operation by the United Nations in the Sinai Peninsula in 1956. At one point in history, Finland was even referred to as a peace-keeping superpower (FORMIN 2013a). International co-operation in the military has increased dramatically in the last fifty years, and Finland will most likely continue to take part in international crisis management operations in the future as well. Participating in international military crisis management is, after all, one of the three main duties[1] of the Finnish Defence Forces (Finlex 2007/551).

Considering Finland's ambition to uphold a high profile in international crisis management, the field of interpreting and translation in a military context has gained notably little attention in Finland (see Snellman 2011, 2; 29–30). In Finnish publications and papers dealing with international crisis management, there is virtually no mention of interpreters, translators, or language services. In the very few papers where interpreters are mentioned, their importance is often acknowledged, but the focus of the paper is devoted to other issues than interpreting (see e.g. Anttila 2012, Langinvainio 2011, and Ådahl 2009). The importance of interpreting in a military context, which has been widely accepted internationally, has yet to be addressed in Finland. Arguably, the domain of language services in crisis management operations has been all but overlooked in Finland.

In today's crisis management operations, interpreters are considered key personnel (see e.g. Nurmela 2010, 118; Van Dijk et al. 2010, 918; UNIFIL 2012). Without well-functioning language services, it is impossible for the operations to reach their objectives. The drawbacks caused by insufficient language services have been well documented in many recent conflicts and crisis management operations. The difficulties and lack of progress experienced by, for example, the American and coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan have highlighted the importance of interpretation services, particularly in counter-insurgency warfare. Consequently, the issue has come to the attention of military decision-makers all over the world. Similarly, research in the field of interpretation in a military

[1] According to the Act on the Defence Forces (Finlex 2007/551), the three main duties of the Finnish Defence Forces are: 1) The military defence of Finland, 2) providing support for other authorities, and 3) participating in international military crisis management.

context has gained impetus internationally, and a number of related papers have been published (see e.g. Footitt & Kelly 2012, Tipton 2011, Inghilleri 2010, Van Dijk et al. 2010).

The crisis management operations in which Finland participates today are becoming increasingly complex and risky, and demands on the military personnel of the crisis management force have risen accordingly. The growing importance of competence and training has been stressed. This trend is predicted to continue in future operations: crisis management missions are becoming increasingly ambitious, and their operational environments are more demanding than ever before (Tuononen 2011, 5). This growing complexity is to some degree caused by the changing operating environment: current and future operations are conducted more often in the human and social dimensions of the battlefield instead of in its more traditional, physical dimension (see Nurmela 2010, 59–63; 80–82). Toivonen (2009, 94; 98) has identified the cultural complexity of future crisis management operations as a particular challenge for Finnish military leaders. Moreover, demands on the language services available in the operations are also likely to rise.

The agency of Finnish military interpreters has previously not been addressed in research. However, the importance of language skills in general is commonly recognised in the Finnish military (see e.g. Aho 2003 and Pääesikunta 2009). More recently, the importance of linguistic action competence as an element of the military action competence of individual soldiers has received some attention (see Snellman 2011, Kastepohja 2011). This study argues that soldiers' understanding of what military interpreters are, what they do, and how to work with them, constitutes a significant part of their linguistic action competence. Therefore, this study seeks to deal with some of the military aspects of language use as seen from the viewpoint of translation studies. Ambitious as it may seem, if this study contributes to an improvement in the results of future Finnish crisis management operations, it will be an undertaking worth the effort.

The research questions of this study (see sub-chapter 1.2 below) implicitly suggest that there is a common view among soldiers who have worked with interpreters in crisis management operations that the trustworthiness or usability level of the translation services is low in general (cf. Snellman 2011, 15–16). Although the perceived problems within the domain of military interpreting in Finnish crisis management operations constitute one of the starting points for this study, the existence, causes, or backgrounds of such claims or perceptions are beyond its scope. Nor is the competence or loyalty of individual Finnish military interpreters in any way questioned in this study. On the contrary, this study emphasises the fact that Finnish military interpreters and their specialist skills are highly respected and valued by Finnish crisis management forces.

Another important starting point for this study is my personal experience of serving in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan in 2009–2010. As the commanding officer of the Provincial Office in Samangan province, I had the opportunity to work directly with both local and military interpreters in the field. Daily interaction with Afghan counterparts together with Swedish, German, and American troops would not have been possible without interpreters. This first-hand experience and insight into the crucial importance of language services, combined with my earlier background of translation studies, initially sparked my interest in the matter. My personal motivation for this study is to bring forward the role of Finnish military interpreters as central actors, or agents, in crisis management operations and, by doing so, to attempt to give these specialist soldiers some of the attention that they undeniably deserve.

1.2 Research Framework

The subject matter of this study is the agency of military interpreters in Finnish crisis management operations. This study has two aims: First, to outline the profile of Finnish military interpreters, and second, to describe the agency of military interpreters in Finnish crisis management operations. In addition to these two main objectives, this study aims to identify some features of the translation culture within Finnish crisis management operations. This study has another ambition, too: its results could eventually find applications in the recruitment and training of military interpreters for example, or the training of crisis management forces in Finland.

This study describes the backgrounds and perceptions of Finnish soldiers who have served as military interpreters in crisis management operations: why and how they have enlisted as military interpreters, what relevant skills they possessed in advance, what expectations were put on them, how they performed in their duties, and what they learned during their service. The focus is on the interpreters' agency, which will be analysed by studying the military interpreters' own perceptions of their motivation, capabilities, and possibilities to act as a part of the crisis management force in a demanding operational environment. The military interpreters' agency could be formulated, in short, as their "willingness and ability to act" (Kinnunen & Koskinen 2010, 6). To identify features of a translation culture in Finnish crisis management operations, this study draws on Erich Prunč's (1997) definition of translation culture. A translation culture is, in Prunč's terms, manifested in such factors as the norms, conventions, expectations, and values that affect

the military interpreters. The concepts of *translator's agency* and *translation culture* are examined in closer detail in sub-chapter 2.2.

This study is part of a larger, practical framework of language services in international crisis management operations. Organising interpretation and translation in any military operation requires much more than merely the deployment of military personnel with language skills. Language services in crisis management operations form a specialised field incorporating many segments, such as recruitment, training, administration, and tactics. In order to be successful in supporting the mission, the language services must be carefully planned, preferably years in advance of the operation, and must be skilfully executed. Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance that the end users of the language services, i.e. the soldiers in the crisis management force, are given basic training in how to work with an interpreter, so that they are aware of the limitations and possibilities of communicating via an interpreter. Practical application of the results of this study may possibly contribute to development in the field.

Figure 1 presents an overview of the different elements in the research framework of this study. The fields outlined in blue, green, and red represent the domains of *military interpreters*, *Finnish crisis management operations*, and *agency* respectively. The boxes with text in black contain a selection of keywords within each domain, to which special attention is given. The keywords placed where the coloured fields overlap belong in both or all three domains. The broader concepts of translation culture and linguistic action competence, represented by the boxes in white, connect with all three domains, providing a point of reference. As Figure 1 suggests, the domain of agency is the focal centre of this study: the keywords within that domain are the most significant of all for this study, and they all fall into the other two domains as well.

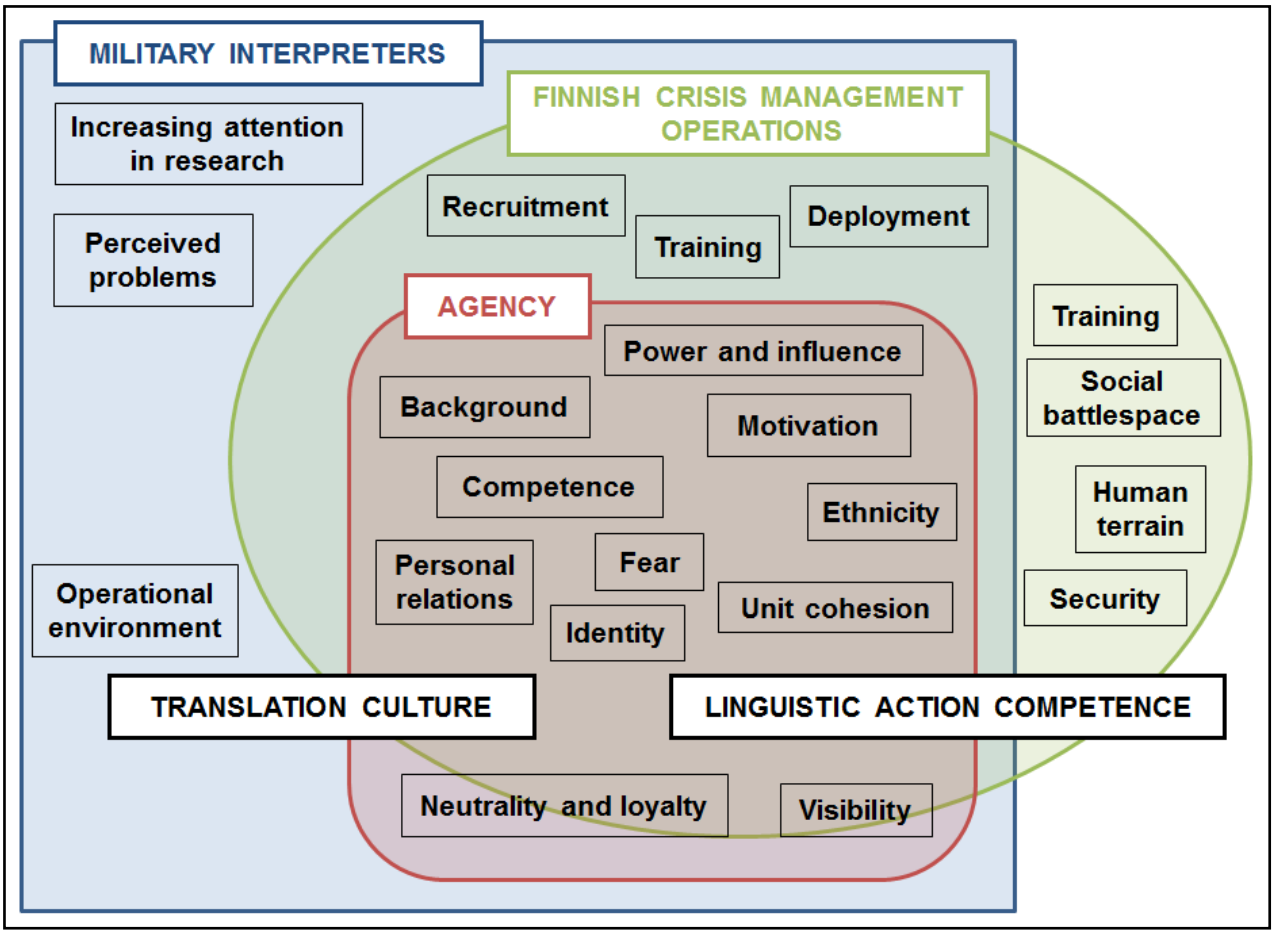

Figure 1. Research Framework.

Two research questions were formulated to address the agency of Finnish military interpreters, each with a number of sub-questions. The research questions are:

1. What constitutes the background, motivation, training, and competence of a person who serves as a military interpreter in a Finnish crisis management force?
2. What is the agency of military interpreters as a part of a Finnish crisis management force?

The sub-questions deriving from the above problems are addressed in closer detail in sub-chapter 3.3. The research questions are founded, in part, on the suggestions for further study by Snellman (2011, 29–30).

The main research data of this study is comprised of interviews with 14 Finnish military interpreters. The interviews, which were recorded and transcribed, were conducted in person with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix A). Additional data was gathered by sending an email questionnaire to persons working in the field of language services in the military organisations of eight countries (Appendix B).

The structure of this study comprises six chapters. The first chapter introduces the subject matter of this study, and outlines its frame and scope. The second chapter presents the theories on which this study is founded: translation studies and military science. In addition, key concepts are defined in the second chapter. The third chapter deals with the methodology and research data used. The fourth chapter presents the analysis of the research data. The findings are thematically organised and exemplified by direct quotations from the interviews. Chapter five continues the analysis and discussion of the results, focusing on what suggestions for improvement can be drawn from the research data. Additionally, the fifth chapter evaluates the reliability and validity of the results of this study. Finally, the sixth chapter draws upon the entire study, and gives a summary and evaluation of the findings. The final chapter identifies areas for further research.

2 Theoretical Framework

The previous chapter described the existing background and motivation of this study. Moreover, the introductory chapter suggested that the subject matter cannot be satisfactorily covered from the viewpoint of either translation studies or military sciences alone. Hence, a multidisciplinary approach is necessary. This chapter scrutinises the academic framework of this study and places the subject matter in a theoretical context within the study of translation and military science. The focus is on rationalising the selected theoretical approaches. First, earlier studies are examined, as well as the author's pre-understanding of the subject. In addition, two central concepts as well as the key theoretical concepts are introduced and defined for the purposes of this study.

2.1 Conceptualisation and Definitions

2.1.1 Conceptualisation

As the title of this study suggests, its subject matter is by definition cross-disciplinary, and can be viewed against different theoretical backgrounds. On the one hand, it clearly belongs in the domain of translation studies. The concept of *interpreters' agency* appears frequently in translation studies and it has been widely researched (see e.g. Kinnunen & Koskinen 2010; Angelelli 2004; Pöllabauer 2004; Leanza 2005; and Mäntynen & Kinnunen 2009). On the other hand, many questions concerning military interpreters and crisis management forces would fall into the domain of military sciences. The linguistic dimensions of *military action competence*, for example, are a matter of military pedagogy. The tactical usage of military interpreters in crisis management operations is another obvious connection to the military sciences. Consequently, the agency of military interpreters is a multi-faceted topic and can be set in a variety of paradigms and schools of thought.

Academic research in the field of this study is relatively scarce. Mona Baker's (2010, 201–203) review of research into translation and interpreting in war zones concludes that studies dealing with the subject matter are uncommon. Research focusing directly on interpreting and language mediation in a military context is very rare, but the role of interpreters in conflicts has recently gained more attention (ibid.). Baker's observations

were published in the 2/2010 issue of the journal *The Translator*, which was a special issue entirely dedicated to the subject. The issue features a number of papers from a project undertaken at the University of Reading, Great Britain, called *Languages at War*[2]. The on-going project focuses on the policies and practices of language contacts in conflict. At the University of Eastern Finland in Joensuu, Pekka Kujamäki is currently leading a research project in *Translation and Interpreting in World War II in Finland*[3]. Both of these projects have resulted in the publication of a number of books and articles relevant for this study.

My own paper on the language services in Finnish crisis management operations (Snellman 2011), a thesis for the Senior Staff Officer Course at the Finnish National Defence University, was an overview of how the language services of the Finnish crisis management operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan were organised in 2009–2010. In addition, the paper offered some practical advice for the personnel of crisis management forces on how to work with interpreters. The advice was well received by the Finnish military, and I have had the opportunity to act as an instructor in the training of crisis management forces from 2011 onwards. This study follows up and develops some of the issues addressed in my earlier paper, such as training and recruitment, but from a different perspective, and using a larger amount of source data.

As noted above, this study draws on both the theories of translation studies as well as military science. **Figure 2** describes this dualistic theoretical approach. From the direction of the theory of translation studies, the subject matter is approached through the notions of *translators' agency* and *translation culture*. The approach allows the focus to be put on elements of particular interest in a military setting, such as *ethics*, *power,* and *military translation culture*. These elements also influenced the formulation of the sub-questions to the research questions (see sub-chapter 3.3).

[2] Languages at War: *http://www.reading.ac.uk/languages-at-war/* (Viewed 16 December 2013).
[3] In Search of Military Translation Cultures: *http://translationinww2infin.wordpress.com/* (Viewed 16 December 2013).

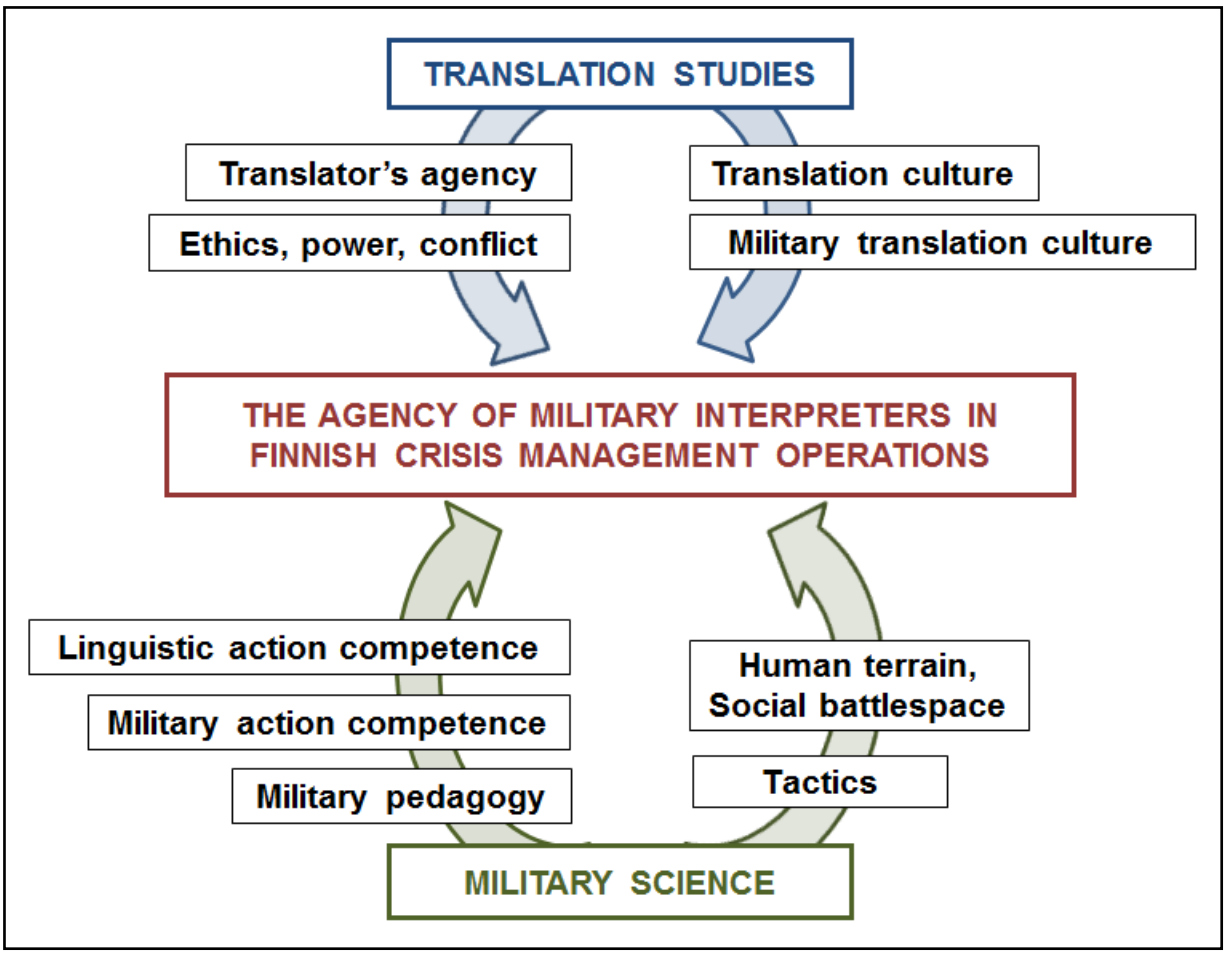

Figure 2. Theoretical Framework.

From the viewpoint of the theory of military science, the subject matter is approached through the concepts of *military pedagogy* and *tactics*. Closer to the subject matter, these broad disciplines are narrowed down to the key concepts of *military action competence* and *linguistic action competence,* as well as *human terrain* and *social battlespace*. It is worth noting that the chosen theoretical approach, whatever it may be, is indisputably pivotal in any research process and will greatly influence its results. Similarly, conclusions drawn from the same research data could vary in another study, depending on the chosen theoretical approach. The approaches selected for this study and their fundamental concepts are validated and defined in the following sub-chapters.

2.1.2 Military Interpreter

A military interpreter is, in short, an interpreter who serves in a military organisation. As a soldier, a military interpreter wears a uniform, military insignia and carries a weapon openly. A military interpreter is an expert in one or several foreign languages and cultures. The task of a military interpreter is to facilitate military operations by interpreting and/or

translating, but he or she may also be assigned other tasks related to language and culture, such as information gathering or training of other soldiers. As trained soldiers, military interpreters may also perform other military duties, such as acting as drivers, guards, or ordinary infantrymen (ISAF & KFOR 2010).

Ordinary soldiers with language skills are not considered military interpreters unless they are specifically assigned to interpretation duty, which factually transforms an ordinary soldier into a military interpreter. Through their military training, military interpreters also have an insight into the language and culture of the military in which they serve. Arguably, this provides interpreters with military training advantages over their civilian counterparts when working in a military environment. Interpreters with a civilian status also serve in military organisations, but they are not considered military interpreters.

In this study, the terms “interpretation” and “translation” are used interchangeably: both terms are used to refer to interpretation as well as translation, where applicable. Thus, the term “military interpreter” always refers to a “military translator” as well, although the latter term is rarely used.

2.1.3 Crisis Management

Crisis management is defined in a Finnish Field Manual as “actions undertaken by the international community to prevent and limit conflicts, to stop the use of violence between parties, to repair the damages caused, and to re-establish the security, stability, social structure, and rule of law in the crisis area. [Crisis management] consists of military and civilian crisis management” (Kenttäohjesääntö 2007, 99; translation by author). In this study, the concept of crisis management refers solely to the military component of crisis management. Other terms used to describe military operations with similar structures and objectives are *stabilisation operations, normalisation operations*, *peace support operations*, and *counter-insurgency operations* (cf. Nurmela 2010). Also included in the concept of crisis management operations in this study are military operations led by the United Nations, which are otherwise often referred to as *peace-keeping* or *military observation* operations[4].

[4] Nurmela (2010, 48) elaborates on the Finnish terminology used and points out that while the term *rauhanturvaoperaatio* (peace-keeping operation) has been replaced by the term *kriisinhallintaoperaatio* (crisis management operation), individual soldiers are still called *rauhanturvaaja* (peace-keeper).

The operational environments of past and current Finnish crisis management operations differ considerably from those that many other countries have operated in, or in which they are currently operating. Finnish crisis management operations have been conducted in areas of a relatively low threat level. In Afghanistan, for example, countries such as Estonia, Denmark, Germany, or the USA have often operated in conditions of a higher threat level than Finland. This fundamental difference has to be kept in mind when considering the processes that the military authorities of other countries have selected for the recruitment and training of their military interpreters. Furthermore, the same difference is also evident when discussing interpretation in war-like conditions in broad terms: the circumstances that Finnish military interpreters in crisis management operations are faced with do not often correspond to those in, for example, the present Middle East, or during the First and Second World Wars.

2.2 Translation Studies

Translation studies deals with translation, interpretation, and localisation. Translation studies is interdisciplinary, as is characteristic of the humanities, and does not deal in exact terms. Interpreting and translation operate in general with more flexible norms and rules than the natural sciences. For example, to compare interpreting, the transfer of oral communication from one language and culture to another, with a process in which words and phrases in one language are substituted with the words and phrases of another, would be overly simplifying. Prunč (1997, 103) argues that common misconceptions about the true nature of translation and language in general are behind many false notions about the subject. For example, contrary to common belief, not everyone who masters a foreign language is able to interpret.

What does the theory of translation studies have to offer for this paper? Historically, translation studies has focused on the content of translations rather than on the persons performing the translative act, or on the social structures in which they operate. Furthermore, the approach has been prescriptive instead of descriptive. Gideon Toury (1995) was among the first to place translation in a sociological context, and examines the behaviour of translators as human actors through the concept of *norms*. Toury also studies how people become translators and adapt to the norms and conventions of the profession. In stressing the importance of normativity and structures, Toury limits the freedom of translators as individual agents (see Kinnunen & Koskinen 2010, 8).

Katarina Reiss' and Hans Vermeer's *skopos theory* emphasises communication and action in translation. The target audiences' needs shape the purpose or *skopos* of a translation, thus determining the course of the translatory action. However, the act of translation is only one of the options available for translators: they may also paraphrase, summarise, make an entirely new text, or choose not to translate at all (Reiss & Vermeer 1984, 87). Consequently, the skopos theory would seem to grant translators, as agents, ample space to act in. The reality, however, might look very different: translators often work and operate as a part of networks, which effectively limit their autonomy in terms of agency and power. According to Kristiina Abdallah (2010, 40–43), translators' agency is often profoundly reduced by the translation production networks that act as their principals.

Justa Holz-Mänttäri's theory of translational action (1984) offers an approach similar to the skopos theory, but focuses on the translator as an agent. The central concept of the theory, translational action, connotes not only translation, but also the entire production and process of carrying messages from one culture to another. In this process, the translator takes the role of an expert, whose actions are determined by the function (cf. *skopos*) of the message. The nature of this function is defined in the co-operation between actors in different roles, such as the client, the translator, and the recipient of the message (cf. Holz-Mänttäri 1984, 17; 109–111). These roles are often combined or overlapping. Therefore, translators require competences beyond language skills: translational action occurs in social interaction.

The sociological approach to translation studies, a relatively new trend, has gained in popularity. This approach, which puts the focus on the people who produce translations – rather than the translations themselves – has been elaborated upon and renamed *translator studies* by Andrew Chesterman (2009). He identifies the sociology of translators as covering issues such as "the status of […] translators in different cultures, rates of pay [and] working conditions […]", but also the "[…] translators' attitudes to their work, as revealed in essays [and] interviews […]". Moreover, Chesterman suggests that the personal motivation of translators, which he calls *telos* (cf. *skopos*), be used as a factor when analysing the agency of translators (ibid., 16–17).

Chesterman's tentative model of translator studies brings together many of the elements of both the concepts of *translator's agency* and *translation culture* that are relevant for this study. In Chesterman's model, the cultural branch of translator studies deals with such elements as values, ethics, ideologies, traditions, and history. The sociological branch deals with translators' observable behaviour as individuals, groups or institutions, and their relations with other groups (Chesterman 2009, 19). Fittingly, these elements are also

central to translation policy, which in turn is an influential constituent in translation culture (see sub-chapter 2.2.2 below). Consequently, this study of military interpreters' agency falls under the sociological and cultural branches of translator studies. Two significant concepts in the sociological and cultural approaches to the military interpreters' agency, *translators' agency* and *translation culture*, are introduced next.

2.2.1 Translator's Agency

The concept of *agency* in general is frequently met in the social sciences, where it refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices. Similarly, in translation studies, at large, agency has referred to "how translators act at the interface between individual and social dimensions" (Palumbo 2009, 9). In this study, however, the definition of agency draws on Tuija Kinnunen and Kaisa Koskinen (2010, 6–7), who formulate agency as "the willingness and ability to act". This definition distinguishes three elements to agency: *willingness*, *ability,* and *action* (cf. Kujamäki 2011, 13). The term "willingness" implies a conscious intention to act, as well as an ability to reflect and make moral judgments. Willingness is a quality of the individual, but also concerns identity and cultural models. The second term, "ability", in turn, reflects the actor's competence, skills, constraints and power, and it is defined in social interaction with other individuals, culture, organization, gender, etc. (Kinnunen & Koskinen 2010, 6–7). The term "to act" refers to exerting influence through action, and is dependant on the actor's choices and decisions. The three elements of agency are, of course, mutually dependent.

The first element of military interpreters' agency is the willingness or motivation to serve in a military organisation and in a crisis management operation. Moira Inghilleri (2010, 176–177, 180) points out that the motivation to serve in the military as an interpreter does not fundamentally differ from the motivation to serve as a soldier. Common reasons for enlisting are "patriotism, pay, employment opportunities, and a search for adventure". Moreover, Inghilleri recognises the willingness to help, stemming from ethical and ideological backgrounds, as an important source of motivation (ibid., 177–178; 185). Rebecca Tipton (2011, 19–21; 25–27) also recognises both the above-mentioned general sources of motivation. Tipton suggests, however, that the boundaries between these two sources become blurred in conflict situations, as the interpreters grow accustomed to the military's ways of working and thinking. It is worth noting that both Inghilleri's and Tipton's research concerned locally recruited, civilian interpreters, as opposed to interpreters with military background and training.

The second element of a military interpreter's agency, the ability to act, has a number of obvious differences compared with that of interpreters working in a civilian environment. In the operational environment of crisis management operations, military interpreters can, as trained soldiers, undertake many other tasks besides interpreting, and thus exert influence in different ways. The military interpreters who are assigned to provide cultural awareness training for the other soldiers of the crisis management force are an example of this. Baker (2010, 213–218) proposes that interpreters in conflict situations have much more influence than what is traditionally attributed to interpreters, and that their clients often fail to understand this influence. Arguably, by virtue of their cultural and linguistic expertise, military interpreters often considerably transcend their designated role and organisationally narrow margins of influence within the military structure.

The third element of military interpreters' agency, their actions, should be viewed in the context of their working environment. Kinnunen and Koskinen (2010, 7–8) stress that agency can only be understood in a social context. Inghilleri (2010, 179) highlights the character of military units as social and institutional frameworks, in which military interpreters act: "The bond that develops between interpreters and their units is equivalent in many cases to the affective bond which develops among the soldiers of a platoon where safety and survival depend on mutual trust." The bonds formed in human interaction can undoubtedly be considered an important part of both the willingness and ability of military interpreters. Thus, their agency should not be seen only as the agency of individual soldiers, but as the agency of individuals who are part of a military unit. This is not only true when they are interpreting, but applies to all their duties throughout the time they are in service. This close-knit social and institutional interaction becomes the framework in which their agency manifests itself.

Perhaps one of the most important questions related to interpreters' agency is that of neutrality or impartiality. Traditionally, interpreters have been expected to remain impartial towards their clients, a practice which is reflected in the many ethical guidelines of the translatory professions[5]. However, this requirement of impartiality may not be valid in a military context. Research suggests that in conflict situations, such as those which may occur in the operational environments of war or crisis management operations, interpreters exert their agency in different terms: they choose sides, either voluntarily or by necessity,

[5] See e.g. the International Federation of Translators' Code of Professional Practice (http://www.fit-europe.org/vault/deont/European_Code_%20Professional_Practice.pdf) or The Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters' Professional Code (in Finnish) (https://sktl-fi.directo.fi/@Bin/33666/tulkin+ammattis%C3%A4%C3%A4nn%C3%B6st%C3%B6.pdf) (Viewed 16 December 2013).

and align their loyalty with one side or the other of the conflict (see e.g. Baker 2010, Inghilleri 2010, Kujamäki 2011, Monacelli & Punzo 2001). Consequently, the requirements on the ethical action competence (see sub-chapter 2.3.1) of interpreters in a military context may be considerably higher than in the traditional, civilian working environment of interpreters.

2.2.2 Translation Culture

The concept of *translation culture* in this study is based on Erich Prunč's description (1997, 2008). In all cultures, according to Prunč, methods and practices are established in certain fields when the fields are considered relevant. Prunč views translation and interpreting as one such field. The existing and emerging norms and conventions of the field, as well as the expectations and values of the society surrounding it, form the translation culture of that particular field and society (Prunč 1997, 107). Thus, for the purposes of this study, the concept of translation culture in Finnish crisis management operations would cover all translatory activity within Finnish crisis management operations, including the methods and practices used, the relevant norms and ideologies, as well as the social relations and statuses of the people involved.

More specifically and in more theoretical terms, Prunč (1997, 107) defines translation culture as a "subsystem, grown over time within a culture, that concerns the field of translation and that consists of a set of shared professionally established, controlled and controllable norms, conventions, expectations and values of all actual and potential parties of translation processes" (translation by author). As cultural subsystems, translation cultures can be classified into smaller subsystems, such as the diacultures and idiocultures of institutions or even of individual interpreters. Prunč further defines translation cultures by stating that any common, cross-cultural theory of translation is possible only to the extent that it can detect, describe, and systemise common features and differences in existing translation cultures (ibid.).

Prunč (1997, 107–109) describes translation cultures as openly reflective (self-conscious) and actively shaped and controlled systems. The concept of translation, as defined by Prunč, is specific to a given culture, and subject to a continuing rivalry of innovation and tradition of norms and conventions. The role of translation studies would thus certainly not be to dictate the norms in translation cultures, but instead to focus on establishing relevant norms and conventions with all the actors of the translation culture. The prevailing conventions and norms within a culture reveal its positions of power and exchange of

interests. However, the reached conventions or established norms can exist only if the consensus is accepted implicitly or explicitly by all parties (cf. Toury 1995, who also positions translation norms in a socio-cultural context). Prunč's theoretical model of a translation culture can equally well be applied to both the communicative aspects as well as to the extratextual features of interpreting, such as the recruitment, management, and motivation of military interpreters. As this study focuses exclusively on extratextual features, it is useful to look at how Prunč has been interpreted by some scholars with similar research interests.

According to Kujamäki (2012, 33), a general characterisation of a translation culture would cover issues concerning how translation and interpretation are organised and handled within a certain community or institution. Examples of such issues are whether interpretation is considered important, where and in what kind of situations interpreters must be available, who is recruited to be an interpreter, how interpreters are educated, and how much are they paid. Kujamäki elaborates on the differences of localised translation idiocultures and the translation cultures of international institutions, such as the European Union. He also differentiates between "official translation cultures", which are abstractions defined in official documents, and "unofficial translation cultures", which are the practical, more flexible adaptations of the former (ibid., 34–36). Any translation culture of a Finnish crisis management operation could thus be labelled "unofficial", since the official documents describing language services in the operations are scarce, as noted in chapter 1. Similarly, any translation culture specific to an individual crisis management operation could be labelled a translation idioculture.

Michaela Wolf (2012) pointed out that Prunč's conceptualisation of a translation culture is made from the perspective of a national culture. According to Prunč, "The fundamental arbitrariness of translatorial conventions entails that a translation culture ideally to be constructed must be culture specific. The translation culture is therefore based on values which are recognised as generally valid in the respective society" (Prunč 1997, 110–111; translation by Wolf). This suggests that Prunč's culture concept is based on a view of norms and conventions being fundamental for the construction of culture, and that translation cultures are constructed in societies in which these norms and conventions are agreed upon. In addition, this view proposes that translation cultures are principally national cultures. Kujamäki (2011, 13), too, recognises the importance of common, shared norms in his outline of a national translation culture for Finland during World War 2.

When looking at the concept of translation culture in a military context, however, the above is less apparent. According to Wolf (2012), Prunč in a later paper stresses that translation

cultures are not limited by language spaces: “within one language space several translation cultures can develop, but on the other hand translation cultures can also go beyond a certain language space” […] “It should be taken into account that cultures are hybrid formations, not easily to be discerned from each other” (Prunč 2008, 25–26; translation by Wolf). This would certainly be valid in the context of Finnish crisis management operations, which are by definition undertaken in a multi-national environment, and are consequently multi-lingual.

2.3 Military Science

Within the military sciences, this study falls under the two sub-categories of tactics and military pedagogy, also referred to as military education and training. From the aspect of military pedagogy, questions of interest related to the agency of military interpreters concern the training of military personnel. What kind of military, language, and cultural training should the personnel of crisis management operations receive prior to their deployment? Who should be trained, in what topics, and how should the training be executed? A highly specialised field in this context concerns the training of the military interpreters themselves, which would arguably belong more fittingly in the setting of interpreter training. Key concepts in the military pedagogical approach of the subject matter are *military action competence* and *linguistic action competence*.

From the viewpoint of tactics, questions related to this study concern mainly the organisation and usage of military interpreters as a part of a military force. These tactical concerns range from administrative issues, such as the organisational level on which the military interpreters should stand, what their rank of service should be, and what their level on the pay scale should be, to much more concrete matters, such as where the interpreter should be positioned in a vehicle convoy or during foot patrol, or what special equipment the military interpreter should carry. All of these tactical matters have an impact on the military interpreters’ agency, and they are examined in this study using the concepts of *human terrain* and *social battlespace*.

2.3.1 Military Action Competence and Linguistic Action Competence

The concept of *military action competence* was coined by Jarmo Toiskallio (Toiskallio 2009, 58). Military action competence has been defined as a soldier’s “motivation, will, and courage to fulfil his or her tasks, a sense of responsibility, the ability to make ethical

decisions, and a feeling of self-confidence" (ibid., translation by author). Military action competence manifests itself in four dimensions: physical, mental, social, and ethical action competence. However, these dimensions should only be seen as a framework, since the social identity of a soldier is central to the concept. In Toiskallio's words, "The purpose of the study of military action competence is to gain a deep understanding of military education and training in its personal, social, historical, political, ethical, and cultural contexts." (ibid., translation by author).

Toiskallio (2009, 53) suggests that the research of agency as an element of military action competence should be set in a larger social and cultural context, and that the concept of *action* in military pedagogy should be seen primarily as an ethical question. Accordingly, the ethical dimension of military action competence could be seen as most relevant for the study of military interpreters' agency. However, the mental and social dimensions of military action competence are also of interest for the purposes of this study and should not be overlooked, as the selected themes of analysis (see sub-chapter 3.3) will show. Moreover, the mental, social, and ethical dimensions of military action competence are central to a communicative perspective of military action competence. A graphic representation of the dimensions of military action competence for the purposes of this study and their relation to linguistic action competence (see below) is shown in **Figure 3**.

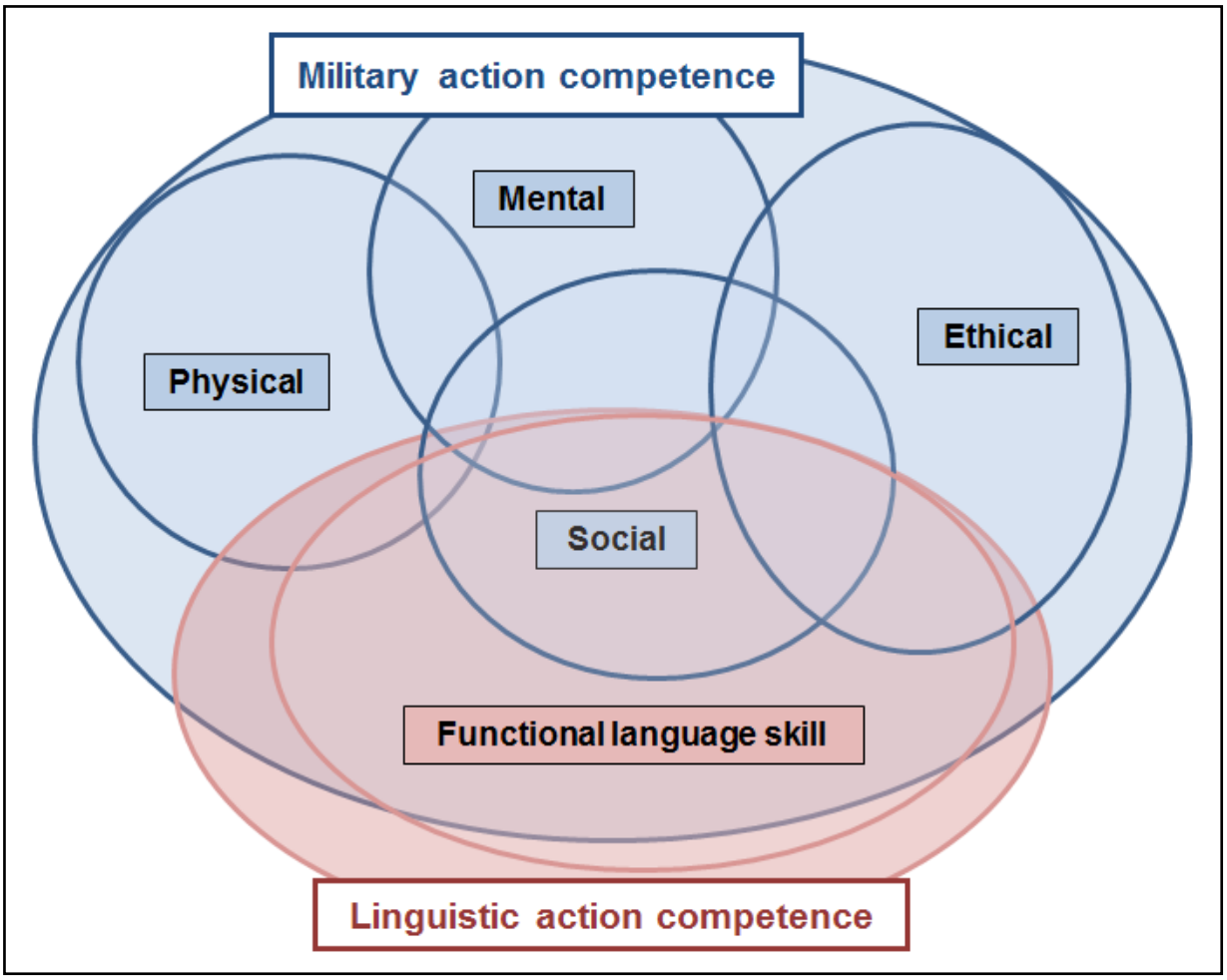

Figure 3. Military action competence, linguistic action competence, and functional language skill.

Communicative action has been emphasised as an important part of military action competence. The concept of *linguistic action competence* (in Finnish *kielellinen toimintakyky*) was introduced by Päivi Kilpinen (2007, in Snellman 2011, 29 and Kastepohja 2011, 14), who placed it largely within the social dimension of military action competence. Kilpinen stressed that the ability to communicate and convey a message precisely within a given context is an integral part of military action competence. Indeed, the basic military abilities of "shooting, moving, and communicating" are considered fundamental for every soldier in the U.S. Army (Field Manual 7-21.13, Appendix A). Similarly, in 2005 the U.S. Department of Defense directed the U.S. armed forces to treat language capabilities as "a core warfighting skill akin to marksmanship" (Outzen 2012). In the context of modern conflicts, communication often takes place in more than one language. As indicated above, Finnish crisis management operations are by definition multi-lingual. Consequently, the ability and skill to use the services of an interpreter can be considered an essential part of the linguistic action competence of a soldier in Finnish crisis management forces. Thus, a "satisfactory" competence (in Finnish *riittävä kielitaito*)

in, for example, the English language is not enough, even if it meets the official requirements (Finlex 2006/254, 2 §).

Ritva Aho (2003, 134) defines the concept of *functional language skills* (in Finnish *toiminnallinen kielitaito*) as “how easily and fluently a person copes with different tasks and situations, in which the understanding and usage of a language is called for” (translation by author). Janne Kastepohja (2011, 15) defines functional language skills as linguistic expertise in a specified, work-related international context, and stresses the abilities of both acting and communicating. In the Finnish Defence Forces, functional language skills are defined as “a person’s ability to function in the producing and receiving dimensions of language skill in a given situation” (Pääesikunta 2011, 3; translation by author).

All the aforementioned definitions of functional language skills draw on the description of functional competence in the European Framework (Council of Europe 2003, 125–130). This guideline is action-oriented (ibid., 9–16), and has had a strong influence on the assessment of linguistic competences in Finland (see e.g. Latomaa et al 2013, 168). The term “functional” also appears in the NATO standard STANAG 6001 (NATO 2010), which describes the language proficiency levels within NATO forces. In STANAG 6001, the “functional” proficiency level denotes a lower mid-level proficiency, namely level 2 on a six-level scale from 0 to 5. The above arguments propose that functional competence in one or several languages is included in the concept of linguistic action competence. Hence, the concept of linguistic action competence could be seen as a superordinate concept to the concept of functional language skills, as shown in Figure 3.

A person’s functional language competence is commonly considered pre-eminent in the native tongue, whereas language skills in a second or third language are typically inferior. Consequently, the linguistic action competence of the soldiers in Finnish crisis management forces can be used to its best advantage when they have the possibility to express themselves in their native tongue, Finnish, instead of speaking (often a reduced form of) English. Using military interpreters recruited in Finland with Finnish as a working language could thus be a distinct advantage: in Finnish the soldiers would be able to say what they *want* to say instead of saying only what they *are able* to say, which would be the case both for them and the locally recruited interpreters when working in English, the lingua franca of military crisis management (cf. Prunč 1997, 102).

2.3.2 Human Terrain and Social Battlespace

The concepts of *human terrain* and *social battlespace* have a background in the emergence of the so-called *comprehensive approach* to military operations. This approach, in turn, stems from the rise in the number of low-intensity conflicts, which have all but replaced large-scale wars. Low-intensity conflicts, once suppressed, often become crisis management operations. The outcome of these operations often depends on how the local population views the legitimacy of the military forces in theatre (Nurmela 2010, 19). Moreover, the problems that cause these conflicts cannot be solved with traditional military power, even if the military operations are locally successful. This new paradigm of war has been called “war amongst the people” (ibid., 20).

Teemu Nurmela (2010) views the military approach to crisis management operations (Nurmela uses the term “stabilisation operations”) as human-centric, as opposed to the traditional enemy- or terrain-oriented approaches. In the human-centric approach, which identifies the local societies in crisis as the incentive for crisis management operations, the human dimension of the battlespace is considered far more important and complex than in a traditional conflict (ibid., 32). According to Nurmela, battlespace comprises four dimensions: the physical, human, informational, and temporal dimensions (ibid., 54), of which the human dimension of battlespace is obviously central to the human-centric approach.

Introducing the concept of social battlespace, Nurmela argues that the previous terrain-oriented models, or the approaches involving different domains of battlespace, have failed to capture the complexity of the human dimension of stabilisation operations. He sketches a three-layer model (see **Figure 4**) of the human dimension of battlespace and discusses its connections with the other dimensions:

> “The human terrain refers to the physical domain or the objective (real) world […]. On the other hand, the cultural domain represents the cognitive part of the human dimension […]. Finally, the social domain stands for all the action and interaction between individual human beings and groups of humans. Consequently, it is closely connected with the information dimension of the battlespace.” (Nurmela 2010, 61–62).

Nurmela (2010, 80) argues that the human dimension constitutes the core of social battlespace, and points out that the layer-based model of the human dimension helps identify its key factors. Nurmela stresses the necessity of cultural awareness for mapping

the human terrain, and recognises the difficulties caused by the culture and language barrier. Furthermore, he highlights the importance of translators and interpreters as cultural mediators in social action (ibid., 61–62; 70; 75–76).

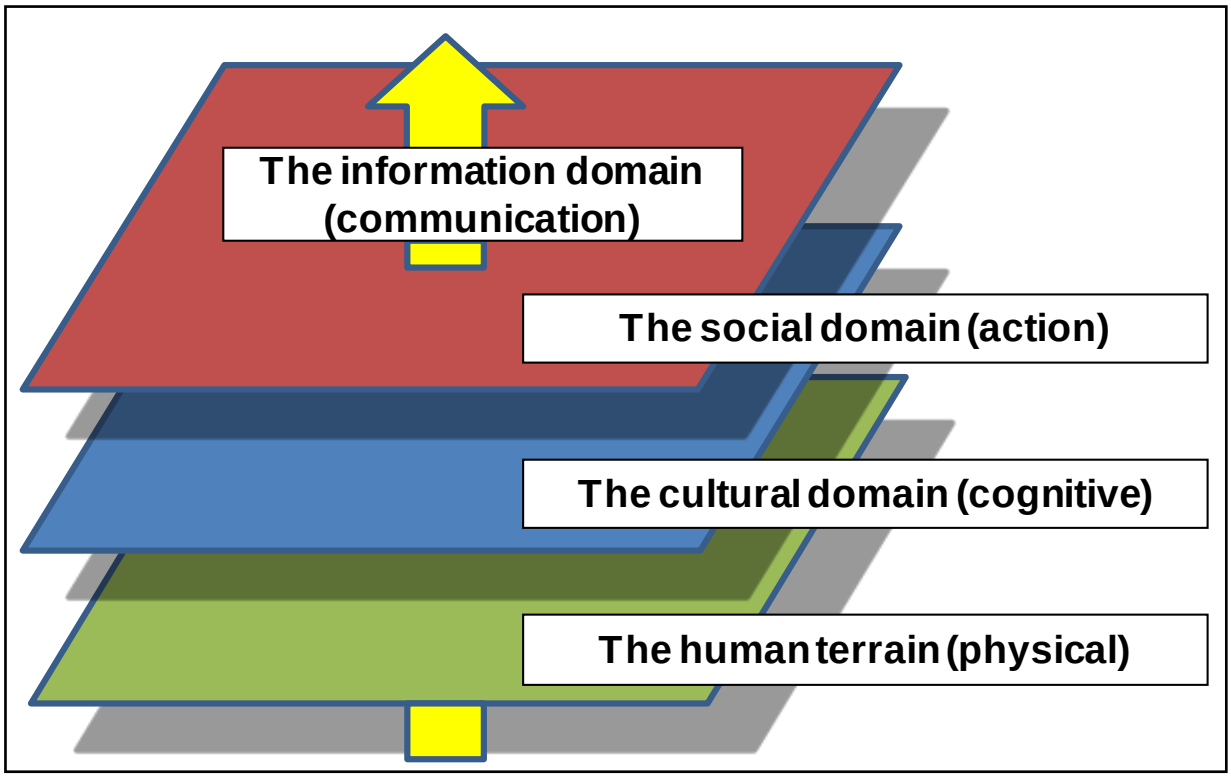

Figure 4. The human dimension of battlespace (Adapted from Nurmela 2010, 63).

In social battlespace, communication is in focus. Nurmela points out that "battlespace is seen as a conceptual operating environment that does not necessarily include combat action – even if the name includes the word 'battle'" (2010, 29). However, this does not mean that armed opposition is non-existent in human-centric operations. On the contrary, the possibility and threat of armed combat is real, and can appear in many forms (Nurmela 2010, 21–23). This does not deny the aim or need to communicate: taking military action is also a strong way of communicating. However, military action as a means in human-centric operations is not desirable or practised on the strategic and operational levels. It occurs most frequently, if at all, on a lower, tactical level. Nurmela argues that the reality in the field, on the tactical level in stabilisation operations may differ considerably from the mission statement made by the staff, on the operational level (2010, 23).

The above arguments by Nurmela (2010) outline the tactical reality in which military interpreters in crisis management operations are key players. Nurmela identifies social battlespace as the operational dimension in which the outcome of crisis management operations is decided. In this dimension, the act of communication is pivotal: a single

communicative act in the form of a speech, negotiation, declaration, or press release may become the decisive point of an operation. In such an operational environment, words take the place of bombs and bullets, and languages replace traditional weapons systems. Every trained soldier knows that one must carry a map and a compass when heading out on a mission in unfamiliar terrain. Since the social battlespace of crisis management operations is multi-lingual, military interpreters function as the map and compass in its human terrain.

Operational art and tactics have been described as the art and science[6] of organizing a military force, and the techniques for using military units in battle. The U.S. Army's Field Manual 3-0 (2008, Appendix A) lists nine principles of war, which are commonly known in the Finnish military, too. Many of these basic, tactical principles would seem to fit equally well in the context of military language services as in combat operations. The principle of *objective*, for example, suggests that the tasks assigned to military interpreters should support each operation's purpose directly. A clearly stated objective would also encourage and direct military interpreters to take the initiative in uncertain situations. The principle of *economy of force* advises that commanders never leave any unit without a purpose. Accordingly, military interpreters should never be left without duties or assigned to tasks in which their special expertise fails to be employed. Similarly, the principles of *unity of command*, *security,* and *simplicity* could also be applied.

[6] "[…] a science when researched and studied, and an art when practiced". (Kesseli 2008 in Nurmela 2010, 29)

3 Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The previous chapter positioned this study academically by examining how the subject relates to the established paradigms of translation studies and military science. This chapter continues the theoretical discussion, but focuses on the philosophy of science and methodology. The ethical foundations of this study are laid in this chapter by describing and validating the research data, the methods used to analyse it, and the research process leading to the subsequent research results. Furthermore, the chapter addresses limitations in the scope of the study and the research data. The aim is to clarify how the research results were reached and thus improve the reliability, validity and credibility of the study (reliability, validity and credibility are discussed in closer detail in sub-chapter 5.3).

3.1 Methodology

The purpose of research is, through a systematic and detailed process, to find an answer to questions that derive from functional practices, or to problems based on thinking. Only research that is performed in accordance with scientific principles can be considered scientific research (Varto 1992, 8). When the subject matter of a study involves persons – in a role other than that of biological entities – the researcher and the persons being studied belong in the same empirical reality, or life-world. Everything in this life-world consists of meanings, which the persons involved bestow, or have previously bestowed, on events or phenomena. Therefore, research concerned with persons cannot resort to extensive idealisation or rationalisation, because the meaning of the object being studied will be lost, as well as the manner in which other meanings are connected with it. Moreover, the results of this kind of research are bound to the same life-world (ibid., 13–14; 28).

All scientific research reflects the researcher's worldview: it belongs in the life-world of the researcher and must in a reasonable way fit into his or her sphere of meanings. Similarly, any research results achieved gradually influence and become part of the life-world and understanding of both the researcher and the people being studied (Varto 1992, 18–19). Thus, it is impossible to study persons as an outside observer. Indeed, the demand for objectivity has long since been considered problematic, or even obsolete in the humanities. As suggested above, the research questions arise from the life-world of the researcher (ibid., 23; 34). In this study, the author's own experiences of working with interpreters in crisis management operations, his previous studies, and work experience

constitute a pre-understanding of the subject matter, and must consequently have an impact on it. However, what is being studied here, i.e. the agency of military interpreters, belongs to the life-world of other persons. Any influence by the researcher on the object of study must be accepted and understood in order to identify and control its effects.

The research data has been analysed using a phenomenological hermeneutical approach. An important starting point of the phenomenological method is the researcher's ability to observe and describe individual, unique phenomena without fixed assumptions or bias (Varto 1992, 133–136). The uniqueness of the observed phenomena and the meanings associated with them means, for example, that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers to questions in an interview, only varying perceptions and observations. Correspondingly, the interviewees' answers do not confirm or refute the existence of any phenomenon in physical reality, even in the case that they all share the same observation. In a subsequent phase of the phenomenological method, observations are thematised and analysed in the context of the researcher's pre-understanding.

The object being studied here is a phenomenon: the agency of military interpreters does not actually have a physical reality, and this study only conveys the meanings behind it. A phenomenon is in essence the researcher's view of the research object, i.e. its meaning to the researcher. A phenomenological approach aims to separate the meaning of the phenomenon for the researcher (which is needed to perform an analysis) from those meanings, which are actually being studied, and exist independently of the researcher (Varto 1992, 133–136). In this study, the above refers to the meanings that the individual interviewees have bestowed on the phenomena related to military interpreters' agency.

However, the phenomenon, which is the target for understanding, is situated in the life-world of the object being studied, which can by definition never be fully understood. This is recognised in a hermeneutical reading process, where the researcher approaches the subject through his or her own pre-understanding. The researcher's analysis of the subject adds to the pre-understanding, but also alters the analysis. Therefore, this so-called hermeneutical cycle is never complete. Analysis always leads to understanding, but understanding is relative: the life-worlds of other researchers at another time, their interests, the purposes of the study and other circumstances will differ. Moreover, any understanding gained will change the life-worlds of the object of study and researchers alike permanently (Varto 1992, 88–108; cf. Nurmela 2010, 30).

Juha Varto (1992, 36) defines research interest as "the researcher's stance towards the research, its subject matter, the research objects and its methodology" (translation by

author). Varto makes a rough division into theoretical and practical research interest, and lists five factors that a researcher's research interest consists of: the researcher's notion of science, the research framework, the researcher's conscious world-view, the researcher's theoretical view of research, and notion of knowledge (ibid., 37–40). Drawing on Varto's classification, the research interest of this study is inclined towards the practical: the research data is deeply rooted in practical experiences in the field, and the ultimate aim of this study is obtain results that would have practical applications for professional soldiers, reservists, and linguists in the military.

Ontologically, this study draws from the concept of agency, which was defined in the previous chapter as the "the willingness and ability to act". Agency as an attribute, however, does not take into consideration the complexity of its subjects, and it should thus be considered a construct for the purposes of research (cf. Varto 1992, 64). Hence, agency is a phenomenon, which manifests itself in actions. The fundamental assumption here is that military interpreters are agents, i.e. that they possess agency. This study views military interpreters holistically (ibid., 68–70): military interpreters, who possess agency, use it to act. These actions are both physical as well as mental, e.g. the interpreters speak, eat, rest, make decisions, and have feelings. Similarly, the agency of military interpreters is influenced by both the physical reality as well as the psychological factors in the operational environment of crisis management operations, such as noise, heat, darkness, fatigue, dehydration, fear, and stress. These factors, as well as the actions which are the manifestations of the military interpreters' agency, are revealed and reflected in their interviews. An analysis of the interviews enables the researcher to approach the meanings that military interpreters have bestowed on the outside factors as well as on their own agency.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The main research data of this study consists of interviews with Finnish military interpreters who have served in crisis management operations. The interviewees' contact information was obtained from the Peace Support Operations Training Centre of the Pori Brigade of the Finnish Defence Forces, which handles many tasks related with the recruitment and training of Finnish crisis management forces. To obtain the military interpreters' contact information, permission was applied for from the Defence Command (Pääesikunta 2012). The Defence Command's research permission set the terms and conditions for the use of the contact information: the information is intended for the author only; it must be handled securely, and is to be used exclusively for research purposes. In

addition, the study must not contain any classified information, which is to be verified by the Navy Command prior to its publication. Once the permission was granted, the Pori Brigade sent a list to the author with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of 22 persons who had served as military interpreters in Finnish crisis management operations. The list contained no further information, such as dates of deployment, tasks, or evaluations.

It soon became clear that an interview with all the 22 persons listed would not serve the purposes of this study, as the amount of research data from 22 interviews would be too large. Moreover, an initial estimate of the time and budget allocated for conducting and transcribing the interviews allowed for approximately 10 to 12 interviewees. Thus, a method of selecting the interviewees had to be chosen. As the obtained list did not contain any information about the service history, age, or background of the persons listed, a random selection seemed preferable. An initial round of phone calls to all the persons in the catalogue, however, quickly solved the issue of selecting interviewees: of the 22 persons listed, six were unavailable for interview. Of these six, one could not be reached (despite several attempts using different media), three were permanently living abroad, and two declined an interview due to work or family-related issues.

The initial telephone contacts with the interviewees revealed that all but one of the potential interviewees had served in either of two crisis management operations: the Finnish crisis management force in Kosovo (KFOR) or in Afghanistan (ISAF). Consequently, to further decrease the overall numbers of interviewees, two persons in the catalogue were omitted. One of these two interpreters had served in Kosovo and the other in Afghanistan. These two potential interviewees were the only persons intentionally omitted from this study. The deselecting was done in careful consideration after conducting the first eight interviews, as the professional profiles of the aforementioned two interpreters appeared similar to some of persons already interviewed. Another reason for rejecting specifically these two interpreters was to reduce travel time and costs, for they were among those who lived the furthest away. The option of focusing this study on military interpreters from only one crisis management operation was rejected at an early stage, because it would have provided unrepresentative research data.

The remaining 14 interviewees responded positively, without exception, to the prospect of being interviewed about their experiences as a military interpreter. This first impression of their positive attitude over the telephone would later be confirmed during the interviews. As one interviewee put it, “I’m grateful for the opportunity to finally, after ten years, to be able to tell how I felt and what I have thought. I hope that the decision-makers hear what I have

at heart."[7] (2)[8] Moreover, many of the interviewees also expressed their appreciation of the fact that the person conducting the interview had himself experience of serving in a crisis management operation, as well as having an understanding of issues related to translation and interpreting. This aspect of the interviewees' positive response may be partly caused by the fact that it saved them the trouble of having to explain their views and experiences in close detail. In the words of one interviewee: "[…] you know what it's like down there, and what to do, and who does what."[9] (3) Or, as another interviewee put it: "You understand these issues, having yourself served in the area and worked with interpreters […]"[10] (12). This potential therapeutic quality of the research process is also noted by Varto (1992, 112–113). The relation between the researcher and the object of study is often redefined during the research process, especially when studying the subjective views, opinions, expectations, and beliefs of people. The outcome may well be more complex than the onset, and both the researcher and the object of study might have changed in the process.

The interviews were all conducted personally by the author between 12 December 2012 and 19 April 2013. The interviews were semi-structured theme interviews, in which the interview questionnaire (see Appendix A) was followed loosely, more as a guideline than in strict form. The interviews were recorded and emailed to an independent third party (Tutkimustie Oy[11]), which performed the transcription. Prior to commencing each interview, the interviewees signed an agreement concerning the interview being recorded, which also contained information about the ethical principles[12] of this study. The average duration of the interviews was 1 hour 24 minutes, with the shortest interview being 52 minutes, and the longest lasting 1 hour 58 minutes. Most interviews took place in the private homes of the interviewees, but a number were conducted in quiet public locations, such as at a café or in the study room of a public library. The overall duration of the interviews was 19 hours 36 minutes, which when transcribed equalled over 350 pages (approximately 120,000 words) of text.

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[7] "Olen kiitollinen kun pääsin kertomaan vihdoin ja viimein kymmenen vuoden tauon jälkeen että miltä minusta on tuntunut ja minkälaiset ajatukset minulla on ollut. Toivon että päättäjät kuulee, että mitä mulla on sydämellä."

[8] In the direct quotations, the interviewees are referred to by the numbers 1 through 14 (see References).

[9] "[…] kyllä sä tiedät mimmonen meininki on siellä ja mitä tehdä ja kuka tekee mitä."

[10] "Sinä itse alueella palvelleena, tulkkien kanssa työskennelleenä ymmärrät tätä asiaa […]."

[11] Website: http://tutkimustie.fi/

[12] The ethical principles listed the agreement are based on the terms and conditions of the research permit for this study obtained from the Defence Command (Pääesikunta 2012), and the Guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (TENK 2012).

Although large in quantity, the research data has limitations. The conducted interviews reflect only the experiences of the available interviewees and the specific crisis management operations in which they have served. A sample of 14 individuals out of a population of 22 equals 63.6%, and it can as such be considered representative. Nevertheless, as argued above, the responses of each interviewee, and the meanings attached to them, are unique, which is equally true for those military interpreters who were not interviewed. It will have to be kept in mind that the findings of this study may not be applicable to all Finnish military interpreters or crisis management operations. The situation in the operations may also have changed considerably over time. Consequently, the interviews provide only a subjective view of the situation as it was in that specific operation at that specific time.

It is also important to notice that this study focuses only on the agency of Finnish military interpreters, and disregards the agency of the locally recruited, civilian interpreters of the crisis management force. The reason behind this limitation is that personal interviews with local interpreters would not have been possible within the scope of this study. Typically, a Finnish crisis management force has only one or two military interpreters at a given time, whereas the number of local interpreters available can be anything between ten to sixty individuals. Although local interpreters undoubtedly constitute the largest interpreter workforce in all Finnish crisis management operations, in this study they will be examined only to the extent in which their agency is related to that of the military interpreters recruited in Finland.

A supplementary body of research data used in this study consists of the replies to an email questionnaire concerning how military interpreters are recruited and trained in the militaries of a number of other countries (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was sent to the BILC[13] representatives of 11 countries, whose contact information was obtained through the Defence Language Centre of the National Defence University. At this point, it was uncertain whether the recipients of the emails were persons who had access to the information requested. In some countries' militaries, language training and assessment activities are organised as a part of the intelligence services, which, arguably, may restrict the availability of information. Thus, the questionnaire included a request to forward the questions to whoever would be able to answer them, should the addressee of the email be unable to do so. In a number of cases, the email was forwarded multiple times, which delayed these replies. Eventually, the questionnaire received replies from 8 countries. The

[13] The Bureau for International Language Coordination (BILC) is NATO's advisory body on language training and testing issues. Website: http://natobilc.org/index.html (Viewed 16 December 2013)

attitudes in the responses to the questionnaire were very positive, even enthusiastic, as was the case with the interviewees. However, although most replies were thorough and detailed, the length and depth of the replies varied, which is reflected in the international comparison in sub-chapter 5.2.

3.3 Data Analysis Methods

The two research questions presented in sub-chapter 1.2 form the starting point for the phenomenological hermeneutic analysis of the research data. These two research questions, formulated in general terms, are here broken down into a number of supporting sub-questions. The sub-questions address problems that are more specific, and are formulated to assist in the search for explicit facts and pieces of information in the extensive research data.

Sub-questions to the first research question[14] are:

- What is the proficiency and competence of a military interpreter? (Language and interpreting skills and experience, military training, etc.)
- What is the military action competence of a military interpreter?
- What are the specific features of a translation culture within Finnish crisis management operations in an international comparison?

Sub-questions to the second research question[15] are:

- How did the military interpreters perceive their own role and identity as a part of the crisis management force? (E.g. soldiers, language experts, mediators, outsiders, etc.)
- What were the preconditions, possibilities, and motives of the military interpreters to act and influence in their perceived roles? (Expectations, feedback, influence of ethnicity, cultural differences, etc.)
- How did the agency of the military interpreters manifest itself in situations of conflict, stress, or threat? (As opposed to a typical civilian or neutral operating environment.)
- What features of the military interpreters' agency in Finnish crisis management operations are common to the translator's agency in conflict situations in general?
- What tactical considerations should be taken into account when working with military interpreters?

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[14] "What constitutes the background, motivation, training, and competence of a person who serves as a military interpreter in a Finnish crisis management force?"

[15] "What is the agency of military interpreters as a part of a Finnish crisis management force?"

According to Varto (1992, 88–89), it is possible to construct a distinct method of analysis for each individual study within the paradigm of meaning and understanding. In doing so, the hermeneutical problem of the interpretation of meaning must be carefully considered. When a research method is constructed, it is vital that it adheres to the following principles:

> 1) The analysis and understanding is performed methodically,
> 2) the object of analysis is thematised, and,
> 3) it is possible to discern between understanding related to the object being studied, and that related to the researcher.

In this study, the above principles are respected as follows. First, the analysis method applied to the research data as well as the scientific stance of this study are explicated in this chapter. Second, the object of analysis is structured into five categories, or themes, which draw from the subject matter of this study, the agency of military interpreters. Third, the distinction and relations between meanings arising from the pre-understanding of the author, and the meanings identified in the research data are also clarified in this chapter. However, this distinction is not always possible, as the author's pre-understanding is integral to the hermeneutical process leading to understanding. Ultimately, this is a question of research ethics and integrity.

The five thematic categories, which form the structure of the analysis, are: *Motivation*; *Power and Influence*; *Neutrality and Loyalty*; *Personal Relations and Unit Cohesion*; and *Visibility and Fear*. As suggested above, these themes are all central to the military interpreters' agency, or their "willingness and ability to act". However, these themes are not directly linked to the research questions and sub-questions, but are instead used as a tool for analysing the research data. In the transcription process of the interviews, the recorded sound files were turned into text documents, which facilitated subsequent analysis considerably. That the author conducted all the interviews in person also supports the analysis, as the data itself, as well as the circumstances in which it was collected, is already familiar to the researcher.

The analysis process starts with the identification of details, facts, and pieces of information in the research data, which is done by reading the transcribed interviews in close detail. The identified items are then grouped under thematic headings. Next, the pieces of information within each theme are collectively analysed with regard to the above sub-questions and the research questions from which they derive. This analysis is

enriched by using direct quotations to highlight the authentic voices of the interviewees[16]. In a third and final stage, understanding attained from the thematic analysis is used in combination with the supplementary data, source literature, and the author's (by then considerably improved) pre-understanding of the subject matter to draw conclusions, and to answer the research questions.

In addition to the five themes introduced above, three more categories of analysis are used to group details from the research data. These categories are: *Demographics*; *Recruitment and Training*; and *Competence and Experience*. The analysis of these categories differs from the thematic analysis in that the data is analysed in quantitative terms alongside a qualitative analysis. Quantitative methods are applied to purely numerical data only, such as the age, years of service, and years of training of the military interpreters. The results of this quantitative analysis are used to supplement and clarify the results of the qualitative analysis of meanings by triangulation. However, the qualitative method described above remains the foremost analysis method of this study.

The research data obtained in the international email inquiry is of limited importance for the study of the Finnish military interpreters' agency. However, findings from the international comparison are used in this study to illustrate specific features of Finnish translation culture by means of comparison. Moreover, as one of the purposes of this study is to give practically applicable suggestions for improvement, the international comparison may be viewed as a preliminary identification of international best practices.

Triangulation generally refers to the use of more than one research method to investigate a research question, and it is used to improve the accuracy of research findings. This study applies triangulation on many levels: there are two distinct sets of research data, collected using different methods. Moreover, two analysis methods are used: the phenomenological hermeneutic analysis of the research data is complemented with a quantitative analysis of the demographic figures of the military interpreters. In addition, the thematically categorised data is analysed from two angles, translation studies as well as military sciences. Finally, the initial research results are scrutinised in contrast to the research results of relevant earlier studies. Nevertheless, the use of triangulation does not cancel the points made above concerning the uniqueness of each study, nor the relativeness of the understanding of each researcher. Triangulation should not be seen as

[16] At this stage, features that may identify the individual interviewees, such as references to gender, nationality, ethnicity or manners of speech, are removed. For the same reason, all the individual military interpreters are in this study referred to only as ”he” instead of ”she/he” or ”(s)he”.

a method to confirm or invalidate research results, but rather as a way of deepening their understanding.

To summarise, an understanding of military interpreters' agency is attained in this study through a process, which is comprised of the two phases of 1) identifying qualities in the research data to fit the given themes, and 2) analysing them in the appropriate context. Subsequently, the obtained understanding is expressed in writing, and conceptualised against the pre-understanding of the researcher (cf. Varto 1992, 115–116). The process is repeated if, and when, necessary to accumulate enough understanding to answer the research questions.

4 Analysis: The Agency of Finnish Military Interpreters

The previous chapter introduced the research data and described how it was collected. Moreover, it presented the methods used in the analysis of the data and discussed the scientific stance on which the analysis is founded. This chapter presents the findings of this analysis. The findings are grouped thematically into eight sub-chapters. The first three sub-chapters deal with the military interpreters' background: their demographical figures, the details of their recruitment and training, and their professional competence and experience respectively. The analysis in the three first sub-chapters includes some quantitative elements. The following sub-chapters 4.4 to 4.8 introduce the findings that are more directly related to the military interpreters' agency. These are listed under the thematic headings of *Motivation*; *Power and Influence*; *Neutrality and Loyalty*; *Personal Relations and Unit Cohesion*; and *Visibility and Fear*. During the analysis process, the findings under each heading were arranged into groups and sub-headings were added as appropriate to make the information more accessible. The aim of this chapter is merely to present the findings and, where applicable, comment on them, whereas the meaning of and conclusions drawn from these findings in a larger context are discussed in the following chapters.

4.1 Demographics

The relevant demographic data of the military interpreters for the purposes of this study are limited to gender, age, ethnicity and nationality. The key demographic figures are collected in **Table 1** below. Of the 14 military interpreters interviewed, 13 are male and one is female. Their ages at the time of the interview ranged from 23 to 57 years with an arithmetic mean age of 37.9 years and a median age of 37 years. At the time of the beginning of their service as military interpreters, the corresponding figures were 20 to 45 years with an arithmetic mean age of 30.2 years and a median age of 27.5 years. These figures show that the time between the beginning of the interviewees' service as military interpreters and the interview is 7.5 years on average. This is worth remembering when considering how much the interviewees are actually able to recall from the time of their service as military interpreters.

All but two of the 14 persons interviewed were born outside Finland. These other places of birth were Afghanistan Iran, Iraq, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Somalia. The persons who were born abroad moved to Finland in the years 1987 to 1997, with an arithmetic mean of

the year 1991. Consequently, only two of the 14 interviewees are ethnic Finns[17], but all are Finnish citizens. After all, Finnish citizenship is a precondition for serving in the crisis management forces (Finlex 2006/211, section 7, § 3). In addition to having Finnish citizenship, 7 interviewees had dual citizenship of a second country.

Demographic Data	**Figure**	**Additional information**
Gender	Male: 13, Female: 1	
Age at time of interview	37.9 (23 to 57) years	Median 37 years
Age at beginning of service	30.2 (20 to 45)	Median 27.5 years
Moved to Finland	1991 (1987 to 1997)	2 persons born in Finland
Acquisition of citizenship	1999 (1987 to 2000)	2 persons citizens by birth
Dual citizenship	7	7 Finnish citizens only

Table 1. Demographic data of the interviewees.

4.2 Recruitment

The question of recruitment was approached through a number of questions in the interviews. The interviewees were asked, for example, how they initially learned of the possibility to serve as a military interpreter, in what circumstances they made the decision to apply for the position, and how long they considered their decision to apply. Moreover, the interviewees were asked about their opinion of the best way of recruiting military interpreters: how to find potential applicants and how to motivate them to apply. Obviously, certain questions concerning the recruitment process are closely related to the theme of motivation, and some of the findings presented here could fit equally well in sub-chapter 4.4, which deals with motivation. When a distinction between information concerning recruitment and motivation can be made, the line is drawn at the moment of deployment: recruitment deals with the period before the beginning of the service, and the period in service and after service in the crisis management force is a matter of motivation.

[17] The definition of ethnicity here draws from the Nationality Act (Finlex 2003/359): persons who are born in Finland or whose mother or father is Finnish are in this study considered ethnic Finns.

4.2.1 Channels of Recruitment

The interviewees first became aware of the possibility to serve as a military interpreter through one of three channels. The first and most common instance was that they were told about the opportunity by the military authorities or by someone serving in the military. This occurred either when the interviewees were conscripts[18] themselves, or through a friend, relative, or colleague who was serving in the military or in the crisis management force, sometimes as a military interpreter. After this initial contact, the persons made the decision to apply. In the words of one interviewee:

> "[…] I then told that I know the language that they speak in […] and [the cadet] gave me a phone number and told me to call, they might really be interested. Well, I called the next day, that was before I left the army, I called and [they said] 'damn right we're interested' and told me to contact them again as soon as I leave the army […]"[19] (10)

The second channel of recruitment was that the interviewees were personally contacted by the military with the purpose of recruitment, as they were professional interpreters. This instance seemed to occur more frequently when there was an urgent need to fill the position of a military interpreter, which might occur more frequently in the early stages of a crisis management operation. This is exemplified in the words of one interviewee:

> "[…] A man who was major at the time called me at the interpreter centre. […] He took my phone number and asked if he could call. […] And he called and invited me for an interview and introduction […]. And I went, and that's how it all started. [I was deployed within] two weeks."[20] (2)

Another interviewee highlighted the importance of personal contact:

> "[…] had I not had a contact person it would have been up to me to think of calling some phone number, which would never occur to an ordinary immigrant or

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[18] "Conscription" refers in this study to compulsory national service in the Finnish military. For more information, see e.g. the Wikipedia article http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conscription_in_Finland (viewed 16 December 2013).

[19] "[…] mä sit kerroin et osaan kieltä muun muassa mitä […] puhutaan ja [se kadetti] anto numeron et soitapa tonne, ne voi olla oikeesti kiinnostuneita. No mä sit seuraavana päivänä soitin eli ennen intistä kotiutumistani, soitin sinne ja [sieltä sanottiin], et totta helvetis kiinnostaa ja saman tien kun kotiudun niin täytyy ottaa yhteyttä […]."

[20] "[…] Eräs silloinen majuri soitti […] sitten tulkkikeskukseen. […] Hän otti mun puhelinnumeron ja […] sanoi että voisko hän soittaa. […] Ja hän soitti ja pyysi mua haastattelun kautta tutustumiseen […]. Ja mä menin sinne ja, siitähän se alkoi. [Yhteydenotosta lähtöön kului] kaks viikkoo."

> man in the street. You would have to have a very efficient system of recruitment if you want to find these potential interpreters."[21] (6)

The third and least common channel of recruitment was that the interviewee had learnt of the possibility independently, either through the media, or via friends or relatives. This category also includes the interviewees who actively sought information about working as military interpreters on their own initiative. An example of this is the interviewee who said:

> "I applied for this position independently. I compiled and looked for information, I think over the internet. And I had heard that in Kosovo and Afghanistan there are immigrants to Finland who work as interpreters there."[22] (12)

This third channel of recruitment also involves the military as an active party, as advertisements about vacant positions in crisis management operations as well as other media coverage from the operations are often initiated by the military, in the form of press releases, for example.

The interviewees in general did not know many people who they considered suitable to serve as military interpreters. They believed there to be many more people who would be willing to serve as military interpreters than people who meet the requirements. The most commonly-mentioned requirement lacked by people of this category was their insufficient language competence, either in their native tongue, English or Finnish. In the words of one interviewee:

> "[…] First of all, their language skills in their mother tongue are very weak. They moved to Finland very young, and have not kept it up in any other way than by talking with friends […]. Secondly, their Finnish skills are very poor. […] Not to mention their English skills."[23] (12)

The other obstacles mentioned against people serving as military interpreters were their lack of Finnish citizenship and lack of military training. Only two interviewees mentioned fear, or reluctance to travel to conflict area, as a possible reason for not wanting to serve as a military interpreter.

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[21] "[…] jos mul ei olis kontaktia, niin se olis sen varaan jäänyt että jos mä olisin älynnyt nytten soittaa johonki puhelinnumeroon […], joka tavalliselle kaduntallaajalle, maahanmuuttajalle ei tuu koskaan mieleen. Siinä täytyy olla erittäin tehokas rekrytointi, jos haluu löytää tämmösiä potentiaalisia tulkkeja."

[22] "Mä hakeuduin itse tähän tehtävään. Laadin tietoa ja hankin tietoa, taisi olla internetin välityksellä. Ja olin kuullut että Kosovossa ja Afganistanissa on Suomeen muuttaneita maahanmuuttajia, jotka siellä toimii tulkkina."

[23] "[…] ensinnäkin heidän oma äidinkielen taito on hyvin heikko. He ovat hyvin pienenä muuttaneet Suomeen. Eivät ole ylläpitäneet sitä kieltään millään muulla tavalla kuin puhekielenä kavereiden kesken […]. Ja toiseks heidän suomen kielen taitonsa on erittäin heikko. […] Puhumattakaan englannin kielen taidosta."

4.2.2 Applying and Pre-Deployment Training

Once informed of the possibility to serve as a military interpreter, the interviewees did not hesitate long to apply. They sent their application, or, when recruited directly by the military, agreed to serve usually within a few days or weeks of the initial contact. A number of interviewees hesitated to send in an application because they did not consider themselves eligible for the task, but finally decided to try it. Deployment to the area of the crisis management operation was usually accomplished together with the normal rotations of the crisis management force. In a number of cases, deployment was hurried and accomplished outside the normal rotation rhythm, as the position of military interpreter was vacant. In the few cases that deployment was delayed, the most common reasons for doing so were related to the family or work of the military interpreter.

All interviewees had participated in the pre-deployment rotation training of the crisis management force. Even the few who had been deployed hurriedly outside the normal rotation schedule were quickly briefed in Finland over the period of a few days. The interviewees considered the rotation training to be largely useful with respect to military life in general, as well as for shaping the right mind-set for the operation. From the viewpoint of a military interpreter, however, they found rotation training useless, as they were not given practically any training in interpreting or languages. The nine interviewees who had served as conscripts in the Finnish military held their military training in high value for their service as military interpreters, especially in terms of attitude and military culture. As one interviewee put it:

> “I wouldn’t consider it really possible to handle the task, in its full sense, if the interpreter doesn’t have a military background, if the interpreter hasn’t gone through the Finnish conscription system. You need to co-operate so closely with military culture and personnel, and military vocabulary, that you can’t learn it all by heart in a short time […]. Just learning to take orders and being one part of a bigger unit. The army as a hierarchical system is against the character of some people. […] Putting a guy in uniform and giving him an assault rifle doesn’t make him a military interpreter in my view.”[24] (12)

[24] ”Mä en näkis sen tehtävän olevan oikeestaan kunnolla, tehtävän täydellisessä tarkotuksessa ees mahdollista mikäli tulkilla ei oo sotilastausta, mikäli tulkki ei oo käynyt suomalaisen asevelvollisuusjärjestelmän läpi. Siellä tarvitaan niin paljon yhteistyötä sotilaskulttuuriin ja sotilashenkilöö, sotilassanastojen kanssa, että kaikkea ei voi lyhyessä ajassa ulkoo opetella […]. Ylipäätään että opitaan siellä joukossa yhtenä osana suurta joukkoa ottamaan käskyjä vastaan. Joidenkin ihmisten luonteelle se ei sovi, että armeija on hyvin hierarkkinen yhteiskunta. […] Se että lyöt univormun kaverin päälle ja annat RK:n käteen, ei tee mielestäni hänestä sotilastulkkia.”

Not surprisingly, the majority of the interviewees without prior military training also stressed that familiarity with military life would have facilitated their work as interpreters, especially at the beginning of their service.

4.3 Training, Competence and Experience

This sub-chapter presents the research data concerning the training, competence and experience of the interviewees, military as well as linguistic. The main figures for this data are collected in **Table 2** below.

Training or Experience	**Figure**	**Additional information**
Language competence incl. Finnish and English	5.6 languages known (3 to 7)	Native languages: Albanian, Croatian, Dari, Finnish, Kurdish, Persian, Somali
Language studies or examinations	University level studies: 4 of 14 Examinations: 1 of 14	Examinations such as university degree, National Certificate of Language Proficiency, etc.
Interpreting experience prior to serving as a military interpreter	Non-professional: All Professional: 7 of 14	Interpreting studies: 7 of 14 (same persons who have worked as interpreters)
Military training (beginning of conscript service)	9 of 14 (1993 to 2008)	Rank in the reserve: private to sergeant (1 lieutenant)
Military interpreter experience	2.4 years (4 months to 6.5 years)	Median 2 years
Beginning of military interpreter service	2005 (1999 to 2009)	

Table 2. Training and professional experience of the interviewees.

4.3.1 Language and Interpreting Proficiency

The language competences of the 14 persons interviewed were extensive. Their mother tongues included Albanian, Persian, Kurdish, Somali, and Finnish. Two persons were bilingual (Finnish and Croatian, Finnish and Dari). All interviewees were, of course, also competent in Finnish and English. Moreover, in addition to their mother tongue, Finnish,

and English, the interviewees had at least a basic competence in 2.6 languages on average. The four interviewees with the most extensive language competence knew seven languages in total, and only two interviewees had no language skills above their working languages of Finnish, English and their mother tongue.

However, language studies were not common among the interviewees: only one person held a Master's Degree in languages. An additional three persons had studied languages at a university, but interrupted their studies. The remaining 10 persons had learnt languages at school or at short language courses. All interviewees had some experience in interpreting prior to serving as a military interpreter: everyone had acted as an interpreter for their relatives and friends. Seven out of the 14 interviewees had never received money or other compensation for these interpretation tasks, while the other half had worked as professional interpreters. Nearly all of these professionals had worked as community interpreters, many in the regional interpreter centres around Finland. Three interviewees had more than 15 years' experience in interpreting, and two more had over 5 years' experience. The occurrence of interpreting studies correlated perfectly with professional interpreting experience: the 7 interpreters with a professional background had studied community interpreting at a university of applied science or an equivalent.

The language skills of the interviewees had not been tested in conjunction with their recruitment as military interpreters. Only three exceptions occurred: two interviewees mentioned an English test in the rotation training, and one mentioned a short translation from Somali, also taken during the rotation training. Other tests or examinations of their language competence had occurred when they were in school, during their community interpreter training, or in connection with their naturalisation process. When asked about the reasons why language tests had not been arranged, the interviewees had varying views:

> "[…] all matters concerning immigration and integration are so rudimentary [in Finland]"[25] (2)
> "[…] no, because I had good work certificates that I am honest and […] I have references which say that I am capable of handling positions of trust."[26] (4)
> "The task is not regarded so important. It's not valued enough."[27] (4)
> "[…] Perhaps they don't realise what an important component of the whole unit the interpreter is. Just knowing that [the interpreter] has no criminal record and knows these two languages is not the secret to success."[28] (7)

[25] "[…] ylipäätään maahanmuutto ja kotoutuminen, se on niin lapsen kengissä [Suomessa]."
[26] "[…] ei koska mulla oli […] vahvat työtodistukset että olen rehellinen ja […] mulla on sellaisia suosituksia, että pystyy hoitaa luottamustehtäviä hyvin."
[27] "Yksinkertaisesti tehtävää ei nähdä niin tärkeäksi. Tehtävälle ei anneta tarpeeksi arvoa."

A number of interviewees criticised the lack of language testing:

> "They only asked me if I knew English, to which I replied 'yes, I know some'. Based on that they thought that yes, he's good at English."[29] (5)
> "They trusted that we know our mother tongue, and that was not so good. You must not trust too much, because there were so-called pizza-interpreters [meaning: incompetent interpreters] among us [at the community interpreter centre]. But they have been weeded out long since."[30] (4)

The interviewees' competence in their respective mother tongue has remained good despite living in Finland for many years. The positive influence of family and friends who share the same language was highlighted by almost everyone. Many also use their mother tongue every day at work, which helps maintain their skills. The younger interviewees also mentioned the compulsory education in their first language in school as a sustaining factor. The interviewees acquired their Finnish skills mostly through two separate channels: those who had moved to Finland as children learnt Finnish in school, and those who moved to Finland as adults learnt it at special language courses for immigrants. The latter stressed that they were highly motivated to learn Finnish: they attended evening classes, took private lessons, and learnt independently. Both groups also emphasised the Finnish language influences from working life, hobbies, and friends.

4.3.2 Military Training and Experience

The interviewees had served in one of three crisis management operations: Kosovo (KFOR), Afghanistan (ISAF), or the Indian Ocean / Somalia (ATALANTA). Their service as military interpreters had commenced between 1999 and 2009 (arithmetic mean 2005). None of the interviewees had experience of multiple operations, although quite many had served multiple rotations in one operation, which their time in service shows: the arithmetic mean time in service was 2.4 years with a median of 2 years[31]. Their military rank when

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[28] "Ehkä sitä ei sisäistetä, että kuinka tärkeä komponentti siinä kokonaisuudessa se on se tulkki. Että pelkkä [-] tiedot että ei ole rangaistu ja osaa näitä kahta kieltä ei ole välttämättä se että, avain onneen."
[29] "Multa ei mitään muuta kysytty [kuin] et osaaksä englantia, mihinkä mä vastasin kyllä, jonkin verran osaan. Sil perusteel sit ne aatteli et joo, mä oon hyvä englannissa"
[30] "Hän luotti että me osataan omaa äidinkieltä ja se oli, ei niin hyvä. Ei saa liikaa luottaa, koska meissä [asiointitulkkikeskuksessa] oli sellasia pizzatulkkeja [tarkoittaa: epäpäteviä tulkkeja] kyllä oli. Mut ne on karsiutunu pois jo aikoja sitten."
[31] Typically, one rotation of a Finnish crisis management operation lasts 6 months, and the service can be extended with a second rotation of six months. According to the Act on Military Crisis Management (Finlex 2006/211, Section 9), the maximum period of service is one year at a time.

serving as military interpreters was military clerk (in Finnish *sotilasvirkamies*), with the exceptions of one corporal and one seaman.

Nine of the persons interviewed had served their compulsory national service in the Finnish military, and five had not taken part in the conscription. On average, the conscripts had served in 2003 or 2004, and their military rank in the reserve ranged from private to sergeant, with the exception of one lieutenant. The reason why five persons had not served as conscripts was not asked, but the answer can be concluded from the data, and it is related to age and gender. The maximum age of conscription in Finland is 30 years, and military service is not compulsory for women. Therefore, the interviewees without military conscript service had not received Finnish citizenship before their 30th birthday, or were women, and were thus not obliged to do national service. In other words, these 5 persons served as military interpreters without previous experience of serving in the Finnish military. Other military training received apart from conscription in Finland included diverse elements, such as 13 months' conscript service in another country, refresher training in Finland, and undergraduate studies at the Finnish National Defence University.

4.3.3 Self-assessment

The interviewees were asked to contemplate whether they had considered their language skills, cultural knowledge and interpreting skills to be adequate for the requirements of a military interpreter prior to their deployment, and whether their own estimate had corresponded with the reality in the field. All interviewees shared the view that, despite initial shortcomings, after deployment their language skills quickly reached the necessary level through experience, assisted by self-study and hard work. Baker (2010, 216–217) questions whether interpreters without interpreting-specific skills and experience can act as reliable mediators and be able to articulate the nuances vital in the context of conflict. However, the interviewees were in general very confident about their language skills, although many mentioned the need to improve their special vocabulary. Three interviewees were initially dissatisfied with their English skills, and one mentioned his lack of Finnish skills.

All interviewees were confident about their cultural knowledge, and had encountered very few surprises in facing the local culture. A number of interviewees reflected on how serving as a military interpreter revealed in what ways they had adapted to Finnish culture during their time in Finland. The interviewees with no previous professional interpreting experience did not know what to expect when working as military interpreters but, to their

surprise, managed well after overcoming initial nervousness. Three of the non-professional interpreters suggested that even a few days of interpreter training would have lowered their learning curve and helped them to start working in the operation area.

A comprehensive self-assessment of language competence normally correlates with results in language examinations (cf. Latomaa et al. 2013, 179). Arguably, the military interpreters' self-assessment of their language skills gives a reliable estimate of their language competence. Thus, the results suggest that Finnish military interpreters are competent interpreters. This appraisal is based not only on the interpreters' self-assessment, but also on the feedback they received after interpreting assignments, as well as their service evaluations, given to them upon their discharge from duty in the crisis management force. At this juncture, it should be noted that, during the research process, the author has had the opportunity to share and overhear a multitude of narratives and impressions about military interpreters from Finnish soldiers who have worked with them. However, as already pointed out in Chapter 1, these influences have been omitted consciously and deliberately from this study.

4.4 Motivation

Central to military interpreters' agency – the willingness and ability to act – is their motivation: why they wanted to serve as military interpreters. As already argued in sub-chapter 2.2.1, the military interpreters' motivation to serve in crisis management operations may not fundamentally differ from the motivation of other members of the crisis management force. Indeed, many of the more or less traditional motivational factors also appeared in the interviews.

4.4.1 Patriotism

The motivational factor of serving one's country was commonly voiced in the interviews – directly or indirectly. The military interpreters' immigrant background was reflected in many answers and it affected their motivation in ways, which rarely occur in ethnic Finns:

> "What [reason for serving] that first came into mind was that I wanted to return a favour to Finland, to pay my debt. When we arrived […] Finland was fair to us, we got asylum and a safe place to be in […]. Secondly, I went to my native country,

> learnt more about my own country, […] and got closer to what's really going on there. […] And the salary is good, of course, you can't deny that."[32] (1)
> "My primary motivation was that I wanted to spend more time in […], with people close to me, because all my best friends and [family] live there and that's where I grew up. And I saw the possibility to be able to do that."[33] (7)
> "[…] this is after all a great honour for us military interpreters to get such an assignment. […] I'm given this opportunity to go there and sort of influence […] there in my own country […] and I think that that is a really, really big thing. And I think that every single person who has served as a military interpreter there feels the same way."[34] (11)

Thus, patriotism as a source of motivation for the interviewees draws from both their country of origin as well as Finland.

4.4.2 Altruism

Altruistic motives, such as the possibility of helping and doing something of use in the operation area, were mentioned by a number of interviewees. Many of the interviewees disclosed their humanitarian interest in serving as military interpreters. They saw their ability to act as mediators and to facilitate communication as a means of helping not only the local population, but the soldiers of the crisis management force as well:

> "[…] you must always consider how you can strive and contribute to make the world a better place."[35] (2)
> "[…] heal the world in the sense that if there is an argument between two parties, a skilled military interpreter is able to settle the situation in a way so that they may even become friends after a while."[36] (3)
> "You can't [do good] without a military interpreter, anyway"[37] (10)

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[32] "Mulla ihan ensimmäisenä kävi mielessä että mä haluun tehdä Suomelle palveluksen, takaisinmaksun. Et silloin kun me tultiin […], Suomi oli reilu meitä kohtaan, me saatiin tänne oleskelulupa ja turvallinen paikka, […] ja sit toiseksi mä menin mun synnyinmaahan, mä opin lisää mun omasta maasta. […] pääsin vähän lähemmäks sitä mitä siellä oikeesti tapahtuu. […] Ja totta kai oli ihan hyvä palkkakin, ei sitä voi kieltää."

[33] "Ykkösmotivaatio oli se että halusin olla mahollisimman paljon taas vuosien jälkeen […]ssa, meikäläisen läheisten ihmisten kanssa koska mullahan siellä on parhaat kaverit ja [sukua] ja siellä oon kasvanu. Ja siinä huomasin sellasen mahdollisuuden."

[34] "[…] tää on kuitenki meilleki sotilastulkeille iso kunnia päästä tollaseen tehtävään […] mulle annetaan semmonen mahdollisuus mennä sinne ja tavallaan vaikuttaa […] siellä omas kotimaas […] niin se on mun mielest, tosi, tosi iso juttu. Ja mä luulen että joka ikinen joka on ollu siellä sotilastulkkina kokee sen samalla tavalla."

[35] "[…] ihmisen täytyy aina miettiä sitä että kyllä mä omalla panoksella yritän tehä jotain hyvää tälle maailmalle."

[36] "Sanotaan näin, parantaa maailmaa siinä mielessä että joskin sanaharkka syntyy kahden osapuolten kesken jos on taitava sotilastulkki pystyy rauhottaa sen tilan sillä lailla että heistä jopa voi tulla jopa ystäviäkin hetken päästä."

[37] "Yhtä lailla, ei se [hyvän tekeminen] ilman sitä sotilastulkkii onnistu."

> "And when you are acting as a military interpreter, as a connecting bridge of sorts, and, for example, when a conversation or understanding between two parties is concluded successfully it creates a feeling of great pleasure inside. It is what I often feel myself and also colleagues who have served."[38] (3)

On the other hand, many believed that the military interpreters' role as neutral mediators either limited or even contradicted their opportunities of helping the local population:

> "An interpreter must not heal the world. An interpreter interprets, and keeps his mouth shut."[39] (4)
> "Do good? […] An interpreter is not there to take sides for anyone. When an interpreter starts to go down that path, he's lost the essence of the task."[40] (12)

4.4.3 Remuneration

The majority of interviewees considered the remuneration for a military interpreter to be on a good or suitable level. One interviewee regarded the rate of pay as unimportant, and only two said it could be higher. They suggested that the salary could be adjusted according to the threat level of the operation as well as the tasks and competences of the military interpreter. Interpreters with multiple working languages, or who are qualified to interpret for high-level and VIP meetings, or to interpret in combat-like circumstances, should have higher salaries. One interviewee pointed out that not all interpreters are suitable for field operations: "[…] there are interpreters who are interested in just interpreting and less interested in military things, and then there are interpreters who are both soldiers and interpreters."[41] (10)

4.4.4 Other Influences on Motivation

Many interviewees mentioned personal relations with their fellow soldiers as a positive influence on their motivation. Many also highlighted the contingent commander or other superior officer as a source of motivation. In the words of one interviewee: "I saw signs of

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[38] "Ja kun sä toimit sotilastulkkina, semmonen yhdistävänä siltana ja kun se, esimerkiks, onnistuneesti päättyy se keskustelu tai ymmärrys kahden osapuolen kesken niin se luo valtavan mielihyväntunne, ittelleni sisään. Se on se mitä mä monesti itsekin koen ja myös muut kollegat jotka ovat osallistuneet."
[39] "Tulkki ei saa parantaa maailmaa. Tulkki vaan tulkkaa. Ja pitää suunsa kii".
[40] Tehdä hyvää? […] Tulkki ei ole siellä kenenkään asian puolestapuhuja. Silloin kun tulkki lähtee sille tielle, hänelle tehtävä[n] sisältö on hukassa niin sanotusti.
[41] "[…] kun on, sotilastulkkeja joita kiinnostaa ainoostaan se tulkkaus ja se sotilaspuoli vähän vähemmän, ja sit on tulkkeja jotka on sotilaita ja tulkkeja."

pride in the commanders and generals when things went precisely right, and in the same style and tone of voice as what the commander had used."[42] (6). There was little mention of negative influences on motivation. Lack of positive feedback and unsubstantiated negative feedback, as well as a few cases where the military interpreters' loyalty was questioned, were the most noticeable negative influences on motivation.

The vast majority of the interviewees would be willing to serve again as military interpreters. Many expressed enthusiasm at the prospect of another opportunity to serve: "I would go again this instant" (14; 5), "It was the best time of my life" (11; 6; 9), and "I would do anything to be able to go again" (12). Only three persons of 14 said that they would not be willing to serve again as military interpreters. Two of these said that it was a unique opportunity and a good experience, but it is not something that they would want to do again. Only one interviewee described the service wholly in negative terms.

4.5 Power and Influence

Power and Influence, which was perhaps the most significant thematic category in the agency of military interpreters, collected the largest amount of information from the research data. This was partly due to the inclusive nature of the concepts *power* and *influence*. During the analysis process, the author was in many instances faced with the dilemma of deciding which thematic category would best suit a specific piece of information, and, in some cases, the classification is entirely dependent on the perspective of the reader. Thus, indications of the considerable power and influence that military interpreters unquestionably possess can be found in many of the other thematic categories, too.

4.5.1 Influence of Military Interpreters vs. Local Interpreters

The interviewees were practically unanimous in their view that military interpreters are a necessary resource for a Finnish crisis management force. The interviewees commonly held that local interpreters are also needed, but that military interpreters are irreplaceable in certain sensitive matters. The military interpreter's role was seen as particularly important in supervising the local interpreters and other local employees, as well as in

[42] "Näin ylpeyden merkkejä komentajilla, kenraaleissa kun asiat meni just niin kun piti ja samaan tyyliin ja samaan äänensävyyn niin kun komentaja sanoi."

interpreting in high-risk situations, and in the translating of classified material. This was seen as true especially in the early stages of a crisis management operation. Moreover, the interviewees regarded the Finnish military interpreters' ability to understand Finnish culture and adopt a Finnish perspective on matters as a valuable asset. In addition, a basic military training was generally considered essential for working efficiently as a part of a military unit; this was also considered essential by those interviewees without previous military training. The military interpreter's role was summarised by one interviewee as:

> "A military interpreter, recruited in Finland, speaking Finnish, and having served his conscription in Finland, is extremely important for the Finnish troops, their security, and their situation awareness."[43] (12)

The military interpreters considered in general that their position was more demanding and involved more responsibility than that of the local interpreters. This may in part be explained by the fact that some of the interviewees had acted as superiors of the local interpreters. A number of interviewees believed that the local population respects a military interpreter, i.e. a person who both knows their language and culture and wears the uniform of a peace-keeper, more than it respects a local interpreter. Some interviewees also considered that, as uniformed soldiers, they face a higher threat level than the local interpreters do, which makes their position more demanding. In the case of an armed incident, a local interpreter would most likely take cover, whereas a military interpreter would be required to use his weapon for self-defence. The difference in the status of a military interpreter and a local interpreter is illustrated in the reply of an interviewee who had worked as a local interpreter for the Finnish crisis management force prior to being granted Finnish citizenship and applying for the position of a military interpreter:

> "Everything changed. First, the understanding of what we're doing there. And then […] of course the status as an interpreter, it's completely different for a military interpreter than for a local interpreter. […] There's quite a difference, let's put it that way. Then you are one of them, when you are wearing a uniform there. That is the difference. And for a good reason I must say."[44] (6)

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[43] "Sotilastulkki, Suomesta rekrytoitu, suomea puhuva, Suomessa asevelvollisuuttaan suorittanut sotilastulkin rooli on äärimmäisen tärkeä ajatellen suomalaisia joukkoja, heidän turvallisuustilannetta siellä, heidän tietoisuuttaan ympärillänsä tapahtuvista asioista"

[44] "Muuttu kaikki. Muuttui ensinnäkin se ymmärrys et mitä ollaan tekemässä siellä. Ja sitten […] totta kai se asema tulkkina, sotilastulkin on täysin erilainen ku mitä paikallistulkit siellä ovat. […] Siinä on aikamoinen ero, sanotaanko näin. Sillon sä oot yks heistä sitte ku sä oot näissä, kun sä oot sotilaspuvussa siellä. Se on se ero. Ymmärrettävästä syystä täytyy sanoo."

4.5.2 Enabling Skills and Qualities for Influencing

A number of other essential skills or qualities for military interpreters were mentioned besides the obviously indispensable language and interpreting skills. A good military interpreter should be fit both mentally and physically. As an interpreter is usually needed on every patrol, the interpreter should therefore be able to work long hours and possess sufficient field skills. A military interpreter should have good self-esteem and a calm and mature disposition in order to be able to handle situations of stress. In the words of one interviewee:

> "He is able to take responsibility and is at peace with himself. It's definitely important that you're at peace with yourself, that you don't categorize yourself. That you don't have the need to say that 'I'm with these guys or I'm with those guys'. I'm me, and I have the guts to make things happen, even when it feels like everyone will look at me oddly later on."[45] (14)

Good social skills and adaptability were also frequently mentioned. Furthermore, a military interpreter should be widely knowledgeable and be able to understand the purpose of the whole operation. He should have both a high work ethic and good moral standards. A military interpreter should be alert and be able to make sound value judgements quickly. As one interviewee put it: "[…] the interpreter should be more alert in order to save the life of a Finn […] misunderstandings should be assessed fairly quickly."[46] (4)

4.5.3 Feedback and Recognition

The majority of the interviewees were of the opinion that, during their service, they had sufficient influence on matters related to their own service, such as the arrangement of duties and working hours. Most of the interviewees had also felt that their expertise was highly valued, their advice adhered to, and their opinions heard. Only about one in four interviewees expressed that they would have wanted to participate more in decision-making, or that their opinions had at times been ignored. Similarly, the vast majority of the interviewees stated that they had received adequate feedback from their fellow soldiers about their interpreting assignments. The other soldiers' responses had, however, despite

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[45] "Osaa ottaa sitä vastuuta ja on sujut ittensä kanssa. Se on ehdottomasti tärkeetä et on sujut ittensä kans, ettei lähe luokitteleen itteensä. Tai ettei oo sellasta tarvetta että, mä oon nää jätkät ja mä oon nää jätkät. Mä oon minä. Ja mul on pokkaa tehä asioita, vaikkaki ne tuntuis siltä, että kaikki muut kattoo vähän vinosti, myöhemmin."

[46] "[…] tulkin pitäis olla enemmän valppaana. Että pelastaa suomalaisen hengen […] niitä väärinkäsityksiä pitäis osata arvioida aika nopeesti."

being almost exclusively positive and encouraging, provided little constructive support for their professional development as interpreters. Nonetheless, feedback such as the following tells much about the influence of the military interpreter:

> "Having stayed up nights and worked together it has been a real pleasure to [hear] 'thank you for being there'. Many have said this, 'thank you […] for being there when we needed you'. This happened many times."[47] (9)

The majority of the interviewees felt that they had access to enough information to perform their duties. In the cases where interpreting assignments were ad-hoc or otherwise not prepared for, the interviewees mostly recognised that it was due to the nature of the situation, and not because of negligence on the part of the crisis management force. Instead, on the occasions when there was enough time and a possibility to prepare in advance for an interpreting assignment, which was true in the majority of cases, this extra time was even more valued by the military interpreters.

4.5.4 Impact of Working Language and Interpreting Experience

The most common working language of the military interpreters was Finnish. Whenever personnel from a third country were present, however, the language was changed to English, as this is the working language of practically all multi-national military crisis management operations. Roughly one third of all interpreting assignments were in English. Exceptions to the above were the two interviewees who had served with Finns exclusively, and had thus only used Finnish as their working language, as well as those two who had served almost exclusively in multi-national units, and had thus used English only. Two interviewees mentioned the military interpreters' ability to interpret into Finnish as a distinct advantage when working with those Finnish soldiers whose English skills were inadequate (cf. Leino 2010, 43–44).

The interviewees' perception of interpretation as an art and a profession changed in many ways during their service as military interpreters. These changes were understandably more prominent in the replies of the interviewees with no previous experience of professional interpreting, but even the interviewees with a professional background saw many profound differences between interpreting in a civilian and a military environment. Moreover, the experienced interpreters were obviously more confident about their

[47] "Et se että on valvottu ja tehty työtä niin minusta on ollut tosi ilo että […] kiitos että olen olemassa. Näin on sanonut monet, kiitos […] että olit olemassa kun tarvittin sinut. Näitä tapauksia on tullut lukuisia."

competence, but reflected perhaps more deeply on the ethical dimensions of interpreting. This is reverberated in the following quotations:

> "[…] when you're wearing a uniform, you have to be ready to take all kinds of orders from higher level. I think that it's a different situation. As a civilian, you can say that you won't come or go. But you're there as a soldier, and if they say that you have to go there, you can't say that I won't go. Then you have to go."[48] (1)
> "[…] Even though […] a military interpreter is supposed to follow orders you have to consider that many military interpreters originally come from the country where the operation is. They are burdened by the culture, and some may feel – and I have seen this myself – that the local population are his people and he's just interpreting for the Finns. […] so even if he is under orders he would still go by the ethical rules in the end. The interpreter would decline that assignment."[49] (10)

However, the differences between the replies of the interviewees with a professional interpreting background and those with no professional experience were small, and the two categories of interviewees could not be differentiated by examining their opinions.

4.5.5 Workload and Other Tasks Than Interpreting

The workload of the military interpreters had been of an acceptable level on average. The interviewees reported having periods of far too much work, which had resulted in serious stress, but there had also been quieter periods. The interviewees generally accepted that fluctuations in their workload was a feature of crisis management operations, and did not feel that too much was required of them. Instances where an interpreting assignment had to be interrupted for any reason related to the interpreter, such as fatigue, fear, or lack of language skills, were very rare in the research data. In the few cases mentioned, the interruption was due to the interpreter being fatigued and in need of a break.

Many of the interviewees had been assigned a multitude of other task besides interpreting. These could include diverse duties, such as administrating local interpreters, following the local mass media, liaising for special occasions such as dinner parties, giving cultural awareness training to the crisis management force, guiding, running errands outside the

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[48] "[…] kun sulla on univormu päällä, sun pitää olla valmis kaikkii, käskyjä mitä ylempää tulee. Mun mielestä se on niin erilainen tilanne. Siviilissä sä voit sanoo että mä en mee enkä tuu. Mut sä oot siellä sotilaana, jos sanotaan et sun pitää mennä tonne, niin sä et voi sanoo että mä en mee, vaan silloin se on mentävä."

[49] " […] vaikka […] sotilastulkin pitäs toimii sen käskyn mukaan niin ottaen huomioon sen et moni sotilastulkeista on näist kriisinhallintamaista kotosin alun perin ja niille kuitenkin se kulttuuri painaa siellä ja osast saattaa tuntua enemmänki siltä, minkä oon nähny omin silmin että se kansa siellä on hänen omaa kansaa ja nyt hän on vaan suomalaisten kanssa ja tulkkaa heille. […] vaikka se sotilaskäsky tulis sieltä niin kyl se silti menis niitten eettisten sääntöjen mukaan, loppujen lopuks. Se tulkki kieltäytyis siit tehtävästä."

camp, and acting as a driver or guard during patrols, just to mention a few. The military interpreters' role as sources of information about the local culture was highlighted in many answers, such as the following:

> "[…] Some things had stuck as questions in the peace-keepers' heads as they never took the trouble to find out. […] It must have been the second day after I arrived in the area; there were so many questions that I didn't have time to answer them all."[50] (10)
> "[…] I know how people think down there and I know how to formulate the questions to get the answers you need, because I know the culture and know how the people react and so on. This should be a bigger responsibility and it should be fully utilised."[51] (11)

The vast majority of the interviewees felt that even in the above-mentioned secondary tasks their language and cultural skills had been a great advantage.

4.5.6 Exercising Power and Influence

Many of the interviewees felt that as military interpreters they had possessed considerable power and influence. They acknowledged that this power was a direct result of their language and cultural skills, and recognised the ethical issues involved in exercising this power, which is illustrated in the following quotations:

> "[…] They really listened to what you had to say, and in certain situations also acted accordingly […], you are in a way more than a military interpreter, because you do more than just interpret down there. It became quite clear that they ask you for advice, like 'hey, we have this situation, what do you think we should do […]."[52] (11)
> "At one point I specifically asked the commanding officer for permission to use my skills in the sense that should I see the situation escalating, I would identify and emphasize features with both parties, as a part of the interpreting, to bring

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[50] "[…] jotku asiat on sit jääny niille kriisinhallintasotureille kysymykses päähän kun ne ei oo koskaan ottanu siit asiasta selvää. […] ku pääsin sinne paikan päälle niin oisko ollu toka päivä ku kysymyksiä tuli niin paljon etten mä kerinny ees vastaamaan."

[51] "[…] mä tiedän, miten ihmiset siellä päässä ajattelee ja mä tiedän sen että minkälaisii kysymyksii mun pitää laittaa jotta mä saan sen kyseisen vastauksen sieltä koska mä tiedän sen kyseisen kulttuurin ja mä tiedän ihmisten reaktion ja niin poispäin, niin sitä vastuuta enemmän et käyttäis oikeestaan sitä, maksimaalisesti, hyödyks."

[52] "[…] se mitä oli sanottavaa niin kyllä sitä sitten kuunneltiin ja tietyis tilanteis myös toimittiinki sen mukaan […], sä oot kuitenki enemmänki ku sotilastulkki, koska sä et tee vaan sitä tulkkausta siellä, niin se tuli kyllä aika hyvin esiin siellä että sulta kysytään neuvoja sit että hei, tämmönen tilanne, et mitä mieltä olet tästä näin ja miten täst vois toimia […]."

> the situation to a successful closure. I got the permission and there were some cases where it was needed, but not many."[53] (3)
> "[…] many clever people who work with interpreters, soldiers as well as officers, consult the interpreter in advance. […] It came as a complete surprise to me, but I took it as a gesture of confidence in me that the commanding officer wanted me to prepare the agenda for the first couple of meetings."[54] (6)
> "In the end everyone gave me fairly free hands, so that I could discuss freely with the person – which is very important to the locals – and interpret at the same time."[55] (10)
> "They were a little dependant on us [laughs]."[56] (6)
> "[…] A military interpreter is able to influence the way in which a situation is handled, because the military interpreter has after all knowledge of the culture and the way in which people behave and act. It's so valuable for the other party as well that you are able to in a way give advice to the soldier how he should act. So essentially in that situation you have two tasks: you interpret but at the same time you advise the soldier how to act."[57] (11)

In contrast, many interviewees had experienced uncertainty when faced with the power to influence the outcome of situations, and expressed their reluctance to do so in many cases:

> "[…] I was a little [uncertain] about my own status down there, about what it was possible for me to say. If the captain says that 'now the interpreters do like this' – how much room was there for me to object, 'no, let's not put him there, let's put someone else' and something like that."[58] (13)
> "Only your voice must be heard, you can't get involved in the situation yourself. Then you have succeeded in your mission."[59] (1)

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[53] "Mä oon joskus, operaation aikana pyytäny erikseen luvan, komentajalta, että jos saisin käyttää taitoani siinä mielessä että jos näen että tilanne eskaloituu, löydän semmoset piirteet jota poimin molemmilta osapuolilta ja tuon esiin, niin sanotusti tulkkauksen merkeissä jotta se tilanne, sanotaan näin päätyy onnistuneesti. Lupa tuli ja joskus vain on ollut tarvetta, ei suurin määrin."

[54] "[…] moni fiksu tulkin käyttäjä, sotilas, upseeri, mikä tahansa niin he etukäteen oikeastaan konsultoivat tulkkia. […] Joka mul tuli täydellisenä yllätyksenä, mut se oli luottamuksen osoitus mua kohtaan, että joukkokomentaja halusi että mä laadin sen että mistä puhutaan nyt esimerkiks parina ensimmäisinä tapaamisina."

[55] "Kuitenki loppujen lopuks kaikilta sain aika avoimet kädet, ja et sain käydä sen henkilön kans avointa keskusteluu mikä on paikallisille hyvin tärkeetä ja tulkata sitte siin samassa."

[56] "Ne oli vähän riippuvaisia meistä [nauraa]."

[57] "[…] sotilastulkkihan pystyy vaikuttaan siihen et miten sitä kyseistä tilannetta ratkotaan koska, sotilastulkilla on kuitenki, sitä tuntemusta, siitä kulttuurista ja siitä tavasta miten ihmiset käyttäytyy ja toimii, niin siitä on kuitenki niin paljon hyötyy sille, toiselleki osapuolelle et sä pystyt tavallaan, neuvoon sitä sotilasta miten hänen pitää toimia niin periaattees sulla on tuplatehtävä siinä, et sä käännät mut samalla neuvot et miten sotilaan pitäis toimia."

[58] "[…] mä en oikeen sitä omaa asemaani siellä että paljonko mä voisin esimerkiks sanoa jos kapteeni sanoo että nyt tulkit tekööö näin tai muuta niin paljonko mä oisin voinu sanoa vastaan että ei pistetä nyt sitä sinne ja pannaan joku muu ja sellasta."

[59] "Ainoastaan sun äänen pitää kuulua, sä et saa mennä siihen tilanteeseen itse. Et silloin sä oot onnistunu tehtävässä."

> "[…] A military interpreter cannot say that 'now we won't do like this, we should do this differently, in a more friendly way' or something like that. You have to act in the middle and take orders from others."[60] (13)

The above reflections illustrate that the military interpreters are aware of their influence. At the same time, the quotations strongly underline the ethical challenges involved.

4.5.7 Ethical Action Competence

Twelve out of the 14 interviewees said that they knew or were familiar with the ethical guidelines of the translatory professions (see sub-chapter 2.2.1). It is then perhaps not surprising that the majority of the interviewees, who all had experience of serving in the field as military interpreters, considered it possible that in certain situations a conflict of interests might arise between what is required of a soldier and what is required of an interpreter. The most profound ethical issue that arises from the research data is that military interpreters are, as military personnel, under orders, which may in certain situations contradict the principles of the ethical guidelines for interpreters. In the words of the interviewees:

> "The difference is that there is always someone behind you giving orders. Here no-one gives you orders. There you have orders. You follow orders; you go where you are ordered. And if the situation gets tense, your role changes, because you carry weapons."[61] (4)
> "[…] you can put higher ethical demands on a military interpreter than on a local interpreter."[62] (3)
> "But there I couldn't work in the way that I have been taught to work in as an interpreter. You couldn't do it."[63] (4)
> "[…] Definitely there will be conflicts of interest in certain situations, when the military interpreter tells [the soldier] to act or speak in a specific way because he knows the culture and can read the person better. The soldier then is of the opinion that he will do exactly as ordered. In that sense there may be [conflicts of interest]."[64] (11)

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[60] "[…] sotilastulkki ei pysty sanomaan ettei nyt tehdä tällä lailla, että tehtäiskö tää vähän toisella lailla, ystävällisemmin tai muuten vaan, sä joudut vaan siinä toimimaan siinä välis toisten käskytettävänä."

[61] "Ero on siinä, sua käskee aina joku takana. Täällä ei käske kukaan. Siellä on käsky. Sä noudatat käskyjä, menet sen käskyn mukaan. Ja jos tiukka tilanne tulee, rooli muuttuu. Koska meillä on aseet."

[62] "[…] sotilastulkeilta voidaan vaatia vähän kovempaa niin sanotusti, eettisiä säännöksiä kuin paikallisella tulkilla."

[63] "Mut siellä ei voinu, emmä voinu toimia siis miten minut on opetettu toimimaan tulkkina. Et se ei onnistunu."

[64] "[…] kyl varmasti tulee, tietyis tilanteis ristiriitoi ku, sotilastulkki sanoo et, teepäs näin tai sanopas näin koska hän tietää sen kulttuurin ja osaa ehkä lukee paremmin sitä ihmistä niin sotilas on sitä mieltä että hän tekee sen juuri niin ku, hänet on käsketty niin siinä mielessä voi tulla."

Consequently, a number of interviewees considered it possible that military interpreters may in some circumstances be unable to act according to the common, civilian ethical guidelines for interpreters, and that different ethical guidelines for military interpreters may be needed.

4.5.8 Remaining Neutral when Exercising Influence

Another important principle of the interpreter's ethical guidelines, the principle of neutrality, was reflected upon by many interviewees. Here, too, the research data suggests that military interpreters take a different stance towards neutrality than their civilian counterparts:

> "[…] sometimes there are misunderstandings and you have to resolve them. […] that you are able to act as something else than an interpreter sometimes, to distance yourself from the role that you have. I'm not saying that it's at all easy, but experience and old age helps. […] the role of the military interpreter is highlighted in that you know and understand when and how to interfere in specific issues, and when to distance yourself from the matter. […] on the other hand […] you always had to consider the consequences."[65] (2)
> "And then you estimate that you have the best possibilities of intervening in a way that's necessary […]. In order not to make the situation any more tense you say the final word and everyone sticks to that. […] In that situation you have to give the interpreter a stronger mandate, if you will, to say that 'this discussion has taken a wrong turn, let's stop here'."[66] (6)

Although the majority of interviewees considered it ethically important or even indispensable that the interpreter remains neutral – or at least strives for neutrality – one interviewee openly challenged the military interpreter's need to remain neutral:

> "[…] A soldier is on someone's side anyway, and if I am a military interpreter then I am on the side of this person. So a normal interpreter would interpret everything both parties say. A soldier doesn't have to. […] I didn't have to interpret

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[65] "[…] joskus väärinkäsityksiä syntyy ja niitä piti oikaista. […] että pystyy toimimaan joskus muinakin kun tulkkina ja pystyy tarvittaessa ottaan etäisyyttä ja irtautuun siitä, roolista mikä hänellä on. En laisinkaan sano että se on helppo homma mutta, kokemus ja ikä tekee tehtävänsä. […] siinä sotilastulkin rooli nousee, että osaa tietää ja ymmärtää koska, miten paljon puuttua mihinkin asiaan ja koska sitten ottaa etäisyyttä asiaan. […] toisaalta […] niin aina piti miettiä että mihinkä se johtaa."

[66] "Ja sillon sä arvioit et sä oot paras siellä puuttumaan sillä lailla kun mitä pitää […]. Jotta tilanne ei kiristyisi enempää, niin sä sanot viimesen sanan ja sit pidetään siitä kiinni. […] Siinä tilanteessa täytyy antaa tulkille vähän enemmän sanotaanko toimivaltaa sanoa, et nyt tää keskustelu menee ihan väärälle tielle et nyt lopeta."

> everything to the clients. But as long as the interpreting and information flowed in our direction there was no problem."[67] (14)

The above quotations reverberate Hilary Footitt and Michael Kelly's (2012, 208–209) observation that military interpreters without professional training or support in ethical issues often resort to the role of mediator and feel obliged to intervene.

Roughly half of the interviewees were of the opinion that the interpreter should be informed about a possible clandestine agenda of a meeting. Some of those who believed that it was necessary based their view on the belief that if the interpreter was not aware of the secret agenda, he might risk exposing the agenda unawares during the discussion. Others said that it would not be possible to interpret successfully if the interpreter was not previously advised about a secret agenda.

4.5.9 Breaking Confidentiality

Another possible conflict in the interpreters' ethical guidelines concerns the breaking of confidentiality. An analysis of the interviews suggests that the ethical principle of confidentiality, for example, would not seem to apply to military interpreters to the same extent as to their civilian counterparts. In the words of one interviewee,

> "And we talked with the commanding officer that if it was in the interests of the operation, if our security is at stake, or something very important comes up, that's where my confidentiality ends. And that's how I acted, too."[68] (2)

According to the interviewees, confidentiality was most frequently broken in the case of security threats. Confidentiality was also frequently broken in cases of attempted corruption. When asked whether they had been offered bribes, or if they had been the target of other attempts of dishonest manipulation while on duty, 10 of the 14 interviewees admitted that they had been targets of attempted corruption. Two interviewees answered no, and two declined the question. Many of the interviewees who had identified corruption reported that the local population had approached them with corruption-related

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[67] "[…] sotilas on kuitenkin jonkun puolella, jos mä oon sotilastulkki niin mä oon tän henkilön puolella. Niin normaali tulkki tulkkais kaikkia mitä molemmat sanoo. Sotilaan ei tarvitse. […] Eihän mun tarvinu kaikkea tulkata muille asiakkaille. Mut niin kauan ku se, taas tulkkaus ja tieto meni tähän suuntaan niin, ei mitään ongelmia."

[68] "Ja me puhuttiin siellä komentajan kanssa, että jos tämä operaatio vaatii, että meidän turvallisuus on vaarassa, tai tulee jotain mikä liittyy hyvin tärkeisiin osa-alueisiin, niin silloin loppuu minun vaitiolovelvollisuus tavallaan. Ja niinhän mä toiminkin."

suggestions almost daily, of which they had also informed their superiors. In the words of the interviewees:

> "I have experienced [corruption] and I believe that every military interpreter experiences it to a lesser or greater extent."[69] (7)
> "The interpreter is god [to the locals], he represents everything."[70] (8)

This leaves little room for doubt that, in the eyes of the local population, i.e. the human terrain of the operation area, the military interpreters are in a position of considerable power and influence in the local population's dealings with the crisis management force.

4.6 Neutrality and Loyalty

The thematic category of *Neutrality and Loyalty* is similar to the category of *Power and influence* in that considerations of neutrality and loyalty may be identified in many of the other categories, too. As elements of agency, for example, influence, loyalty, and personal relations are interdependent: one area will invariably affect the others, and findings presented in this sub-chapter may fit better under a different heading.

It should be noted in this context that the concept of *loyalty* discussed below has little to do with the concept of loyalty established in translation studies. The concept of translator's loyalty, introduced by Christiane Nord, refers to the translator's loyalty to the authors of the original message, to the initiators of the translation, and to the target audience (Nord 1989; 1991 in Prunč 1997, 111–112). The military interpreters' loyalty towards their unit could be seen to have more in common with Prunč's expanded characterisation of translator's loyalty, which includes protecting the identity and ethical integrity of the translator (ibid., 112).

4.6.1 Soldier or Interpreter?

At first glance, considerations about neutrality and loyalty were usually not perceived as a problem by the military interpreters themselves: they understood the neutrality and loyalty of military interpreters as something expected or self-evident. The military interpreters identified themselves as members of the Finnish crisis management force, and, as such,

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[69] "[…] olen kokenut ja uskon että jokainen sotilastulkki kokee tätä enemmissä tai vähemmissä määrin."
[70] "[…] tulkki on heidän jumalansa ja kaikki asiat."

they were committed to their unit. Moreover, they normally perceived themselves primarily as soldiers, not as interpreters, and expressed their allegiance in similar terms:

> ”Q: Were you in your opinion able to remain neutral as a military interpreter? A: Sure. I was working for the Finns. […] I was working for the organisation, and I am partial toward the organisation, really. I tried to follow instructions given to me by my superior.”[71] (7)
> “[…] I noticed that they were trying to exploit [the situation], or to use unfair methods. I must say that I immediately stepped out of my role [as an interpreter] and took up the situation, as a Finnish soldier among others”[72] (2)
> “You have to really consider what’s best for the platoon at all times. That’s the idea. As long as you are a part of the organisation, at least that’s how I understand it […]. As long as I’m wearing a uniform, I will act according to what that uniform requires and what I’m committed to, to the best of my ability.”[73] (6)

The above quotations reverberate Justin Lewis’ (2012, 67) observation that “the military linguist must also understand that (s)he is a facilitator for his/her employer and, therefore, not only not neutral, but active in pursuing the commander’s objectives”. Thus, being a part of a military organisation would seem to guide and support military interpreters in forming their role and identity, as noted by Bonner (2012, 35; 55).

4.6.2 Loyalty of Military Interpreters vs. Local Interpreters

Judgements related to neutrality and loyalty were exposed in connection with other interview topics, such as “What is a good military interpreter like?” Here, many interviewees mentioned “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” – in addition to language skills – as the most important quality of a military interpreter. Two interviewees described this trustworthiness as a particularly Finnish quality: the more Finnish you are, the more trustworthy you are. Similarly, the importance of loyalty was highlighted, particularly when contrasted with the loyalty of locally recruited interpreters, which the interviewed military interpreters did not trust as a rule.

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[71] ”K: Pystyiksä mielestäsi sotilastulkkina olemaan puolueeton? V: Pystyn. Mähän olin töissä suomalaisille.” ”Että organisaatiolle työskennellään ja minä oon tosissaan jäävi organisaatiolle ja minä pyrin itse noudattamaan sellasia ohjeita, mitä mä oon saanu esimieheltä.”

[72] ”[…] mä huomasin että nää yrittää sitten tavallaan käyttää hyväksi [tilannetta]. Tai sitten käyttää keinoja mitkä ei ollut reiluja, niin kyllä mä heti irtauduin siitä [tulkin] roolista ja sitten tartun siihen tilanteeseen, yhtenä suomalaisena sotilaana.”

[73] ”Kyllä joukkueen etu pitää koko ajan olla ajettuna. Se on ideologia siinä. Niin kauan kun siinä järjestössä olet, ainakin minä olen ymmärtäny sen […]. Et niin kauan kun mä kannan sitä univormua, niin mä toimin sen univormun sanotaanko vaatimusten mukaisesti ja sitoutumusteni mukaisesti, niin hyvin kun mä pystyn.”

Although the military interpreters valued and respected the locally hired interpreters' language skills and cultural expertise, they did not consider the local interpreters to be loyal to the crisis management force: "The [local] interpreters have no doubt given information to the local population all the time."[74] (8) The military interpreters' mistrust of the local interpreters was founded on their own experiences. They reported cases where the local population and local authorities were unwilling to speak openly when a local interpreter was present, and demanded to work with a military interpreter instead, if it was possible. The military interpreters had, in many operations, the duty of acting as the superiors of the local interpreters, which included monitoring the local interpreters' work. Many interviewees mentioned the local interpreters' strong ethnic and family ties to the local population as a likely cause for the positioning of their loyalty.

4.6.3 Loyalty and Ethnicity

The military interpreters regarded themselves in general as being able to remain neutral in their interpreting duties. As a rule, their ability to remain neutral and their loyalty towards the crisis management force had never been put into question. When this had occurred, it had not been perceived as a matter of serious concern, but more because of ignorance:

> "No. Perhaps as a joke, or humorously, but even I can understand that, that's humour. But not earnestly, definitely not. […] I think it's more likely that every military interpreter thinks about whether the others are thinking whether he's loyal or not."[75] (10)
> "But the other soldiers asked me. In fact there were quite a lot of questions, do you feel that you are more a […] or a Finn."[76] (1)
> "[…] perhaps he then had suspicions about me, perhaps he suspected whether I'm loyal, that I'm partial towards the […]. Whether I'm a real Finn at all, or something like that."[77] (13)

Three interviewees, however, said that their loyalty had been questioned by their fellow soldiers, and that these feelings of mistrust stemmed from ethnical prejudice. As one of the three put it:

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[74] "Nämä, koko ajan, varmasti antoivat tietoja, siis paikallisille, nämä tulkit."

[75] "Ei. Ehkä vitsillä ja huumorilla mut se nyt menee ihan täysin mullaki läpi, huumorii se on. Mut ei tosissaan, ei missään nimessä. […] Enemmänki mä luulen et joka sotilastulkki miettii sitä et ajatteleekohan muut hänestä, että onko hän nyt lojaali vai ei."

[76] "Mutta noi muut sotilaat kyseli. Itse asiassa tuli aika paljon kysymyksiä, et tunnetko enemmän ittes […] vai suomalaiseks."

[77] "[…] hänellä ehkä sitten oli epäluulot mua kohtaan, ehkä hän epäili et oonks mä lojaali että oonks mä niiden […] puolella liikaa. Et oonks mä kunnon suomalainen ollenkaan, vähän sellasta.

> “Not directly, but I regarded it as [mistrust] when they called me towelhead, Finnish raghead and such. Their attitude and behaviour made it clear that you are not one of us, you are not our kind.”[78] (12)

These cases of mistrust had a strong negative impact on one interviewee, while another was not influenced by them:

> “[…] these suspicions, that I was blamed, it really, really aggravated me. I remember that it was so tough that I almost cried, like what the hell.”[79] (2)
> “[…] sometimes it felt like someone was questioning my neutrality a little. But I didn’t care.”[80] (6)

Baker (2010, 210–211) notes that, specifically, the interpreters who belong to the same ethnic group as the ‘enemy’ are generally not regarded by the military establishment as trustworthy mediators. Moreover, she argues that when the military attempts to recruit interpreters from their own ranks, and domestically rather than from the operation area, it is caused by the military’s assumption that “‘foreign’ interpreters are by definition untrustworthy, and interpreters who are formally part of the *us* group but are of the same origin as the enemy (Iraqi Americans, for instance) are equally untrustworthy” (italics in original). The Finnish military interpreters’ experiences as well as their stance towards the local interpreters (see previous sub-chapter) partly confirm but also dispute the above arguments by Baker. Nevertheless, those interviewees whose loyalty had been put into question took the initiative and found ways of re-establishing trust:

> “[…] I made this big decision, I went to talk with him […] and I made it clear that I am with us and that I can be trusted.”[81] (12)

Another aspect of ethnicity and neutrality is the military interpreters’ ethnicity in relation to the local population. The interviewees were well aware of the fact that their ethnicity could compromise in some circumstances the neutrality, or even the security, of the crisis management force:

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[78] ”Ei suoranaisesti mutta näin sen myös [epäluottamuksena] kun puhuttiin kähtävänä, kotikähtävänä ja tällästä. Ne tekivät kohtelullaan ja käytöksellään selväks sulle että sä et ole yks meitä, sä et ole meikäläisiä.”
[79] ”[…] nää oli nää epäilykset, että syytettiin, mua pännii niin paljon, niin paljon. Mä muistan että se oli niin kun niin kova juttu, mä suurin piirtein itkin että mitä helvettiä.”
[80] ”[…] välillä tuntu siltä et joku saattaa vähän kyseenalaistaa mun puolueettomuutta. Mutta siitä mä en välittäny.”
[81] ”mä teinkin tän ison päätöksen, mä kävin hänen juttusillaan […] ja tein tämän asian selväksi että mä olen meidän puolella ja minuun voi luottaa.”

> "[…] Right at the start the commander asked me if I hate [...]. And I was sort of shocked to get this question from such a high-level person […]. I told him, 'Sir, if I hate anything then it is the troops that have taken action, and have burned my houses and my childhood memories'. […] he just laughed and understood, he said 'That's what I would do, too. And you can't pretend to be a robot, we are made of feelings', like that."[82] (3)
> "[…] it's a tricky situation when I am a […], and they put me into an area with a […] majority. If they notice that I am a […], it may become a threat scenario, so to speak."[83] (1)
> "It doesn't matter how fluent [your language] is, I know that he, that I can catch it. A couple of sentences, I know for sure that [he is …]. It's the same, they know […], too. […] It is not accepted in many places. I was not taken along to some places […]. It's no use, it isn't constructive, I mean it's not co-operation. It's, I took it more as a provocation."[84] (5)

It is worth emphasizing that the instances of mistrust were rare, and were far outweighed by the accounts of strong, mutual trust between the military interpreters and the crisis management force.

4.6.4 Other Aspects of Loyalty

The interviewees with a background as professional interpreters in Finland reflected perhaps more profoundly on matters related to neutrality and loyalty than their non-professional counterparts:

> "A soldier has orders, yes. That is a conflict of interests, but as I said you have to learn how to act neutrally while being partial."[85] (6)
> "I had a much more difficult role, sort of, in that I sometimes navigate between cultures. […] If you think about how I have remained neutral here in Finland, you couldn't down there. I have to say that you couldn't, and I'm not lying."[86] (2)

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[82] "[…] heti alussa, komentaja esitti mulle kysymyksen, vihaanko minä […]. Ja, tavallaan vähän, järkytyin että kysymys tuli näin korkealta taholta […] Minä sanoin sir, […] jos mä nyt jotain vihaan niin ne on ne joukot jotka ovat toimineet, ja polttaneet minun talojani ja minun muistojani lapsuudesta. […] hän vain nauro siihen ja hän ymmärsi, se sanoi, niinhän minäkin tekisin, hän sanoi. Ja, ei voi esittää robottina, me ollaan tunteista tehty ihmisiä, sillä lailla."

[83] "[…] semmonen kinkkinen tilanne on se että kun mä oon […], ja mut pistetään semmoselle alueelle missä on […]enemmistö. Jos ne huomaa et mä oon […], niin siit voi tulla semmonen uhkatilanne niin sanotusti."

[84] "Vaikka kuinka sujuvaa [kieli] olisikin, mä tiedän että hän, mä saan kiinni, pari kolme neljä lausetta, mä tiedän tasan tarkkaan että on […]. Niin sama, ne pystyy […] tietämään. […] Ei monessa paikassa hyväksytä. Mut tiettyihin paikkoihin minua ei otettu mukaan […]. Ei tuu mitään siitä, ei rakennu, siis ei oo yhteistyötä. Se on, mä otin enemmän sen provokaationa."

[85] "Sotilaalla on käsky, kyllä. Se on se ristiriita mutta, niin kun sanoin niin täytyy oppia toimimaan puolueettomasti puolueellisena."

> "[…] Many times [you must] search for your own identity there, in that unit. You must affirm to yourself and to everyone else that we are here for Finland, and serving the Finnish Defence Forces […]. The only difference is that I know a little more about the place than you and so on, exaggeratedly speaking."[87] (6)
> "The interpreter has to be neutral. He has no alternatives. I see no other alternatives than being neutral."[88] (12)

Of all the interviewees, only two were aware of cases where their interpretation had been monitored or supervised by a third party who knew the languages used. However, these rare occasions had not led to any measures. The interviewees' loyalty was also manifested in that they did not divulge classified information during the interviews, even after being informed that the contents of the interviews were being handled securely. A number of interviewees replied to questions related to sensitive issues simply by "I can't answer that question". The same respect for confidentiality was shown in the interviewees' description of their interaction with other countries' military interpreters: the topics of their discussions concerned only trivial subjects or small talk, and work-related matters were never touched upon.

4.7 Personal Relations and Unit Cohesion

The vast majority of the interviewees described their relations with the other members of the crisis management force in positive or very positive terms. They felt that they had been accepted at large as equal members of their unit, and that their expertise and opinions were heard and respected.

> "Peace-keepers are such a just and reasonable crew that they would always give thanks and pay attention to you."[89] (3)
> "I met the best of Finns there."[90] (4)

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[86] "Mulla on paljon vaikeempi rooli tavallaan, välillä että mä seilaan kulttuurien välissä. […] Jos mietitään sitä miten mä oon puolueettomana pysyny täällä Suomessa, niin ei siellä pystyny. Kyllä pakko sanoo että ei. En mä valehtele."

[87] "[…] monesti [saa] etsiä sitä omaa identiteettiä siellä […], siinä joukossa. Siinä on taottava itselle päähän ja tehtävä myöskin kaikille selväksi, et Suomen eduksi me täällä ollaan ja palvellaan Suomen puolustusvoimia […]. Ero on vaan et mä tiedän vähän enemmän paikasta kun sä ja näin, karrikoidusti sanon tän."

[88] "Kyllä sen tulkin on pakko olla puolueeton. Hänellä ei muuta vaihtoehtoa ole. Minä en näe muuta vaihtoehtoa kun olla puolueeton."

[89] "Rauhanturvaajat ovat sen verran reilu ja rehti porukka että kyllä ne osas aina kiittää ja ottaa huomioon."

[90] "Mä olen tavannut parhaat suomalaiset siellä.

Moreover, all interviewees also described their relations with their colleagues, both the local interpreters as well as the military interpreters of other countries, as excellent: “[The locals] were really surprised that there are people who really achieve something and are able to come here.”[91] (11)

4.7.1 Ethnic Prejudice

However, roughly one third of the interviewees mentioned instances of prejudice or biased behaviour on the part of their peers. Cases of prejudice based on ethnicity may, as such, seem frequent. However, these instances were described as having been the result of the ignorance of a few individuals, and never the unit as a whole. In a few of these cases, the poor personal relations had even hampered the implementation of duties, when the military interpreter had started to avoid confronting the person causing the problem.

> “[…] Of course there was prejudice. We’re all people, there’s no forest without wolves. […] I just turned a deaf ear and went to sleep.”[92] (4)
> “They belonged to the group who always saw the interpreter as an outsider, the so-called non-Finn, who has been brought there out of necessity.”[93] (12)
> “[…] some people used certain expressions that insulted me. At one time, I got furious and left. It wasn’t anything personal, I can understand it pretty well, and that saying those things doesn’t necessarily mean anything at all to him. He’s not trying to get anywhere. But perhaps it’s ignorance. […] there was absolutely no attitude of ’you damn – ’, or anything. […] sometimes you just come across people who have never seen different people.”[94] (14)

4.7.2 Leadership

The military interpreters’ interaction with their superiors took place in an encouraging atmosphere. Many interviewees had experienced their commanding officers as

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[91] ”Ne [paikalliset] oli tosi otettuja siitä et on henkilöitä jotka oikeesti saavuttaa jotain ja pystyy tuleen tänne”

[92] ” […] Oli ennakkoluuloja myös tietenki. Me olemme ihmisiä, ei oo metsää ilman susiakaan. […] mä laitoin korvat kiinni ja menin nukkumaan.”

[93] ”He kuuluivat siihen ryhmään jotka ikuisesti näkivät sitä tulkkia ulkopuolisena, niin sanottuna ei-suomalaisena, joka on pakon edestä hankittu sinne.”

[94] ”[…] jotkut ihmiset käytti tiettyjä ilmauksia jotka loukkas mua. Kerran raivopäissäni poistuin paikalta. Ei se ollu mitään sellasta henkilökohtasta, kyl mä aika pitkälti ymmärrän et, ku toinen sanoo jotain, niin ettei se merkkaa sille yhtään mitään, välttämättä. Se ei hae sillä yhtään mitään. Mutta ehkäpä sitä tietämättömyyttä. […] tällaista et sinä senkin -meininkiä niin ei ollut ollenkaan. […] välillä tulee niitä ihmisiä jotka ei oo koskaan nähneet erilaista ihmistä.”

exceptionally competent or inspiring: "[…] the best superior that I have ever had."[95] (7). Nonetheless, not all leadership relations were free from friction:

> "The problem was that if the closest superior of a private first class or corporal is a lieutenant colonel, things can be a little stiff… You can't talk on a friendly level like you should normally be able to do with your leader in a crisis management operation."[96] (10)
> "I even recall my superior at some point […] having said 'you're just a 'terp [military slang for 'interpreter'].' I felt really worthless then, and even considered quitting. I talked about the matter with my companions and they said that the next time when he's heading to a meeting tell him that you're not coming to interpret, let's see how he manages."[97] (12)

A number of interviewees were disturbed by what they perceived as the organisation's distrust of military interpreters in general:

> "[…] We should [achieve] a change in the whole mentality. Sure, the army has certain protocols, but you must not always see the involvement of a military interpreter as some kind of danger or a security risk […]"[98] (6)
> "So this distrust was maybe one thing that bothered me down there; that the first thought in these soldiers' mind is to […] think bad about people."[99] (13)
> "Trust is of utmost importance in this job. If the interpreter feels that he is not trusted, he automatically needs to prove himself and convince people. And then most of his energy is spent on proving himself and convincing someone, which is futile."[100] (12)

Overall, the interviewees stressed that military interpreters' security clearance should not be contested once they have been assigned to their duty.

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[95] "paras esimies mitä mulla on ikinä ollu"

[96] "Ongelma oli siinä et jos lähin esimies on alikersantilla tai korpraalilla everstiluutnantti niin se tuo pientä jäykkyyttä siihen… et, sen kans ei keskustelu ollu semmost kaverillista niin ku normaalisti johtajan kans pitäis olla kriisinhallintaoperaatios"

[97] "Muistan jopa joskus esimieheni […] sanoneen että sähän oot vaan tulkinretale. Silloin oli, tunsi ittensä todella arvottomaksi ja jopa mietin että keskeyttäisin. Keskustelin asiasta muiden palvelustovereiden kanssa ja ne sano minulle että seuraavan kerran kun hän on menossa palaveriin niin sano että sinä et lähe, sinä et tulkkaa niin katotaan kuinka pärjää."

[98] . "[…] pitäis, ensinnäkin [saada aikaan] koko ajattelutavan muutos. Kyl mä uskon että armeijal on tietyt toimintamallit mut täytyy, et tarvi koko ajan nähdä jonkinlaisena riskinä tai turvallisuusriskinä jos sotilastulkki on mukana […]."

[99] "Et tää epäluuloisuus oli ehkä yks se mikä kans mua vähän siel häiritti, et näil sotilailla ensimmäinen ajatus on se et […] ajatella[an] ihmisistä pahaa."

[100] "Luottamus on tosi tärkee täs tehtävässä. Mikäli tulkista tuntuu että häneen ei luoteta, niin hänelle tulee automaattisesti tarve todistaa ja vakuuttaa. Ja silloin hänen energiansa menee aika paljon siihen todistamiseen ja vakuuttamiseen, mikä on turha."

4.8 Visibility and Fear

This sub-chapter addresses the physical appearance and discernibility of the military interpreters, as well as their experiences of threatening situations. The military interpreters' visibility in the sense of involvement in communication is discussed in more detail in sub-chapters 5.1.4 and 6.3.

4.8.1 Uniform

The military interpreters had, during their service, worn without exception the same uniforms or clothing as the other members of their units, and could not be differentiated from the rest of the soldiers. As one interviewee put it: "In […], I was a just a Finnish soldier. We were the same."[101] (4). The military interpreters usually wore military uniforms, and civilian clothing was used on rare occasions only, such as for informal meetings, or in certain tasks where civilian clothing was needed to blend in with the local population. Only one interviewee mentioned occasionally wearing a badge with the text "INTERPRETER". Moreover, the majority of the interviewees also carried the same equipment and weapons as the other soldiers of their unit. Those military interpreters who did not carry weapons had usually not received previous military training.

The interviewees were also very aware of the effect conveyed by wearing a Finnish military uniform, especially in the eyes of the local population:

> "A uniform intimidates civilians, no matter what. […] Especially if you are in a conflict area […], when armed men approach a local […], there's always some tension in the air."[102] (3)
> "[…] the moment you put on a uniform you're no longer neutral."[103] (6)
> "In a Finnish uniform, because that means that that country trusts you."[104] (11)

A number of interviewees also mentioned the local population's respect for uniforms as an asset when communicating: soldiers are seen as an authority.

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[101] "Mut […]ssa mä olin ihan suomalainen sotilas. […] me oltiin samanlaisia."
[102] "Koska oli miten oli, uniformu jännittää siviilejä. […] Varsinkin jos on konfliktialue […] kun aseistautuneet miehet lähestyy sitä paikallista […], niin aina pieni jännitys on jo päällä."
[103] "[…] että heti kun on univormu päällä niin sä et oo enää puolueeton."
[104] "Suomen univormus koska sehän tarkottaa sitä että kyseinen maa luottaa sinuun."

4.8.2 Concealment

The interviewees believed at large that they did not stand out from among the other members of the crisis management force. Only a few mentioned that their general appearance or "the colour of their face" might have hinted that they know the local language. Another possible divulging sign was the nametag on their uniform: "I had a nametag, […], by which the locals could immediately tell. But if I didn't wear the tag or anything else, they couldn't."[105] (3)

Situations in which the military interpreters felt the need to conceal their language skills were most often related to supervising local interpreters or other locally recruited employees of the crisis management force. There were situations, however, where the military interpreters wanted to hide their ethnicity to avoid possible conflicts with the local population. Blending in with the other soldiers was usually easily achieved by talking only Finnish, and, if needed, by removing their nametag, or by using a nametag with a false name.

4.8.3 Fear and Post-Traumatic Stress

Roughly half of the interviewees had been in situations during their service in which they had felt fear. Of those who had felt threatened, the majority described them as being situations where their superior language skills and cultural knowledge had allowed them to perceive the situation differently from the other soldiers in their unit. Consequently, the military interpreter had experienced more fear in these situations or been more stressed than the other soldiers – except for one instance, where the interpreter was able to remain calmer than the others, because he knew what the locals were saying. The interviewees described their ability to read the situation as follows:

> "I am a […], and whenever I go into a […]'s house, I see it on their faces and in their movements if there is a threat. […] I know for sure. And the soldiers trusted that. They observed me the whole time, more how I reacted."[106] (4)
> "I understood the magnitude of the threat differently, how big and serious the threat is, what the others did not realise until I told them of course. […] I stood side by side with a local and he kept telling me what he knows about the threat.

[105] "Oli mulla nimitarra, […], jossa heti paikalliset […] osasivat erottaa. Mutta jos ei ollu tarra tai muuta niin, ei ne osas."
[106] "Mä oon […], mä menen johonki […]taloon, mä tiedän heijän kasvoista, mä tiedän heidän liikkeistä onko uhkaava […]. Mä tiedän tasan tarkkaan. Ja ne sotilaat luotti siihen. Että ne katso koko ajan, enemmän katsoi miten minä reagoin."

> And I forwarded it the whole time, of course, but the information wasn't always on the same level."[107] (10)
> "[…] The reason why I was not afraid is that I could understand them, that crowd. Because I saw tension in the other soldiers."[108] (14)
> "[…] I sometimes told them that you guys are lucky not to speak the language so that you can't understand what's going on here."[109] (2)
> "I was the only one who could understand their language and I had to take all the shit, I had to filter it, and to forward it to my superior. It was really a tight spot. It really stresses the interpreter, and this is something that a Finnish serviceman does not understand, because he hasn't a clue."[110] (12)

One interviewee said openly that the stress experienced during the service left him with symptoms, whereas a number of other interviewees expressed their reactions to stress in more subtle terms:

> "I went to see a psychiatrist. I was so burnt out that I was prescribed medicine because I couldn't sleep anymore. I stayed awake and I cried, it hurt and I didn't know what was wrong with me, I really felt bad. And I have heard the same from many others."[111] (2)
> "But all those tasks and coping with them, you have to be fairly strong mentally, have a strong psyche to endure them and to be able to deal with them."[112] (6)
> "What really hit me was seeing people who are refugees. It brought my own time as refugee to the surface; I started thinking back on how they felt. […] it stirred a lot of things inside me."[113] (14)

Baker (2010, 213) suggests that the way in which peoples' identities are constrained in the context of conflict, by defining them by their ethnicity alone, for example, may inflict serious emotional damage on interpreters. Similarly, the research data suggests that military

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[107] "Ymmärsin eri tavalla sen uhan laajuuden, kuinka laaja ja suuri se uhka on, mitä muut eivät ymmärtäneet ennen ku mä tietenki sanoin niille. […] kuitenkin siinä oli paikallisen kanssa vierekkäin ja se koko ajan kerto mulle et mitä se tiesi siitä uhasta ja.. mä kerroin sen tietenki koko ajan eteenpäin mutta se ei ollu aina samalla tasolla se tieto."

[108] "[…] syy miks mua ei pelottanut […], on se että mä ymmärsin heidät. Ja tän porukan. Koska mä havaitsin jännitystä muissa sotilaissa."

[109] "[…] mä joskus sanoinkin näille että teillä on tuuri että ku te ette ymmärrä tota, kieltä ettekä ymmärrä mitä täällä tapahtuu."

[110] "Mä olin ainoa joka ymmärsi heidän kielensä ja minulle se kaikki paska tuli minun niskaani tuli, minun piti suodattaa se minun piti sellaisenaan edelleenvälittää omalle esimiehelle. Siinä se oli, se oli tosi kova paikka. Siinä tulkki kuormittuu todella paljon, ja tää on asia mitä suomalainen sotilas ei ymmärrä, koska hän ei itse tajua sitä."

[111] "Kyllä mä psykiatrin vastaanotolle menin. Mä menin niin alas että mulle määrättiin lääkkeitä kun mä en pystyny enää nukkuun. Mä valvoin ja valvoin ja itkin ja, sattui ja mä en tiedä että mikä oli sitten, tosi paha olo. Ja olen useammalta kuullut samaa."

[112] "Mutta sit kaikki ne tehtävät ja niitten kanssa pärjääminen, niin täytyy olla aika vahva näin mentaalisesti, psyykkisesti et kestää niitä ja osaa käsitellä niitä asioita sitten."

[113] "se juttu mikä mulle klikkas et kun näki ihmisii jotka oli pakolaisii, niin oma pakolaisuus heräs, ja rupes muisteleen miltä heistäki tuntu. […] tosi paljo sisäisii asioita tuli esille itessäni."

interpreters in conflict areas of even relatively low threat levels may be in more need of psychological debriefing and other post-deployment assistance than the other soldiers of the crisis management force. “Translators of war” may eventually become “translators at war, whether they like it or not” (Guidère 2008, 22 in Tipton 2011, 19).

This concludes the analysis of the research data in terms of thematic categories. So far, this study has been able to define in reasonable detail who Finnish military interpreters are, their background, competences, and experience. Additionally, the analysis this far has been able to highlight many key features of the Finnish military interpreters’ agency by describing their motivation, loyalty, and power, as well as some of the elements that empower or obstruct the military interpreters’ agency. While the analysis has been able to identify elements of both positive and negative influence on the military interpreters’ agency, the approach of the analysis has remained neutral. Understandably, some of the observations made so far encourage the search for improvements, which is the approach of the following chapter.

5 Discussion

The previous chapter presented the results of this study in thematic categories. This chapter continues the analysis of the research data, but instead of making observations according to thematic categories, it looks at constructive elements and practically oriented suggestions for improvement. These elements are viewed against the author's pre-understanding, as well as the findings of previous studies. Theoretically, the suggestions for improvement draw mainly from the military sciences instead of translation studies. In addition, the suggested improvements are scrutinised against an international backdrop, namely a brief tour of the recruitment and training systems of military interpreters in the militaries of eight countries. Finally, this chapter looks at the reliability, validity, and credibility of the research results.

5.1 Suggestions for Improvement

5.1.1 Recruitment

The volume and quality requirements of the language services needed in crisis management operations often come as a surprise to the military (Footitt & Kelly 2012, 238)[114]. As Ellen Ruth Moerman (2008) pointed out, "When the military or the press or human aid organisations move to an area whose language they do not master, they rarely plan the need for interpreters in advance". The interviews conducted for this study provide many indications of how the recruitment process of military interpreters might be improved in Finland. Additional proposals arise from the international comparison in sub-chapter 5.2.

5.1.1.1 Requirements for Candidates

It is widely accepted that domestically recruited military interpreters play an important role in the framework of military crisis management (see e.g. the international comparison below). This view is shared by the interviewees, who see the military interpreters' role as particularly important in matters related to information security and the supervision of

[114] Footitt and Kelly (2012, 89–104) give a detailed account of the British military's struggle to prepare and organise language support for the crisis management operation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as subsequent lessons learnt.

locally recruited interpreters and other employees. The same observation is made by Andrea Van Dijk et al. (2010, 918): “The balance between the pros and cons of working with local translators trouble the military, because dependence on the knowledge of interpreters may […] imply vulnerabilities that threaten the safety and success of the operation.” Lewis (2012, 65) has elaborated further on the pros and cons of different categories of interpreters in a military context. Indeed, military interpreters may not be the most suitable or cost effective option for every situation or need, but they undoubtedly constitute an irreplaceable part of language services in the military.

According to The Act on Military Crisis Management, all “persons chosen for crisis management operations must be Finnish citizens” (Finlex 2006/211). The Decree by the Ministry of Defence on the competence requirements and terms of service of military crisis management operations personnel (Finlex 2006/254) specifies further conditions for recruitment: all personnel must have completed their conscription or women’s voluntary military service, and must possess adequate language skills for the task. The former requirement, however, is a subject for exception in certain circumstances. Officially, Finnish military interpreters have no other competence requirements above those that apply to all military personnel. Perhaps surprisingly, this also applies to the special skills which are essential for interpretation duty, such as multiple language skills, interpretation competence, or cultural knowledge. Furthermore, there are no special recruitment categories or quotas for women, although recruitment campaigns aimed at encouraging women to apply to the crisis management forces have been undertaken (see e.g. YLE 2013). The importance of deploying female military interpreters was also recognised by one interviewee “[…] when you think about what women have had to endure there during the war, and if you need to talk about that, then you have a female interpreter available in case of those situations.“[115] (13)

Perhaps even more surprising than the lack of linguistic competence requirements for military interpreters is that the language skills or interpretation competence of Finnish military interpreters is not systematically tested at any point in their recruitment, during their training, or before their deployment. The findings of the previous chapter thus confirm the earlier observation by Snellman (2011, 14–15). Consequently, it would theoretically be possible for any Finnish citizen to be appointed as a military interpreter merely by claiming to know the language of the operation area. Although this study is not concerned with whether this lack of systematic testing has actually led to any problems in the field, it is fair

115 ”[…] kun ajattelee justiin se että sielläki naiset aika kovia joutuu kokemaan sodan aikana, että jos tulee sellasista puhetta niin on sitten naistulkki käytettävis sellasis tilanteis jos tarvitaan.”

to say that recruiting and deploying military interpreters without in any way confirming their competence seems to be taking an unnecessary risk. Nevertheless, despite the seemingly low recruitment requirements, there have been some difficulties in finding potential applicants and motivating them to enlist and serve as military interpreters (ibid., 17). These problems may be partially caused by the absence of a systematic process of recruitment.

5.1.1.2 Tracing vs. Training Candidates

The interviewees generally saw conscript service in the Finnish military as the most important channel of recruitment. The conscripts' language skills should be documented in their personal records, and the conscripts with relevant language skills should be informed of the opportunity to serve as a military interpreter. As one interviewee puts it, "You could tell people even at that early stage that 'hey, you know two languages, you have this possibility'."[116] (14) Another group of potential applicants, and, as such, a target group for recruitment efforts suggested by the interviewees, were the professional interpreters at the regional interpreter centres. The interviewees stressed the importance of the knowledge of Finnish culture, which is undoubtedly good with both the aforementioned groups. However, the interviewees also emphasised the importance of military skills, which the latter group might not possess. Another factor that favours the recruitment of conscripts and reservists is that their background and psychological ability to perform in a stressful environment has already been the subject of evaluation during their military service.

The analysis so far suggests that the age or gender of military interpreters has little influence on their agency. Moreover, the interviewees' lack of previous language studies did not seem to impede their performance as military interpreters. Simona Tobia (2010, 279–280; 290) notes that during the recruitment of military interpreters for the British war crimes trials in the late 1940s, the best interpreters were found to be "between thirty-five and forty-five years of age, and bilingual rather than multilingual". In addition, Tobia points out that the military interpreters' rank was considered unimportant, and that it had little to do with interpreting competence, but that many of the best military interpreters came from the level of lieutenant colonel. Similarly, a number of interviewees advocated experience and maturity as important assets in coping with the working environment of military interpreters. Thus, the target group of recruitment should not be too strictly limited by age.

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116 "Siinä vaiheessa vois jo kertoo ihmisille, hei, sä osaat kaks kieltä, sulla on tällanen mahdollisuus."

The Finnish crisis management operation in Afghanistan provides an example of the problematics involved in the recruitment and training of military interpreters. Finland first joined the ISAF operation and deployed her first military interpreters in the area in 2002 (FORMIN 2013b), which at the time of writing is more than 11 years ago. Nevertheless, the Finnish Defence Forces are still currently recruiting military interpreters for the operation (Porin Prikaati 2013), and have experienced difficulties in finding suitable applicants for the position[117]. Arguably, ten years would have been ample time to trace, recruit, and train a sufficient pool of military interpreters – even if the candidates had no previous knowledge of the local language and culture, or military training. When asked to assess how long it would take to train an ethnic Finn with no previous knowledge of a foreign language or culture to become a military interpreter, the interviewees estimated the time to be approximately two to three years. Only three interviewees out of 14 expressed doubt at the possibility of training ethnic Finns to become competent military interpreters. Of course, having an employee in language training full time for three years is a considerable expense, especially when considering that the future of crisis management operations are often uncertain. On the other hand, a military interpreter trained in this way could receive the relevant military training and have a high security clearance established at the same time. As Kayoko Takeda (2009, 198) concludes, in the selection of military interpreters, trust often prevails over language proficiency.

Why then has Finland neglected the possibility to recruit or train a sufficient pool of military interpreters? Of course, it is difficult to predict in which part of the world the next crisis management operation will take place, and whether Finland will participate in it. The duration of an operation, which would determine how many military interpreters are needed, is equally difficult to predict. Overall, the majority of the interviewees were of the opinion that the language services in Finnish crisis management operations do not receive enough attention, and believed that one of the reasons behind this lack of effort is the Finnish military's inability to appreciate the importance of military interpreters and interpreting at large. As one interviewee put it, "The task is simply not considered that important. It's not valued enough."[118] (12) The situation is similar for Finland at large: Finland has, for example, yet to establish a public national register of interpreters like Sweden or Norway (IMDI 2011; Thurén 2011, 30–36).

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[117] An advertisement about vacancies for military interpreters in the ISAF operation was published by the Finnish Defence Forces on 13 May 2013 and was still online when the page was last updated on 18 November 2013.

[118] "Yksinkertaisesti tehtävää ei nähdä niin tärkeäksi. Tehtävälle ei anneta tarpeeksi arvoa."

5.1.1.3 Recruitment Process

While the importance of the crisis management operations in Kosovo and Afghanistan is diminishing, the likelihood of a major crisis management operation in Syria seems to be growing. According to the Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, “the Syrian operation will be the biggest and most demanding in the history of the United Nations. However, the operation is still a long time ahead, if it is undertaken at all” (Helsingin Sanomat 2013b, translation by author). If Finland is to successfully recruit the military interpreters needed for such a large and difficult operation, now would be the time to take measures. A suitable first step would be to locate all persons with Arabic skills who have served their conscription in Finland, and who are preferably non-commissioned officers or officers in the reserve. However, looking at the language statistics of the Population Register Centre or other authorities might not be a sufficient method of locating these potential applicants, as Latomaa (2012, 532–533) notes. For example, second generation native speakers of Arabic may well be registered as Finnish speakers in the statistics, because the statistics are based on what the persons in question have themselves preferred to tell the authorities.

Once these potential applicants have been located, a suitable second step would be to contact them. Preferably, the initial contact should leave a positive first impression, and be implemented in a manner which acknowledges the different backgrounds of the potential applicants. The potential applicants could be invited to, or, if too few applicants show interest, summoned to a few days’ refresher training, in which their language skills and personal qualities would be assessed in detail. The most suitable potential military interpreters would then be offered a readiness contract, in which they would commit themselves to serve if needed, as well as to attend a similar refresher training course each or every other year. An important part of this periodic training would of course have to be language and interpreting training, especially in military language and interpreting in a military context. As Daniel Gile (2013) notes, language for special purposes or specialised sociolects may well fall outside the domain of native languages. Translators are supposed to work into their native tongue, but as Gile puts it, "A military interpreter who speaks in his native tongue but who doesn't have knowledge of military culture and military matters is not a native speaker. He is a B-language speaker, a second language speaker."

If necessary, the commitment to serve could be compensated with a suitable sum. However, the interviewees’ replies suggest that the remuneration is not an important factor in the recruitment, if the remuneration is already on a level that is perceived as fair. Thus, the total costs of this method of recruitment would not amount to much, and it would

provide the trained reservists with the possibility of networking and expanding the group of potential recruits. Similarly, to serve the purposes of national defence rather than crisis management, the same method of recruitment could be applied to the reservists who know Russian. This recruitment process would, during the course of a few years, lead to the establishment of a pool of trained, reliable, and dedicated military interpreters.

5.1.2 Testing and Training

Evaluating a person's language proficiency is usually done by comparing the achieved results with a set of fixed skill levels, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), the NATO STANAG 6001, or another recognised scale. Finland has developed a number of national evaluation scales, most of which are tied to the European framework (Latomaa et al. 2013, 175). The strong impact of the CEFR can also be seen in the legislation concerned with the evaluation of language proficiency, such as the Act on the Language Competence of the Personnel in Public Offices (424/2003), and the Act on the National Certificates of Language Proficiency (964/2004). The information about a person's language skills needed to make a comparison with any skill level is gathered using language tests. Language testing can be considered a science in its own right, and it has been widely researched. Important questions related to language testing are the reliability, validity, and feasibility of the tests, as well as the items actually being evaluated, the interpretation of the results, and the way they can be compared with each other (Council of Europe 2003, 177–184). The resources and time allocated for evaluating the language proficiency of a person are often limited, which leads to a compromise between different factors.

One way of evaluating language proficiency is self-assessment. This involves asking the persons being evaluated how well they know the language. Comprehensive self-assessment may be performed, for instance, with the help of questionnaires or interviews, in which different questions or statements are answered. The results of self-assessment have proven reliable and correlate with the actual proficiency of the test subjects (Latomaa et al. 2013, 179; Council of Europe 2003, 226–230). In competitive situations, however, people may be tempted to exaggerate their competences, and self-assessment may as a result be a less suitable method of evaluation. This may be the case particularly when applying for a position, such as that of a military interpreter.

To be considered successful, language evaluation must be accurate, reliable, many-sided, and authentic. Accuracy means that the test actually measures those qualities, which are

intended to be measured. Reliability refers to the repeatability of the test and the overall quality of the testing process. Many-sidedness means that the test acknowledges language as a multidimensional and multifaceted phenomenon. Authenticity, in turn, is the pursuit to replicate, in as close detail as possible, the circumstances for which the language proficiency is being evaluated. Moreover, the feedback given to the person being evaluated constitutes an important part of language proficiency evaluation (Kokkonen et al. 2008, 10–11). Nevertheless, the evaluation of future military interpreters should be based on more than merely language skills. Factors such as education, work experience, and social skills can be considered important. The testing should also take into account the extraordinary working conditions of military interpreters, and consider qualities such as the ability to handle stress, mental stability, and military experience.

On what grounds should the skill level required of military interpreters be determined? The validity of language tests involves critically assessing the consequences of the testing (Chi & Davidson 2012, 566). In the case of military interpreters, this would mean that if the desired skill level is set too low, the interpreter's usability in the field may be reduced, or, in a worst-case scenario, lives may be put at risk. On the other hand, setting the desired skill level too high may hamper the recruitment process by culling too many otherwise suitable applicants. A number of interviewees suggested that the population of potential applicants in Finland is small. Thus, it would be counter-productive to reduce the number of candidates further by setting the skill level overly high. In contrast, other interviewees estimated that there are far more potential and willing candidates than there are positions for military interpreters. Indeed, the number of applicants has usually been sufficient (Snellman 2011, 14).

Thus, a suitable language testing procedure for military interpreters should combine many of the qualities addressed above. The existing competence-based qualifications for community interpreters as well as for court interpreters (Opetushallitus 2006; 2013) could form a suitable basis on which the test and requirements for military interpreters could be formulated. At a minimum, the applicants' language skills would need to be assessed using a combination of language tests and self-assessment. The applicants' proficiency in Finnish, English, and the language of the operation area, the so-called foreign language, should be analysed in detail. If language tests in the foreign language are not available, an interview including reading and writing assignments, conducted and assessed by a native speaker, could be used. If the interview was conducted by a person who has already served as a military interpreter, the applicants' command of military vocabulary could be assessed simultaneously. If the interviews were recorded, they could be evaluated by a

third party. It is clear that the testing and training of military interpreters offers plenty of opportunities for international co-operation and benchmarking.

The military did not provide the military interpreters with any interpreter training to prior to their deployment, with the exception of one interviewee. As already mentioned in sub-chapter 4.3.3, three of the interviewees with no earlier experience of professional interpreting suggested that even a few days of interpreter training would have lowered their learning curve and helped them to start working in the operation area. Understandably, none of the interpreters with a professional background mentioned the need for interpreting exercises. However, the importance of military training prior to deployment was emphasised by both those interviewees who lacked a background in the military, as well as those with previous military training. Interestingly, 'military training' denoted not only field skills, but also other aspects of military culture, such as the differences in the use of language in the military, which is especially important for military interpreters:

> "I said that 'I don't quite know how I should put it'. He said that 'Hey, you can be direct with these guys. Say it like it is; don't go around in circles'. […] Career soldiers are even more direct than reservists are. […] And without anyone getting offended. By the end of my service I too finally learnt to speak bluntly."[119] (2)

Additionally, one interviewee brought up the need to be briefed about the situations of stress that working as an interpreter might involve:

> "So there should be some kind of training before you're sent there. Particularly about what your role is, what kind of situations you can encounter, and how you can seek support when you're down there […] if you feel bad mentally. As we had no such thing there, everything was chaotic."[120] (2)

[119] "Mä sanoin vaan että mä en oikein tiiä miten mun pitää sanoo. Se sanoi että hei, näille voi sanoo aivan suoraan. Sano niin kun asia on, älä kiertele. […] Kapiaiset sano vielä suoremmaks asiat, tai suoremmin kun nää reserviläiset. […] Ja ilman että joku loukkaantuis. Ihan loppujen lopuksi minäkin opin, ihan loppuvaiheessa että minäkin sanon suoraan."

[120] "Että jonkinlaista koulutusta täytyy olla alussa, ennen kun kaveri lähetetään sinnepäin. Just nimenomaan siitä että mikä sun rooli vois olla, minkälaisiin tilanteisiin sä voisit törmätä, ja kuinka sitten siellä paikanpäällä sä voisit turvautua […] jos tulee henkisesti paha olo. Kun ei meillä ollut ikinä mitään siellä. Kaikki oli niin levällään."

5.1.3 Training of the Crisis Management Force

This sub-chapter deals with questions related to the training of the crisis management force from an interpreter's viewpoint: it concerns such questions as whether the interpreters' fellow soldiers knew how to work with an interpreter, whether they possessed the required language skills and communicative abilities, and the kind of problems the interpreters encountered. The military interpreters were at large satisfied with the abilities of the crisis management force. The most commonly mentioned needs for improvement were, by far, in the cultural knowledge of the crisis management force. Certain shortcomings in the knowledge of the local culture of the operation area were identified on all levels of the crisis management force, from the ranks to the commanding officers. In some cases, these flaws were due to out-of-date or clichéd information. Indeed, a number of interviewees proposed that a preferable way of keeping cultural knowledge up-to-date during the course of extended crisis management operations would be to take better advantage of the military interpreters' expertise in cultural training.

In other cases, the attitude of the soldiers was inappropriate. The military interpreters stressed that establishing a correct attitude towards the local culture should be an integral part of the cultural awareness training of the soldiers. Interestingly, one interviewee identified similarities in the development of peace-keepers' attitudes and that of the attitudes of immigrants to Finland in this respect:

> "All the symptoms that an immigrant shows here […], the Finns had down there. It was really interesting. […] At first, everything is rosy, and then everything is crappy and bad and so on. It was quite interesting that I noticed that Finns are there just people like everyone else."[121] (2)

Other minor needs for improvement identified in the training of the crisis management force included practical issues, such as speaking for too long without interruptions, and allowing the interpreter time to rest and recover. A number of interviewees also suggested that the soldiers of the crisis management force should be given the opportunity to practise working with an interpreter prior to deployment. Interviewees who had served more recently seemed in general to be more satisfied with the training of the crisis management force. When examined in chronological order, the military interpreters' answers suggest that the crisis management force's training, particularly its cultural knowledge training, has

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[121] "Kaikki oireet mitä maahanmuuttaja täällä näyttää […], niin suomalaiset oireilivat siellä, paikanpäällä. Ja se oli tosi mielenkiintonen juttu. […] Kaikki on ruusuista ensin ja sitten kaikki on paskaa ja kaikki on huonoo ja sitä ja tätä. Se oli aika mielenkiintonen juttu että, huomasin että suomalainen on siellä, missä kaikki muutkin, ihminen."

improved over the years. The exercises involving the use of interpreters, which were introduced in the rotation training of the crisis management force in 2012, are a good example of this. In these exercises, the soldiers have also been given a list of practical issues to consider when working with interpreters (Snellman 2011, Appendix 2).

However, a number of interviewees reflected more profoundly on their fellow soldiers' inability to comprehend the true nature and role of military interpreters. They felt that this failure to understand how military interpreters operate led to the crisis management force being unable to bring out the best in them and take full advantage of their expertise. As one interviewee put it,

> "Many don't understand what this profession is about. Many don't know what a military interpreter is. […] Those working closest to you of course thought you were worth gold, but many didn't. But then you worked to get approval. And the rest were a little confused."[122] (6)

When asked about whether the soldiers in the crisis management force should be required to know some basic phrases of the language spoken in the operation area, such as a few courtesy phrases, the majority of the interviewees agreed. The interviewees considered that learning a few words of the local language was not absolutely necessary, but that it could be very useful in many ways. It was regarded as a sign of respect and simply good manners to be able to reply to a greeting, for example, in the same language in which you are addressed. However, knowing the local language could have an even stronger impact:

> "[…] If […] you know how to greet in the local language, it will work wonders to relieve tension and build communication […]. Because sometimes a single word in the local language can radically change the situation down there. Even if the situation looks hostile, the atmosphere may all of a sudden open up to be friendly and easy to work in. […] I warmly recommend that peace-keepers would learn some basic phrases before or after deployment."[123] (3)

Footitt and Kelly (2012, 244; 103) argue that language training for the ordinary soldiers should focus on general language awareness and the way to use the language resources

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[122] "Moni ei tajua mikä tää ammatti on. Moni ei tiedä mitä sotilastulkki on. […] Ne läheisimmät työtoverit tietenkin pitivät kullan arvosena, mutta moni ei. Mutta sitä arvostusta haettiin sitten, luotiin. Ja muut oli sitten vähän hämillään."

[123] "[…] jos […] osaa paikallisella kielellä tervehtiä, niin jo se kummasti se jännitys laukee ja suhde, niin sanotusti tämmönen kommunikointi alkaa sujuu […]. Koska ykskin sana joskus kun osaat sanoo paikallisella kielellä, se voi muuttaa tilanteen ihan radikaalisesti siellä paikanpäällä, että tilanne, sanotaan näin vaikka näyttäsi kuinka synkältä, niin yhtäkkii, ilmapiiri avautuu ystävälliseksi ja semmonen helpoksi toimia. […] lämpimästi ehdottaisin että rauhanturvaajat, ennen kun lähtee alueeseen tai siellä paikalla ollessa, oppisivat joitakin alkeita."

available, but they also mention the usefulness of knowing some elements of the local language.

5.1.4 Tactics

The questionnaire used in the interviews (see Appendix A) does not include questions which directly address how military interpreters should be used, nor are the research questions of this study directly aimed at the practical issues surrounding military interpreters' work in the field. Consequently, the research data only provides little information about how military interpreters are, or should be, used in the field, and only few suggestions for improvement can be drawn directly from the research data. However, the deployment, use, management, and leadership of military interpreters, which together are henceforth referred to as *interpreting tactics*, have a strong influence on how the military interpreters' agency manifests itself. It is thus worthwhile examining what few practical matters were touched upon in the research data.

The interviewees saw training and self-improvement as a central part of a military interpreter's daily duties. The most important areas of training concerned the language and culture of the operation area, in particular the special terminology used in crisis management operations. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the majority of interviewees felt that their vocabulary was inadequate, and they had to study independently to improve their proficiency. One interviewee pointed out that training may be called for in many other areas as well:

> "Improving your skills does not stop when you are deployed, that's when it starts. Physical training, language skills and, of course, the military skills, just basic military training and nothing fancy. […] In Finland they only look at the language skills, 'he knows the language, let's send him'. But I just don't think that that's enough."[124] (10)

The military interpreters took pride in their expertise and made efforts to maintain and improve their competencies. In the words of one interviewee, "An interpreter is never ready, or good enough. […] The profession doesn't suit you if you don't improve every

[124] "Taitojen kehittäminen ei lopu siihen ku menee operaatioon, sillon se vasta käytännössä alkaa, fyysisen kunnon kehittäminen, kielitaidon ja tietenkin sotilaallisten taitojen, ihan perussotilaan taidon, ei mitään sen kummallisempaa. […] Suomes katotaan vaan täällä päässä et no, se osaa kieltä, laitetaan se sinne. Mutta mun mielestä se ei vaan oo riittävää." (10)

day."[125] (4) Even though many military interpreters took the initiative to train themselves, it is primarily the responsibility of the crisis management force to support the military interpreters in their professional development.

As noted in sub-chapter 4.5.3, the majority of the interviewees felt that they had access to enough information to perform their duties. Briefing the military interpreter before each interpreting assignment facilitates the interpreter's work in many ways. Moreover, by informing the interpreter about the purpose and the goals of the upcoming meeting, the interpreter is given a possibility to influence the direction and outcome of the meeting. In the words of one interviewee,

> "[…] some briefing about how the meeting will be conducted, what questions we will ask, and what the person is likely to answer and what our reaction to that answer will be. […] Then the interpreter is able to fill in the gaps and will feel less stressed in the situation […]."[126] (10)

As already stated in sub-chapter 4.6, military interpreters do not consider themselves impartial or neutral in the sense that is traditionally expected of interpreters. Therefore, the military interpreters' role could be regarded as closer to that of a third party in a conversation, rather than that of a 'translation machine'. Claudia Angelelli (2004, 98) arrives at a similar conclusion:

> "Firstly, interpreters perceive their role as visible in all of their work settings. […] interpreters perceive themselves as aligning with one of the parties, expressing affect as well as information, controlling the flow of the communication traffic, establishing trust and facilitating mutual respect, and interpreting culture as well as language. Secondly, in spite of the fact that individual social factors affect interpreters' perceptions of their role, making it almost implausible to state that they can be value-neutral or impartial, interpreters' work setting has an even greater impact on their performance."

Consequently, while military interpreters are valuable tools of communication, at the same time they are human beings with personal qualities, feelings, and limitations. Like other soldiers, military interpreters must be treated well to perform well. For example, one constituent of successful interpreting tactics is to ascertain that the interpreter is well fed and rested before each assignment. At large, the working conditions and other circumstances of military interpreters, including personal relations and esprit-de-corps,

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[125] "Ei tulkki oo koskaan valmis. Tulkki ei oo koskaan riittävän hyvä. […] se ammatti ei sovi sulle jos sä et kehity joka päivä."

[126] "[…] vähän semmost briiffiä et miten siinä tapaamisessa tullaan toimimaan, mitä aiotaan kysyy, mitä voidaan olettaa että se vastaa ja miten reagoidaan siihen vastaukseen. […]
niin se tulkki pystyy ite jo paikkaamaan sen et siinä ei tuu semmost jännitystä siinä tilanteessa […]."

should be arranged in such a way that the interpreters' work is supported. In the words of one interviewee, "[…] He can interpret completely incorrectly for you if he sees fit. You don't know, and you won't achieve anything. Instead, create good working conditions for him, because he's a very valuable tool for you."[127] (6)

The military interpreters' expertise should be utilised to the best possible extent. Arguably, their cultural knowledge of both the local culture as well as of Finnish culture may enable military interpreters to detect problems that no-one else is able to. This is highlighted in the following example from one interviewee: "[…] In addition, we monitor the behaviour of the Finnish soldiers and quickly intervene if we notice that they as Finns do things that they shouldn't and offend the local culture and religion."[128] (12) Disregarding the military interpreter's intervention in the above example could have severe consequences.

Another aspect of interpreting tactics is where and when each military interpreter is deployed, and where their position within the unit should be. In a patrol, for example, the interpreter's position is usually in the patrol commander's immediate vicinity. However, an interpreter with suitable military skills could be positioned with the patrol's scouts instead, where interaction with the local population is more likely to occur. An interpreter is needed, or "standard issue", as one interviewee put it, on practically every patrol, but not all interpreters are suitable for all kinds of missions. In addition to the field skills of the military interpreter, other factors for consideration when deploying are gender and ethnicity (see sub-chapter 4.6.3). As one interviewee remarked,

> "I would consider female officers and soldiers in certain situations even a disadvantage for the whole operation. […] [The locals] don't relate, they don't take female soldiers and officers seriously. They are even offended by a female soldier giving them advice."[129] (12)

5.1.5 Security

In the context of crisis management operations, information security is of crucial importance. Due to the nature of interpreting tasks, large amounts of information, some of

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[127] "[…] se voi tulkata sulle ihan päin helvettiä jos se haluaa. Sä et tiedä, sä et saavuta mitään. Vaan luo hänelle hyvät työolosuhteet, koska hän on sun erittäin arvokas työkalu."

[128] "[…] lisäksi tarkkaillaan suomalaisten sotilaiden käytöstä, puuttua nopeasti siihen mikäli huomaa että suomalaisena siellä tehään sellasia asioita mitä ei sais tehdä ja loukataan paikallisten kulttuuria ja uskontoo."

[129] "Näkisin että jopa naisupseereista ja sotilasta jopa tietys paikassa on haittaa koko operaatiolle. […] He eivät suhtaudu, ei ota naissotilaita, -upseereita tosissaan. He ottavat jopa loukkauksena kun naissotilas antaa neuvoa heille."

which is classified, invariably pass through interpreters. Therefore, all military interpreters should have a security clearance that permits them to undertake their duties. As already pointed out in sub-chapter 4.7.2, some of the interviewees were irritated by what they perceived as mistrust on the part of the military organisation, even after they were deployed and serving as military interpreters. The military interpreters' loyalty in terms of security should not be questioned beyond what normal information security protocol and procedures demand. Anton Grabar (2012, 24–25) points out that, in human intelligence (HUMINT) operations, shared values between the military interpreter and the rest of the team enhance the operability of the whole unit. Mistrust based on fabricated claims, prejudice or bias undermines the military interpreters' moral and work ethic, and reduces their usability.

Some of the military interpreters interviewed had originally left for Finland from the same geographical area to which they returned as soldiers of the crisis management force. A number of interviewees had friends and relatives who lived in the area. Family ties to the operation area have been seen as a hazard for the neutrality of military interpreters. In Denmark, for example, military interpreters with close family ties to the operation area are not eligible for recruitment. A number of interviewees expressed similar concerns when discussing the trustworthiness of the locally recruited interpreters. For example, when dealing with sensitive information, the local authorities had demanded to work with a military interpreter instead of a local interpreter, because they considered the local interpreters unreliable. Two interviewees pointed out that a Finnish military interpreter who was convicted of taking a bribe when serving in Afghanistan (cf. Snellman 2011, 15) had ties to the local population. Indeed, a number of interviewees had believed, even before sending their application to the crisis management force, that they would not be eligible to serve as military interpreters because of family ties with the operation area.

Most of the military interpreters interviewed had met colleagues from other nations' militaries during their service. These encounters without exception occurred in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The interviewees emphasised that topics related to their duties were mutually avoided in their discussions, which was seen as a sign of professionalism.

5.2 International Comparison

This sub-chapter outlines an international comparison of the backgrounds, recruitment, and training of military interpreters in eight countries. The specifics and ideas expressed below are based on the answers to one email questionnaire, and should as such not be

regarded as comprehensive. Although the answers to the email queries were compiled by persons who work with language issues in the militaries of the respective country, the answers may also reflect their personal notions, and might thus not be representative for the military organisation of that country. Moreover, the comparison outlined below provides little insight into the agency of Finnish military interpreters. Instead, the data was collected for a different purpose, namely to identify features of a translation culture specific for Finnish crisis management operations by comparing military translation cultures internationally.

5.2.1 Estonia

The Estonian military does not recruit or use military interpreters. This is mainly due to the small size of the Estonian Defence Forces: it is not rational to train interpreters for military purposes only. Consequently, Estonia's crisis management operations have acquired their interpreting services by other means. The Estonian contingent in the ISAF operation, for example, has 4 local interpreters, which the lead nation of the operation area, the United Kingdom, provides by a memorandum of understanding. As there is currently no training of military interpreters in Estonia, research in the field is also non-existent (Leete 2013).

Epp Leete (2013) stresses the importance of military subject matter knowledge in military interpreting over language skills, as "it's the meaning and not the words that should be translated", but asserts that an interpreter is always surrounded by helpful and willing specialists when working with the military. Moreover, with reference to the limited resources of the Estonian military, Leete asks whether it would be a good idea to initiate co-operation between Finland and Estonia in the training of military interpreters (Leete 2013). The idea of international or Nordic co-operation is also expressed in the Swedish reply (see sub-chapter 5.2.6).

5.2.2 Canada

The Canadian military considers the experience and cultural insight of Canadians from varying ethnical backgrounds an asset for military operations. To facilitate qualified Canadians to seek contract employment with the Department of National Defence (DND), the Canadian Forces initiated a special programme called the Language & Cultural Advisor (LCA) Program. LCAs are not trained interpreters, but they work with Canadian

soldiers providing translation services and cultural advice. LCAs may be required to work under the same conditions and face the same risks as Canadian soldiers.

Various methods are used to select recruits for LCA positions. Options include searching for qualified personnel among current employees of the Canadian military, using private recruiting companies to initiate enrolment, and recruiting by targeting specific ethnic groups using social media, job websites, and word-of mouth referrals. Moreover, other government departments with candidates possessing the required language skills may be contacted. The language competence of the candidates is assessed by the Canadian Forces Language School (CFLS) with an oral and written examination. Their language proficiency is rated on a scale from 0 (no ability) to 5 (well educated native speaker)[130] in the target languages considered for a particular crisis management operation.

Applicants to LCA positions must be Canadian citizens, and able to obtain a Canadian Government Level II SECRET security clearance. Moreover, the candidates must be medically and physically fit. Previous military experience or interpreting experience is not a pre-requisite for applying, but is considered an asset. Other preferred skills are the ability to read, write, and speak effectively in the target languages, as well as cultural awareness and understanding of the target area of the operation. Additionally, demonstrated experience in working with computers and in administrative duties, as well as the ability to carry out physically demanding activities if necessary, are required. Good planning and organization skills, and the ability to multi-task, are also appreciated. The Canadian military has a large number of potential applicants to choose from for each LCA position. Consequently, the level of desired skills and qualifications can be set higher.

Before deployment, the LCAs are given the same preparation and training that all civilian employees of the DND are required to complete prior to deployment overseas. The LCA training also focuses particularly on military interactions and escort interpreting for the military. The LCAs are employed as civilian employees on a fixed term contract with the DND. The length of deployment is typically 6 months, but further extensions of contracts are possible. Specific salary figures are not divulged, as this is restricted information. The LCAs are given an annual evaluation of their performance, and, upon returning from a mission, a full debriefing with lessons learned or suggestions for improvement for the future. No research has been completed on the performance of the LCAs in the field (Barber 2013).

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[130] This description matches the language assessment scale of STANAG 6001 (see NATO 2010).

5.2.3 Denmark

The Danish Defence Forces train military interpreters on two levels: Language Officers (in Danish *sprogofficer*) and interpreters (*tolk*). The language officers' training lasts two years, and consists of a four-month-long basic military training and a 20-month-long language training in Arabic, Russian, or Farsi/Dari, upon which the language officers are appointed lieutenants in the reserve. They sign a reserve personnel contract of 4 years with an obligation to serve for up to 6 months in international operations, and 10 months in total. (Bjerregaard 2013) If deployed, the language officers' terms of service are equivalent to those of other officers of the equivalent rank. A basic salary of a first lieutenant is approximately 28,000 DKK, or 3,750 euros (Pilemand 2013).

The interpreters' training lasts eight weeks, and includes 2 weeks' of interpreting training and exercises. The applicants' language skills in Danish and the language of the operation area (e.g. Dari, Pashto, or Somali) are tested in oral and in written examinations. Additionally, the admission requirements include a clause that excludes applicants with close family ties with the operation area. Interpreting experience, English language skills, and conscript service in the Danish Armed Forces are not mandatory requirements, but desired. When deployed, the interpreters have the status of a civilian and do not carry weapons, even though they wear uniforms and protective equipment. Both the language officers as well as the interpreters are subject to a number of physical health and fitness tests in order to be eligible. No research has been completed on the military interpreters' performance in the field, but a follow-up regime is being constructed (Bjerregaard 2013; Forsvaret 2013).

5.2.4 Germany

The German Armed Forces recruit personnel with language skills to serve as military interpreters. The recruitment takes place at universities, for example, in cultural associations, on the internet, and at recruitment fairs. However, in practice the potential applicants learn of the possibility to serve as military interpreters mostly by word of mouth. The recruits are almost exclusively immigrants, but German citizenship is a prerequisite for deployment. The applicants' language competences as well as their interpreting skills are tested in a recruitment and selection process, which consists of an oral part (interpretation scenario) and a written part (translation from the candidate's native language into German, and from German into the candidate's native language). Applicants are not expected to have an in-depth knowledge or experience of interpreting, although

that is considered an advantage. However, the applicants must have a very good command of both their native tongue and German. Previous military experience is not required.

The military interpreters first undergo a total of eight weeks of general military training for personnel who have not previously served in the German Armed Forces. An additional two weeks' training period prior to deployment is obligatory for all members of the crisis management force. In addition to the military training, the interpreters receive mission-related language training. This intensive training is done in tandem teams of new and experienced interpreters, which has proved very successful.

Upon completing their training, military interpreters are offered fixed-term contracts for the duration of the mandate of the operation (normally 12 months). The interpreters' monthly pay ranges from 2,000 to 2,800 euros, depending on qualifications. Additional military pay (15 euros per day) and a foreign duty allowances (e.g. for the ISAF operation 110 euros per day) are paid during operations. A military interpreter's tour of duty lasts from two to six months, on average four months. Interpreters serve for at least six and occasionally up to eight months per year. No research on the linguistic support provided to German contingents has been carried out. Nevertheless, feedback and efficiency reports show that the vast majority of military interpreters have performed excellently. The German Armed Forces consider linguistic support vital to the successful accomplishment of operations in foreign theatres (Gollinger 2013).

5.2.5 Netherlands

The Dutch Armed Forces continually recruit and select interpreters for the military. Recruitment is done passively or actively: passive recruiting is done among native speakers or professional freelance interpreters with a connection to the military, or civilian or military employees of the Armed Forces who are competent in a foreign language and are interested in having a secondary task as an interpreter. Active recruiting is carried out by contacting civilians registered in interpreter and translator registers (professional or non-professional), or contacting people with specific ethnic backgrounds, for instance by consulting other authorities such as the national police, or the immigration services. Contact with potential applicants is also sought actively by advertising in various media, or by word of mouth through consulting ethnic societies and networks. All candidates must have Dutch citizenship.

The majority of Dutch military interpreters are native speakers, i.e. first or second-generation immigrants. Therefore, extensive training in foreign languages is not considered necessary, and the focus is on military training as well as on mission-related training. Based on their military training and experience, Dutch military interpreters are divided into 3 categories. The first category comprises the military personnel who have passed a language test, and who are registered as military interpreters. People from many different ethnic groups serve in the Dutch Armed Forces. The second category comprises National Guard personnel, who have also passed language tests, and who are registered in an interpreter database. The National Guard takes part in mandatory basic military training every year. When interpreters from the above two categories are not available, a third category, which consists of freelance interpreters or civilian personnel, is considered. People in this category must pass a language test in the foreign language of the operation area and Dutch as well as an interpreting test. Moreover, they must pass an interview, psychological and physical tests, and a security screening by the Dutch Military Intelligence and Security Service. If contracted, the interpreters attend five weeks of military training and additional mission related training.

The interpreters' salary depends on their rank of service, which is based on their experience, education, age, the results of the language and interpreting tests, and current income. The duration of their contract depends on the mission at hand. As a rule, a contract commences three to four months prior to a mission, and extends three to four months after the mission. All Dutch military interpreters are carefully evaluated by the end users as well as by interviews. The evaluations are collected and archived, and their results and lessons learned are continuously applied in the field (Oegema 2013).

5.2.6 Sweden

The Swedish Defence Forces recruits and trains two different categories of interpreters: Military interpreters (in Swedish *militärtolk*) and language interpreters (*språktolk*) (cf. the two categories in the Danish Armed Forces in sub-chapter 5.2.3 above). The military interpreters are linguist specialist officers employed in the Defence Forces, whereas the language interpreters are native speakers of a foreign language with Swedish citizenship, who receive basic military training as well as supplementary language training in Sweden. Like Denmark, Sweden trains military interpreters in the Russian, Arabic, and Dari languages.

Military interpreters are trained at the Armed Forces Interpreter Academy (Tolkskolan), which is a part of The Swedish Armed Forces Intelligence and Security Centre. Traditionally, the persons trained as military interpreters are not native speakers, but not all are ethnic Swedes. In fact, the candidates are not expected to have any previous knowledge at all of the language they are to be trained in, nor of interpreting, or previous military training. However, persons with a military training or experience may apply to the Interpreter Academy. The training lasts two years, including military training and interpreter training. After completing their training, the candidates are expected to have reached the competence level 2 ("Functional"), or a higher level, of NATO STANAG 6001[131] in the foreign language. In English, the candidates must reach STANAG 6001 competence level 3 to be eligible for training. Upon completing their training, the candidates are offered employment as specialist officers with an obligation to serve in international operations.

Prior to deployment, the military interpreters attend a three-week language course, which focuses on the practical application of their language and interpreting skills. These interpreting exercises are a part of the pre-deployment training of the crisis management force. The military interpreters' terms of service are, as a rule, comparable to those of other military personnel. There is no research available on the performance of Swedish military interpreters. Any follow-up, such as feedback and "lessons learned" seminars have focused on the experiences of individual interpreters, and the interpreters as a group have not been collectively studied (Larsson 2013).

The Swedish Armed Forces recognises the increasingly important role of military interpreters as cultural mediators, and follows the decreasing number of applicants to the Interpreter Academy with concern (UNT 2012). A representative for the Armed Forces Language School, Hanna Jungwallius (2013), expresses interest in the topic of this study and gives examples of recent forms of co-operation in the field of languages between the militaries of the Nordic countries, for example through NORDEFCO[132]. Should Nordic co-operation in the training of military interpreters eventually be initiated, as suggested above by Estonia, the Swedish Armed Forces, with their experience in training military interpreters, might have plenty to contribute.

[131] For a description of STANAG 6001 competence levels, see NATO 2010.
[132] Nordic Defence Cooperation. Website: http://www.nordefco.org/

5.2.7 United Kingdom

The UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) is responsible for meeting the linguistic requirements of the British Armed Forces. The language services of the UK military are met by using a combination of uniformed linguists (i.e. military interpreters), civilian linguists recruited in the UK, and locally employed civilians (LEC). The UK MOD recognises linguistic capabilities in the military as a central resource, and that developing them is a long-term project. As Justin Lewis (2012, 59) puts it: “an appreciation of culture and language must be widely embedded in military culture and developed over time, and should not be a niche capability that is only ramped up on an as-required basis”. Uniformed linguists are not specifically recruited into the UK military, although language competences are regarded as a merit in the recruitment of military personnel. The uniformed linguists’ primary tasks are usually related to intelligence, support operations, or non-operational tasks. The Royal Armed Forces has a linguist reserve unit, the members of which can volunteer for temporary full-time service when required. Civilian linguists are recruited as required from the UK and internationally. The civilian linguists are usually well-educated, but not necessarily professional linguists, and their English is often inferior to their native language. The UK MOD emphasises that serving as a linguist should be voluntary: the best linguists are often volunteers, and the motivation inherent in volunteers is an important factor in achieving good training results (Lewis 2012, 62).

The language skills of the uniformed linguists are evaluated according to NATO STANAG 6001. The civilian linguists’ language skills are evaluated using STANAG 6001, or an equivalent, recognised scale such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)[133] or the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale. The UK holds STANAG 6001 skill level 3 as the lowest level at which the military can reasonably expect accurate interpretation (Lewis 2012, 62). Military linguists are expected to meet STANAG 6001 Standardised Language Profile (SLP) 3321[134], and are thus not trained to a civilian standard in translation or interpretation. Volunteers are selected in interviews, where their motivation is evaluated. Other factors in the selection comprise previous education and language experience, intelligence, and a high Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) result. Moreover, field skills are considered a merit: “The military linguist must have sufficient field skills to be robust in adversity and not to be a liability to those around them” (Lewis 2012, 62).

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[133] Lewis (2012, 63) presents an ”indicative mapping” of how STANAG 6001 relates to the CEFR

[134] ”SLP 3321” means STANAG 6001 competence level 3 in listening, level 3 in speaking, level 2 in reading and level 1 in writing.

The selected uniformed linguists undertake a residential military language course of 9 to 18 months' duration and, if possible, a special training prior to deployment with the unit they will be supporting. Additionally, up to 10% of the military personnel of a deployed crisis management force will receive limited language training prior to deployment, enough to assist with their primary tasks. The civilian linguists recruited in the UK receive a limited pre-deployment training in field survival skills, which is given by the contractor responsible for the recruitment. Any requirements for interpreting experience will depend on the availability of native language speaking candidates. Employment contracts are usually for a minimum period and can be extended. Uniformed linguists receive a qualification award when passing language examinations, and daily active use payments during deployment (for the exact sums, see Lewis 2012, 66). The uniformed linguists often serve as superiors to the civilian linguists. Upon returning from the operation area, the uniformed linguists are debriefed and the lessons learned are recorded. Subsequently, the feedback is adapted in the training of future contingents and in the evolution of doctrine (Lewis 2013).

5.2.8 United States

The US actively recruits and trains military interpreters, which in the US Army are called "enlisted translators/interpreters". The candidates for this Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), code 09L, or "oh-nine-lima", are usually fluent in a particular target language as well as English, although candidates with no prior knowledge of English, or a foreign language, are also accepted for training. The US Army uses the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) to evaluate the ability of a native English speaker to learn a language. The DLAB score determines the level of difficulty in the language training. If no DLAB is available for a specific language, an Oral Proficiency Interview can be used instead. The candidates' background is also verified, as linguist positions usually require Top Secret security clearance.

The enlisted interpreters receive 9 weeks of Basic Combat Training, which is followed by Advanced Individual Training at the Defense Language Institute (DLI). This training lasts from 6 to 16 months, and includes language training as well as training in the history and culture, such as the subtleties of body language, regional conventions, courtesies, and taboos of the target population. Languages currently trained are different varieties of Arabic, Chinese, Persian, and Pashto. The military interpreters also take part in exercises, in which they learn to use their language skills in a variety of scenarios.

The US Army or Army Reserve linguists are deployed around the world in strategic or tactical positions. Strategic linguists usually work in an office environment, while tactical linguists more often work in the field alongside soldiers. In addition, the tasks of a military interpreter include teaching their fellow soldiers basic language and cultural skills in preparation for overseas deployments. An interpreter's remunerations may be considerably higher than that of a regular soldier because of bonuses. A Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus of up to 400 USD for demonstrated proficiency in each language is paid as an incentive to maintain and improve language skills. Interpreters might also qualify for other bonuses, such as an enlistment bonus of up to 40,000 USD and the Montgomery GI Bill of over 50,000 USD. Interpreters may also increase their eligibility for promotion by seeking certifications while in service, such as accreditation with the American Translators Association, or the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators. Moreover, the US Army encourages linguists to pursue a civilian career after having completed their time in active duty (Fischer 2013; Luckwaldt 2013; U.S. Army 2013).

This short examination of the recruitment and training procedures of military interpreters in eight countries shows many similarities with the situation in Finland: military interpreters are usually required to be citizens of the country that they serve, the candidates are mostly immigrants, and recruitment may be difficult. Perhaps because of the scarcity of potential applicants, military interpreters appear to be well paid in other countries as well. However, it is striking that none of the respondents to the email inquiry reported having knowledge of any research into the performance of military interpreters in the field. This is especially surprising in the case of countries such as the U.K or the USA, or even Denmark, which all have ample experience of working with military interpreters from Iraq and Afghanistan, for example.

5.3 Reliability and Validity of Research Results

To fill the criteria of validity of a scientific study, research should, when repeated, arrive at the same or similar results. In the case of this study, repeatability is challenged by the large quantity of source data and the amount of detail in it. As argued in Chapter 3, in qualitative studies, the researchers' pre-understanding, their choices of the information to highlight, and how to construe this information, greatly influence the outcome and results. Should this study be repeated by another researcher, it is quite possible that he or she would arrive at somewhat different conclusions. Alternatively, the results might very well be similar, which would neither increase nor reduce the validity of this study. A method of

improving the validity of research, triangulation, and the methods of triangulation used in this study, are discussed in sub-chapter 3.3.

The credibility of any research can ultimately only be judged by its reader. However, it is the researcher's responsibility to establish the credibility of a study by describing and specifying, for example, the setting, subjects, procedures, and parameters of the study, thus convincing the reader. The credibility of this study is enhanced by the thematic approach of dealing with the research data. The stance involving thematic categories, further explicated by presenting the results in sub-categories within each theme, allowed for transparency in the analysis of the research data. This approach highlights the authentic voices of the interviewees, contextualises the findings, and delivers the research results to the reader in an accessible format.

The research data can be considered as a representative sample. Out of 22 names on the list of military interpreters, 14 people were interviewed. Of 22 possible interviewees available, one could not be reached, three were unavailable, two declined, and only two were purposefully deselected. A sample of 14 individuals out of a population of 22 equals 63.6%, and it can, as such, be considered statistically representative. A percentage of 36.4 non-respondents can be considered as normal (Gobo 2002, 412). More important than statistical representativeness in the humanities, however, is whether the selection is socially representative (ibid., 406). The grounds on which two interviewees were deselected are discussed in sub-chapter 3.2, and are open for scrutiny by the reader. However, the non-respondents, i.e. the interpreters who could not be reached, were not available, or who declined an interview, might have systematically different statistical distributions in their main socio-demographic characteristics than the interviewees. It is not known whether this is true. Furthermore, it is not known if the list of military interpreters obtained from Pori Brigade, from which the interviewees were selected, was a complete list of Finnish military interpreters. The list may, for example, have been edited before being given to the author. Nevertheless, as the approach of this study is qualitative, it was considered excessive to correct these possible deviations by weighting, for example.

Similarly, the qualitative nature of this study has to be kept in mind when assessing the generalizability of its findings. As the focus of this study lies on the interpretation of meaning, each piece of research data, each interviewee, and each email response is considered unique: the information or phenomena derived from a single interviewee cannot, as such, be generalised to the whole population. It is thus irrelevant whether a characteristic is unique to only one person in the population, or whether it is shared by all. Instead, this study observes the relations between variables, and regularities or

irregularities therein (cf. Gobo 2002, 423). Thus, the results of this study can be generalised only to a limited extent. In the words of Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, "In terms of making generalization to a larger population, **we are not attempting to generalize as such but to specify** […] the condition under which our phenomena exist, the action/interaction that pertains to them, and the associated outcomes or consequences. This means that our theoretical formulation applies to these situations or circumstances but **to no others**." (Strauss & Corbin 1990, 191, in Gobo 2002, 421, bold in original.)

In survey studies in which interviews are used, the personalities of the persons involved are likely to influence the results (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006). The results of the interviews may depend to a degree on the atmosphere in which the communication between the interviewer and the interviewee takes place. In this study, both the interviewees and the interviewer had served in the military, which may have influenced the interview results. The fact that the person conducting the interview was serving as an officer in the Finnish Defence Forces may have affected the approach of the interviewees, all of whom held a lower military rank, although efforts were taken to create an open and relaxed atmosphere in the interviews. This influence may not necessarily be negative (as suggested in sub-chapter 3.2), but it should nevertheless be taken into account. During the interviews, the author did not get at any point the impression that his military rank or position in the Finnish Defence Forces hampered the discussion in any way.

The author of this study, having himself served in a crisis management operation, knew one of the interviewees in advance. Furthermore, the author had friends in common with several of the interviewees, and the subject of common acquaintances was touched upon in the interviews. These personal relations were largely due to the small size of Finnish crisis management operations: as only a small number of soldiers are serving in the operations at a given time, it is inevitable that the soldiers become networked with each other. However, these friendships and connections have not influenced the conduct or results of this study in any way.

6 Conclusion

The previous chapter finalised the analysis of the research data and proposed areas for development. This chapter summarises the findings of this study, and formulates the final answers to the two research questions. In this final chapter, the attention shifts away from details in the research data to the larger entity and the central concepts of this study, namely *translator's agency*, *translation culture*, and *linguistic action competence*. Finally, there is discussion on new avenues of research related to Finnish military interpreters in crisis management operations.

6.1 Translation Culture in Finnish Crisis Management Operations

The first research question of this study concerns the background, motivation, training, and competence of Finnish military interpreters. The answers to this question, as well as two of the related sub-questions, are explicated in detail in Chapter 4. The remaining sub-question concerns the features of a translation culture in Finnish crisis management operations. What does the profile of a Finnish military interpreter, drawn in the previous chapters, disclose about the translation culture of Finnish crisis management operations? Do the findings of this study question or contradict the realities of the currently prevailing translation culture?

The translation culture of Finnish crisis management operations has much in common with the translation cultures of the militaries of other countries. As the international comparison in the previous chapter shows, many fundamental similarities exist between the militaries of Finland and other countries. One feature shared by all countries with military interpreters is the requirement of citizenship. Previous military experience is a merit in many countries, but not a requirement. Another common feature appears to be the many channels of recruitment. The multiple and overlapping methods of recruiting and training military interpreters are perhaps a necessity due to a lack of potential recruits, or the difficulties in finding them. Many similarities can also be identified in the pre-deployment training. Additionally, military interpreters volunteer for service, and are paid reasonably well, in all the surveyed countries. This suggests that military translation cultures are not national cultures, as Wolf (2012) notes. Some extent of cultural exchange and mutual learning takes place between the military cultures of the participating countries in multi-national crisis management operations, and military translation cultures are no exception.

However, the international comparison also shows that the translation culture of Finnish crisis management operations is comparatively undeveloped, and that there is much to be learned. Many of the replies from the militaries of other countries directly stress the value and importance of military interpreters in a way yet to be seen in Finland. Moreover, the pre-deployment training in many countries seems more structured and tailored to the military interpreters' needs than in Finland. Additionally, in a number of countries, persons with no previous knowledge of a language or culture were trained to become military interpreters. A fundamental difference learnt in the international comparison was that, in many countries, the persons applying for duty as military interpreters were subject to extensive testing: in addition to the health and fitness tests, which are conducted also in Finland, language tests, interpreting tests and psychological tests were common.

Translators and interpreters are, in general, often perceived as a necessary evil or a nuisance at best. Consequently, the lack of effort put into translation, or a failure to see the central role of the cultural translation process jeopardises the result or final product that was being pursued (Cf. Prunč 1997, 101). In business, a good translation is a profitable investment: it is productive and cuts expenses. Poor translations, on the other hand, reduce sales and increase costs. In the context of military crisis management, translation quality may mark the difference between operational success and setbacks, or, in a worst-case scenario, between life and death. Considering the high importance of language services in crisis management operations, the shortcomings in the translation culture of Finnish crisis management operations recognised above can be regarded as constituting an obstacle, or even a risk to the success of future operations. This stands in sharp contrast to the considerable achievements made in the field of military crisis management in Finland in other respects.

Why and how, then, should military interpreters be recruited, used and trained in future Finnish crisis management operations? There is no need for Finland to reinvent the wheel: many changes could be initiated by international benchmarking and co-operation, and by adapting international best practices to Finnish interests. The NATO document "Linguistic Support for Operations (AlingP-1)" (NATO 2011), for example, could offer a good starting point and a useful guideline when formulating a policy for the operational linguistic support of Finnish crisis management operations. However, each crisis management operation is unique: the agenda, context, and operational environments may vary. Furthermore, resources can be expected to be increasingly scarce. There are no easy, simple, or quick solutions. Additionally, linguistic competences are to a large part developed outside military structures, and close co-operation with civilian interpreting institutions is necessary. Nevertheless, as the results of this study suggest, military translation culture is

distinct and differs considerably from translation culture in a civilian setting. As noted by Lewis (2012, 67), ”The greater the physical danger, autonomy of action, sensitivity of content and need to understand military business, the more likely that military linguist requirements will diverge from those of civilian practitioners.”

Footitt and Kelly (2012, 243–245) point out that the organisation of language preparation and support in military operations has the tendency to improve over time. Lessons learnt from one operation are often applicable in subsequent operations, because “issues of language and culture are pervasive and fundamental”. In this light, perhaps one suitable starting point for developing the translation culture of Finnish crisis management operations would be to assemble and thoroughly evaluate the experiences of military interpreters from past and current operations. After all, like many of the countries examined above, Finland, too, has decades of experience of military crisis management.

6.2 Military Interpreters’ Agency

The second research question of this study and its related sub-questions concerns Finnish military interpreters’ agency. Many of the sub-questions related to agency have already been addressed in the two previous chapters 4 and 5. To summarize, the results of this study suggest that military interpreters have substantial agency in Finnish crisis management operations. The military interpreters’ role extends far beyond the traditional role of interpreters as prescribed by translatory norms, such as the professional interpreters’ codes of conduct. As actors, military interpreters are flexible and adapt to the existing circumstances. They effectively utilise the space they are given, and exercise their influence freely but, at the same time, they remain aware of their designated roles. Military interpreters are closer to being active contributors and third parties in communication when interpreting, rather than mere mouthpieces or ‘interpreting machines’. Depending on the situation, military interpreters act as mediators, advisors, “fixers”[135] – and interpreters. Moreover, Finnish military interpreters hold a high status, and are respected and valued by their comrades in arms.

What elements does the military interpreters’ agency consist of, and how significant are these elements in relation to each other? The building blocks of the Finnish military interpreters’ agency become visible when the results of the thematic analysis are

[135] According to Baker (2010, 209), the term *fixer* is widely used to refer to interpreters in war zones because of the wide range of duties they undertake to ‘fix’ things.

examined together with the data about the interviewees' background and competence. Furthermore, some constituents of agency were directly referred to in the interviews. The results of such an examination propose that the age, gender, or professional experience of military interpreters have only a limited influence on their agency. A somewhat more noticeable influence can be attributed to the military interpreters' language and interpreting proficiency, as well as their ethnicity. Perhaps surprisingly, the strongest influence on the military interpreters' agency was their military training or lack of it, as well as their cultural knowledge. Knowing both Finnish culture and military culture appeared as particularly important elements of agency. The elements of Finnish military interpreters' agency are shown in **Figure 5**.

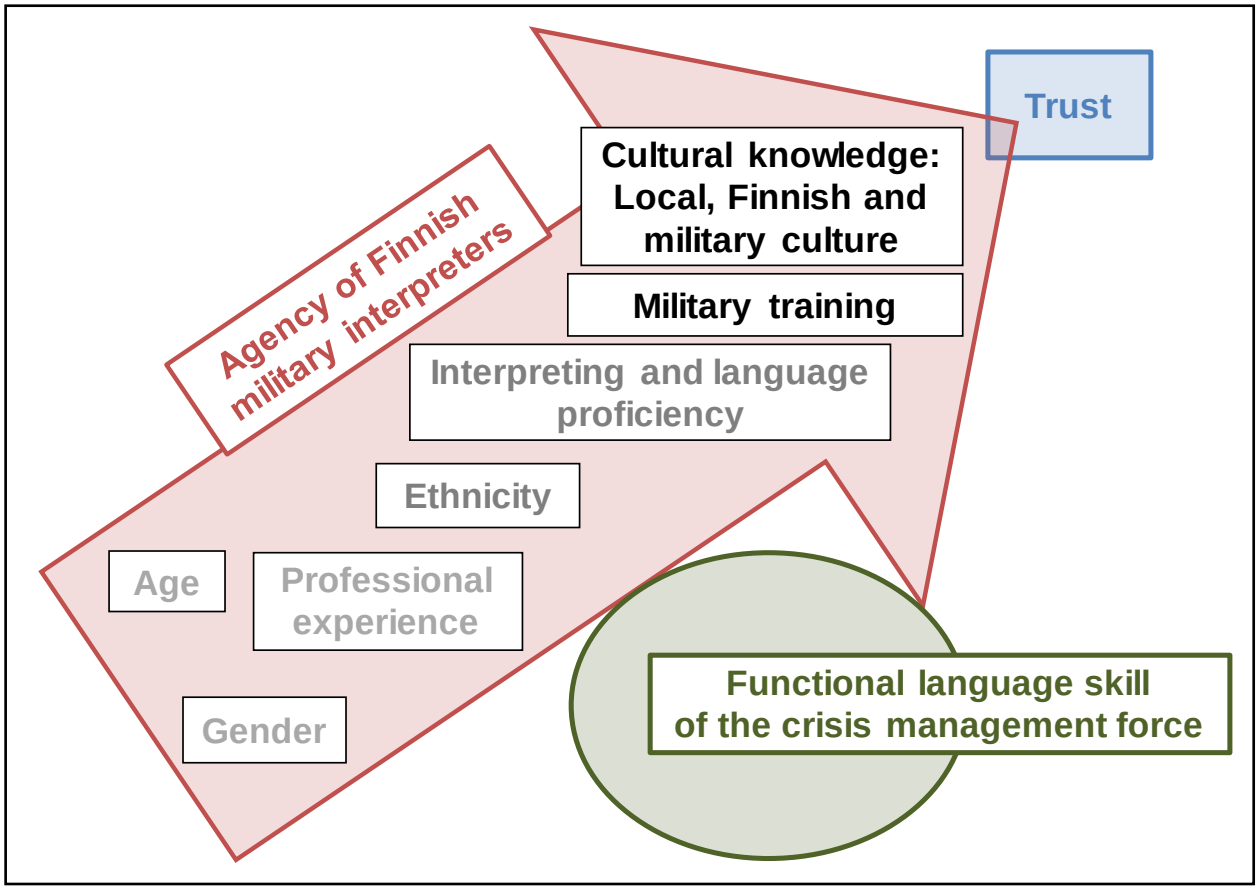

Figure 5. Elements of Finnish Military Interpreters' Agency.

Thus, the results contradict the Finnish and international practice, whereby basic military training is not required of military interpreters: knowledge of military culture is indispensable when working with the military. However, the results also suggest that the interpreters' agency is somewhat constricted by military institutions and the hierarchy inherent in military organisations. Understandably, interpreters' relations to their clients are by default non-democratic, and the same is true in a military context. Moreover, the

characteristically hierarchical nature of military organisations may counteract the communicative role of the military interpreter.

If any conclusion can be drawn from the above, it is that the foundation of Finnish military interpreters' agency is their trustworthiness or loyalty, as perceived by the other members of the crisis management force. This trust, which in the framework of this study was exposed particularly against the backdrop of the locally recruited interpreters, draws from the perceived 'Finnishness' and 'soldiership' of the military interpreters, which, in turn, are supported by their military training and knowledge of Finnish culture. Moreover, the military interpreters' agency is dependent on and may be enhanced by the sufficiently functional language skills of the soldiers in the crisis management force (see **Figure 5**). As already argued in sub-chapter 2.3.1, the ability to work with an interpreter is an essential part of the linguistic action competence of any soldier in a crisis management operation. This ability includes elements such as knowing the interpreters' role, the interpreters' abilities and limitations, as well as the basics of interpreting tactics. As Baker (2010, 214) notes, the interpreters' significant capability to influence communication is hardly ever acknowledged by their clients.

6.3 Suggestions for Further Research

There is little scientific research on interpreting in military crisis management. No such research had been undertaken by the countries in the international comparison (see sub-chapter 5.2), and this study is the first of its kind in Finland. Consequently, as a category of interpreters, military interpreters in crisis management operations are relatively invisible, even among all translatory professions, in which the translator's invisibility has traditionally been emphasised (cf. Dean & Pollard 2011, 167). Arguably, increasing this visibility through research could be one method of giving the language services utilised in military crisis management the attention that they deserve. Indeed, one purpose of this study is to make Finnish military interpreters more visible.

However, people's interest in issues concerning interpreters in the context of war and the military seems to be continuously growing. In newspaper articles and other media, there is frequent mention of interpreters working in conflict zones. Online sources, such as social media and blogs, are full of debate on the subject. For example, a simple Google search with the terms "interpreter Iraq Afghanistan" returns over four million search results. In the media, two questions would seem to have gained the main focus: first, the risks and problems caused by the lack of competence of the interpreters that the military employs,

and second, the poor security situation in which interpreters work in conflict zones. One aspect of the latter question is the difficult juridical position and security situation in which the local interpreters are placed once the military operation, which they have supported, ends[136]. The circumstances of the local interpreters employed by the crisis management operation in Afghanistan have recently received much attention, and the issue has been noticed even in Finland (Helsingin Sanomat 2013a).

The results of this study suggest that an understanding of military culture is crucial when communicating with military personnel. If this is true, what are the reasons? What is the concept of language and language use in military culture? What characterises communication between soldiers? In what ways does the military's view on language differ from that of linguists or interpreters? Because of their view on language, do people with a military background more often perceive interpreting as a process of code-changing from one language to another? Military personnel are trained and encouraged to use exact, explicit, and concise expressions. Could this limit or restrict their understanding of the subtleties of interpreting? Could some of the military's negative experiences of working with interpreters, civilian interpreters in particular, be a direct result of this culture clash? Obviously, the interpreter's role in the military is subject to a multitude of factors, of which the communicative aspect is only one. As Footitt and Kelly (2012, 243–245) point out, "The professional status of translators and interpreters in conflict situations is complex and does not easily fit into the established paradigms. Further work is needed to develop an appropriate model for civilian interpreters in the military."

The above, introductory draft of a translation culture in Finnish crisis management operations raises many questions. Inghilleri (2003) proposes a theoretical model of norms in various interpreting contexts. What translational and non-translational norms are inherent in the translation culture of Finnish crisis management operations? To what extent are Finnish military interpreters committed to these norms? Are the military interpreters subservient to these norms, or are they, through their agency and visibility, able to participate in shaping the norms of this emerging translation culture?

The possible discontent with language services among military personnel, already mentioned in the introductory chapter as one of the starting points of this study, opens up some interesting avenues of research. Are these problems factual, and if so, what lies

[136] The issue has been the matter of public debate in many countries, including Finland, Sweden, the U.S., U.K, and New Zealand. Interpreting in conflict zones has also started initiatives, such as the non-profit organisation "Red T", which strives to improve the security of all the members of the profession (see http://red-t.org for more details).

behind them? Are they caused by problems in communication, as suggested above, or by unskilful interpreting tactics? One research topic of particular interest would be the performance of military interpreters in the field, especially as the international comparison revealed that it has not been studied. The topic of military interpreter performance leads directly to military interpreter training: what kind of training would best prepare military interpreters for deployment? What kind of training is most urgently required during the missions? What is the impact of military interpreter training?

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7. Interview. 31 December 2012. Material in possession of the author.

8. Interview. 11 January 2013. Material in possession of the author.

9. Interview. 21 December 2012. Material in possession of the author.

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Appendix A: Interview Questionnaire

Interview Questionnaire (Translated from Finnish by author)

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Theme *Question* *Secondary question* *Notes*

Background information

- What is your name?
- What is your age?
- Where do you live?
- Where were you born?
- When did you or your family move to Finland?
- Are you a Finnish citizen?
  - When did you become a Finnish citizen?
- Do you have other citizenships?
- Have you lived abroad?
  - Where, for how long?

Language skills

- What is your mother tongue?
- What other languages do you know?
- How did you learn Finnish?
- How have you maintained your language skills in your native tongue?
- How did you learn English?
- Have you studied languages?
  - What, where?
  - Have you taken language examinations or tests in languages?
- Have your language proficiency been tested?
  - In what languages?
  - By who, where, when?
- How well do you know the mentioned languages in your own opinion?
  - How often do you use the mentioned languages?

Military training, service history

- Have you served your conscription in the military in Finland?
  - Where, when?
  - What is your military rank in the reserve?
  - Do you feel that completing your compulsory military service was useful for your service as a military interpreter? (Or, if you did not serve in the military, was it a problem in your service as a military interpreter?)
- What crisis management operations have you served in?
  - When, in what tasks, for how long in total?
  - What was your rank of service?
- Did you take part in the rotation training?
  - Was your task (military interpreter) dealt with in the rotation training? In what way?
  - Was the rotation training useful for a military interpreter in your opinion?
- Have you received any other military training?
  - What, where?

Recruitment

- How did you first learn about the possibility to serve as a military interpreter?
- How long did you consider the decision to serve as a military interpreter?
- How did you apply for the task?

Do you know anyone who, in your opinion, is suitable to be a military interpreter, but does not want to?
Why not?
Would you be willing to serve again as a military interpreter?
Where, why? Why not?

Interpreter training and experience

Had you worked as an interpreter prior to your service as a military interpreter?
Where, when?
Have you received any training to be an interpreter?
Where, when, in what languages?
Have you taken tests or exams in languages?[137]
What did you know or think about interpretation before the operation, and afterwards? How did your idea of being an interpreter change?

Agency (will, motivation) (*awareness, reflectivity, intention, ethical choices*)

Why did you want to serve as a military interpreter?
Are the military interpreters recruited in Finland necessary, or could the language services in the operations be covered with local interpreters?
Why, or why not?
What is in your opinion the most important task of a military interpreter?
What should it be?
Is the salary of military interpreters appropriate in your opinion?
Why not, what should it be?
What is in your opinion the most important skill or quality of a military interpreter? Why?
If you had to encourage a person who is considering applying for the task of a military interpreter, what would you say? Why should this person apply for the task?
Is it possible to “do good” or to “heal the world” as a military interpreter?
More than in the task of an ordinary soldier in the crisis management force, or less?
During the operation, did you perceive yourself more or primarily as a military interpreter, rather than an ordinary soldier?
Why? In what ways was this manifested?
Pick one of the following alternatives:[138]
A military interpreter is 1) a translating soldier (mediator between languages), 2) a cultural adviser-soldier, 3) a mediator-soldier between cultures, 4) a defender or advocate-soldier (in a conflict situation), or, 5) a soldier with language skills.

Agency (ability, competence) (*power*)

Did you in your own opinion have sufficient language skills for the task of a military interpreter?
Prior to deployment?
In operation area?
After the operation, based on your experiences?
In what ways was the lacking competence shown? What would you have wanted to do better?
Did you in your own opinion have sufficient knowledge of the culture of the area?

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[137] This question is repeated intentionally.

[138] This is the only multiple-choice question of the interview, formulated in an attempt to simplify approaching the complex issue of the interviewee’s opinion of his/her own role within the crisis management force.

Prior to deployment?
In operation area?
After the operation, based on your experiences?
In what ways was the lacking competence shown? What would you have wanted to do better?

Did you in your own opinion have enough influence over your own service and duties as a military interpreter?
Did people listen to you and your opinions?
Did they respect you and your expertise?

Were you in your own opinion able to interpret well enough?

Did you in your own opinion perform well in the interpretation tasks assigned to you?

Did you usually interpret in Finnish or English? In what situations?

What kind of feedback did you receive of your interpretation (immediately afterwards)?

What kind of evaluation did you receive upon completion of your service?

Have you in your service as a military interpreter and in connection with interpretation duties been offered bribes or been the target of other attempts of dishonest manipulation?

Training of the crisis management force

Did the soldiers of the crisis management force in your opinion know how to work with an interpreter?
In what ways were the problems or know-how manifested?

How should the training of the crisis management force be improved from an interpreter's point of view?

Should the soldiers of the crisis management force be required to know the basics of the language of the operation area?
Why?

Did the soldiers of the crisis management force in your opinion know sufficiently about the culture of the operation area?
How should the culture awareness training be improved?

Leadership

Who acted as your closest superior in the operation (no names, just the task)?
How did you get along with him/her/them?

Were you as a military interpreter given sufficient attention in the duties and when assigning tasks?
What was expected of you?
Were you able to meet these expectations?
Did you have too much or too little work?

Did you in your opinion receive enough background information to be able to perform your interpreting assignments?
Why, why not?
What kind of information would you have wanted more?

Did you interpret in any assignments with a hidden agenda, i.e. where the discussion topic was different from the actual purpose of the meeting (e.g. intelligence gathering)?
Does an interpreter in your opinion need to be aware of such a hidden agenda? Why?

What kind of other tasks than interpreting were you as a military interpreter assigned?
Why were these tasks assigned specifically to you?
Did you make use of your language skills or cultural knowledge in these tasks?
Was your military training useful in these tasks?

Unit cohesion

Did you as a military interpreter feel that you were an equal member of the crisis management force?
Did you stand out because of your ethnicity?
(Did you stand out because you had not received any military training?)
Did you experience prejudice, discrimination or insults from the other soldiers?
What kind? What caused them?
Did your unit use the services of local interpreters?
What was the local interpreters' attitude towards you?
Did you as a military interpreter feel that you had a more demanding, similar, or less demanding task than the local interpreters did?
Did you meet military interpreters from other countries during your service?
In what circumstances? What did you talk about?
What was the other military interpreters' attitude towards you?

Visibility

Did you when serving as a military interpreter have any external signs or features, which could identify you as a military interpreter?
What kind? Were you identified by other means?
Did you wear a uniform and carry a weapon just like the other soldiers?
An assault rifle and/or a pistol?
Did you attend meetings as a silent interpreter, i.e. follow in silence as the local interpreters worked?
What exactly was your task in that situation?
Did you as a military interpreter ever feel the need to hide that you are an interpreter and that you know the local language?
In what situation and what circumstances?
Were you able to conceal it? What were the consequences?

Loyalty and neutrality

As a soldier of the crisis management force (and having sworn the military oath), you were of course loyal towards the unit to which you belonged. Was your loyalty towards the crisis management force ever put in question?
In what situation?
By whom, locals or other Finns?
Do military interpreters in your opinion have to contemplate matters of loyalty more because of their ethnicity and because they have a deeper knowledge of the culture in the area?
In what kind of situations?
Can the tasks and duties of a soldier and a military interpreter in your opinion sometimes be conflicting?
In what kind of situations?
Which duty comes in your opinion first?
Are you familiar with the ethical guidelines for interpreters?
Can a military interpreter in your opinion follow the same ethical norms as an ordinary interpreter, or should military interpreters have different ethical guidelines? (For instance for intelligence gathering or interrogations?)
What was the attitude of the local population towards you in general?
How did the attitude towards you differ from that towards the other soldiers in the unit?
Did the local population ever insult or blame you?
An interpreter should in general be impartial and neutral. Were you in your opinion able to remain impartial as a military interpreter?
When interpreting, in other situations?
Did you ever have difficulties in remaining impartial?

Was a security clearance performed to you prior to deployment?
Did you have access to classified information?
To what level?
Was your interpretation ever supervised during the operation?
Why? What kind of feedback did you receive?

Fear

When serving as military interpreter, were you ever in situations that were so threatening that you experienced fear?
What was the situation like?
Did the other soldiers fear?
Was your fear caused by the fact that you understood the situation better than the others did?
Had you visited the area of the operation before serving as military interpreter? Have you been there after your service?
In what situation? Why not?

Coping with workload

Interpretation requires being focused and can be mentally very tiring. Was this taken into account when organising your duties?
Were you allowed enough rest between interpretation assignments?
Did you experience stress during the operation?
How did you relax and unwind?
Did you ever have to interrupt an interpretation assignment (because of fear, lacking skills, or another reason?)
Why, in what situation?

Improvement

What thoughts did serving as a military interpreter awake? What did you learn during the operation?
What is a good military interpreter like in your opinion?
What qualities are required of him or her?[139]
What would be in your opinion a good way of recruiting people to become military interpreters?
How could the potential recruits best be reached?
What would motivate them to become military interpreters?
Do you think that the effort and resources put into translation and interpretation services in the Finnish crisis management forces are sufficient?
How is this manifested?
What do you think is the reason behind this?
In some countries people with no previous knowledge of a language or culture are trained to be military interpreters in that language. Do you think that it would be a good idea to train ordinary Finnish soldiers to become military interpreters?
Would training like this be at all possible?
Would it provide a sufficient language competence and cultural knowledge?
How long would it take in your opinion?

Other

Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Thank you!

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[139] This question is repeated intentionally.

Appendix B: Email Questionnaire

Email Questionnaire

- - - - -

Dear Sir/Madam!

[…]

The purpose of my research is to find out what kind of actors military interpreters are in the Finnish crisis management operations in which they serve. I strive to answer for example the following questions: What are the backgrounds, language skills, military training, and interpreting competency of Finnish military interpreters? How and why were they recruited as military interpreters, what tasks did they actually have in the field and how did they perform in the tasks appointed to them?

My primary source of research data consists of interviews with Finnish military interpreters, but it would be extremely useful for the purposes of my research to do a brief comparison of how the service of military interpreters in crisis management operations is set up in a number of other countries. […]

The questions that I would like to ask you are:

1. How does the [Name of country] military recruit its military interpreters for international crisis management operations? How do you find the potential recruits? Are they immigrants or ethnic [nationality]? How do you test their language skills? What requirements do you have for the military interpreters concerning military training, language skills, interpreting experience etc.)?

2. What kind of training are the military interpreters given prior to deployment abroad? What is included in the language training and the military training?

3. What are the terms of service for [Name of country] military interpreters in crisis management operations? What is their salary (in relation to other military personnel and as an absolute figure)? How long do their contracts or tours of duty last?

4. Has there been any kind of follow-up or research into how the [Name of country] military interpreters have performed in their duties in the field? What do the results show?

Any kind of information on the above would be greatly appreciated.
Please send unrestricted (non-classified) information or material only.
If you are unable to answer my questions, I kindly ask you to forward them to someone with better possibilities of answering them.

Yours respectfully,

Pekka Snellman

Lieutenant (N) (OF-2), Finnish Navy

Suomenkielinen lyhennelmä

1. Johdanto

Yksi puolustusvoimien päätehtävistä on osallistuminen kansainväliseen sotilaalliseen kriisinhallintaan, ja kansainvälisen yhteistyön merkitys sotilasalalla kasvaa. Tulkkeja pidetään laajalti kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden avainhenkilöinä, joita ilman operaatioiden tavoitteita ei ole mahdollista saavuttaa (ks. esim. Nurmela 2010, 118; Van Dijk ym. 2010, 918; UNIFIL 2012). Käännös- ja tulkkaustoimintaan sotilaallisissa yhteyksissä on kuitenkin kiinnitetty Suomessa vain vähän huomiota. Vaikka kielitaidon merkitystä korostetaan puolustusvoimissa (ks. esim. Aho 2003 and Pääesikunta 2009), ei suomalaisten sotilastulkkien toimijuutta kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa ole aiemmin tutkittu.

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, keitä suomalaiset sotilastulkit ovat, ja millaisia toimijoita he ovat osana suomalaista kriisinhallintajoukkoa. Tutkimuksessa pyritään tunnistamaan tekijöitä, jotka vaikuttavat sotilastulkkien toimijuuteen sekä luonnostelemaan kuva käännöskulttuurista suomalaisissa kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa. Tutkimuksen eräänä tavoitteena on lisäksi, että sen tuloksia voitaisiin hyödyntää käytännössä, esimerkiksi sotilastulkkien rekrytoinnissa ja koulutuksessa tai suomalaisten kriisinhallintajoukkojen koulutuksessa. Tutkimuskysymykset ovat:

1. Mitkä ovat suomalaisissa kriisinhallintajoukoissa palvelleiden sotilastulkkien taustat, motiivit, koulutus ja valmiudet sotilastulkin tehtävään?
2. Millaisia toimijoita sotilastulkit kokevat itse olevansa kriisinhallintajoukon osana?

Tutkimuskysymykset perustuvat osittain tekijän aiempaan selvitykseen kriisinhallinta-operaatioiden tulkkaustoiminnasta (Snellman 2011, 29–30).

Sotilastulkkien toimijuus on osa kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden tulkkaustoiminnan muodostamaa laajempaa viitekehystä. Operaatioiden kielipalvelut koostuvat useista eri tekijöistä, kuten rekrytointi, koulutus, hallinto ja tulkkaustaktiikka. Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan ainoastaan suomesta rekrytoituja, suomalaisia sotilastulkkeja, ja toimialueelta palkatut paikallistulkit jäävät tarkastelun ulkopuolelle. Tutkimuksen eräänä lähtökohtana ovat tekijän omat kokemukset tulkkien kanssa toimimisesta kriisinhallinta-operaatiossa Afganistanissa 2009–10.

2. Teoreettinen viitekehys

Tutkimuksen teoreettinen lähestymistapa on kaksijakoinen, sillä tutkimuksen aihe on olemukseltaan monitieteinen, eikä siitä voi saada kattavaa kuvaa vain yhdestä näkökulmasta. Siksi aihetta tarkastellaan sekä käännöstieteen että sotatieteen perspektiivistä. Käännöstieteen alan keskeiset käsitteet tässä tutkimuksessa ovat kääntäjän toimijuus ja käännöskulttuuri. Sotatieteen alan suunnalta aihetta tarkastellaan kielellisen toimintakyvyn sekä taistelukentän inhimillisen ja sosiaalisen ulottuvuuden käsitteiden kautta.

Käännöstieteessä tutkimusaihetta lähestytään käännöstieteen sosiologisen suuntauksen näkökulmasta. Tässä lähestymistavassa, jota Chesterman (2009) luonnehti ”kääntäjätieteeksi” (translator studies), keskitytään ensisijaisesti käännöksiä tekeviin henkilöihin tekstien asemesta. Lähestymistapa kattaa monta kääntäjän toimijuuteen ja käännöskulttuuriin liittyvää ulottuvuutta.

Kääntäjän toimijuudella (agency) ymmärretään tässä tutkimuksessa Kinnusen ja Koskisen (2010, 6–7) määritelmän mukaan kääntäjän ”tahtoa ja kykyä toimia”. Toimijuus rakentuu täten kolmesta osatekijästä: kääntäjän motivaatiosta, hänen toimintakyvystään, sekä itse toiminnasta. Kinnunen ja Koskinen (2010, 6–7) korostavat, että toimijuus on ymmärrettävissä ainoastaan sosiaalisessa kontekstissa. Sotilastulkkien toimijuus ilmenee vuorovaikutuksessa osana sitä sotilaallista joukkoa, johon tulkki kuuluu.

Käännöskulttuurin käsitteen määritteli ensimmäisenä Prunč (1997, 107), jonka mukaan käännöskulttuurilla tarkoitetaan jollain tietyllä alalla vallitsevia ja sille muodostumassa olevia normeja ja konventioita, sekä tätä alaa ympäröivän yhteisön odotuksia ja arvoja. Kujamäen (2012, 33) tulkinnan mukaan käännöskulttuuri ilmenee käytännössä siinä, miten kääntämiseen ja tulkkaukseen liittyvät kysymykset on järjestetty tietyssä yhteisössä tai instituutiossa. Käännöskulttuurit voivat olla virallisia, esimerkiksi lailla vahvistettuja, tai epävirallisia, kuten käytäntöön vakiintuneita tapoja. Käännöskulttuurin muodostuminen edellyttää kuitenkin, että alan normit ja konventiot ovat kaikkien yhteisön jäsenten hyväksymiä (Prunč 1997, 110–111).

Sotilaan toimintakyvyn (action competence) käsitteen esitteli ensimmäisenä Toiskallio (2009, 58). Sotilaan toimintakyky on yleensä jaettu neljään alueeseen: psyykkinen, fyysinen, eettinen ja sosiaalinen toimintakyky. Toiskallio korostaa eettistä ulottuvuutta ensisijaisena sotilaallisessa toiminnassa. Sotilaan toimintakyvyn käsitettä on syvennetty kielellisen toimintakyvyn käsitteen avulla, joka korostaa kommunikaation merkitystä

sotilaalle. Kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden monikielisessä toimintaympäristössä tärkeänä osana sotilaan kielellistä toimintakykyä voidaan perustellusti pitää taitoa kommunikoida tulkin välityksellä.

Taistelukentän inhimillisen ja sosiaalisen ulottuvuuden (human terrain, social battlespace) merkitys korostuu pienissä, sotaa alempiasteisissa konflikteissa, joista kriisinhallinta-operaatioissa usein on kyse. Tällaisia konflikteja ei voi ratkaista asevoimalla, vaan operaatioiden ehkäpä tärkein toiminta-alue on paikallinen yhteiskunta ja sen jäsenet. Ihmiskeskeinen lähestymistapa konflikteissa korostaa kommunikaation ja kulttuurin merkitystä operaation menestystekijöinä (Nurmela 2010, 61–80). Tässä taistelukentän inhimillisessä ja sosiaalisessa toimintaympäristössä kieli ja sanat korvaavat aseet ja patruunat vaikuttamisen välineinä. Tällöin sotilastulkit ovat avainpelaajia: sotilastulkit ovat kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden inhimillisen maaston kartta ja kompassi.

Tutkimuksen keskeiset käsitteet ovat sotilastulkki ja kriisinhallinta. Sotilastulkki tarkoittaa sotilasta, joka tulkkaa kielestä toiseen. Sotilastulkki käyttää sotilasarvoa ja univormua sekä kantaa avoimesti asetta. Kriisinhallinnalla tarkoitetaan tässä tutkimuksessa sotilaallista kriisinhallintaa, joka on ensisijaisesti toimintaa ”konfliktien ehkäisemiseksi ja rajoittamiseksi, osapuolten väkivallankäytön lopettamiseksi, aiheutettujen tuhojen korjaamiseksi sekä kriisialueen turvallisuuden, vakauden ja yhteiskunnan toimintojen sekä oikeusjärjestyksen palauttamiseksi” (Kenttäohjesääntö 2007, 99).

3. Metodologia, aineiston keruu ja analyysimenetelmät

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkastelun kohteena ovat ne merkitykset, joita haastatellut sotilastulkit ovat antaneet kohtaamilleen ilmiöille. Sekä tutkija että tutkimuksen kohteena olevat ihmiset ovat osa samaa empiiristä todellisuutta eli elämismaailmaa, joka muodostuu merkityksistä. Näin ollen tutkimuksen kohteena olevia merkityksiä ei ole mahdollista tarkastella täysin objektiivisesti. Kaikki laadullinen tutkimus on myös sidoksissa tutkijan merkitysmaailmaan, eikä tutkija voi koskaan täysin ymmärtää tutkimuksen kohteena olevien henkilöiden merkitysmaailmaa. (Varto 1992, 18–19; 23) Näin ollen tutkijan esiymmärrys aiheesta on tiedostettava, jotta sen vaikutus voidaan ottaa huomioon tutkimusprosessissa.

Tutkimusaineiston analyysimenetelmä on fenomenologis-hermeneuttinen. Tutkimuskohde ”sotilastulkkien toimijuus” on ilmiö, jolle tutkija ja tutkittavana olevat henkilöt antavat omat merkityksensä. Näitä merkityksiä pyritään analyysissa lähestymään ilman ennakko-oletuksia, eikä haastateltavien antamia vastauksia arvoteta. Se, että tutkittavana olevien

henkilöiden ilmiölle antamia merkityksiä ei voida täysin ymmärtää, otetaan huomioon hermeneuttisessa analyysissa: tutkijan ymmärrys tutkimuskohteesta kasvaa analyysin aikana, jolloin myös analyysi muuttuu. (Varto 1992, 88–108)

Tutkimuksen aineisto koostuu 14:n sotilastulkkina palvelleen henkilön haastatteluista. Haastattelut toteutettiin puolistrukturoituina teemahaastatteluina, jotka tallennettiin ja litteroitiin. Haastateltavien henkilöiden yhteystiedot saatiin Pääesikunnan tutkimusluvan nojalla Porin Prikaatista, ja he osallistuivat tutkimukseen vapaaehtoisesti. Haastatellut olivat palvelleet joko Kosovon (KFOR), Afganistanin (ISAF) tai Somalian (ATALANTA) kriisinhallintaoperaatiossa. Haastatteluaineistoa kertyi yhteensä noin 20 tuntia, mikä litteroituna tekee noin 350 sivua. Tutkimusaineistoa täydentää 8 valtion sotilas-organisaatiossa palveleville sotilastulkkien rekrytoinnista ja koulutuksesta vastaavalle taholle tehty sähköpostikysely.

Tutkimusaineiston analyysi toteutettiin viiden temaattisen kategorian avulla. Kategoriat, jotka nimettiin tutkimuskysymysten ja niihin liittyvien alakysymysten avulla, ovat: motivaatio, vaikutusvalta, neutraalius ja lojaalius, henkilösuhteet ja joukon kiinteys sekä näkyvyys ja pelko. Kategoriat eivät anna suoria vastauksia tutkimuskysymyksiin, vaan toimivat analyysityökaluina. Analyysiprosessissa tutkimusaineistosta poimittiin kuhunkin kategoriaan lukeutuvia tietoja. Seuraavaksi kategorioihin valittuja tietoja tarkasteltiin tutkimuskysymysten ja alakysymysten, tutkijan ennakkotietojen sekä aikaisemman tutkimuksen valossa. Samalla tietoihin niihin liitettiin suoria lainauksia haastatteluista.

Edellä mainittujen kategorioiden lisäksi aineistosta poimittiin tietoja kolmeen kategoriaan, jotka kuvaavat sotilastulkkien taustaa: henkilötiedot, rekrytoituminen ja koulutus, sekä koulutus ja kokemus. Näiden kategorioiden analyysissa hyödynnettiin lisäksi tilastollisia menetelmiä. Tutkimuskohteesta saatavaa ymmärrystä syvennetään triangulaation avulla: tutkimuksessa hyödynnetään kahta erillistä aineistoa, niiden analyysiin käytetään sekä laadullisia että tilastollisia menetelmiä, ja tehtyjä havaintoja lähestytään sekä käännöstieteen että sotatieteen näkökulmasta.

4. Analyysi: suomalaisten sotilastulkkien toimijuus

Henkilötiedot

Taulukossa 1 on esitetty haastateltujen sotilastulkkien relevantteja henkilötietoja kuten ikää, sukupuolta ja kansalaisuutta koskevia tietoja.

Henkilötieto	**Lukema**	**Huomioitavaa**
sukupuoli	miehiä: 13, naisia: 1	
ikä (haastattelun aikaan)	37.9 (23–57) vuotta	mediaani 37 vuotta
ikä (palveluksen alussa)	30.2 (20–45)	mediaani 27.5 vuotta
muutti Suomeen vuonna	1991 (1987–1997)	2 hlöä syntyperäisiä
sai Suomen kansalaisuuden	1999 (1987–2000)	Suomen kansalaisia
kaksoiskansalaisuus	7	7 vain Suomen kansalaisia

Taulukko 1. Haastateltavien henkilötietoja

Rekrytoituminen ja koulutus

Sotilastulkeiksi hakeutuneet henkilöt olivat saaneet tiedon mahdollisuudesta palvella sotilastulkkina yleensä puolustusvoimien kautta, joko heidän suorittaessaan asevelvollisuuttaan tai myöhemmin jonkun palveluksessa olevan henkilön välityksellä. Joihinkin oli otettu suoraan yhteyttä puolustusvoimista heidän työskennellessään ammattitulkkina. Vain harvat olivat hakeutuneet tehtävään omaehtoisesti hankkimalla tietoa mahdollisuuksista.

Kaikki haastateltavat olivat osallistuneet kriisinhallintaoperaatiota edeltävään rotaatiokoulutukseen. Koulutusta pidettiin hyödyllisenä sotilaallisten taitojen ja operaatioon asennoitumisen kannalta, mutta tulkin tehtävää ajatellen rotaatiokoulutus oli hyödytön.

Koulutus ja kokemus

Taulukossa 2 on esitetty tärkeimpiä haastateltujen sotilastulkkien koulutustaustaa ja kokemusta kuvaavia tunnuslukuja.

Koulutus tai kokemus	**Lukema**	**Huomioitavaa**
kielitaito mukaan lukien suomi ja englanti	5.6 kieltä (3–7)	äidinkielinä albania, kroatia, dari, suomi, kurdi, persia, somali
kieliopinnot tai -tutkinnot	yliopistotason opintoja: 4 tutkintoja: 1	esim. yliopiston loppututkinto, yleinen kielitutkinto tms.
tulkkauskokemus ennen palvelusta sotilastulkkina	ei ammattilaisena: kaikki ammattilaisena: 7	tulkkausopintoja: 7 (samat henkilöt jotka työskennelleet tulkkina)
sotilaskoulutus (varusmiespalveluksen alkamisvuosi)	9 (1993–2008)	reservin sotilasarvo: jääkäristä (vast.) kersanttiin (1 luutnantti)
kokemus sotilastulkkina toimimisesta	2.4 vuotta (4 kuukautta–6.5 vuotta)	mediaani 2 vuotta
palveluksen sotilastulkkina alkamisajankohta	2005 (1999–2009)	

Taulukko 2. Haastateltavien koulutusta ja kokemusta koskevia tietoja.

Puolet haastatelluista oli opiskellut tulkkausta ja työskennellyt tulkkina ennen palvelustaan sotilastulkkina, ja 9 henkilöä oli suorittanut varusmiespalveluksen. Haastateltujen keski-määräinen palvelusaika sotilastulkkina oli noin kaksi ja puoli vuotta.

Motivaatio

Sotilastulkkien motivaatio palvella kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa ei monelta osin poikennut muiden kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaiden motivaatiosta. Yleisiä motivaation lähteitä olivat isänmaallisuus ja auttamisenhalu. Jotkut Suomeen pakolaisina muuttaneet henkilöt korostivat isänmaallisuuden vaikutusta. Palkalla ei ollut suurta merkitystä motivaation kannalta. Muita motivaation lähteitä olivat inspiroivat esimiehet ja hyvät suhteet palvelustovereihin.

Vaikutusvalta

Sotilastulkkien vaikutusvalta on toimijuuden tärkeä osatekijä. Vaikutusvaltaa tulisikin tarkastella myös muihin kategorioihin luokiteltujen havaintojen kautta. Sotilastulkeilla oli kokonaisuutena merkittävää vaikutusvaltaa, mikä johtui suoraan heidän kielitaidostaan ja kulttuurintuntemuksestaan. Tulkit tunnistivat oman vaikutusvaltansa ja pohtivat siihen liittyviä eettisiä kysymyksiä.

Sotilastulkit kokivat, että he palvelevat vaikutusvaltaisemmassa ja vaativammassa tehtävässä kuin paikallistulkit. Vaikutusvallalle tärkeinä taitoina ja ominaisuuksina mainittiin esimerkiksi kenttäkelpoisuus, rauhallisuus ja vastuullisuus. Tulkit suorittivat tulkkaustehtävien lisäksi lukuisia muita eri palvelustehtäviä. Sotilastulkit kokivat, että he saivat yleensä riittävästi tietoja ja palautetta, ja että he yleensä kykenivät riittävästi vaikuttamaan omiin palvelustehtäviinsä. Sotilastulkkien mukaan he suoriutuivat tehtävistään hyvin. Tulkkauskoulutuksella ja -kokemuksella oli vain vähän merkitystä tehtävissä suoriutumiselle.

Neutraalius ja lojaalius

Haastateltavat pitivät itseään sotilastulkkina toimiessaan enemmän sotilaina kuin tulkkeina. Sotilastulkit eivät sotilaina aina kokeneet olleensa neutraaleita siinä määrin kuin tulkeilta yleensä edellytetään. Suomalaisen sotilaan rooli toimi myös haastateltavien lojaaliuden lähtökohtana: kriisinhallintajoukon ja Suomen etu oli ensisijainen. Joissain yksittäisissä tapauksissa sotilastulkkien kantasuomalaisista poikkeava etnisyys oli aiheuttanut sen, että heidän lojaaliutensa oli kyseenalaistettu.

Henkilösuhteet ja joukon kiinteys

Valtaosa sotilastulkeista kuvaili suhdettaan muihin kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaisiin erittäin myönteisesti. Noin kolmasosa haastatelluista oli kokenut ennakkoluuloja tai syrjintää, mutta nämä tapaukset olivat yksittäisten henkilöiden aiheuttamia. Sotilastulkkien kokemukset johtamisesta olivat pääosin hyviä.

Näkyvyys ja pelko

Sotilastulkit käyttivät miltei aina samaa sotilasasua ja -varusteita kuin muutkin kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaat, eivätkä kokeneet erottuvansa joukosta. Noin puolet haastatelluista kertoi kokeneensa uhkaa tai pelkoa palveluksensa aikana. Näissä

tilanteissa sotilastulkkien kielitaito ja kulttuurintuntemus aiheutti sen, että he kokivat pelkoa eri tavalla kuin muut kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaat.

5. Pohdinta

Suomesta rekrytoiduilla sotilastulkeilla on tärkeä rooli kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa, erityisesti paikallistyöntekijöiden valvonnassa. Operaatioiden tulkkauspalveluja ei tulisi jättää pelkästään paikallistulkkien varaan. Ainoat Suomen lainsäädännön asettamat kelpoisuusvaatimukset sotilastulkeille ovat Suomen kansalaisuus ja tehtävään riittävä kielitaito. Sotilastulkkien kielitaitoa ei rekrytoinnin tai rotaatiokoulutuksen aikana kuitenkaan yleensä testata. Sotilastulkit itse korostivat sotilaskoulutuksen ja sotilaskulttuurin tuntemuksen merkitystä osana sotilastulkin ammattitaitoa.

Eräs keino sotilastulkkien rekrytoinnin kehittämiseksi, esimerkiksi mahdollista tulevaa Syyrian kriisinhallintaoperaatiota ajatellen, olisi koota tiedot kaikista niistä varusmiespalveluksena suorittaneista suomalaisista, joiden äidinkieli tai toinen kieli on arabia, tai joiden kotona on puhuttu arabiaa. Näiden henkilöiden löytäminen voi olla vaikeaa, sillä kielitilastot eivät kerro kaikkea henkilön kielitaidosta (vrt. Latomaa 2012). Arabiankielentaitoiset reserviläiset tulisi kutsua testeihin, joissa soveltuvimmat valittaisiin koulutukseen sotilastulkeiksi. Koulutettujen sotilastulkkien ammattitaitoa ylläpidettäisiin harjoituksissa määräajoin ja he sitoutuisivat palvelemaan tarpeen tullen.

Sotilastulkkien kielitaito tulisi testata sekä suomen, englannin että niin sanotussa vieraassa kielessä. Testeissä käytettäviksi mittausmenetelmiksi ja kielitaitoasteikoiksi on tarjolla useita eri vaihtoehtoja, myös esimerkiksi itsearviointi. Eräs useiden maiden puolustusvoimissa käytetty mitta-asteikko on Naton standardi STANAG 6001. Sotilastulkeille tulisi järjestää myös tulkkauskoulutusta, esimerkiksi asiointitulkin ammattitutkintoon valmistavan koulutuksen mukaisesti.

Kriisinhallintajoukon koulutuksessa tulisi painottaa operaatioalueen paikallisen kulttuurin tuntemusta sekä tulkkaustaktiikkaa, eli tulkkien käyttöä ja johtamista. Tulkkaustaktiikan kysymyksiä ovat esimerkiksi tulkin asema joukon hierarkiassa, hänen paikkansa joukon ryhmityksessä ja tulkin varustus, mutta myös se, mitä tietoja tulkille annetaan ennen tehtävää ja millainen palaute hänelle annetaan tehtävän jälkeen. Jokaisen kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaan tulisi ymmärtää tulkin avulla viestinnän mahdollisuudet, rajoitukset ja uhkat. Sotilastulkit olivat myös yleisesti sitä mieltä, että paikallisen kielen alkeiden osaamisesta voi olla kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaille suurta hyötyä.

Kansainvälisessä vertailussa selvitettiin muun muassa, miten 8 valtion (Viro, Kanada, Tanska, Saksa, Alankomaat, Ruotsi, Iso-Britannia ja Yhdysvallat) sotilasorganisaatiot rekrytoivat ja kouluttavat kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa tarvitsemansa sotilastulkit. Eri valtiot noudattavat toisistaan poikkeavia käytäntöjä, mutta yhtäläisyyksiäkin löytyy. Kaikissa maissa kyseisen maan kansalaisuus on edellytys sotilastulkkina palvelemiselle. Yhteistä on myös se, että sotilastulkkien rekrytoinnissa ja koulutuksessa on usein koettu vaikeuksia.

Tämän tutkimuksen reliabiliteettia ja validiteettia tarkastellessa tulee pitää mielessä, että tutkimuksen tulokset eivät ole laajasti yleistettävissä. Tulokset perustuvat merkitysten tulkintaan ja keskinäisiin suhteisiin. Tutkimusprosessiin tai sen tuloksiin mahdollisesti vaikuttaneet ulkopuoliset tekijät on huomioitu ja niiden merkitys on pyritty minimoimaan. Tutkimuksen luotettavuutta ja analyysin läpinäkyvyyttä parantaa aineiston temaattinen käsittelytapa. Analyysin tulosten ryhmittely alakategorioihin sekä suorien lainausten käyttö nostaa esiin haastatellut sotilastulkit ja esittelee tulokset helposti lähestyttävässä muodossa.

6. Lopuksi

Kahdesta tutkimuskysymyksestä ensimmäinen koski suomalaisten sotilastulkkien taustoja, motiiveja, koulutusta ja valmiuksia. Tähän kysymykseen luvussa neljä saadut vastaukset kertovat paljon myös suomalaisten kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden käännöskulttuurista. Eri valtioiden noudattamien käytäntöjen ja haastatteluaineistoista nousseiden tekijöiden rinnastaminen osoittaa, että suomalaisten kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden käännöskulttuurissa on paljon kehitettävää. Vertailussa korostuivat etenkin muissa maissa sotilastulkeille tehtävät kattavat kieli- ja tulkkaustaidon testit sekä tulkkauskoulutus, joita Suomessa ei sotilastulkeille järjestetä lainkaan. Kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden kielipalveluille Suomessa annettava verrattain pieni painoarvo on ristiriidassa siihen, miten paljon sotilaalliseen kriisinhallintaan Suomessa muuten panostetaan.

Toinen tutkimuskysymys koski suomalaisten sotilastulkkien toimijuutta. Tulokset osoittavat, että sotilastulkeilla on huomattavaa toimijuutta suomalaisissa kriisinhallintaoperaatioissa, ja että heidän roolinsa on merkittävämpi kuin se, joka tulkeilla yleensä on esimerkiksi tulkkien ammattisäännöstön mukaan. Toimijoina sotilastulkit ovat pikemminkin viestinnän kolmansia osapuolia kuin ”käännöskoneita”, ja he ovat myös arvostettuja kriisinhallinta-joukon jäseniä.

Sotilastulkkien toimijuuden tärkeimpiä osatekijöitä ovat kulttuurintuntemus, erityisesti suomalaisen ja sotilaskulttuurin tuntemus, sekä sotilaskoulutus. Kieli- ja tulkkaustaidolla sekä etnisyydellä oli myös suuri vaikutus toimijuuteen. Sen sijaan sotilastulkkien iällä, sukupuolella tai tulkkauskokemuksella oli vain vähäinen vaikutus heidän toimijuuteensa. Sotilastulkkien toimijuuden perusta on se luottamus, jota muut kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaat heitä kohtaan osoittavat. Tätä luottamusta omalta osaltaan vahvistaa sotilastulkkien suomalaisen kulttuurin tuntemus sekä heidän sotilaskoulutuksensa. Toimijuuden kannalta tärkeää on myös kriisinhallintajoukon sotilaiden toiminnallinen kielitaito, jonka osana voidaan pitää taitoa viestiä tulkin välityksellä.

Tulkkaustoiminta sotilaallisessa kontekstissa on kasvavan mielenkiinnon kohde, ja aihepiiri tarjoaa useita aiheita jatkotutkimukselle. Miten sotilaiden käsitys kielestä sekä sotilaskielen ja sotilaiden välisen viestinnän erityispiirteet vaikuttavat tulkkien käyttöön? Mitä translationaalisia tai muita normeja sisältyy suomalaisten kriisinhallintaoperaatioiden käännöskulttuuriin? Eräs aihe, jota tämän tutkimuksen kansainvälisen kyselyn mukaan ei ole tutkittu, on miten sotilastulkit ovat suoriutuneet tehtävissään kentällä. Tällaiseen tutkimukseen liittyisivät läheisesti kysymykset sotilastulkkien koulutuksesta. Mikä on sotilastulkkien koulutuksen vaikuttavuus?

Haluan kiittää haastattelemiani sotilastulkkeja tutkimukseen osallistumisesta sekä puolustusvoimia tutkimusluvan ja opintovapaan myöntämisestä. Lisäksi haluan kiittää Suomen Kääntäjien ja Tulkkien Liiton 40-vuotisjuhlarahastoa tutkimukselle myönnetystä taloudellisesta tuesta.