Generic Fluency in Fansubbing
Neology as the Voice of Science Fiction
in Non-professional Subtitling

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Abstract

This study analyses the genre-specific features in the non-professional subtitling (fansubbing) of audiovisual science fiction (SF). Considered as one of the most important linguistic elements in SF, neologies create the cognitive estrangement from reality that is characteristic of the SF genre, cognitively estranging the reader from reality. Evaluating the translation of neologies is thus used as a tool to evaluate the transfer of the source text (ST) genre to the target text (TT). When the neologies are retained as genre-specific features of SF, the TT genre is regarded as generically fluent and the ST genre is accessible for the TT viewer. The study material reveals that the non-professional translations have retained the neologies with greater percentage than the professional translations of the same TV series translations resulting in a more fluent SF genre. This can be due to the tendency of fansubs to use foreignizing translation strategies. The material of the study consists of the neologies in non-professional and professional subtitles of contemporary Anglo-American SF series, which were analysed to determine whether they retain or recreate the SF generic fluency.

Keywords: fansubbing, audiovisual translation, generic fluency

1 Introduction

The technological advances of the twenty-first century have altered the modes of audiovisual translation and enabled the creation of new phenomena within the field. The surge in **non-professional subtitling**, such as **fansubbing,** is one of the new phenomena and technological innovations, such as the internet, have enabled fan networks around the globe to produce **fansubs** (Dwyer 2019: 437; Constales 2012: 119), which can be briefly described as the subtitles produced by fans for fans (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez 2006). Even though the roots of fansubbing are historically associated with the Japanese animation of the 1980s (Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez 2006: 37; Dwyer 2019: 438), the phenomenon has spread throughout the world to other genres, languages, countries and contexts (Dwyer 2019: 440). Today, fansubs are produced "in virtually any country and in any language" (Pedersen 2019: 50). This analysis adopts the recent and broader definition of fansubs proposed by Jan Pedersen (2019: 51) as "subtitles produced by fans, with little or no professional training or experience, carried out without pecuniary

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remuneration and normally without the consent of the copyright holders of the source text" and widens the scope of the study of fansubs to the genre of **science fiction** (SF), more specifically to **generic fluency** (the preservation of genre specific elements in translation) in the translation of science fictional neology (Korpi 2017; Korpi 2021).

According to David Orrego-Carmona (2015: 45), there is a growing trend in researching non-professional subtitling from various perspectives and the progress in this research has produced "studies that are more oriented towards specific aspects" (ibid.: 27). However, most of the studies conducted thus far appear to have "sidestepped the issue of quality" (Pedersen 2019: 51) by claiming that a comparison between non-professional and professional subtitles is possible only when the differences in their requirements and purpose are taken into account (Orrego-Carmona 2015). In this study, this comparison is necessary to answer the primary research question: are fansubbers more aware of the linguistic importance of the source text (ST) neologies and thus more likely to retain them in the target text (TT) than professional subtitlers (hence forward **prosubbers**). In order to justify the research question, the material of this analysis on fansubs is compared to the material of a previous study (Korpi 2021) that analysed the professionally subtitled SF neologies in the same STs. With regards to the research question, it also needs to be noted that as the phenomenon of fansubbing has grown exponentially during the last decades, not all the fansubbers are fans of what they translate (Orrego-Carmona 2015: 34). Nevertheless, the research question was formulated on the assumption that the analysed non-professional subtitles are fansubs produced by fans of the SF genre. The aim is therefore to examine these subtitles by taking into account the specific aspects of fandom, such as expertise in the genre conventions.

This analysis applies the concept of **generic fluency** (Korpi 2017; Korpi 2021) to the fansubbing of SF. That concept describes the effect on the genre when neologies, the genre-defining elements of SF, are transferred from the ST to the TT. When a SF text is translated, the chosen translation strategies for the neologies affect the transfer of the SF genre to the target language and culture. This study explores the extent to which neologies as typical genre elements of the SF in the English ST have transferred to the Finnish TT in the fansubs of the audiovisual TV series *Stargate Atlantis* (2012), *Star Trek Enterprise* (2001b) and *Battlestar Galactica* (2004b) and compares the results with a previous study on the transfer of the same neologies in professional subtitles to answer the following more precise research questions: 1. Do the non-professionally produced subtitles **(fansubs)** treat neologies differently from the professionally produced subtitles **(prosubs)**? 2. What are some of the possible reasons for the possible differences? 3. What happens to the SF genre in the fansubbing process? Based on a previous study from the field of professional subtitling (Korpi 2021), it is assumed that at least some neologies will not be preserved in the fansubs, but as fansubs are reported to be more source oriented (Orrego-Carmona 2015: 37; Pedersen 2019: 53–54), it is assumed that fansubs will retain a greater percentage of the SF neologies than the prosubs. Hence the neologies as genre-specific elements become less normalised towards more conventional target language expressions in fansubbing than in prosubbing. This may be due to fansubbers regarding them as more important elements to retain in the translation than the prosubbers.

The concept of generic fluency and the role of neologies in SF are discussed in section 2, and the phenomenon of fansubbing in section 2.1. The material and method are explained in section 3, and the study's results are analysed with examples in section 4, with comparisons to prosubs. Section 5 discusses the results and ventures on to answer the research questions.

2 Neologies and Generic Fluency in translation of SF

The genre of SF is characterised by neologies as linguistic elements that are typical for the texts in this genre. These genre-defining elements enable the readers of SF novels or the viewers of audiovisual SF to recognise the genre. It can be claimed that **neologies** (new words or new meanings attached to existing words**)** are the most important linguistic element of the SF genre because they create the voice of SF and differentiate it from other genres (Korpi 2017). For the contemporary genre critic Istvan Csicsery-Ronay (2008: 5), fictive neologies are "the first beauty of science fiction" and "an aspect of SF that audience desires from the genre." The importance of the neologies in the worldbuilding of SF has also been recognised by Gary Westfahl (1993: 1), who states that "the new world is thus understood and absorbed by means of its new words" and by Peter Stockwell (2000: 106), who argues that SF "creates new worlds by conjuring and coining new words" and that these neologisms assume "a fundamental importance as an act of creation that is not just conceptual but real" (ibid.: 125). Thus, neologies are important in constructing the **cognitive estrangement** of a SF text. This cognitive estrangement in SF means that the reader or viewer of SF is estranged from the reality by a new phenomenon, **a novum**, which does not exist in the empirical reality, but which is similar enough for the reader to consider it plausible (Suvin 2016).

This analysis adopts Stockwell's (2000) categorisation of neology into **neologisms** and **neosemes**, for according to Stockwell (2000) and Csicsery-Ronay (2008), neology in SF operates with either neosemes or neologisms. Neosemy, a term coined by Stockwell (2000), refers to the development of new meanings for existing words. Thus, neosemes represent both the historical aspects of the words, and the possible futures these words might have, inviting the reader to decipher the connection. According to Stockwell (2006: 5), neosemes make "the imaginary world seem close and more nearly extrapolated from the reader's familiar world" when compared to the relatively disjunctive and alien neologisms. For example, in the SF TV series *Stargate Atlantis* (2005), the *ancients* (an alien race) and the *stargate* (a wormhole gate which transports people between planets) are neosemes. Neologisms, in turn, are new words without histories (Csicsery-Ronay 2008: 19). Their strength in producing the SF estrangement lies in their "ability to evoke imaginary differences of culture and consciousness" (Csicsery-Ronay 2008: 19). An example of a neologism is the name of the alien race *Goa'uld* in the *Stargate Atlantis* (2005).

As stated previously, this analysis applies the concept of **generic fluency** (Korpi 2017; Korpi 2021) to the fansubbing of SF. I suggest that a translation of a SF text can be regarded as generically **fluent** when it preserves the voice of the genre, the fictive

neologies. This generic fluency is therefore related to the quality of reception rather than textual fluency. When these neologies are not preserved, the translation is regarded as generically **unfluent**. For the present analysis, the neologies were first categorised into local translation strategies. They were then further categorised as representing either **retentive** or **recreative** global translation strategies, which either preserved the voice of the genre (retentive) or misplaced that voice (recreative). This dichotomy between retentive and recreative strategies is based on the categorisaxon of fiction by the genre critic Darko Suvin (2016: 31–33, 81–82), in which SF represents **estranged** and **cognitive** fiction as opposed to naturalistic and noncognitive fiction. Suvin (2016: 82) proposes that estrangement in SF must be explained scientifically. Hence, the translation strategies of neologies which combine both the 'cognitive' and the 'estranged' similarly as the ST, are considered as retentive and to preserve the SF ST neology's **cognitive estrangement.** As an example, if the neology in the ST is both cognitive (intelligible in the world of the story) and estranging (from the author's reality), but the TT neology has lost either its estrangement or cognition, the neology has been translated recreatively and the voice of the genre is lost as the ST cognitive estrangement is misplaced. Furthermore, the TT is generically unfluent. Retentive strategies are thus suggested to result in a generically fluent SF TT, whereas the recreative strategies lead to an unfluent SF TT.

2.1 Fansubbing of SF

This section discusses the phenomenon of fansubbing and aims to demonstrate its relation to SF fandom and the generic fluency of SF texts in Finland. As mentioned earlier, the fansubbing phenomenon is currently acknowledged as a practice that is used for a vast array of genres, formats and languages (see, e.g., Dwyer 2017: 138). Interestingly, fansubbing has been connected directly with the United States SF fan community and anime fans (Dwyer 2017: 137–139). This connects fansubbing particularly to the genre of SF and Anglo-American SF TV series, which have become more accessible than before also for the Finnish viewers due to, for example, the surge of streaming services. As many of the fansubbing networks also provide Finnish subtitles, the phenomenon of fansubbing has also affected the Finnish audiovisual genre of SF.

The majority of audiovisual SF in Finland comes from the English-speaking world and Finnish consumers of audiovisual material are mostly exposed to the audiovisual SF genre through subtitles (Korpi 2021). SF fandom arrived in Finland from abroad (Hirsjärvi 2009: 12) and more specifically, from the Anglo-Saxon world (ibid.: 144–145). Irma Hirsjärvi (2009: 17, my translation) states that fans are nowadays considered to be the definers of a genre for "fans are seen as selective consumers, actors in the genre-related actions and definers of a genre." Hirsjärvi (2009: 116) also notes that fans master the trivia related to their subject of interest, and thus they can be regarded as experts in their subject. Therefore, even though Hirsjärvi surely refers to fan fiction and other related products, it can be deduced that fansubbers are aware of genre conventions. As experts of the SF genre, fansubbers are those who create the expectations for a translation.

Furthermore, fansubbers can be considered to be **prosumers** (consumers of subtitles, who also produce them), who as part of the audience have "become a more compact self-elected public that develops a profound affection for certain products and has a deep interest in participating in or influencing the creation and development of those products" (Orrego-Carmona 2015: 12). This has a strong connection to the process of fandom in general, in which consumers become fans and petty producers (Abercrombie & Longhurst 1998: 141). Hirsjärvi (2009: 200, my translation) has developed this idea by stating that modern media have enabled fans to become experts who are able to "produce and use this information together with a wide network of people." Hirsjärvi's observation could also describe fansubbing as fansubbers can be seen to be part of an expert network. In the case of SF, they are familiar with the genre definition of SF. This differentiates them from the prosubbers, who might regard the genre conventions as peripheral in comparison to other features of the subtitled content. Furthermore, some prosubbers might not be aware that such genre characteristics even exist. With regards to the material of this analysis, Finnish subtitles of SF TV series, a Finnish university degree in translation and the English language usually entails knowledge about literary conventions, but prosubbers do not necessarily have such an education. This underlying difference in their standpoint is most likely due to their different circumstances when producing subtitles.

2.2 Foreignizing (Abusive) Fansubbing versus Domesticating (Corrupt) Prosubbing

This section compares fansubbing and prosubbing on a more practical level. The differences between the two are discussed in many previous studies. Pedersen (2019: 52) notes the amateur and voluntary status of the subtitlers as a basis for his definition of fansubbing. Unlike most prosubbers, fansubbers are generally untrained and do not get paid for their work (Dwyer 2017: 135). This appears to be the prevailing and underlying difference, which is reflected in more practical differences. It seems to reflect Hirsjärvi's (2009: 114) notion that fan activities in general are not based on financial compensation, but rather on the willingness of fans to invest a great amount of time and knowledge in them. Fansubbers are not trained translators, but as Minako O'Hagan (2009: 102) notes, "domain knowledge possessed by fans may in some cases compensate for the lack of formal training." This can also apply to the fansubbers of SF, who may know more about the genre-specific features of SF than prosubbers do. When the motivation for producing a translation is not in remuneration, it must be in the content and providing access to the subtitled programme for all. According to Tessa Dwyer (2017: 139), with regards to anime fansubbing, "the issue of translation began to trump that of access […] fan networks were the only channels able to inspire trust, ensuring 'authenticity'". In other words, fansubs could be seen to be produced with the demand for trusted access to the authentic content. Orrego-Carmona (2019: 13) mentions that when (some) viewers "feel the subtitles are not good or identify something they are not convinced of, they prefer to look for another subtitle file." Hence, even though there are professionally and commercially

produced subtitles available, fans who can utilise fansubbing sites may prefer to use fansubs if they are considered more 'authentic' than the prosubs.

The practical differences between prosubbing and fansubbing are recognised by many to be related to quality issues. Many studies claim that the quality of fansubs is often variable and lower than that of prosubs (Pedersen 2019; Díaz-Cintas & Muñoz Sánchez 2006; Orrego-Carmona 2015), which could be explained by the lack of formal translator training. Furthermore, fansubs are perceived to be more source-oriented or foreignizing and creative than prosubs (Pedersen 2019: 53; Dwyer 2017: 144). Fansubbers are "genre experts who take a holistic and rather foreignizing approach to translation, against the domesticating mainstream preference" (Orrego-Carmona 2015: 45). According to Dwyer (2017: 144), this foreignizing approach of fansubbers "aims to counteract the flattening, domesticating textual strategies so prevalent with commercial TV." The approach is also contrary to prosubs, which are, in a Venutian sense, considered to be the "necessary evil" (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2007: 139) of an audiovisual product. Dwyer (2017: 135) also observes that "the fansubbing phenomenon is exploding standard screen translation practices, exposing supposed rules and formal constraints as mere conventions."

Related to the generic fluency of SF, this tendency of fansubbers to foreignize and challenge the prosubbing conventions should lead to a more generically fluent genre because it can influence the translation of neologies. The foreignizing approach could favour retaining the neologies in the translation, making the TT subtitles generically fluent. According to Orrego-Carmona (2019: 16–17), in addition to fast access to the audiovisual product, the users of fansubs "are more and more interested in accessing a product that is ever closer to the original" and that for viewers with a limited knowledge of English language, "a good quality subtitle might be the one that follows the original and maintains a certain degree of 'foreignness' [and] from the users' point of view, professional translation might fail to fulfil the expectations of a more literal translation" (Orrego-Carmona 2019: 16–17). Orrego-Carmona (2019: 16) also argues that the fansubbing communities can afford to adopt a more source-oriented approach "because they serve a relatively small and self-selected audience that expects this type of approach" in comparison to prosubbers, who need to ensure the suitability of the translation for a larger audience. This further supports the assumption that, as a foreignizing approach can lead to a more fluent SF genre, the fansubs would be more generically fluent in comparison.

The difference between the number of **foreignizing** (source-oriented) and **domesticating** (target-oriented) translation strategies (Venuti 1995) can be attributed to the fansubbers' lack of education as language experts. The difference also reflects the reaction by viewers to the subtitles, the feedback effect, the vulnerability of subtitles (the viewers are able to judge the content of the subtitles when they understand the simultaneous ST) (Díaz-Cintas & Remael 2007: 55–56), and the fact that the constraints involved in prosubbing (for example temporal or space constraints) are not present as such in fansubbing. The fans may be willing to overlook for example linguistic errors or reading speed errors if they perceive the content of the fansubs to be more authentic than that of prosubs. According to O'Hagan (2007: 165), "hardcore fans are prone to take timeless interest in translation issues in search for authenticity." In this study, this would

mean that fansubbers may be willing to overlook for example linguistic errors or difficult reading speed and emphasise source-oriented strategies that offer the viewer an authentic sense of the ST SF rather than create easily readable subtitles that conform to the norms that they are accustomed to when watching prosubs. This can also affect the difference in the level of generic fluency in fansubbing and prosubbing.

When translating neologies, prosubbers tend to use translation strategies that normalise the genre of SF, such as omission and generalisation, which can be regarded as the base of SF generic fluency (Korpi 2017; Korpi 2021). This reflects the preference of prosubbers to domesticate and what Abé Mark Nornes (2004: 449) referred to as "corrupt" translation. Nornes (2004: 449) notes that "it is a practice of translation that smooths over its textual violence and domesticates all otherness while it pretends to bring the audience to an experience of the foreign." Nornes (2004: 467) proceeds to suggest that the tendency of fansubbers to not conform to the norms of audiovisual translation gave rise to his concept of "abusive subtitles [which] always direct spectators back to the original text." Hence, while the corruptive strategies of prosubs can explain why the genre of SF does normalise in prosubbing, this abusive nature of fansubbing should further explain the stronger generic fluency evident in fansubs than in prosubs.

3 Material and Method

The material consisted of 1,280 translations of neologies in the Finnish fansubs of three contemporary SF TV series retrieved from the fansubbing sites *DivX Finland* (2019) and *opensubtitles.org* (2019). These include the two first episodes of season one of *Stargate Atlantis* (2012), the first five episodes of season one of *Star Trek Enterprise* (2001b), and the three-hour-long first episode of the first series of *Battlestar Galactica* (2004b). The material was collected from the retrieved fansubs and analysed one neology at a time. The three series and their episodes were chosen in order to compare the results with a previous study conducted on prosubs (Korpi 2021) with the same source texts. The method for the present study was also identical to that of the previous study. A comparison of the results from these two studies provided an answer to the question of whether fansubs treat neologies differently from prosubs.

The generic fluency of the material was determined by evaluating the translation strategies that were used in the translation of neologies. The strategies were divided into two main categories, **retaining** and **recreating**, depending on how the neologies were transferred from the ST to the TT. The retentive translation strategies preserve the neology's cognitive estrangement, whereas recreative translation strategies neutralise the cognitive estrangement. By selecting a retentive strategy, the fansubber has maintained the cognitively estranging nature of the novum and preserved the neology. Hence, from the point of view of neologies, the genre remains fluent in the translation. For example, if the neologism *Cylons* (alien race) from the *Battlestar Galactica* (2004b) TV series is translated into Finnish with the local strategy of direct translation as *Cylonit* ('Cylons'), the cognitive estrangement of the ST is retained. Recreation means the opposite, that is, the generalisation of the neologism *Cylons* as, for example, *avaruusolennot* ('aliens').

Another example of recreation is the complete omission of a ST neology from the TT because both its estrangement and cognition are lost.

The retentive and recreative strategies were divided into six local translation strategies. Their selection is based on Pedersen's (2011: 73–74) taxonomy of six categories of local strategies needed in the study of subtitles: retention, direct translation, specification, generalisation, omission and substitution. Pedersen's (2011) category of substitution was replaced with the category of compensation which was the category label used in the previous study (Korpi 2021). To avoid confusion between the global and local strategies in the study, Pedersen's (2011) category of retention was replaced with direct transfer. The category of direct translation refers to literal translation. The neologies in the material were thus divided into the following six local translation strategies: **direct transfer, direct translation, specification, generalisation, omission and compensation**, which lead to either retention or recreation of the neologies. This categorisation corresponds to the one adopted in the previous study on prosubs (Korpi 2021) to enable a comparison between prosubs and fansubs in this analysis. The results indicated that many of the local strategies can be interpreted as either retentive or recreative depending on the context. Examples of the use of each of these local strategies will be provided in the following discussion of the results. The examples will also offer a comparison of the neologies that are translated in fansubs and prosubs.

4 Analysis

This section presents and discusses the examples of the translation strategies that were identified in the data. The overall results of the study are presented before the examples. The dichotomy between the retentive and recreative local strategies does not imply that using one or the other would guarantee the generic fluency of a text. The results indicate that depending on the context, many of the local strategies can be either retentive or recreative. The strategy of compensation (adding a neology in the TT) was not used in the fansubs or in the prosubs. This was possibly due to the constraints of the media.

The analysis revealed that in most cases, the SF genre of the ST is generically fluent in both the TT fansubs and prosubs. The percentage of neologies that were interpreted as having retained the cognitive estrangement is slightly higher in the fansubs (84.4%) than in the prosubs (80.2%). The percentages of neologies which were interpreted as recreating the cognitive estrangement were correspondingly lower in the fansubs. The difference of 4.2% percentage points for the benefit of fansubs does indicate a difference, but it is not a large enough difference to make absolute claims regarding fansubs being more retentive than prosubs in general. However, it does suggest that fans might be more inclined to retain the neologies in their translations, whether or not they are cognitively estranging. Table 1 presents the overall percentages of the different local strategies in fansubs and prosubs. Examples of each strategy are provided in the following paragraphs.

Table 1: Translation strategies in fansubs and prosubs

	Fansubs	**Prosubs**
Direct Transfer	389 (30.3%)	320 (25.3%)
Direct Translation	698 (54.5%)	654 (51.7%)
Generalisation	108 (8.4%)	142 (11.2%)
Specification	45 (3.5%)	46 (3.6%)
Omission	40 (3.1%)	103 (8.1%)
Total	**1,280 (100.0%)**	**1,265 (100.0%)**

The following discussion and examples demonstrate how the data were interpreted and subsequently categorised. One of the elements analysed in the examples is whether the strength of the pictorial link (the connection between the picture and the dialogue) (Schröter 2005), is weak or strong. A strong pictorial link means that the novum, represented by the neology, is present in the picture simultaneously with the subtitles. As audiovisual SF produces the cognition (understandability) for its visual estrangement through the neologies in the dialogue, the presence of a strong pictorial link was not considered to allow an omission or generalisation of a neology. When the link is strong, the picture is considered to produce the estrangement (without cognition) or complement the estrangement produced by the neology. Thus, the picture complements the cognitive estrangement of the neology in the dialogue and vice versa. An estrangement of the visual channel needs a cognitive explanation, which is produced by the verbal channel and the role of the pictorial link can therefore be considered as being complementary to the SF generic fluency (Korpi 2021). Nevertheless, the role of the link is considered separately in each case to determine how it affects the generic fluency of the translation. When of a strong pictorial link occurs, the verbal neology is not the only cognitively estranging element of the audiovisual context. The pictorial link is referred to by the abbreviation PL and the backtranslated (BT) neologies are underlined in the examples.

Examples 1 and 2 demonstrate the strategy of direct transfer and specification. The examples reveal how the neologism *frak* loses its cognitivity through direct transfer. The neologism *frak* is the estranging fictional version of the English swear word *fuck*, which it replaced in the ST TV series *Battlestar Galactica* (2004b). According to a fan website of that popular TV series, *frak* "is a potent profanity in the language of the Twelve colonies" (Battlestar Galactica Wiki 2020). The ST therefore constitutes a typical example of how SF estranges the viewer from reality by reflecting it back. While the TT estranges the viewer, it does not follow a similar cognitive logic as the ST because *frak* is not related to any Finnish swear word. Hence, these examples illustrate the decrease in the generic fluency of the text for both fansubs and prosubs.

(1)   ST: Nothing Sir, just another leak in that <u>frakking</u> window.
                                       (OoCities.org 2019)
        Fansubs: Vain vuoto siinä <u>frakin</u> ikkunassa.
                                       (Battlestar Galactica 2004b: s1, e1)
        BT Fansubs: <u>frakking</u>
        Prosubs: S [sic] <u>*frakin*</u> ikkuna vuotaa taas. (Battlestar Galactica 2004a: s1, e1)

BT Prosubs: <u>frakking</u>
PL: Weak

In example 1, both the fansubs and prosubs have directly transferred the neologism *frak* into the TT. Although the TT is estranging, the cognition is lost. However, the fansubber regarded preserving the neologism in the TT to be more important than the prosubber. This can be deduced from the ST material including nine instances of the neologism *frak*, the TT fansubs containing ten instances, whereas the prosubs had only five instances of it (the four remaining were omitted). The one extra instance that occurs in the fansubs compared to the ST is presented in example 2 and this is likely due to the fansubber mishearing the ST and/or the fansubber's willingness to use the neologism *frak* instead.

(2)   ST: Frikkin' right, you're not. (OoCities.org 2019)
           Fansubs: Ette <u>frakissa</u> olekaan. (Battlestar Galactica 2004b: s1, e1)
           BT Fansubs: <u>frakking</u>
           Prosubs: Ette niin. (Battlestar Galactica 2004a: s1, e1)
           BT Prosubs: -
           PL: Weak

The ST utterance as presented in example 2 can be heard as *frikkin'* instead of *frakking* and it is also written as *frikkin'* in the script of the episode (OoCities.org 2019). Example 2 represents an unfluent specification in the fansubs. However, the different number of the neologisms that occur in fansubs, all directly transferred, and prosubs, directly transferred and omitted, also suggests that the fansubber regarded retaining the neologism in the TT to be more important than the prosubber. The prosubber has highlighted the foreignness of the word in italics throughout the subtitles, whereas the fansubber has not. This is most likely due to the prosubbing conventions. Furthermore, in addition to reflecting the fansubbers' willingness to retain the neologisms in the TT, the strategy of direct transfer can also be interpreted as reinforcing the cognitive estrangement and thus the generic fluency of the TT. Example 3 demonstrates this.

(3)   ST: <u>Uta lora ista. Urasta mistavor.</u> (Chakoteya.net 2018)
           Fansubs: <u>Ataa loora iis da. Oohrem miista voor.</u>
                                 (Star Trek Enterprise 2001b: s1, e3)
           BT Fansubs: <u>Uta lora ista. Urasta mistavor.</u>
           Prosubs: - (Star Trek Enterprise 2001a: s1, e3)
           BT Prosubs: -
           PL: Strong

In example 3, a human linguist is communicating with an alien in their language. The fansubber has transliterated their discussion in the alien language, whereas the prosubber has not. The alien language is not translated into English or transliterated as on-screen text, but the content of the discussion can be surmised from the surrounding plot and pictorial link to the speaking aliens and linguist. The prosubs would therefore remain as cognitively estranging as the ST is without the transliterated subtitles and the prosubber has acted according to the prevailing subtitling conventions by not translating them. However, by transliterating the alien language, the fansubs have foregrounded the alien

language. This has contributed to the generic fluency of the TT by enforcing the cognitive estrangement of the ST.

The most used strategy in both fansubs and prosubs was direct translation, which is demonstrated in the following examples 4, 5 and 6.

(4) ST: <u>Plomeek broth</u> is a traditional morning meal on Vulcan.
                            (Chakoteya.net 2018)
     Fansubs: <u>Plomeek lihaliemi</u> on perinteinen aamiainen Vulkanuksella.
                            (Star Trek Enterprise 2001b: s1, e4)
     BT Fansubs: <u>Plomeek meat broth</u>
     Prosubs: <u>Plomeek-keitto</u> on perinteinen aamiainen Vulkanuksella.
                            (Star Trek Enterprise 2001a: s1, e4)
     BT Prosubs: <u>Plomeek broth</u>
     PL: Weak

In example 4, the specification led to recreation in the fansubs and the direct translation of prosubs led to retention. The strategy in fansubs is regarded as specification as the neoseme part of the neology, *broth,* is specified to mean meat broth. The example reveals that the fansubber did not acknowledge that in the Star Trek universe, most Vulcans are vegan (Memory Alpha 2021). As a result, the genre is unfluent in the fansubs and fluent in the prosubs, which used the strategy of direct translation (by not specifying the ingredients of the broth).

(5) ST: We just need three <u>phase pistols</u>.
                            (Chakoteya.net 2018)
     Fansubs: Tarvitsemme vain kolme <u>vaiheista</u>.
                            (Star Trek Enterprise 2001b: s1, e3)
     BT Fansubs: <u>phase pistols</u>
     Prosubs: Tarvitsemme vain <u>pistoolit</u>. (Star Trek Enterprise 2001a: s1, e3)
     BT Prosubs: <u>pistols</u>
     PL: Weak

In example 5, the direct translation in the fansubs leads to retention and thus towards the fluent TT genre. Many of the novums (and their neology names) of the Star Trek universe were established during the long history of this audiovisual SF world. One of the common neologies that occurs in that universe is the *phase pistol*, which has been translated as *vaiheinen* ('phaser') or *vaiheispistooli* ('phase pistol') in the previous prosubs of the Star Trek series as well as in the fansubs of this study. Here the phasers are mentioned for the first time in the series. The fansubber regarded retaining the neologism in the TT to be more important than the prosubber. This is because the generalisation of *phase pistols* into *pistoolit* in the prosubs decreases the degree of genre fluency as the estrangement of the neology disappears when the expression is normalised as standard language.

(6) ST: but even with our most advanced, <u>naquadah-powered generators</u>,…
                            (Stargate Wiki 2019)
     Fansubs: kehittyneimmilläkin <u>naquadah-generaattoreillamme</u>
                            (Stargate Atlantis 2012: s1, e1)
     BT Fansubs: <u>naquadah-generator</u>
     Prosubs: Yritimme sitä. (Stargate Atlantis 2005: s1, e1)

BT Prosubs: -
PL: Weak

Example 6 highlights the fansubber's willingness to retain the neoseme, supported by an unrestricted number of characters. The neoseme is named after the Egyptian city of Naqada, which adheres to the ancient Egyptian theme (Stargate Wiki 2020). The omission of the whole neology in the prosubs is no doubt at least partly due to spatial limitations. Nevertheless, it has recreated the cognitive estrangement of the neoseme.

Examples 7 and 8 illustrate the less frequently used strategies of generalisation and omission.

(7)   ST: I'm not going to die with <u>a hypospray</u> in my hand.
                          (Chakoteya.net 2018)
        Fansubs: En aio kuolla <u>ruisku</u> kädessäni. (Star Trek Enterprise 2001b: s1, e4)
        BT Fansubs: <u>syringe</u>
        Prosubs: En kuole <u>ruiske</u> kädessäni. (Star Trek Enterprise 2001a: s1, e4)
        BT Prosubs: <u>syringe</u>
        PL: Weak

(8)   ST: THERE ARE ONLY 12 *CYLON MODELS*.
                          (OoCities.org 2019)
        Fansubs: - (Battlestar Galactica 2004b: s1, e1)
        BT Fansubs: <u>-</u>
        Prosubs: *CYLON-MALLEJA* ON VAIN 12. (Battlestar Galactica 2004a: s1, e1)
        BT Prosubs: <u>CYLON MODELS</u>
        PL: Strong

Example 7 demonstrates that both the fansubs and the prosubs have generalised the neologism *hypospray*. *Hypospray* is a medical device in the Star Trek universe, and it is used to spray liquids into the body without a needle (Memory Alpha 2020). Neither the fansubber nor the prosubber considered it important to retain the neologism. This example as well as the previous Example 4 suggest that the fansubber was not an expert of the genre because s/he changed the meaning of a subtitled neology. Example 8 addresses the omission of an on-screen text by a fansubber. This resulted in an unfluent genre. As a plot-pertinent text, the prosubber translated the note and thus retained the neologism *cylon*.

5 Conclusion

Fansubbing (non-professional subtitling) has become an inseparable part of audiovisual translation studies as fansubs have become increasingly available in different languages. Finnish fansubbing has not yet been extensively researched and this analysis likewise did not aim to adopt a general stance on the subject. Instead, the objective was to answer the research question of whether or not the fansubbers might be more aware of the linguistic importance of the ST neologies in SF and therefore be more likely to retain them in the TT than prosubbers. As previously noted, fansubs have been regarded as more source-oriented or abusive. It was therefore also assumed that fansubs would retain a higher

percentage of the SF neologies than the prosubs. This assumption was confirmed by the data, although the difference between fansubs and prosubs was only 4.2 percentage points. The fansubbers did consider the ST neologies to be more important than the prosubbers and as a result, the SF genre was more fluent in the fansubs than in the prosubs.

However, the results also appear to suggest that, even though the fansubbers may be aware that ST neologies are important, they are not necessarily aware of the genre conventions, such as cognitive estrangement. Even though it was mentioned that the fansubbers accentuated the estrangement by adding neologies (see example 2), it was also stated that the fansubber has not had expert knowledge on the particular SF TV series (see examples 4 and 7). The formulation of the research question was based on the assumption that the examined fansubs were produced by fans of the genre who were experts in the genre conventions. If fans are indeed considered to be experts on a genre, this could imply that this particular fansubber was not a fan of the SF genre. Thus, it could be suggested that rather than being expert fans of a particular genre, some of the fansubbers are currently actually fans of the subtitling activity because they are willing to produce subtitles without financial compensation, specialising in the activity of subtitling instead of a genre. From the point of view of generic fluency, as defined earlier, the difference between fansubs and prosubs is negligible. Nevertheless, fansubs seem to be slightly inclined to retain the genre of the ST better than prosubs, resulting in a more fluent TT genre. This is due to the translation strategies that were selected which fansubbers are able to implement without many of the restrictions, such as spatial limitations, that have affected the prosubs. The reasons for selecting different strategies can also be attributed to a difference in the level of formal translator training between fansubbers and prosubbers.

It is suggested that the recreation of cognitive estrangement produced by neologies leads to an unfluent genre, which can therefore be considered to be the normalisation of genre-specific elements into normal language in translation (Korpi 2021). When the SF genre of the TT is rendered unfluent, the TT genre normalises towards conventional language. The TT's genre changes when the translation contains fewer instances of the SF genre-specific cognitively estranging neologies than would be expected based on the ST. This can also be the result with fansubs, although with a smaller percentage than with prosubs. The results could be further compared to literary translation to reveal the differences between the two media.

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