

Krista Kaski

# **MON CHER, RAKAS YSTÄVÄ**

Foreign languages in Finnish Translations of Agatha  
Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*

# ABSTRACT

Kaski, Krista: Mon cher, rakas ystävä: Foreign Languages in Finnish Translations of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*  
Bachelor's thesis  
Tampere University  
Bachelor's Programme in Languages, Specialisation in English Language  
August 2022

---

This thesis explores the effects of foreign languages on Finnish translation in two Finnish translations of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934). The translations used are *Idän pikajunan arvoitus* (1937, reviewed in 1977) by Leena Karro, and *Idän pikajunan arvoitus* (2017) by Jaakko Kankaanpää. The purpose of this examination is to compare the translations in the context of language change and retranslation to determine whether either translation has been more affected by these elements when compared to the other. The first research question was to determine how foreign languages have affected the Finnish translations, mainly in the form of loan words and text sequences that had been left untranslated. The second question was to determine whether language change and retranslation played a part in how the two translations differed from each other, considering the timespan between them.

The data used consists of the second chapter of *Murder on the Orient Express* and the corresponding chapter in both translations, focusing especially on examples of the influence of foreign languages in the translations. All instances of loan word use and untranslated sentences, and the corresponding sequences in the other translation were listed and categorised by language. There were three categories: English, French and one which consisted of examples that differed in spelling between the translations.

My analysis is based on the theory of translation by Friedrich Schleiermacher (1992) who defined the concepts of domestication and foreignization, the terms for which were later introduced by Lawrence Venuti (2018). The theory presents two methods of translating a source text, while Schleiermacher himself notes that a balance between the two methods is most important. I also examined the translations through the retranslation hypothesis since they are translations of the same source text. The hypothesis relates to Schleiermacher's theory by considering the way retractions might differ from earlier translations in terms of method.

The results show that foreign languages have influenced both translations to a degree but are more heavily present in the 2017 translation which features multiple pragmatic borrowings and has retained most foreign sentences. The retranslation hypothesis applies to the translations as well, since the 1937/1977 translation is more domesticated and assimilative, considering the use of Finnish equivalent words and erasure of foreign dialogue.

Keywords: language change, retranslation, domestication, foreignization, retranslation hypothesis

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

# TIIVISTELMÄ

Kaski, Krista: Mon cher, rakas ystävä: Foreign Languages in Finnish Translations of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*

Kandidaatin tutkielma

Tampereen yliopisto

Kielten tutkinto-ohjelma, Englannin opintosuunta

Elokuu 2022

---

Tämä tutkielma tarkastelee vieraiden kielten vaikutusta suomalaiseen kääntämiseen kahden Agatha Christien *Murder on the Orient Express* -teoksesta tehdyn suomalaisen käännöksen kautta. Tutkimuksessa käytetyt käännökset ovat Leena Karron *Idän pikajunan arvoitus* (1937, tarkastettu 1977) ja Jaakko Kankaanpään *Idän pikajunan arvoitus* (2017). Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus on verrata käännöksiä toisiinsa kielenmuutoksen ja uudelleenikäntämisen näkökulmasta ja siten määrittää, ovatko nämä käsitteet vaikuttaneet jompaankumpaan käännökseen toista enemmän. Ensimmäinen tutkimuskysymys oli määrittää, miten vieraat kielet ovat vaikuttaneet suomalaisiin käännöksiin pääasiassa lainasanojen ja kääntämättä jätettyjen kokonaisuuksien muodossa. Toinen tutkimuskysymys oli tutkia, vaikuttivatko kielenmuutos ja uudelleenikäntäminen kahden käännöksen välisiin eroavaisuuksiin ottaen huomioon niiden välisen aikavälin.

Käytetty materiaali koostui *Murder on the Orient Express*-teoksen toisesta luvusta ja vastaavista luvuista käännöksissä keskittyen erityisesti esimerkkeihin vieraiden kielten vaikutuksesta käännöksissä. Kaikki esimerkit lainasanoista ja kääntämättömistä lauseista sekä vastaavista kohdista toisessa käännöksessä luetteloiitiin kielen perusteella. Kategorioita oli kolme: englanti, ranska sekä erillinen kategoria kirjoitusasultaan käännösten välillä eroaville sanoille.

Analyyssini perustui Friedrich Schleiermacherin käännösteoriaan (1992), jossa hän määrittä kotouttamisen ja vieraannuttamisen käsitteet. Kyseiset termit näille käsitteille esitteli myöhemmin Lawrence Venuti (2018). Teoria esittelee kaksi metodia alkuperäistekstin kääntämiseen ja Schleiermacher itse peräänkuuluttaa niiden välisen tasapainon tärkeyttä. Tutkin käännöksiä myös uudelleenikäntämishypoteesin kautta, koska ne ovat käännöksiä samasta alkuperäistekstistä. Hypoteesi liittyy Schleiermacherin teoriaan siihen nähden, miten uudelleenikäntämiset voivat erota aiemmista käännöksistä metodin suhteen.

Tutkimustulokset näyttävät, että vieraat kielet ovat tahollaan vaikuttaneet molempiin käännöksiin, mutta niiden merkitys on suurempi vuoden 2017 käännöksessä, joka sisältää useita pragmaattisia lainauksia ja on säilyttänyt useimmat vieraskieliset lauseet. Uudelleenikäntämishypoteesi pätee myös näihin käännöksiin, koska käännös vuodelta 1937/1977 on kotoutetumpi ja assimiloitumpi suomalaisten vastinesanojen käytön ja vieraskielisen dialogin poistamisen huomioon ottaen.

Avainsanat: kielenmuutos, uudelleenikäntäminen, kotouttaminen, vieraannuttaminen, uudelleenikäntämishypoteesi

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin Originality Check -ohjelmalla.

# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to examine two Finnish translations of Agatha Christie's famous whodunit, *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934). The book is often referred to as Christie's most famous work, and it has been translated to dozens of different languages. One of these languages is, of course, Finnish. Two translations of *Murder on the Orient Express* have been made in Finnish, the first in 1937, reviewed again in 1977, and the second one in 2017. The translations were made 80 years apart so there are many differences between them. I aim to examine the differences in the appearance of foreign languages between the two translations through theories on translation strategies and retranslation. By investigating these differences, I hope to shed light on their significance in terms of language change and possible societal changes.

Dame Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie (1890–1976) was a novelist known for her successful whodunits. She remains the best-selling novelist of all time, and is best known for her 66 detective novels, 14 short story collections and the world's longest-running play, *The Mousetrap* (The Home of Agatha Christie 2022). In 1916 Christie wrote her first published novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, which was also the first novel to feature the Belgian detective Hercule Poirot. It was published in 1920 by John Lane and received good reviews. Christie's career as a novelist was successful, and her books have sold over a billion copies in the English language, and a billion in translation (The Home of Agatha Christie 2022).

Having read many whodunits from Christie in particular, I have grown familiar with the Finnish translations of her work. Since I have read both old and new translations, I have noticed many significant changes in language and terminology between them. In the older ones there were some terms that I had not previously heard before coming across them in the translations in question. After further comparing some Finnish translations of Christie's books together, I became interested in the topic, and decided to investigate it more in this thesis. As a fan of Christie's famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, I decided to pick one of the novels he is present in and ended up choosing *Murder on the Orient Express*. I will be using two Finnish translations of the novel, the first one of which was made in 1937 and reviewed again in 1977 by Leena Karro. The second translation, made more recently, is from 2017 and was done by Jaakko Kankaanpää.

I examine the two Finnish translations of *Murder on the Orient Express* and list the instances where foreign languages have had an impact on the wording in Finnish. I will then compare the instances

between the translations and determine whether language change could have affected the way the novel was translated to Finnish in both 1937/1977 and 2017. I will also use the original novel by Christie when needed, especially with instances where neither of the translations have retained the original form of an expression.

Foreign elements such as loan words can be very important in translation, since it is up to the translator to decide how certain elements will be presented in the translated text. It is important to study this, as people are nowadays able to interact with, and are more frequently exposed to, languages that can be very different from their native language. It is therefore likely that foreign languages also affect Finnish translations of books that were originally in another language. It is important to understand the difference in the appearance of foreign languages, especially between two translations that were made far apart from each other. By doing this we can determine whether language change has affected Finnish translation, which is why it is a relevant subject. The time between the translations also provides us with an extensive timespan, during which these hypothetical language changes could have happened. This is also one of the contributing factors to my choosing of this particular novel and its translations as my material, for 80 years is a long interval.

In this thesis my goal is to examine whether language change and retranslation have influenced the way *Murder on the Orient Express* was translated earlier in 1937/1977 and recently in 2017. Language change in this paper refers to the effects foreign languages have had on the Finnish language, such as the presence of loan words and untranslated terms. My hypothesis is that language change has contributed more to the changing dynamics of translation in the new translation from 2017, while the old one from 1937/1977 is more domesticated and is thus a more “Finnish” version, if you will.

The effects of English on Finnish have been previously examined by Peterson (2017), who talks about language contact between English and Finnish, English being a non-native language for the receiving speech community. She has investigated pragmatic borrowing, which is the incorporation of pragmatic elements from one language to another: as an example, Peterson mentions the phrase “oh my god”, which has made its way from being a typical English phrase to being a remark regularly used by Finnish people as well (Peterson 2017, 116).

Agatha Christie’s work has also been subjected to research. Storm (2016) has examined Christie’s work and the early translations of her novels. Christie’s first novels were translated non-

chronologically in Germany, and the publishers faced many dilemmas: the attitude towards English-language literature and translations was hostile, and so-called “entertainment fiction”, despite being popular, was not all that positively received by all (Storm 2016, 62). Especially Christie’s Poirot novels are examined in the text. Storm (2016, 79) notes that a very interesting aspect about Poirot is that his most important feature is his un-Englishness, especially when considering the British audience. Poirot’s foreign appearance, ways and especially language make it clear to the reader that he is often perceived as being out of place by other characters in the novels. He is also presented heavily as a French caricature (Storm 2016, 81), his characterisation personifying English ideas about foreignness.

This bachelor’s thesis is divided into six chapters, first being this introduction. In the second one I explain the theoretical background for my thesis. In the third chapter I introduce my material and give more information on its background and history. I also explain the method I will be using to dissect the material. In the fourth chapter I apply the theoretical background of my thesis to my material and present the main findings of the analysis. Finally, in the fifth chapter I present my conclusions, and in the sixth chapter I list my sources.

## **2 Theoretical background**

### **2.2 Schleiermacher and Venuti’s theories**

For the theoretical background of my thesis, I use Friedrich Schleiermacher’s theory on translation and the different methods of translating foreign texts to another language. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) was a German reformed theologian, philosopher, and an eminent classical scholar, who is known for his religious philosophy, but also his hermeneutics (theory of interpretation) and his theory of translation (Forster 2017). Schleiermacher presented his translation theory in his lecture “On the Different Methods of Translating” (“Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens”) at the Academy of Sciences in Berlin in 1813. In the theory he explains that there are two methods one can use in translating foreign texts to another language.

The first method is referred to as foreignization. With this method the translator leaves some parts of the original text in their original form; “moving the reader towards the writer” and aiming to leave the original work alone as much as possible (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). The second method is domestication. The translator makes the text easier for readers in the target language, making foreign concepts more familiar and easier to understand; “moving the writer towards the reader”

and leaving the reader alone (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). This could include translating some foreign terms to the target language or explaining foreign concepts.

The terms “domestication” and “foreignization” were first introduced into the world of translation research by Lawrence Venuti, who used them in his 1995 work *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*. In the book Venuti illustrates his viewpoint on translation: “translation simultaneously recontextualizes the source text by constructing another, comparable set of contexts in the translating language and culture” (2018, xii). The interpretation is transformative because circumstances and languages change over time. According to Venuti, the source text is transformed even when the translator makes a conscious effort to maintain a semantic correspondence and stylistic approximation because the interpretants are drawn predominantly from the receiving language (2018, xii). Interpretants in this case consist of formal and thematic factors that include a relation of equivalence, a particular style, values, beliefs, and representations. Every language has a different set of interpretants, which makes a “perfect” translation impossible to achieve. Venuti also adds that “translation is inevitably domesticating insofar as it aims to interpret the source text in terms that are intelligible and interesting in the receiving situation” (2018, xii).

Schleiermacher (1992, 44) notes that “the translator’s goal must be to provide his reader with the same image and the same pleasure as reading the work in the original language offers to a man [sic] educated in this way” and adds that translating refers to a situation that is located somewhere between domestication and foreignization. Therefore, he does not refer to either of the methods as the correct one, but rather explains that a good translation is something that utilizes a bit of both.

According to Schleiermacher, humans are bound to the language they speak: “Every human being is, on the one hand, in the power of the language he speaks; he and his [sic] whole being are a product of it” (Schleiermacher 1992, 38). He therefore asserts that native languages affect people’s understanding of the world around them and two people who speak different languages might view the world slightly differently. He also mentions that concepts are outlined to people in the language they are born and educated in, which illustrates the importance of being able to read content in their native language as well (Schleiermacher 1992, 38).

Venuti and Schleiermacher share a similar opinion on the nature of translation in relation to differences in languages: they both agree that different languages affect the way we perceive concepts and retain information. Venuti’s idea of constructing a set of contexts comparable to the source text in the target language (2018, xii) relates heavily to Schleiermacher’s comment about the

translator's goal in providing the same image to a foreign reader as the original provides for a reader who understands the language (1992, 44). Thus, a good translation is one that conveys the same message as the source text, using both domestication and foreignization to construct a set of contexts that help in understanding the text. Since Venuti notes that interpretants are different in every language (2018, xii), translation also varies between languages, sometimes heavily.

### **2.3 Retranslation hypothesis**

A retranslation is defined by Koskinen (2019, 317) as a new translation produced in the same language where a previous translation of the same text has already been made. Retranslators may or may not rely on the other translations to the extent of copying elements from them. Studies on retranslation began before the 1990s, but in the 21<sup>st</sup> century they increased, indicating a continued and reinforced interest (Koskinen 2019, 317).

In the community of translation research, the retranslation hypothesis began to spread in the early 2000s. In short, the hypothesis assumes that “first translations need to introduce the foreign text for the target readers for the first time, and they therefore have a tendency to be assimilative” (Koskinen 2019, 317). According to the hypothesis, the first translation is an example of Schleiermacher's domestication. Koskinen (2019, 317), continues: “The second translation, then, is better placed to provide a more source-text-oriented or foreignized version.” Foreignization is more common in translations following the first one, also mentioned by Schleiermacher. However, Koskinen also notes that it is easy to find subsequent translations that fit into this pattern, but equally easy to find those that do not (2019, 317). Hence this theory does not hold true for all retranslations. Retranslation research has been characterised by a case study approach, which also holds true for most attempts to test the retranslation hypothesis itself: this approach has enriched the field of research with detailed observations of real-life retranslations (Koskinen 2019, 318).

Koskinen notes that the faith in eternal improvement, or the belief that a later translation is automatically better than the previous translations, cannot be sustained by empirical evidence, as quality and improvement are difficult to measure (2019, 316). As such, we must examine translations in the context of the time period they were made in and compare how they each convey the same message to the reader. Koskinen adds an example: “the retranslation could be stylistically successful but contain severe omissions” (2019, 316). An aging translation, on the other hand, might contain outdated linguistic elements or concepts but could be revised with updated wording. Aging alone is thus a poor explanation for retranslation (Koskinen 2019, 316).



### **3 Material and method**

#### **3.1 The whodunit**

A whodunit (less commonly whodunnit) is defined by Merriam-Webster (2022) as a detective or mystery story, and by Cambridge Dictionary (2022) as “a story about a crime and the attempt to discover who committed it.” The name is an alteration of the phrase “who done it”, which usually refers to the perpetrator of a crime that has been committed in the story. The term was first used in 1929 (Merriam-Webster 2022). Whodunits are often characterized by their interesting cast of characters, a mysterious atmosphere, and surprising twists. Often there is an appointed detective who attempts to solve the case and reveals everything at the end of the novel. This detective can either be a professional or an amateur. While reading a whodunit, the reader is involved in solving the crime just as much as the detective. The reader typically receives the same clues and information as the detective, which is sometimes considered to be what appeals to people while reading whodunits.

#### **3.2 Murder on the Orient Express**

The material I have analysed using the theories presented in the previous chapter are two Finnish translations of the novel *Murder on the Orient Express*. *Murder on the Orient Express* is a whodunit written by famous author Agatha Christie in 1934. It has often been viewed as one of her most famous works, and as the novel where her Belgian detective character Hercule Poirot is most known for.

*Murder on the Orient Express* tells the story of a mysterious murder that happens on a long train journey across Europe. Hercule Poirot is traveling onboard the train, along with several other passengers. Due to heavy snowfall, the train gets stuck in Yugoslavia. One of the passengers, American businessman Samuel Ratchett is found murdered in his cabin. Nearly all passengers on the train are suspects, and it is up to Hercule Poirot to use his talents to figure out who the killer is.

I will be focusing my examination on the second chapter of *Murder on the Orient Express*. It is named “The Tokatlian Hotel”. In the chapter Hercule Poirot has reserved a room from a hotel in Istanbul but receives a telegram telling him he is needed for a case back home in England. He has dinner and observes the other people in the hotel with a keen eye. He also encounters an old friend who manages to reserve him a last-minute spot from a sleeping car on the Orient Express, a train traveling through Europe. A passenger named Mr. Harris does not arrive to claim his spot, so Poirot

can have his place. Poirot ends up in a cabin with a young American, Mr. MacQueen. They have a friendly conversation, and the chapter ends with the train leaving the platform in Istanbul and beginning its journey through Europe towards Calais.

The two Finnish translations were made exactly 80 years apart; the first was made by Leena Karro in 1937 and reviewed again by her in 1977. It is important to note that we do not know how much the reviewed version from 1977 differs from the original 1937 translation, as I only have access to the 1977 reviewed version. Jaakko Kankaanpää made the second Finnish translation in 2017. Both translations of *Murder on the Orient Express* are named *Idän pikajunan arvoitus* in Finnish.

### **3.2 Method**

To find examples of the appearance of foreign languages in the two translations, I have looked at the second chapter of *Murder on the Orient Express*, “The Tokatlian hotel”. The chapter is named either “Hotellissa” in the 1937/1977 translation, or “Hotelli Tokatliyan” in the 2017 translation. I will go through the chapter in both translations and make a list of all the instances where foreign languages, either French or English in this case, have had an impact on the wording in Finnish. These instances could include the presence of loan words or foreign sentences left untranslated. I will also divide them into categories based on whether they are words integrated into Finnish from another language, or phrases left completely in their original form. Afterwards I will attempt to use the theoretical background to find reasoning for the changes between the two translations. I will also attempt to connect the differences between the translations to language change and possible societal changes, granted that they are somehow connected to language.

## **4 Foreign languages in Finnish translations of Murder on the Orient Express**

### **4.1 Significance of Foreign Languages**

On page 13 in the 1937/1977 translation and page 27 in the 2017 translation we can observe the very first difference between the two translations and their treatment of foreign terms. The hotel Poirot is staying at is named “Tokatlian” in the original English version of the novel, but the name is slightly different in both Finnish translations. In the 1937/1977 translation the hotel is named “Tokatlia”, while the new translation refers to it as “Tokatliyan”.

Despite being used in a fictional context in the novel, the Tokatliyan hotel was a real hotel located in Istanbul. In an advertisement label the hotel is referred to as both “M. Tokatliyan Oteli” and

“Hotel M. Tokatlian”, the former being the Turkish title and the latter the English name. The hotel was founded by Meguerditch Tokatliyan, an ottoman who moved from Tokat to Istanbul in 1883 and adopted the last name Tokatliyan, meaning “from Tokat”. In the 2017 Finnish translation the name is thus at its most accurate, while the title in the original novel, “Tokatlian”, is the English version of the name “Tokatliyan”. The 1937/1977 translation has the English version of the name, but the last letter “n” is missing, making the name “Tokatlia”. It is unknown why this is, though we can speculate that it might have something to do with the Finnish language and its genitive case. Finnish genitive case forms end with -n, which could make the name “Tokatlian” confusing, as it could imply that the -n in the name is a possessive suffix. However, without consulting the translator, we will likely never know why this is.

Interestingly, the 2017 translation has retained the spelling of a passenger’s name, “MacQueen”, from the original novel. However, the 1937/1977 translation has instead omitted the “a” from “Mac”, thus changing the name to “McQueen”. Without asking the translator why this is, it is difficult to speculate on such a change since it does not appear to have any effect on the text.

#### **4.1.1 English**

There are many instances between the 1937/1977 and 2017 translations of *Murder on the Orient Express* where the English language has somehow affected the Finnish used. The first noticeable difference is the way the titular Orient Express is referred to. In the 2017 translation its original title, “Simplon Orient”, is used on page 28. In the 1937/1977 translation however, the train is referred to as “Simplonin kautta menevä idän pikajuna” (14) which loosely translates to “the Orient Express which passes through Simplon”. The 1937/1977 translation therefore refers to the train in a more complicated manner, which raises the question: why?

Looking at Schleiermacher’s theory and the retranslation hypothesis, some reasoning can be found for this difference. Domestication has certainly been used in the 1937/1977 translation, since it uses Finnish wording instead of foreign terms, thus moving the writer closer to the reader and making the text easier for a Finnish reader to understand (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). The word “Orient” in the English title for the train, “Simplon Orient”, implies the geographical route the train is going to take. However, to Finnish readers the meaning of the word might be unknown. Thus the 1937/1977 Finnish translation “Simplonin kautta menevä idän pikajuna”, tells the reader the geographical route and a specific location the train will pass through, Simplon. The construction “Simplonin kautta” also helps the reader understand that Simplon is a location. In the 2017 translation, foreignization

(Schleiermacher 1992, 42) has been used instead. The train's title has been left in its original form for the reader to interpret. This also supports the retranslation hypothesis and its notion of translations following the first one using foreignization more (Koskinen 2019, 317).

Since the word "Orient" conveys geographical information about the train, it is important for the reader to understand it. Although it was translated to Finnish in the 1937/1977 translation, there is an existing loan word for it: "orientti". This is a very direct loan word, as only two letters have been added to the word to change its spelling, making it easier for Finnish speakers to articulate.

Typically, "orientti" has the exact same meaning as its source word, referring to the geographical East. Since a Finnish word equivalent exists for the word "orient", why did the 1937/1977 translation not utilize it? We can speculate that this has something to do with the rather awkward sentence its use could create: "Simplonin orientti" sounds rather bizarre, as the word is more often used as an adjective in Finnish.

There is also another instance that has something to do with the train's title. The name "Orient Express" appears, of course, in the title of the novel. Its Finnish equivalent is "Idän pikajuna", which appears in the title in both Finnish translations. However, in the second chapter of the novel itself the Finnish title appears only in the 1937/1977 translation (20). In the 2017 translation the train is instead referred to as "Orient Express", the original title (36). The reasons for this are similar to the previous example "Simplon Orient". Schleiermacher's foreignization (1992, 42) becomes relevant again, since the train's title has been retained in its original, foreign form. Thus, the reader is moved closer to the author.

There are differences in word choice between the translations, which are relevant because many of the words used are loan words. On page 15 in the 1937/1977 translation a man is referred to with the noun "ihmisystävä" which loosely translates to "friend of people". However, the 2017 translation employs the noun "filantrooppi" instead (29). The word "filantrooppi" is a relatively direct loan word, since its spelling is very similar to the original English noun, "philanthropist". The more Finnish equivalent "ihmisystävä" expresses the same sentiment but combines two Finnish words and forms a new construction. This construction features two words already familiar to Finnish-speakers and thus does not introduce the reader to foreign elements. According to Schleiermacher (1992, 42), this kind of translation compensates for the reader's lack of understanding of the original language.

Another loan word borrowed from the English language is “konduktööri”, which is featured several times in the second chapter of *Murder on the Orient Express*. The loan word is used in the 2017 translation, but in the 1937/1977 translation the corresponding word is “junailija”. With these words we can observe the same dynamic as with the previous example: “konduktööri” is a Finnish spelling of the English word “conductor”, while “junailija” is a purely Finnish equivalent. “Junailija” is formed of the word “juna”, the Finnish word for train, and the “-ja” suffix used to form an agent noun. As Koskinen (2019, 317) mentioned, the second translation is better placed to provide a more source-text-oriented or foreignized version of the original work.

Although “junailija” is a Finnish equivalent word for “conductor”, its use is not common in Finland anymore. Sometimes foreignized words, such as “konduktööri” in this case, actually become more familiar to the target language. Koskinen (2020, 64) explains how Finland joined the EU in the mid-1990s, thus creating concern about the foreign influence in institutional Finnish: this concern “lead to a policy of an extremely ‘Finnicizing’ strategy for translating lexical items. It was dictated that if any term or word had a native Finnish equivalent, it was to be preferred over a loan word, regardless of whether the loan word was the more standardized option and notwithstanding the potential obscurity of the ur-Finnish equivalent”. This led to non-standard words being used, which in turn actually made texts sound more foreign and stranger to Finnish readers (Koskinen 2020, 64), despite them technically being “more Finnish”.

There are other constructions that follow the same pattern as “junailija” and “konduktööri”, such as the 1937/1977 translation using the word “tynesti” when referring to a way a passenger reacts to something (20), and the 2017 translation instead using the word “filosofisesti” (35). In the original novel the word used is “philosophically”. The newer translation thus uses a loan word again, while the older translation uses a more Finnish equivalent.

It is important to note that there are also similarities in the way foreign language has affected the Finnish translations. The word “konferenssi” has been used in both the 1937/1977 translation (18) and the 2017 translation (32), despite it being a loan word taken from the English word “conference”. So far, we have been able to observe a pattern with the way loan words have been used: they have appeared exclusively in the 2017 translation. “Konferenssi” is therefore an exception to the rule.

#### 4.1.2 French

In addition to English, French plays a significant role in the novel. Poirot, being Belgian, frequently speaks French, although usually very briefly. Since I am focusing on the second chapter of the novel, “The Tokatlian Hotel”, where Poirot meets another Belgian, many French exclamations are used. These include brief reactionary clauses, titles and concepts, such as a French name used for a certain type of haircut. Most of them are not important plot points, but rather casual remarks used to enforce the idea of the main character being a French-speaker. Compared to the role of English in the translations, there are no loan words taken from French.

The first of several French exclamations comes in the form of a comment from Poirot: “Voilà ce qui est embêtant” (28). In the 2017 Finnish translation it appears in its original French form, but in the 1937/1977 translation it has instead been translated to Finnish in its entirety: “Tämöpä nyt oli kiusallista” (14). The comment conveys Poirot’s feelings towards the situation and his disappointment, but it is not absolutely necessary for the plot. Thus, the reader’s capability to understand the sentence does not hinder their ability to follow the story. In the 2017 translation the comment, retaining its original French form, is most likely not understandable to most Finnish readers. In the 1937/1977 translation, on the other hand, the sentence has been translated entirely to Finnish. The sentence has therefore been domesticated (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). It has been made fully understandable to the reader despite its relative insignificance to the story. Translating the sentence to Finnish, however, diminishes Poirot’s foreignness which is an important part of his characterisation, especially in the source text (Storm 2016, 79). It could thus affect how the reader understands Poirot’s character, despite being irrelevant to the understanding of the plot.

The second chapter of the novel features several instances of the honorific title “monsieur”. It is used frequently by several characters, all of them French speakers. In the 2017 translation the word has retained its original form, but in the 1937/1977 it has been translated to “herra”, the Finnish equivalent of “monsieur”. Curiously, the word has been omitted altogether in some instances. For example, when Poirot and Bouc greet each other: the 2017 translation has them both use “monsieur” (28), while the 1937/1977 translation has omitted the titles during the first encounter (14). Thus, the men greet each other only by their surnames. In the original novel they use “M”, an abbreviation of “monsieur”. This change affects the formality of the encounter, making the relationship between the two men seem slightly more familiar. However, the use of surnames only

is relatively formal, so the text does not change all that much. Nonetheless, the use of “herra” in the older translation follows the trend of domestication (Schleiermacher 1992, 42) we have observed so far, since it is a direct translation of “monsieur”.

Excluding the titles, Poirot’s friend Bouc also uses some friendly terms to refer to Poirot in the second chapter of the novel. He says both “mon vieux” and “mon cher”, which have both been left in their original French form in the 2017 translation. “Mon vieux” (Kankaanpää 2017, 28) has been translated as “vanha veikko” in the older translation (14), a friendly term expressing familiarity. In the same vein, “mon cher” (Kankaanpää 2017, 28) was translated to “ystäväni” (Karro 1937/1977, 15), which is a more direct translation. As mentioned by Koskinen (2019, 317), the first translation should introduce the text to the target readers, while the following translations may be more foreignized or source-text-oriented.

Mr. Bouc works as a director of Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits, an international railway company. The name of the company is regularly shortened to only “Wagons-Lits” in the 2017 translation, which has also retained the full version of the French name (28). The Finnish name of the company is “Kansainvälinen makuuvaunuyhtiö”, which is also the title used in the 1937/1977 translation (14). It is the official Finnish name of the company, so the translation was not necessarily a deliberate choice by the translator. The company had business in Finland as well, and during the time the older translation was made it was still going. However, the company quit its business in Finland in 1959, so the Finnish name “Kansainvälinen makuuvaunuyhtiö” might not be recognizable to readers today. Thus, the original name is used in the newer translation.

In the original novel Mr. Bouc’s hair is described as having been cut “en brosse”. Curiously, this term has not been retained in either Finnish translation. In the 1937/1977 translation it is referred to as “pystytukka” (14), while the 2017 translation only says that his hair had been cut very short (28). It can be assumed that the translators deliberately made the choice to leave the term “en brosse” out, since it is not familiar to Finnish readers. This is an exception to the trend we have been able to observe with the newer translation so far, since it has retained most of the original French terms from the original novel. “En brosse” is, in both cases, too foreign a term to be used. The reason is not its language of origin, French, but the fact that its meaning would most likely be lost to most readers.

There are several more French comments and exclamations said by Poirot and Bouc in the second chapter of *Murder on the Orient Express*. Most of them are short, such as “tres bien”, “eh bien” and

“precisement”. As mentioned earlier, most of these have no significance in terms of plot, so not understanding them does not make a difference in the reader’s understanding of the story. However, all of these short comments have nonetheless been translated to Finnish in the 1937/1977 translation. In the 2017 translation they have been left in French, which better conveys the speakers’ nationality to the reader. As the 1937/1977 translation is more domesticated (Schleiermacher 1992, 42), the reader is not able to perceive it as well. Thus, the characters’ nationality and its effects on their characterisation might be left unclear. As mentioned before by Storm (2016, 79), Poirot’s characterisation depends on his foreignness and distinctly foreign ways. Mr. Bouc is also Belgian and often adds French exclamations to his speech, which enforces his nationality in a similar way.

The 1937/1977 translation contains one instance of French used by the main character, Hercule Poirot. As he moves through the train, he apologises to the other passengers for the trouble by saying “pardon”. This French comment has been retained in its original form in both translations. For the older translation it is an exception to a rule, since all other French comments have been translated to Finnish. This might be due to it being a relatively simple word, or due to it being more familiar to Finnish readers. It should also be noted that “pardon” in this context is not a direct quote said by Poirot, but rather part of the narrative: “hän sai lausua kohteliaan ‘pardon’ säännöllisesti kuin kello” (Karro 1937/1977, 19) or “kohtelias ‘pardon’ kuului hänen suustaan kellokoneiston tarkkuudella” (Kankaanpää 2017, 34). The original phrase is “his polite ‘pardons’ were uttered with the regularity of clockwork” (Christie 1991, 15). This could have also affected the way this particular French comment was translated.

So far none of the French comments have significantly affected the reader’s understanding of the novel. There is an exception to this in the 2017 translation: Poirot’s porter points him to his cabin by saying “tout à fait au bout, monsieur” (34). The phrase has been translated to “aivan päässä, herra” in the 1937/1977 translation (19). It can be translated to “at the end, sir,” referring to the location of Poirot’s cabin. Using the original French form in the 2017 Finnish translation could hinder the reader’s ability to understand the porter’s words. However, the phrase is followed by the porter expanding on his guidance: “the end compartment but one” (Christie 1991, 15). The 2017 translation has translated this as “toiseksi viimeinen osasto” (34). This helps the reader comprehend the meaning of the French phrase as directions to the cabin. This makes it possible to retain the French in the Finnish translation without hindering the reader’s ability to understand the text, as the location of Poirot’s cabin is quite important to the plot.



The same kind of construction can be observed at another point: before the train leaves the platform at the end of the chapter, a shout can be heard from outside. “En voiture” is shouted to signify the train’s departure. The 1937/1977 translation has it in Finnish: “vaunuihin” (20), while the new translation retains the French. In this instance the French might prove difficult to understand without the context that follows the shout. Poirot and MacQueen have a brief discussion, with MacQueen saying “ja sitten lähdettiin” (Kankaanpää 2017, 35) or “we’re off” (Christie 1991, 15). This conveys the message of the shout to the reader: it signifies that the train is about to leave.

At times, the 1937/1977 translation tends to purposefully avoid using French, even when it would be somewhat important to a scene in the novel. MacQueen, an American, speaks English to Poirot when meeting him. At first, he thinks Poirot cannot understand him, so he repeats his words in French: “Je crois que vous avez un erreur” (Christie 1991, 15). This phrase has been retained in the 2017 translation. In the 1937/1977 translation, however, it is only mentioned that MacQueen repeats his English phrase laboriously in French: “hän toisti lauseen ranskaksi hieman kangertaen” (19). Thus, the older translation avoids the use of the French phrase altogether, instead replacing it with a narrative clause. This further emphasizes the use of domestication in the older translation (Schleiermacher 1992, 42).

## 4.2 Discussion

I have observed the ways foreign languages have affected two Finnish translations of *Murder on the Orient Express*. Examining the translations from a theoretical point of view, I have been able to see a pattern. In my analysis, I focused on 21 examples found in the second chapter of the novel, “The Tokatlian Hotel”. Out of these 21 examples, only two remain completely similar between the 1937/1977 translation and the 2017 translation. One example is completely different between the original novel and the translations, and some terms have been omitted entirely in the older translation. I categorized these examples into groups by language, English and French. Some of the examples did not fit into either category so they were mentioned separately in the beginning of this chapter.

Regarding translation strategies, the pattern between the two Finnish translations is clear. The 2017 translation has been affected more by foreign languages than the 1937/1977 translation. It features more loan words and has retained multiple phrases in their original language, while the older translation is more domesticated (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). In the old translation most foreign

sentences have thus been translated to Finnish and Finnish word equivalents have been used instead of loan words.

Loan words are especially relevant in regards to the differences between the two translations. English has become an important language in the Finnish society and has influenced the Finnish language as well. As Peterson (2017, 119) points out, “proficiency in English does not appear to be a prerequisite for incorporating pragmatic borrowings”. It is therefore not necessary for a Finnish reader to be good at English to understand loan words. Loan words have, however, become more common in recent years with the rise of the Internet and globalisation. Peterson also comments on the recipient language, in this case Finnish, noting that the recipient language often has a pragmatic or grammatical equivalent for a pragmatic borrowing (2017, 119). This can be observed with the examples “konduktööri” and “junailija”, which were examined in the analysis chapter. “Junailija” is the recipient language’s equivalent for the loan word “konduktööri”. These equivalents were utilised more in the 1937/1977 translation: three of the 21 instances had Finnish equivalent words, all featured in the older translation.

Poirot and Bouc’s French sentences are important when examining the translation differences between the Finnish translations. Of the 13 examples I compiled, 10 were translated to Finnish in the 1937/1977 translation. One example, the expression for a very short haircut “en brosse”, was omitted entirely from both translations. Poirot’s “pardon” has been left in its original form in both translations since it is not a dialogue sentence and is rather a part of a narrative clause. MacQueen’s “Je crois que vous avez un erreur“ (Christie 1992, 15) has been omitted from the 1937/1977 translation and is also conveyed through a narrative clause which, contrary to the previous example, does not feature any French. Looking at these examples from the second chapter of the novel, most of them have been domesticated. Despite their insignificance to the plot, the French exclamations and comments enforce Poirot and Bouc’s characterisation and add significantly to the reader’s understanding of their backgrounds. Because of their significance to characterisation, the 2017 translation is better in terms of maintaining important parts of the original text.

The chapter “The Tokatlian Hotel” featured more French than English as a foreign language, mainly due to the prevalence of the exclamations used by Poirot and Bouc, two Belgian characters. Other characters, such as a hotel concierge, a porter, and MacQueen also speak short French sentences, which adds to the amount. French as a foreign language was more prevalent in dialogue, while English was incorporated more in the narrative.

While the majority of the French sentences in the original text have been translated to Finnish in the 1937/1977 translation, 12 of 13 examples used were left in their original foreign forms in the newer translation from 2017. While the retranslation hypothesis (Koskinen 2019, 317) does not apply to all retranlations, we can observe that it does apply to the Finnish translations of *Murder on the Orient Express*. The older translation is more assimilative and domesticated, while the newer is more foreignized and in turn less assimilative (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). Venuti (2018, xiii) notes that even a translation that is foreignizing does not escape inevitable domestication: “It must produce its foreignizing effects in terms that can be recognized as differential by readers of the translating language, and so it must apply interpretants that are specific to the receiving situation”. Foreignization must thus be recognisable to readers in the target language, which means that it is domesticated in itself. Venuti continues: “The retention of source-text words and phrases in a translation, to take a verbal choice that is frequently regarded as foreignizing, can signal a linguistic and cultural difference by suggesting that the text in which it occurs is a translation of a text written in a different language” (2018, xiii). This suggests that using French sentences in a similar way that they are used in the source text reinforces the idea of foreignness.

## 5 Conclusions

I examined two Finnish translations of Agatha Christie’s famous novel *Murder on the Orient Express*, which are both named *Idän pikajunan arvoitus* in Finnish. I focused my examination on the second chapter of the novel, “The Tokatlian Hotel”. I compiled examples of the use of foreign languages in the translations and compared the translations to each other in the context of retranslation and language change. My intention was to determine whether foreign languages had affected the two translations, and whether they differed regarding the way foreign elements were utilised in them. These elements included loan words and sentences that were left in their original foreign form.

The theoretical background for my thesis consisted of Friedrich Schleiermacher and Lawrence Venuti’s theories on translation itself, including the different methods of translating. I also utilised the retranslation hypothesis (Koskinen 2019, 317) since the translations I examined are of the same source material.

My method for examining the translations consisted of going through the two texts and making a list of the instances where foreign languages appeared. Afterwards I compared the examples to each other and analysed them through the theoretical background of my research.

Finally, I discussed my findings and related the results to language change. I also contemplated the ways in which translation affects the reader's understanding of the source text and the problems that might arise from a translation that is either too domesticated or too foreignized (Schleiermacher 1992, 42).

I examined the two Finnish translations with the goal of determining whether they have been affected by foreign languages, and if so, whether either of them has been more affected than the other. Foreign languages have with certainty influenced both translations to a degree. The Finnish translations both feature some loan words and differing amounts of French: for example, the loan word "konferenssi" is present in both translations. The French word "pardon" is similarly featured in both the 1937/1977 translation and the 2017 translation. However, despite language change affecting both, the 2017 translation has clearly been influenced more. It had more loan words, nearly all of the French was left untranslated, and only minor words were omitted, such as the term for a short haircut, "en brosse". It is thus a more foreignized translation, while the 1937/1977 translation is more domesticated (Schleiermacher 1992, 42). Since the older translation was made first and is also the first Finnish translation of *Murder on the Orient Express*, it fits the retranslation hypothesis: "first translations need to introduce the foreign text for the target readers for the first time, and they therefore have a tendency to be assimilative" (Koskinen 2019, 317). Such is the case with Karro's 1937/1977 translation.

Language change and its effects between the two translations are significant. While the older translation uses more Finnish equivalent words, such as "junailija", the newer translation uses loan words that have been integrated into Finnish from another language, "konduktööri" being a prime example of this. Since the influence of English in Finland has grown, pragmatic borrowings have become more common in regular speech and writing, as it is not necessary for a person to be proficient in English to use them (Peterson 2017, 119). This also connects to the use of French in the 2017 translation of *Murder on the Orient Express*. Nearly all French remarks were left untranslated, despite the fact that most Finnish readers would not understand them. While the older translation did translate these sentences into Finnish to make them understandable, the new one kept them in their original forms. Since the untranslated French dialogue is not necessary for the understanding of the plot, it is not necessary to translate it, and it might even benefit the reader in that they get a better understanding of Poirot and Bouc's characterisation. As Storm (2016, 79) mentions, Poirot's character is entirely based on his foreignness, originally in the eyes of British readers. He embodies the French stereotype with his manners and looks, but his French dialogue also makes him seem foreign in the midst of other characters. If this dialogue is changed, it might

hinder the elements important to his character. Poirot's character is changed in some translations: some remove his Belgian accent altogether, making him fit into his surroundings too well for his foreignness to be clear, Storm continues (2016, 1).

My method was to go through the second chapter of *Murder on the Orient Express* on both Finnish translations and list the instances where foreign languages affected the Finnish used. I wrote down the examples and compared them to each other, attempting to connect them to my theoretical background. I categorised the examples I found by language and also examined some other changes I noticed between the two translations, such as differences in spelling. This was apparent with examples such as "Tokatlian" and "Tokatliyan", or "MacQueen" and "McQueen".

My method was relatively simple but effective since it helped me form a conclusive image on the differences between the translations and their relationship with the source text. The categories I used, loan words and untranslated sentences, allowed me to sort through the examples more easily and made the analysis process more efficient. It was also a good decision to only examine one chapter from the whole novel, since there were plenty of examples relating to the influence of foreign languages present. Had I examined more than one chapter, I would have had to carefully choose the most relevant examples but using only one chapter allowed for deeper analysis. However, using only one chapter for observations also limits the research and lessens its merit in the scope of translation research. For a more conclusive analysis, one should use more material, as the observations made about one chapter might not apply to the whole novel. Thus, forming a conclusion based only on one chapter might not result in the most accurate outcome.

The results might also be affected by the fact that different translators could choose to use different methods for their respective translations. Language change might not affect individuals the way it affects society. It could therefore be more effective for further research to use translations made by various translators, not only one or two. With such a change a larger scope of material could be used and thus, a more thorough result achieved. As Venuti notes in *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*, a translator recontextualizes the source text by constructing a set of comparable contexts in the target language (2018, xii). Thus, it is the translator's responsibility to use appropriate contexts in conveying the source text's message to foreign readers. A source text therefore always receives a translator's interpretation, and this interpretation is what conveys the meaning of the source text to the readers in the target language. The resulting translation and any research it is subjected to are always linked to the translator, which raises more questions about the translator's personal style and previous work.

Research on language change and the effects of foreign languages on Finnish translation has become more relevant in recent years since the use of the Internet and globalisation have affected the use of languages all around the world. English is an important language, since it is relatively universal compared to other large languages, such as Mandarin, which are often more localised. The effect English has on Finnish grows every day with new pragmatic borrowings being incorporated to it through Internet slang and foreign media. Such is the case with “oh my god”, mentioned by Peterson as an example of a pragmatic borrowing that has made its way to being a common phrase used by Finns as well (2017, 116). English has also provided Finnish with many loan words that have replaced Finnish equivalent words in relevance and use. Words such as “ihmisystävä” are rarely used today and appear mainly in old translations and media publications.

Finnish translations over the years should be examined more to determine what kind of changes have happened and why. Language change is a relevant subject that connects heavily with translation and therefore it should also be researched more thoroughly in relation to it.

## 6 Bibliography

### Primary Sources

Christie, Agatha. 1977. *Idän pikajunan arvoitus*. Kääntänyt Leena Karro, WSOY.

Christie, Agatha. 2017. *Idän pikajunan arvoitus*. Kääntänyt Jaakko Kankaanpää, WSOY.

Christie, Agatha. 1992. *Murder on the Orient Express*. New York: HarperPaperbacks.

### Works cited

Cambridge Dictionary. 2022. “*Whodunit*.” Cambridge University Press. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/whodunit>

Forster, Michael. 2017. “Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher.” In *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), edited by Edward N. Zalta.  
<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/schleiermacher/>

Koskinen, Kaisa. 2019. “Revising and retranslating.” In *Routledge Handbook of Literary Translation*, edited by R. Kelly Washbourne and Ben Van Wyke, 315-324. London: Routledge.

Koskinen, Kaisa. 2020. *Translation and Affect: Essays on Sticky Affects and Translational Affective Labour*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary. 2022. s.v. “*whodunit*.” Accessed February 23, 2022.  
<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/whodunit>

Peterson, Elizabeth. 2017. “The nativization of pragmatic borrowings in remote language contact situations.” In *Journal of Pragmatics*, 113, 116–126.

Schleiermacher, Friedrich. 1992. “On the Different Methods of Translating.” Translated by Waltraud Bartscht. In *Theories of translation: an anthology of essays from Dryden to Derrida*, edited by Rainer Schulte & John Biguenet, 36-54. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Storm, Marjolijn. 2016. *Agatha Christie’s The Mysterious Affair at Styles in German and Dutch Translation: The Remarkable Case of the Six Poirots*. Brill.

The Home of Agatha Christie. 2022. “*About Agatha Christie*.” Agatha Christie Limited. Accessed February 23, 2022. <https://www.agathachristie.com/en/about-christie>

Venuti, Lawrence. 2018. *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*. New York: Routledge.