

Translator versus Copyeditors: Reflections on Contemporary Finnish Shakespeare Translation

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Tämä artikkeli käsittelee kääntäjän ja kustannustoimittajien välisiä valtasuhteita WSOY:n julkaisemissa uusissa Shakespeare-suomentoksissa. Tarkastelen aihetta kahdesta toisistaan tukevasta näkökulmasta. Toisaalta pohdin sitä, kuinka Shakespeare-suomentamisen traditio saattaa vaikuttaa kustannustoimittajan työhön niin sanottujen mallikäännosten kautta. Toisaalta taas analysoin André Lefeveren teorian valossa sitä, kenellä on valta sanoa ”viimeinen sana” – ammattilaisia (professionals) edustavalla kääntäjällä, vai isäntiä (patrons) edustavilla kustannustoimittajilla. Materiaalina käytän satunnaisotosta Matti Rossin uusimman Macbeth-suomentoksen käsikirjoituksesta, joka sisältää kahden kustannustoimittajan kommentit.

Keywords: Shakespeare, copyediting, power relations, translation tradition, textual model

1 Introduction

In the course of its relatively short history, the study of translation has evolved from its purely linguistic origins into an interdisciplinary branch of research with a strong sociocultural foundation (e.g. Chesterman 2007). Source-oriented study of translation has been complemented by target-oriented approaches represented by such movements as the Manipulation School and Descriptive Translation Studies. However, in spite of these theoretical advances in understanding the sociocultural aspects of *completed* translations, the view of the actual *translation process* has changed surprisingly little. The basic understanding of a translation process still seems to involve the source text, the target text and an *autonomous* translator between them, working alone.

I am arguing that especially in literary translation, this kind of simplistic view does not hold in that the final target text rarely reflects only the translator's choices. This argument goes against the implicit assumption in the study of literary translation that all translation solutions are either decided on by the translator alone, or they are dictated by the commissioner and then slavishly followed by the translator. Lawrence Venuti (1995)

has already drawn attention to the way in which *translators* behind translated texts have traditionally been kept invisible; in my present research I intend to continue along Venuti's lines by exploring the invisibility of *co-authorship* behind translated works. In this paper, I would like to emphasise that translation processes behind published literary texts are not as uncomplicated as they are often seen to be, and that they involve multiple co-translators and multiple source texts, some of which might even originate in the receiving culture.

The main purpose of this paper is to expressly focus on some of the power relations that take place in the context of copyediting the contemporary Finnish retranslations of Shakespeare's plays.¹ These retranslations are commissioned and published by WSOY², one of the most prominent Finnish publishing companies. By concentrating on power relations, I wish to draw the attention to the way the authorship of a translated work is fragmented between many individuals. I approach the relationship between the translator and the copyeditors essentially as a confrontation or a power-struggle, that is, a domain in which important but usually hidden background factors of the translation process become visible.

2 Material & method

My material consists of a random selection of 10 pages from the unpublished manuscript of *Macbeth*. The total number of pages in the manuscript is 105, so this sample should represent about 10% of the whole manuscript. My analysis is based on handwritten editorial comments found in these 10 pages, on which there are 82 comments in total. I have analysed the comments by paying attention to the following two points of concern. On the one hand, I have examined to what extent the copyeditors' comments seem to be motivated by the previous Finnish translations of *Macbeth*. I am referring to this phenomenon as *the influence of the Finnish Shakespeare translation tradition*, in which existing translations which already are part of the Finnish

¹ I am referring to translations published as books: actual stage-translations lie beyond the scope of this paper.

² The first translations in this contemporary series, one of which was *Macbeth*, were published in 2004.

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literary system have certain power over the copyeditors' work. However, comparing the comments with all published translations and adaptations of *Macbeth*, of which there are five, is not feasible in the space available here. Therefore I have chosen to divide the history of translating Shakespeare's plays into Finnish into two major periods, each represented by one translation of *Macbeth*. I shall discuss this choice in detail in section 4. On the other hand, I have examined the power relations between the translator and the copyeditors from the point of view of the question "who has had the final word". By this I mean whether or not the translator has "obeyed" the copyeditors. In Finland, the copyeditors' work has traditionally been concealed, but they have, nevertheless, had authority over the writer or translator. This subject has been under a heavy debate (see Anhava 2000; Haanpää 2000; Markkanen 2000; Stenbäck 2007).

3 Translation process

Since this paper intends to take the work of the copyeditors into account, the translation process needs to be carefully illustrated. The translation/publication process of these retranslations has gone roughly as follows (although this scheme has varied depending on the translator). The process has started with the publisher's selection of the authoritative source text as well as the translators taking part in the project. The primary source text edition for all plays is *Oxford World's Classics* (Martin 2003). The translators have been either invited, or they have been selected through an application procedure. The translator has, once selected, made a draft of the whole play, which has been commented on by the *main copyeditor*. Different main copyeditors have edited different plays, but they all specialise mostly in linguistic issues. The project involves three main copyeditors, Päivi Koivisto-Alanko, Alice Martin and Saara Hyypä, all of whom have a background in either Early Modern English studies or translating. (Koivisto-Alanko & Martin 2009).

After commenting on the manuscript, the main copyeditor has submitted it back to the translator and, at the same time, to the *consultant*. The consultant in the project is Matti Rissanen, one of the leading Shakespeare and Early Modern English scholars in Finland. The consultant's function is similar to the main copyeditor's, with the exception that he

has commented on the translator's and the main copyeditor's work, mainly concentrating on language as well. Finally, the translator has made the necessary corrections on the basis of the main copyeditor's and the consultant's feedback, and submitted the manuscript to the publisher. After this, the final draft has been proofread and checked by people inside as well as outside the project, and some slight changes have been made also at this point. However, as these changes are undocumented it is not clear who is behind them and what they actually are. (Koivisto-Alanko & Martin 2009).

4 Influence of Finnish Shakespeare translation tradition

If the history of translating Shakespeare in Finland is examined more closely, it can be inferred that Shakespeare's plays constitute a group of texts that has been actively translated both for the stage and the page in Finland. Because of the long and productive history of Finnish Shakespeare translation, the current Finnish literary system contains a strongly established niche for Shakespeare's plays which can be argued to be governed by its own translation tradition. In its typical usage, "translation tradition" refers to translational phenomena within a given culture in a very holistic manner, but in this paper I am employing "translation tradition" as a fitting term to convey the idea of the normative and prescriptive sides of Finnish Shakespeare translation without having to resort to the much more problematic concept of translational norms, for example.

However, the idea of translation tradition has, perhaps, most fruitfully been dealt with in terms of translational norms, the study of which was initially included in Gideon Toury's (1995) *Descriptive Translation Studies* agenda. For example, Andrew Chesterman (1997) has introduced the concepts *expectancy norms* and *norm-models*, and argues that

[i]n theory, we can distinguish, within the total set of translations in a culture, a fuzzy subset of texts which are felt to conform very closely, prototypically as it were, to the relevant expectancy norms [norms relating to readers' expectations of what the text should be like]: such translations tend to assume the status of 'norm-models' [...] (65).

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From this point of view it can be argued that among all Finnish representations of Shakespeare's works there exist a number of texts which have a normative status. These "model" translations can be seen to have an influence on later retranslations.

Also Theo Hermans (1996) speaks about the influence of "model" translations: "[t]ranslating 'correctly', in other words, amounts to translating according to the prevailing norm, and hence in accordance with the relevant, canonized models. The result can be expected to be another 'model' translation" (37). Therefore, in order to produce a retranslation that is "good" enough to become a model translation, the prevailing canon must be taken into account. Hermans (ibid.) also points out that "[...] the textual models [...] are not only, and not necessarily, those of the receptor culture" (38), and so even foreign-language source texts may be dealt with as textual models, as I am approaching the project's primary source text edition, *Oxford World's Classics*, as a textual model of sorts.

I am employing these norm-based views as a background, but instead of explicitly referring to translational norms as such, I will at this stage of my research use the concepts *translation tradition* and *textual model*. To be able to deal with norms in this context, I would at least need to base my research on a considerably larger textual corpus. Furthermore, there still is considerable disagreement on the basic definition of norms in the context of translation (see Chesterman 1996; Schäffner 1999). So, in addition to the category representing the textual model constituted by the official source text edition (*Oxford World's Classics*), my analysis includes two categories representing textual models deriving from the Finnish Shakespeare translation tradition. Each of these two textual models represents a distinct period in the history of translating Shakespeare into Finnish. I am basing my categorisation on Sirkku Aaltonen's (1999) division of the history of Finnish theatrical production (and translation) into three periods.

The first period (the second period in Aaltonen's division) takes into account the Romantic phase of Finnish Shakespeare translation in the second half of the 19th century. The pinnacle of this phase is constituted by Paavo Cajander's translations of the whole

canon of Shakespeare's plays into Finnish between 1879 and 1912. I am employing Cajander's translation of *Macbeth* from 1885 as an exponent of the Romantic period. The second period (the third period in Aaltonen's division) is characterised by the emergence of a "modern" way of looking at Shakespeare's texts, particularly on the stage. These new readings were almost exclusively seen on the stage, and only few were made available in print. One of these few published translations is Matti Rossi's version of *Macbeth* published in 1983, which I am using as an exponent of the modernising period.

Out of the total of 82 editorial comments included in the sample, 21 comments were found to be irrelevant with regard to this study. These 21 irrelevant comments mainly concerned the correct use of Finnish which lies outside the interests of the present paper. The remaining 61 comments were examined in detail and compared with *Oxford World's Classics* edition of *Macbeth* as well as local solutions in the two abovementioned Finnish translations of *Macbeth*. The comments fell into the following three categories: (1) references to the source text edition, (2) references to solutions characteristic of Cajander's 1885 translation (which are not, for example, word-for-word translations of the source text), and (3) references to solutions characteristic of Rossi's 1983 translation (which are not present in Cajander's translation).

My analysis of the ten-page sample (see Diagram 1 for results) shows that in most cases (36 out of 61 comments) there seems to be a link between the copyeditors' comments and the official source text set by the commissioner.

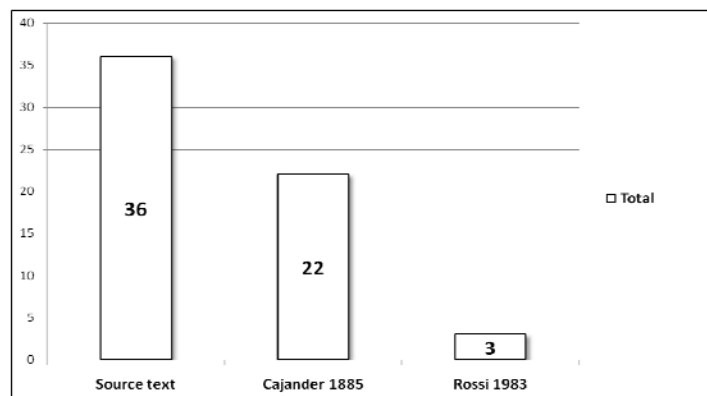


Diagram 1. Editorial comments and their possible sources of influence.

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This kind of result could be expected because of the source text edition's emphasised position in the project. What is more interesting is that many of the copyeditors' comments seem to bear resemblance to solutions in Cajander's 1885 translation of *Macbeth* as well in that 22 out of 61 comments seem to be linked to solutions evident in Cajander's translation. Rossi's 1983 translation of *Macbeth*, however, seems to be a minor influence; a feasible link between an editorial comment and a solution evident in Rossi's 1983 translation can only be established in 3 out of 61 cases. This is rather interesting since Matti Rossi is also the translator of the contemporary retranslation of *Macbeth*.

In what follows, I will discuss each of these three categories through an example. The solution in the manuscript of the contemporary translation will be given first, and it is followed by the copyeditor's comment. The comment is followed by the solution evident in Cajander's 1885 translation as well as the solution in Rossi's 1983 translation. The solution to which the editorial comment is considered to be linked is underlined in each example.

Example 1 shows the most typical of the ways in which the source text seems to give a motivation for an editorial comment. It is from Act 3, Scene 4 in which Lady Macbeth suggests her husband, anxious and ridden with guilt after seeing Banquo's ghost, that he should try to get some sleep.

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------|--|
| (1) | Manuscript: | Saat liian vähän <u>virkestävää</u> unta. (60).
[You get too little refreshing sleep.] ³ |
| | Comment: | <u>season:</u> tarpeellinen vuodenaika, suola, säilyttäminen
[<u>season:</u> necessary time of year, salt, preservation] |
| | <u>ST (Oxford):</u> | <u>You lack the season of all natures, sleep.</u> (160). |
| | Cajander 1885: | Sult' uni puuttuu, kaiken luonnon höyste. (53).
[You lack sleep, the seasoning of all nature.] |
| | Rossi 1983: | Sinä kaipaavat unta. Se on luonnon paras lääke. (67).
[You need sleep. It is nature's best medicine.] |

³ The back translations in square brackets are mine.

In Example 1 the main copyeditor refers directly to the source text by including the word “season” in the comment and also giving a list of possible connotations of the word in Finnish. Behind the comment there is the idea that the source text’s “season” should be somehow included in the translation; in the manuscript it is missing.

Example 2 shows the possible influence of Cajander’s translation. The passage is from Act 1, Scene 3 in which Macbeth is wondering about the actuality of the three witches who have vanished after stating their prophecy.

- (2) **Manuscript:** [...] Näyttivät vain ihmisiltä [...] (10).
[*They merely looked like human beings*]
- Comment:** näyttivätkö? ”heillä näytti olevan ruumis, mutta se haihtui...”
[*did they? “they seemed to have a body, but it faded away...”*]
- ST (Oxford):** [...] and what seemed corporal melted [...] (104).
- Cajander 1885:** [...] Minkä ruumiiks luulit, haihtui [...] (25).
[*What you thought of as a body, faded away*]
- Rossi 1983:** [...] Niiden ihmismuoto
oli pelkkää harhaa [...] (13).
[*Their human form was only an illusion*]

In Example 2 the main copyeditor insists that the witches should “have a body” instead of “looking like human beings”. Furthermore, the copyeditor suggests that their bodies should “fade away” or “evaporate” instead of “melting”. These two main points in the editorial comment seem highly reminiscent of Cajander’s 1885 translation. However, it remains under speculation, as it does with many other similar examples, whether the copyeditor’s comment is related to Cajander’s solution intentionally or by mere coincidence.

Finally, Example 3 shows a link between the editorial comment and Rossi’s modernising translation from 1983. The following passage is also from Act 1, Scene 3, in the beginning of which the three witches are waiting for Macbeth and Banquo.

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- (3) **Manuscript:** Kipparin akka kastanjoita naamaan mätti vaan,
ei suostunut se raato edes yhtä antamaan,
se noidaksi vain haukkui ja hiiteen toivotti. (6).
[*The captain's wife did nothing but stuffed chestnuts in her face,
that carcass did not agree to give me even one,
she called me a witch and told me to go to hell.*]
- Comment:** *mahd. rivouksia*
[*possible obscenities*]
- ST (Oxford):** A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munched, and munched, and munched. 'Give
me', quoth I;
'Aroynt thee, witch', the rump-fed ronyon cries. (100).
- Cajander 1885:** Helmastaan laivur'akka kastanjoita
Söi hotki hotkimistaan. "Annas", sanoin:
"Pois hiiteen, noita!" huus se ihrahaaso. (7).
[*From her lap the skipper's wife ate chestnuts
Munched and munched away. "Give me", I said:
"Away to hell, witch!" yelled that fat carcass.*]
- Rossi 1983:** Kipparin akalla oli kastanjoita helmassa ja se hotki niitä että sylki
roiskui. "Annahan minullekin", minä sanoin. "Menetkös siitä", se
leveäperseinen syyhynsyömä lumppu kiljaisi minulle, "hus hiiteen,
noita." (10).
[*The skipper's wife had chestnuts in her lap and she munched them so
that spittle splashed. "Give me", I said. "Go away", that wide-arsed
mange-eaten slut screamed at me, "shoo to hell, witch."*]

In Example 3 the main copyeditor seems to suggest that the passage possibly requires rougher language, as is readily evident in Rossi's 1983 translation. In other words, the witches should use coarse language in a way that is idiomatic to the modern Finnish language. Cajander's translation uses coarse language, but does it in a more archaic fashion.

Next I will look at the results from another point of view. In what follows, I will discuss the power relation that exists between the translator and the copyeditors on the individual level. I will examine whose solutions tend to appear in the published translation, and try to draw some conclusions on to what a degree an established *professional* working as a translator is able to contest the authority of the *patron* (i.e. the publisher). The concepts *professional* and *patron* have been suggested by André Lefevere's (1992: 14–15), and they relate to Lefevere's theoretical view according to which patrons (e.g. publishers) essentially set the limits within which professionals (e.g. writers and translators) eventually have to work.

5 Translator versus copyeditors

If the results of the analysis are looked at from the point of the question “who has had the final word” (see Diagram 2), it can be seen that out of the 36 comments linked with the source text, the translator has ignored 19 and followed 17. Out of the 22 comments linked with Cajander’s translation, the translator has ignored 13 and followed 9.

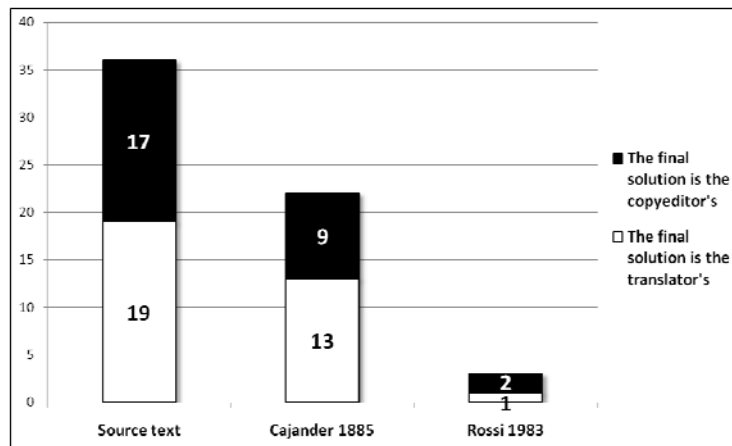


Diagram 2. Power relations between the translator and the copyeditors.

Therefore the translator seems to have, in all three categories, a great deal of authority in deciding whether the authority of a given textual model, reflected by the editorial comments, actually shows in the final translation.

Hermans (1996) points out that “[a]n experienced and well-established poetry translator may feel more confident than the young aspiring novice in ignoring the wishes and suggestions of a particular editor or publisher” (35). Although Hermans is talking about poetry translation, I would argue that this is exactly what is taking place in my material: Matti Rossi, an established Finnish poet, writer and Shakespeare translator, seems to be able to ignore the copyeditor suggestions. Continuing this line of thought, it would be interesting to look at whether a *non-established* Shakespeare translator working in this contemporary project is able to do this at the same scale.

I have merely touched upon translational norms in this article, but I would like to conclude with a quote from Chesterman (1997): “[b]ut suppose a translator decides not

to conform to a particular norm? What then? Suppose norm-breaking leads to the establishment of new, higher norms, which thus change translation practice for the good?" (85). When dealing with translation, it is good to bear in mind that non-conformity or norm-breaking is in many cases the only way to create something new.

6 Conclusions

In this concise case study of *Macbeth* it was found that out of the three categories included in the study, the source text edition seems to be the most visible one in the copyeditor's work in the contemporary translation project. Paavo Cajander's 1885 translation of *Macbeth* was found to be the second-most prominent category and, perhaps most interestingly, a feasible link with an editorial comment and Matti Rossi's modernising 1983 translation could be established only in three cases. The small number of comments that were seen to refer to Rossi's previous translation might, however, be explained by the fact that many solutions in Rossi's modernising 1983 translation are, perhaps, already incorporated in Rossi's 2004 contemporary translation. It was also found in the analysis that in the case of *Macbeth*, the translator has a considerable power over the copyeditor, and that this most probably is due to the translator's well-established position as a Finnish Shakespeare translator.

This heavily interpretive, small-scale case study represents an attempt in exploring a way to analyse commented manuscripts, and therefore the results cannot be generalised on. Furthermore, the material is very commissioner-centred in that it is the commissioner who has, in effect, hired both the translator and the consultant. Because of this, Lefevere's theory may not apply directly to this case. However, the outcome suggests feasible rationale for a hypothesis according to which the influence of Paavo Cajander's work on the contemporary Shakespeare translation project might be considerable. So, even though the contemporary Shakespeare translation project is, allegedly, a return to the source text in that the *Oxford World's Classics* editions are considered the authoritative source texts (Martin 2003), Cajander's influence as the creator of canonised "Finnish Shakespeare" might on many occasions override the authority of the English-language source text edition.

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